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THE BISHOP PADDOCK LECTURES, 1884

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THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

AT THE CLOSE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

BY

RT. REV. A. N. <sup>✓</sup>LITTLEJOHN, D.D., LL.D.

BISHOP OF LONG ISLAND

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THE  
BISHOP PADDOCK LECTURES.

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IN the summer of the year 1880, GEORGE A. JARVIS of Brooklyn, N.Y., moved by his sense of the great good which might thereby accrue to the cause of CHRIST, and to the Church of which he was an ever-grateful member, gave to the General Theological Seminary of the Protestant Episcopal Church certain securities, exceeding in value eleven thousand dollars, for the foundation and maintenance of a Lectureship in said seminary.

Out of love to a former pastor and enduring friend, the Right Rev. Benjamin Henry Paddock, D.D., Bishop of Massachusetts, he named the foundation "THE BISHOP PADDOCK LECTURESHIP."

The deed of trust declares that,—

"*The subjects of the lectures shall be such as appertain to the defence of the religion of JESUS CHRIST, as revealed in the Holy Bible, and illustrated in the Book of Common Prayer, against the varying errors of the day, whether materialistic, rationalistic, or professedly religious, and also to its defence and confirmation in respect of such central truths as the Trinity, the Atonement, Justification, and the Inspiration of the Word of God; and of such central facts as the Church's Divine Order and Sacraments, her historical Reformation, and her rights and powers as a pure and national Church. And other subjects may be chosen if unanimously approved by the Board of Appointment as being both timely and also within the true intent of this Lectureship.*"

Under the appointment of the board created by the trust, the Right Rev. A. N. Littlejohn, D.D., LL.D., Bishop of Long Island, delivered the Lectures for the year 1884, contained in this volume.





## PREFACE.

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THE subject chosen for these Lectures is, on the face of it, a practical one. It will deal with questions of authority, office, administration, conduct, and character. It will show how earthly stewards, human trustees, have used, in a generation of unparalleled activity and change, the Divine gifts committed to them. We are nearing the close of by far the most eventful of the Christian centuries, — one that includes the beginning and the consummation of forces that have radically modified the drift of modern life, and with that the internal, as well external, relations of institutions ordained to be permanent factors in the training and development of mankind. It is of the utmost practical moment, that we see as clearly as we can the effect of these forces upon the most obviously and vitally representative agency of Christianity, and through that upon Christianity itself. But, while in these respects intensely practical, the subject will, at the same time, oblige us to consider from the Christian standpoint many issues yet lying within the province of theory and opinion, — issues which, though now wrapped up in the inner thoughts of men, may, any day, leap forth into the arena of agitation and controversy. Indeed, it will be impossible to conduct with any degree of thoroughness such an inquiry as is here proposed, without cross-

ing at many angles the deeper speculative tendencies of the time. There could scarcely be any truer test of what is best and what is worst in these tendencies, than the influence which they have already begun or are likely to exercise, upon the Office and Ministry ordained to show forth and plead for the Christ unto the end of the world.

Of the twelve Lectures now published, five, and considerable parts of the others, were not delivered, for lack of time ; though the continuity of the series was maintained by presenting a syllabus of each lecture or part of a lecture omitted.

A. N. L.

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## LECTURE I.

### THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY AT THE BAR OF CRITICISM.

THE centuries are only so many chapters in the volume of time. They conveniently mark off the historic spaces behind us, for purposes of observation and study. But for the breaks and rests they supply, events would be without grouping or perspective, and the past would close in after us like a single horizon on a boundless plain. And yet, however they serve our convenience, they are of our own making and arrangement. The world's life and movement have in them no corresponding chapters. The forces that govern them have as little regard for our modes of scoring the lapses of time as the organic activities of our bodies have for the great days in our civic or ecclesiastical calendar. My theme, therefore, "The Christian Ministry at the Close of the Nineteenth Century," neither asserts nor implies any relation of cause and effect between the Christian Ministry and the close of this century; but is intended rather to call attention to the fact, that, as we are nearing the end of one of the larger measurements of time recognized by history, it is the dictate of an intelligent curiosity as well as of a sober Christian thoughtfulness, to inquire how it has fared with this

God-given but man-kept agency; what is said of it by others; what it has to say of and for itself.

This is not only the last, but, as commonly believed, it is the most remarkable, of all the centuries. Moved by this belief, the minds of men in all the higher walks of thought are now turning aside from special studies, to look at the mould and drift of the age taken as a whole. The sciences of mind and matter, of society and civil government, of law and medicine, the arts of utility and the arts of imagination, the skilled industries of the soil, the sea, and the factory,—all things, in short, into which men have, in these latter times, thrown their best mind-power or will-power,—seem to be making up their record, and, as the shadows deepen with the setting sun of the century, to be preparing to give an account of their stewardship. For no possible reason can the Christian Ministry refuse to do likewise. If it be foremost in dignity and power as the representative of an eternal kingdom, then, by so much the more as it transcends all other offices ordained for the well-being of man, is it bound, at this time, to account for the talents committed to it.

Neither the purpose nor the scope of these thoughts demands any formal statement of the doctrine of the Ministry. It is enough, perhaps, to say that what the Church has taught in all ages respecting its origin, constitution, and transmission, is taken for granted. And yet there are Ministries which in the light of this teaching we must hold to be defective, whose existence and work it would be idle to ignore in such a discussion as is now proposed. While, therefore, as a rule, when

speaking of the Ministry, I shall refer to what we understand by the Catholic and Apostolic Ministry, I shall not hesitate, in all cases that may require it, to include the fruits of other Ministries organized upon a different basis.

The characteristics of our time, whether religious or irreligious, repeat themselves in the current views of the Christian Priesthood. As men think of religion generally, so they think of the official class commissioned to represent it. The Priesthood belongs to a system of gifts, powers, ordinances, and institutions, organically bound together; and the conception which determines the place and value of the whole determines the place and value of every part. In forming this conception of the whole, or of any part, many minds are swayed by habits of thought, both speculative and practical, that sweep widely beyond the subject in hand, and deal with interests that have no immediate connection with it. Some are influenced by that elastic and often intangible thing, — the spirit of the age; some, by opinions or prepossessions derived from certain schools of science and literature, or from theories of social and political development, or from historical studies; while still others, consciously or unconsciously, take their bias from some pronounced trend in theology, or some dominant phase of Christian life and organization. However we may account for the many and divergent estimates of the Christian Ministry in these closing years of the century, it is a fact that they exist; nay, more, that they assert themselves boldly in the popular as well as the critical judgment of our time. While some of them may sad-

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den, none of them ought to surprise us ; for there is not one of them whose way has not been prepared by some definite drift of modern thought. While there is scarcely an aspect of the unbelief or liberalism or genuine faith of the day, that has not repeated itself in one or more of these, they are reducible, without loss of any essential feature, to the following.

1. We have the view of the Ministry taken as matter of course by the agnostic, who neither affirms nor denies the being of God, relegating with philosophical complacency the whole question to the region of the unknown and the unknowable ; by the secularist, who, sure of only this world, deems it a waste of thought and care to divide his attention between that and some other only possible world, dismissing without reserve the spiritual life, with its inheritance of immortality, to the limbo of dreams and fictions ; by the extreme liberal, who, though flaunting the badge of a spiritual philosophy, and talking in a large way about God and the human soul, about duty and the grandeur of an endless moral development, about the hid treasures and wonderful possibilities of the great ethnic religions, and about all affiliated themes, yet, so far as Christianity or the Church is concerned, can give us no better proof of his solicitude for our welfare than by warning us of the approaching collapse of faith, of the increasing shallowness of the crust of modern piety, of the loosening hold of the Cross on all forms of intellectual and ethical development, and of the consuming flame driven by advancing science over the stubble field of worn-out creeds and sapless traditions. By all these, the Chris-

tian Ministry is declared to be a dying function, retaining the show without the reality of life, and kept afloat only by habits of thought and usages of society gradually dwindling away before the advancing dawn of a new era of light and progress.

2. Next there is the view of the Ministry taken by not a few Christian people. For one reason or another, they have come to listen to disparaging allusions to the Sacred Office as though they were in good part well-grounded. It has become the fashion to speak of it slightly, and as though it has had its day; and sadly enough it has equally grown to be the fashion, among too many, to be silent or timidly apologetic, as though, if they attempted any defence, it would be reluctant and half-hearted. I am not concerned just now with the causes of this state of mind. Speaking generally, it has been one effect of the recent movements in religious thought, to make many within the Church timid and distrustful in regard to the future of the faith and order in which they have been trained. To them, the outlook is clouded; old landmarks are passing away; the very foundations seem to be threatened; strange doctrines, claiming to be the latest voice of Christianity, are in the air; the facts of the Gospel are made to shake hands with modern conceits and speculations, in a way that forces a suspicion as to the integrity of the facts themselves; while the stability of the best-known Christian dogmas and institutions is disturbed by the passion for new departures in religious teaching and organization. Now, to minds mainly occupied with these aspects of the religion of the time, the Ministry very naturally appears to be in a

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decline. They see no help for it, and strive not to find any. There is a great deal of spiritual wreckage afloat, and this is only a part of it.

3. Finally, there is the estimate of the Ministry prevalent, I would fain believe, among the great body of the faithful. With them I affirm that the essential elements of Christianity were never pushed more boldly to the front of human thought and human life than they are to-day; that the religious impulse of the race was never so deep and strong as now; that the faith once delivered never had a more vital hold on the reason and conscience of mankind, or was more likely to lift them to higher orbits of truth and power, than at this moment. All this may be claimed without denying much that seems to make against it. Some are terrified by the apparently sweeping and radical character of the changes going on in the beliefs of the time. But these are not what they seem. The material of all doctrines in any way fundamental to our religion is drawn from the facts of revelation and the facts of our own consciousness. There is and can be no change in these. But when we consider the forms into which these facts are to be cast, the verbal shapes they are to take, there is scarcely any limit to the possibilities of change. The mind, guided by the Spirit of all truth, will go on stating and restating them generation after generation; and will be sure to exercise its liberty, as it ought to do, to the full extent needed to make its statement of eternal wisdom as large as the sum of knowledge and the actual experience of the human soul at any given time. This process may often disturb, but need not alarm, the people of

God. The very fact that it is now so widely operative, thrusting upon us so many signs of change, and here and there giving off ugly portents of agitation and convulsion, is at bottom the strongest possible proof of the unwasting vitality of the facts with which it deals. It is because Christianity is made up of these facts of revelation and consciousness, that it is ordained to be the crown of the moral order of the world. As such, neither itself as a whole, nor any thing instituted by its Author to represent it unto men,—as Priesthood, or Sacraments, or Worship, or the mystical Body itself,—can permanently wither or really perish. We know, then, as we know Him in whom we have believed, even the Word made flesh and dwelling among us, that the priesthood eternally His as the one Mediator, and committed by Him unto men called by the Holy Ghost and formally set apart by the Church,—though still as thus exercised only a more special and authoritative form of the one royal priesthood diffused among all the members of His Body,—is an inherent and imperishable part of the supernatural instrumentality by which God, in the order of grace, seeks to reconcile mankind unto Himself. Such is the essentially Christian conception of the Priesthood; and thus regarded, we may trace it, as we now purpose to do, through its later historic fluctuations, marking its losses and perversions occasioned by the progress of events or by the faults of its administrators, as well as its victories and gains achieved in times when most intensely conscious of the grandeur of its mission and of the indwelling energy of the Holy Ghost. Standing on this vantage-ground, we may listen with

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sorrow to all that modern criticism can tell us of its negligences and aberrations, its shallownesses and puerilities, its failures and forfeitures; but also in the full assurance of faith in its inherent power of recuperation and renewal.

Nothing relating to the Christian Religion is more characteristic of these closing years of the century than the allegation, pressed every day with increasing emphasis, that the influence of the Christian Priesthood on the thought and life of the time has not only changed in its form and direction, but that it has declined in bulk and force. Whatever the Clergy themselves may think of the question, it is clear that the world at large has not been backward in making up or in announcing its verdict. Strangely enough, the minds that seem to be most confident of the moribund drift of the Priesthood are the very ones that, as a rule, are most powerfully drawn to it as a subject of inquiry and criticism. Somehow they are constantly endeavoring to prove what they wonder that anybody should doubt. As they read the logic of events, it ought to be visibly wasting away; and yet the best intelligence of the day treats it as though it had a long lease of life. Certainly the free thought of the time handles it with scant courtesy, and waves it one side as a thing whose destiny was long since sufficiently settled. But free thought, as it is called, is not the highest or the most abiding thought. It is only from the thought that is highest and most abiding, that the Christian Ministry can expect a judgment that will include all the facts. Sure we are that the origin and historic descent of this Ministry, its intimate relation



with most of the leading moral forces of life, its place and office in the world of intellect, its permanent guardianship and habitual employment of the noblest ideas that sway the human mind, its vast and continuous work in moulding individual character, its admitted control over many of the most powerful and yet intangible influences that affect society, — sure we are that these, aside from its directly religious ministrations and its official stewardship of the Divine mysteries, will always recommend it to truth-loving and earnest minds, though they be without the pale of formal Christian belief, as a subject of supreme importance, if not of absorbing interest.

We speak sometimes of the power, and sometimes of the influence, of the Ministry, as though they were synonymous ; whereas they relate to different aspects of it, and suggest widely divergent lines of inquiry. Power denotes what inheres in the very nature and constitution of the Holy Office ; what is conveyed by the Holy Ghost in ordination, — that grace of orders which is absolutely God's own gift. Influence denotes the sway which the power thus conferred gains over those on whom it was intended to operate. It represents practical direction and actual control. It brings up the whole question of results arising from the exercise of this Divine agency. Power stands for the original authority of the sender, and the derived authority embodied in the commission of the sent. It is an impersonal Divine virtue, committed by God's appointment, and for a defined purpose, to human instruments, chosen and called by Himself. Influence, on the other hand, meas-

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ures the extent to which this force accomplishes its end; how far as salt it purifies, how far as light it illumines, how far as leaven it pervades the lump of humanity.

As the inquiry now proposed relates solely to the influence of the Ministry, the distinction just drawn will take us at once into the province of history and experience. In support of the assertion that the influence of the Ministry is declining, substantially the following statements meet us at every turn. We are told that institutions and offices resting on authority have been damaged in their pretensions; that the spirit of the age is bent on levelling the old eminences of power and privilege, and on bringing all hereditary rights and successional claims down to a point where the popular voice can deal with them; that there is a growing disposition among the masses in all countries of any mental activity to challenge any law, ordinance, or function in Church or State, that does not approve its reasonableness and expediency at the bar of popular opinion. We are told that the time has come, whether for good or evil, when mankind in most civilized lands think and know too much to endure any longer priestly dictation in matters of the family or of society, or priestly teaching as a reliable expression of eternal truth. There was a time when the Priest's position and influence were accepted as things of course; when no one dreamed of intruding into functions universally conceded to him and touching in some way all sides of life. But all that is radically changed. Now the Priest's authority amounts to no more than the moral power won by force of character,

or the intellectual power created by superior discipline and attainments. With most people his teachings and opinions go for what they are worth as products of individual judgment. Favors, immunities, special confidences and attachments, no longer, save in rare exceptions, gather around him as the spontaneous fruit of a friendly social order. Still further, we are told, that, in the current opinion of the day, the Priesthood has, as a whole, fallen off in elevation of moral and spiritual tone, and, consequently, in those rarer and nobler qualities of character which need only the opportunity to crystallize into brave leaders and heroic witnesses, to whom a forlorn hope or a perilous crisis in a great cause is as an inspiration from God, and by whom all things, verily and indeed, are counted loss for Christ. Such, in general, is the tone of sentiment now widely prevalent in regard to the present status, work, and influence of the Clergy. I have stated it just here as a fitting introduction to the more formal and detailed consideration, now to be undertaken, of positive losses or serious dilutions and abrasions of clerical influence, whether caused by the progress of events, working inevitable changes in the whole fabric of modern life, or by the faults, actually verified or simply alleged, of the Clergy themselves.

As history tells us, the Clergy once, and for a long period, wielded a very wide-spread and powerful influence as the exclusively learned class. As such, they were pressed in many ways into the service of the state, and of general society. With the first beginnings of modern civilization, they emerged into prominence as recognized leaders in fashioning the chaotic and recon-

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ciling the conflicting elements of social and political life. It was not of their seeking, that so much was devolved upon them in addition to their proper spiritual charge. It was a necessity of the times, that they who had the faculties needed for so great a task should assume the guidance of rude and only partially amalgamated races in their exodus from barbarism. They were the founders of the schools in which modern Europe learned many of its earliest lessons. They were law-makers and magistrates, because law-making and magistracy would have fared badly without them. They were masons, carpenters, workers in metals, tillers of the soil, road-makers, conquerors of wildernesses, scribes, composers and transcribers of books, — men, in short, of all work demanding intellectual ability, patient energy, and a disciplined will. All things considered, it is wonderful that such variety and pressure of secular work, with the temptations to ambition and self-aggrandizement which it created, should not have more completely overlaid and demoralized their special vocation as priests of God and servants of the Church. The hold thus acquired on all leading interests of the world was not easily relaxed. Custom retained them for centuries in well-nigh the same general relation to society and the state in which necessity originally placed them. But at last, as the result of the slow but steady operation of causes set in motion by the versatile genius of modern civilization, the time came when the Clergy fell back as naturally into their own divinely appointed sphere of work, as, ages before, they had accepted responsible secular trusts, and exercised important secular

functions. The change has been one of the most remarkable in history. It has been going on visibly since the dawn of the seventeenth century. Our day has completed it. And as the total result, in the world's judgment, the Clergy have lost seriously in prestige and influence. They are now only one of many learned orders and professions. Civil government, whether in monarchies or republics, no longer needs their extra help; society has learned how to care for itself; and the great modern law of the subdivision of labor has relegated them to what many regard as a condition of hopeless mediocrity among callings destined to leave it far behind in the race for publicity and influence.

Again, at a period not far distant in the past, the Clergy were the accepted guides and masters in all liberal and popular education. When they ceased to act as judges, legislators, cabinet-ministers, and to direct mankind in practical arts and skilled industries, they did not cease to be the accredited instructors of the human mind and the foremost builders of individual and national character. Themselves men of thought and culture, or, at least, impelled to become such by the instincts of their calling, they habitually identified themselves with all existing methods for promoting intellectual interests; and when such methods were wanting they considered it their duty to supply them. They founded schools and seminaries and universities, wherever they could secure the favor of princes and the patronage of the rich. They gathered libraries, endowed fellowships, and built quiet retreats for men of scholarly tastes. They assigned to theology the first place among the

subjects of human thought; but they believed that no science, no department of learning, could extend its borders without doing something to illustrate afresh the wisdom and glory of God as well in redemption as in creation. In the times to which I refer, the Clergy made mistakes, wandered often far away into fields of profitless speculation and controversy, were not seldom narrow in their estimates of the services of great thinkers and discoverers; and yet not by any means to the extent asserted by minds of nineteenth-century breadth. Whatever even may be said of them in these respects, it is certain that beyond any other class they were the sponsors and tutors of the generations which prepared the way for whatever is most distinctive and valuable in the attainments of recent times.

In this country, especially, the Clergy have a noble record in the history of education. There was not a college, and scarcely a school, founded in colonial times, or, indeed, up to within forty years ago, that was not indebted for its existence to the sympathetic interest and active co-operation of the Clergy. In those early days they everywhere planted the school beside the church, and hailed the fullest and freest intelligence as the handmaid of religion, and the buttress of a free state. It seemed then only the natural and necessary thing, to give them the controlling voice in all school boards and academic faculties.

In Europe, until twenty-five years ago, it is not too much to say that nine-tenths of the primary, and by far the larger share of the higher training, intended for the learned and professional classes, were directly or

indirectly controlled by clerical influence. Even the free-thinking portions of Germany furnished no exception, save in a few of its gymnasia and universities.

But now, look where we will, at home or abroad, and we are confronted with the evidences of a radical change. The movement for secular, as against all avowedly Christian education, has, in this country, been entirely successful. The Clergy of all names have been gradually retired from the field in which they were once the acknowledged leaders; and any attempt on their part to meddle with, far more to manage, our public schools, or even seminaries and colleges in any degree dependent on state aid, would be greeted in most, perhaps all, of our communities, not merely with distrust and censure, but with determined opposition. The battle has been fought, and, as everybody knows, won by the secular power. From being the rule that the Clergy should predominate in all school-committees and college trusteeships, it is now not only the exception, but it is growing more and more rare, to find their names in any such connection at all. There are still schools and colleges where they govern, but they do so as the immediate representatives of the religious bodies to which these institutions belong. Nowhere among us in the general educational work of our land which represents the tone or is obedient to the will of the people, does any distinctively clerical influence linger, except by courtesy or by forbearance toward its admitted weakness. In Europe, in all schools partially or wholly under state control, the same tendency is intensely aggressive. In England, clerical influence in every grade and depart-

ment of education is on the decline. The Established Church is putting forth a mighty effort to retain her influence over the nurture and training of her children. The contest has its fluctuations, and now and then in some parts of the land she seems to score a victory ; but, taken as a whole, the national mind seems to be steadily sagging toward the temper and policy of avowed secularism. It is a fact of special significance in this connection, that in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, with their total of more than forty separate colleges, the old statute declaring Clergymen as alone eligible to the office of masters or heads of colleges has been repealed. This, with other equally marked changes in the religious regimen of these centres of learning, attests better, perhaps, than any thing else, the present attitude of the English people. Certain it is, that the drift of legislation and of public thought, as expressed in the current discussions of the hour, is adverse — strongly, profoundly so — to the Clergy as educators of the nation. In Belgium, where the Clergy held undisputed sway over the training of the people, they have lost their hold on the gymnasia and middle schools ; and since the dogma of infallibility was decreed, they maintain a precarious position in the primary schools. In France, the controversy on this great question has, within twenty years, traversed all its aspects and bearings. At times it has shown so much heat and bitterness as to attract the attention of the civilized world. Nowhere else have the elements in this contest been set against each other in such uncompromising and turbulent antagonism. The result is



known to all: the State is triumphant; the Clergy, after fighting long and bravely for so much as a *modus vivendi* on the question, find themselves driven to the wall. So late as the close of Napoleon Third's reign, they held with a firm hand the mastery over popular education; but within five years after the inauguration of the Republic, in a council of thirty-nine members, the Clergy were reduced to five representatives, — one archbishop and four bishops; and to-day they are absolutely excluded from the national deliberations on the subject. In Spain, there are abundant signs of a growing impatience of priestly control over the education of the people. In Italy, the course of things has been so plainly marked by new laws and new measures, taken together almost subversive of the old system, that there can be little doubt as to the early and complete expulsion of the Clergy from the national schools and universities; while, in Austria, the radical modification of the concordat between the State and the Church has left the nation free to deal with this question, as it could not before. In Germany, this same issue has been forced to the front by the old struggle between Church and State, again revived by the new and extraordinary claims of ultramontaniam. The ultimate action on this question is generally believed to be a foregone conclusion. In view of these facts, it is plain that the Clergy have lost altogether in some quarters, and are losing in others, the control, once overwhelmingly theirs, over the education of the masses. This loss is so deep and so serious, that it is not too much to assert that it indicates a change well-nigh consummated in the value

and force of the Christian Ministry as a factor in the present and future civilization of the world.

It will be said, perhaps, that the Clergy did not give to the nations the education they needed ; but it remains to be seen what the nations will do for themselves. This solemn trust has changed hands, and with what results the future alone can show. There are those who have studied this problem down to its roots, and have brought to the task a profound knowledge of the human mind, of the structure and wants of society, and of the law of God. They do not claim any special wisdom as interpreters of the dark things of our day ; nor are they men who have lagged behind the age, and whom a timid conservatism has converted into croakers of coming evil. They tell us that a re-action from this now irresistible drift of secularism in the training of this generation is inevitable ; that disintegration and anarchy will befall the nations that attempt to govern after they have expelled from their own organic life the authorities and ministries which God has ordained to represent His spiritual empire evermore in the affairs of the race. They assure us that what the Christian Priesthood has lost by the cleavages of the modern spirit will be regained ; but not until the dominant peoples of the earth shall have had another Red Sea baptism, and another desert exile.

But there is another product of modern life that has been pushed into competition with the Clergy as a teaching order. To the versatile vigor and enterprise of the press, there seems to be no assignable limit. More than any thing else among us, it gathers into itself the fabled

powers of the gods of the Greek Pantheon. In its many-sided faculties, Jupiter and Apollo, Mercury and Minerva, seem to be reproduced for practical service. Day by day, without pause or rest, it throws off its marvellous photographs of the thought and movement of the world. It has built up an empire of its own, with purposes and laws peculiar to itself. All this, and much more in the same strain, may be said without over-stating its achievements ; and yet it is not easy to see why this agency should be forced into comparison with the Christian Priesthood as the chosen vehicle of sacred truth. The press and the pulpit both command a hearing, but in very different ways and for very different ends. The Church uses the press as a means to an end ; as a subordinate agent which the progress of discovery and invention has gradually developed into the common servitor of all human interests. But the press never so uses the Church : to do so, were to reverse the order of things. With matchless skill and insight, it may read the signs of the times, and detect the symptoms and issues of change in society, in the state, in the Church, and in the world of letters ; and yet it is itself only an instrument ordained to serve powers and institutions sacred and secular, which in a certain commanding sense are themselves their own ends and reasons for existence. Accordingly, after the manner of every leading interest of mankind, the Church has, from the date of its introduction into modern life, employed the press in countless ways and with immense advantage. By it, as well as by her living Ministry, her sound has gone out into all lands, and her words unto the ends of the world. And yet, however great the service

it has rendered to Christianity ; however necessary, as things now are, it may be to all present plans for disseminating the Gospel, it would be an idle boast to affirm that it had either supplanted or weakened any part of the original equipment of the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments. In the nature of things, no such result could happen. As well imagine one of the elements of nature superseded by some new mechanical invention, or the occupation of the moon and stars gone because we have an abundance of gas. Undoubtedly the press has vastly multiplied the readers, as compared with the hearers, of Divine truth. By what it prints and circulates, it can virtually set up the pulpit in countless spots all over the world where no regular ministration of the living preacher could be had. And yet it must be remembered, that printed truth and spoken truth, when addressed to the will and conscience, are two widely different powers ; and that ordinarily many who receive the words of truth and life conveyed to them by the press will sooner or later find their way to the care and blessing of priestly ministration, and so will enlarge more and more the area of priestly influence.

While I believe this to be a fair estimate of the comparative influence of the press and the pulpit within the sphere of religion, I know that a considerable portion of the general public regard the former as much the more effective agency, and as destined to encroach gradually upon the functions of the latter until it will be accepted by the masses of the people as a satisfactory substitute for it.

Again, the Pastoral Office has lost a powerful auxiliary

in ceasing to be the chief dispenser of charity. Until recent times the poor derived most of their relief through the Clergy as the ordinary almoners of the Church and of the wealthy classes. It will be remembered with what tenderness of sentiment and beauty of language George Herbert brings out the meanings and uses of the relation subsisting between the Parson and the poor of his flock. He had a care for their daily bread, as well for the body as for the soul. The alms he brought never left his hand unseasoned with prayers and godly counsels. The bestowment of them was made, when required, the occasion for admonishing the ungrateful, restraining the unruly, rebuking the vicious and disobedient, and equally for instructing the ignorant in matters of practical duty and comforting the weary and heavy-laden. This side of the pastorate has been rendered almost obsolete by the altered methods of relief. What was done aforetime by the alms of parishioners dispensed through the Clergy, is done now by taxes levied by the civil authority, and applied by agents whom it appoints for this purpose. The State has taken into its hands the education of the people ; and, as part of the same general expansion of its power and responsibility, it has assumed the care of its poor. In both ways the Church has been impoverished, and virtually set aside. No doubt, most parish Priests still consider it a duty to do something in the line marked out for George Herbert's ideal Parson ; but it is certain that this function, save in rare exceptions, has ceased to be what it once was, and it is equally certain that the disuse of it has entailed upon the Clergy a corresponding loss of pastoral influence.

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It appears, then, from these facts, that, in the common judgment, the Christian Ministry in the closing decades of this century has lost ground:—

(1) By sharing with other callings, and with the people generally, the learning and technical skill of which it once held a monopoly;

(2) By being deprived of its once controlling authority over both liberal and popular education;

(3) By what the press has done to relieve it of a portion of its traditional work, if not in some degree, as is claimed, provide a substitute for that work;

(4) By the substitution of poor-rates or taxes for alms, civil functionaries for the Clergy, in the relief of the poor.

Now, if this conclusion be sound, it follows, that, relatively to the whole mass of forces operating upon the life of to-day, the influence of the Ministry has not only been modified in its form and direction, but has fallen off in its dimensions. But may it not be that this influence, in becoming less diffused, and less mixed with secular interests, the care of which has passed into other hands, is destined to revert more nearly to its original, Apostolic simplicity, and so to grow more fervent in spirit, more positive in its teaching, and more definite and concentrated in its aims? And so, too, may it not come true, that in the end its gains will outrun its losses, and the great spiritual harvest of the future be enriched by this merciless handling, in the present, of the secular pruning-knife?

Thus far all parties to this discussion are substantially agreed. I come now to aspects of the subject on some

of which there is little and on others a very radical diversity of opinion. In dealing with them my inquiries will very naturally take their form and direction very largely from the adverse rather than the favorable criticisms of the time. The Church may be left to guard and maintain its own conception of the necessity of the Priesthood, and of the value, under all possible fluctuations of energy and faithfulness, of the service it performs. What my theme makes it chiefly desirable to know is the degree of truth and force to be conceded to the general view of the office and work of a Priest in the Church of God, taken by the average man of the day; in other words, what these closing years of the most remarkable of centuries have to say about it. Now, it is a fact, that the current thought of the hour is turned upon what are believed to be the weak, rather than upon what the Clergy themselves believe to be the strong points in their calling and work. It is well, therefore, to consider alleged faults, rather than claimed virtues; and with a frank and fearless eye to scan the picture of the Ministry drawn by the world at large, with all its mixture of faith and doubt, sympathy and hate. St. Paul, in drawing an inspired portrait of the ideal Minister of Christ, tells him to "give no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed."<sup>1</sup> Now, the average Priest of to-day must have offended beyond all calculation, judging from the frequency and severity of the blame cast upon him. Let us see for what he is blamed, and then ask how far he is blamed justly.

1. A majority of the Clergy of this and all the

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. vi. 3.

Clergy of the Latin Church, and, I may add, all the doctrinally conservative Ministers of the more stable and conservative Christian Denominations, are blamed for adhering to any theology on which this last quarter of the Nineteenth Century has not put its *imprimatur*. The theology that will not wear this label is disparaged because of what it is, and of what it does, or rather fails to do, for those who accept it. What is said of it is said of its disciples and teachers, and substantially the following is said of both. The theology which is the product of the clerical mind, the old theology of books and systems and seminary lecture-rooms, has visibly receded in recent years from its once proud position among the sciences. Its prestige is broken; its erudition is lean and consumptive; its leading schools and faculties are no longer the centres they once were of critical learning, speculative subtilty, and profound study. It no longer imposes its law upon inferior or collateral departments of knowledge, and what it does or leaves undone attracts constantly decreasing attention. No philosophy, it is charged, can live peaceably within its borders, that attempts any real advance in handling the great problems of being, or the root principles of scientific morality. To be true to its instincts and to the instincts of its guardians, it must be narrow, timid, unenterprising, tied to the old ruts of tradition, and averse from the well-ordered highways of modern thought. And then, it is added, how can any body of educated men, thus trammelled, help declining in vigor and freshness and breadth, and consequently in ability to interest and guide others?



Comment upon this censure will be reserved until another stage of the discussion, when something will be said touching the theological and ethical labors of the Clergy.

2. The Ministry is blamed because of an alleged decline in the power of the pulpit. The preaching of the day, it is said, does not hold its own in logic, or unction, or eloquence. It has lost the power which compelled the hearing, stirred the souls, and shaped the opinions, of the best men of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But, what is worse, it lacks boldness and fire in rebuking sins that are eating out the heart of this generation, — sins of ambition and vanity, sins of selfish and profligate riches, sins of lust, sins which defile our business, our government, our churches, our homes. Now, I question the truth of such statements. It is much easier to make them than it is to prove them. I know the critics and the secular press say they are true; but they would not be up to their vocation if they said otherwise. Our modern life has developed agencies for moving public opinion, which, whatever their merit, are not over-modest in rating their own power, or in challenging comparison with the pulpit. It may be that our preaching is as strong as it ever was, and yet not seem so, because thrown into competition with more pretentious methods for shaping popular sentiment.

But why, it is asked, the present dearth of great preachers? It may be asked also, what is the standard of greatness in this function? The fact is, none of the Christian ages has been prolific in preachers whom after-

times declared great in the highest sense of the term. "The truly great preacher is one of the rarest products of the human mind. The combination of gifts required to produce one is so extraordinary, that that generation is fortunate which gives even one to the Church and to mankind. Neither the poet, nor the civic orator, nor the painter, nor the sculptor is so rare." No trait of intellectual or moral greatness can be spared. Even the physical man must be the fitting organ of the great soul, while the spiritual man must be at one with God in Christ Jesus. If you rate greatness by a lower standard, so as to bring under it preachers really eminent in learning and eloquence,—preachers who influence multitudes of wills by their words of power, and yet men who will be little heard of thirty years hence, and totally forgotten in two generations—if we do this, then I am bold to affirm that ~~no~~ age has had a stronger, more gifted, and versatile pulpit than the present. Nay, I am bold to say that the Christian religion has never had so large and well-equipped a body of men to propagate it at home and abroad as now. And, if there be no corresponding results in the hearts and lives of men, it may be due to causes which lie beyond the power of any ministry to remove, though made up of Augustines and Chrysostoms. There is, I know, a great deal of preaching that misses the mark because its arrows are poorly aimed; a great deal, too, that is mere wind, that panders to a morbid taste, that is sensational and vulgar; a great deal that has no doctrinal backbone, and is spongy with liberal and humanitarian vagueness. I know, moreover, not a little of it is hard and heavy and dull,—the lame

issues of prosaic, plodding, feeble souls, whom Providence, for some inscrutable reason, has transferred to the sacred desk from the highways of hopeless mediocrity. And yet it is my belief, that in no previous period of our religion has so much of talent, culture, unction, and eloquence been devoted to the proclamation of God's truth to a sinful world. No censor of the pulpit has a right to demand, or to expect, that every preacher will be a genius, any more than he has a right to demand that every one devoted to law, or medicine, or education, or journalism, shall be a genius. The fact is, the Ministry is fully on a level to-day with any other calling of educated men. There are qualities that have become the special idols of this generation, and without which no preacher especially can hope to pass current. I mean smartness, pungency, vivacity. But in these is not the greatest power of a great preacher. The main thing is, that he shall *be* what he asks others to *become*; and, if he be that, the really great qualities — depth, fervor, sincerity — will be likely to go with it; also that highest intellectual art, — the art of saying great things in plain words. Many there are who are growing weary of rhetoricians, fine talkers, pulpit gymnasts; many who feel that they have had already too much chaff and too little bread.

Preaching is God's ordinance: it has become too much man's contrivance. Unless I am greatly mistaken, we are now passing into a period of Church life when great words will not produce great effects, and men will crave the inner heat, rather than the outer sparkle of language. It has been well said, that "the day of flocking

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after great orators is not gone by, but the day of seeing through them is come." "The crackling thorns of fine speech" may arrest the crowd for a brief moment; but the only power that can hold them is that of him who, fired with the flame from God's altar, preaches simply, earnestly, —

"Those Christ-like ways which lead to peace.  
The hearts of men follow his word as leaves  
Troop to wind, or sheep draw after one  
Who knows the pasture."

3. But, again, the Ministry is blamed for its want of self-sacrifice and readiness to endure hardship. Certainly a Ministry without these would not be worth having. It would be a shell without the kernel, a pretence, a deceit, a sham. It would be as unlike the thing Christ instituted, as this earth is unlike heaven. It would be as an arm of power bereft of its main sinew. God would disown it. The Church would die under it. The world would despise it. The mere fact that it lives and works proves that it is not to-day altogether false to the law of its being. This charge, then, on the face of it, can be only partially true. How partially, can be known only by knowing what is going on every day in a thousand homes and parishes. I may not here undertake to lift the veil, and tell all that lies behind it, — what burdens cheerfully borne, what labors faithfully performed in storm and frost and summer's heat, what distresses and humiliations of poverty, what anxieties as to the fate of wife and children when voice and sight shall fail, what buffetings by vulgar wealth, what contradictions of the ungodly, what insolence and contumely from

coarse tongues and coarser hearts, what coldness and what Shylock exactions by the flock, what lonely days and uncheered toil ; and all confronted and endured by men whom a slight wounds like a blow, and an insult cuts like a knife ; and this, too, with a calm courage, an heroic patience, a life-long submission, which gives us martyrs for whom neither the Church nor the world offers a crown. True, darkly, sternly true, is all this of some of the Clergy. Of how many, I may not say. They may be, we may concede that they are, a minority, — a small minority, if our judges so insist. But, thank God, there are enough of them to preserve the honor and to exemplify the true genius and the lofty aims of the Christian Priesthood. Not all the Clergy are given over to easy living in this age of luxury, not all are self-seeking in this age of selfishness, not all have bowed the knee to Baal in this age of idolatries. Some think there is no self-sacrifice, no willingness to endure hardships, because a majority of the Clergy do not at once offer themselves for missionary work in heathen lands ; as though we had no heathen at home, to work among whom tries a man's nerve and endurance and self-forgetfulness as much as to work among Hindus and Chinese, Zulus and Patagonians.

Others, again, would not be convinced of the existence of these qualities of character, except they saw the Clergy in hair-shirts and feeding on locusts and wild honey ;

“ Making the dust their beds, the loneliest wastes  
Their dwelling, and the meanest things their meat ;  
Clad in no prouder garb than outcasts wear ;

Fed with no meats, save what the charitable  
 Give of their will ; sheltered by no more pomp  
 Than the dim cave lends, or the jungle bush.”<sup>1</sup>

But, on the other hand, is there no truth whatever in the charges? Alas! with shame be it said, our Ministry, as a whole, is not free from reproach. There is too much ground for blame in this regard. Let a call be given to some distant field, and how painfully familiar, how sadly prominent, are the questions: What is the salary? Is it near a railroad? How far is it from the city? Is there good society? Is there a parsonage? Is there any provision for six weeks' vacation? What is the custom about donations? Is the church-edifice well warmed in winter and properly ventilated in summer? Do the people object to repeating a good sermon within the year? Is there any malaria in the neighborhood? Are exchanges with brethren easily made? Are the vestry kind and considerate, and quite willing to give the rector his own way? Such questions, taken together and pressing for immediate answer, do not, it must be admitted, tend to recall either the temper or the work of the Apostolic Ministry. They imply very little inclination to forget self and do all for the glory of God. They have a very unheroic and worldly flavor. No strongholds of sin, no citadels of the Devil, will be carried by the men whose decision turns on the answer they get to such questions.

4. Again, the Ministry is blamed for a lack of boldness and independence in thought and action. Boldness and independence,—what is meant by these words?

<sup>1</sup> “The Light of Asia,” by Edwin Arnold.

All, I take it, would not agree in their definition. In one school they mean one thing, in another school quite a different thing. The Church has her own idea of these qualities, and of their limitations; and she has shown what it is by the leaders whom she has embalmed in her memory. St. Paul prayed for utterance, that he might speak boldly the message given him to deliver; and he did so speak when he withstood St. Peter to the face, and preached to the men of Athens, of Corinth, and of Ephesus. Athanasius was sufficiently bold and independent when he stood against the world, for the faith once delivered; so was Chrysostom when with words of fire he rebuked the vanities and vices of his flock, from the altar-steps of his cathedral; so were Ridley and Latimer when they assailed the false doctrine and ecclesiastical corruption of their day, and accepted the fires of Oxford as the penalty. So, in our own day, were Selwyn and Patteson, when they carried the word of life to the savages of New Zealand and Melanesia. So, too, was the fearless Grey in his vindication of the faith in South Africa. These men, and others like them, were bold in declaring what had been committed to them. They were regardless of all things that hindered them in doing so. But they were neither bold nor independent in the sense now so popular. They did not deem themselves superior to the system under which they worked. They did not invent new formulas of belief, nor recast the traditional moulds of teaching and of polity. There was about them none of the cheap glamour of what the world calls originality. They were not ambitious of founding new sects to perpetuate their

names, nor to overlay the old paths with new ones whose signboards should tell how they had hewn down the thick cedars of the early Councils, and bored through mountains of speculation. But nowadays no man can be bold, no man can be independent, who does not lay the axe at the root of venerable traditions, or cast overboard some portion of the cargo which, we have good reason to believe, God stored away in the ark of grace and salvation. Boldness has become recklessness, and independence rashness; both alike counting it a merit to scorn consequences. With us, the system is greater than the private judgment; the kingdom greater than any individual; the ancient creeds, than any man's speculation; universal consent, than any man's dissent; the old and well-worn liturgies, than any man's notion about an edifying worship. All this may be our misfortune, but certainly it is our characteristic. It cuts off many and much-coveted chances of intellectual fussiness and conceit, dries up many sources of excitement, narrows the arena of gladiatorial displays among theologians, and generally contracts the bounds of what passes for original thought. There are minds that cannot be happy under such conditions; that are at peace only when at war, and see no use for the intellect except in showing what fools our fathers were. There is a sense in which it is our strength to sit still, to accept what has been handed down, to stand fast in the old ways. If, for doing so, this generation will not think us sufficiently bold and independent, there is no help for it. There is a type of these qualities that we admire, and do what we can to embody. There is another that must be left



to others who walk not with us, and for whose development, I may add, neither earth nor heaven is large enough.

5. Again, we are blamed for allowing the Church and the world to be too much intermingled, and compromises of principle and practice to take root in our average life. This complaint is not from the world, for the world is flattered by our imitation of its ways; but from the Church's own heart. Her best thinking and purest living give voice to the censure; and we have no answer for it, save a *peccavi* and a *confiteor*. We have discipline enough for the Clergy, but next to none for the people. Here the fences are down, the lights are out, the watch is asleep. The only law is that of lawlessness, the only standard is what each chooses to accept. I may not enter upon the causes: I stop with the fact. God's Word has a great deal to say on the subject; so had the Church in her early days. From both we have gone adrift; and so far adrift, that even to recall the Scriptural or the primitive rule of the Christian life, is to bring upon one the epithets of purist, ascetic, sour censor of morals, stoic, Pharisee, hypocrite. And yet there are the old commands bedded and wedged into the Word of Inspiration:—

“Abstain from all appearance of evil.”<sup>1</sup>

“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.”<sup>2</sup>

“Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.”<sup>3</sup>

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2 Thess. v. 22.    <sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 33.    <sup>3</sup> Rom. xii. 2.

<sup>4</sup> First Epistle of St. John, ii. 15.

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“ Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers ; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness ? and what communion hath light with darkness ? ” <sup>1</sup>

“ Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord.” <sup>2</sup>

“ That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye are lights in the world.” <sup>3</sup>

And so on, almost without limit. There, too, are the Canons of the early Church, in keeping with these Scriptures. Both point to a gulf between the Church and the world, too deep and too broad to be crossed ; and yet our modern religion has bridged it, and multitudes cross and recross with an impunity which justifies in their minds a doubt whether or no there be any such gulf. Professedly we stand on a higher plane than that of the world. Baptism, Confirmation, the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, put us there. But somehow it melts down by easy stages into that of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Do I speak too strongly ? Recall the pleasures, the amusements, the occupations, the luxuries, the pomps of society, the vanities of fashion, the extravagances of wealth, the self-indulgence of the time. That is a sharp eye which can detect in any of these things a radical difference between the children of God and the children of the world. There have been some foolish and superficial attempts of believers at asserting their separateness from the world. Quakerism tried it with cut-away coats and broad-brimmed hats and neutral tints. Divers monastic orders, at sundry times, have

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. vi. 17.      <sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. vi. 14.      <sup>3</sup> Phil. ii. 15.

tried it with cowls and cords and unsandalled feet. Better such expedients than none at all. But the true distinction is grounded on feeling, conduct, character ; on voluntary abstinence, and simple silent conformity to a higher rule, a loftier tone of life. Now, if the rank and file are to be reclaimed from worldliness, their leaders must set the example. The Clergy, in this matter, must bring forth works meet for repentance, if we expect the people to do so. We are on a current which sets strongly toward a wiping-out of the boundaries between the sacred and the secular. A subtle pantheism is in the air, which by making God all things, and all things God, eliminates from all moral life the God of our worship, the God of the moral law : the God in Christ, who speaks through the Church, which is His Body ; through the Priesthood, which is His witness unto the ends of the earth ; and through the lives of Christians, which are ordained to be His living epistles unto men. According to this gospel, our houses and our sanctuaries, our counting-rooms and our altars, our every-day work and our acts of adoration, our indulgences and our denials, our politics and our religion, our dinners and our Eucharists, our sensual pleasures and our struggles of conscience, are all equally sacred and divine. This theory with some, this sentiment with others, has fastened like a cancer upon the vitals of our Christianity. It must be cut away with knife or burnt out with cantery, if we would save the power as well as the form of godliness.

6. The Ministry is charged with feeble and shallow methods in the cure of souls. It deals too much, it is said, with assemblies, and too little with individuals.

There is excess of preaching, but neglect of personal guidance. We exhort and admonish, but do not edify. There is much hewing of timber, and not much building. The sheep are folded, but are not known by name. Strictly pastoral duty has degenerated into bell-pulls, and card exchanges, and family chats on all subjects save the one for which the pastorate exists. The herding together of the young on the Lord's Day, under teachers who themselves need to be taught the elements of the faith, has taken the place of priestly guidance and authority in expounding the Word. All this is said, and who will deny that there is reason for saying it? How many souls need help that do not get it! How many are fighting temptations, every nerve of the conscience, every sinew of the will, tense with the agony of the strife, and yet with no hand from without to press home the Cross, and no voice to cry, "By this sign shalt thou conquer"! How many are plunged first into the shadows of doubt, and then into the darkness of despair, with no arm of strength at hand to unbar the shutters and let in the light! Never before were there so many minds in the Church in which the joints of faith were loosened; never before, so many afloat upon the unsteady and turbid sea of speculation; never before, so many inquirers, or so many in painful suspense. Sermons say too much or too little in such cases. The individual soul, in the deep separateness of its own personality, must be grappled with, and a rope thrown to it from the solid banks through which sweeps the current of passion or of doubt. And yet it is just at this time, and amid this want, that we are told by a distinguished authority

in the Church, that "the last thing which a thinking man will do in spiritual perplexity is to consult his clergyman; because he knows that his clergyman has never been *trained* to minister to a mind diseased; because he feels that he shall probably be snubbed for his doubts, and told that difficulties which are to him very real are no difficulties at all."<sup>1</sup> I state the case, and there leave it. Let those that have ears to hear, hear.

7. But, to take up another ground of censure, the Ministry is arraigned for its lack of enterprise and its feeble faculty of organization. The facts are before us, and there is no dispute about them. Let us look at them as they are, and profit by what they teach. In platform addresses, in Convention reports, and in congratulatory speeches, we now and then wax happy over our achievements, and make the most of what material we have for eulogy and mutual admiration. But such moods, however enjoyable, do not change the facts. It is a fact, that we have in this century octupled our Bishops and Clergy, our dioceses and parishes, our communicants and offerings. It is a fact, that we have in a yet greater ratio advanced in social influence and public prominence. But it is also a fact, that in the same time the population and resources of the country have multiplied, not eight, but eighteen fold. It is a fact, too, that we have had not only unexampled opportunities of growth, but equally unexampled incentives to make the most of them. In footing up the results, we may justly claim that our difficulties shall be duly considered. To recite these in detail would be a familiar story. It is

<sup>1</sup> Dean Alford's *Essays and Addresses*, p. 147.

enough to recall in a general way the extra weights imposed upon us by the logic of events. It is known that this Church had a bad start in the ecclesiastical race; that it began with a polity stifled and mutilated by the folly and neglect of the Mother Church; that it came out of the Revolution saddled with popular prejudices; that it took one generation to establish the fact that it had a right to exist on American soil, and to prove that its growth would not necessarily endanger the liberty of the Republic. It is known, too, that it required another generation to soften the rancorous hate of sectarian opposition to prelates and prayer-books. All this is known and admitted. And yet, let our hinderances and trials be rated as they may, who will claim that the growth, the power, the influence of the Church, are to-day what they ought to be? That would be an uncandid tongue that would portray our past as one of glory and might, or that would represent it as abounding in tokens of aggressive enterprise, or of strong and energetic methods for rallying the hearts and wills of God's people, or for turning to the best account sources of power always latent in Christ's Body. We find proofs enough of a quiet, orderly, conservative spirit, and of a due sense of corporate dignity; but, alas! how few of the consciousness of a great mission to the rising empires of this continent, or of a solemn and resolute purpose to achieve it! Certainly the retrospect is not inspiring. It is almost barren of kindling memories, and quite devoid of freshening, salient enthusiasms, that roll up against adverse winds and a darkened sky, flooding torpid souls and waste places with holy fire.

8. I have now to notice a group of faults imputed to the Ministry by the world of letters and science, by the world of politics, and by the world of social reform.

It is alleged by the first, that the Clergy, as a rule, are deficient in culture, and have too little sympathy with the aims or the methods or the results of science. The first thing to be settled about culture is its meaning. "The Greeks had their *παιδεία*. The Latins had their *humanitas*. The modern Germans have their *Bildung*." We attempt to express the same thing by "culture." Substantially it is the full and harmonious development of the whole man. But the great underlying question is, How is such development to be reached? Shall it be by taking the road travelled by the Greeks and Romans, or that so well worn by German feet in these later days? Shall Goethe be our guide, with his subtle intellectuality and sensuous æstheticism; or Matthew Arnold with his revamped Attic theory about "sweetness and light;" or Spencer and Huxley, who confine the means and ends of our development within the area of the phenomenal world? Or shall it be the Galilean Teacher who said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God," and, "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect"? It is, in fact, the old issue "between the grace that went forth from Jerusalem, and the gifts that radiated from Athens;" between man starting from and returning to himself, and man beginning with God and ending in God. If this notion of culture, now so strongly pushed, aims at the complete and proportionate evolution of all our faculties, so does the Christian religion. But as the object of religion is Godlike perfection, and the object of cul-

ture human perfection, so it may be argued that religion is greater and more all-embracing than culture, by so much as God is more so than man: if this be so, religion includes culture as the greater includes the less. In theory, certainly, religion legitimates and encourages the most exhaustive development of human nature on all sides and in all ways. To all natural, it superadds many supernatural incentives; it provides for the intellectual, the moral, and the æsthetic; it opens out and stimulates the highest, by holding in subjection the lowest. Spirit, soul, flesh; conscience, intellect, appetite; will, understanding, sensibility; holiness, thought, beauty: the right, the true, the graceful, — this is the gradation, starting with the highest, of what is in man approved by the best philosophy as well as by Christianity. The man struggling to become the perfect man in Christ Jesus must be trained according to this order, and all the time with a conscious reference to a type of completeness which as far transcends the loftiest ideal of culture as the infinite the finite, the eternal the measures of time. Theoretically, then, the Christian believer, and especially the Christian Priest, ought to aim, not only at the grace and symmetry of character which culture so habitually magnifies, but at other and higher tastes and faculties, which culture has neither the power, nor in its pagan and in many of its modern forms the desire, to confer.

But our critics, when forced to admit the superior breadth and elevation of the Christian ideal as compared with their own, turn upon us, and challenge us to show them the lives that verify the Christian theory. As



matter of fact, say they, what one-sided, angular, narrow, hard characters, are those of most religious people and of most Clergymen! There may be much piety, but there is little sweetness; much devotion, and but little grace and refinement; a loud clamor about light, and little of one very needful and lovely sort of light,—the light which brings into relief and glorifies the rounded fulness to be seen in the actual life of nature and in the ideal life of man. Scan, say they, the list of names which have been canonized; run over the roll of saints and worthies, scholars and preachers, priests and pastors, thinkers and leaders, nearest and dearest to the ecclesiastical mind; and point out one to be compared for fulness, completeness, symmetry, and grace, with Pericles of old Athens; or for geniality, refinement, and versatility, with the poet of Weimar. Of will-power, of earnestness and fervor, of deep convictions and noble aspirations, of self-denials and sacrifices, of heroic courage and undaunted purpose, they had all that mortals can have. But these qualities, because of the narrow, sharp lines on which they wrought, and of the things which they excluded or underrated, issued in deformity. To some of them, this life was a lean and shrivelled thing;

“A moan, a sigh, a sob, a storm, a strife.”

A world of Raphaels and Angelos would have been wasted on some of them; a world of Wordsworths and Tennysons, on others; and a world of Beethovens and Handels, on the rest. They lived so much in the other world, that they had little time and less inclination to

know much of this except its sin and sorrow. And yet, if there be that other world, it is no more God's world than this.

( Now, to all this there is a twofold answer. The Christian ideal is perfect; the ideal of culture, only an attempt, a vague guess, at the perfect. As is a man's ideal, so, on the whole, will be his life; at least, toward it will be the drift of his life. It is better to be on the road to the perfect, though standing afar off from it, than to struggle toward and finally realize an ideal that is as far beneath the perfect as the clouds are beneath the farthest sky. )

Again, the present limitations of our being render it impossible that one man can be complete in every thing. To choose one vocation is to turn away from other vocations. Success is possible only by concentration. Greatness was never won by scattered energies or divided purposes. To burn up the barriers that hedge in genius, its rays must focalize. Luther could not have been Tintoretto and Luther besides. Pusey could not have been Ruskin and yet be Pusey too. All gifts and faculties are not marshalled under any one will. There are many moulds of character, but no one character can fill them all. The symmetry and fulness so much glorified by culture are a dream, and the man who attempts them will ooze out into feebleness and defeat. This is as true of the clerical as of other callings. It has its own line, and to follow it many things must be put aside. And so the Clergy may not be artists, and yet be fond of art; may not be musicians, and yet be lovers of music; may not be votaries of literature, and

yet be alive to the best issues of literary genius ; may not be naturalists, and yet thrill with nature's sweetness and beauty ; may not be society-men, and yet be open to the charms and graces of genial fellowship. And so they generally are, because they are men of educated tastes and trained powers. If they be narrow, they are so only as all men are narrow who have a supreme object in life. If they be hard and angular, they are so only as intensity of aim interferes with the softness and roundness possible only to natures that bask in the sunshine and float with the current. In thus faulting the Clergy, I hold that this new gospel of culture, masked as it is in old pagan tastes and Athenian longings, is guilty of a silly impertinence. We may not be Goethes or Matthew Arnolds, but surely we are not "philistines" because God's priests and Christ's deputies.

But the Clergy are charged also with having too little sympathy with the progress of science. This is an old charge, and will be disposed of in few words. What passes for science, they may not always admire ; but over the genuine progress of science, none rejoice more than they. To say that they are not friendly to all true knowledge, is a foolish and wicked libel. The Clergy are nervous, it is said, over new discoveries, lest something turn up which will undermine the house they live in, and put an end to their occupation. On the contrary, if they have no special liking for much of the science of the day, it is for the best of reasons. They are offended, and justly so, at its meddling with things that do not and can not fall within its range, at its supercilious dogmatism, at its frequent substitution of imagination

for induction, of guesses for ascertained truth, at its rash and hasty generalizations, at its ever-changing front, and its ever-shifting testimony.<sup>1</sup> Why should we not be disgusted, when it tells us of effects which have no adequate cause, of wonderful adaptations which have no intelligent source ; of the reign of law, when what it calls laws can be so called only by courtesy, or by the jugglery of language ; of the eternity of matter, and

<sup>1</sup> A noteworthy example of this is the evolution theory. It is amazing, with what assurance the advocates of this theory presume upon the credulity of unscientific minds ; and it is still more so, to see how many educated minds are ready to accept as ascertained truth an unproven hypothesis. We are made to feel every day, that they are to be regarded as of a very slow turn of mind who prefer to wait for more light ; and yet here is some of the latest and most trustworthy testimony on the subject : At the recent annual meeting of the Victoria Philosophical Institute, held in London, it was reported, after careful analysis of the various theories of evolution, by Professor Stokes, F.R.S., Sir J. Bennett, vice-president, R.S., Professor Beale, F.R.S., and by others of equally high standing in the world of science, that as yet no scientific evidence had been met with giving countenance to the theory that man had been evolved from a lower order of animals ; that Professor Virchow had declared that there was a complete absence of any fossil type of a lower stage in the development of man ; and that any positive advance in the province of prehistoric anthropology had actually removed us farther from proof of such connection, — namely, with the rest of the animal kingdom. In this Professor Barrande, the great palæontologist, has concurred, declaring that in none of his investigations had he found any one fossil species develop into another. In fact, it would seem that no scientific man had yet discovered a link between man and the ape, between fish and frog, or between the vertebrate and the invertebrate animals. Further, there was no evidence of any species, fossil or other, losing its peculiar characteristics to acquire new ones belonging to other species: for instance, however similar the dog to the wolf, there was no connecting link ; and among extinct species the same was the case, — there was no gradual passage from one to another. Moreover, the first animals that existed on the earth were by no means to be considered as inferior or degraded.

the nothingness of spirit ; of moral liberty as a fiction of the brain or a delusion of the heart ; of life self-created out of death ; of organization produced by that which is incapable of organizing itself ; of no God save one that shall be the counterpart of ourselves, — the phenomenal reflection of a phenomenal universe ; of no truth save that of things as they appear ; of no obligation to believe any thing which cannot be proved by logical demonstration ? What wonder, I say, that they who are set apart by conviction and by formal ordination to widen out and deepen life by keeping it abreast of the infinite and everlasting, and to fill it with a sense of obligation and reverence toward a supreme Law-giver as well as toward law ; toward a God whom the heart can love and adore, as well as toward intellect and matter, — what wonder that such men should not be drawn into relations of friendly sympathy with such aims, such methods, such results ? It would be treason and cowardice to profess what it is impossible for them to feel. Let science rise to its true mission, stick to its own business, bear itself with becoming modesty in the presence of mysteries beyond its reach : let it make room for the Providence of a moral Governor, as well as for the fatalism of law ; for faith, as well as for demonstration ; for cumulative probability in the moral world, as well as for the logic of induction in its own world ; for will-force and spirit-power, as well as for mechanical and chemical energy ; for life as the parent, not the child, of material organization ; for the instincts and functions of human consciousness, as well as for cells and fossils and gases ; for sin, its penalties and

remedies, as well as for protoplasm; for religion, as well as for sociology; for man seeking after immortality, as well as for man seeking to conquer nature and turn it to the best practical account,—let it do these things, and so develop into a larger and nobler power than it now is, and it will find no more admiring and ardent friends than among the Clergy. This, briefly, is their position. There can be no other unless they renounce their vocation, and throw their birth-right to the winds.

But the Clergy have no sooner run the gauntlet of culture and science than they are confronted by that of political ethics. Their censors are as numerous as the interests which are influenced by their action. The nation, it is said, has a conscience, as well as the individual; and it is asserted that the Clergy have not dealt with it as faithfully as they ought, and hence its deterioration. It is not as honest and resolute as it once was; and they, it is charged, are largely responsible for the decline. The highest form of moral power is vested in them. They are commissioned to speak, and it is their business to speak with authority, not only on religion, but on morals; and for the reason that the two cannot be divorced either in the treatment of the individual or of the nation. If their claim be just, they have special gifts from God which are intended to make their pleading effective. It is for them, beyond all others, to discern right from wrong, and to give warning of the approach of evil. If there be special temptations, it is for them to show the people how to grapple with them. And if things go wrong, if the moral sense

of the people fall off in purity and vigor, if life grow corrupt, and iniquity multiply, and society drift into the downward path, on the Clergy must be laid the chief responsibility for such results. Now, it so happens, that, in the general belief, our life has of late years been changing for the worse; and if our fathers could see us, they would be not more astonished than ashamed at the extent of the change. True, the Clergy may plead that the State does not sanction their existence as an order, nor provide for their support, nor formally invite their co-operation. But, on the other hand, it is true also that they have full liberty to exercise such sway over the national will as their high moral authority ought to wield. They are none the less guides and conservators of the public conscience, because they are not paid functionaries of the State. Let this be granted, and let it be granted also that a scapegoat is needed to bear the sins of the people, the Ministry, I contend, do not deserve to be singled out for that purpose. They may not have done all they could to avert the moral disasters which have befallen us, but they are not mainly responsible for them. Where many causes have been at work to produce a certain result, it is illogical and unfair to say, that, if one of these causes had worked differently, the total result would have been radically different. It is undoubtedly true, that the great object of the Ministers of Christ in dealing with the nation is to implant righteousness, and to expel whatever opposes it; and yet laboring, as they do, in the midst of many forces which they can, at the best, only partially control, it were at once foolish and wrong to declare their work a failure,

and themselves false to their trust because they have not succeeded. If it is said that no land ever presented to the Church such opportunities for great and enduring conquests over the minds and hearts of men, it may be said also, and with equal truth, that no land ever threw obstacles so formidable in the way of such conquests. The sudden greatness and unprecedented prosperity of the nation have developed equally sudden and unprecedented temptations. The lust of wealth and the lust of power have been followed by ambitious luxury and the coarse greed of pleasure. Our very liberty of speech and action has spawned a brood of perils and vices peculiar to itself. In other times and in other lands, the idolatry of kings and oligarchies and aristocracies may have crippled, debased, and cursed the masses ; but we have found to our cost a worse danger, a more portentous vice, in the self-worship, the self-adulation, the proud self-sufficiency, of the people themselves. A self-idolizing democracy, tolerating no check save that of its own will or its own passion and caprice, involves in itself the worst evils that can threaten a nation. There is no tyranny so unreasonable, reckless, and exacting as the possible tyranny of such a power. It allows itself to be plundered by monopolies and corporations who begin as its creatures, and end as its masters. It delights in the flattery and tamely acquiesces in the corruption of the demagogues whom it has educated ; and, as for minorities who dare to oppose it, there is but one fate for them, — either to change their ground, and go with the current, or to submit to any spoliation of rights and property which the strong may choose to inflict upon the weak.



Theoretically our democracy magnifies the individual: practically it swallows him up in the multitude. There is a delusion in it which often flings a dark shadow on its path,—a delusion as to man's real nature; a delusion as to his willingness to do the right when he sees it, as to his intelligence being the measure of his morality, and as to the cleansing power of a purely mental development. Some of the results are before us,—a bright, sharp, scheming, ambitious, but morally irresolute life, swayed by convictions of expediency rather than of duty, and almost swamped in the worship of mammon, the coarsest and meanest idolatry under the sun; the social and political conscience spotted with gangrene; the nation's soul sagging toward lower standards; the decline of domestic purity going on side by side with the boasted safeguards of universal education. Now, these mischiefs and disasters are apparently part of the harvest being gathered from seed planted long since; and if they are, then no possible boldness, fidelity, or self-sacrifice on the part of the Clergy could hold them in check. It is idle for them to expose and rebuke vices and corruptions, unless they are free to expose and rebuke the tendencies and principles of government which produce them. It may be said that they are free to do so; but it must be added, that, if any of them are rash enough to use the freedom, they will encounter a storm of popular wrath which would drive them from any community in which they ministered. Finally, let it be declared once for all, that, so long as the Nation's organic law has no room for God, the Christian Priesthood cannot hope to make any very profound impression on

the Nation's conscience. Shall I be told that public opinion is omnipotent, and that the Clergy have as good a chance to shape that as any other class? I reply that public opinion, like the government and social life which it sways, is moulded by forces born of the system which they in turn irresistibly control. It cannot be lifted above its average sources, or be held amenable to the Christian standards which those sources formally disavow. Our politics have become a muddy stream, and the Church is told that she only befouls herself in her attempts to purify it. No, she must not meddle with statesmanship, must not discuss what belongs to Congresses and Legislatures, must hold her tongue except on the abstractions of political ethics, must stand aside and be grateful for the protection she enjoys at the hands of the Republic; and yet, when the evil day comes, and degeneracy sets in, she must meekly consent to be reprov'd for her silence and her unfaithfulness. Let the Clergy take their share — no more, no less — of the blame for what has come upon us; but let them protest, as they have a right to, against being singled out as the chief sinners, but for whose supineness and negligence our life would be more hopeful than it is.

But, again, the Ministry has been blamed for its apparent indifference to what are called the social problems of the age. Labor, as we hear, is in the midst of a determined struggle with capital. The poor are demanding that something shall be done to redress the inequality between themselves and the rich. Those who have nothing are insisting that those who have all shall consent to some equitable division of the wealth accu-

mulations of society. The landless demand a share of the land-ownership. Then there is the war of the masses with privileged monopolies and selfish corporations. And quite equal to any of these in the discussion and excitement it engenders is the unsolved question of what are called woman's rights. To these must be added the plans and methods proposed for the permanent amelioration of pauperized wretchedness, and the sufferings of the hundreds and sometimes thousands in many communities who are thrown out of employment by the fluctuations of industry and the encroachments of labor-saving inventions. Besides there are the vices of drunkenness, gambling, and licentiousness, which roll a never-ceasing tide of iniquity through the arteries of social life. It is a formidable list, certainly; and it is a formidable charge, too, that those who are the ordained servants of Christ, and therefore of humanity, are backward in their duty toward questions which are agitating our civilization to its centre. Time is not allowed for examining the attitude of the Ministry toward each of these problems. I can speak only in general terms.

Now, if we look into the matter carefully and candidly, it will be found, I believe, that, so far as the criticism has any color of truth, it relates rather to the *way*, than to the *spirit*, in which the Clergy work. Whatever their convictions, they cannot join trades-unions, or communistic societies, or other outside secular methods of agitation and reform. What they do must be done ordinarily within their own sphere, and by means not inconsistent with their own vocation; and for this they are often harshly, but unwisely, censured. As for their

aims and wishes, as for the spirit in which they work, it were nothing less than a cruel slander to say that these are not in accord with the hopes and designs of the best and truest advocates of reform. Does any man yearn to see removed from our human lot all needless and artificial inequalities, and the sufferings engendered by them? They yearn for it still more. Does any man strive for the things which shall give to humanity the unity and peace, the comfort and happiness, which it craves? They are ready to lift that striving to an agony which has in it too much of conscience and charity to allow any room for dreamy sentiment.

“So many woes they see in many lands,  
So many streaming eyes and wringing hands,” —

that they are habitually falling back for fresh inspirations of love and duty, upon One who said, as no other ever did or could say it, “Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Because of the unwillingness of the multitude to heed these words, the Clergy see, as few others do, why

“The sad world waiteth in its misery;  
The blind world stumbleth on its round of pain.”

By its constitution the Sacred Office is designed to exercise many functions, but eminently that of consolation; else it could not reflect the mind that was in Jesus Christ, or be the organ of the Eternal Comforter, the Holy Ghost. It is its special charge to know and to soften

“The aches of life, the stings of hate and loss,  
The fiery fever and the ague-shake,

The slow, dull sinking into withered age,  
The horrible dark death, and all the pangs  
That go before."


This is part of its very being, — pervades it as blood pervades the body; and to say that it has slight sympathy with man in his wrongs and griefs, or with all reasonable measures for his relief, is to say that it has neither a right nor a name to live. Is the mechanic pledged to his craft, the lawyer to the law, the physician to the healing art, the man of letters to literature? So in a still stronger, because more binding sense, is a Priest of the Son of God pledged to the healing of the sin-sick soul and the sin-cursed body. There can be no doubt, then, as to the spirit in which the Ministry must view all questions relating to the well-being of mankind. In a large sense, then, it must be true, as has been said, that whatever censure is visited upon the Clergy in this direction must refer to the *mode* rather than the *temper* of their work.

But in regard to the mode, — the best mode of dealing with the ills of life, — there must always be a radical difference of principle between the Christian Ministry and the world at large. As by its own wisdom the world knew not God, so by its own wisdom it knows not itself, nor the true basis on which to build its schemes of amelioration and reform. Now it pushes toward its favorite aim, and seeks to uproot inequalities of lot among its contending classes, by revolution and anarchy; and now it crowds forward to the same result by changes in the framework of civil government and of general society; and now, again, it presses into its service the

powers of literature and science, superadding the trained combinations of associations and unions. At one time it wields the arm of physical power, at another the energies of a public sentiment more or less moulded to its will; and then, again, it appeals to convictions of interest and expediency. But it finds a cold, hard heart to deal with, because it is its own heart. Itself incurably selfish, it vainly urges individual men to be and to do what they can be and do only when lifted to a higher plane, and by a power higher than themselves,—the power of love. So it comes to pass, that it agonizes from age to age, with baffled purpose and defeated energies. It seeks for unity, and finds discord; for equality, and finds inequality growing with the growth of the most advanced forms of society; for the elevation of the poor, and finds the gulf between them and the rich yawning deeper and deeper as civilization multiplies its resources and increases its wealth.<sup>1</sup> And so it will be, so long as the world relies upon itself. Its morality rises no higher than the doctrine, “Every man for himself;” and it is impossible to reach the coveted goal along this path. As well expect that water will run up hill, or that gravity will forget its own law.

<sup>1</sup> A recent very able American writer declares, that, “Taking Europe as a whole, and comparing the prices of labor with the cost of living,—food, clothing, and shelter,—it can be proved that the average European peasant of the fourteenth century, as also of the fifteenth, was better off relatively than the average European peasant of the nineteenth century.” A well-known English authority has put the matter somewhat differently, but with substantially the same conclusion: “The upper classes have more luxuries, and the lower classes more liberty; while, in regard to the substantial comforts of life, they are farther apart than they were three or four centuries ago. The greater the wealth of the nation as a whole, the greater the inequality between its upper and lower classes.”

The world has never seen but one enthusiasm for humanity that can cure its hurt; and that was an enthusiasm born not of the will of the flesh, not of letters or philosophy or industrial reforms or political expedients, but of the Spirit of God and the mission of his Eternal Son. It was the Gospel of Christ that first taught a man who is his neighbor, and how his neighbor should be treated. It was the Gospel of Christ that first undertook the reconstruction of society on the twofold basis of individual regeneration, and of the brotherhood of all men. It was the Gospel of Christ that first insisted that mere justice could not right the wrongs of mankind, that the world can never realize its dream of general happiness until it shall learn how to love mercy as well as to do justly. As the deputies and representatives of Him who first published these principles, and for the spread of which His Church was instituted, the Clergy are obliged to shape all their efforts for the amelioration of human life. They have no choice. Their own judgments and speculations have no place. This is their commission, and they must follow it or abandon it. But it so happens that experience demonstrates its wisdom, and leaves no reasonable doubt that it is the panacea to which the world must resort at last, or perish in its sin and sorrow. What charity and benevolence, what retreats for the poor, what hospitals for the sick, what mutual-benefit societies and homes and asylums and protectories, what stated and regular provisions for the relief of the suffering, — what of any or all these there are in our modern life, are directly or indirectly the fruits of that love of which our Lord gave the supreme example

in giving Himself for the salvation of all men. The Christian Priesthood is often roughly handled because it has not made the world better than it is. Would it not be well for its censors to inquire what the world would be to-day without it? The worst that can be said of it is, that it is like the sun in the short, dark days of winter, which, tempering but not preventing the frost, continues to shine, though not with sufficient intensity to pierce the clouded atmosphere that envelops the earth. There may be a chill in the air which searches the bones, and yet there is warmth enough to keep the blood in motion, and the seeds of life in the wintry soil. The Priesthood, because it is the Priesthood of Christ, can never satisfy the world. It is and it will be faulted, not so much because of what it fails to do, as because of the principles and methods to which it is bound to adhere. 

In conclusion, there are two general considerations on which it may be of use to dwell somewhat, because they are related to the topics that have been under review, and will serve to define yet more clearly the attitude of the Clergy toward some of the leading social and political tendencies in these closing years of the Century. The Clergy, if they know themselves, desire to be *en rapport* with the watchwords of the time. They are well enough schooled in history and in human nature to know that the ideals of every generation are embodied in the words and phrases oftenest upon the lips of the multitude. Their cries, their mottoes, their bannered inscriptions, whether amid the clash of arms, or the passionate conflicts of revolution, or the more peaceful strifes of current politics, tell, beyond all else, the



thoughts seething in their brains, the aims and resolves that gird up their wills. Liberty, equality, fraternity, progress, honor, reason, nature, science, country,—these are thrown out from the common heart, as the red cinders are thrown from the heated iron when drawn from the furnace. So far from being empty words, they are revelations of what lies deepest in the hearts and minds of the people. It is their weakness, that they leave out religion, and therefore are fated to move on a plane below that of the noblest powers which have been ordained of God to shape the life of man. It is not so much opposition to Christianity, as the matter-of-course way of ignoring it, in the attempted solution of the problems of the day, that constitutes the most melancholy feature of modern society. Whatever the masses think in their better moments, they act as though Christianity were of little consequence to them in their struggles to lift the burdens that oppress them. In the attempts to recast the framework of society and civil government, so as to check the encroachments of the favored few, and to protect the rights and liberties of the unfavored many, they seem to have concluded that they have little to expect from the Gospel of Christ. And yet no message ever fell upon the ear of man that did so much for the individual, as against all forms of organized power, as that same Gospel. If we go deeply enough into it, it has more to say about the rights and liberties of *man as man*, and does more to protect and extend them, than all the philosophies, all the systems of social and political ethics, that have figured in history. In reality, then, as, on the one side, the great

task of the Church, speaking through the Clergy, is to reconcile modern knowledge with the Gospel: so, on the other, it is her great task, speaking through the same instrumentality, to reconcile modern society with the Gospel; to explain and justify from the Christian standpoint the very watchwords which are so dear to the masses of men; to lift them into a nobler, larger meaning; to bind together and energize them as the motive powers of a progress which shall include the advancement and purification of souls, hearts, consciences, as well as of bodies and intellects. Liberty, equality, brotherhood, honor, reason, nature, country, individual development, rights, duties, — compare what these are upon the tongue of the rationalist, the socialist, the communist, the pattern reformer, or revolutionist of the modern type, with what they were upon the lips of Christ, or with what they are to-day as interpreted by a Gospel and a Church of average faithfulness. The words are the same, but how immeasurably greater the meanings and uses found in them by the latter than those discerned in them by the former! What is the freeman of the freest country to-day, compared with the freeman in Christ Jesus? or the votary of reason and nature in the noblest school of living thought, compared with the devout and intelligent disciple of the incarnate Logos? I have spoken of the representative watchwords of the time: they are significant as uttering the dominant popular impulses of the time. Now, as God is the fountain of all lawful activities and movements emanating in a secondary sense from the heart and brain of man, so God is the source of the power and generally of the

drift of these impulses. He is not more the author in outward nature of gravity, affinity, magnetism, electricity, than He is the author of the forces which sway humanity in all the normal spheres of its development. It is God who created them; it is man that by his ignorance and waywardness misinterprets and perverts them. Now, it is part of the mission of the Church of Christ to correct the errors, to remedy the evils, to check the rashness and violence, into which the multitude, in every age, fall by misdirecting an impetus that has its origin in man's eternal Maker and Father. In performing this mission, the necessity is laid upon it of affirming, from generation to generation, certain deep and momentous truths,—an office, but for which the favorite reforms, the wide-sweeping changes, the great revolutions, of which we read in history, and about which we are thinking to-day, would have ended, or will end, in barrenness and defeat; their fruit withered as by an invisible curse, or turning to ashes on the lips that would eat it.

None other foundation can any man lay than that is laid, even Jesus Christ. He is the only foundation, because He is God manifest in the flesh; and, because He is so, no man, no society of men, no nation, no systems of reform, no attempts at progress, can build safely or wisely, except as they build on this foundation. History is a continuous commentary on this law.

“Whosoever has sought glory, save through Him, has only succeeded in letting loose the deadly spirit of battle-strife upon the world.”

“Whosoever has sought to make wealth, apart from

Him, has only succeeded in brutalizing men, by turning immortal souls into a tortured, frenzied machine, toiling, blaspheming in its darkness."

"Whosoever has sought science without Him has been engulfed in the quicksands of false reasoning."

"Whosoever has clutched at power without Him has been plunged amidst revolutionary victories; and whosoever has sought liberty without Him has waked up, throttled by a military force which, while loading him with fetters, has derisively asserted, 'I am Liberty!'"

I add the following from the same source: "It is God Himself, it is our Lord Jesus Christ, who wills the growing freedom of all men of all nations in justice and truth, and that with a will which becomes ever stronger as the world goes on. Unquestionably the evil of our day perverts all Heaven-sent movement in a hundred ways; but we must resist the perversion, not the movement itself. And if any one thing is certain, it is that we shall never overcome that perversion save by means of the very movement itself, and of its first principle, which is God; even as St. Paul did not attempt to cast down the shrines of idols, save by setting up among them the True God, hidden and unknown."<sup>1</sup>

The attitude of the Clergy is more or less determined by a view of the evil that is in the world, which many thinkers, and nearly all the existing schools of reformers and humanitarians, refuse to accept. With the latter, the injustice and disorder that have existed from the beginning are simply an accident, a disease of the skin or at most of the blood, a discord occasioned by some

<sup>1</sup> Henri Perreyve, pp. 136-141.

chance mal-adjustment of the strings of the instrument. But if the evil that confronts us be only an accident, a disease, a discord, the removal of it is feasible, and it is only a question of time and of improved conditions and arrangements of human life. It will be accomplished by and by, through the united efforts of governments and peoples. Social progress tends toward this result, and proposes it as its grand aim. Every improvement and advance of the age, every new movement of thought, every broken and discredited tradition of the past, every upheaval of existing forms of civil polity, are hailed as symptoms of approach to it. Saturated with sentimental idealism, this tone of thought fondles this material world, and expects perfection to issue out of it. Rousseau, the first great master of this school, at the close of the last century laid the foundations on which many a passionate dreamer has since built superstructures of hay, straw, and stubble. He began with a belief in the absolute purity of human nature. In his view, man's original tendencies are all good, and the evils of society are nothing more than the results of bad systems of education. From the start, adverse circumstances, in no way inherent in the natural order of things, thwart the noble aspirations of the human heart. If there be crooked growths, or alien and discordant notes, it is an enemy's hand that has done it, and an enemy, too, which man on his own proper plane is able to deal with. And so, consistently with his theory, Rousseau invented a scheme of human training, run out into elaborate detail, which provides a remedy for the evils by the removal of the bad systems. The

first thing to be done, therefore, was to shut out the influence of these systems upon the pupil's mind. There was to be no interference by established forms of conduct, opinions, creeds. No bias either way was to be allowed. There was to be an absolutely fair start in the race. Nature was to have free course, and to bring out its originally good tendencies without let or hindrance, and so to develop its perfect proportions, and consummate its designed growth. This rose-colored conception of human nature did not have long to wait for its translation into a chapter of terrible realities. It was practically formulated and applied by the first French Revolution, whose lurid glare fell like the hue of a wide-wasting plague on the civilized world. No one needs to be reminded of the silly, extravagant expectations, or of the wild fanatical cries of that movement, or of its dreams of the grandeur of human benevolence, the adorable majesty of human reason, and the near advent of an era of social perfection; nor need it be told, how, having escaped the nightmare of the old doctrine of human corruption, the age rose indefinitely in its self-estimation, as well as in its belief that the time had at last come when the possibilities of human nature were to be vindicated, and one scheme of universal love was to embrace all mankind, as one people and under one law,—divisions of race, class, interest, language, all swept away into the sublime amalgam concocted by the illustrious Swiss dreamer.

But if this side of the story need not be recited in detail, neither need the other. The common memory of the world shudders even yet at the horrible ferocity

that accompanied and consummated this sentimental outburst. The flame once started burnt down to the root, and kept on burning until it made it quite clear at the bar of reason, that the ferocity and the sentimentalism were the joint, inseparable progeny of the self-same error. As has been well said, "That which keeps men patient under the evils of this present state of things is the idea of their necessity, — the notion, indistinct, but still real in their minds, that injustice and disorder are fundamental in this visible system. That idea removed, all evil, civil and economical, becomes so much gratuitous and superfluous wrong; and the apparent authors of it, so many monsters of cruelty, and wanton tyrants, delighting in inflicting evil for its own sake. Retaliation to any extent upon such appeared simple justice, and the same theory which produced extravagant expectations produced horrible anger at the facts."

Nearly a century has elapsed since this remarkable experience occurred; and yet there are among us unmistakable evidences, that, while all mankind revolted at the consequences of Rousseau's conception of human nature, and of the evil that is in the world, a vast number have clung to the conception itself. Various as are, to-day, the philosophical and humanitarian schools of reform, and diverse as may be their special tenets, that same conception in one form or another is the common root of them all. The "accident," the "disease," the "discord" theory of evil, and with it the theory of the perfectibility of human nature latent in its own consciousness, and self-sufficing in its own power of self-evolution, underlies them all. Without dwelling upon the more mod-

erate and reserved of these schools, which have not yet developed quite far enough to break down and revoke the old *concordat* with Christianity as a recognized and helpful auxiliary, it is enough, perhaps, to show how the two most advanced ones are teaching and working out the same *πρωτον πσευδος* that brought upon France the terrors of that stupendous frenzy of a century ago. Modern society is, no doubt, too wise to repeat the frenzy, though it may not altogether escape the fever that precedes and follows it. The socialism of the time embodies what are known as the advanced ideas relating to the reconstruction of society on what is claimed to be a more equitable basis. It presents itself in two forms, — communistic and anti-communistic; the former being vastly more radical and visionary, and therefore more dangerous.

Communistic socialism has begun to figure very prominently as well in the New as in the Old World. There is no longer any mystery or doubt in regard to its characteristic teachings and plans. It advocates the absorption of the individual in the community, the citizen in the state. It declares the individual as such to have no rights, and the community to possess all rights. The state directs and determines all things, — what every man must do and leave undone, the number and character of employments and industries. It is to own every thing, — lands, houses, factories, banks, railways, vessels. Private property, private business, is to cease; and if these cease, the present motives to labor and to save also cease to operate. Under such a *régime*, there will be neither the ability nor the desire to better one's condition. The



individual man is of no account except as he is tributary to the organized whole. Minorities vanish before the power of majorities. There is no such thing in the heart or the life of man as sin, and so there is no need of atonement and regeneration. What we call sin is only an unfortunate accident, a curable disease, a short-lived discord. The trouble that is in the world is created by inequality of social condition. Level down the hills and valleys, and only a smooth even surface remains, over which every man can travel with equal ease. Break down the partition-walls, and Paradise rises into glory and happiness as a matter of course. For the present this gospel is only preached; but when its disciples become sufficiently numerous, the preaching is to be followed by an armed and violent propagandism. Equality is to be enforced upon each generation as it takes its place on the stage. Under such a system, says a late writer, "We need no pity, only an equal chance. Humanity is sufficient unto itself, involving both Providence and Grace. There are no families any more, not even a family, but only a herd. Human brotherhood is cant and nonsense where no child calls any man father on earth, and there is no Father in heaven. We are not brothers, only companions,—oarsmen together in the galley, oxen together in the furrow. We have no favors to ask of anybody. All we want is wages for our work. As for work, organization takes care of that, both to find it for us, and to keep us at it. There will be no more play, and there will be no more heroism. Moral character is of no account, so long as the work goes on. Genius is of no account, where the brightest must fare

no better than the dullest. Competition is the name of a lost art. The arts are all lost. Coarser production grows more coarse. Production declines; every thing declines. The alarm is sounded. We are going to ruin; we must all of us work more, work better. Who shall make us work more and better? One another. And so our Paradise bristles with bayonets. So the circle is completed, the evolution ends. The animal began it; the animal man, made tenfold more a beast, finishes it."

Comment is needless. It is too monstrous for logic, too abhorrent for conscience to touch; and yet just this is one of the voices of modern social science. Between the lines we see peering out the features of Rousseau's face, only a little enlarged and distorted. He said, "Human nature will be all right if you will only let it;" and this is one of the schemes for letting it unfold its inherent purity and loveliness.

Let us now turn to the other scheme,—anti-communistic socialism. The former painted its own portrait amid the horrors that befell Paris in 1871. The latter is doing the same thing under the guidance of the positive philosophy of Comte, only with more sober and subdued colors. According to this, Communism pure and simple is an exploded heresy, and its views about property, the individual, and the state, radically wrong. Frenchmen may speak of it in this way, because they had a taste of it which they will not be likely to forget. But as matter of fact, heresy though it be, it certainly is not an exploded one. Italy, Germany, Russia, would rejoice to-day to be assured that it is so. Even this

country would be glad to know that it has run its career. A system which counts its adherents by the hundreds of thousands, and prints a score of widely circulated journals in half a dozen languages, and employs a small army of emissaries to stir up strife and bitterness among the laboring classes, can hardly be said to be obsolete. The type of socialism which assumes to have supplanted it is undoubtedly far less radical and revolutionary in its attitude toward society and the state, but scarcely less so in its attitude toward Christianity and the remedies which Christianity offers for the ills of mankind. It is essentially nothing more than the current materialism of the time, embodied in a scheme of social reform. It exalts the individual, magnifies his rights, respects private property, narrows rather than enlarges the sphere of state-power, relies but little on legislation as an instrument of amelioration, and a great deal upon public opinion, glorifies the sentiment of human brotherhood, and depends for what is best in the future upon the increasing power of love and benevolence between man and man. If this be true, it might be thought, that, having adopted practically the great central thesis of Christianity, it would have some word of reverence and good-will for the system from which it has borrowed all in itself that challenges sympathy or respect. But on the contrary, it is, if possible, more bitterly hostile to Christianity than the most bald and blatant Communism. It contents itself with the morality of Christianity, while boldly rejecting all the fundamental principles on which that morality is grounded. It uses the sentiment of religion, but spurns religion itself. It declares theology

to be an impossible science in the future, and a melancholy failure in the past. The Church has exhausted its ethical life in two weak and impertinent messages to man, — alms-giving to the rich, and resignation to the poor. In a single sentence it outlines its view of the final era: "Labor shall take the place of war, science of theology, and humanity of God."

Now, to the full extent that these and similar notions, however modified or held in reserve, enter into the so-called reform movements of the age, or inspire the masses in their disorderly, ever-shifting schemes of social amelioration, it is impossible for the Clergy to do otherwise than oppose them, and, by opposing, to incur sneering or angry imputations of coldness and indifference toward what some have come to regard as the noblest outcome of the modern spirit. Their answer to such allegations can be stated in few words. The truth of it must be left to time to determine.

Injustice, disorder, social inequality, and many of the evils arising from them, have such a hold on this visible order of things, as to forbid our treating them as accidents, or as any thing else than part and parcel of this world, and therefore to last as long as the world itself lasts. If they are so, then they cannot be removed by schemes devised in the same spirit in which reforms in finance, or commerce, or jurisprudence, or police are devised: we must drop the over-sanguine view, for a sober and matter-of-fact one, and, by doing so, renounce delusive futures and imaginary probabilities. Men's expectations must be measured by their experience, not by their desires; and they must be taught to be just

before they are generous, to be wise before they are prophetic. The Gospel condemns sentimentalism, and rebukes a luxurious and carnal faith that spends its strength in fondling and caressing human nature; and they who speak for the Gospel are false to their office and their trust if they fear or fail to say so. The bad tree brings forth bad fruit. It is no use to try to make the fruit better until the tree itself has been purged of its vicious sap. Personal character is the crown of life, the supreme fruitage of all that man is and does. It is the delusion of the time, that character is the product of social conditions. It is so in part; but there is another and higher part which is the product of man himself. Equalize absolutely all external conditions, but this will not equalize character. Good characters will still emerge from bad conditions, and bad characters from good ones. Poverty, it is said, is a great temptation to dishonesty. Sometimes it is, but not as a rule; for, to say the least, the rich steal, in one way or another, quite as often as the poor. It is the old question of will on the one side, and circumstances on the other. And, in every generation, the instinct, if not the reasoning of mankind, has settled it in favor of the former; so settled it, that no man has been accounted truly strong and great whose personality has not triumphed over adverse conditions.

Again, as part of the reply of the Clergy to their accusers, it may be laid down as a fact approved by experience, and not disproved by any philosophy of life, — far less by the latest one, called *positive* because claiming to deal *only* with facts, — that inequality of

condition, the scape-goat on which the most popular schemes of reform would lay the sin and sorrow of the time, is only in part *avoidable*, only in part *deplorable*. It has its advantages, as well as its evils. It is wedged into the social framework by the power that made that framework. It is as much a feature of society, as eyes and ears, arms and legs, are organic parts of the body. Some of it results from inequality of natural endowment; some of it from inevitable casualties, and is, therefore, Providential; some of it is the sad heritage handed on by a vicious, idle, diseased parentage. Some of it, again, is produced by industrial, commercial, monetary fluctuations; and quite as much, if not more, by the vices, extravagances, and caprices of men themselves. Exactly how much is curable, and exactly how much must be accepted and endured as being incurable, it is impossible to tell. But so much of it as is curable, Christianity, unless faithlessly represented, is always ready to help cure. So much of it as the Gospel declares to be needless and oppressive, the Clergy are bound to do what they can to remove. And it is my belief, that, as an Order, they are loyal to this obligation; and that this loyalty is proved by what they preach, and by what they do, in vast numbers of individual cases, to lift up the fallen, to encourage the hopeless, to relieve the distressed. If they fail to walk arm-in-arm with so-called reformers, or decline to carry the banners of social doctrinaires, or to play the part of advocates and orators on the platform in behalf of schemes that propose to clean only the outside of the platter, to wash bodies without washing the filthy souls which they cover, or

to strike down all inequalities of life as so many mortal enemies to the well-being of man, or to go to the very verge of a violation of natural instinct and natural law in abolishing differences of function, right, privilege, education, service, between the sexes, — if the Clergy do this, it is because they refuse to trifle with the sacredness of their commission, with the dignity of God's truth, with the honor and consistency of the Church of Christ, and with the rational hopes and aspirations of the souls given into their charge.

If now we survey the whole field of fact, suggestion, and inference, over which we have travelled ; if we make due allowance for what must be admitted, and for what may be doubted or denied, — we are brought, I think, substantially to this conclusion : viz., —

(1) That in some relations to modern life, and in some of the traditional and ordinary means and modes of work, the influence of the Christian Ministry has declined ;

(2) That in others it has been seriously hindered or sadly perverted ;

(3) That in none has it been of such range and power as to fill out the ideal of the Sacred Office, whether we have regard to the very definite one contained in the Holy Scriptures, or the less lofty and severe and more general one floating in the traditions and hopes of the people of God.

But, though the conclusion thus broadly outlined be granted, it will be seen, after due reflection, that it does not charge the Ministry of the present generation with any unusual betrayal of trust, or unusual feebleness in

the exercise of its gifts : but simply with that measure of fault which commonly attaches to human agency when wielding Divine powers,—the fault of yielding too easily to adverse forces, and of failing to seize at the critical hour great opportunities for service to the Kingdom of Christ ; the fault of not studying and understanding the signs of the times, so as wisely and promptly to adapt what is mutable in the polity, worship, and practical methods of the Church, to the ever-changing conditions of individual and social life ; and, finally, the fault of coming short of the highest attainments in Christian knowledge and the noblest motives of Christian duty.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “ It is curious to see how complaints have been made, in all ages, of remissness in supporting the faith, of negligence in the cure of souls, of degeneracy from primitive times. S. Hildebert, in addressing the Clergy of Angers or Tours ; S. Fulbert, in his Diocesan Synods of Chartres ; S. Norbert, preaching before the Priests of Magdeburg ; S. Anselm, in Normandy and at Canterbury ; S. Arnoule at Soissons ; S. Frederick at Utrecht, — all bear witness to the same thing.” — REV. J. M. NEALE: *Mediæval Preachers*, Introduction, p. 74.



## LECTURE II.

### THE CAUSES THAT HAVE HINDERED OR IMPAIRED THE INFLUENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

HAVING set forth, in the preceding Lecture, the present status of the Priesthood, as estimated by the current criticism of the day, I now proceed to consider the causes that have hindered or impaired its influence in our time. Some of these causes have already been alluded to when examining the faults imputed to the Priesthood by the popular judgment. I begin now with that which lies deepest, and reaches farthest. Nothing is so much opposed by what passes for “the modern spirit” as that one thing which the Priesthood chiefly represents, — Christianity as a supernatural force working through the Church continuously in history.<sup>1</sup> The ground as-

<sup>1</sup> The loose, unintelligent way in which the term “supernatural” has been used has helped to give currency to not a few of the errors of modern popular infidelity. It has a definite sense, and when employed by the teachers and apologists of Christianity should be used in that sense. It is, however, often associated with the ghostly and the marvellous; with apparitions and wonders belonging to the category of vulgar superstitions, or to the jugglery and legerdemain of necromancy and spiritualism; or with actions of divine agents which could not be explained, or reduced to any system. The scepticism of our time has traded largely on the misleading, and to thoughtful minds offensive, use of the word.

Briefly, the supernatural, whether used religiously or philosophically, and understood in the broadest sense, expresses any force which *acts on*

sumed is so sweeping and radical, that all minor questions affecting special claims and prerogatives of the Priesthood drop out of sight. The enmity that assails

*the chain of cause and effect in nature from without the chain*, whether it be the will of man, or angel, or God. *Christian supernaturalism* signifies that God is acting from without on the lines of cause and effect in our fallen world, and in our disordered humanity, to produce what, by no mere laws of nature, will ever come to pass: i.e., "as a power of *regeneration* and *new creation*, working to repair the hurt which the laws of nature, by their penal action, would otherwise perpetuate."

To hear some of our wise men (as the world accounts wisdom) talk, one would be forced to regard Christianity as not merely a superfluity, but an impertinence in the universe of souls; and this simply because it comes to quicken and to purify humanity by powers which it were indeed an impertinence to look for in nature. When shall we have a science of our world large enough to make room for the real system of God, in its two grand divisions of the natural and the supernatural, — the empire of necessary law, and the empire of will and liberty, — acting and re-acting one upon the other under His direction, just as easily and certainly as one property of matter acts upon another? If ever there be such a science, it will allow for, if it does not actively teach, two methods of arriving at truth, — the one assuring the understanding by demonstrative certainty; the other, the method of faith, which verifies the higher truths of religion by the heart, and not by the notions of the head. Such a science, moreover, will recognize the great underlying fact which Christianity presupposes, and, as it were, repeats in every exercise of its redemptive power; viz., that as Christ the Lord "is before all things, and in Him all things consist," or stand together, so His Mediatorial work was "not an afterthought, but a forethought of God," — a plan formed anterior "to the foundation of the world." As a profound thinker has remarked with singular clearness and force, —

"Instead of coming into the world, as being no part of the system, or to interrupt and violate the system of things, they all *consist*, come together into system, in Christ, as the centre of unity and the head of the universal plan. The world was made to include Christianity; under that, becomes a proper and complete frame of order; to that, crystallizes in all its appointments, events, and experiences; in that, has the design, or final cause, revealed, by which all its distributions, laws, and historic changes are determined and systematized."

the whole makes itself felt in every part. Men will be influenced by the Priesthood only as they accept its authority to teach and guide, and are convinced of the reality of its gifts and powers. To those who reject its claims, it is not merely an idle, or a useless, or a dead function, but an imposture. It is either God's ordinance or man's device. There is no middle ground of partial good and partial evil. Now, the Christian Priesthood plants itself in all essential regards absolutely within the domain of the supernatural. It sets forth a supernatural Head and a supernatural Kingdom. It announces supernatural gifts and sanctions. It offers a supernatural life to the individual, and affirms a supernatural life in the Church. It works upon nature, but with motives, instruments, and results that transcend nature. Certainly, such a power will tell upon men only as they trust its authority and capacity to do what it professes.

Now, as matter of fact, it is largely hindered and often nullified because it demands, from those on whom it works, a faith which exists only partially in some cases, and in many others not at all. There is an open unbelief, that simply shuts its ears, and refuses to hear; and there is a secret distrust, that, in the minds that cherish it, paralyzes the word and work of the Priesthood. This is at once the most and the least religious of generations. It is the most so if judged by its interest in the discussion of religious questions, and the least so if judged by its actual reception of the positive teachings of religion. What faith there is, outside the circle of earnest believers, exists in all possible stages of decay. There is the suspense of faith, the eclipse of

faith, the atrophy of faith. Starting with the faith that hangs dreamily on the edges of Christianity, too timid to let go, and yet too weak to hold fast, we have all varieties and stages of repudiation of the supernatural, down to that which accepts the final thesis of the pagan rationalism of the Greek Sophists.<sup>1</sup> This temper of the time envelops us like an atmosphere. If we take up the public journals, it confronts us there in current notices of men and things, in criticisms of books and periodicals, in discussions of political and social questions, in anti-Christian views of marriage and divorce, and consequently of crimes against the purity of domestic life and

<sup>1</sup> Justin Martyr says of the Sophists of his time, "They seek to convince us that the Divinity extends his care to the great whole, and to the several kinds, but not to me or to you, not to men as individuals. Hence it is useless to pray to him, for every thing occurs according to the unchangeable law of an endless cycle." (NEANDER, vol. i. p. 9) There could not be a better statement of the fundamental idea of that numerous class of minds to-day who flavor their speech with some of the familiar terms of a supernatural faith, and yet deny in detail every principle of such a faith. They tell us of a religion which is to prove the solvent and absorbent of all other religions, — a religion universal, philosophic, scientific, content to dwell and to do its work within the domain of nature; a religion without miracle, or incarnation, or resurrection, or new birth, or new creation, or new heavens and new earth, but with certain sublime sentiments of love, brotherhood, and worship; reciting the Orphic hymns, the Sibylline verses, and the Sermon on the Mount with equal veneration; abandoning prayer, except as a passionate utterance of the soul toward the unknown and unknowable, or as a means of keeping before the soul a grand ideal, itself but a product and an idol of the soul; recognizing no Providence that knows any thing of individuals, or cares for them save as it cares for all being in its totality and through changeless laws which grind on as so many soulless wheels of a soulless machine. Justin Martyr met the same sort of thinking in his day. The type has not changed. The religion of the pagan Sophists is the religion of the Huxleys and Tyndalls of to-day.

the sacredness of home sympathies and obligations. But above all does it confront us in their mode of handling whatever relates to the Faith, Order, and Worship of the Church; to the mysteries and miracles of Religion; to the Christian doctrine of Prayer, of Divine Providence, of the retribution of sin, and of the Revelation of God's will. And then, if we examine the various schools of fiction for the people, or the sensuous poetry intended for the delectation of the select few, or many of the widely circulated manuals of the sciences of mind and matter, sadly abundant evidence will be found of the pervading influence of this tone of thought. It is not so noticeable in the older men and women of the time, as in the young of both sexes,—a fact which plainly discovers the drift of the reigning systems of education. Now, in more ways than I can stop to mention, this state of feeling, this style of culture, this bias of character, are hostile, habitually and often bitterly so, to the work of the Ministry.

But, disastrous to the normal influence of the Ministry as this may have been, it has hardly been more so than certain unscriptural and unchurchly notions widely prevalent among large bodies of Christian believers. I shall not attempt to trace the origin and history of these notions, nor to point out their logical connection with the systems of religious life and thought with which they are almost universally associated. It is enough, perhaps, to say that they are part of the unfortunate legacy from sixteenth-century extremes, and have their common root in a theory of Christianity which makes much of it as a force, and little of it as an institution; which

magnifies the life of the individual, at the expense of the life of the Body ; which, in cases of doubt, esteems the verdict of each member of the Body as of equal, if not superior, value to the verdict of the whole Body ; and which, in effect, makes each member, in the last resort, practically independent, not merely of the governing authority, but, what is much more serious, of the life-giving and life-feeding offices of the Body. Under this theory, there is and there can be no proper Church life. What seems such is only the nerveless and diluted product of modes of Christian association, which, lacking all continuous, corporate, historical life, fluctuate with the circumstances of each generation. It is the inevitable result of this view, to cleave Christianity in twain, and then to array the parts which are alike divine in destructive antagonism. Now, there have been some theories of religion which have been saved from their final consequences, held midway in their course of development, by moral or intellectual instincts which work on in a region too deep to be reached by the subtleties of schools, or the narrownesses and anarchies of sects, or the visionary guesses of speculative philosophy. Such has not been true of this theory. The liberties of modern life have given it full scope, while special causes have been at work to stimulate its growth, and tempt it to push on to the last consequences of its principles. Of all the Christian Bodies in which this theory has prevailed, there is not one, whatever may be its piety and zeal, which does not exhibit evident symptoms of disintegration. It is not, however, effects in this direction that it falls within my purpose to notice ; but, rather, those

which detract from the dignity, assail the authority, and undermine the influence, of the Priesthood.

There are three characteristic fruits of the general view to which I have alluded. They are separable in thought, but ordinarily go together in practice. The mind that holds one will be apt to hold all. Theologically considered, they are only different phases of the same fundamental idea.

1. It is held, that, as Christianity saves the race by saving the individuals of which the race is composed, therefore its virtue is chiefly exhibited in a series of individual redemptions; the completeness of each being promoted by contact with the ministrations of the Church, though not necessarily prevented or utterly defeated by the absence of such ministrations. Church-membership is expedient, not essential. The Church has nothing to offer the soul, which the soul may not secure in some other way. The Sacraments are witness and seals of something already done, or to be done in the future. Baptism certifies the pious resolution, publishes and records the solemn pledge of the individual; but of itself and in itself as Christ's ordinance conveys no positive gift or blessing from Him. The Sacrament of His Body and Blood is simply a memorial which appeals through imagination and memory, and the moral sensibilities, to the higher spiritual affections. It is neither the channel through which life-giving grace flows into the soul from without, nor the pledge to assure the soul of any actual indwelling presence of its Lord. Neither of these two Sacraments, nor any nor all means of grace, do any thing which faith and repentance could not do without them.

2. But as a corollary from this, the notion prevails widely in the popular religion of our time, that the soul has no wants which may not be satisfied by its immediate personal communion with God; consequently, that the Ministry in no way, except figuratively, mediates or stands officially between God and the soul; that all ministerial acts are merely supplementary to what each soul can do for itself, and therefore are to be regarded as a convenience, a help, a means of edification, but in no respect essential to the soul's health and salvation. Under this view, no one need be troubled about questions as to what constitutes valid Sacraments, or valid ministrations of any kind. They are among the accidents of a life which may be benefited by, but is not dependent on them.<sup>1</sup>

3. But all who accept this definition, or one substantially like it, of the soul's relation to Christ and His Church, fall inevitably into low views as to the source and nature of the authority of the Sacred Office of the Priesthood. They are quite consistent in treating as of secondary importance, or with absolute indifference, the origin of its commission, or the means of transmitting it from age to age. Very naturally they entertain no

<sup>1</sup> "When a man has risen from his lower nature, so that he sees God face to face; when, by invisible truths, he learns to love God and man, — it makes no difference to him whether he observes this and that custom or ordinance, or not. He is not affected by baptism one way or the other. He may take it, or he may neglect it. He may partake of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, or he may go without it. . . . In regard to all outside things pertaining to religion, and to churches, and to the whole economy of ordinances and doctrines, you may have them if you can make any thing out of them, and if you do not want them you may go without them." — *Plymouth Pulpit*, sermon, "The Liberty of the Gospel," vol. vi. No. 2.



higher idea of Ordination than as a formal recognition by the people or by their Ministers of a call already complete in its essentials, and of certain personal gifts and acquirements which qualify for the exercise of the Holy Office. To such minds, it savors of—if it is not really—a superstitious fiction, to speak of Ordination as Christ's own act, performed through His accredited deputies, and conveying the gift of the Holy Ghost with all its heavenly retinue of priestly, prophetic, and kingly graces,—the gift without which no man, whatever his learning, or genius, or piety, or fervor, may “take this honor unto himself.” If the Christian Ministry has witnessed a decline of late years in its official influence and in popular regard; if it has, as some contend, suffered in the common judgment of the people even unto occasional degradation and contempt,—we need not go beyond such opinions and such teachings for the cause which has produced results so lamentable to religion, and so disastrous to the work of those who, as an Apostle declares, are to be so accounted “as the Ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.”

Encompassed as we are, in these times, by errors so hurtful to the moral sway of the Priesthood, it is well that we not only recall, but that we be doubly persuaded of the fact, that the primitive and traditional teaching of the Church, even in its most positive form, goes no farther than is necessary to protect from decay the powers of the Holy Office, and to save from general disesteem its ordinary functions. That teaching, sharply cut in its outline and firmly grasped in its substance, is alike needful to the people of God and to the Clergy themselves. As for

the people, it tells them these plain and salutary truths. "What can be more evident than that we cannot be obliged in conscience to own any for our *spiritual governors*, and pay them suitable regards of obedience and submission, if they have not our Lord's commission to *govern* us? Whosoever pretends to act as a magistrate in any temporal kingdom, without the king's commission, is reckoned a *usurper*. If the standing of all other societies requires that subordinate governors should have authentic commissions from the *supreme head*, how much more must the standing of the Church require it? Church governors are God's representatives; they preach in His name; they make covenants, and append seals to them, in His name; in His name they receive into and thrust out of the Communion of His Church. In a word, in His name they must do *every thing*, if they would do it *warrantably*. But how can they do any thing in His name? how can they represent him any manner of way? how can they in any sense be called His ambassadors, His proxies, His vicegerents, — without His commission?"<sup>1</sup> But, if this commission be so necessary, does it not seem equally so that there should be in the Church some prescribed and authorized method for transmitting it from age to age? "There is not in the world a greater presumption than that any should think to convey a gift of God, unless by God and in God's way he be appointed to do it."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Sage's Reasonableness of a Toleration of the Episcopate, p. 208.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Taylor's Ductor Dubitantium, b. iii. ch. iv., Rule 12.

It might be inferred by reason alone, that such an institution as that of rulers and ministers, intrusted with the gifts of grace, would necessarily

Let the people be settled and grounded in this principle, and there will never be a question among them who are the parties empowered to decide on doctrine, to administer discipline, and to send forth laborers into the vineyard.

To this principle of Catholic and Apostolic order there is only this one alternative, which has its sad and impressive illustrations on all sides of us.

“If the existence of a permanent ministerial succession down from the mission of our Lord be denied, then there can be but the mission of man; and that mission can ultimately be nothing else than the fact of a number of persons agreeing to accept the ministry of one who conceives that he has had an inward call to it. They may ordain, they may institute, they may regulate and organize a well-ordered, well-officered body, a model of compact government; yet all is the mere work of man, the

imply a succession unless the appointment were always to be *miraculous*. “We can conceive no other method by human agency possible without being exposed to all the excesses of imposture and licentiousness. Such is the nature of the Christian Priesthood, that it can only be continued in that method which God has appointed for its continuance. This consideration is of great importance, because the Priesthood is in its nature a *positive* institution, that is, one which is of no significance but *as it is of divine appointment*, and can no otherwise be continued except as God has appointed. *Apostolical practice*, therefore, under this view, shows us what is the *order or method* that is appointed; but it is the *nature* of the Priesthood that assures such *order or method* is unalterable.” — LAW’S *Reply to the Bishop of Bangor*.

For, says Hooker, “if the reason why things were instituted may be known, and being known do appear manifestly to be of perpetual necessity; then are those things also perpetual, unless they cease to be effectual unto that purpose for which they were at first instituted.” — *Ecclesiastical Polity*, b. iii. ch. x.

creation of his will, the platform of his architectural ingenuity; and all will sooner or later be resolved into its original elements of his *self-will*.”<sup>1</sup> †

But a clear perception of and firm hold upon this principle are as needful to the Clergy as to the laity. On no lower ground can they hope to maintain permanently their due place in the reverence and affection of their flocks, or to have acknowledged by them the dignity and necessity of their vocation. This question of a properly authenticated commission is too serious and too practical to be left to antiquarians and theorizers. It involves much more than the continuity of history and the truth of the records of the past, — even the estimation in which the Priest of God shall hold his own gifts and prerogatives; the temper of mind with which he shall habitually contemplate his work, and confront the trials and failures which will attend it. It is only saying what experience and the nature of the case amply prove, to affirm that no Priest is likely to be to his people, or to demand from them, what he ought, whose call and mission rest upon mere sentiment or inward conviction, however benevolent and sincere, or upon a sense of personal fitness, or upon popular choice. To be and to do what is required of him, to rise to the highest grade of moral power in his work, to feel the noblest and most unfailing stimulus to exertion, to bring strength out of weakness, to be ready for self-abasement and yet not unwilling to be personally prominent in all duties and offices of public administration, to endure hardness, to live near the source of true consolation and courage under disap-

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Hall's *Episcopacy by Divine Right*.

pointments never wanting in the most successful career, to combine the softness and meekness of the saint with the aggressive boldness and energy of the Christian soldier, — to do all this, and thus to fill up the ideal of the Christian Priest, the feet of Christ's Ministers must be planted firmly on the rock of a veritable warrant and commission from God provable by plain historic testimony. He alone is sufficient for these things, whose life is animated by the faith that the man whom God prompts and palpably commands, he also will enable.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In what has been said on this point, there is no room for the controversy sometimes evoked by the mere naming of the doctrine of "Apostolic succession." The truth of a transmitted commission has a practical value which is independent of all controversy; and for the reason that it does not turn on the *necessity* of the succession, but on the *historical fact that it exists*. This view has been set forth by W. Archer Butler with his characteristic eloquence and vigor. "Men have dared to speak slightly of this conception of a transmitted commission. I appeal from hearts imbittered by controversial disputings, to every unprejudiced mind, when I ask, Is there not, after all, something unutterably awful in the thought of a mission inherited thus directly from the Incarnate God? When, instead of the vague inference that guides the proof of a commission in *the utility of the office or the necessity of the time*, the Minister, however humble, can actually trace along the page of history the unbroken succession that ends in the mighty Twelve and their mightier Master; when the voice that bade him tend the flock of Christ is felt to be the echo — after many a reflection, indeed, yet still the echo — of the voice which spoke on the evening of the resurrection, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," and that, again, itself an echo from the central recesses of the Father's eternity; when thus, by no ideal connection, however true to the meditative reason, but by plain and tangible links, we see ourselves bound to the living and suffering Christ, — I ask you, does it not give an impression of reality, of awful and awakened reality, to our whole office? Does it not seem to bring Christ fearfully *near* us? Must not a man thus empowered feel himself *sent* with a force and directness nothing else can supply, charged with a work from which he dare not withdraw, and 'straitened till it be accomplished'?" — *Visitation Sermon* by W. ARCHER BUTLER (2 Cor. iii. 6).

But another prolific source of hinderance to the Ministry has been the enormous development of sectism in modern Christendom. It is no longer necessary to prove the evils it inflicts as though any one denied them, or to expose them as though there were a disposition anywhere to conceal them. We no longer hear the apologies once so familiar. Happily, though the evils are not diminished, nor the power which creates them abated, it is a great gain to know that they are recognized and deplored as among the bitter fruits of the confusion and license consequent on the great religious upheaval of the sixteenth century. They who are not yet prepared to acknowledge that the rending of Christ's Body is a crime, and that organized sects are in their final results organized sins, are, at least, under the pressure of experience, forced to admit that they are mistakes, and that by them the work of the Church is sadly obstructed and in many cases utterly paralyzed. Time was when the zeal, energy, enterprise, and competitive rivalries which they generated were themes of praise and admiration, and the eyes of good men seemed to be closed to consequences which have since been proved to be inevitable. But it is now seen that their zeal has not been according to knowledge, and therefore largely misdirected; that their energy and enterprise have been attended with a destructive friction and a melancholy wastage of all kinds of power; and, finally, that the rivalries long ago lost all that is wholesome in the feeling of emulation, and degenerated into painful and sometimes scandalous strifes for denominational fame and triumph.

Now, whatever the hurt done to the Church as a

whole, or to any of its parts and functions, by the sect principle, it can scarcely be doubted that the Ministry has been the chief sufferer. This will appear from the following considerations:—

The Ministry is, by its constitution and appointment, the most demonstrative, obvious, and continuous means of contact between the Church and its members, also between the Church and the world. It is representative officially and actually of all that the Church *is* and *does*. It lives and works, teaches and guides, serves and suffers, in Christ's stead. It concentrates in itself, in virtue of its mission from the ever-living Head, all powers and gifts of reconciliation between God and man. It is the living tongue to the written Word, the voice of deputies and ambassadors sent from the court of heaven to a world dead in trespasses and sins; calling upon it to accept the life which the Lord and Giver of life offers it through "the spirit-bearing organs" of the Church,—the Body of Christ. It is the pastorate which was ordained to keep alive among men, not merely the memory of the Great Shepherd of souls, but a sense of the very presence and operation among them of the Divine power and love of His eternal Pastorate.

Whatever, then, assails the unity of the one Body, the unity of the one Faith, the unity of the one Spirit, correspondingly assails the Priesthood in the highest range of its influence. Whatever divides Christ, divides every thing that flows from Him, and especially every ordinance, every institution, purposely created to represent Him. It is and must be true, then, that the Priesthood has been shorn of its normal power over men, and of the reverence

and affection which it has a right to demand from them, to the full extent that sectism has injured and marred the relations of Christ and his Church to the world they came to redeem.

But let us glance briefly at some special aspects of this evil. One disastrous effect of the prodigious outgrowth of sect-life in recent times has been, to contract more and more the boundaries of universally accepted truth, and to expand the margin of doubtful or clashing opinions. It is one of the most painful features of the times, to see how steadily and insidiously this double process has been going on; how the area of faith has been yielding inch by inch, first to the encroachments of controversy, and then to the settled usurpations of doubt. Some minds have, in this way, parted with so much that they were once taught to believe needful to their souls' health and salvation, that they begin to question what will be left. One limb after another of the body of the great Christian tradition has been cast to the lions of unbelief, until the quiet and simple folk of the Kingdom are forced to ask: What and where are the foundations which cannot be upturn? Where is the barrier which shall at last hold in check these conflicting surges of dissent and secession? Now, in no direction does this state of things tell more powerfully for evil than along the whole circuit of priestly labor. It chills the fervor and ties up the tongue of the Preacher, because he knows that they who listen have been inoculated with the spirit of challenge and denial. It cuts under and undermines the Christian nurture of the young in the family, the school, and the Church; for they too, though they fail



to catch the flavor and virtue of the Church's work in their souls, will not fail to absorb into their life-blood the latent infection of a possible uncertainty clinging to what they have been taught as most certain truth. The ethics of the Gospel, moreover, suffers with its doctrine; and the Clergy are deprived of the weight of authority which should belong to them as public teachers of morality, when it is widely suspected or believed that in matters of faith they set forth as the doctrines of God what are only the commandments of men, or the opinions of a school, or the shibboleths of a sect.

Again, the issues of the sect spirit affect the Clergy injuriously in other ways. If those issues impair the moral tone and weaken the nerve-power of their office, they work precisely the same results on their personal character, their Christian manhood, their inner religious life. The comprehensive soul shrinks into narrow methods and narrow aims. The large mind, that should have fed habitually on sublimities of thought, work, and worship worthy of the grandeur of the whole Catholic Body, is dwarfed into an adroit and disciplined organ of the peculiarities of a sect; the tender and loving heart, that should have expanded without limit under the boundless love and tenderness of its Lord, pines and wilts under the intense but unhealthy heat of sectarian zeal. This is an effect of which comparatively little note is taken, and yet it is one of grave importance. Our libraries abound in biographies of strong and learned and earnest Christian men, which no thoughtful reader can go over without being struck with the cramp and chill and deterioration inflicted upon them by the work and training of a sect.

And then, how can we sufficiently estimate the loss of influence to the Clergy produced by the same cause through wastage of gifts and resources of every kind? Who shall measure the time, the talent, the learning, the power of all sorts, given up to religious disputes intended to establish the credentials of rival bodies, or to snatch a brief triumph over a defeated foe which served only to bring forth a harvest of conceit, prejudice, and bitterness, and then lapsed forever into nothingness and oblivion? This, however, is a side of the subject which needs only to be named, to open up a very world of illustrations and inferences too evident to need any mention here.

In a previous place, I alluded to the evidences of the decline of Clerical influence over academic and popular education in Europe and this Country. This is not due so much to the hostility of the State, as to disagreements and divisions among Christians themselves. The State is not, as some argue, necessarily irreligious because it is secular. There is a profound instinct in all wise civil governments, which recognizes and is glad to receive the powerful support of religion in the maintenance of rightful authority. This feeling may not find formal utterance in organic laws, or written constitutions, or special statutes, or in public proclamations from chief magistrates; but it is nevertheless a power in the body politic, which rulers are not likely to ignore or to despise. It has in more than one case, in late years, been strong enough to hold in check wayward statesmen who, in view of the confusion, not to say anarchy, now prevailing in the relations of religion to the State, felt

quite safe in proposing educational schemes with a pronounced atheistic flavor. No modern State has been, or is now, or is likely to become, wantonly infidel. The risk is too great. Deliberately and under the forms of law to assume such an attitude, would be to cast to the winds the strongest of all the admitted securities of peace and order, to say nothing of the inevitable damage that would be inflicted upon all social and material interests. Accordingly in no case, it is believed, except where the preposterous claims of ultramontane Popery have been so pushed as to become a just occasion of suspicion and fear, has any living State repudiated the help and sympathy of Christianity, or declined to consider, and where practicable to act upon, all judicious overtures of its representatives looking to the preservation of its influence over the education of the masses. The difficulty is not altogether in the State, but largely among the Clergy. The State has been in this matter a homogeneous unit, ready to consider any scheme for combining religion with education which could command a substantially unanimous assent among Christians. But Christians have been irreconcilably divided; they have, both here and abroad, been unable to agree upon any definite plan to be recommended to the State. And thus the sorest of calamities has come to pass. Religion, ordained by Him who created it not more truly than He created the complete being of man, to be the inner life, the saving virtue, of all human education, wanders among our State schools, and looks forward to the same fate in some countries of Europe, as an alien and an outcast; and this simply because its friends cannot agree as

to the dress it shall wear, and as to the message it shall deliver. No more lamentable, no more perilous result of the divisions of Christendom, can be named or imagined; and very naturally no class is so disastrously affected by it as the Clergy,—educators *ex officio*, called, trained, set apart by solemn commission, to deal with humanity in all its parts and aspects, required as matter of sacred obligation to uphold and teach all that is purest and best in character and life, and amid the supreme difficulty of their task as teachers and fashioners of intellect, conscience, and will, authorized of God, as His own deputies, to draw upon Heaven's treasury of supernatural helps: and yet here, as the bitter fruit of religious dissensions, practically disabled from wielding any portion of the vast machinery provided by the nation's wealth for the culture of the nation's intelligence, and the development of the nation's life!

I come now to speak of still another, and, if possible, more serious injury, done to the Ministry by the sect spirit; and this, too, in a sphere of work around which gather the most momentous responsibilities. The Church, in the complete scope of its work, may be said to be charged with a twofold stewardship,—that of building itself up from within, disciplining and ripening in the graces of the divine life its own members, and that of delivering unto those who are without, and especially unto the heathen, the message of its Head to a dying world. The one is its internal and domestic mission, the other its external. But what is true of the Body is true of its officers. Now, to what extent the Ministry has been hindered and thwarted in this external mis-

sion to heathen races, God only knows. We can judge only by such limited and partial consequences as have revealed themselves on the surface. But these are so grave, as, when we think of them, to oblige us to pause in grief and astonishment. Sect divisions, sect competitions and antagonisms, are bad enough where the Church is firmly established, and enjoys the support of the customs and traditions of centuries. But they are immeasurably worse in regions where it has only entered in, but has not taken root: where it offers itself to races sunk in darkness and barbarism, as a new and original power given of God to lift them up into the blessed unity of the gospel, and the glorious liberty of the Incarnate Lord; and yet finds itself, in the presence of those races, half paralyzed by alienations and oppositions bred in its own bosom. The missionary work of the Ministry during the past hundred years has in many respects been characterized by a certain grandeur of aim and achievement. Its record is full of labors which would have reflected honor on the Church in its best ages. It has been abundant in zeal, hardship, self-denial, courage, patience, and martyrdom. It has shown an unfailing readiness to confront with bravery and fortitude the perils of all climates, the privations of all lands, and the hostilities and obstinacies of all forms of paganism. And yet it is the settled and universal conviction of Christians themselves, that the results attained are so utterly disproportioned to the vast resources employed, as to excite not merely disappointment but mortification. As to the cause of it there is little or no disagreement, as well among the friends and supporters of Roman

Catholic missions (some of these now more than three hundred years old) as among those of Reformed Catholic and Protestant missions. Missionary teachers, missionary priests, and missionary bishops, all of whatever name, tell the same story of hinderance and partial defeat, of shame and bitterness of soul, arising from sectarian rivalries and collisions.<sup>1</sup> Thus the Ministry has

<sup>1</sup> “In the East India, for instance, twenty different churches and sects are laboring to convert the Hindus; each endeavoring to encroach upon the rest, destroy their settlements, and gain over their proselytes. And what is true there is true elsewhere: so that Christianity presents itself to the intelligent heathen under the repulsive aspect of division and uncertainty. In Tahiti the French Government, years ago, took possession of the Protestant missions, and handed them over to French Catholic emissaries. In Madagascar the emissaries of the rival churches, (Roman) Catholic and Protestant, brought matters to such a pass that King Radema oscillated for a year between them, and when he was murdered each party charged the other with the crime; and the mutual hatred and endeavors to supplant one another still continue. In 1845 the Protestant missionaries were ejected from Fernando Po by the Spaniards, who laid claim to the island. That is the spectacle presented by Christians to the gaze of the heathen world. Christ says that every kingdom divided against itself shall be destroyed. We understand the failure of missionaries. And that is not all. What is to Christians the holiest and most venerable of all places, the birth-land of our faith, where Christ taught, lived, and suffered, is now the meeting-place of churches that hate one another. Greeks, Russians, Latins, Armenians. Copts, Jacobites, Protestants of various names, all have their fortresses and intrenchments, and are intent on making fresh conquests for the rival churches. To the shame of the Christian name, Turkish soldiers have to interfere between rival parties of Christians, who would else tear one another to pieces in the holy places; and the Pacha holds the key of the Holy Sepulchre. The strife between Latins and Greeks for the possession of the chapel in 1852 was the immediate occasion of the Crimean war.

“Truly every one who values the name of Christian should daily pray to God for a fresh outpouring of the spirit of unity, that we may keep a new Pentecost of enlightenment, peace, and brotherly love.” — DÜLLINGER'S *Lectures on the Re-union of the Churches*.

been crippled and driven back, ay, smitten with weakness and dismay, in its attempts to obey the great commission of its Lord to go forth and disciple all nations. And thus, too, as the necessary consequence, the Church, though it has sown in tears, has failed to reap in joy.

But, of all the causes which have helped to weaken and obstruct the proper influence of the Priesthood, none has wrought more powerfully than decay of discipline in the Church. The relaxation of dogmatic belief is not a more marked feature of our present Christianity than the relaxation of Church discipline. The two have a very intimate connection, and it is only natural that they should advance *pari passu*. Discipline has steadily declined among all branches of the Catholic Body, and, when the facts are remembered, to a degree most singular among the various organizations whose origin falls within the post-Reformation period. Roman Catholic discipline has fallen off notoriously in most Roman Catholic countries. The old system in its main provisions is still in use. It is very effective over the Clergy, holding them sternly in its grasp, and causing the rank and file to feel that death is to be preferred to any form of apostasy. But among the laity it is another matter. It is well known that in Italy, Spain, France, Germany, and Austria, and especially in Romish populations in North and South America, the men, particularly, can be counted by millions who submit outwardly to the forms and requirements of ecclesiastical discipline, but inwardly despise and reject them; while other millions can be found, who, in spite of the hidden power of "latticed ecclesiastics" and the impressive demonstrations

of Pope and Council, openly repudiate the very points of faith and obedience which it is the primary object of discipline to enforce and preserve. Regarded as a system for controlling the opinions and conduct of men in the interest of an absolute Church authority, there can be no question that Romish discipline is almost a miracle of ingenuity. It has been slowly evolved from the experience of centuries. Its anatomy of human nature has left nothing to be discovered. Its diagnosis of spiritual disease is remarkable for its thoroughness and subtlety; while those who work the system are not allowed to touch it until they have been well instructed in the knowledge of casuistry as a distinct science or rather art. And, then, besides, there is a veil of secrecy thrown over the working of the system in individual cases, which greatly heightens its power in dealing with both the strong and the weak points of those subjected to its sway. But matchless as the Roman discipline is in ripeness of experience, ingenuity of adaptation, and fertility of resources, it has not proved itself a match for the relaxation and license, as some will say, or the emancipation and liberty, as others will put it, of this age. The evidences of its diminished influence are to be found in every civilized country. Votaries in abundance it still has, and over these the old sway continues unabated; but over vast multitudes of nominal adherents who swell the tables of Romish statistics, it is steadily declining both in actual power and in public estimation.

Substantially the same may be said of the present condition of discipline among the leading Protestant



Bodies, all of which started originally with the avowed purpose of tightening up and purifying the Christian profession beyond what the average of Catholic Christianity had deemed possible or necessary. It were needless to go into particulars, or to cite the numerous corroborative statements that might be found in the official documents of Synods, Conferences, and Assemblies. The fact is notorious, and it is spoken of in terms of mournful regret, that these Bodies have declined utterly from what they regard as the once healthy stringency of control over the faith and morals of their members.

As for the American Catholic Church, it is in some respects scarcely, if at all, better off. It has kept the faith sharply and firmly; but this has been done, not by the discipline of the Church as technically defined, but in spite of its growing relaxation and inefficiency. The faith among us has enjoyed a certain Divine guaranty of perpetuity by the maintenance of Apostolic order, which, in a large sense of the word, must be regarded as the corner-stone at once of the Church's discipline, and the Church's witness to the truth. And then it has derived an almost equal advantage from the fact, that, amid the changes and the tumults of these later times, it has been safely anchored to a permanent liturgical worship, and thus rescued from the errors incidental to the fluctuating expositions of individual teachers. But as regards any habitual and acknowledged disciplinary restraint upon the every-day life, the current morals of its people, it is no better off than the several Denominations, and much worse off than Romanism.

If we turn to the Church of England, whose strength and weakness repeat themselves of necessity, more or less, in her lineal descendant, we find, that notwithstanding she has all the appliances and forms of discipline, and has given all through her practical theology the strongest witness to the indispensable need of discipline to a living Church, discipline itself has in fact fallen away into almost hopeless confusion and weakness. Whatever old precedents and customs and even statutes may say to the contrary, there is no discipline for the laity. Under the broad ægis of membership in her as the National Church, every man does, so far as law goes, what is right in his own eyes. There is practically no authority to call any layman to account for what he thinks or does in the sphere of religion. And yet, though he may deny all amenability to discipline, he may act as one of the Church's masters, as a steward of her revenues, as a ruler of her Clergy, as a judge of her doctrines and practices, as a member of her Vestries, Synods, and Church Courts. Nowhere else has the Church and State connection hatched such a brood of evils as in this matter of discipline. The theory on which this connection rests obliged the Church to surrender what never can be given up without mortal injury,—the right to govern herself. The Church still adheres to the compact, though the State has in many ways set it at naught. The Church is bound, the State practically free. The Church, having so long intrusted her proper work of discipline to the State, now finds herself confronted by these two mortifying facts: (1) Long disuse of the powers of self-government has created a timid

reluctance, if not an actual incapacity, to resume them; (2) The State refuses any longer to wield them, and is not ready to restore them. And the result is, there is nothing to forbid the unbelieving and the dissolute, violators of her laws and despisers of her doctrine, from not only calling themselves but acting as her members. There are, in fact, no tests of Church-membership that can be enforced against such as choose to resist them.

With the Clergy, the case is different. They make subscriptions and promises; they assume in various ways obligations which bind them as the laity cannot be bound. And yet in practice, so tedious and costly is the administration of discipline in the Church of England, that there is great reluctance among the authorities to proceed against an offending Clergyman, except it be a case of such extreme unsoundness of teaching, or such gross departure from the Ritual of the Church, or such manifest immorality, as to give it the character of a public scandal.

With us, there is no lack of discipline for the Clergy in theory or in fact. A singularly large proportion of our Canons, General and Diocesan, is devoted to setting forth the mind and will of the Church on this subject. Offences are carefully specified, and the forms of judicial proceedings are plain and easy. The ecclesiastical courts being entirely independent of State regulation, and amenable to civil jurisdiction only when they violate the Church laws by which they profess to be governed, they are simple in their constitution and inexpensive in their administration. Under our system, it is difficult neither to enforce nor to obtain justice. The only anomaly in it

is the absence of courts of appeal. The trials in the American Church have been surprisingly few when we consider how numerous and widely scattered the Clergy have been, and, owing to the remoteness of the central governing authorities, how great has been the temptation to substitute license for liberty and self-will for obedience. So far as the Clergy are concerned, it cannot be questioned that a commendable vigilance has been exercised in maintaining purity of faith and morals. The one grievous fault of our discipline, as already intimated, is in its loose and inefficient dealings with the laity. In this direction little more is attempted than can be accomplished by pastoral advice, warning, and rebuke. Suspension from the privilege of the Sacrament is provided for in the case of notorious evil livers; but practically the scandal must be very great which induces a Rector to publish and enforce the suspension of a communicant. It is the general habit, to be ignorant of what is going on in the private lives of Church-members, and to trust to the purity and soundness of the individual conscience as a safeguard against offences worthy of discipline. But clearly such ignorance is tolerable only because of the prevailing slackness, and such trust is proved to be most unsafe by the increasing demoralization of the average type of Christian character.

And this leads me to observe, that there is no more suggestive or profitable study, in these times, than that which leads us to compare the discipline of the early with that of the modern Church. This alone can open our eyes to the extent of our degeneracy in this particular, and to one of the chief causes of the diminished

influence of the Clergy and of the slow progress of the Church of the nineteenth century as compared with that of the first three centuries. Even a hurried glance at the history of the primitive Church shows us that the Christians of that period grasped firmly and acted resolutely upon all the fundamental principles of ecclesiastical discipline, as being one of the necessary marks of a true Church. No special guidance or inspiration was needed; for common-sense and universal experience taught them (1) that no society or association could live without its own laws and regulations, and without an inherent authority and conceded power to enforce them; and (2) that the privilege of membership in any corporate body involved the duty of obedience. But they knew also that the Church, as a Divine institution, organized for the noblest and most difficult of ends, deriving its charter and constitution from Jesus Christ its living Head, and intended to outlive the ages, was designed to be the most compact and effective of all possible corporations or kingdoms. There was nothing necessary to the perpetuity of any secular corporation, that was not far more so to the perpetuity of this. If societies and states must have rules and laws to define and enforce the conditions and duties of membership, the terms of admission and exclusion, the punishments of the evil and the rewards of the good; much more must the very Body of Christ have them,—the Body whose members were to be as salt to the world's corruption, and as lights set upon a hill amid the world's darkness; the Body whose purity was to clothe all evil with a darker hue, whose heavenly order and

concord were to rebuke the anarchy of a world lying in wickedness, and whose matchless standard of conduct was to lift sins which the world winks at, to the rank of grievous crimes against God and man. And all this was intensified vastly in their minds by the fact that the governors of this Body were to rule in the name and authority of Jesus Christ, and that the members of it, if they offended against each other, would offend chiefly against Him.

Acting upon these principles they believed the Church to possess a wide discretion in its disciplinary legislation. Clearly quite unknown to them was the narrow theory urged by some, that its power to enact laws was limited by the express or implied directions of the New Testament. With loyal reverence they obeyed Apostolic precedent where it plainly touched the case in hand; but where what was on record in the brief history of Christian discipline, such as synodical judgments, or the rulings and sentences of individual Apostles, did not help them to meet new difficulties and exigencies, they seem not to have hesitated in accepting the guidance of a sanctified reason. And this they did on the broad ground that the Church has authority from its Head to do whatever is needful to its welfare and efficiency, if it do not contradict the spirit or the teaching of God's written Word.<sup>1</sup> When, in the great forty days, Christ taught the disciples the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God, we must believe that he could not have omitted to instruct them in the elementary principles

<sup>1</sup> This is the ground which the great Hooker defends with such masterly reasoning and profound learning in his *Ecclesiastical Polity*.

of ecclesiastical jurisprudence. These principles, first applied by the inspired Apostles, were handed on, and, with the promised illumination of the Holy Ghost, were gradually wrought up, under the pressure of ever-varying contingencies, into a more or less complete digest of Church law, which has descended to us as a precious inheritance, and which, in every intervening age, has given tone and shape to all sound ecclesiastical legislation.

But what is of quite as much consequence to observe is the impartial and resolute administration of the early discipline, whatever may have been its details. Abundant illustrations are at hand from the practice both of the Apostles and of the Church of the Fathers. The rich and the poor, the titled and the obscure, rulers and subjects, the teachers and the taught, transgressors of every grade, sinners against truth, sinners against purity, honesty, and charity, fornicators, covetous men, idolaters, railers, drunkards, extortioners, litigators in pagan courts, even the idle and the lazy, were made to feel the presence and power of the law, and to dread its penalties. Here and there all through the life of St. Paul, whose mission lay among the Gentile Christians, we light upon evidences of his energy and rigor as a disciplinarian. Much as he loved the brethren, ready as he was to sacrifice himself for them, tenderly, importunately, as he entreated offenders to turn from the evil of their ways, he did not hesitate to strike when the blow was needed, and with a vigor and decision which drove into submission or into banishment all hardened violators of the Church's rules. And then

later on in the sub-Apostolic Church how vigilant, firm, and discriminating was the penitential system it established! Offenders were not massed together and treated as though there were no gradations of guilt and punishment. They were carefully distributed into four classes or grades of penitents; each with its own badge of disgrace, its own mode of purgation and restoration. To all this was added the most patient care and oversight in regard to Christians who had lapsed under the terrors of persecution, or the enticements of ordinary temptation. The whole attitude of the Church in this matter of discipline was, indeed, that of the Good Shepherd who knoweth his sheep and is known of them, and who is perpetually mending the fold wherever broken down, and guarding it wherever threatened by the wolf of an ungodly world.

But here the question arises: Why did the Church so sadly fall away from that primitive and illustrious example of fidelity? How did it happen that she so censurably relaxed her discipline for reclaiming sinners and correcting vice? Why this loss of vigilant supervision, and consequent loss of moral power? Strangely enough, there are those who account what the Church generally considers a deterioration, as a higher development. The advocates of "broad" or "liberal" Christianity, so far from regretting, rejoice over this decay of ecclesiastical discipline. They find in it the signs of growth in the corporate body, and of emancipation for the individual conscience from the restraints of arbitrary authority. They accept it as proving the overthrow of sacerdotalism. They philosophize on the matter very



much as might be expected from those who utterly misconceive the nature, the work, and the purpose of the Church of God. Their reading of history, and their reasoning upon its facts, seem to have conducted them to these three results : —

(1) That the discipline which was necessarily minute and severe when Christianity was making its way against the aggressive and persecuting opposition of the old pagan order with all its affiliated vices and corruptions, was no longer indispensable, or even desirable, when that opposition ceased, and the Church obtained general recognition.

(2) That Christianity assumed the education and direction of the individual conscience when it was in its spiritual childhood, and therefore demanded tutors and governors and stringent penitential arrangements to pilot it through the entanglements growing up on all sides out of the intermixtures of the old heathen and the new Christian conditions of life ; but that now, inasmuch as the individual conscience has developed into the ripeness of spiritual manhood, and has put away childish things, it is abundantly able to stand alone, and ought to do so for its own health ; dispensing with props and guides and restraints once acknowledged to be necessary.

(3) That we are now living under an order, — the precious fruit of all past progress, — which has lifted the individual out of slavish subordination to political and ecclesiastical corporations, and, in every way, made him a larger and more self-centred being ; and that, as a consequence, he has acquired the right and the habit

of self-control; and hence, that he no longer requires what the Church once so efficiently and abundantly supplied. Doubtless there is a degree of truth in this view. It sets forth, in a very partial and misleading way, one side of the result which has been produced by the Christian training of mankind. But there can be just as little doubt among sober minds, who make room for all the facts of the case, that, conceding to this view all that it can really claim, we are very far from the conclusion that it supersedes or diminishes the permanent necessity of some authoritative and thoroughly enforced system of discipline in the Church over its individual members. To declare the contrary, would be to declare obsolete one of the sovereign attributes of the Church, than which none enters more essentially into its original constitution. It may be admitted, that under Christian civilization the individual has been wonderfully advanced in culture, prerogative, and opportunity, and that an importance now attaches to the obscurest member of society never dreamed of by the far-off ancients. But unless we are to fall into the delusion of a shallow optimism, we cannot admit that man has now reached, or that he is likely to reach, in this world, a condition which, either in Church or State, will enable him to dispense with an external discipline for his sins and infirmities, or with governors authorized to enforce it.

But turning from these sophisms I proceed to notice some of the facts of history which help us to account for the Church's decline in discipline. These have been stated with clearness and cogency by an able English writer. Among many causes more or less operative, he

names three. The first "was the policy by which the Papacy reduced the Bishops to nullities. By continually withdrawing people from canonical obedience to the Bishops, the Pope rendered them useless in the management of their dioceses. Wherever an appeal to the Roman court lay, the Bishops naturally avoided the contest. Such things, as now, cost money; and the largest purse was sure to win the day, for at Rome at that time every thing was, as the old proverb had it, put to sale." "A second cause was the power of the nobles, who not only led vicious lives themselves, but encouraged vice in their followers. Holy Church prevailed not against them, save in the hour of death, when a life of sin was scarcely redeemed by cessions of broad lands, which at last evoked the Statute of Mortmain." "A third cause was the fusing the civil and ecclesiastical judges together, which had much the same look as when a clerical magistrate sentences a laborer for poaching, or interferes between labor and capital, or takes a strong line in politics. Then came what was called the handing over ecclesiastical offenders to the secular arm, and the burning of heretics. What seemed to be an augmentation of strength, was really a confession of weakness on the part of the Church. At no period of her existence was the Church so powerful in the service of God, as when she relied on her own intrinsic ability to deal with evil; and at no period of her life has she shown such weakness, as when she looked to kings and princes for aid and maintenance."<sup>1</sup>

Externally, the Church in this country, from a period

<sup>1</sup> Ecclesiastical Essays.

coeval with the beginning of our nationality, has been entirely free to legislate on all matters affecting its corporate interests or its control over its members. There was nothing in the way, so far as the State was concerned, to forbid its resumption, to the fullest extent, of the primitive discipline. But internally its life was bound hand and foot by the traditions and usages of the Mother Church. It accepted without challenge, almost without consciousness, as part of its inheritance, the chronic and enfeebling laxity of discipline which had grown up in and fastened upon the Church of England under the influence of various causes (some of which have been named) developed in pre-Reformation times. As we have seen, this laxity no longer exists in regard to the Clergy. The Church has resumed its full authority over them in faith and morals, and has embodied this authority in a system of discipline which leaves little to be desired either in its canonical arrangement or in the moderated rigor of its administration. But with regard to the laity, the discipline, if such it can be called, of the American Church, is practically on a level with that of the English Church; and the fact that it is so is fraught with mischief and hinderance to the Ministry in the following ways:—

(1) The Ministry is brought into discredit by its great claims and its small performance; by the substantial powers theoretically conveyed to it when receiving its official warrant to teach and rule in the Church of Christ, and by the very imperfect and often absurdly weak exercise of those powers under the stringent limitations imposed by custom and by the temper of the

times. The Ordinal presents an inspiring outline of authoritative guidance and supervision. Its noble words, borrowed mainly from Scripture, have the ring of real power. They stir the heart of the waiting candidate for the honors and the dangers of the Holy Office. They speak to the people in tones that cannot be mistaken. They bear with them the breath of the Holy Ghost, and the divine prerogatives of a Kingdom which is not of this world. They revive the memory of what an Apostolic Ministry once was and did. Somehow the glory and might of a great spiritual ancestry, stretching back to the day of pentecostal gifts, overshadows them. They could not have been placed where they are, except by men whose souls had been baptized into the spirit of our Lord's commission to His Apostles, and to all whom through them and their successors He would be pleased to send out into the vineyard unto the end of the world.

It will be recollected in what solemn and pointed language the Bishop is instructed by the Church to address the candidates for the Holy Office of Priesthood, before putting the series of questions which compass the whole round of official and private duty. And then, after the *Veni Creator Spiritus* and the prayer of thanksgiving, follow the momentous words: "Receive the Holy Ghost for the Office and Work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained. And be thou a faithful dispenser of the Word of God, and His Holy Sacraments: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Such is the outline of the commission. As to the filling of it up, it were needless to speak in detail. If we look to the practical working of the average pastorate, we are almost forced to exclaim, How grand the ideal! How poor the reality! The Priest, as he gets into the thick of his work, soon sees that gifts conveyed in his ordination lie dormant at the very heart of his Ministry, and that powers then conferred he, somehow, is not permitted to use. He is pained with a sense of shrinkage; and whether it be in himself, or in his conception of the office, or in the office itself, he is puzzled to decide. On the other hand, the people are quick to perceive what the Priest so keenly feels; and not seldom they are prone to attribute to timidity or unfaithfulness what he knows to be due to their own restiveness, not to say insubordination, under any exercise of real authority in dealing with individual souls by one appointed to be an overseer and ruler of the flock of Christ. The truth is, the Church in ordaining her Priests puts them on one plane of prerogative and responsibility, while by the loose discipline which the free and easy temper of modern religion has in part forced upon her, she has allowed the life of her members to drop to a lower one; and the result is a disastrous blow to that very side of the Priesthood which theoretically is supposed to be in habitual contact with every soul that looks to it for food and guidance.

(2) But our lax discipline obstructs and damages the work and influence of the Ministry, because it cheapens and degrades the privilege of Church-membership. It is scarcely too much to affirm, that, as one fruit of the

sharp sect rivalries and competitions in the matters of wealth and numbers, the multitude have come to regard admission to the communion of the Church as much more of a favor to the Church than to themselves. The Church is patronized, rather than obeyed; and so with her Clergy. Men give their money and influence, help to build churches, support services, pay for the luxury of fine oratory and showy music, make their way into vestries and conventions, legislate and dictate and govern, and all in a spirit of worldly ambition and vanity; and then count upon, and, if they do not get it, demand, easy treatment, smooth words, cunning glosses of fashionable sins. Threats of suspension or excommunication for gross scandals fall upon the ear as idle pastoral thunder. If driven out from one fellowship, offenders are assured in advance of a welcome into some rival Christian Body, provided they bring with them an equivalent. So far has this evil gone, that certificates of good standing are, in many cases, neither asked for by religious itinerants, nor demanded by those whose fellowship they seek. The fences are down; the ecclesiastical world is all open where to choose; boundary-lines are wiped out; the world and the Church have come to a friendly understanding, or at least a kind of truce on that vast battle-field, from the centre of which rises, as an undying protest, the blood-stained cross of the Son of God. And so it has come to pass, that though the Priests' lips keep knowledge, though the ordained deputies of Christ minister at the altar, and speak from the pulpit on the old themes of the Gospel, they are treated by the mass of believers as wearing the

semblance of official power without the reality; and if under provocation they venture upon bold, sharp words of rebuke, they are regarded only as giving a pungent equivalent for their professional hire. When one recalls all that is in the moral atmosphere about us; when one thinks how Christians on all sides ravel and bleach out in a matter-of-course way into the amusements and pleasures and luxurious sensualism, if not open ungodliness, of the world, and how all this re-acts upon the life of the Church and the work of her Priesthood, he must be a very blind or ignorant man who will consider what has been said as the language of satire or exaggeration. Would to God that it could be justly so characterized! The time has come when the credit of the Priesthood, the honor of the Church, the integrity of the Gospel, demand that judgment shall begin at the House of God, and shall not cease in its goings forth until, armed once more with the scourge, and it may be the sword, of a revived discipline, she shall purge the host of God's elect, driving out from the camp the deserters, the hangers-on, hypocrites in saintly livery, cowards in soldiers' uniform, men who think to buy the gifts of God with money, unclean traders in the temple, despoilers of the treasures of Israel. Mere strength of numbers is a delusion; popularity is a snare of the Devil. Better the few who are true and tried, than the useless disorderly rabble. Better to go back into dens and caves of the earth, and be pure and strong, than to dwell in shame and weakness amid the glories of our modern architecture. Ay, it were a blessing, if nothing else can bring back the old tone and nerve of Christianity,



that the world, grown weary in its proud selfishness of the chiding voice of the religion of the Cross, should once more breathe on the smouldering cinders of its hate, and rekindle the flames of persecution, which, in burning away the dross, would leave the fine gold meet to adorn the Spouse of Christ.

### LECTURE III.

#### EVIDENCES OF INTELLECTUAL VIGOR AND ACTIVITY IN THE MINISTRY.

At the most, it is only a few of the leading aspects of a subject so vast and varied, that I can hope to treat. To find the evidences which my theme obliges me to produce, I must in a free and sketchy, though not inaccurate manner, travel over the lines of mental activity along which the Clerical mind has moved with the most power. Mere summaries of results will not answer. It seems rather to be incumbent on me, to reproduce in a fresh and living way the processes of thought, and the uses and adaptations of old and new learning, by which results have been reached. We want to know not only the intellectual aims of the Clergy, but the intellectual energy displayed by them in reaching these aims. I give the inquiry this turn, because it is so often alleged that the Clergy, as a body, have declined in intellectual force. As it was once considered the right thing to rate this force at the highest, so now it is coming to be the fashion to rate it, if not at the lowest, at least as on the decline as compared with that of other learned classes. I hope to show that the facts give no countenance to this opinion, and that the opinion itself, so far as it exists, is due not to any such decline of mental

power and enterprise among the Clergy, but to a decline of sympathetic interest among mankind generally, in the distinctive truths which the Clergy are set apart to teach.

There are two extreme wings of the Clerical body (I use the phrase "Clerical body" in the broad, popular sense) which take little interest in this inquiry, and for reasons characteristic of each. The very liberal and progressive class among the Protestant Clergy hold so diluted a conception of the Ministry as a Divine vocation, that they are quite indifferent to encroachments on its prestige. They rather prefer to be spoken of as thinkers and reformers, as a moral and intellectual leaven pervading the mass of living thought, than as men ordained to a holy function. With this view of their calling, it is not strange that they should feel no special concern in the preservation of its traditional dignity and influence. If any one says that the Christian Priesthood is growing more and more circumscribed in its power to guide the mind of the age, or to restrain the more doubtful tendencies of modern life, it is no offence to them. They have graduated into a wider calling. They belong to the great, universal priesthood of knowledge, civilization, and philanthropy; and, provided that the age be held to the path of safety and progress, they are indifferent to the source of the influence that does it. Indeed, some of the more advanced of this class count it an occasion of congratulation when they see, or think they see, Clerical influence ravelling out, and being overlaid or absorbed by forces which are general and undistinctive. This is a noteworthy symptom of the

times. It has its origin in a low view of the Ministry, that, in its turn, is the inevitable product of a self-made and anarchical type of ecclesiasticism, which, as it has no honored lineage reaching back into the distant past to maintain, blends easily with every thing that happens to be stronger and more positive than itself.

On the other wing are the Clergy of the Church of Rome. They have little interest in this subject, because they allow no doubts to be raised among themselves, or among their adherents, as to the security of their position and the undiminished extent of their influence. They wield an authority which they will not permit to be questioned by those who submit to it at all. They have a hold on the individual conscience which enables them to control nearly every thing else connected with individual life, and so to exclude from their flocks most of the sources of agitation and resistance. As themselves are taught from the start, so they teach the souls whom they guide, to turn a deaf ear, as to the voice of the arch-tempter, to all exciting and threatening questions that hover over the skirmish-line between religion and modern thought. Their professional drill is so severe as to weed out every bias of will or intellect to which such questions could appeal. They teach and minister as they are ordered, with no apparent concern about the possible effect of extraneous forces upon the system which they represent. Their priesthood in its practical power flows through, without mixing with, the surrounding water-courses of the age.

But though this subject may be deemed unimportant in the two quarters named, it is of vital concern to

those who believe in a Scriptural and Apostolic Priesthood, and who, while protecting it against the dilutions of a false liberalism and the dangerous accretions of Romish prerogative, would rejoice to see it moving in the fulness of its strength upon a world dead in trespasses and in sins. In treating the subject, I shall not refer to the matter-of-course labors of the Clergy in their every-day occupation as teachers,—labors which aim to utilize the results of recondite studies, or to simplify and illustrate material already at hand. Diversified and necessary as these labors are, and much as they draw upon the best learning and mental skill, they do not exhibit the sort of mental activity and culture needful to establish what it is now proposed to prove. The evidence needed must be found, if at all, in the deeper and more methodical studies of the Clergy, the fruits of which appear in the Christian literature of the time.

Very naturally, theology is the first to claim our attention. How, then, let it be asked, have the Clergy acquitted themselves in this their own especial domain? What is there here to attest the industry, zeal, and learning of their order, or to prove that they have shared as fully as they ought in the characteristic enterprise and movement of the age? In one respect this inquiry puts them at a disadvantage at once. Unlike most other departments of knowledge, theology offers no room for discoveries. It stimulates speculation on the deepest themes, but does not encourage the speculator to hope that he can produce any thing original. It rejoices to have its contents handled with freshness and vigor, but it holds out no prizes for novelty of matter. Its attitude

on the whole is that of the old, the continuous, and the settled, seeking to keep its foot-hold amid the new, the temporary, and the fluctuating. As a consequence, the true theologian neither covets nor expects, however profound his erudition, or however valuable its practical fruits to thousands of schools and pulpits and libraries, the applause which the general mass, even of the educated, bestow only upon those who startle them with a new invention, or with a fresh and tangible contribution to their stock of knowledge. The work of the theologian, whether in itself or in its results, cannot be judged by the same standard as that of the scientist, the metaphysician, the man of letters. With this fact duly recognized, I ask, what have the Clergy to say for themselves as thinkers and students in theology?

I affirm then, generally, that theology, as pursued and expounded by the Clergy, has, during the past generation, lost no substantial ground amid its conflicts with opposing forces. Considering how many of the oracles of modern learning and criticism have been busy in heaping obloquy upon it, or in reviving hard stories about its narrowness and bigotry in the past, and its hostility in the present to free inquiry and the progress of knowledge; nay, considering the efforts put forth to discredit it altogether as a recognized member of the family of sciences, — it would be strange if its prestige had not suffered. And yet its place among the great departments of knowledge remains undisturbed. As a science it now attracts, to say the least, as much attention, excites as much discussion, creates as much habitual and cultivated intellectual activity, as any other.

Even the most advanced thinkers, who claim to have driven it into exile, are constantly recalling it. They cannot handle any of the deeper problems touching God and man and nature, without crossing its domain; nor, as they do so, without paying tribute to its sovereignty even in the realm of disciplined intellect. That theology, in spite of all that has been said and done to abolish or undermine or disintegrate it, should have held its own, viewed simply as a science, is an incontestable proof of the learning and ability of its special teachers and guardians.

But to appreciate even slightly the force of this sort of evidence, we must glance somewhat more in detail at the influences which have combined to disparage or override the claims of theology. It is not individuals, however eminent for genius and erudition, that I care to mention, but rather certain great tidal movements in the history of recent thought. The first of these to arrest attention in this connection is what is known on its scientific side as positivism, and on its practical side as secularism. This system of thought, the product of French speculation, after running through the well-known schools of materialism, eclecticism, and socialism, as expounded by De Tracy, Cousin, and Fourier, is not merely anti-Christian, but atheistic. It is the portentous amalgam of all that was bad in the previous dreams and eccentricities of the intellect of France. Silent about God, spirit, personal immortality, it regards "science as the only revelation, demonstration as the only authority, nature's laws as the only Providence, and obedience to them as the only piety." It aims to

destroy Christianity by destroying the possibility of its proof. It views religion as the product of an unscientific age, for which a belief in the laws of nature and the discoveries of science is a sufficient substitute. The order in nature which we are wont to regard as the result and the evidence of a designing intelligence, it admits; but refuses to infer from that order the existence of any such presiding mind, except so far as it can be verified by proof resting on our own sensible experience. The whole history of thought records no grosser type of materialism. It is worse than a return to the lowest grade of the old Pagan speculations. Indeed, few thinkers could be named in ante-Christian times, who, if this system had appeared in their day, would not have been shocked and disgusted at its idolatrous worship of mere phenomena, and its scorn for the very conception of an original or a final cause. It is its avowed aim to tear up and scatter to the winds, as so much hoary superstition and illogical sentimental trash, the whole frame-work of theology. Christianity at best is only the latest and ripest of religions, the already-decaying symbol of a higher truth towards which humanity is tending; and theology shares of necessity in the nature of that which it expounds. Positivism is not merely a thing on paper, or the quiet dream of minds that are content to die and make no sign. On the contrary, it has a practical side where it is boldly aggressive and sternly dogmatic in the assertion of what it teaches. No school has ever shown a more passionate desire to propagate its teachings. It openly aspires to be considered as a philosophy of life, and a



substitute for religion. It accepts with evident relish the title of secularism, because, as the name implies, it asserts it to be the great business of man to attend to the affairs of the present world which is certain, rather than of a future which is uncertain.

Different in some respects from positivism, and yet identical with it in its tendency to sweep away the foundations of theology, is the system of philosophy elaborated and expounded by Mr. Herbert Spencer. In considering the present relations of theology to the general thought of the time, it is impossible to ignore those features of his system which antagonize its fundamental principles. In his "First Principles of a New System of Philosophy," he begins with an attempted reconciliation of religion and science. But unfortunately the reconciliation consists in eliminating religion from the field of rational thought. He admits the existence of the religious sentiment, but denies the possibility of constructing a religion which shall rest upon absolute truth. Human nature needs religion, and will have one of some sort; but it must be content with religions which are as likely to be false as to be true. The religious sentiment, instead of being regarded as an inherent and indestructible element in the moral constitution of man, is represented as a gradual growth or accretion starting in a certain vague feeling of awe, which, in turn, is the product of the perpetual contact of the human mind with the unknown and unknowable Infinite. From this almost formless germ, the religious sentiment has been developed by orderly, consecutive stages, from fetichism — its first manifestation

— up to the plane of monotheistic worship. This development has been the work of science: the lower and cruder faiths yielding to the higher and more elaborate under the compulsory pressure of advancing knowledge. If it be strange that a truly great mind, claiming, in an extraordinary degree, the faculty of accurate and profound thought, should take refuge in a psychology which so utterly fails to account for religious emotions, it is still more so, that such a mind should, with vast pains, build up a theory of the development of those emotions which is contradicted by indisputable facts of history. It is undeniable that the Old Testament, regarded simply as history, is the record of a monotheistic worship reaching back to the dawn of the historic ages; and, to say the least, the evidences bearing on the subject justify the belief that it is quite as probable that all lower and grosser religions are corruptions and degradations of the higher and purer, as that the latter are developments from the former.

Were we not living in the midst of the experiment, and witnessing daily its increasing success, we might think it impossible that the “New Philosophy” of Spencer should meet with favor among the more thoughtful classes, or be regarded by any as a formidable antagonist to the Christian religion. It declares that the Infinite and Absolute is utterly inconceivable by us; that it cannot become the material of human knowledge; that to beings like us, whose consciousness is cast in the moulds of time and space, it is unthinkable, unknown and unknowable: and yet it does not hesitate to tell us with dogmatic assurance and almost logical precision

what the Infinite and Absolute cannot do or become in its relations to us. It says that our belief in an omnipresent and eternal cause of the universe has a higher warrant than any other belief,—that the existence of such a cause is the most certain of all certainties; and then asserts that we can have no knowledge whatever of its attributes,—that it is absolutely beyond any possible human cognition. It puts forth a statement of the ultimate cause, which, while affirming our utter inability to conceive of its mode of existence or of its character, compels us by a logical and moral necessity to assign it at least six attributes, and these the very ones which form the staples of natural and revealed religion; viz., being, causal energy, omnipotence, eternity, wisdom, and love. It traces the feeling and need of religion to a certain awe arising from the habitual contact of the mind of the race with the unknown and unknowable. But surely what is altogether unknown and unknowable to the race as a whole cannot impress itself on the consciousness of an individual. What is absolutely unknown and unknowable is to us as though it did not exist. No sentiment of awe or of any thing else can arise from that of which we are entirely unconscious. Again, this “New Philosophy” admits the existence of an ultimate cause, and admits the manifestation of this ultimate cause in effects the sum-total of which is the universe: and yet it tells us that we cannot reason from the effects to the cause; that the work reveals nothing as to the qualities of the workman; that in the law we see nothing of the nature of the lawgiver; that “by the things which are made” we can know nothing of

“the invisible things” of the maker: that order, intelligence, beneficence, beauty in the creation prove nothing whatever as to the true character of the creator. Such are some of the weaknesses of the “New Philosophy.” Like many systems gone before it, it will have its day, and then take its place in the great gallery of speculative curiosities. The grounds on which it menaces theology with expulsion from the fellowship of science are futile. They are at war with the very elements and conditions of valid thinking on any subject. The fundamentals of natural theology can no more be denied than the main facts and affirmations of our own consciousness. Both are known by direct intuition; and we cannot suppose there is any uncertainty concerning them, without supposing that certainty is impossible in any thing. “The only ground, in fact, on which the validity of the inductions and intuitions of natural theology can be assailed, is that of the relativity of knowledge; and to make the assault *seem* successful, the position of the assailant must be taken so far to the left as to leave him in utter and complete scepticism, doubting the axioms of mathematics, and uncertain of his own existence.” Just this is the position of the “New Philosophy” of Herbert Spencer; and, whatever others have done to expose its fallacies, the students and teachers of theology have not been barren or idle in the same task.

But from this I turn to notice a formidable adversary of theology, on the opposite side of the world of speculative thought. I refer to the various schools whose common foundation is subjective idealism, or the alleged supremacy of the individual consciousness, or the suf-

ficiency of reason as the test and measure of truth, or the infallibility of the intuitions of man's rational nature, — all only different expressions of the same thing. Now, as characteristics of a certain tendency of thought, we find these, in one shape or another, re-appearing at nearly all points in the line of recent speculation; beginning — not to go too far back — with Lessing and Kant; cropping out most influentially in Christian Baur and the Tübingen school of criticism; attaining a still more luxuriant growth in such thinkers as Strauss, Theodore Parker, Francis Newman, and Renan; and culminating in the sceptical coterie of the "Westminster Review." Starting, as they do, with substantially the same premises, these idealists, intuitionists, rationalists (the name is of little consequence), arrive at substantially the same conclusions, however they may diverge on minor points. These conclusions are, in the main, utterly subversive both of the matter and the form of Christian theology. It is impossible to accept them, and retain any respect for theology as a science, or for theologians as men of high intellectual character. As the necessity and authority of revelation are denied; as inspiration is only a higher form of the reason; as it is quite practicable to construct God out of the ideas of consciousness, and to find the surest revelation of truth in individual insight; as the current faith of the time is not only the transient expression of the soul's wants and worship, but the ever-changing utterance of the soul's aspirations to realize an ideal which the progress of the ages is constantly mending, — as all these things are so, what else can be done with religion except to

resolve it into ethics, or with faith except to absorb it in moral sentiment, or with Christian dogma except to merge it in philosophy, or with Christian theology generally, except to banish it out of sight as an obsolete tradition? And such, in fact, is the disposition made of theology, as an object of thought, by all the affiliated branches of this school. Whether, then, we consider opinions which rely upon sensation as the ultimate test of truth, as in the case of positivism in all its various modifications from that of Comte to that of Herbert Spencer; or upon the metaphysical conception of the unknowableness of the Infinite; or opinions which rely upon the faculty of insight as the sufficient basis of authority, as in the case of the various phases of the subjective school, — the result is the same: the former in tending towards atheism, and the latter in its drift toward pantheism, or naturalism, wherein no chance for interposition by miraculous revelation is retained, alike cut away the very ground of theological science.

But, emerging from these regions of speculative inquiry to the solid ground of physical science, we find here an influence quite as hostile to the claims of theology. The attitude in this regard of physical science, as defined by some of its most popular exponents, is too familiar to require either comment or illustration. Flushed with the sense of its alleged as well as real triumphs, in late years, it has fallen into a tone of almost insolent contempt at once for the matter and methods of theology. Putting on the air of conceded superiority, it has borne itself as though theology were the common repository of the dreams and fables and

idols of the race, thrown up to the surface by the human mind in the periods of its ignorance and immaturity, and as though itself alone dealt with the only knowledge worth having. Because, in the progress of discovery, it has taken some things out of the province of the supernatural, and carried them over to the domain of universal law, thus step by step narrowing, as is alleged, the field of theological inquiry, it argues that, in due course of time, it will remove all the fences enclosing that field, and finally take possession of the field itself, thus consigning theology, as a science, to irrevocable bankruptcy, and leaving behind nothing but its name to keep alive in the records of the world's thought the memory of its once undisputed sway.

I cannot leave this branch of my subject without a few words on certain schools of thinkers within the Church, some of them bearing her Orders, or holding chairs in her great seats of learning. It is a sad thing to say, but it is nevertheless true, that theology as a science, seeking to hold its own amid the cross-currents of modern thought, has received its worst wounds, not from its avowed enemies, but in the house of its friends. There has been among us a class of minds both learned and influential, who, in their efforts to reconstruct or modify theology with a view to its better adaptation to the altered tone of thought in our time, have, in one way or another, loosened its hold on the general mind, and thus afforded aid and comfort to its professed adversaries. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to give a just impression of this class of minds without some notice of the origin and history of their

characteristic tendencies. The general type of thought which they represent began with Coleridge, through whom filtered into the English theological mind many of the peculiarities of German speculation and criticism. Coleridge started with the conviction that religion lacked a philosophical basis. He attempted to supply one different from that of the last century. He found it in those intuitions of reason which were supposed to rise above Scripture and tradition, and to form the ground and measure of both. He came upon the stage at what he deemed a critical period. In politics, literature, and religion, there were manifest symptoms of a determination to break away from the past. On all sides were the signs of impending revolution. It was his desire to stand by the ancient inheritance of truth, and at the same time to make way for all that should be valuable in the later acquisitions of knowledge. In reviewing the past beliefs of mankind, he saw much truth and some error in all. He undertook to preserve the former, and eliminate the latter. But some sure, comprehensive guide was indispensable to the performance of so grave and difficult a task. He found this guide, or believed that he did, in a certain faculty of the human mind which he called "the impersonal or intuitional reason," the organ in man which interprets the absolute truth, whether in the form of the true, or the good, or the beautiful, — that eternal reality of life and being after which all systems had searched, and for which all earnest spirits had yearned. With this for his pilot, he set out on his voyage over the wide ocean of existing thought. There was nothing, in Coleridge's method, of the older



rationalism. He magnified rather than pared down the supernatural in Christianity. He explained the divine mysteries by raising the mind to a height where they ceased to be mysteries. He did not depress revelation to the ordinary plane of the intellect, but strove, however vainly, to elevate the intellect to a level with the plane of revelation. It was in the effort to do this that he was led to define inspiration as only an elevated form of "the reason," and so to hatch a whole brood of errors in the field of Biblical interpretation and theological study. His system — if system it can be called — drew, as is well known, upon the Neo-Platonic philosophy of Alexandria, and borrowed still more largely from the thinking of Kant, Jacobi, and Schelling; a fact which of itself might — had it been clearly understood — have enabled his contemporaries to forecast the tendencies and ultimate fruits of his method of inquiry, now so familiar to the present generation in the teachings of the disciples who sat at his feet. The movement of free thought in English theology abreast of which we stand is the resultant of the Alexandrian and German elements of speculation which met, mingled, and crystallized in the genius of Coleridge. Its tendency, to use the well-chosen words of another,<sup>1</sup> is "to require that the human soul shall apprehend divine mysteries intellectually, as well as feel their saving power emotionally; the reduction of inspiration theologically, as well as psychologically, to an elevated but natural state of the human consciousness; the inclination to regard the work of Christ as that of the divine Teacher of humanity, and

<sup>1</sup> Farrar's Critical History of Free Thought.

human history as the longing for such a divine voice ; the description of the work of Christ as a divine manifestation of a reconciliation which previously existed, instead of being the mode of effecting it, — all of which, as they are corollaries from the philosophy of the Neo-Platonists, so they find their parallel in the school of the Alexandrian fathers.”

Now, the drift thus described not only pares off and abrades the edges of dogmatic theology, but strikes at its very core. It works not from the outer rim toward the centre, but begins at the centre, and spreads like a subtle poison in all directions. Its influence is apparent in much of the most taking literature of the time. It has spoken mildly through Maurice and the elder Arnold, and Charles Kingsley up to within ten years of his death, and then through Dean Stanley and the growing school he represented. But it has made itself heard in a more resolute and aggressive tone in most of the authors of “*Essays and Reviews*,” and with especial boldness in the writings of Professor Jowett and Matthew Arnold. In all of them, though with varying degree, may be discovered the same ear-marks of the system whose historic lineage was revived in England by Coleridge. They are not in all respects mutual indorsers ; but there is an evident sympathy among them all with the effort to remove or drive in the existing boundaries of dogmatic religion. The more pronounced, such as Professor Jowett and Matthew Arnold, repudiate all disguise, and tell us plainly that God gave his Son not to reconcile God to man, but man to God ; not to purchase Divine mercy for man by the blood of the Cross,

out to make way in man's heart for the spontaneous flow of that mercy ; that Christ is to be accepted as a Teacher and a King, but not as a Priest ; that the main purpose of Christ was to work out a higher type of life, not a scheme of redemption ; that the dogmatic is but the ever-changing shell of the moral element of Christianity ; and that, looking forward to the religion of the future, Christianity can become such only as it will cease to be the religion of form and dogma, and become the highest type of ethics. It need scarcely be added, that, under the influence of such views, the very foundations of theology as a definite and methodical body of divine truth are resolved into quicksand. It is no longer a science, but a nomadic speculation, half real and half visionary, according as each age may see in it more of truth or more of falsehood.

But finally, in order to complete the list of influences conspiring to degrade theological science from its hereditary dignity, I must not omit the agency of the literature of scepticism. This opens up too wide a field to be traversed or even outlined here. No one, familiar with the higher reading of the million, needs to be reminded how largely it has been flavored not so much with the logic as with the sentiment of unbelief ; nor how much of its graver and more scholarly thoughtfulness has been furnished by such minds as Carlyle and Emerson, Buckle and Lecky, Michelet, Renan, and Taine, whose surpassing ability and culture, combined with the immense popular attraction of the special themes to which their labors have been devoted, have won for any thing they might say, not merely the atten-

tion, but very generally the assent, of the masses. When such writers, in elaborate essays, habitually slur and scorn the most learned and strongly reasoned apologies for Christian dogma produced by the theological mind of the day, what else than a settled temper of unfriendliness toward Christian theology can be looked for, not only amid the numerous company of copyists and parasites that hang upon their path, but among the vast audience whom they address in Europe and America?

Such, then, are the adversaries against which the Clergy, as the special organs and conservators of theology, have been called to contend. With these in our eye, we can judge somewhat of the quality and extent of the intellectual activity which has been exhibited in theological inquiry and defence during the present generation. It will be quite impossible for me, in this connection, to follow out, or even to name, all the lines of investigation which have been pursued within the wide field over which this activity has been diffused. To do so with any completeness, would require at least a summary of all the processes and results of the sacred learning of recent times. It will be quite sufficient for my purpose, to advert only to those efforts of the theological mind which furnish special illustrations of its readiness and ability to deal with the more salient questions of the day, so far as they affect the claims or embarrass the progress of Christianity. But, before proceeding further in this branch of the subject, it may be well to notice briefly two objections urged, with some frequency and spirit, against these efforts.

(1) It has been alleged, that they evince little original constructive power ; that they are mostly explanatory of material already in existence, or apologetic as against the attacks of modern criticism and discovery which forced the Clergy into a defensive attitude. The answer is easy. The theological activity of the time has been thrown, as common-sense required, in the direction where it was most needed. And yet, though largely given to defensive work, it has not been lacking in constructive energy. It has not undertaken, as a mere intellectual exercise, to resolve the existing theology into its elements, and out of them to build a new theology. Such an attempt would have been superfluous, in the presence of other work more imperatively demanded. But it has re-examined to its foundations every doctrine, every principle of theology, which the altered tone of the age rendered it needful to re-state with more clearness, or to guard against modern objections. As examples, take the doctrines of the Incarnation and the Atonement ; or of the Church, the Ministry, the Sacraments, the Scriptural and primitive theory of worship ; or, which has been the chief battle-ground, the authenticity and genuineness of the Holy Scriptures. On each of these, to name no others, almost a new literature has been created ; and if little absolutely original has been added to the previous treatment of them, certainly no resource of historic induction, or logic, or biblical learning, or general knowledge, has been neglected in their defence or their exposition. Eighteen hundred years of thought and teaching, on these and kindred subjects, by minds as illustrious for power and erudition as any to be found

in the past, have, indeed, left little room for positive discovery, and still less for absolute originality of handling. And yet it may be doubted whether any period in ecclesiastical history has witnessed a more comprehensive grasp of the subject-matter of theology, or a more complete mastery of its complex relations with other departments of inquiry. It is too soon to pass upon the theological work of the last thirty or forty years. The din and dust of the conflict still raging make it impossible to correctly estimate its value; but I have little doubt that minds have flourished among us whom the judgment of the future will deem not unworthy of companionship with the best that have been produced in the most energetic and fruitful eras of the Church's life.

(2) It is alleged that the work done in this field, whatever it be, has not been exclusively clerical work, and therefore that the Clergy may not claim all the credit. In the last fifty years there has been an extraordinary growth of lay talent and learning in the department of theological study. Not a few laymen of piety and culture have engaged with vigor and success in the religious discussions of the time, or in collateral investigations having an important bearing on the issues raised in those discussions. Religion has abundant cause of gratitude for the labors of such men as the Duke of Argyle, Rawlinson, Henry Rogers, St. George Mivart, and Drummond, not to add many others whose names will readily occur to the reader. But, as with other vocations demanding varied attainments or assiduous and methodical study, so with this. Take law, or

medicine, history, or physical science. Each has had its professional corps exclusively devoted to its interests, and each has had its non-professional auxiliaries who have stepped aside from other callings to elaborate special questions falling within its particular province. Discoveries have been made by men who could not be called discoverers ; inventions, by men who did not rank as inventors ; contributions to history, by those who were not historians ; philosophical, legal, and medical explorations, by those who were neither philosophers, lawyers, nor physicians. And yet, very properly, we attribute whatever progress may have been secured in any one of these vocations, to the minds professionally engaged in them. The same rule, in all fairness, should apply to theology, and to those whose duty and calling it is to cultivate it.

These objections disposed of, I turn now to note some instances of a high order of intellectual activity in theological studies.

I. These studies have helped to establish on a more solid basis the claims of theology as a science having a distinct aim and work in the sphere of human knowledge. They have shown what it is not, as well as what it is. It is not, as some would have it, merely an orderly reflection from nature, with a divine glow on its face ; nor, as others would have it, a capacious wallet in which are assorted and packed with much learning and care the traditional but unverified guesses of the human mind on the problems of being and destiny. Sacred polemics and Christian evidences fall within, but do not fill up, its province. It is not synonymous with what is

vaguely known as "our common Christianity," nor with what schools of thought or individual inquirers may gather from the Holy Scriptures. It is simply the science of God, or what we know of God put into system; and has its own place and function as positively and definitely as any one of the family of sciences built up by the purely inductive method. What we know of God includes all that outward nature, all that reason on its moral as well as its intellectual side, all that revelation, can tell us; nay, more, all that can be gathered from the history of man, whether regarded as the simple record of his searches after God, or as a testimony to the reality of the wants that compelled him to be a seeker. If what we know or can know of the heavenly bodies is the material of astronomy; if what we know or can know of the crust of the earth is the material of geology: so what we know or can know of God is the subject-matter of theology. And, as has been already remarked, it may be doubted whether any past age has excelled the present either in the quality or the amount of the intellectual force with which this subject-matter has been handled. This force has been applied in many ways, but conspicuously in the following.

(1) In proving, by direct argument or by necessary inference, that theology meets every test of a veritable science:—

(a) As to the reality and genuineness of its sources of knowledge;

(b) As to the validity of the premises drawn from those sources;



(c) As to the logical soundness of its reasonings from those premises ;

(d) As to its permanence and continuity as a department of human thought ;

(e) As to the universality of its fundamental principles, and of the ethical conclusions deduced from them ;

(f) As to the unsurpassed intelligence devoted, in every age, to its cultivation.

(2) In proving that theology is not only a science, but that it is in reality the foremost of sciences : —

(a) Because, from the subject with which it deals, it is not so much one sort of knowledge as the condition of all knowledge. For, if there be that behind nature which Christianity reveals, and which, in some form, all healthy thought admits without a revelation ; then what we know of that power or that personality must condition all that we can know inductively or metaphysically of its operations, or of the phenomena they produce in the world of sense.

(b) Because, if it be and have what it claims, it supplies a living root to all other sciences, by exhibiting to them the life-power that pervades all of which they take cognizance.

(c) Because it is part of its rightful function, to explain the other sciences in their ultimate meanings each to each, and each to all combined, and to correct their exorbitances and defects, individually considered, by the unity and equilibrium of the whole body of knowledge, of which each science, taken by itself, is but a fractional part ; and of which theology, as the science of God, is and must be the central light to the full extent that it

is able to interpret by the voice of nature, of reason, of revelation, His eternal will, infinite wisdom, and boundless love. For, just what history would be if it left out the volitions of man in its summaries and explanations of events, — that, if there be a God, all science is that merges not its last generalization in the effulgence of His being, and traces not its ultimate root to His life-giving power.

II. These studies have done much toward solving the problem of the limits of human thought on the subject-matter of religion, — a problem which antedates and underlies every other in the field of religious inquiry. I do not say that they have solved this problem to the satisfaction of all schools of thought, or even that the result they have arrived at commands the assent of any set of thinkers outside of the pale of theology. What I affirm is, that, in their handling of the problem, they have kept abreast of the deepest and subtlest philosophical reasoning of the day.

The terms of the problem are these. Given a professed and duly authenticated revelation, is the human mind competent to sit in final judgment on its contents? Can the human mind be so far exalted, or revelation be so far depressed without losing its character, as to confer such a power upon man? If we answer in the affirmative, then we must admit that the finite may sit in judgment upon the infinite, the relative upon the absolute; and, if we admit this, then it follows, that, in the sphere of religion, God may be compressed into the measure of man, or, which amounts to the same thing, that man may be expanded into God; or, to adopt a formula of

advanced German speculation, that Christ — in whom, according to revelation, dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily — is only man sublimated into deity by the religious consciousness. Now, there are but two ways in which it is possible for the human mind to bridge the gulf which separates the Absolute from the relative, the Infinite from the finite. The one is by the pure intellect, which is forced to shape all its conceptions under the limitations of time and space; the other is by the intuitions of the moral reason or the spiritual consciousness, which, as they are capable of comprehending the immutability of moral distinctions, and appreciating what is eternal in the ideas and laws of moral obligation, constitute the only faculty of human nature which can rise above the limitations that condition all the thinking of the logical intellect. Now, the utter and hopeless failure of the first method — that of the speculative reason — has been admitted by most metaphysicians since Kant, whose analysis of the functions of the pure reason has been regarded by nearly all subsequent schools of thought as the final settlement of the boundaries of human intelligence, in its relations to the Absolute. But if philosophers have proved the impossibility of mapping out the divine nature, and discovering or constructing its attributes by any process of the intellect — that is, by any scheme of logical induction or deduction; so thinkers in the interest of revelation have proved, over and over, that if it be not impossible, in the nature of things, for the human mind to elaborate a satisfactory conception of Deity by its faculty of moral reason or spiritual insight, yet, that, in point of fact, it has never done

so. Nay, more : they have demonstrated psychologically that it is impossible to secure any satisfactory agreement as to the number, the quality, and the range of those intuitions of the moral consciousness of man, which have been so much relied upon by some as competent to unveil the foundation principles of religion, and thus to supersede the necessity and contradict the fact of a revelation. And then, still further, they have shown by the undeniable testimony of history, that those intuitions, under all grades of knowledge and culture, have proved to be little better than the ignis-fatuus of the religious aspirations of humanity, ever keeping alive the desire to attain to the Christian conception of God, but ever powerless to realize it. But if such be the limits of human thought in the sphere of religious truth, as shown by history and by analysis of the human consciousness, then certain consequences of vast moment inevitably follow. If man cannot, intellectually or morally, arrive at a philosophy of the Infinite, he cannot find within himself an infallible criterion of religious truth ; and, if he have not such infallible criterion within himself, then all his reasonings on religious truth, the substance of which is God's voice speaking through finite symbols, are exposed to error ; and, if this be so, then it follows that human reason, though not without its necessary office and work in religion, is not entitled to sit in final judgment upon all the contents of a duly authenticated revelation. As matter of fact and experience, the criterion built up out of the intuitions of the moral sense in man finds itself at sea the moment it attempts to account for many of the admitted phe-

nomena in the course of God's natural providence ; e.g., the infliction of physical suffering, the adversity of the good, the prosperity of the wicked, the crimes of the guilty involving the misery of the innocent, the tardy appearance and partial distribution of moral and religious knowledge in the world. Now, these are facts reconcilable, though we know not how, with the infinite goodness of God. But they are facts which baffle and silence any criterion that can be erected by the human mind ; and, if this be so, what possible right has any human being to assume that a criterion which thus signally fails to account for what certainly happens in the order of nature can be applied unqualifiedly and universally to the statements of revelation ? Such, substantially, has been the process and the result of the reasoning of the theological mind on the great question of the limits of human thought in this direction.

The following is another view of the same question. There is in man a sense of the Infinite and Absolute. Precisely how it works in bridging the gulf between the conditioned and the unconditioned ; whether it exists simply as feeling or intuition, or as a mental conception or cognition capable of expressing itself under the necessary laws of thought : is still, and probably always must be, an open question. Between these two views the current metaphysical thought of our time is about equally divided. If we accept the former, we must confine human thought on the deep things of God within a small circle. If we accept the latter, the limits of thought are indefinitely extended, and we have to deal with pretensions that in their final development may deny

the necessity of revelation ; or, admitting it as a fact, may invest man with absolute authority to sit in judgment on its contents. It is against the former theory that we have to defend the knowableness of the Infinite and Eternal, and so to give the Divine, whether in nature or revelation, a hold on the human mind, and the obligations of religion a sure foundation in the soul of man as well as in the will of God. It is against the latter theory that we have to assert the necessity of revelation, and the subordination of human reason to its authority. Granting the knowableness of God by man, the question arises, how far it extends, and what are the boundaries of our valid judgments on divine things.

It is admitted that our thoughts of the Infinite have the character of knowledge ; and that, like all other knowledge, it is a relation between our faculties and their object. It is admitted, that, so far as it goes, it is real knowledge, i.e., a knowledge of the object ; and, moreover, that it has a certainty of its own, i.e., the certainty, not of *formal demonstration*, but of *assured conviction* of truth. It is admitted that the only alternative to this is nescience with all its negative results,—a thing double-edged, and cutting both ways. For, if it be true that the infinite severed from all relation to the finite is unthinkable, incognizable, it is equally true that the finite apart from all relation to the infinite is unthinkable, incognizable. If we cannot trust the veracity of our faculties when dealing with the ground of phenomena, we cannot trust their veracity when they deal with phenomena themselves ; and so all processes of differentiation, without which no knowledge is possible,

are alike untrustworthy. The report of the sounding-plummet is as sure in deep water as in shallow, provided it makes any report at all. The necessary relativity of knowledge does not, therefore, discharge knowledge of its hold on the absolute. Conditions in us do not bar all access by us to the unconditioned. But if this be admitted, then, among other consequences, it must be admitted, to come at once to the point in hand, that, as Bishop Butler declares, "Reason can, and it ought to, judge not only of the meaning, but of the morality and evidence, of revelation."<sup>1</sup>

And yet this admission must be limited and qualified by the facts of the case. To treat it otherwise, would be to convert revelation into a ladder whereby reason could climb to a plane above itself,—God's voice into the mere prelude of some nobler harmony to be constructed by man himself. What, then, are the limitations of Bishop Butler's statement? Apart from these, it is sweeping enough to satisfy the extremest rationalist who finds in his own consciousness the highest possible authority in all matters of religion, if not the ultimate source of religion itself. Man, then, because made in the image of God, may determine whether or no the voice that reaches him, taken as a whole, is God's voice; i.e., may determine by its internal character a true revelation from a false one. But specifically, while he may, for example, pass upon the morality of revelation, he may not pass upon the truth and fitness of all doctrines of the Divine nature and economy that constitute the ground, the sanction, and motive-power of that morality.

<sup>1</sup> Analogy, part ii. chap. 3.

He may apprehend what he cannot comprehend; he may accept, and be obliged to act upon, what he cannot measure; he may grasp as most real and necessary truth what he is incompetent to criticise and unable to prove. As there is a limit to his knowledge of physical phenomena, so there is a limit to his knowledge of spiritual phenomena. He may describe nature's processes, and catalogue its elements, its species, its genera, without knowing why it does what it does, or whether what it does is done in the best possible way. So with what he knows of the economy of God's spiritual kingdom. He may judge of moral facts in the Divine administration, but he may not judge of the whole plan of which they are only individual and perhaps isolated parts. The Incarnation of Christ is a fact and also a mystery. He must accept the fact, though he cannot fathom the mystery in the sense of deciding whether it was necessary or not, whether it accords with the internal and absolute subsistence of the Godhead or not, whether or not it violates or harmonizes with reason. So with the Atonement and the Resurrection of Christ. As facts they must be accepted, whether above or within the scope of reason. So, again, if God be revealed as Triune, he must deal with the fact in its practical consequences, though as a doctrine it refuse him rational satisfaction. Revelation, because it is revelation, comes to him with authority; and to this authority, if he accept revelation at all, he must bow. If, as far as he can go, all be consistent with reason, he must believe what lies beyond to be equally consistent with reason, though he cannot see it to be so.



Of late years some metaphysicians have assailed with vigor, if not with success, Kant's famous demonstration of the impossibility of attaining to any positive cognition of the absolute by any purely intellectual process. They claim to have opened the passage from the finite to the infinite, which Kant had closed by his iron logic; and, as a result of their effort, they claim not only that the absolute and the infinite are cognizable by the human mind, but that, inclusively, all that enters into religion must be considered as the legitimate subject-matter of thought; and consequently they have helped to place the intellect in an attitude of superiority to revelation. This new phase of speculative thought has given to advanced rationalism a new lease of influence, and quickened it into fresh activity. This drift, however, having had its day, will doubtless give place to a re-action; and this re-action, when it sets in, will in all probability swing back toward a re-acceptance of the logic of Kant and of the school which he founded. Certainly, while asserting their right to criticise religion as a whole and each of its constituent parts, this school has developed no constructive power worthy of the name. What they would destroy in the sphere of revealed truth, they are unable to replace with any device of their own. They are shut up to negations, and travel over and over the weary, fruitless round of abstractions which have proved too vague and thin to offer a solid footing to anybody's faith, or a message of peace to anybody's mental or spiritual anxieties. The structure they have built in the realm of religion is an inverted pyramid.

On the other hand, those who think with Kant that

the intellect, if obedient to the laws which condition thought, cannot cross the gulf which divides the absolute from the relative, but that the moral faculties can, have fared scarcely better. Starting with the asserted "imperatives" of the moral reason, — i.e., God, immortality, and the moral law, — and relegating revealed religion to the inferior position of a mere auxiliary to the moral reason, they too have equally failed in constructive power. Having dragged Christianity from its throne of sovereignty, they cannot agree upon any satisfactory substitute. The moral reason, so self-sufficing according to their theory, cannot do the work or bear the strain put upon it, but breaks down utterly under the final, crucial test. When analyzed and sifted it is found to be powerless to give shape and vitality to the raw material which it furnishes for the structure of religion. Nor does the material so furnished cover the whole ground which religion must occupy if it is to be of any practical service to mankind. Moreover this theory of the moral reason does not square with the facts. The theory assumes that the light it sheds is pure light; that it is a faculty free from flaws and fractures; that it is now what it was at its creation, upright and undefiled, the one governor of man's nature whose supremacy may not be questioned. But the facts prove that the exact opposite is true: that what light it gives is mixed with misleading shadows; that it is seamed and scarred as by some great catastrophe; that it is fallen and corrupt; and that in reality, while proving its title to command all the elements of human life, whether passional or intellectual or moral, it is often

disobeyed and set at naught. Psychologically considered, it is supreme, and its authority ought to be the very highest. Ethically and practically considered, it is weak and fallible. The moral reason, then, — the sole faculty, according to this school, competent to take hold of the Infinite and Absolute, of God and His truth, the sole power adequate to the construction of a religion, or to the criticism of any religion coming to it *ab extra*, — is, as matter of fact, out of joint with the life it was ordained to govern; speaks with a stammering tongue, where, if it speak at all, it ought to speak with a clear-cut emphasis; is bound by fetters where it should exhibit an unchallenged freedom; gives scarcely light enough to drive back the pursuing, hovering darkness. And yet this is the reason, this is the conscience, that is to be enthroned above revelation, and to sit in final and all-comprehending judgment on its contents. However these views may stand when an exhaustive metaphysical analysis shall have subjected them to its final test, it is certain that it was no ordinary or rudely equipped type of the theological intellect which worked them out, and won for them the respect of modern thought.

III. As further illustrating the theological vitality of the Clergy, observe what they have done to keep alive, in the popular mind and in every-day life, the sense of the supernatural as a practical, habitual influence upon character and conduct, as well as upon thought and feeling. The causes tending to weaken this sense are so familiar, that it will be enough to name without enlarging upon them. Men in our time live *in* the present in the sense of living *for* the present. There

have been times when men lived in the present in the sense of living *for* the future, and living also *in* the past in order the better to live for both. The past to them was full of great memories, and the future full of inspiring hopes, while the present was flat, sterile, unprofitable. But now the things that absorb heart and brain and hand, the passions and conflicts, the sorrows and joys which throb along the arteries of life are *in* and *of* the present. As comparatively little value is attached to what is distant, so comparatively little importance is attached to what is unseen, or to what does not come to us as self-evident or as demonstratively certain. A thing that is doubted is subject to heavy discount. Every thing must be verified, and most things are held to be of little worth that do not on their face show the uses to which they can be put. Immediate pay and profit is the watchword of the day. There is a hard realism in business of all sorts; but not more of it than there is in science, history, and letters. Men still talk about the ideal, write prose and poetry about it, dream about it, on rare emergencies find in it a certain glow of feeling and imagination; but all that is the by-play, not the serious work, of the age. Abundant proofs of all this are at hand in our politics and education, in our judgments on passing events, and in our estimates of what is chiefly good and enjoyable in life. Then there is the depressing weight of our marvellous material greatness, arising from the large ascendancy which has been acquired over the resources and powers of nature. Connected with, or rather resulting from, this dominion, is an average of comfort and luxury such as

the world never saw or dreamed of before, — an average so high as to breed in the common mind indifference to any other or better heaven than what can be found now and here. In such a state of things, the still voice and the veiled glory of the supernatural are at a discount; and it need scarcely be added, that the extent to which they are so measures the decline from the sources of the truest and best life, and signalizes the sweeping-away from the soul's firmament of the surest lights which God has set there. Crush in man the practical belief in the supernatural, and you crush in him the very possibility of permanent moral power and greatness. This is God's ordinance, and the reason for it is wedged into the core of humanity.

In such times, and amid such tendencies, too much credit cannot be given to those who make it the foremost duty and chief aim of their life-work to chafe into vitality and power the dormant or dying sense of the supernatural in all the modes of it which God employs for the salvation of man, — the written Revelation, the Church with its means of grace, the living Christ with all that came forth from Him, and the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life. Now, speaking generally, next to the undying conviction in the soul of the existence of God and of a future life, which, however it may be crippled or hid beneath deep shadows, never utterly forfeits its power, nothing has done so much to save the sense of the supernatural as an element of the common faith from blight or torpor as the Christian Priesthood, appointed of God and acknowledged of man to be the teacher and guardian of an authentic message from

heaven, which is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. It is needless to argue the value of such a service to humanity. It does not now, and never will, make an item in the statistics of the nineteenth century. There is no arithmetic to compute it, no logic to formulate it, no poetry to glorify it to the million, no oratory to blazon it at the seats of national power or along the highways of the world's thought. For vastly inferior services the canvas glows and the marble breathes, and the nations lift glad shouts of grateful praise. And yet this sublime ministration of things supernatural goes on with no thought of pause or defeat, of the world's praise or blame; though as necessary to the life of man, and as much unthanked and unheeded, as the daily sun or the vital air.

IV. But, again, the vigilance and activity of the theological mind are impressively exhibited in what has been done for the re-adjustment, illustration, and enforcement of the several lines of the Theistic argument, with a view to meeting the altered phases of modern thought. The existence of God is the foundation of theology. In all theological reasoning there are two points of departure; i.e., the being of God, and the human soul. If either be granted, the rest follows. Christianity begins with the former, and out of it develops the scheme of redemption, and then, by what it was appointed to do, measures the spiritual wants of man. God's purposes toward man tell what man is, more surely and more exhaustively than any possible statement by himself of his own condition. Therefore, as might be

expected, nearly all the deeper thought antagonistic to revealed religion assails, before all else, its teaching as to the existence of God. While the arguments for His existence, as Christianity represents it, have not changed materially in their character or substance, the mode of putting them has changed with the changes in the sceptical theories that have of late questioned either their validity or their relevancy. The answers have kept pace with the objections, the lights with the shadows. The theistic reasoning of a century ago — true now as it was then — has been greatly extended and diversified. The progress of knowledge has been, to say the least, as serviceable to Christian as to free thought; and in discovering difficulties, and exciting doubts, it has also discovered the means and excited the intellectual power needed to grapple with and remove them. If this be so, then clearly one test of the mental energy and vigilance of the theological mind is to be found in the way in which it has handled, amid the exigencies of the times, the materials of the theistic argument furnished by both the old and the new learning. It is not proposed to go into details, but merely to outline in the most general way the more salient aspects of the argument, and this with a view to bringing out the fresh light thrown upon it by Christian advocates (belonging mostly to the ranks of the Clergy) in their efforts to answer the objections of modern thought; and unless we are greatly mistaken, the result of our inquiry will prove that the Church has no reason to be ashamed of the breadth, acuteness, and versatility of its ordained servants in one of the highest fields of disciplined intellect.

It was one of the advantages of Christian apologists in the past age, that they were at liberty to take some things for granted. There were at least a few inches of common ground in the arena of controversy between themselves and their antagonists. They could assume the existence of a Creator, and man's conscious relation to him; and, these facts being admitted, they could assume that religion of some sort had a solid standing-place in human reason. Neither Butler nor Paley, for example, attempts to go behind these postulates. Not so now. To-day even these are challenged; and the defence must start as though nothing were established save the mind's capacity to think, and the worlds within and without on which that capacity is to be exercised. Whether or no there is a Supreme Being; whether or no He made the universe, and still governs it with intelligent purpose; whether or no man is so related to Him as to be justified in regarding Him as an object of worship; whether or no, if such a Being exist, He is will, and therefore can be moved, or fate, and therefore cannot be, — these are open questions, and around them the debate rages with a persistency and momentum that forbid all thought of truce or concession. Many, moreover, are the substitutes offered for the doctrine of "*one living and true God.*" One school tells us of "the latent potency of matter;" another, of "a stream of tendency under the guidance of a power not ourselves which makes for righteousness and order;" another, of abstract formulæ of reason embodying the final generalizations of science and metaphysical speculation, — each in turn being chartered to rule the kosmos, and work



out its perfection. In dealing with these and all kindred theories opposed to Christian Theism, it has not been deemed enough to prove a negative, or to drive them into a *reductio ad absurdum*. Our doctrine of God, and of the origin and relations of the universe, must be as positive as that of revelation, or nothing. In stating this doctrine, recent apologists have done good service in pointing out distinctly, (1) what it is proposed to prove; and (2) what are competent proofs; and (3) how much the force of these proofs depends on the condition, the training, and habits of thought, of the minds to which they are offered. In doing this they have admitted that the theistic argument is not what scientists will accept as absolute demonstration, nor what strict logicians would regard as entirely without flaws; but at the same time they have insisted, and in terms defying successful contradiction, that the argument is precisely of the sort that mankind universally accept as decisive in the ordinary affairs of life, and as abundantly sufficient in all issues affecting the moral or voluntary as well as intellectual nature of man. They have shown, too, that all strictly scientific or demonstrative reasoning rests on assumptions rooted in unfathomable mysteries; and that, if there be no valid and convincing use of reason save such as excludes from its processes every element of doubt, then no trustworthy work can be done by reason among the facts of human history, human conduct, human society, and the moral consciousness of man. But the knowledge based on this class of facts is a higher knowledge than the knowledge which admits of absolute verification. It is every way of more con-

sequence to determine a duty, though it can be done only by probabilities, than to determine a chemical affinity or a mechanical force, though it be done with the certainty of demonstration. A given fact is valuable, not in proportion to the facility with which it can be referred to the laws of thought, or to the exactness with which it can be analyzed and classified, but rather in proportion to its bearing on the life and character of responsible beings.

Such are some of the considerations that have been urged as needful to give the proper tone and attitude of mind in handling the various arguments for the existence of a personal God. These arguments are either *a priori*, or deductive as founded upon necessary, axiomatic truths of reason; or *a posteriori*, or inductive as built upon materials provided by observation and experience. In fact, when reaching their greatest force, they combine both processes, involving equally the study of particular facts, and the application of laws, intuitions, truths, said to be universal because inherent in the constitution of man and nature. However much these two lines of reasoning differ in other respects, they differ greatly as to their practical use and value. A more definite classification is that of Kant, — and, probably because more definite, more generally accepted in all recent theistic inquiries, — viz., (1) the Metaphysical or Ontological; (2) Causation, or the Cosmological; (3) Design, or adaptation of means to ends or final causes, or the Teleological; (4) not falling altogether under the last, though partly within its province, the Anthropological, or the argument arising from the facts of human conscious-

ness and history. Now, the Church of this generation has found among its Clergy, some engaged in the active duties of the Priesthood and some occupying Divinity chairs and lectureships, no lack of ability to review these arguments, to determine their comparative force, to repel the objections and solve the difficulties alleged by the several schools of free or positively sceptical thought. If their calibre and culture, and general faculty for deep and solid thinking, are to be estimated by what they have done in this direction, the Clergy have little to fear as to the ultimate verdict of all fair-minded men.

The least valuable of the theistic arguments is the metaphysical. It belongs to the region of abstractions; and from Anselm and Descartes down to Hegel it has proved to be little else than a series of mental gymnastics. It would lift the mind above itself, and put into it more than it can hold. Its conclusions outrun its premises. It vainly attempts to conceive being in the abstract, and then to convert what is an impossible conception into a definite term in logic; and the result is a process of reasoning that turns not on differences of things, but on distinctions of words. Such a process can add nothing to the knowledge of man, however it may delude him into believing the contrary. From the time Kant proved that "the unconditioned necessity of a mental judgment does not form the absolute necessity of a thing" (i.e., that an idea of God in the mind does not certify the reality of His existence; or, generally, that the actual being of an object can never be shown by thinking about it), this argument has been pushed higher and higher into the empyrean of speculation, until its

pure idealism culminated in the metaphysical postulate of Fichte and Schelling and Hegel, who affirmed that the subject contained the object, the ego the non-ego, — in other words, that thought and being are identical, and constitute an organic unity; nay, still further, that the intellectual intuition of the absolute is resolvable into a logical idea, and that this in turn, and by necessary consequence, takes on the form and authority of a supreme law of thought. It is true that in every finite we have an idea of the infinite, and *vice versa*; it is true that of nature and self, of the infinite and the finite, of God and man, we have an intuition on which reason rests. But metaphysically considered, and as matter of strict logic, correlative ideas do not certify one another. The negation implied in the infinite indicates not existence, but non-existence. As has been well remarked, “the chief importance of the metaphysical arguments for the existence of God does not lie in their metaphysical validity, but in their testimony to the tendency of human thought.” If they do not demonstrate His existence, they certainly prove that the idea of such a Being is coincident with the loftiest exercise of reason. In other words, their value is not in what they accomplish as demonstrations, but in what they do toward establishing an antecedent probability of the truth of other and less pretentious lines of reasoning looking to the same end. This, so far as the writer is able to judge after much inquiry, is a fair statement of the estimation in which the later and more ambitious forms of the ontological argument are held by the soundest Christian thinkers of the day.

We turn now to the other arguments, whose individual force can be fully appreciated only when we reach the final result to which, by widely different paths, they lead us. They do not claim the virtue of absolute demonstrations, but that which after its kind is scarcely less, — the virtue of cumulative intellectual and moral probabilities based on the primary intuitions of consciousness, on the suggestions and demands of the practical reason or conscience, and on the testimony of history and human experience.

The Christian position in respect to the several forms of the theistic argument cannot be more exactly or comprehensively stated than in the words of St. Paul: "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, *being understood by the things that are made*, even his eternal power and Godhead."<sup>1</sup> We know God by what he has made, and only more perfectly by what he has said in a Revelation that verifies itself by appealing pre-eminently to the moral and spiritual nature of man. We see the works, and by them know the workman. This is the rock of our confidence in the validity of this great argument; and it cannot be broken or dislodged without involving in the same fate the most rudimentary and instinctive judgments of the human mind. If we look at ourselves, or at the outward world, certain inferences are irresistible; and these inferences, by the necessary and universal testimony of our intelligence, imply a power, wisdom, and goodness that it is impossible to conceive of apart from an infinite personality. Metaphysical speculation weaves

<sup>1</sup> Rom. i. 20.

about these inferences no end of difficulties ; but somehow all healthy minds, when they think upon them as they think upon all matters relating to life and conduct, fail to see the lion in the path that proves so formidable to the votaries of abstract thought. There is scarcely any mental process, that, if pushed far enough, does not land us in puzzles ; and if we must set aside as worthless all conclusions not absolutely proof against every plausible subtlety of metaphysical reasoning, it is hard to say what would be left us. Fortunately the average sense of mankind holds on its way, and seldom mistakes sand for granite, or tapers for stars.

In the cosmological argument, or that from cause and effect, the objections advanced by recent thought have added little to those of Hume. For causation he substituted uniformity of succession, and argued that one thing follows another simply in the relation of antecedent and consequent ; experience, beyond which we cannot go, limiting the mind to this relation. Later objectors have so far qualified Hume's notion as to admit the principle of causality ; but they render it useless as one of the grounds of theistic proof, by defining it as nothing more than the transference of force from one thing to another, and then by asserting that the cause is always contained in the effect, and that the effect measures the cause from which it proceeds. From these premises it is argued, that, if we regard the physical world as an effect, we have no right to infer a cause greater than itself ; and, next, that the law of causality "forbids a stop in its numeric precession which is to be designated as a first cause, itself having no precedent

cause," for, to make such a stop in the process would be to subvert the foundation of the structure so reared. It is claimed, moreover, that, as both cause and effect are physical, neither can be invested with qualities, as moral or intellectual, not found in the other. And so it is argued that we cannot get beyond the physical order by the use of a law in which that order is constantly implied; i.e., we cannot reach the being of God, or the Infinite, by tracing back or heaping together finite changes however countless. Granting the premises, the logic is unanswerable. But the fault of the logic is that it leaves out some important elements of the problem, and involves what the instinctive judgment of the mind is not slow in declaring a *reductio ad absurdum*. In all causation there is the conception of power as well as the conception of succession of phenomena; and of power, moreover, superior to the phenomena that manifest it. Man himself acts freely on nature. He cannot originate new laws, but he can originate new combinations of things and forces. He is conscious of an energy that stands apart from, asserts itself upon or independently of, passive nature. The very idea of causation is a product of mind, not of matter. It carries with it, as matter of consciousness, the attributes of universality and necessity, as well as the quality of power or force. It is not true, too, as a matter of consciousness, that every effect contains its cause in the sense of being the measure of it. An effect manifests, attests, represents, its cause; but does not exhaust it. If we find in causality only transference of force, it does not follow that one thing regarded as cause transfers to

another thing regarded as effect all its force. It may retain more than it imparts. Every cause must be adequate to its effect; but every effect need not be equivalent to its cause, though it must partake of the character of its cause. With the innate idea of power as superior to phenomena is associated, with the certainty of an intuition, the idea of personality,—of will and intelligence. This holds true of our own thought upon the works of our hands; and it holds true equally of our thought upon the universe as a totality of works. We can no more conceive of it as self-originated, or as the result of chance, than we can conceive of it as proceeding from nothing; and, if we cannot do the latter, we must fall back on something eternal. Change, as science tells us, is the condition of all things that appear; behind them the mind is forced to seek the unchangeable. And so we are driven upon one or the other of these two conceptions: either the succession of finite causes and effects is eternal, or beyond this succession there is an infinite cause or reason of all existence — itself uncaused. Both, metaphysically considered, are incomprehensible by the logical understanding, but both are not alike in their hold on the primary instincts of the mind; for these affirm that it is more reasonable to believe that the finite has proceeded from the infinite, than that the finite is eternal, and so to co-ordinate it with the infinite. If we reject the theistic conception of the origin of the universe, modern thought allows us but two other theories, — that which traces the universe to one eternal principle, manifesting itself phenomenally to consciousness in the dual form of matter



and mind, though necessarily neither the one nor the other, unknowable in itself because transcendental, and therefore at best only an inference of reason; and that which regards the universe as the product of material forces that have eternally existed, working out by their own inherent laws, and through countless cycles of time, the effects that we see, — these effects being wrought up into cosmic order by the human mind itself. The former theory figures in living thought as agnostic monism; the latter, as absolute materialism. Both, though in different manner, equally violate the primary laws of human thought. As has been shown over and over, — too often to make it worth while to repeat the process here, — the principle of causality taken by itself, and as only one branch of the theistic argument, proves that there is no resting-place for reason, save in the conception of a personal Creator, from whom all things proceed, and by whom and for whom all things consist.

But next we have the teleological argument, or that from final causes. And here, again, speculation has thrown itself across the path of our instinctive, common-sense judgments. The waters that float this argument would be clear enough apart from the mud cast into them by metaphysical digging. We cannot look at the world without seeing in it endless proofs of intelligent foresight and wise purpose. There is not only power, but power directed by wisdom. Intermediate means and ends work toward a fore-ordained issue. There is a combination, — a harmony of phenomena. Past and present are plainly determined in relation to the future. Innumerable and virtually infinite forces are at work,

and yet they are so marvellously adjusted as to subserve the promotion of order and progress. The mind seeks not only to explain things individually, or in mass, but demands, beside, some rational account of the order that pervades them. To say that this order merely happened, that it is the creature of chance, not only explains nothing, but is an insult to reason. To say that nature is the sufficient account of itself, is only to give up the question as a hopeless enigma. It were needless to go over ground so often traversed, and to cite from the vast mass of facts illustrative of this argument gathered especially from organic functions and animal instincts. Rationally man cannot help applying to the universe the same principles which govern him when he judges his own work and the work of his fellow-men. He refers to intelligence, to design, to a final cause, what, in his own sphere, could not have been produced save by an intelligent, forecasting mind, looking in all its operations to a determinate end; and as he sees in nature unspeakably more wonderful adaptations of means to ends than any of which himself is capable, so he infers, and with a cogency that carries with it the axiomatic, irresistible affirmations of his reason, that the cause which produced them is to all intents and purposes infinitely more wise, as well as powerful, than himself. Left to the guidance of his own reason, and apart from speculative perplexities which amuse, or at most exercise without instructing, the human mind, he sees just what St. Paul declared that he must and ought to see, — even God's eternal power and Godhead in the things which are made, the universe as it appears.

The objections to this argument, however ingeniously worked out and persistently urged by modern thought, have not weighed much in the estimation of the bulk of mankind. They seem content to let the metaphysicians try their teeth on this file, and for their own diversion to keep on rattling the dry bones of their logic; themselves resting meanwhile securely on the intuitive conviction that things made must have a maker, that order in nature must have an intelligent source, that where intelligence is there must be personality, and that where personality proves itself by effects practically infinite, itself must be practically infinite.

Hume said that man had a right to reason in this way only within the limits of his own experience and observation; that, to judge correctly of one world, he must know all worlds. But every advance of science is helping to answer this objection; for, the farther it moves on into the universe, the more clearly does it discover an all-embracing unity. It is said that the argument rests on analogy; that man takes too much for granted when he reasons from what he is and does to the power — if there be one self-existent and eternal — that works in and through the universe. Because he may *think* a law, it is no sufficient proof that such a law really exists: because he thinks a God, it does not follow that the God so thought out really is. But we answer: Unless we are to sever all intelligible connection between ourselves and that which is not ourselves, we must believe that the non-ego has its truthful counterpart in the ego. Our own conceptions are not, and cannot be, the measure of the Absolute Being; and yet we cannot but so far

confide in his veracity and goodness as to believe that the laws of thought in us have a legitimate and necessary relation to things as they are in themselves; and if we can accept the fact of a supernatural revelation which enables us to see God face to face by a direct and immediate vision, as theologians affirm to be the case, then is this instinctive confidence only another name for a moral demonstration. As has been strikingly remarked, "If we are not to throw away all idea of homogeneity and proportion between cause and effect, between instinctive tendency and fulfilment, then the rational and the moral in us can neither have their beginning nor reach their end apart from Divine reason, — from an intelligent, infinite, personal cause. We find not an appetency, affection, or energy of our being, that fails to meet its fitting object: through the range of the animal, the domestic, the social life, the several relations, of which one term is within us, complete themselves by hitting upon the other in the external scene. Is, then, this analogy to be first broken when we reach the highest levels of humanity? Are we *there* fleeing out of all relations, though still furnished with their inward drift and cry? still sent to seek, with pre-judgment that we shall not find? If we are to assume any oneness or any harmony of our nature with its theatre of being, such disappointment of its ends carries in it an improbability revolting to the reason."<sup>1</sup>

Spinoza's objection to the argument has been revived and expanded. He faulted it, because, if true, it would destroy the perfection of God; inasmuch as it would

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Martineau's *Ideal Substitutes for God*, p. 29.

represent Him as looking for an end outside of Himself, and therefore as lacking something which, if perfect, He must possess. The answer is, that God does not complete, but simply manifests, Himself by what He creates.

The materialist objects, that we need not look beyond the forces at work in the universe in order to account for what we see. But a material force capable of effects involving an intelligent purpose, is not what we understand by a material force. If such a force work by law, there must be a precedent power to prescribe the law. It is impossible to conceive of an atom self-impelled, self-directed, by a law inherent in itself. If it could originate its own law, it would not be what it is; and what is true of a single atom is true of any mass of atoms, — of the universe.

Another school antagonizes the argument because of the anomalies, imperfections, and dim gropings of nature, which are inconsistent with the idea of a perfect governing intelligence. Much has been made of useless or rudimentary organs in nature; of adaptations that work harm, that convulse, rend, poison, burn, drown, and in countless ways destroy life, and mar the harmony and beauty of the world. But this really does not make against the principle of the argument, except so far as our ignorance of the whole plan of nature hides from us the final cause. Shut up to efficient causes, the world is a hopeless riddle. Its discords have no solution. Its power is blind and pitiless; its strifes and angers are those of fate; it builds only to destroy, and nourishes life only for the grave. But once concede a purpose, an ultimate end, an intelligent directing mind; and

forces that seemed at war fall into unity, things afloat drop into their orbits, mountains of difficulty are brought low, and valleys of mystery are filled up.

Still another school, — the school of sceptics who tell us, “It may be as you say; the universe may have in it the mind and upon it the hand of God: but you cannot prove it,” — speaking through its ablest disciple,<sup>1</sup> admits that “there is a balance of probability in favor of creation by intelligence,” but insists that it is only “probability.” As no one has claimed for the teleological argument the character of a demonstration, this admission answers the purpose of the argument.

But, finally, a few words must suffice on the foremost opponents of the argument from design, the evolutionists. Starting with an attempt to account for the origin of species, they have step by step passed on to astronomy, geology, zoölogy, history, politics, and social statics. They hold that a process of development from some unknown and inconceivable beginning explains all that can be explained; and that this process is simply one phase of the universe, considered as a totality of force acting and re-acting with continuous energy, and according to uniform and unchangeable laws. The theory is harmless or harmful, according to the use made of it. It may be theistic or atheistic. If it be allowed that God directs the evolution, as well as originates it, we need not quarrel with the theory as being necessarily fatal to Christian Theism, though it eliminate special interventions of creative power. “The genesis of an atom,” says Herbert Spencer, “is no easier to conceive

<sup>1</sup> J. Stuart Mill.

than that of a planet. Indeed, far from rendering the universe less mysterious than before, evolution makes a greater mystery of it. Creation by fabrication is much lower than creation by evolution.”<sup>1</sup> Evolution with a presiding mind and a final cause is no stranger to theology. On the contrary, it is as old as the thought of St. Augustine, who, when he declared that God might have created all things *potentialiter et causaliter*, — the universe from a germ or germs in which were latent and alive in anticipation all possibilities of life and being, — declared all that theistic evolutionists claim to-day. But the contention not merely of theology, but of sound reason, is with a more radical notion of evolution, — that which leaves neither place nor occasion for creative intelligence, for a governing personality, but leaves the origin of nature as a primary force or collection of forces in the fathomless abyss of the unknown and unknowable. As such it is, when stripped of all verbiage, merely the doctrine of chance under a more learned name, and dressed up in the livery of science. Passing over its minor characteristics as an attempted account of the world’s origin and development, it is enough that its incurable weakness be exposed at the bar of reason, and, by necessary inference, its antagonism to the fundamental principle of Christian Theology. Things have come to be what they are by evolution; but how did the evolution begin? Whence came the power that enabled things to produce their like, and to vary just so much and no more, as the theory presupposes? Without this power, the whole

<sup>1</sup> Essays, vol. i p. 298.

process would have been impossible. Whence was derived the life of organized beings? It is life that organizes; life is the parent, not the child, of organization. Again, to bring the world where it is, with all its countless adjustments and adaptations, there must have been a concurrence of an infinite succession of lucky chances, each happening at the right time and place. In affirming this, the theory affirms what it is impossible to believe. Still again, when it is reminded that there is no adequate basis of fact for its inferences within the precincts of history, it shoves things back on what is practically an infinitude of years; and so evades the question, not solves it. "All things, in fact, are possible to those who can draw cheques without limit on the bank of eternity, for it cannot break!" Such a theory may for a time, and to some minds fascinated with its stupendous generalizations, obscure, but it cannot displace, the foundation-truth of Christian Theism.

We come now to the most telling of the arguments for the existence of a personal God, — that derived from man himself.

- (1) From self-consciousness, or personality;
- (2) From the moral nature and the moral world;
- (3) From the universal consent of mankind;
- (4) From the evidences of a moral government, wise, benevolent, and perfect.

Self-consciousness defies analysis. It escapes in the attempt to define it. It is not to be found in this or that quality or faculty of our nature, nor in all qualities and faculties. Self is behind and above all; and that self is personality, and that personality is a free force,



— free though subject to law, one in the midst of multiplicity, continuous and permanent in the midst of change. This is the primary truth of our being. It admits of no proof, because it is its own proof. All the metaphysics that has fluttered around this central core of our being in the ages all along, like a moth around a candle, has only darkened counsel. Now, in virtue of this personality we hold communion with our fellow-men as free personalities. But it is impossible to conceive of our own or of theirs as the source or cause of the conscious self. That self must have a ground; and so step by step we are carried up irresistibly to an Infinite self whose being is its own law, whose freedom is absolute, and whose end is the fiat of its own perfect will. In the existence of such a Being we have not only an instinctive faith which is the source of a regulative knowledge, but a reasonable faith, a faith grounded on the reason, a conviction rooted in an intelligible idea, and, when developed, taking the form of a positive cognition, a form too elementary to be analyzed, and too broad to be comprehended in a definition. No question has been more thoroughly sifted in late years by Christian scholars and thinkers. We give results, and outline the drift of inquiry, with no attempt at describing processes.

So with the other branches of the anthropological argument, which we have no space for discussing however briefly. In all, the intellect of the Church, as professionally exercised, has exhibited a dialectic as well as didactic ability, that has left no phase of thought on the theistic argument unexamined, no objection to the

Christian view of that argument unanswered. When the issue has been pushed into the region of abstract thought with all its affiliated subtleties, or handled by the processes of inductive or deductive logic, or debated at the bar of intuitive judgments and common-sense beliefs, or thrown out among the concrete facts of history and experience; it has been boldly and thoroughly met, and by minds betraying no unfitness for the task because of their habitual intimacy with the mysteries of revealed truth, or their reverence for the standards of a traditional faith. It should be observed, moreover, that, if these minds have not in all respects approved themselves to the average scientist and philosopher, it has not been because they could not walk in the deep waters of speculation, but rather because of a certain instinctive habit of estimating the value of thought by its bearing on life and character, on the moral responsibility and spiritual destiny of mankind, and a consequent impatience of metaphysical guesses and scientific hypotheses that seemed to lead nowhere save into outer darkness. To name the minds that, in this field of thought and in this generation, have won honorable distinction for themselves and for the Church by their erudition and intellectual power, would be to catalogue a large share of the current Christian literature of our time, a task that does not fall within our purpose.

## LECTURE IV.

### THE ACTIVITY OF THE CLERICAL OR THEOLOGICAL MIND IN CHRISTIAN AND SCIENTIFIC ETHICS.

I SHALL now ask attention to some of the more noteworthy evidences of the thoughtful activity of the theological or clerical mind in the sphere of Christian and scientific ethics. For convenience of handling, ethics may be separated from theology; but in substance it cannot be. Theology and ethics are only different phases of the same body of revealed truth. Christian ethics is the doctrine of the Christian life: Christian theology is the doctrine of Christian knowledge. The one treats of action under the aspects of duty: the other treats of faith as an object of intellectual apprehension. The one handles God's truth in its relations to the will and the conscience; the other, in its relations to reason. The one aims to show how man is to be educated and trained for time and eternity; the other, what he is to believe, and why he is to believe — the *what* and the *why* being regarded as inclusive of the principles on which, and the methods by which, that education and training are to proceed. Christian morality, then, and Christian theology, are bound together by an organic, not a technical connection. They were joined together in an

indissoluble marriage by their eternal Author ; and what God has joined together let no man put asunder. And yet the history both of dogmatic and ethical thought tells us how often the attempt has been made to divorce them, or rather to absorb the one in the other. The latter process, which may be traced in some of the great masters of religious thought, Schleiermacher and Rothe for example, has arisen from a conviction of the substantial identity, as of thought and purpose, knowledge and action, so of faith and morals. The attempts to divorce them, as parties not necessarily bound together, may be traced either to a severely speculative bias of the mind, or to an avowed determination to eliminate the dogmatic altogether from the ethical, the latter being regarded as alone important. For the sake of definition, let us go a step farther, and inquire how Christian ethics differs from philosophical or speculative ethics. It differs from the latter "in its subject, which is not man, but Christians ; in its principle, founded on the recognized relation between man and God ; in its source, being derived not from the reason, but from the teaching of Christ and the Apostles ; and, finally, in our perception of it, which is not by any analytical process, but by the Christian consciousness."

Now, as in the topics previously discussed, so in this, it is my purpose to deal only with such aspects of it as will best exhibit the tone and drift of the studies and writings of Christian teachers considered as its expounders and defenders. What, then, in late years, has been the work of the deputies of Christ in this direction ? Has it been a work which has improved or damaged

their credit as men of intellectual culture, vigilance, and energy? The answer to this question will be given under the following heads, as embracing the characteristic points of the recent ethical literature of the Church.

1. The present attitude of Christian ethics toward the ethics of philosophy, or the natural reason, involving the indebtedness of the latter to the former.

2. The alleged weaknesses and defects of Christian ethics.

3. The grounds of the superiority of Christian over natural ethics, in that greatest of tasks, the development and discipline of individual character.

It is well known, that, when Christianity supplanted the heathenism of antiquity, ethics, which had previously for many ages been cultivated as a province of philosophy, or in its practical relations as a branch of politics, was merged into theology. It so continued until after the Reformation of the sixteenth century, with the exception of what was done toward maturing a system of casuistry for the confessional; but this could scarcely be regarded as an exception, for it was done under the auspices of the Church, and with a view to purely religious uses. At the opening of the seventeenth century, there were some signs of a disposition to revive ethical studies as an independent branch of inquiry; but these studies did not assume a distinctly scientific character until after the famous disputes excited by the writings of Hobbes. Toward the close of the seventeenth century, ethics first assumed in our modern thinking the position as a separate science which it has maintained ever since. During a century and a half it drew to itself a very fair

proportion of the best speculative genius in England, France, and Germany. Many illustrious names adorned its history during that period. But it is noteworthy, that of late it has not commanded the interest it once did, and that it boasts of little progress in our day, when almost every other science has pushed its claims to an increased share of public attention. Many causes have conspired to produce this result. The higher thought of the time has been diverted from it by physical science, and still more by the wide and deep range of literature which handles many subjects once deemed foreign to it. It is certain that no masters of ethical inquiry are now produced who at all approach the great names of other days. When earnest and anxious spirits need help and guidance in the higher walks of thought or amid the ever-recurring perplexities of life, they go not to philosophers, but to poets, to giants in letters, and to great preachers. Wearied out in the profitless pursuit of noble but impalpable spiritualities, many have dropped off into a style of thought and teaching, which, though less pretentious, promises more that is tangible and certain. Confining themselves to the world of phenomena, to their co-existences and successions, they do not care to vex themselves with problems that lie deeper. It is admitted, moreover, that the true basis of moral studies regarded in their purely scientific aspect is psychology; and, further, that these studies cannot be exhaustively prosecuted without crossing the domain of certain abstract metaphysical questions which can never be definitively settled. But it so happens that psychology, though assuming a decided physiological bias of late, has not

adequately re-enforced itself with fresh views of the facts and processes of the human mind ; while metaphysics, so far as it relates to moral subjects, has been quite barren of any practical fruit. Thus the interest in ethical inquiries has been considerably diminished. But this can be only of temporary duration. The great and ever-pressing problems connected with these inquiries will compel a revival of the old interest in them. Some new turn in the current of thought, like that now being pushed by Herbert Spencer and his school, will bring them to the front again ; and it is not at all unlikely that the time is rapidly approaching when the best minds of the age will return to them with renewed sympathy, having grown weary of pursuits which, though promising more immediate and tangible results, confine them to mere phenomenal sequences and correlations. Judging from the past, as well as from the instincts of the higher intellect, it is impossible to suppose that it will be content to grind much longer in the mill of inquiries which ignore the causal instincts of the mind, when another and grander realm of investigation is open to it, even that of the will and the moral sense, which are the surest outlets for thought into the region of the absolute.

Now, the ordained teachers of Christian morality have exhibited signal mental activity and acuteness in recent times, not merely at this or that threatened point, but along the whole boundary-line between the ethics of revelation and the ethics of the natural reason. They have steadfastly and successfully maintained the superiority of the former over the latter in many test cases, and against the most powerful and erudite objectors.

Let us glance at some of the grounds on which this assertion rests.

It is generally conceded, that the root difference between ancient and modern ethics, scientifically viewed, consists not in the superior methods of the latter, nor in the superior intelligence devoted to its cultivation; but in the higher plane on which it has moved. In closeness, subtilty, and depth of analysis, the old Greek masters have never been excelled; while their methods of investigation, both *a priori* and inductive, left little for modern ethical thinkers to supply. The wider range of experience afforded by the lapse of more than two thousand years has provided the moderns with more facts, and has thrown upon all facts in the moral life of man a greater variety of lights and shadows; but all the elements and most of the results of modern ethical knowledge, apart from the contributions of Christianity, were as well known by Plato and Aristotle, as by any utilitarian or intuitional or evolutionary moralist of to-day. In the power to handle facts for the purposes of analysis and classification, or in searching and profound insight into the meaning of facts, there has been no perceptible advance. But unquestionably modern ethics enjoys a vantage-ground, moves on a plane of thought, to which the moralists of antiquity were strangers. If this be so, it brings us face to face with the crucial question, How was this nobler vantage-ground, this higher plane, reached? Was it by the orderly and consecutive development of natural ethics regarded as a science, strictly confined within its own limits, and attending to its own business? Was it by



the continuous march of reason from lower to higher ground? Was it by the discovery of some new point of departure, or some original and more fruitful method of research? Or was it by the wider experience and expanding progress of humanity? I answer: By none, nor by all, apart from outside help. Modern ethical science has, in the main, been lifted to its present elevation, as has all modern life, by a force from without; by a force which it did not originate, which it cannot destroy, and which it were a shame and a damage to ignore; and that force is the religion of Jesus Christ, doctrinally as well as morally considered. This external lifting power has operated in many ways, but in at least three with especial energy.

1. It has been well said, "If the thought of Plato and Aristotle was 'conscious' as compared with that of the Seven Sages, the thought of modern times might be called 'self-conscious' as compared with theirs." The ancients dealt profoundly with all conceptions relating to the *object* of moral action, the good or happiness, and the beautiful or virtue. But they rather lingered at than crossed the threshold of the moral *subject*. They treated vaguely and uncertainly the deepest questions on the subjective side of morals. They never stated fully and satisfactorily the relation of the individual will and consciousness to the good in life and action; they left no sure word about a moral faculty in the soul, to whose authority all other powers were to be subordinated. They had but a dim notion of what we mean by duty, by individual responsibility, by the moral affections as related to an outward moral law that always

and everywhere "makes for righteousness." Now, it is this side of morals, the inward, subjective side, which in modern times has assumed paramount importance. When we speak of duty, right, moral obligation, we mean things which bring home to our inmost consciousness the moral quality of actions, and which force us to determine the relations of accountable beings to God and the world around them. The old problem whether man can realize the absolute, the supreme end-in-itself, by means of noble actions and moments of profound contemplation, has little interest for us. It has been superseded by another,—even whether the absolute, the supreme end being given, revealed in the Triune God, man will, with all needful aids afforded him, obey Him. The first thoughts of ethics now are not about how much happiness can be got out of life, but, How far can this present life be brought into conformity with a perfect will? It is all well enough to ask in a philosophic temper, What is happiness? What is the chief good? But it is a vastly sublimer thing to ask, What constitutes duty? Why is this thing right, and that thing wrong? and why ought we to do the one, and to leave the other undone? Doubtless, as has been remarked, we may find in the thinking of the wisest of the old masters of moral speculation suggestive hints and intimations, and sometimes a phraseology, which prove that they were not altogether strangers to such questions. The τὸ δέον, ὡς δεῖ, etc., of Aristotle, imply a certain consciousness of the connection between responsibility and the freedom of the will. But he did not develop the conception. He seems to have gone little beyond the average human

instinct which says we "ought" to do some things, and not others. Clearly it was not a leading conception with him, and, if not with him, then with none who preceded or immediately followed him.

Says an eminent authority on this point : —

"The foundation of the ethical notion of duty is partly owing to the Stoics ; but undoubtedly the whole idea of moral obligation and individual responsibility, which goes to make up its full significance, has taken hold of the thought of mankind through and by reason of the long influence of religion and theology. This deep conception is now an heirloom of moral philosophers ; and they cannot get rid of it, any more than a man can return to the unconsciousness of a child. However comparatively feeble may be the thought of any modern thinker, there is yet a sort of background to his system, provided by the spirit of the age, a conception which he cannot help availing himself of, which, through no merit of his own, is on the whole deeper than any thing which Aristotle (and, I may add, any writer unaided by revelation) had attained to." <sup>1</sup>

2. Again : natural ethics, as we are acquainted with it, is indebted for its present standpoint to Christian Theology on another ground. The freedom of the will, individual responsibility, is assumed in all its reasonings. But how did it happen that this fundamental truth came to be so well established as to allow of its being thus taken for granted ? Metaphysical thought has done much, but theological thought has done more, to place free-will in the category of accepted truths. Democritus touched on the question when he said, "In the whirl of necessity, man is only half a slave." Plato asserts what is equivalent to it, at the conclusion of his

<sup>1</sup> Sir Alexander Grant: *Ethics of Aristotle*, vol. i. p. 313.

“Republic:” notwithstanding he made it of no effect by teaching the transmigration of souls. Aristotle treated the question neither metaphysically nor theologically. It was mooted by the Stoics, but not developed or established by their thinking. In the dawn of modern speculative ethics, it was taken up with great vigor and earnestness by those two masters of metaphysical inquiry, Spinoza and Leibnitz. They, however, worked at the problem under the strong light thrown upon it by ten centuries of theological discussion. They, in fact, took it up in its theological form: the will of God, — how can it be reconciled with the free-will of man? They attempted to harmonize the two conceptions by finding some higher one in which they might both be solved. Logically they both failed. Spinoza drifted into the mazes of pantheism; and Leibnitz, after a vast outlay of learning and subtilty, ended in assuming what he set out to prove. It would be idle to enumerate the writers who came after them. The result was the same. They either proved too much or too little. Free-will is a fact of consciousness, and falls within the domain of man’s moral nature, — a domain where many things are true which cannot be demonstrated.

This question of the freedom of the will has two forms, — either theological, in relation to the will of God; or metaphysical, in relation to the law of cause and effect in the order of nature. It may be asked, How is this freedom compatible with the sovereignty of God? or how can it be reconciled with the unalterable sequence of cause and effect in nature? Is the will a

*cause* only, or is it also an effect? Now, I shall not stop to inquire how far the ethics of reason, of science, is indebted to the discussion of the metaphysical side of this question. It is enough to say that it owes far more to the discussion of the theological side of it; and for these reasons. The question in all its far-reaching consequences was forced upon the theological mind by the collision in the Church of rival theories of the origin and nature of the religious life; and this some ten centuries before it was deemed of sufficient interest to the general philosophic mind to induce any elaborate attempt at its independent treatment. St. Augustine, in his famous controversy with Pelagius, exhausted the capacity of the human mind for dealing with it. He touched the limit of human thought, and all beyond the boundary he reached was unknowable. He handled it with the intense fervor of a Christian who believed that the verities of his religion were staked on the issue; and, at the same time, with a subtle insight and keen analysis which no modern thinker has surpassed. He may be said to have been the founder and master of the literature of the will. The schoolmen eddied around him as the fountain-head of all safe thinking on the subject. Calvin only repeated his conclusions with some damaging exaggerations; and Jonathan Edwards did little more than recast his thoughts in a modern mould and in the interest of Calvin's theology. When the ablest metaphysicians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries grappled with the problem, they could not escape his influence, nor rid themselves of the forms of language which he had indelibly graven upon the common memory.

Again : it must be admitted that the theological side of the question is the higher and more difficult one, and that to handle this side of it with thoroughness is to include the substance of all that can be said on the metaphysical side, and vastly more. Metaphysics treats it as a purely speculative question. Theology treats it as the most intensely practical one imaginable, and, therefore, in such way as to make its conclusions immediately available to ethics, which is the science of conduct as well as the science of moral thought.

3. But there is still another debt to be charged to the account of natural ethics, arising from what Christian morality has done to define and fix the ultimate ground of moral obligation. This is a wide subject, and I regret to be compelled to treat it with the brevity which the limits assigned to this branch of the discussion render necessary. The fundamental points in moral science, around which all others may be grouped, are the moral *standard* and the moral *sanction*. The former answers the question, How do we ascertain what is right? The latter answers the question, What constrains us to do it? Every one is persuaded that he *ought* to do what is right; but every one is not clear as to the answer when he asks himself, *Why* ought I? or, *Why* is this right, and that wrong? Now, all criteria of rightness in an action are reducible to four. The first, that of the inductive or utilitarian moralist, consists in the tendency to promote the general well-being or happiness, — a criterion resting on man's own experience of the effects of human action, and appealing to motives which, however refined and expanded,

are still those of self-love and prudence. The second, that of the intuitive moralist, springs from instinctive preferences, and an inborn consciousness of obligation, which incline us to what is right, apart from all reasoning or experience. The third, that of the evolutionist, substitutes in all moral development the operation of natural law for the exercise of free-will ; affirming, that, as the fitter organism survives the less fit, so must moral conduct in the natural course of things gain the upper hand, and immoral conduct tend more and more toward extinction ; that conduct is good as it is adapted to the preservation of self and the race, and bad as it makes for the opposite result ; that by necessary and immutable laws, excluding all permanent or fatal interference of will-power, higher forms of conduct and character must be evolved from the successive antecedent stages of conduct and character, precisely, and as part of the same necessary action of nature, as higher organisms are evolved from lower ; that virtue and happiness are the one inseparable goal which man approaches by a steady, irresistible advance, free at every step from the struggle and the pain of conscious choice : or, briefly, that the evolution of nature is also the evolution of morality, and that, as nature in and of itself produces better and better crops of vegetable and animal life, so by an equally certain law it produces in and of itself, in the sphere of humanity, higher and higher forms of moral life. Fourthly, and finally, there is the criterion of the Christian moralist, grounded upon the will of God as expressed in revelation and in the providential moral government of the world. Accord-

ing to this, what is right for us to do is what God wills, and the ultimate reason why we ought to do it is because God wills it. In Christian ethics there is nothing more fundamental or ultimate than these two principles which thus coalesce into one. Thus Christian morality finds its ground or criterion, and with this its constraining energy, in one and the same thing, — the perfect will of the only perfect Being in the universe, — the one God and Father of all ; and thus, too, it is enabled to give the simplest and completest answer possible to both the ever-recurring questions, What is right ? and, Why ought I to do what is right ?

Now, it is reasonably certain, that none of these criteria of natural ethics could, independently of the Christian, have ever lifted man to the moral plane on which he now stands ; and it is equally certain, that none of them when developed into a practical system could, without the Christian, permanently sway the conduct and character of men in their present stage of intellectual and moral development. There is little doubt, that many thoughtful minds are content to rest in one or the other of these speculative theories, because to do so gratifies the philosophic instinct and longing for a plausible, rational solution of the problem ; and because they know, that, when driven to it by the perplexities and mysteries of life, they can find a safe refuge from the shortcomings of speculation, in the bosom of that Divine rule in which there is no variableness nor shadow of turning, — a rule whose statutes rejoice the heart, and give light to the eyes ; a pure and undefiled law, which converteth the soul, and giveth wisdom to the simple.



It has been in fundamental matters like these, that Christian has given a helping hand to natural ethics, lifting it to the high ground which it now occupies, and holding firm the moral convictions of mankind, amid all its gaps and fluctuations, its marches and counter-marches, in the wide field of speculative or inductive inquiry. The service thus rendered is not the less certain or valuable because it has been often disowned. Ingratitude is a crime not confined to the every-day world of feeling and action. The pride and self-sufficiency of the human intellect make it possible wherever they prevail. While rejoicing in every successful venture of the human mind in the department of ethical thought, the teachers of the ethics of revelation could not shut their eyes to the inherent defects and weaknesses of the systems elaborated by unaided reason; and they have not, as in duty bound, hesitated to expose them. They have performed this task with a candor and charity worthy of the lofty vantage-ground they occupy, but only very imperfectly appreciated by those in whose behalf they have been exercised.

The scheme of inductive or utilitarian morals can never escape criticism, because it can never cover up its radical weakness. It is a wavering, one-sided transcript of the facts of consciousness, and a lame copy of man's moral experience. By no possible jugglery of logic, by no manipulations of language however adroit, by no refinements of metaphysical distinctions, can pleasure and duty, the calculations of prudence and the spontaneous mandates of the voice within, be made to change places, or to appear as only opposite sides of the same thing.

There is a gulf between them which may be bridged, but cannot be ignored. It may be true that pleasure in some form attends all virtuous action ; but it does so as the consequent, not the antecedent, of choice. The higher the soul advances in virtue, the more it delights in it. But it is no less true that in our present mixed and struggling condition there are many acts enforced by conscience in which there is but the faintest trace of pleasurable satisfaction. The acts are done at the bidding of simple duty, and not because they are pleasant. To give self-love the foremost place in moral conduct, whether as entering into its nature or operating as its mainspring, is to rob such conduct of every vestige of unselfishness. Dr. Newman in a few sharp-cut sentences goes to the core of this whole theory of utility or pleasure as the ground and sanction of moral action. "All virtue and goodness tend to make men powerful in this world, but they who aim at the power have not the virtue. Again, virtue is its own reward, and brings with it the truest and highest pleasures ; but they who cultivate it for the pleasure's sake are selfish, not religious, and will never have the pleasure because they will never have the virtue." No principle in ethics is better established than this ; and our every-day experience furnishes abundant illustrations of its truth. The world over, the pleasure-seeker is not the pleasure-finder, and the happiest men are they who think least about happiness. If any thing is demonstrably certain in morals, it is that the motive on which the utilitarian, the epicurean, the pleasure-seeking moralist, chiefly relies, is the attendant shadow of moral action, not its substance, not its end, nor its propelling power.

On the other hand, the theory of moral action which rests upon the intuitions of the moral nature, or upon the authoritative and spontaneous mandates of the conscience, is scarcely more satisfactory, though it is clothed with greater dignity, stands on higher ground, and appeals to the nobler side of our nature. Practically, it is weak and inefficient in spite of its lofty claims and unselfish aspirations. It is impossible to agree upon the number, or the exact quality and range, of these intuitional judgments. They vary widely in different individuals, and are absolutely dependent on the fluctuating attainments of the intellect. There are many things about them in regard to which we have little definite knowledge. We know not, after all the current wisdom on the subject has been sifted, the exact nature of conscience, or how it pronounces, or to what extent it is infallible, or precisely in what ways it is related to the will and the reason.

As for the evolutionary theory,—just now, because the latest, attracting most attention from the students of ethics,—its radical and sweeping generalizations leave scarcely standing-ground for its natural rivals. The lineal descendant, in its hedonistic proclivities, of utilitarianism, it ruthlessly lays hands upon its progenitor; while out of the intuitional theory, whether in its looser forms or under the rigorous treatment of Kant, it cuts the very heart by substituting for the free play of the will and conscience, the operation of necessary natural law. But in doing so, it discloses certain fatal gaps in itself. If nature evolves morality as it evolves every thing else, choice has nothing to do with it; and so the

moral nature and all moral action cease to be what the thought and experience of mankind have hitherto universally believed them to be. Moral liberty is generalized out of existence; and we are shut up, in the explanation of all ethical phenomena, to necessity as the only motive-power. Herbert Spencer tells us plainly that "the sense of duty is transitory;"<sup>1</sup> that as evolution progresses, man will do or forbear simply out of regard for the intrinsic effects of acts; that as he advances in the performance of the right, — i.e., what tends to the improvement and preservation of himself and the race, — the pleasure of doing so will increase, and that the sense of duty as obligation will disappear as it becomes pleasant for him and natural to do right. So that we have hedonism as the ultimate goal of evolution, and necessity as the one power that impels man toward it.

But, further, Mr. Spencer and all the ethical scientists of his school — as well as of other schools that, however they differ, agree in the attempt to bring all moral phenomena under the sway of universal and necessary natural law — ignore the chasm between conscious life and unconscious life as though in reality no such chasm exists. In doing so they beg the whole question, and to the full extent that they do so, vitiate, philosophically considered, from top to bottom the results at which they arrive. Deep as this chasm is in biological and psychological science, it is, if possible, still deeper in ethics; or, if not deeper in reality, it makes itself more deeply felt. Conduct, we are told, has as its essential mark the adaptation of means to ends. But if this be all, or even the

<sup>1</sup> *Data of Ethics*, p. 127.

chief mark of conduct, conduct may be predicated indifferently of a dog and of a man; though as matter of fact a dog's adaptation of means to ends is unconscious, a man's conscious. A dog's cannot have a moral end, a man's may. The gulf between is absolutely incommensurable. The human mind can never accept the moral life as the development of the natural, or allow the free to be swallowed up in or confounded with the necessary, until it shall be able to unthink its own spontaneous judgments, and to unlearn the meaning and force of language which is at once the echo and utterance of its own laws of thought.

Again: evolution no more explains the primal cause in ethics than in the sphere of cosmical and biological phenomena, or in the world of thought and history. It deals solely with sequences in their serial form, without a beginning and without an end. And yet Mr. Spencer, when he would overthrow the positivist formula of Comte, does not scruple to say that "the idea of cause will govern at the end, as it has done at the beginning. The idea of cause cannot be abolished except by the abolition of thought itself."<sup>1</sup> And so a late writer,<sup>2</sup> after a glowing eulogy on the transcendent merits of "The Data of Ethics," is forced to admit that its author, the greatest of living explorers in this field, has failed to solve the one problem most needing solution,—the fundamental principle of absolute ethics, the ethical criterion of action, the ultimate ground, the primal cause, of moral obligation.

<sup>1</sup> See Spencer's *Reasons for dissenting from the Philosophy of M. Comte*, third edition, 1871.

<sup>2</sup> Frederick Von Baerenbach: *Popular Science Monthly*, June, 1883.

At the same time, while Christian ethics discovers such radical defects in the systems set up to compete with it, it is not insensible to their value, nor slow to appropriate the good they contain. In many of the details of life involving issues of duty and in regard to which the general rules of conduct resting upon the will of God admit of a doubt as to their practical application, it is ready to accept, within certain limits, the criterion of experience as fully and freely as any utilitarian could desire; while in other directions it is glad to call to its side, in battling with man's lower nature, whatever confirmations of its divine mandates his higher nature may be able to furnish through its moral intuitions, together with all supports afforded by the inherent trend of nature as explained by evolution.

But here it should be noted, that Christian ethics, however ably handled by its expounders, has not itself escaped criticism. It has been summoned to appear at the bar of modern thought to answer for its own alleged shortcomings. If there was any one thing within the range of human inquiry, that, up to very recent times, was considered faultless, and therefore exempt from challenge, it was the morality of the Christian religion. That it should have been called in question at last, is perhaps the most striking of all proofs of the unsparing and remorseless temper in which the criticism of the day has attacked all things within its reach. Whatever stray insinuations might have dropped from gainsayers in times gone by, it was reserved for one of the most distinguished metaphysicians and philosophic moralists of this generation to formulate them.<sup>1</sup> He declares,

<sup>1</sup> John Stuart Mill.

strangely enough, that Christian morality is negative rather than positive, passive rather than active ; that it enjoins abstinence from evil, rather than the energetic pursuit of good ; and, therefore, that it has the imperfection of one-sidedness, and cannot guide humanity to a full-orbed development of its moral nature, but must be supplemented by the teachings of systems which, because they are of human origin, it complacently affects to patronize. To refute this, we have only to cite certain indisputable facts. At least one-half of the New Testament is given to the inculcation of positive morality. It rings with appeals to mankind, not only to be good, but to do good ; not only to save themselves, but to save others ; not only to abstain from evil, but to be habitually active in works of love and mercy ; not only to obey the Divine will, but to be energetic in teaching all men to know and obey that will. If it magnifies what are called the passive virtues, it does so because it is the tendency of the world to depreciate them ; but in doing so it utters not a word which, fairly construed, disparages the active virtues. It is, indeed, the oracle of the most aggressive of all religions, — of a religion which must move on or perish ; which must conquer all adversaries, or be driven from the field. Energy, action, conflict, struggle, expansion, are the life of the faith it preaches. Its disciples are not only servants disciplined into submission, but soldiers sent forth to battle. In soft and tender natures, unequal to the solemn strife, it tolerates, but does not encourage, a life of quietism and contemplation. Over and around all the tranquil haunts in which such natures have sought refuge from outward

tumult and contradiction, has been heard from the beginning the trumpet of the great militant host sounding to the charge. There is nothing in all history so astonishing or so sublime as the sustained and indomitable courage and persistency with which Christian believers have, from the start, toiled and fought and suffered to change the face of the world. Their philanthropic love has, time and again, melted the cruel frost of the world's selfishness. Their missions have gone out into all lands and among all races. Their homes, asylums, and hospitals are now, and have been during all the Christian centuries, the only solid and safe barriers lifted up between humanity and the thousand forms of wretchedness whose despairing wail has been the sad song of its earthly pilgrimage. And their schools of learning, always the spontaneous fruit of their reverence for all that can ennoble human reason, as for many ages they were the only centres of intellectual light, so have they been, in later times, the originators and patrons of nearly all the great educational movements which have fashioned the moral and intellectual elements of modern civilization. A religion of submission and resignation, indeed! a religion of passive obedience and mystic fervor! a religion of abstinence from evil, and retirement from the glare and heat of the world's favorite ambitions! All this it is; but it is also the most unresting, the most revolutionary and aggressive force, ever brought to bear upon the life of man.

But there yet remains to be mentioned one fact which of itself sufficiently refutes Mr. Mill's assertion. It was undeniably the chief work of Christ as a moral



teacher, to change the negative law of the Jews into the positive law of Christians. In doing this he radically transformed the whole spirit of morality; and wedged the lesson into the inmost consciousness of his followers, that, to glorify God and to serve Him, they must, as the habit of their lives, be doers as well as teachers of righteousness. To enlarge on so elementary and universally admitted a fact as this, would be sheer waste of words. And with this one fact staring him in the face from so many pages of the New Testament, it passes comprehension how a writer, generally so candid as Mr. Mill, should have been tempted to make a statement so groundless, and yet so very comforting to the gainsayers of Gospel morality.

But the strong point of Christian ethics, that around which gather the homage and admiration of truth-loving souls of every name and every creed, still awaits our notice. I mean the superiority of Christian over natural ethics in that greatest of tasks, — the development and formation of individual character. This, after all, is the real object of moral science. What makes character, what mars it, its perfection and destiny, — these are the supreme aims of every ethical system that mankind have cared to remember. On them all moral speculations, investigations, and reasonings converge. And it is only when we duly consider these aims, and the various means employed to attain them, that we fully realize how immeasurably the moral system of Christianity transcends every scheme of human invention. Here we are on ground where we can tread firmly and fearlessly in the presence of all adversaries.

It has been said that "the chief good is a good will." The highest type of human character is the flower whose root is a completely fashioned will. How, then, in contrast with all other schemes of moral nurture, does Christian ethics plant this root, and grow this flower? The answer is twofold: first, by the ideal it presents; and, second, by the moral and spiritual tonic which it supplies, to enable man to grow up into a likeness to this ideal. The ideal and the tonic, the end and the energy to attain it, the perfect life and the road that leads to it, are exclusively the property of the religion of the Son of God. When I speak thus of the Christian ideal, I do not forget the worth and grandeur of the only ideal ever put in competition with it,—that of the ancient Stoics, which, as we study it in history, appears all the nobler from its contrast with the more languid and sensuous ideal framed by the school of Epicurus. The aim of the ideal wise man of the Stoics was not the pursuit of wisdom for its own sake, but rather to incorporate the results of wisdom with the will and character. He conceived of life as a progress, a conflict, a good fight between "the law of the spirit" and "the law of the members." His dominant purpose was instinct with the spirit of aspiration and effort, and affiliated spontaneously with a tendency to asceticism and a constant striving after the victory of the will. He was regarded as infallible, impassive, and incapable of harm from any external cause. He was alone free, alone king and priest, alone capable of friendship and affection. At first, as portrayed by Zeno, he was a stern and pitiless being, who waged unsparing war

against every softer emotion as a weakness. He forgave no one, and hated the doer of evil more than the evil done. Later on, he was toned down, during subsequent transmutations of the stoical principle, until the rough hardness and lofty isolation of the earlier type were blended with the firm but gentle self-discipline of Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. Speaking generally, this ideal, the grandest ever conceived by unaided reason, preferred the delights of an inner life to all sensible enjoyments however innocent. It drew the mind away from external things, and absorbed it in the contemplation of moral ideas and abstract principles. It rejoiced in the conception of moral progress, and the triumphs of the soul over outward crosses. It foreshadowed rather than developed the thought of duty, and the responsibility of the individual, as we understand them. It had inspiring glimpses of the sublime conception of mankind as one brotherhood, and of each member as standing in direct relation to God; and, as it more and more filled itself out in thought and experience, it became at last intensely theological in its views. It went as far as any thing human can go toward supplying the needs of the soul, and the craving for a spiritual religion. It was the nearest approach made by the Pagan mind to the sunlit summit of the Mount of God. And yet it was very far from scaling the solemn height. Fruitful as it was of moral greatness, amid the world's dreary mediocrity and its passionate scramble after the grosser pleasures of sense, it could not hide its inherent one-sidedness and unnatural and paradoxical character. The print of the iron

shoe was upon its feet, and the marks of the band of steel were upon its brow. It was a hotbed of egotism and pride. It fostered narrowness, and harshness, and gloominess of temper, and was at war with the amenities and genialities of life. It stimulated men to live above the world, but could not teach them how to use the world as not abusing it. This ideal has passed away, but the spirit of it has continued and will continue to reproduce itself in the world. It survives to-day in every known form of religious asceticism; and breathes gently, not only through the fatalistic gloom of pure Calvinism, but, in some sense, through the lives of all who are content to "shun delights, and live laborious days." But it must be added, that, whatever their picture of the ideal man, the Stoics were obliged to confess that such a character did not exist, and that it never had existed. Imperfect as we see it to have been, it was yet too perfect to be realized.

Now, alongside this place the Christian ideal of character, the Christian conception of a perfectly moulded will. This has been described too often, and is too familiar, to require its reproduction here in detail. It is only as we gaze upon this until our moral perception burns with the rapture of adoration, that we can estimate the fulcrum on which has rested the spiritual leverage of Christianity.

But without dwelling on this, I pass on to speak of the dynamic gifts which Christian ethics has conferred upon man in his efforts to realize the ideal life exemplified by our Divine Master. We can hardly appreciate these gifts, so peculiar to our religion and so transcend-

ent in themselves, without first taking a hurried glance at what has been done or attempted in the same direction by other systems, ancient and modern. And here we must recall a fact of commanding influence in this line of inquiry; a fact, too, whose existence none will presume to question. Confused and imperfect as men's notions of right may be, it is not knowledge of right they lack: it is the will and power to do it. St. Paul formulated this fact with an accuracy and completeness which leave nothing to be amended or added: "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not."<sup>1</sup> It is not difficult to portray ideals of goodness, or to set up the imaginary wise man. The separate elements of the perfect life may be found here and there, — one in this character, and another in that. It is easy to collect them, and organize them into an abstract unity, over which philosophers may wax eloquent, and poets may dream in lofty verse. But it must be the main question in every moral system that proposes to unfold and shape the character of man, how is human life in its every-day aspect to be raised to the level of such standards, to be moulded after such a pattern? Now, it so happens that the weakest point in every scheme of natural ethics is the answer which it gives to this question; while the answer given by Christian ethics is its peculiar and distinctive strength, — the one chief ground at once of its theoretical and practical superiority. Let us see, then, how this question of moral dynamics has been handled.

Plato found the motive-power, such as it was, in the simple beholding of the good and true, in the education

<sup>1</sup> Rom. vii. 18.

and elevation of the reason. But he confessed that this could be the privilege only of the few, not of the many. Only here and there did he expect to find a soul that could be kindled into spiritual fervor by the ecstatic vision of the absolute. Of the mass of men, he imagined no better fate than that they would be left to their swine-troughs. As for an ideal common to all men, or a power competent to lift them toward it, there is no trace in his writings that he even dreamed of the possibility of such things. In his view, it would be as unreasonable to hope that the average man would soar to his bright heaven of contemplation, as to expect that he would lay hold on the stars whose light fell dimly on his eyes.

Aristotle gave a higher place to intellectual excellence than to moral virtue. His famous doctrine of virtue was that of a mean or a balance between extremes. Throughout this elaborate theory, there is no provision for creating or increasing motive-power, other than that which each soul could evolve out of itself. He exhorts men to cultivate a habit of doing right, and so to make it easier to do right; but points to no outward help or inspiration which will supply the inward strength needed for the formation of such a habit. There is no cure in his system for man's inherent moral weakness, save that to be drawn from the teachings of himself and other moralists, or from the discipline afforded by domestic and political institutions. But no man found the hurt of his soul healed by any remedy from these sources.

The school of the Stoics — as represented by its great masters, Zeno, Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius — discovered no source of power over the will, outside

of itself. They delved and mined and explored in all directions, they cast their line into all waters; but all to no purpose. In their weakness and despair, while confronted with an ideal which they confessed themselves powerless to verify, the bitter cry again and again rose from their lips, in substance if not in form, "Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"<sup>1</sup>

Coming down to modern systems, and referring only to the noblest and best, we have in Bishop Butler's and Kant's theories the highest help available to man from natural sources. The former dilates on the authority of conscience; and in this, and in the alleged coincidence of duty and interest, obligation and happiness, for the most part here, and perfectly hereafter, finds the only moral dynamic to act upon the will, — a force which he sublimates and expands in his sermons into the love of God; but does so only by leaving the domain of ethical speculation, and crossing over into that of Christian thought. The latter starts with the assertion that the only real and absolute good in the whole world is a good will; and a good will he defines to be one purely and entirely governed by the moral law. This law is not human experience generalized, rests not on supposed harmonies of interest and obligation: but transcends all that can be known here about the effects — happy or otherwise — of moral action; is wide as the universe; and imposes upon all beings who can think or conceive it, the duty to obey it. Conscience is nothing but the translation of this objective law into the lan-

<sup>1</sup> Rom. vii. 24.

guage of the individual consciousness. Out of this root-principle are developed the three fundamental moral ideas which are the pillars of all moral life, — freedom, immortality, and God. Now, in this scheme, which resolutely excludes from its borders all the emotions of love, pity, reverence, sympathy; all mixtures of the ideal and actual; every thing but the pure and absolute law, with its stern imperative demanding the obedience of the will, — what practical, available motive-power can be found? There are but two factors: the law on the one side, strong and terrible; the will on the other, smitten along the whole circuit of its action with a hopeless sense of poverty and weakness. Why, it is as though the world without, standing on its own plane, were to enter a grave-yard, and call upon the dead to come forth by the exercise of an energy inherent in their sleeping dust. Kant's theory is Stoicism gone mad. When he is through with it, he admits that it can have no place or function in actual life; but leaves it to float, like a thousand other waifs spun from human brains, upon the outer sea of speculative thought, as bright and as useless as an ice-mountain from the pole.

The various schools of utilitarianism remind us, as the great message they have to deliver, that pleasure and pain are the only objects of choice, the only motives which can determine the will. Now, as has been well remarked, if by the pleasure or pain which is said to be the end of action is meant merely the happiness or misery of one's self, the dynamic is the most obvious and the most surely operating that can be imagined. But then, with most men, exclusive self-interest is not a



moral motive at all, but rather something from which they look to morality to save them.

Without pushing further this review of natural ethics in regard to this point, we have abundant warrant for saying that in what have been called the intuitionist theories, the motive presented, — the spiritual dynamic, — if exalted, is too remote and impalpable to be brought home to the hearts of ordinary men; while in the simpler and narrower theories built up on the conception of pleasure, or self-love, as the supreme dynamic of the will, the motive is clear and strong enough, but it is a motive which most men of any moral yearning reject as degrading to their higher manhood. This motive, to be sure, is made, by those who would relieve it of its grossness, to combine with benevolence, and to include the interests of the human race. This elevates the motive, but robs it of most of its power. Self-love is strong only up to a certain limit: when carried beyond, its propelling power is gone.

Now, two things are plain. Natural ethics in every form draws all help from *within*. Men are in search of help from *without*. Their cry is, "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I;"<sup>1</sup> "Set my feet upon the rock, and order my goings;"<sup>2</sup> "Lord, be Thou my helper."<sup>3</sup> Crushed on the one hand by a sense of the infinity of duty, and on the other by a sense of their spiritual poverty, they are driven out of themselves, and forced to search through the surrounding gloom for an arm of strength to rescue them from the very borders of despair. Philosophic ideals, with all their elaborate pictorial

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxi. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xl. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. xxx. 11.

dreams of perfectibility, are to them only as pitiless ghosts stealing forth from the outer darkness to mock at their calamity, and jeer at the rags of natural virtue wherewith they would fain cover their nakedness. The soul well knows the gap between its own condition and the "thou shalt" of the commandment; and its supreme need is not "dead diagrams of virtue," but living powers of righteousness. What it craves is not the faculty to know the right, but the power to do it. The moral reason commands what the will cannot do.

Now, what neither science, nor the moral law, nor any innate faculty can do, Christian ethics does. It points to a living, personal, Divine Will, which reveals itself as the needed object and luminous centre of the heart's warmer and devouter emotions,—a Will which, for this very end, has clothed itself in our flesh, and is touched with a feeling of our infirmities; a Will which, in human guise, salutes us in accents of tenderest brotherhood, saying, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest."<sup>1</sup> "Seek, and ye shall find;" "Ask, and it shall be given unto you."<sup>2</sup> "Whosoever cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out."<sup>3</sup> "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."<sup>4</sup> "Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."<sup>5</sup> "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him."<sup>6</sup> "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt xi. 28.<sup>2</sup> Luke xi. 9.<sup>3</sup> John xvi. 24.<sup>4</sup> John vi. 37.<sup>5</sup> 1 John iv. 16.<sup>6</sup> 1 John iv. 9.<sup>7</sup> 1 John iv. 15.

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.”<sup>1</sup> Such is the seminal truth of Christian ethics. Here is the arm of power put forth from the darkness. Here is the everlasting rock amid the unsteady waters. Here is a realm of feeling and truth into which the most favored of men, apart from revelation, have never been able to penetrate. It was the dream, but no more, of Plato and Marcus Aurelius. It required the advent of Christ, in whom dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily, to put the conception of all this as a vital power before men. Himself — even the Lord Jesus — is the supreme and original dynamic force which alone can take the plague-spot of weakness and disease from the human will. His method is not that of the philosophers. They addressed the reason: he speaks to the heart. They fumbled about among the *débris* of a ruined nature, and busied themselves in constructing out of them a fleshless skeleton of impossible virtue. He pours into the soul the living fire of Divine love fresh from heaven, and provides the fuel to feed it until it returns to the source whence it came. They sought to make men pure, generous, humane, righteous, by logical influence. He seeks the same end, but by bringing them into contact with his own Person, with the scenes of Bethlehem and the mount of His passion and the grave of His resurrection, — all of them the tokens of his unutterable love. And then Christian ethics, besides showing how the motive or virtue-making power was increased by Christ’s character, shows also how this same power is augmented

<sup>1</sup> John iii. 1.

and kept alive through all the ages by the transcendent doctrines of the atonement, the resurrection, and the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

Herein, then, are the glory and triumph of Gospel ethics; and herein, too, is the sure testimony which silences the gainsayers of its perfection. In Emmanuel—God with us—"all the principles of man's compound nature find their ultimate end: the natural desire for happiness, the craving of the affections for the unchangeable and the perfect, the moral needs of the conscience, the deep and passionate yearnings of the will conscious at once of its liberty and its frailty,"—all here find their satisfaction; all are wrought, as separate strands into the cable, into one grand composite motive-power, and so arranged that each lower and more selfish element is gradually subordinated and absorbed by the higher and more godlike.

Such in our day have been the attitude and work of the theological or clerical mind in dealing with these themes of ever-engrossing interest,—the loftiest that come to us through the channel of revelation, or that can claim the attention of the human mind. Surely there is no evidence, in all this, of feebleness or decay. On the contrary, may we not see in it another proof, in a period of doubt and conflict, of God's steadfast purpose never to leave His Priesthood, whatever the ebb and flow of human culture, without the intellect and learning needful for the defence of the incomparable treasure committed to their keeping? The task now laid upon the Clergy as ethical thinkers and teachers is the direct product of the dominant philosophical tendency of our

time. The reigning philosophy of the day is the parent of the ethical systems that now excite most attention. These systems, true to their source, account it their chief merit, that they have been built up in absolute independence of the religious, supernatural, divine basis, on which it has been held and believed in all ages that true morality rests. It is only natural that their authors should seek to discover and establish morality apart from the sanctions of a Supreme Being, when they imagine that themselves or others have accounted for the creation without a Creator.<sup>1</sup> As to the line to be taken in combating these latest ventures in ethical speculation, there is no doubt. Enough has been done to make this clear. In substance it is as old as Christian morality itself; and the duty laid upon the Clergy is simply to re-state and expand it in forms of thought familiar to our time, and to enforce it by illustrations drawn from the latest knowledge and experience. It has been shown (and the argument will be amplified and invigorated as circumstances may require), that man's duties to God comprise his duties to his fellow-men and to himself; that our moral conceptions, whatever their origin, lose their proper sanction and cogency unless held in obedience to the authority of a Supreme Being; that an Almighty and All-Wise external Power ordained the moral conditions of the world, as evidently as he ordained the

<sup>1</sup> Of the recent ethical literature, the following may be taken as apt specimens of this drift :—

1. *The Data of Ethics*, by Herbert Spencer, London, 3d ed., 1881.
2. *The Methods of Ethics*, by Henry Sidgwick, London, 2d ed., 1877.
3. *Lectures and Essays*, by W. K. Clifford, London, 1879.
4. *The Science of Ethics*, by Leslie Stephen, London, 1882.

physical conditions of the solar system and of the globe ; that the universe exists for a moral purpose, and that a moral purpose can be accomplished only by obedience to moral laws ; that the moral accountability of man is a part of this purpose, but that he can be accountable only to a moral Being superior to himself ; that the sense of duty springs from obedience to law, and not from theories of the schools on the origin of conscience or the evolution of humanity ; that, in discarding the theistic principle as the foundation of morals, no writer, however profound and ingenious, has shown himself able to provide a tangible substitute, an available working basis, grounded upon any other principle ; and, finally, that the terms of recent speculation cannot escape the charge of vagueness and confusion, as well as of utter impotence to control and regulate the conduct and the passions of men. But if all this can be shown,—and in good part it has already been shown,—then it follows that this latest phase of natural ethics will be made to appear as unsound as the philosophy on which it rests.

## LECTURE V.

### INTELLECTUAL ACTIVITY OF THE CLERGY IN APOLOGETICS AND BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

I SHALL now ask attention to Apologetics and Biblical Criticism as affording striking examples of the energy and fruitfulness of the theological mind in the closing decades of this century. By the labors of recent Christian thought, Apologetics has been advanced to the dignity of a science. Judged by the severest tests, it is no longer to be regarded as an inchoate, unformed literature, composed of isolated monographs and fragmentary contributions; but as a compactly built body of learning and logic. Both Apologetics and Biblical Criticism have grappled boldly and successfully with the deepest and hardest problems falling within their reach. In whatever quarters Christian students and thinkers — their adversaries being the judges — may have shown timidity or vagueness or looseness in their intellectual work, they have not shown them here.

Religious doubt has a history as well defined as that of any of the leading manifestations of the human mind; and it has been one office of Apologetics, considered as a science, first to write up that history, and then to analyze and classify its facts. Among other results, it

has been found that living doubt has nothing substantially new to offer. However divergent its lines of attack, it has been shown to be almost identical with that of the second and third centuries. The family likeness is marked and suggestive. "There is the same spirit of naturalism; the same indisposition to rise to the belief of the interference of Deity; the same feeling of contempt for positive religions; the same sensation of heart-weariness, — the utterance, as it were, of the despairing feeling, 'Who will show us any good?' the same lofty theory of Stoic morality, and disposition to find perfection in obeying nature's laws, physical and moral; the same approximation to the Christian ideal of perfection, while destroying the very proof of the means by which it is to be acquired." Further, it has been shown, that, as the difficulties of the human intellect in both periods have been much the same, so the modes of meeting these difficulties have been much the same. In fact, the two main lines of apology taken at the beginning of the conflict are the lines taken now, changed only in being widened and deepened to meet the wider and deeper thought that up to this time completes the evolution of scepticism. One of these lines is that of philosophy, the other that of history: the former showing the capacities and wants of human nature, and how perfectly Christianity meets them; the latter proving that the events by which Christianity was introduced and established are as much a part of authentic history as any series of events connected with the planting and development of any of the leading kingdoms of the world.



Another aim of Apologetic Science has been to show how these lines of proof, while neither has at any time been entirely overlooked, have changed places at the front of the Christian argument according to the fluctuations of doubt.

“ In arguing with the heathen in the first age, the philosophical method was adopted ; the School of Alexandria trying to lead men to Christianity as the highest wisdom. In the Middle Ages, the same method was adopted, but with the alteration that the philosophy was one of form, not of matter. In the later Middle Ages, the appeal was to the Church. In the early contests with the English deists, the appeal was to the authority of reason, and to the Bible reached through reason : in the later, to the Bible reached through history and fact. In opposing the French infidelity, the appeal was chiefly to authority. In the early German, the appeal was the same as in England ; in the later German, it has been a return in spirit to that of the early Fathers, or that of the English apologists of the eighteenth century, but based on a deeper philosophy, which appealed to feeling or intuition, and not to reflective reason, and through these ultimately to revelation.”<sup>1</sup>

It is on this method that Apologetic Science mainly relies to-day ; with this difference, that the area of the argument has been so far expanded as to include some of the profoundest questions in psychology and metaphysics. The chief effort now is to prove : —

(a) The reality of knowledge, as against the theory of phenomenalism or relativity ; the reality of knowledge, as well of God, the Absolute and the Infinite, as of the world and of human consciousness.

(b) The capacity of man to know God, as against all theories of agnosticism.

<sup>1</sup> Farrar's *Critical History of Free Thought*, note 49.

(c) What and how much man can know of God; involving at once the extent and the limitations of his knowledge, and in such way as to establish the necessity — and, if the necessity, the probability, or even the moral certainty — of a revelation to remedy the defects of such knowledge.

(d) That the foundations of religion are laid, in the consciousness of man, on the twin pillars of a metaphysical and a moral sentiment: the former binding him to the eternal and unchangeable, to that which is true in itself, the essential Being; the latter leading him forth in his sin and suffering (as the former led him forth in his mental weakness and imperfection), in search of a Father who loves him, and who will therefore be his saviour, his deliverer, his consoler.

Emerging from the domain of natural religion as proven by the witness of man's intellectual and moral consciousness, Apologetic Science, true to the present exigency, and moving on the same general line, passes up into the domain of Christianity, and, appealing again to what is truest and best in man, presents to him, as the sufficient evidence of the reasonableness and truth, as well as of the Divine origin, of Christianity, the Christ, its author and finisher; exhibiting Him, in His person, work, and character, as the supreme moral miracle, in whom all other credentials centre, and from whom they derive their authority and explanation. And then, advancing a step farther, it claims to prove, that, as the character of the Christ could not have been produced by any or by all moral and spiritual forces working in or upon ordinary humanity, or by any possi-

ble combination of types of human nature, as Hebrew, Greek, and Roman, it must be supernatural, divine; and, next, that the Christ was a real person, as against the two theories, the mythical and the legendary, the only ones having the semblance of plausibility yet devised by human ingenuity to account for his origin and his place in history; and, finally, that the Christ of the Church and of the Scriptures is also the historic Christ, the Christ of whom the best thought of the ages and the authentic records of the past speak in this wise.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "We talk, indeed, with admiration of His being the one standard to the endlessly differing conditions of society, — to rich and poor, the wise and ignorant, the strong and weak, the few and the many; but what is this to the wonder of his having been the constant standard to distant and different ages? In the same Living Person, each age has seen its best idea embodied. But its idea was not adequate to the truth: there was something still beyond. An age of intellectual confusion saw in the portraiture of Him in the Gospels the ideal of the great teacher and prophet of human kind, the healer of human error, in whom were brought together and harmonized the fractured and divergent truths scattered throughout all times and among all races. It judged rightly, but that was only part. The monastic spirit saw in it the warrant and suggestion of a life of self-devoted poverty as the condition of perfection. Who can doubt that there was much to justify it? Who can doubt that the reality was something far wider than the purest type of monastic life? The Reformation saw in Him the great improver, the breaker of the bonds of servitude and custom, the quickener of the dead letter, the stern rebuker of a religion which had forgotten its spirit; and doubtless He was all this, only He was infinitely more. And now, in modern times, there is the disposition to dwell on Him as the ideal exemplar of perfect manhood, great in truth, great in the power of goodness, great in His justice and forbearance, great in using and yet in being above the world, great in infinite love; the opener of men's hearts to one another, the well-spring, never to be dry, of a new humanity. He is all this, and this infinitely precious. We may 'glorify Him for it, and exalt Him as much as we can; but even yet will He far exceed' (Eccl. xliii. 30). That one and the same form has borne the eager scrutiny of each anxious

Much as has been made of the method resting upon philosophical and moral evidence, because of the recent drift of sceptical thought, it must not be inferred, as is done in some quarters, that what are known as the external evidences have been disparaged or set aside by our best apologists. The tide of battle has sent them to the rear only for the moment: they are of the same value as they have always been. In the early centuries, miracles were discussed as an historical, and scarcely at all as a philosophical, question. In our day this has been reversed. The question now is not so much what history may say of them as events, as what science may say of them as possible facts, and as possessed of rational credibility. So far has this been pushed, that it is now commonly said, that, so far from miracles proving Christianity, it is part of the extra burden put upon Christianity to prove the miracles. Of late, Apologetics has encountered a difficulty which, like so many others, reminds us of its experiences in the early centuries. The agnostic of to-day who denies the validity of all knowledge of the supernatural, and utterly discredits reason as an organ of absolute truth in religion or in

and imperfect age; and each age has recognized, with boundless sympathy and devotion, what it missed in the world, and has found in Him what is wanted. Each age has caught in those august lineaments what most touched and swayed its heart. And as generations go on, and unfold themselves, they still find that character answering to their best thoughts and hopes; they still find in it what their predecessors had not seen or cared for. They bow down to it as their inimitable pattern, and draw comfort from a model who was plain enough and universal enough to be the Master, as of rich and poor, so of the first century and the last." — *Sermons preached before the University of Oxford by R. W. CHURCH, Dean of St. Paul's, London.*

any thing else, thus foisting upon modern thought a new phase of philosophical scepticism, corresponds at bottom with the Pyrrhonist of Pagan thought. Minutius Felix, one of the early Christian apologists, ran against this type of doubt, and dealt with it as we must deal with it to-day. He told the Pyrrhonist, "You have dethroned reason as the faculty of truth, and therefore there can be no appeal to reason in behalf of the reasonableness of Christianity. It is idle to debate with you about the functions of reason, as you have thrown the validity of its conclusions out of count. I therefore affirm, on the authority of a Divine Revelation, and as a dogma which you will reject at your peril, the supernatural origin and claims of the Christian religion, and defy you to disprove them. I cannot prove them to you, because you have disbarred the only authority in you to which an appeal can be made: so neither for the same reason can you deny them." This, in substance, must be our line with the agnostic of to-day. To this issue he must be held, until human nature itself drives him from his position, and forces him to restore reason to its rightful throne. Modern apologetics has accepted reason as an authority in the great debate, and has marshalled before it the Christian evidences for judgment. And so the acknowledged aim has been to show the reasonableness of Christianity. So far has this been carried by some, that our apologetics has incurred the charge of rationalism by undertaking to do its work apart from the supernatural elements necessarily bound up with it. It has relied too much upon reason to prove what transcends reason; too much

upon nature to prove the supernatural ; and not enough upon the supernatural, the infinitely greater thing, to vindicate itself as entering of necessity into the system of nature. It has, for example, puzzled itself to account for miracles consistently with universal laws, forgetting that both miracle and law are but different expressions of one and the same will-power ; miracle being a special and individual expression of this power, and law but a prolonged, uniform repetition of what, in its inception, was of the nature of a miracle. " When science explains a law, theology will explain miracles. The mistake has been in putting miracles upon proof, instead of putting law upon explanation. Law and miracles are essentially the acts of one and the same Absolute Will. The will of God has general manifestations, called laws ; special manifestations, called miracles. But there was a miracle before there was law, just as the beginning of a line is before its prolongation, as the special goes before the general, and the general is only many specials in succession. When law is accounted for essentially, then miracles are accounted for rationally."

Again : the evidence arising from the fulfilment of prophecy was often successfully appealed to by the first apologists. This evidence, though greatly strengthened by the lapse of centuries, has been comparatively little used in modern discussion. The tide of conflict has swept by it, because it has been seldom the object of attack. It has shared, moreover, in the general discredit which modern unbelief has endeavored to fasten upon the whole family of external evidences ; a discredit

that many Christian apologists have tacitly assented to, under the conviction that the only available and effective proof is to be found in the internal relations of Christianity to the individual soul. Undoubtedly such proof suffices in all cases that demand its application; but the Christian religion, in order to be able to present itself in this way to individual inquirers through the successive generations of mankind, must, before all else, maintain its title and place as an historic religion, supernaturally introduced into the historic development of the race. This it cannot do apart from the external evidences which God has affixed as a visible seal to its Divine origin and commission. And if there be one lesson that recent infidelity, in its extravagant idealism, has impressed upon the Christian mind more deeply than any other, it is the value, in this connection, of the external evidences.

But a wider, and in some respects more important field, is that of the critical study of the Holy Scriptures, in which we find perhaps the most striking and abundant proofs of the energy and learning of the theological mind of this age. It may be said that no small share of the best work done in this field has been done outside theological and clerical circles. Let this be granted to the full extent of the facts; yet such is the vast bulk of the scholarship and labor expended on this branch of study, that the most liberal allowance for outside help does not sensibly affect it. In a subsequent lecture I shall have occasion to allude to the feeble and still declining use of the Scriptures in the pulpit. But if the preacher has fallen off, the student has advanced.

The critical may not be as important as the didactic or devotional use of the Word of God, but in recent times it has certainly been the more pressing and prominent. I am not now concerned with Biblical study, whether as destructive or conservative, as rationalistic or mystical, or otherwise: I have to do with it only as it discovers and illustrates the range and quality of the intellectual work performed in the last and in the present generation by ordained men, whether pastors or teachers. And yet in some cases the results of this work may not be overlooked, if we would do justice not only to the intrinsic value of the work, but as well to the depth and breadth of the mental power thrown into it.

Biblical study as pursued of late has proved itself to be, more than ever before, the most comprehensive of all intellectual pursuits. Not only in theory, but in practice, it has put under contribution, and treated as auxiliaries, all sciences and literatures and histories. In extending and enriching itself, it has extended and enriched archæology, philology, chronology, geography, general history; while, as a result of its more elaborate and systematic examination of the great ethnic religions, it has created the new science of Comparative Theology. To theology in its exegetical, biblical, historic, and dogmatic aspects, it has given a new impulse, and advanced it to higher grades of attainment. Among its other achievements, the following may be named as the most far-reaching and decisive. It does not, indeed, claim them as original with itself, but points to them as topics which it has thrown into bolder and stronger lights, as against the shadows cast upon them by nineteenth-century doubt.



Thus understood, I may cite the following as giving the most emphatic testimony to its enlarged spirit and manifold activity. It has shown more clearly than ever that the Holy Scriptures contain the revelation of mysteries inseparable from the relations of God and man, for which no process of inductive or deductive reason could furnish a solution. It has familiarized, and at the same time exalted, the Bible in popular estimation; destroying what is known as Bibliolatry, while making it more the book of every-day life,—the people's book. It has treated it as a literature subject to the accepted rules of criticism and exposition, and yet has carefully discriminated between its Divine and human elements; insisting with an intensified emphasis, that, however interesting it may be as a series of historical documents, affording information nowhere else to be found, it stands alone and unapproached as the rule of faith and life for mankind. By a double process, representative of two opposing schools, reaching the same end, each by its own method of thought,—the one inductive and synthetic, evolving unity from variety, the universal from the particular; the other deductive and analytic, evolving variety from unity, the particular from the universal,—it has traced the One Infinite and Eternal Mind announcing itself on every page as a continuous and progressive revelation of perfect love and justice. Nor has it failed to make the most of the obvious and pregnant inference from the success of this double process, viz., the *organic* character of the Scriptures, binding together by living ligatures every part with the whole, and the whole with every part; and this in spite of the widest diversity of environments

as to time and place, as to social and political modifications, and as to the moral and intellectual temperament of the sacred writers. As against all theories of progress, or evolution, or education of mankind, which assume the gradually unfolding human consciousness as the only and sufficient source of religion, it has shown that the test of a revelation is to be found, not in its beginning or its middle, but in its end; not in "the ruling ideas" as they are imperfectly developed or feebly asserted in the early ages of the race, but in "the ruling ideas" as they are consummated and perfected in "the fulness of time." It has handled consistently and exhaustively, if not to the satisfaction of all minds, that most difficult of questions: in what sense are the Scriptures the inspired record of God's communications to man? The literature that has grown up around this question, it has examined, not only with profound attention, but with the advantage of having in plain sight the dangerous and untenable positions assumed by the two extreme schools that have discussed it with varying fortunes since the Reformation. The mechanical infallibility which Romanism had claimed for the Church, and which was one of the causes of the Reform movement, was, under the necessities of their position, transferred by Calvin and his followers to the Bible. Losing sight of the true office of the Church as the pillar and ground of the truth, while re-acting from Romish error they drifted out into the unchecked individualism of private judgment, and accepted as their battle-cry, "The Bible alone the religion of Protestants!" One result of this was the extreme theory of mechanical inspiration, which represents the inspiring Spirit as work-

ing *on*, not *through*, man ; using him as a pen, not as a penman ; dictating not only the thoughts of God, but the words in which they were inscribed, irrespective of the personal characteristics and surroundings of the several writers. Thus the Scriptures were regarded in matter and form as the absolute echo of the Divine voice ; and the mind of the inspired writer, as a passive, colorless, impersonal medium,—a soulless machine, mechanically responding to the force that moves it. This theory absorbed the human element in the Divine, and made every word of Scripture equally necessary and equally authoritative, whether relating to matters belonging to the domain of physical science, or to those within the sphere of faith and morals. Thus the life and its dress, the kernel and its shell, God's voice and the human utterance of it, were put absolutely on the same plane. There is no sanction for this view in the Scriptures themselves or in historical testimony. It was not long before it began to give way before the extravagances of fanaticism and the steady advance of knowledge, until finally its utter demolition was completed by the progress of modern criticism and the profounder analysis of the human mind. Parallel with it ran the opposite extreme, developed by the subjective tendencies evoked by the altered philosophy of the times. So soon as it became the intellectual habit to study all things from within and not from without, and to subordinate the organic to the individual, external authority to reason or intuition, the world was absorbed in man, and revelation itself was forced to accept his judgment as its ultimate criterion. As part and parcel of this movement, the consensus of historic

Christianity — the testimony of the Catholic Church — was disparaged more and more, until, with the whole fabric of external evidence, it was sent to the rear as powerless and useless, if not irrelevant. That alone was divine which every man in his own way could feel to be so, and the inner consciousness of each individual read into or read out of the Scriptures what it pleased. This tendency had free course, until the conclusion was reached, that the Bible was merely “the book of Hebrew legends, which will yield to the skilful inquirer their residuum of truth, like those of the Greeks and Romans and other ancient peoples ;” and that inspiration is but another name for “that poetic faculty which embodies whatever is of typical or permanent import in things around, and invests with a lasting form the transitory growths of time.”

After demonstrating the untenableness of both these theories, the soundest recent thought has discouraged all theorizing on the subject, and fallen back upon the view always held by the Historic Church, treating inspiration as a fact too deeply rooted in the mystery of God’s dealings with man to be satisfactorily accounted for at the bar of human reason. And yet much has been done to simplify the subject, and thereby to lessen the difficulties that environed it. That was a great step taken by the theological mind of the time, when it so defined inspiration as to exclude from its proper subject-matter all outside the moral and spiritual world, the world of belief and duty ; allowing it, indeed, a certain hold on the physical order, but this only so far as might be necessary to supplement the teaching of natu-

ral theology touching its creation and moral government. It was another great step, when it was affirmed that the human powers of the sacred writers acted according to their natural laws, even when most under supernatural direction; and that, for Him who created these powers, it was quite as easy to quicken them into more exalted states of consciousness, and to endue them with forces not inherently theirs, without disturbing the conditions of their normal action. Thus it has been shown how we could have a revelation that would be authoritative as being God's voice, and intelligible as being in the thought and language of men; the Divine agency so operating as neither to neutralize the nature of the human medium, nor to impair the absolute truthfulness of the message from God. It has been shown, too, that, while unity is the characteristic of God's teaching, uniformity is not; thus providing for the immutability of truth amid all the changes incident to the progress of humanity, and so leaving to truth such ample play as would enable it to assume spontaneously such forms as would best adapt it to the age in which it was revealed, whether it be the age of patriarchal simplicity, or the age of national vigor and maturity, or the age glorified by the ministry of the Christ, or the age in which the infant Church struggled into historic form. Thus, too, it has been explained how the Bible proves its inspiration as a whole, not by the contents of particular books, but by the final result which determines the quality and value of every stage in the series leading up to it.

But finally, to use the weighty language of one of the ablest of living Bible-students: —

“To speak of the *proof* of the inspiration of the Scriptures, involves an unworthy limitation of the idea itself. In the fullest sense of the word, we cannot prove the presence of life, but are simply conscious of it; and inspiration is the manifestation of a higher life. The words of Scripture are spiritual words, and as such are ‘spiritually discerned.’ The ultimate test of the reality of inspiration lies in the intuition of that personal faculty (*πνευμα*) by which inspired men once recorded the words of God, and are still able to hold communion with Him. Every thing short of this leaves the great truth still without us, and that which should be a source of life is in danger of becoming a mere dogma.

“At the same time, it is as unfair and dangerous to reject the teaching of a formal proof of inspiration, as it is to rely upon it exclusively. It cannot be an indifferent matter to us, to bring into harmonious combination the work and the writings of the Apostles; to follow and faithfully continue the clear outlines of scriptural criticism as traced in the writings of the New Testament; to recognize the power which the Bible has hitherto exercised upon the heart of the Church, and the depths which others have found in it.”

It may be regarded as now definitely settled by the sounder tendencies of Christian thought, that no separation of outward from inward, of logical from moral proof will be tolerated. Though the former may, with the progress of time, acquire no fresh force or wider application, it is yet of great value, because it can be transmitted, in all its formal completeness, from one generation to another, and without appreciable fluctuation in the testimony it offers; while the latter, though it may change with changing modes of thought, must always have the utmost value, because its vitality and strength will increase with the growing fulness and power of ever-accumulating individual experiences of the internal meaning of God’s revealed Word. That

this conclusion has been reached after three centuries of discussion, and that it is not likely to be disturbed by any new turn of thought on the subject of inspiration, afford a happy omen of the character of all future dealings with this aspect of the Holy Scriptures.

But, as before remarked, the scientific study of the Scriptures has in our day, and in response to the spirit of the age, taken mainly the form of criticism; and in this form, therefore, demands our chief attention. Criticism in general has been defined to be a method of knowledge, or a method of testing the certainty of knowledge by discriminating between the true and the false, the proven and the hypothetical. Biblical criticism in the modern sense began with the general awakening of the human mind which accompanied and followed the Reformation. It started as one phase of the spirit of inquiry, which permeated all branches of thought; it has grown and spread with the progress of knowledge. In our day it may be said to have reached the climax of boldness and versatility. By way of consolation to those who look timidly and regretfully on the fruits of its destructive zeal, it is often said, as the sufficient answer to all fears, that its growth falls within the limits of the centuries most remarkable for intellectual progress, and that the day is only beginning to dawn when its constructive work will supplant the ruin it has wrought among the cherished traditions of the past. However this may be, my purpose will be met by noting its present characteristics so far as they affect my theme.

And, first, I note the increased attention given to lan-

guages of the Bible. This is due in part to the recent advance in all branches of philological study, but still more to the newly awakened interest in the Scriptures as the earliest and most important of historical documents. Whatever the cause, it is certain that the study of the Bible tongues is now being pushed as it never has been. The more we know of their history and structure, as well as of their relations to other families of speech, the more we desire to know of them. The interest deepens on all sides, with the progress of investigation. It is no longer merely the belief that these languages embody the loftiest and purest religious and ethical thought, that attracts the learned; but as well the energy, vividness, and majesty of the embodiment itself. It has now become evident to all minds willing to see God in the processes of nature and history, that, as it was His purpose to reveal Himself to man, so it was equally His purpose to prepare the vehicle by which the revelation should be conveyed. The deeper we go into the history, the more carefully we examine the peculiar characteristics of the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages, the more striking are the traces of this Providential preparation; and the more plainly, moreover, do we see that it was the Divine intent, that, having "run their career as living tongues, they should lapse into the unalterable form of dead ones; so holding meanwhile, and for all coming time, in their fixed embrace, the message of eternal redemption," as to lift it on its human side above the possibility of material change, amid all the inevitable changes of the world's life and the world's speech. The more, too, our best students



have observed the subtle and essential connection between language and thought, — a connection as of body and soul, — the stronger is their conviction, that, of all tongues ever spoken or written by the human race, the best were chosen for the sacred uses of revelation ; whether regard be had to the simplicity and grandeur, or to the fulness and variety, of its contents. There has never been a time when scholars have not felt that no translation could take the place of the original Scriptures ; but now this feeling is so positive, so earnest, that all second-hand versions are reckoned as second-hand appliances of study, and none are counted even in the inferior rank of Biblical students that have not handled with a living interest the languages in which the life and spirit of God originally took shape. Nor is this the highest point reached by the sacred studies of the day : for not only has it been shown that the Hebrew in the earliest forms known to us was the fruit of a still earlier literary development, and that the whole family of Shemitic languages, eleven in number, were derived from an original mother-tongue, of which all traces are gone ; but, what is vastly more important, that the Shemitic group, however great the contrast in their respective features, crystallized into a higher unity, in order to perform more perfectly the task of conveying to all ages the Divine Revelation. To work back to this higher unity, has become one of the higher aims of our best Oriental scholarship. But this is impossible without an acquaintance with the languages cognate to the Hebrew. This accounts for the extraordinary interest (attributed by some to mere curi-

osity, or to the desire to escape intellectual *ennui* by going in search of yet unconquered difficulties) taken more and more in the study of the Arabic, Ethiopic, Syriac, Chaldee, Phœnician, Assyrian, and Babylonian. It is a noteworthy fact, that the most advanced philology of the day, without by any means abandoning the Indo-Germanic group, is throwing its chief efforts in this direction; and it is equally noteworthy, that the leading centres of learning in England and America (as those in Germany and France did long ago) are making provision for this rising taste, — a taste, be it observed, originally excited by Scripture studies, and now chiefly cultivated by the votaries of these studies.

However interesting, it does not fall within my limits to point out in detail what the enlarged criticism of the Bible has done in late years to bring within the reach of those who have no time to be scholars, not only the Hebrew's marvellous power of expression, and intense realism in grasping the concrete, phenomenal side of nature and human life, but how it influenced, while it yielded to, the Aramaic, the vernacular of our Lord, and through the Aramaic the Greek, which enshrined the teachings of the God-man in forms so perfect that no possible culture of the race can outgrow them.

The next thing to be noted in the Biblical criticism of our time is its researches and conclusions touching the Canon of Holy Scripture. There is nothing original or specially characteristic in the thought and learning of the day on this subject. Criticism here has taken substantially the old lines, only working them out with more fulness as the matters in debate have been successively

pushed into prominence. Avowedly rationalistic criticism has regarded the Canon as a purely historic and literary question. Considering inspiration as simply an exalted form of ordinary consciousness, with no super-added gifts of spiritual insight, and with no truth from a source higher than itself to convey, it has attached no other moral authority to any of the Sacred Writings than can be found in any of the nobler efforts of the human mind. As for the traditional consensus of the Church, it has reduced that to the least possible value; resolving every issue, as it has arisen, into one of dates, authorship, style, and relations to similar documents. It has torn the Old Testament into shreds, rejecting as spurious or unauthenticated at least one-third of its contents; while scarcely a book of the New Testament has escaped its disparaging doubts. And yet few of its verdicts have been accepted by the general scholarship of the time as more than plausible, while the most of them have been set aside as unsupported by competent evidence.

Next comes the half-mystic and half-rationalistic line taken by critics and theologians boasting their loyalty to the Puritan rule of judgment announced by the ultra-Reformation thought of the sixteenth century. This determines the canonicity of the received books by the inward light imparted to the individual mind by the Holy Spirit, speaking through the books themselves. Thus every part of Scripture proves its right to be where it is, by the impression it makes on the judgment of the individual believer. But, as matter of fact, this impression has proved to be variable and contradictory. The Song of Songs, for example, has often been

declared by the isolated individual Christian judgment to be disgusting when interpreted literally, and blasphemous when treated as an allegory. The Epistle of St. James crossed Luther's track; and he did not hesitate to pronounce it a thing of straw, and unworthy of its place in the Sacred Canon. And so, too, the individual Christian judgment, even when guided by historical testimony rather than by the inward light, has frequently challenged the canonical authority of St. Jude, of Second St. Peter, and of Second and Third St. John, and even the Revelation of St. John the Divine; and this simply on the external ground of the omission of these books in the New Testament of the Syriac Church, the earliest collection of Christian Scriptures for the East. The Puritan rule magnifies inspiration to the utmost, but confers upon the individual believer the sole and supreme right to pass upon the signs and proofs of its presence; setting aside as of inferior moment the uniform consent of Catholic Christendom, this being esteemed as little more than a loose aggregate of opinions vitiated more or less by ignorance and prejudice, or by the bondage of tradition.

Next, there is the Roman-Catholic view of the Canon, which treats the dicta of private judgment as an impertinence, and leaves the whole matter to the infallible Church, — or rather, since the Vatican decrees of 1870, to the infallible Pope.

Finally, there is the Anglo-Catholic teaching. This rests the Canon, to begin with, on the witness of the undivided Catholic Church of the first five centuries, during which it was framed and established as we now

have it and as it has been ever since. With the Canon thus grounded upon external testimony which, by virtue of its authorship and the mode of its deliverance, is only the voice of the Holy Ghost speaking through the whole organic Body of Christ, this view encourages and authorizes the individual believer to examine the several books for himself, guided by "the inward light" given by the same Holy Ghost, according to the measure of his faculties. Where he can attain to certainty, it bids him rejoice and be strengthened: where he cannot, it bids him leave the doubt to the consentient judgment of the Divine Body of which he is a member. As matter of fact, no book of Scripture was admitted into the Canon until tested by *use*, and formally *approved* by the whole Church. The Church, acting in council, simply bore witness to such use and approval, and gave to the books so tested the seal of its authority. The only question is as to the nature of this authority, and the extent of our obligation to accept it. But this is only another form of the question as to the reality of the promise made to her by the Church's Divine Head, that the Holy Ghost, given on the Day of Pentecost, shall guide her into all truth. Consider it as we may, to doubt the bestowment of this gift, or the power and authority that went with it, is to doubt the Incarnation itself. As to their place in the scheme of Christianity, they are on the same supernatural plane, and have an identical historic credibility.

As these several views of the Canon, or rather of its authority, are the products of wide moral and intellectual differences among men, so it is scarcely to be expected that any one of them will ever command general, far

less universal consent. But even though this be true, it is of interest to inquire which of them is likely to do the better service to Christianity amid the religious upheaval and anarchy of these times. I leave the inquiry with the single remark, that as the soul of man and the world without, the faith once delivered and the sum of human knowledge, will never be at unity until, both in religion and philosophy, the objective and the subjective, being and thought, the real and the ideal, shall be reconciled by seeing, the one in the other, only opposite sides of the same organic whole ; so these conflicts of opinion relating to the authority of the Body of Christ and the authority of the individual reason will not be even in the way of ultimate settlement until our nineteenth-century thought, ceasing to put its weakest emphasis on the former and its strongest on the latter, shall grasp more reverently and practically, not merely the natural solidarity of the race considered as of one blood, but the supernatural unity of all men in Christ, and therefore of all men as members of the Church of the living God.

Returning for a moment to gather up the result of recent criticism on the Canon of Holy Scriptures as wrought out in the main by ordained representatives of the Church, it can be claimed, without fear of contradiction by the best scholarship of our day, wherever found, that there is a general consent as to the books commonly received as canonical, and that there is a decided preponderance of testimony in favor of those concerning which there has been any question.

I come now to the work of criticism on the text of the Sacred Writings. How wide and difficult a field of in-

vestigation this opens, they only know who have given to it the labors of a lifetime. Within this field has been piled up a mass of minute technical learning, which it would be idle to speak of save in bulk and in some of its leading results. All things considered, the preservation of the Scriptures, as we have them, attests the wonderful care of Divine Providence, and a singular devotion and fidelity on the part of their custodians through all the ages of the two dispensations. And yet mistakes and corruptions have crept in through copyists and heretics and over-anxious believers; these have multiplied with the lapse of time, and have been concealed or exaggerated according to the interests of conflicting schools of scholarship and theology.

The importance of a genuine, original, uncorrupted text has always been felt; but it has been only in modern times, and chiefly in the past and present generation, that Christian scholars, in Orders and out of Orders, have addressed themselves to the task of securing it in a resolute, continuous, and systematic manner. In spite, however, of the vast amount of labor given to this task, we have not yet the ideal text. In fact, none has been produced, up to this time, which satisfies the critics themselves. So true is this, that the chief fault found with the recent Revised Version of the New Testament is grounded upon the imperfection of the standard text from which its translation was made.<sup>1</sup> In the sixteenth

<sup>1</sup> Whatever may be thought of the probability or desirableness of the general adoption of the Revised Version for practical use, it must be regarded on all hands as a remarkable exhibition of critical erudition and ability. It may be doubted whether any thing surpassing it in minute, patient, and varied learning, has appeared in any department of study in this generation.

century, Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin undertook work which compelled them to be translators and critics. They dealt some rough blows to the texts and versions that fell into their hands. They were by no means backward in taking liberties with the grammar and logic of the sacred authors, often raising the question as to how far they went in their belief in verbal inspiration. They certainly rejected the Massoretic traditional pointing, and accepted as inspired only the unpointed Hebrew text. The first decided impulse to profounder and closer textual study was given by Maronite scholars in the seventeenth century, who threw down a wealth of Oriental learning at the feet of Christian scholars. This impulse was quickened by Pocock's journey to the East, crowned as it was with priceless treasures of Arabic literature; the first practical use of which, in France, Holland, and England, was the renewed study of the Hebrew Scriptures, and the memorable conflict with rabbinical tradition, ending in the denial of the inspiration of the Hebrew vowel-points and accents, and the common Massoretic text. Coincident with this was the appearance of those monuments of textual learning, the great Polyglots of Antwerp, Paris, and London; the last having been regarded ever since as the foremost critical work of the seventeenth century, and, as every scholar knows, continuing until the present day as the acknowledged basis for the comparative study of versions. In the eighteenth century we have the noteworthy labors, in the same field, of Mill, Richard Bentley, Bishop Lowth, and Kennicott, with whose passing away this branch of learning migrated to the Continent, there to stay until



our own time. The great textual critics of Germany and Holland from 1734 to 1870, ending with Tischendorf the greatest of them all, are as household words to all who have any interest in this line of study. This brief review will prepare us to appreciate the advance in textual criticism, both of the Old and the New Testament, accomplished in our day by divines and Christian scholars, especially by those in England. From England alone, in the last thirty years, we have had at least five works in this department, of the first rank; and to Drs. Westcott and Hort, honored names of Cambridge University, the distinction is universally conceded, of "having advanced the textual criticism of the New Testament beyond the mark reached by the best Continental scholars." And yet it remains to be said, as showing how much is still to be done, that, in the remarkable work of Ginsberg on the Massora (London, 1880), we have only a good start toward a correct text of the Old Testament.

Finally we come to the most prominent aspect of Biblical criticism, — that known to us under the name of "the Higher Criticism," whose chief aim is to study the Scriptures simply as literature, to inquire into the origin and development of the material contained in the Bible, into questions of authorship and of environments, and into the interior structure and relations of the several books. The subject is too large and intricate for details, and yet without a brief review of its history we cannot properly understand the phase which it presents to-day. This review will lead us up to facts of great interest and importance in the present outlook of sacred literature.

It will show us that many of the agitating questions now pressing upon us, so far from being new questions, have occupied the attention of Biblical scholars in one way or another for at least three hundred years, though thrown into greater prominence by the critical work of the last hundred years. It will show us, that, as in the past, so to-day, the studies of the Clergy must be so conducted as, while making room for all ascertained truth, to defend the Divine authority of the Scriptures against both a diluted and a consolidated rationalism. It will show us, too, that battles which have been fought in other days and in other lands, and only the far-off noise of which we have heard, have been renewed at our own altars and firesides. English and American Christianity is just beginning to feel the fires that have scorched to the very bone and marrow the faithful in Germany and Holland; and the sooner our schools for the training of the Ministry prepare to meet them, the better it will be. The germs of the Higher Criticism can be traced to the Reformers of the sixteenth century. They broke in upon the traditional theory of the Canon, by casting out the Apocrypha. They examined the received versions of their day, and threw out as uninspired the Septuagint and the Vulgate, falling back on the original Hebrew and Greek texts. They denied the inspiration of the Massoretic pointing of the Hebrew Scriptures. They attacked the allegorical method of interpretation, and insisted on the surface or grammatical sense. Luther and Calvin and Zwingli, and their immediate disciples, expressed themselves on questions of Scripture authorship with a freedom hardly surpassed in later times.

Luther denied that Solomon wrote Ecclesiastes, that St. John wrote the Apocalypse, that St. James was an Apostolic writing, that St. Jude was an independent Epistle, and, not hesitating to go as far as the boldest criticism of to-day, raised doubts as to the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. Calvin waxed equally bold, and challenged the Pauline authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews; questioned whether St. Peter wrote the second Epistle credited to him; declared that there were many parts of the Psalter not written by David, and that the book as we have it was compiled by Ezra, that Ezra wrote the prophecy of Malachi, and that the only really important part of the Mosaic legislation was the Ten Commandments. What these leaders said was echoed, with divers additions, by their followers. Since the Reformation, there have been three distinct revivals of what may be called critical enterprise: the first taking in hand the Canon of Scripture; the second, the original texts and versions; and the third, that of our own time, the purely literary characteristics of the Bible. Among other fore-runners in the seventeenth century, of the Higher Criticism, were Spinoza, the apostate Jew and pantheistic philosopher, and Richard Simon, a Roman Catholic. The former asserted that Moses could not have written the Pentateuch; that the Old Testament, from Genesis through the Books of Kings, was one historical work; that the Books of Chronicles belong to the Maccabean period, and the Proverbs to the time of Josiah; that the prophetic books are a mere conglomeration of fragments; and that the Book of Job was translated into Hebrew from a foreign tongue. The latter bent himself

to the task of elaborating the proofs of the non-Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, and far excelled the former in extent and thoroughness of investigation. In the eighteenth century, several Roman-Catholic divines, including Vitringa and Abbé Fleury, advocated the theory of a second-hand composition of Genesis by Moses, or what was known as the documentary theory ; while Astruc, a physician of the same faith, announced what he claimed to be a great discovery, which Eichhorn and the majority of Biblical scholars subsequently conceded to be such, — viz., that the Book of Genesis is divided, by the use of the Divine names *Elohim* and *Jehovah*, into two large and several lesser memoirs. But it was Bishop Lowth's work on Hebrew poetry, that gave the renewed impulse to the literary study of the Scripture in this century. This work, translated into German, awoke the genius of the poet Herder, who, saturated with the Oriental spirit, compelled the attention of German scholars to the unrivalled beauties of the Old-Testament literature. But it was the work of Eichhorn, in 1780, that gathered up and organized the critical labors of all his predecessors in this field, and won for itself the title, made so familiar in after-days, the Higher Criticism. The next chapter of the movement was opened by De Wette, who gave himself to the investigation of the origin of the documents alleged to have been used by Moses in writing the Pentateuch, and by other Scripture-writers in their respective works. Of theorizing on this subject there was no end ; but if the clashing conjectures brought forth no other fruit, because of the paucity of the facts on which they proceeded, they at least made

themselves memorable by paving the way for the next chapter of the Higher Criticism, inaugurated for the New Testament by the Tübingen school, and for the Old by Reuss and his school, both reaching the climax of destructive scholarship by their attempts to rebuild, on a basis of absolute naturalism, the entire series of the Sacred Writings. They exaggerated discrepancies to an extent that rendered their reconciliation impossible; and boldly advanced the theory, that the literature and religion of both Testaments could be accounted for by antagonistic forces struggling for the mastery. The story as to how they were answered by Neander, Hofmann, and Ewald, and their disciples, as regards the New-Testament literature and faith, is too familiar to be repeated here. The substance of the answer was, that all the alleged diversities and antagonisms met, and were reconciled, in a higher unity of thought and life.<sup>1</sup> The Higher Criticism having exhausted its resources, or become weary of the long series of attacks and counter-attacks, in Germany, crossed the English Channel, and stirred up the Anglo-Saxon world by Bishop Colenso's assault on the historical character of the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua, and still more by the rationalistic virus of the "Essays and Reviews." The authors of the latter simply paraded in the faded finery of defunct schools, — notably in that of the old deists and of the later anti-supernaturalism of De Wette and Baur. Colenso's work has not died as

<sup>1</sup> For a learned and luminous treatment of this and kindred topics, to which I have been able to allude only in a passing way, see *Biblical Study, its Principles, Methods, etc.*, by Professor C. A. Briggs, D.D., New York, 1883.

easily as "Essays and Reviews." Curiously enough, as for another sort of work Bishop Lowth begot Herder, and for still another Hume begot Kant, so Colenso, in order that the most advanced radicalism might not be without its file leader, begot the Dutch scholar Kuenen, who just at this time is the bright cynosure of the Higher Criticism. Of the further cropping-out of this movement in diluted forms in Great Britain and America, of the threadbare reproduction and second-hand scintillations of it in some of our pulpits and professional chairs, it were useless to speak; if for no other reason, because it were idle to attack the tyros and novices of rationalism when more formidable antagonists are to be looked after.

We should remember, however, that while the Higher Criticism has been thus far destructive, it is not in itself necessarily so, and may not prove so in the near future.<sup>1</sup> Alford and Wordsworth and Lightfoot and Westcott and

<sup>1</sup> It is sad to recall the wrong-headed and wrong-hearted temper often displayed on the destructive side of the so-called Higher Criticism, and interwoven with it the vast wastage of intellectual power amid the bottomless quicksands of learned conjecture and speculation. It is hard, indeed, to suppress a feeling of righteous indignation, when one examines in detail the more radical positions successively held and abandoned by German extremists under the guise of progressive scholarship and candid investigation. They have treated the Sacred Writings with all the less reverence because of their claim to a Divine origin. Time and again they have torn to pieces and reconstructed the life of the chosen people of God, drawing the materials of their artificial fabrics not so much from credible historic records as from their own consciousness. So with New-Testament history and the early Christian life associated with it. *Their dogmatism has surpassed, by a long way, that of the so-called traditional or scholastic theologians*; while their contradictory conclusions on matters of vital concern, each announced in turn as a positive discovery, make one

Ellicott, to name no others, illustrate what it may be when pursued in a reverent and devout spirit. Antipathy to the supernatural is its accidental, not its essen-

wonder at the hold they took on the sober thought of the time. As examples, take the following:—

Moses wrote parts of the Pentateuch. — Moses had no hand at all in it: it was a compilation, at a much later date, from primitive documents preserved in the national archives.

Moses, in forming the Hebrew ritual and in many other things, borrowed largely from the Egyptians. — The Mosaic legislation, so called, as a whole did not emerge until after the Captivity.

Deuteronomy was the earliest of the five books. — Deuteronomy was the latest of the five books.

The Hebrew worship was designed to shut out idolatry, and was relentless in the execution of this design. — The Hebrew worship, in many of its ritual and symbolic arrangements, was intensely idolatrous.

Moses did not write the books ascribed to him, but he may have written the Book of Job. — The authorship of the Book of Job is absolutely unknown, and Job himself is a myth.

The prophets, by a special exaltation of their spiritual consciousness, were able to forecast events. — The prophets were no more than earnest and fearless teachers of fundamental moral duties, in times of forgetfulness and disobedience: their predictions were after-thoughts credited to them in order to give them greater authority, or they turned out to be mistakes, and in either case were fictitious.

As for the New Testament, the writers were genuine historic men, and set down honestly and simply what they saw and knew. It is very doubtful whether St. John wrote any thing more than one Epistle. The Four Evangelists were so warped and colored by education, by local prejudice, and by race-feeling, that they were incompetent to give a true account of the real teaching and work of Christ. St. Paul was such a mixture of the Jew and the Greek, that all doctrine in his hands was seriously deflected from its proper line. St. Jude did not write the Epistle that bears his name, but some one else extracted it from the writings of St. Peter.

As for the Christ, he founded a Divine society. He introduced *only ideas, principles*. He, in some mysterious sense, came forth from God. Rationally considered, he was a *time-growth*, and embodied the ideal of humanity as a *time-growth* out of its own progressive consciousness.

tial characteristic. As the day of faith returns, as it certainly will, more faith and less doubt will enter into its work. But persistent and mighty as have been its assaults during the century past, and profound as have been the fear and agitation it has excited, the net result, when brought down to its actual substance, is thus summed up by the majority of our best Biblical scholars: "While some of our traditional teachings will have to be modified to a considerable extent in the several departments of Biblical study, nothing has been established by modern critical work that will at all disturb the statements of the orthodox dogmatic symbols of our day with reference to the authority of the Word of God." But there is another moral to be pointed. If in the past the theological and clerical mind has displayed immense learning and intellectual activity in meeting the adversaries of the truth, what a call have we in the present, and what a call shall we have in the near future, as the ordained deputies of the Christ, to so advance in sound learning and godly zeal as that the ark of true religion committed to our keeping shall suffer neither miscarriage nor spoliation by the hands of its enemies!



## LECTURE VI.

### MATERIAL AND TRAINING FOR THE MINISTRY.

IN the remaining lectures, our attention will be given to the positive, or constructive, side of the general subject ; i.e., to showing what is needed, and what it is in our power to do, for the renewal and invigoration of the gifts and functions, and with these of the influence of the Sacred Office.

The Church has of late had, in some respects, an unhappy experience in the period previous to ordination. It is believed by many, that the best material is not offered as freely for the Ministry as for other learned callings. The Church is not privileged with a wide range of selection. It is commonly understood, that, failing to secure the young life which the dignity and importance of her work ought to command, she is forced to take what she can get. The demand for recruits so far exceeds the supply, that, though maintaining towards those without, the traditionally lofty attitude as to tests and requirements, she more than winks at a rule in the choice of candidates which may be mildly characterized as generously easy and conveniently blind. To fend off ignorance and mediocrity, and the low ambitions which may put on the disguise of pious desires, she builds

the canonical fences very high; and then, under one plea or another, she allows the functionaries of voluntary societies, her Clergy and Standing Committees, and even her Bishops, a dangerous discretion in taking them down. Looking back over the past twenty years, it is not too much to say that only very marked disabilities of mind and body could have discouraged any one from applying to be received as a candidate for Holy Orders. Certainly any ordinary weakness, any open question of perceptible fitness, any grade of mental inferiority consistent with the possession of common-sense, has apparently operated to the disadvantage of no pious single-hearted soul who could persuade himself that the Christian Priesthood offered a nobler sphere of influence than private life. There has been no Aaronic or Levitical line to choose from; and owing to the temper of the time on the one hand, and to the solemn urgencies of her mission on the other, the Church has been in no condition to demand the firstlings of the flock or the lambs without blemish. Failing to command at will the gold and silver of intellect and culture, she has been constrained to accept, not seldom, the humbler talent of coarser metals.

The causes which have crippled the supply, and lowered the standard of the recruits for the Ministry, are strengthened, rather than weakened, by the present drift of things. The expense and difficulty of a complete academic and theological education; the new professions and employments introduced by our many-sided life, all requiring a thorough training and a vigorous intellect, and offering inviting opportunities to secure

wealth and promotion; the meagreness of clerical support, aggravated by the more costly scale of modern social life; the unhappy divisions which have disquieted the Church; the doubtful and shifting opinions, even upon the most vital theological issues; the consequent hesitancy and embarrassment in the minds of many thoughtful and conscientious youths; the persistent purpose of some within, and more without, the Church, to make the most of her troubles and imperfections, whether real or imaginary; the alternating fortunes of ecclesiastical parties; the unsettled relations between Christianity and the more advanced schools of thought, — these, together with other admitted symptoms of a period of transition, are influences which, there can be little doubt, will combine to hinder many choice spirits from seeking to serve at our altars; while they will also bring to the surface many more not so choice, who, in such a time of change and agitation, will be only too ready to accept any opening to ecclesiastical employment which promises respectability and support. Now, no training, however perfect, can create a high order of clerical character and service out of such material. The more of it we put in surplices, the weaker we shall be, and the louder will be the complaint, already so prevalent among the laity, and so often echoed by the secular press, of unfledged divines, shallow theology, crude discourses, and perfunctory ministrations. I say, then, antecedently to the question of training, that, if the influence of the Ministry is to be maintained at even its past average, and not allowed to shrink away gradually into feebleness and obscurity, the Church must hence-

forth exercise more care and vigilance in the selection of the raw material on which her theological schools are to work.

Again, and for the same reason, assuming that the raw material is of the right quality as to native texture and vigor, the Church must bring to bear a more scrupulous judgment in determining what constitutes a valid call to the office and work of a Priest in the Kingdom of God. It is to be feared that loose views and a looser practice have obtained a foot-hold among us on this vital point. I allude, of course, to the individual, subjective side of a call. One has only to go over the subject with the majority of young men offering themselves for the Sacred Office, to discover the evil and the danger now threatening us from this quarter. Some think themselves justified in looking forward to the Ministry if they have become seriously interested in, and have learned to reflect soberly on religious questions. Others imagine themselves duly persuaded in this solemn matter if they are conscious of a strong desire to be useful in promoting the interests of the Church and of humanity. Still others arrive at the same conclusion through the suggestion of friends who see in them gifts and abilities which they fancy would insure them power and reputation in the pulpit, or popularity in the pastorate. On all sides we encounter a state of feeling which makes it easy — altogether too easy — for the mechanic, the tradesman, the farmer, the lawyer, the physician, to abandon their callings, and attempt the functions of the Sacred Ministry, which, beyond any thing else in life if they are rightly discharged, take hold on the strongest

convictions and profoundest experiences of the soul. It is a state of mind often produced by consciousness of failure in secular work, or by native restlessness of temperament, or by the ambition to figure in a more conspicuous sphere, or by the desire to enjoy what is supposed to be the easy dignity and comfortable respectability of a vocation which surrounds itself with an atmosphere of quiet thought and sympathetic fellowship. But men lifted into the Ministry by such motives can never rise above the lowest grade of moral power. The first wave of tribulation that strikes them will draw from their lips the cry of cowards and time-servers. Never will be heard, even in any chance moment of spiritual exaltation, trembling on their tongues in pathetic, victorious earnestness, the words, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel,"<sup>1</sup> "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."<sup>2</sup> Never need the Church expect from such any personal sacrifice, that "no offence be given in any thing," and "that the Ministry be not blamed."<sup>3</sup> To them, afflictions, necessities, distresses, tumults, labors, watchings, fastings, obscurity, isolation, poverty, are sources of death, not life. They may abound in great words, but they will be barren of great deeds. The fire that tries them will prove them dross, and the furnace will cast them out as the refuse of God's Kingdom. If the Church is to have a Priesthood worthy of the Word she has been commissioned to preach and of the work she has undertaken to do, she must teach more and more the men whom she ordains, that they must rise above

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Phil. iii. 8.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. vi. 3.

all secondary motives grounded in mere taste or preference, or general intellectual and moral bias, and pass wholly into the region of those primary and fundamental motives which are alone spoken of and relied upon in the Scriptures of the New Testament. She must have the witness of the Holy Ghost working with and working through the judgment and volition of the individual soul.

Clearly the time has come when the Bishops of the Church must exercise greater care in selecting and receiving postulants. No duty can be more important than this, and none requires more pains-taking discrimination for its due performance. If the *morale* of the Ministry is ever to be made what it ought to be, and must be in order to sway the mind and heart of this generation, the random, hap-hazard method of dealing with this interest, so prevalent in the recent past, must cease. Much good material has come to us by what seems like a happy accident, but more of another sort has been imposed upon us by the lack of suitable vigilance. We must abandon the notion that candidates will drift in upon us as they are wanted, like waifs from the outer world. The manhood we want must be *sought* out in early youth, and the Church's seal fixed upon it at the start. The Church must help to fashion the lives and characters of those who farther on are to be trained in her theological schools. We may believe with all our hearts that "Almighty God, who has purchased to Himself an Universal Church by the precious blood of His dear Son, will" in this matter "mercifully look upon the same." We may believe, as we ought,

that the Holy Ghost, who perpetually applies to the Church's needs the virtue of Christ's indwelling presence, and who, through this, oils the joints and repairs the wastage of the Church's organic machinery, will not fail to provide in some way a due supply of "stewards of the mysteries of God." We may pray statedly, as we are bound to do, that God will "so guide and govern the minds of His servants the Bishops and Pastors of His flock, that they may faithfully and wisely make choice of fit persons to serve in the Sacred Ministry." But we must remember that all such believing and praying, as in other cases, so in this, will amount to little unless accompanied and followed by the active and habitual circumspection which they are intended to inspire. Certainly the guiding and governing sought for, even if granted in most liberal measure, do not excuse the Church's responsible officers from the most watchful and scrupulous exercise of their own conscience and judgment. I have dwelt on this point the more at length, because no careful observer can fail to trace some of the most serious deficiencies and inaptitudes of not a few of our living Clergy to the source I have indicated.

I shall now ask attention to some thoughts on our present methods of training candidates for the Priesthood. This work is done mainly by institutions built up and endowed for the purpose. Some of these institutions are officered by able, experienced, and earnest men, — men keenly alive to the gravity of their task and to the demands of the Church. But to the discredit, and I had almost said the shame, of the Church, it

must be admitted, that, in this age of remarkable forethought and liberality in general and denominational educational interests, not one of these Schools of the Prophets has been furnished with the appliances essential to any successful attempt at building up and maintaining a high order of sacred learning. This is not the place for details on this subject: I say therefore, generally, that neither the Church collectively nor any of her individual officers or members has a right to complain of, or, except in the most considerate manner, to criticise, the work actually done in such schools, until they shall have provided them with a much more complete and effective equipment than they now possess. It is not my purpose either to complain of or to criticise our Schools, but to deal in a broad spirit with the general subject of theological training.<sup>1</sup> The best of them are capable of abundant improvement. And yet, when we consider their disadvantages; when we remember the quality of much of the material they are required to work upon, the crudeness and meagreness in many cases of its previous academic preparation, the unrebuked hurry and impatience of candidates to push through the

<sup>1</sup> Of this (the General Theological Seminary), the oldest, best-known, and most influential of our Schools of the Prophets, I rejoice to say, in this connection, that the present outlook is most encouraging. Ten years more of the same large-minded, conciliatory, judicious, and enterprising administration that has of late quickened and blessed it, will not only win for it the affectionate good-will, and justify the best hopes, of the Church, but will assuredly advance it to the very front rank among the few really first-class theological institutions in the land. Speedily may it lead the way to the higher learning, the ripper scholarship, the loftier standard, of priestly attainment and outfit, *now* sorely needed by the Church, but to be still more needed by her in the next generation!



prescribed curriculum of study, the half-endowed professorships, the chronic poverty which sometimes obliges one teacher to do the duties of two, the ill-appointed libraries, half-starved for lack of stated income to feed them, in some cases complete in nothing, and thinly sprinkled with the treasures of patristic and modern learning,—when we recall these facts, we cannot but wonder that these Schools acquit themselves as well as they do, or that the men whom they graduate do not give the Church greater cause to mourn over the shortcomings of her Ministry.

To invigorate and expand the influence of the Ministry, to make it in quality and degree what the interests of religion in this age demand, certain things must be done, certain results attained, not yet found in any existing system of clerical training, Romish or Protestant or Anglican. They relate not to technical studies, or to modes of prosecuting them; they are not, and cannot be the offspring of class-room drill. They pertain to the normal animus of the Priesthood. They are to the character and manners and work of the individual Priest, what the atmosphere is to the picture, or expression is to the human face. Beyond all else save the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit, they determine the tone of the Ministry; giving it individuality without individualism, a large sympathy without loss of intensity of feeling for special ends, a lofty purpose without pride of office, and the power to endure hardness without being soured or chilled by trial and privation. If we examine the preparatory collegiate training of young men in our day, whether intended for the Ministry or not, we shall find

that the tendency in Roman-Catholic schools is to exclude the intellectual and religious forces of the *present*, and to fashion the mind and heart only by the *past*; while in most so-called Protestant institutions among ourselves, the tendency is rather to make doubters and thinkers than believers. The result in the one case is to make men powerless to understand modern life; in the other, to make them powerless to direct it in wholesome channels. If this alternative were inevitable, we might despair of all efforts to educate the complete Christian or the well-furnished Priest. Men may acquiesce in it, but it is idle to say that it is forced upon them. The problem before us is to rear minds that will sympathize with life as it is, and yet not be dominated by it; that will exhibit scholarly vigor and freshness in handling the issues of the time, and yet bear themselves in all inquiries and controversies as though the fundamental principles of morals and religion were settled, and so settled as not to admit of successful impeachment; that will welcome all the light the age can shed on any and all subjects, and yet abide steadfastly in the conviction, that, on some subjects of chiefest moment, faith casts a surer light than reason; that will admit that there is nothing too sacred for investigation, and yet affirm that there are some things with regard to which belief is the only inlet to knowledge; and, finally, that will challenge authority when it plays the tyrant, or usurps the prerogative of personal infallibility, and yet will lovingly accept, as the ground of all thought in matters of duty and faith, the ancient and catholic traditions which enshrine, alongside the Word of God, the best thinking

and purest living of the Christian centuries. This is no impossible problem. It belongs to the genius of this Church to produce such minds, and it ought to be her care to gather more of them into her Ministry. It should be the aim of her colleges to plant the germs of such a culture, as it should be the duty of her Seminaries of theology to foster them, and of her Chief Pastors to endue their ripened fruit, in Christ's name, with the gifts and graces of Ordination.

And here I venture a word upon the question, now so often mooted, whether our training sufficiently recognizes the drift of living thought, and duly qualifies the average Priest to deal with it. It were easy to state the *desiderata* in this direction. It is said that the faith of the Church is now on trial before the most critical and unsparing court that ever sat upon its claims; that the common mind of the day is leavened with doubts born of its knowledge, not of its ignorance; that objections to Christianity, many of them originating from the recent advances of science and speculation, were never urged with so much learning, acuteness, and argumentative force. In a certain large way, too, it is said, that as from natural science, philosophy, history, and literature, the adversaries of religion draw their weapons of assault, so no training for the Ministry can be worthy of the name which does not, from the same sources, supply the Clergy with the means of defence. And so in the same strain we are told, in gross and in detail, what, in view of the extraordinary mental development of these times, and especially in view of their intelligent, widespread scepticism, the Clergy ought to know, to com-

mand respect for their vocation. Some of us may see a slight dash of exaggeration, a little of the ever-recurring "crisis" cry, in all this; but all of us who have our eyes and ears open must admit that there is truth enough in it to justify a re-examination of our methods of training, in order to ascertain how they can be so modified and improved as to cope more successfully with these aspects of the times.

In the present exigencies of the Church, we cannot hope to extend the time — the canonical three years — given to theological studies; but all who are competent to speak on the subject declare that no more work than is now done can be crowded into this space. It is certain, moreover, that no part of the present curriculum can be safely displaced or even abbreviated. As things now are, no branch of study can be exhaustively treated by the teacher, or thoroughly handled by the student. Both do their work with an irritating sense of imperfection. Some suggest an easy way of dealing with the dilemma. They raise the issue between *past* and *present* in quite the same spirit in which it is now being ventilated in the circles of academic training. The time is too short for the classics and for modern languages. The former are important, but not so much so as the latter: therefore their lines must be driven in, to make more room for what represents the life of the present. In other words, the past is well enough in its place and degree, but it must not interfere with the franchises and liberties and utilities of the present. Little as we sympathize with this view, it may be allowed to pass unchallenged in the sphere of merely intellectual train-

ing. Not so, however, in that of theological training. It may be that here we should give more attention to the present, but surely no well-grounded Churchman will advise us to give less to the past. It may be that we should be more as men of understanding, discerning the signs of the times, and taking frequent soundings in the cross-currents of living thought; but the fact remains, that for us, all Ritual, Ecclesiastical, Sacramental, Dogmatic, Priestly life has not only its roots, but its matured growths, in the distant past. The faith we teach was once and forever delivered. As it came to us, so we are to hand it on. It can gain nothing in its substance, and it must lose nothing of its substance in our keeping. It enters the life of this age as it has entered the life of each of the nineteen centuries behind us,—as a finished force from without; by some of them, indeed, rent in twain, by others sadly corrupted and obscured, by others restored to its early purity, but by none advanced beyond its original type. Religiously considered, we have no possible solution for the problems of the present, save as it is furnished by the lights streaming over us from the far-off sunrise of Judæa. It is idle, then, to suggest in matters of theology any discount of the past in favor of the present. But if this be forbidden, there is something we can do. We can do more than we have done, to so shape the studies of the Christian past as to give them a more vital hold upon the difficulties of the present. The matter in our hands is unchangeable; but it is for us to show, not only what forms it assumed to meet the wants of this or that age behind us, but eminently the form it must take now

to bring into unity the verities of revelation, and the healthy, genuine thought of living minds. It is incumbent on teachers of theology to concentrate their best learning on the points where the doubts of the hour impinge with greatest force. It is for them to show how the pen-and-ink sketches of early scepticisms, heresies, and infidelities, done by the vigorous hands of the Fathers, have their exact counterparts to-day; and in doing this, to prove not only the continuity, but as well the substantial identity from the beginning, of all the oppositions of human learning and speculation to the Gospel of the Son of God. It will doubly arm the student of to-day, and so the Priest of to-morrow, in his efforts "to convince the gainsayer," and to prove his "aptness to teach" truth doubted or denied, if he can be made to see beyond all question, in the spiritualist, the materialist, the anti-supernaturalist, the agnostic, the atheist, now vexing and disquieting the faith of God's people, the lineal descendants of the same types of character in the Church's infancy, and only reproduced from age to age by a law of heredity operating as surely and widely in the world of thought and belief as in the physical world. But I need not labor the point further. The present curriculum is sufficiently comprehensive and elastic. Without adding scarcely a feather's weight to their bulk, hermeneutics, ecclesiastical history, Christian evidences, Christian ethics, and dogmatic divinity can be so handled, independently of all inventions, novelties, and re-adjustments, as to meet the demands of the time. And the mental energy, the fresh learning, and didactic skill are not, we may well

believe, wanting in those whom the matter most immediately concerns.

Again, in the matter of theological training we may note several contrasted methods, as to the comparative value of which there are wide differences of opinion. There is nothing more peculiar in the whole practical system of the Church of England, than its method of educating the Clergy. A competent witness has remarked, that there are no Clergy in the world so well educated as those of the Church of England, and yet there are none whose education has so little reference to the special duties of their profession. "The study of theology, with the sacred languages and literature, is almost entirely neglected, or, at the most, extends only to attendance on one or two short courses of routine lectures. A student destined for the Church is scarcely ever called upon to write sermons or homilies until the Bishop's examination, and his first effort at reading or speaking in public is not until after he has taken Deacon's Orders. The result is, that the Clergyman as a public teacher is unable, with all his education, to compete with the most uneducated preacher that harangues in the neighboring Bethel or Bethesda. These are facts (says this writer) admitted alike by all parties in the Church and out of it."

By the same authority it is stated, that, "as a rule, the Clergy come from the middle and higher classes of society. They are sent to the great public schools and universities, where they mix with those of their own age who are destined for other professions or for no profession at all. They pursue the same studies, indulge

in the same sports, and fall into the same sins, as their fellow-students. Their testimonials are signed, as a matter of course. Their *Si quis* is read, to which no one pays any attention. They are examined by the Bishop,—an examination which is often the merest imaginable pretence. They are ordained, and go to work in their parishes, often to preach a Gospel which they have never learned, to expound Scriptures which they have never studied, and to address, as consolation to the sick and dying, words that would bring no consolation to themselves.”<sup>1</sup>

It is difficult to imagine that any advantages could grow out of such looseness and negligence of training. And yet the very authorities that are severest on the evils are foremost in claiming a certain superiority for this training. They tell us that this largely non-professional training is of great value to the Clergy in many ways. It avoids the danger of gradual consolidation into a priestly caste. It keeps the Clergy abreast of the social and civil life around them, gives them a manly and intelligent interest in all that is of moment to other men, reminds them that they are citizens as well as Priests, that they are to enjoy the comforts and discharge the responsibilities of husbands and fathers. Thus such

<sup>1</sup> Contemporary Essays in Theology, by Rev. John Hunt, p. 507. I should scarcely have presumed to quote such a description of the slovenly and neglectful preparation of the average theological student in the Mother Church, if it were not abundantly confirmed by testimony from other sources. In some of the debates on the supply and training of Clergymen, in the reported Proceedings of more than one of the Church Congresses, within the past ten years, language is used quite as strong as that quoted above.



a training widens out the sympathies, enriches the experience, and multiplies the influence of the Clergy; imparting a breadth and versatility of culture, and a ready perception of the symptoms and tendencies and wants of the various forms of life around them, which a more strictly professional preparation could not give. The model Clergyman of England may fail in every thing else, without necessarily losing his position; but he must not fail to be a gentleman. Society and the State have claims upon him, as well as the Church, and claims which his education must qualify him to meet.

But all this amounts to saying that the Priest of the Church of England must be trained for other than clerical service; and the result of this is, that the Clergy who mean to be faithful in their vocation, and to acquit themselves in all its duties as workmen that need not be ashamed, must learn after Ordination what they ought to have learned before it. They must be apprentices while they wear the title and occupy the position of masters. Such a theory could hold sway for any length of time only in an Established Church; but it will not do so much longer even there. With the rising life and energy of the Church of England, her foremost minds, her real leaders, are becoming more and more impatient of the glaring deficiencies of such a system; and the last twenty years have witnessed some very determined efforts to modify it.

The Roman-Catholic method is in all respects the exact opposite to the Anglican. It sets out with a radically different aim, and adheres to it rigidly to the very end. The preliminary training of the Romish Clergy

allows no side-issues, and is encumbered with no mixed purposes. It pays no heed to matters of social status and political citizenship. It bears steadily and continuously on the strictly professional work to be done. It cares for nothing that does not help to inspire its subjects with a supreme and absolute devotion to the Church. It handles them, from beginning to end, as material to be shaped into tools, not to be developed into men of breadth and self-poise. Its conception of the Priesthood is that of an army, every soldier of which is educated into the habit of unquestioning submission to the will of his commander; or that of a hierarchical caste, fenced in by a celibate life, and isolated as much as possible from all contact with men and things which does not serve to increase its power over the world around it. The Priests of the Church of Rome, in nearly all countries where it holds sway, are chosen from the humbler classes. They are singled out for the holy office while mere boys. They are under the Church's eye from the start. They undergo a long and severe course of training in schools and colleges and seminaries of theology, and special care is bestowed upon them at the time of their Ordination. The results of this conception of the priestly character and work, and of the training devised to put it in force, are too familiar to require comment.

Our method of clerical education is neither so loose as the Anglican, nor so rigid as the Romish. It is more strictly ecclesiastical than the former, and less so than the latter. The special duties of the office are kept constantly in view, and yet a knowledge of men and

things is recognized as necessary. The training is secular in the college, and professional after candidateship begins. It aims to combine the scholarly with the practical, devotion to the Church with a healthy interest in general affairs. It seeks to foster the *esprit de corps*, or class attachments, which give to the sacred profession a certain necessary power of corporate cohesion, without neglecting any true characteristic of a large-hearted, sound, and sympathetic manhood. Our type of the Priesthood is in most regards the outgrowth of our circumstances. In the nature of the case we might expect that it would, as it does, come short of the Anglican in breadth of general culture, and of the Roman in intensity of purpose and thoroughness of drill. We could not, if we would, reproduce the ideal Anglican or Roman Priest: our work could not be done or our ecclesiastical system be administered by either. And yet there is one respect, to name no others, in which our training, and the type of ministerial character which it creates, might be improved. We may not think it wise to imitate the peculiar devotion of the Roman-Catholic Priest to his Church or to his Order. We may condemn this type of Priesthood for its hard and narrow ecclesiasticism. We may say that it lacks freedom and fervor, that it has in it the lurking antipathy and selfishness which external pruning and compression always leave behind them, that it is largely nurtured by caste feeling and caste interests, and therefore that it cannot be really noble in spirit or truly great in any of its manifestations. Still it is capable of producing what to the common eye appear to be the fruits of self-sacrifice, the tokens of a

frame of mind which can rise above personal ease and self-indulgence, which can obey in spite of hardship and denial, and march steadily on in the discharge of duty, caring neither for the world's praise or blame. Account for the qualities as we may, strip them of merit as far as the most hostile criticism may demand, there is yet left in the best specimens of the Romish Priest a certain intensity and directness of purpose, a sustained, habitual indifference to the minor accidents of life, which deserves, and ordinarily wins, the respect if not admiration of impartial observers.

Now, it would be well if we could infuse into our young men preparing for Holy Orders more of these qualities; enough of them, at the least, to lead them to dwell less on what this ease-loving, pleasure-hunting generation has come to regard as the hardships and privations of the Ministry, and more upon the intrinsic greatness of the work to be done, more upon the incomparable dignity of their sacred vocation, more upon the value of souls to be saved, more upon the Church they serve, more upon God's grace in choosing them out of the world to be the vessels of so glorious a treasure as the Gospel of His Eternal Son. Too many of our candidates enter the Ministry with such low views of its *morale* as to make it seem to them quite consistent with the solemn purpose which they profess of entire consecration to their work, to forecast, not only in day-dreams and visions, but by definite, preliminary engagements, the comforts of wives and homes, of quiet studies and attractive pastoral surroundings. So far has this gone, that it is no unusual thing for the candidate to

arrange simultaneously for his wedding and his Ordination, and occasionally to take a wife before he takes duty in the Church. We get little enough out of the Diaconate in its best estate; but in many cases the Church gets next to nothing out of it, because of the rash and unseemly haste to snatch the joys of matrimony, at the expense of the Church's just claims and expectations. In all such cases, the fault and the trouble arise from the fact, that, while a candidate, the Deacon fell into the habit of thinking too much of what concerned his own comfort, and too little of what he would owe to the Church, and to Christ her adorable Head, after taking the vows and receiving the gift of Ordination.

There is a purer and loftier atmosphere of thought and feeling on this whole subject than most of our young life in training for the Ministry has attained; and yet, up to which it must be lifted if the Ministry is to recover the ground it has lost, or to extend that which it still holds. I advocate no special enthusiasm. I would portray as the needful thing no spasmodic exaltation of soul, possible only to the few. There are cant phrases, coined by minds in the white heat of religious frenzy, which I have no wish to repeat. And yet there are views relating to this aspect of the Christian Ministry, which ought to be made more of than they have been. If there be danger in feeding a false fervor, there is much greater danger in having no fervor at all. The tendency is very strong, just now, to treat the Ministry as one of the professions to some one or the other of which liberally trained young men will naturally turn. From this standpoint its prospects are discussed, and its

liabilities estimated. They are set down as needlessly exacting, who refuse to pause in the search for motives, until they have touched the tests uniformly pressed in Holy Scripture whenever it speaks of those fit to be called the Pastors and Prophets of Jesus Christ. There are times and occasions on which we may be practical and business-like in speaking of the Ministry, without being selfish or worldly. It is entitled to consideration in various ways, from the laity, which we may justly demand. It is a vocation whose sacredness and elevation do not relieve it of the necessity of competent support, and circumstances may render it needful to urge this fact upon those whose duty it is to attend to it. It has rights and franchises in law and custom, which no fear of mixing in temporal matters should prevent us from asserting when they are denied, or defending when they are assailed. There may be a lawful readiness to exchange a worse for a better position. There may be an honorable and legitimate desire to rise in professional influence, as well as to advance in professional usefulness. All this is consistent with the noblest ideal of the Ministry. But it is easily overdone, and allowed to run over into a pronounced worldliness, which drops blight and mildew on the character and work of the Priest of God. Enough of human nature is carried into the Ministry to make it certain that this side of it will never be forgotten. Would that it could be said that enough of God's grace, enough of the mind that was in Christ Jesus, is carried into it to make it equally sure that the other side will always be remembered!

Too generally we have fallen into the unhappy way

of dwelling too much on the minor trials and accidental annoyances of the Ministry, and too little on its real burdens and tribulations. A well-meant but unfortunate sentimentalism has given to the former too large a place in the attention of candidates, while an undue fear of discouraging those who might be thinking of the Ministry has tempted us to make less of the latter than truth really demands. It is time this were all changed. The great question now is, not how much but what sort of material is to be put under training. Numbers, if they be of the wrong sort, will only still further weaken and demoralize us. The Church wants no one in her Ministry who will be likely to turn back when confronted by a full knowledge of what is in store for the faithful deputy of Christ. Let it be declared, then, over and over, and let it be understood, that in a true Priesthood heavy toil, wasting care, constant self-sacrifice, saddening disappointments, and often the uncomfortable straits of poverty, are inevitable. Let it be known that he who takes up the work must take up the burden; that he who accepts the Master's service must accept the enmity and reproach visited upon Him. Burden-bearing, self-denials, strivings, hardships of every name, are inseparable from the task of converting the world to God; and they were meant to be so. To shun them is to shun the Cross we preach. These things are the glory and crown of the Ministry. Its elevation, its honor, its joy, its strength, is in its union with Christ, and participation in what He was called to endure. It is a wanton and wicked profanation of the Sacred Office, to even think of it as the avenue to worldly honor and personal ease.

Granted that the heralds of Christ are often poor, overweighted, neglected, despised; granted that they are often in conflict, often in peril, — was it not so with Himself? It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord. The cause is too great, the blessings to be conferred too inestimable, the ultimate reward too glorious, the present commission to go forth and sow beside all waters too divine, to permit any such drawbacks to palsy the wills and hearts of those whom the Holy Ghost draws to the standard of the Lord of lords and King of kings. The stuff out of which confessors and heroes and martyrs are made is not worn out, nor is the mould in which it may be cast into these grander forms of Christian service broken. Both are with us, but they can be found only by the electric touch of a soul in the Church as great and unselfish as that which dwells in its heavenly Head. Once restore to the Ministry the prestige and power of such sentiments, and there will be no more speculations and inquiries about the decline of its influence, or assertions of its inferiority to other agencies thrown to the front by modern life.



## LECTURE VII.

### PREACHING.

THOUGH it may be shown that the influence of preaching has not really declined, it will hardly be asserted that a just criticism will not find in it much that needs amendment. When we consider the sort of truth committed to it, the promises by which it is upheld, the Divine gifts with which it is endowed, and the sublime purpose it was ordained to accomplish, we must admit that it is far below its proper ideal, and that a more thorough discipline would disencumber it of not a few side-weights that now hinder its power. It is not intended to repeat what has been more or less well said by writers on homiletics, from Guibert de Nogent and Humbert de Romanis, the foremost mediæval authorities, down to those of our own time. To do so would be quite foreign to the object of the present inquiry. Nothing more will be attempted than to point out such actual faults and harmful tendencies in our preaching as mar its present and seriously threaten its future influence.

1. The pulpit is thought by many to exhibit an undue craving for popularity. Popularity is not always an evil or a danger, though on some sides of our life it has

figured of late as any thing but a boon. Whatever it be, it is the idol of individuals, parties, and communities. Enthroned by our social and political training, it holds powerful sway in the domain of religion. It would be uncharitable to charge the pulpit with consciously and openly courting such a fickle divinity. The road that leads toward it is ingeniously and piously prepared. A famous help to this is the Apostle's example of becoming "all things to all men," when freely rendered. Still another help is the wide-spread, often well-meant, demand for further adaptations of the Church's ministrations to the wants of the people. There is no end to the discoursing on what are esteemed to be the unprecedented needs of these times. It is insisted that the modes of dealing with them must be quite as extraordinary as the needs themselves. The customary tools in the past will not answer in these fresh mines. The old salt has so far lost its savor, that its virtue must be restored by the inventions of our modern chemistry. And then, lest the Church should be dull of apprehension, she is reminded of the stiffness and blindness which have damaged her prestige at sundry times in the past. Puritan secessions in the seventeenth and Methodist outbreaks in the eighteenth century are recalled, to frighten her into a more flexible compliance with the alleged requirements of the age. Practically the voice of the people is held to be omnipotent, as well in the Church as in the State. It may be full of passion, prejudice, and ignorance; but, with whatever hesitation, it is in the end obeyed. To an extent greater than is supposed, it moulds the style and dictates the topics of the pulpit; with too little re-

gard for the fact that the Gospel was sent, not to gratify, but to reform, human nature. Without question it is the common opinion, that the Church must conform her ways, more than she has yet done, to the popular taste, or the places that have known her will know her no more. Now, to this view in its extreme form may be traced not a few of the worst characteristics of much of the preaching of the day.

Our generation is inflated and self-asserting. It has done a great deal, and it means that all the posterities shall know it. The silence of reserved force, the modesty of balanced power, the humility of true greatness, are alien to its spirit. This restless, feverish life surging by us is itself a stupendous sensation, and will so appear in history. The pulpit has sucked in the infection, and unconsciously reproduces it in the familiar and abnormal development known in our vocabulary as "sensationalism." It needs no analysis or description: to name it is to suggest a thousand monstrous possibilities of thought, speech, and manner.

The age, intellectually considered, has far more surface than depth. It is many-sided, but disinclined to thorough work. It does not believe in hidden treasures of learning and wisdom: what it owns, it wears as part of its every-day attire. Spiritually it will not bear what Master Ridley called "deep spading," nor, farther on, what honest Latimer called "weeding," for the sake of a better crop. Much of our preaching is of the same stamp. It is not cumbered with any extra weight of learning or of logic. To be very deep or very elaborate, to draw out the more hidden juices of theology, to

import into a sermon the terms in which the severer and more precise thought of the most thoughtful of the Christian centuries took shape, — to presume upon any sustained active attention on the part of the hearers to matter of this sort is to scatter them. The preacher who makes a conscience of putting into his sermon the study and culture of a ripe and disciplined mind is often no match for the washy, flashy extemporizer who makes up in wind what he lacks in sense. He who would preach to a crowd must not crowd his preaching with what our common-school training would style fossilized learning. Strong men, indeed, here and there hold the multitude; but in too many cases they do it by cheapening, in some way, their manner or their matter.

2. Again: this age is largely given to adulterations of every sort. Its food and drink, its clothing and furnishing, its literature, its politics, its legislation, and even its justice, are very much mixed with alien elements. Trade-marks and guaranties are no protection. What wonder that religion, regarded as a thing of and for the people, and as bound to be in all ways accommodating to the prevailing customs, should be more or less adulterated also? What wonder that the most demonstrative organ of religion, the pulpit, should have its mixture of truth and heresy, of unity and schism, of godliness and worldliness, of high-toned theory and low-toned practice, of independence and servility, meekness and vanity? To keep any thing in religion as God made it, is to be exclusive. To maintain the truth sharply and firmly in its purity, and as God gave it, is to

be morbidly sensitive to petty distinctions, and to forget "the infinite breadth of the Divine Mind."

3. As might be expected from the traits already mentioned, our time is keenly alive to the charm of originality. Apparently it would sacrifice almost any thing, rather than be thought lacking in this. It may be originality of a cheap and thin sort,—originality in confounding evil with good, or even in inventing new forms of wickedness, as well as new forms of power and wealth and beneficence. Its capital in hand is an inheritance. The ideas and forces, the laws and institutions, the controlling impulses in art, letters, politics, and religion, are in the main a legacy from the past. Though constantly denying it, no generation, no country, was ever more thoroughly dominated by traditional influences. The solidarity of the centuries, the unity of the race, and the continuity of the work laid upon it, compel a strong family likeness among all the historic ages. Still this age has views and tests of progress, has modes of working out results, and of doing things generally, which are peculiar to itself, and which it is no stretch of language to characterize as original. Whatever the grounds on which it rests, there is no doubt of its claim to this quality, or of its noisy pride in pushing the claim. Now, very naturally much of our most admired preaching takes tone and manner from this feeling. Few preachers can hope to be really original, but many can put on the semblance of it. There is a certain petty cleverness of thought and speech, not unattainable by most men who are willing to work for it, which with the multitude passes for the

freshness and vivacity of genius. It is a poor counterfeit, but it is none the less harmful. It makes the preacher self-conscious and vain; it enfeebles his sense of obligation to the truth as God gave it; it fills him with a low ambition for striking but transient effects; and nothing is surer than that the pulpit which habitually courts it will decline in all the nobler sources and attributes of power. This spurious imitation of originality has been overdone. Symptoms are not wanting to show that all the magic-lantern tricks of mere rhetoricians will ere long be rated at their real worth.

4. Again: our time is spectacular. It is fond of shows. It loves to see its own life reproduced in dramatic form. It is charmed with living exhibitions and literary portraiture of its own ideas and habits, its own faults and virtues. Amid all its "Philistinism," it has much of the old Athenian craving in this direction. Now, there is much in our religion, much in the Church's tone and ways, that readily sympathizes with this tendency. The life of our Lord was essentially a drama, for it was Godhead in action visibly before the world. The Church's history has been one continuous drama from the beginning; for, among other things it was to do, it was to show forth, by a perpetual and solemn Sacrament, the Lord's death until He come again. Certainly the Ritual and Calendar of the Church have a large dramatic element. They recite the past as though it were now happening, or were yet to come. They make the hidden visible, the absent near, the ancient new. Their office is that of an ever-recurring rehearsal of what has been and of what shall be. The highest order

of preaching cannot be reached without this element. Accordingly it has been the aim of most of the truly great preachers in the past, to enforce the truths they delivered, not only with clearness of argument and fullness of learning and felicity of illustration, but also and eminently with a certain dramatic vividness which should cause them to live on the eye and the ear. Right and desirable in itself, there are some signs in the modern pulpit which admonish us to guard against its running into extravagance and eccentricity. Those who need this caution most are unfortunately just those who grow up and work under ecclesiastical systems which deprive them of the wise and moderated guidance of the Church's worship and Christian year. Our own Clergy are safe enough from any extreme of this sort: their fault is, that they do not infuse into their ministrations more of the dramatic animation and freshness with which the Church's mode of handling the events and teachings of Christianity so richly abounds.

5. Our time, not only in spite, but perhaps as a consequence, of its busy, prosaic life, has a marked turn for humor. It has an almost childish fondness for amusement; so much of it, indeed, as to render it careless of what it gets in this way. The fun may be rude or refined, select or vulgar, highly moral or dubiously so: it is all the same. The supreme want, in many circles, is something to laugh at. If that something can be had in connection with sacred acts and sacred places and sacred persons, it is all the more highly esteemed, because the incongruity of the association gives a keener relish at once to the enjoyment and to the occasion

of it. No one will be so stupid as to question that real humor is a good thing in its place, or that it deserves well of all who know how to appreciate the sunny side of human nature. The only point here raised is its use in the pulpit. To exclude it altogether, or to denounce it as, under all circumstances, an impertinence, would be to bar out from the preacher's function not a few most gifted minds. There is now and then a mind of rich endowment and exuberant spirit, that can scarcely move in the world of ideas or among the facts of life without evolving flashes of humor, and doing it as naturally and inevitably as the steel, clashing with the flint, drops sparks of fire. Such a mind may be exposed to peculiar risks and temptations in the pulpit, but it is not to be silenced or expelled because of this liability. We know that some preachers who did a noble work in their day did not hesitate to employ any means, whether ludicrous or serious, to arouse the sluggish attention of their auditors. "In all countries and in all ages," as has been remarked by an eminent authority, "the most celebrated popular preachers have felt a tendency to excite laughter in its turn, as well as other emotions." Still, in an age and among a people so given to levity and irreverence as ours, it must be admitted that this faculty of humor is a very dangerous one in the pulpit, very easy to abuse, and very likely to offend most minds of churchly training and sentiment. Two things may wisely be said of it: those who have the gift should be cautious how they use it, and those who have it not should beware of attempting lame and insipid counterfeits of it.



Much is said about the declining interest in preaching; and many reasons are given to account for it, such as the loss of novelty in the matter, the higher education and wider information of the people, the weakened sense of the claims of the moral law and generally of the reality and importance of the truths dealt with, the complacent self-satisfaction of modern life, the multiplication of topics of intellectual interest outside the sphere of the pulpit. But these things, so far as they are true, should only drive the preacher back to what still remains to him the source of highest power in this and every age; viz., his ethical relation to the people. Next to proclaiming the truth, his chief duty growing out of this relation is to do so with the intense fervor of personal conviction; arousing the heart and the conscience to the message he delivers, by clothing it with a living fire drawn from his own soul. To this sort of power, no congregation is indifferent; and perhaps it is the only sort of power, normal to the pulpit, that no widening of popular knowledge, no elevation of mental tone produced by advancing culture, no change in the conditions of social life or other cause, can diminish or nullify. Clearly, then, the more our preaching is shut up to the exercise of this power, the more it should study how to find it, and, when found, how to use it. As life grows more settled and composed, and inclines to the well-worn grooves of custom, the preacher is apt to fall off in this quality. He so much dreads the risk of running into or of being charged with fanaticism, that he quenches, little by little, the healthy heat of a decent enthusiasm. And

yet such regulated fervor is essential to the ordained teacher of the duties of life. For the truth he preaches is only duty in solution; the moral order he expounds is only another name for God in Christ, in contact with the individual will, and supplying to it, in its vacillation and weakness, the spiritual dynamic which it cannot find in itself. Thus the highest task of the preacher is to translate universal truth into specific personal obligations; and this he can do successfully only by the ardor of his own conviction and experience, and by the burning energy of his own speech. Here is a hold upon the common mind, that nothing can shake. There is always intrinsic strength, as well as popular interest, in personal earnestness; and the more the pulpit has of it, the greater will be its attraction, especially in times of arrested faith, or positive doubt, or dogmatic indifference. The very influences that tend to destroy earnestness of conviction among the masses will tend, at the same time, to render them more sensitive to its power when wielded apart from doctrinal differences and dissents, and exclusively in the spheres of moral duty and spiritual aspiration.

I proceed now to notice another fault in much of our preaching, which deserves to be sharply criticised, and which, strangely enough, attracts less attention than it ought in quarters where it might be expected that no effort would be spared to cure it. I refer to what most careful observers regard as the lame, weak, and barren use of the Holy Scriptures. That person must have been very blind or very careless who has failed to notice this defect. I speak of what is common, not universal.

There are exceptions, but they are all the more remarkable because they are so. If the Church's large experience touching the temptations which have corrupted the taste and warped the judgment of her preachers, in one way or another, in ages gone by, did not prepare us for it, we might deem this fault of all others the most unaccountable. With so many things to bind the preacher to the Scriptures, how, we are ready to ask, could he ever fall away from them? What is the ministry of the Word, apart from the Word as its own food, as well as the food of the flock? Preaching as Christ ordained it, and as alone God has promised to bless it, is the public explanation of His Word, and its application to the people's use. The terms of its original commission distinctly prescribe its subject-matter to be "all things whatsoever I have commanded you."<sup>1</sup> The Apostles and their successors were to preach nothing else than that which they had themselves received. St. Paul expressly declared, "I delivered unto you that which I also received;"<sup>2</sup> and warned all whom he taught, not to listen to himself or any other teacher who might go beyond these limits. He charged Timothy, as an Apostle, to "keep that which is committed to thy trust."<sup>3</sup> "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also."<sup>4</sup> And so the Church, catching the mind and purpose of our Lord and His Apostles, ordains no Priest without reminding him that his "doctrine and exhortation must be taken out of the Holy Scriptures;" how "studious" he "ought to be

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxviii. 20.    <sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 3.    <sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. vi. 20.    <sup>4</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 2.

in reading and learning the Scriptures ;” and how, “by daily weighing the Scriptures,” he “may wax riper and stronger in his ministry ;”<sup>1</sup> nor this only, but demanding of him the solemn promise that he will be “diligent” in “such studies as help to the knowledge of the same.”

Now, express as Christ, his Apostles, and his Church are on this point, yet in fact the Scriptures have been a variable quantity to the Clergy in various periods ; sometimes their sole spiritual diet, sometimes so only in part, and sometimes scarcely so at all. The past teaches one lesson on preaching to which there is no exception. Always and everywhere its influence has been gauged by its knowledge and use of the Scriptures. It may be impossible to give the average of clerical studies in God’s Word in our own day : certainly, if judged by our preaching, it would not be very high. The old power of handling the Scriptures with striking popular effect has declined. The contrast in this respect between the preachers of the patristic and mediæval times, and those of our own day, is remarkable. The Scriptural knowledge of the former was immense and almost intuitive. They often pushed the spiritual and figurative method of interpretation too far. Sometimes they were betrayed into extremes whose absurdity has been the sport of modern critics. Their mysticism may have been extravagant, and their passion for detecting fanciful types and analogies may have degenerated into a scholarly weakness worthy of rebuke and even of ridicule. But they did one thing which gave to their preaching singu-

<sup>1</sup> Priest’s Ordinal.

lar depth and freshness and power: they filled every nook and corner of the Old Testament with the life of the New; they found the spirit and beheld the glory of Christ in a thousand places where, perhaps, our duller sense fails to see them. Whatever faults may be charged to them, they were at least saved, by their mode of studying the Word, from the spiritual barrenness caused by that wretched invention of a later age,—the hard and harsh canon of the school of Calvin,—which refused to find a type of Christ anywhere except where it is distinctly pointed out in the New Testament. It was one consequence of their method of interpretation, that they could not conceive of any preaching worthy of the name, whose warp and woof were not spun and woven out of the Word of God. If we take any two standard sermons, the one of the early and the other of our own time, we shall find that the Scripture quotations and references in the former are as nearly ten to one in the latter. Those old preachers differed from modern ones in another respect: they knew nothing of the fashion of these days in quoting almost exclusively from certain books or chapters of Holy Scripture, which happen to be deemed most important by the reigning schools in Biblical criticism or dogmatic theology. Equally imbued with the spirit of all parts, and citing from all parts alike, they unconsciously erected the surest safeguard against openly violating or ignorantly wandering from the analogy of the Word.

Again: how weak in the Scriptures is our preaching, as compared with that of the divines and casuists during and subsequent to the Reformation. It is impossible to

read their discourses without being surprised at the ingenuity, closeness, and insight with which they handled them. They had to be deep and strong in the Word, or be nothing. Their sharp and versatile controversial training did for them what the mystical style of thought did for the ancient and mediæval divines: it obliged them to cultivate an accuracy and fertility of Biblical knowledge which made them giants in dealing with the Word of God and with the consciences of men.

Now, the reasons for the decline of which I am speaking are neither obscure nor remote. The times, it is said, are changed. For ages the Bible was a sealed book to the people. When read in public services, it was read in a language not "understood" of the people. What little they knew of it, they were obliged to learn from their preachers. Thus preaching became almost the sole vehicle of sacred knowledge, and it naturally made the most of what rendered it most attractive and popular. But now the Bible is in everybody's hands, or may be, and the ability to read it is universal. The habit of drawing from it so largely, as was once the case, has passed away with the necessity for doing so. The preacher, therefore, it is claimed, has the right to presuppose the existence of considerable Scripture knowledge among the people, and to address them accordingly. This may explain the fact, but does not justify it. The preacher's commission binds him to deliver a message equally needed in all times and places; and the more his hearers know of that message, the greater his power to drive it home, and the greater his duty to do so. But the wider circulation of the Scriptures,

and their translation into all spoken tongues, have not been followed by a corresponding knowledge of them. It is a great mistake to think otherwise. The blessing has been made so free as to cheapen it. The easier it is to get at the Scriptures, the less, in reality, they are used. The feeling that they can be read at any time, that they can be found everywhere, prevents many people from reading them at all. Undeniably there is among us a wide-spread respect for the Word, and of necessity an equally wide-spread ignorance of it. Besides the cause above named, there is another, operating in the same direction and among vast numbers of people. It has crept even into the Church, and it works there with a force as secret as it is fatal. I refer to a latent scepticism as to the authority and genuineness of the Holy Scriptures, engendered by the modern tone of thought,—a scepticism which paralyzes faith without killing it; which breeds inward distrust and indifference while maintaining outward reverence; which consists with a certain willingness to hear the Scriptures read and explained, and also with liberal mental reservations as to their truth. As a rule, this temper of mind regards with distaste, not to say repugnance, the free use of the Scriptures in preaching. It is painful and ominous to see how influential over the pulpit this feeling is. Good and earnest and orthodox men are often swayed by it more than they are aware, or would like to own. Without doubt, that preaching is commonly regarded as most in accord with the times, and most likely to be rewarded with flattering audiences, which humors it most.

Again: not a few of the Clergy have, without intending it, fallen off in the close and habitual study of the Word which characterized the beginning of their Ministry, and correspondingly in their ability to handle the Word with a sympathetic interest and with a fair degree of scholarship. So wide has become the area of knowledge over which a man of culture is expected to travel, that only specialists and experts can hope to tarry long on any one portion of it. But a Parish Priest who hopes to accomplish much among his people cannot afford to be ignorant of the leading branches of useful knowledge, or of the current additions to the standard literature of the day. Though not scientific, he must know something of the sciences. Though not literary, he must be imbued with the spirit, and acquainted with the changing fashions of letters. Though not a profound and accurate theologian, he must be at least respectable in theological attainments. But whether he attain to all these or to none, there is one thing in which it will be held unpardonable for him to fail, and that is knowledge of human nature, — tact in dealing with men, capacity for affairs, aptness for making the most out of a little, whether in money, or brains, or religion, or ecclesiastical influence and attachment. It must be a man of unusual resources, who, after meeting such requirements, can find time to study the Scriptures as they were studied by successful preachers in the great historic periods of which I have spoken. The most the busy and over-worked Clergyman can do is to make an equitable division of his time among the claimants on his attention. But he is bound, by every recollection of his Ordination



vow, to give the first and highest place to the Word of God. It may be inexpedient that any of them should be neglected, but this is the only one that cannot be neglected without sin.

Besides these causes so discouraging to the free and full handling of God's Word in preaching, there is another, so obvious to all that it needs only to be named. I mean the present enforced brevity of sermons. Popular feeling on this has developed into a canon which no one may violate with impunity. Life runs fast, and speech must do likewise. The demand is for the greatest amount in the briefest space. The bulk of every popular assembly are impatient of nice points, critical details, delicate shadings. They want the lights and shadows thrown up into bold relief. The taking style in the pulpit must avoid the elaborate finish and rounded unity of the Raphaels of art, and cultivate the *chiaroscuro* enchantments of the Dorés. The conventional twenty-five minutes requires a bold, free, and sketchy tongue, piercing at once to the marrow of the subject, and wasting no breath on minor distinctions, or on attempts to be acute, or subtle, or learned, or exhaustive. There is time only for hints at Scripture, not citations and expositions of it.

Account for it as we may, the fact is indisputable, that our preaching, as a whole, is no longer mixed and seasoned with God's Word, as it was in the days of its greatest power. That it should have declined, therefore, in influence, was inevitable. It has experienced precisely the sort of damage and loss which is seen sooner or later in any function that neglects its original end,

or drops below the primary conditions of its health and strength. By feeding on weaker food than God meant it should, it has grown weaker itself, and has helped to weaken the life it was ordained to feed. Whatever the fashion of the hour may say, the green slopes of heavenly truth nourish richer blood in preachers and hearers than the arid fields of human invention. There is only one bread that satisfies the hunger of the soul, and that is of God, not of man.<sup>1</sup>

Having endeavored to show how and to what extent our preaching has been enfeebled by the evils consequent upon its attempts at popular adaptation, and by its partial disuse of the Holy Scriptures, I shall next inquire how far and in what ways it has suffered from an excess of individualism. Individualism is now a recognized phasis of life in all its spheres of development. More than any thing else, it indicates the tendencies, measures the growth, and, in the judgment of many thoughtful minds, describes and sums up some of the most serious evils which already afflict or threaten the existing order of things. There are those who see in it the consummation of some of the fondest hopes of the past, and the promise of some of the noblest blessings which we are wont to associate with progressive knowledge and advancing civilization. And it is proper to add, in speaking of this type of thought and character, that what one school fears and denounces as excess, is

<sup>1</sup> For some fine examples of how the *loci communes* of Holy Scripture may be *touched*, not dwelt upon, leaving the hearer's own mind to follow out the various threads of thought, and generally of the ready and skilful handling of the Word, see Blunt's *Parish Priest*, pp. 165, 166, *passim*.

welcomed and praised by another as a healthy moderation. By individualism is meant self-will as opposed to authority; private opinion as opposed to tradition; individual life rising above organic life; the reason of one man asserting itself against the common, consentient reason of all men; speculation against settled truth; invention against testimony. These are all only different forms of the same thing; and one or the other will be adopted according as our inquiry may pass within the limits of the State, or of society, or of the Church, or of abstract philosophy.

It has already been remarked, that the individualism which is deemed excessive by some, is esteemed moderate or even deficient by others. The latter remind us of the fact that the external forces at work upon the individual are always immeasurably greater than those working from within him. They recall the older and the later theories of civil and ecclesiastical government, which have treated the individual as though he existed only to be absorbed into a life larger than his own; the supreme fact in his citizenship, whether in the Church or the State, being the absolute claim of both on his service and obedience. They tell us, too, of the undue repression of all healthy boldness and strength of individual character by the upstart tyrannies of custom and opinion, warmed, strangely enough, into unprecedented vigor by the very excesses of modern freedom. The most illustrious apostle of this school says, "In this age the mere example of non-conformity, the mere refusal to bend the knee to custom, is itself a service. Precisely because the tyranny of opinion is such as to make

eccentricity a reproach, it is desirable, in order to break through that tyranny, that people should be eccentric.”<sup>1</sup> “Custom” and “opinion” as here used are meant to be broad enough to include the established order, whatever it be, as well in religion as elsewhere. To break away from it, to develop some novel and decided type of personal peculiarity, to encourage dissent from what others believe, to violate the general concord of habits built up on the average good sense of the majority, is thus elevated into a cardinal virtue, and declared to be the main spring-head of a strong and fresh life. There are multitudes who are not quite ready for so bold a theory, and yet who are travelling on the road that leads to it; their views on social and religious problems logically tend that way.<sup>2</sup>

Now, in the judgment of others (the writer included) evidences are not wanting to show that this individualism has already advanced farther than is safe or desirable. It is filling our young with conceit and pretension. It is telling sadly on the proper respect for the authority of parents, teachers, pastors, and civil magistrates. It is pulverizing the cement of law and order on all sides. It is the ally of sectarian disintegration and religious

<sup>1</sup> John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 129.

<sup>2</sup> Froude, in his *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, p. 172, well remarks, “Mr. Mill demands for every man a right to say out his convictions in plain language, whatever they may be; and so far as he means that there should be no Act of Parliament to prevent him, he is perfectly just in what he says. But when Mr. Mill goes from Parliament to public opinion; when he lays down as a general principle, that the free play of thought is unwholesomely interfered with by society,—he would take away the sole protection which we possess from the inroads of any kind of folly.”

radicalism. It challenges every thing as liable to overthrow, and assents to nothing as finally closed against doubt. It does not fall within my purpose, to trace its effects generally on the Church's faith and order, but simply to note its vicious influence on the pulpit.<sup>1</sup> Our preaching is measurably saved from this influence, by the fixed, objective character of our ecclesiastical system. It cannot invade our worship, for that resolutely bars out all individual peculiarities. It ought not to invade our theology, and will not, if its historic safeguards be understood and respected. It can, with due vigilance, be excluded from the prevailing tone and methods of our practical Christian work. But preaching is the vital centre around which all the influences of the time revolve, and it is sure to be swayed by the strongest. It is an office whose force is largely dependent on what the individual puts into it. To be strong,

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Döllinger, in his *Re-union of the Churches*, quotes these words from a distinguished Protestant divine, Brückner: "Our Church is in many respects reverting to the condition of the age before Constantine. Public opinion is again, on the whole, enlisted, not on the side of Christianity, but against it," etc.; and then goes on to say, "Mere naked unbelief, or hostility to positive religion, will not explain the phenomenon: the mischief lies deeper. The general superintendent and court-preacher at Berlin, Hoffman, has lately written on the *Causes of the Antagonism to the Church in Germany*. He enumerates many, but above all the *uncertainty and discordance of the doctrines delivered in the pulpit*. The impression left on one's mind is, that the evil lies in the want of confidence and respect of the laity for their preacher, in whom they see a man teaching simply according to the measure of his attainments and *from his own subjective point of view*. They have no feeling that he is supported on the broad stream of Christian tradition flowing down through eighteen centuries, and that his message is but the echo of the voice of the whole Church reaching up to Christ."

it must be free. To reach the intellects and wills of men, it must draw upon the elastic vigor and freshness of manly and earnest thinking. That preaching is comparatively worthless that is not saturated through and through with the individuality of the preacher. He must mint the gold that comes into his hands, before he can circulate it. Without his image and superscription, it will be of little account in the exchanges of thought.

There are limits, however, to this individual force, necessary as it is. Within these limits, it remains a healthy individuality; beyond them, it degenerates into individualism, with its attendant evils. These limits are generally respected by the Clergy of this Church; and yet, under the example and influence of what the leading religious bodies around us consider the model of a popular pulpit, they are sometimes so far forgotten or transgressed as to invite a word or two of warning. The limits to which I refer have been, perhaps, sufficiently indicated by naming the things with which individualism antagonizes. I will only add, that, besides the order and worship and faith which the Church has received as a precious legacy from the Christian past, she has a temperament of her own, — a certain *genius ecclesiæ*, — a flexible and yet tolerably well-defined tone of thought and life, which shapes and colors all she says and does. As she has a purpose and a work of her own, so she must and does have a way of her own in studying events and treating the questions of the day. It is needful to her health and peace, as well as to her corporate unity and power, that her Clergy shall habitu-

ally respect this characteristic ; and it should be understood, that self-will can work quite as much harm by ignoring or despising this, as by the more open scandal of a direct assault upon her doctrine and discipline.

It is claimed, I know, that we cannot have great thinkers and preachers under a system which has so much to say about landmarks and boundaries. Mediocrity can plod on without complaint under the extra weight of traditional teaching and traditional order ; but to real genius, to high, strong, and discursive natures throbbing with almost more than mortal sympathies and aspirations, such things, we are told, produce an insupportable sense of constraint and suffocation. If we would have minds that shall mount as eagles, and catch the bright sunlight of the coming glory, they must not be caged within the narrow bounds of hereditary customs, or tethered by creeds and liturgies, but must be allowed the range of the mountains and the sea and the fields of air. If history did not teach us something on this subject, we might submit without a protest to the doom to which our more liberal friends would consign us, — that of dwindling into dwarfs, if not pygmies, under the pressure of a traditional influence, — a transmitted heritage which we are weak enough to consider our strength and glory.

But it so happens, that substantially the same system as that which has reared and fashioned us has, in the past, produced a large share of the admitted masters of thought and eloquence. As matter of fact, the vast majority of those who have adorned the Church by their genius, as well as piety, have grown into greatness while

toiling in this very harness of tradition. It would be idle to name even the most noteworthy among them: the list is too long for that. This age may have considerably widened out, and altered generally the conditions of attaining to marked eminence and power in the sphere of sacred learning and eloquence; but clearly it has not done so to such an extent as to oblige those who aspire to be strong and influential to cast off, as leading-strings which the time has outgrown, the honored guides and wholesome restraints of the Church's system of intellectual and theological training,—a system, be it remembered, which in its fundamental principles has been identical through all the Christian centuries.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “Petulant impatience, disdainful of control, intolerant of contradiction, and contemptuously neglectful of limitations, belongs rather to the fretfulness of an intellectual childhood, than to the quiet self-respect and reverent love of truth characteristic of intellectual maturity. Not such has been the spirit of the great discoverers of nature's laws. . . . These men have been, without exception, believers in the dogmatic faith.” (*Vide* Astronomy and General Physics considered with Reference to Natural Theology, by the Rev. W. Whewell, M A., London, 1833. Book iii. pp. 307-309.)

Again: “Most certainly the complaint that a dogmatic faith cramps the freedom of thought, and narrows the progress of knowledge, is singularly at variance with the history of the past. . . . Freedom of thought, largeness of affection, nobility of character, and political liberty, have all been nursed beneath the shadow of dogma. The sole exceptions to this fact are to be found in the corrupt periods of the Church, when she had departed from the teaching of the inspired Scriptures, and substituted dogmas of man's making for dogmas of God's revealing. The persecuting spirit displayed toward Galileo in one department of inquiry, and toward Erasmus in another, was only an effect of the policy of suppression necessitated by the unfaithfulness of the Church herself. But so long as the Church has been faithful to her trust, and has taught no dogmas but what are contained in or may be proved by Holy Writ, she



I pass now to another aspect of the subject, of serious moment. Much of our preaching is too vague to be strong. Indefiniteness of matter and purpose, in any mode of speech, is weakness. The teaching that is not positive and determinate; that timidly or falteringly feels its way; that moves on in hazy uncertainty; that utters itself as though not quite sure whether the ground on which it rests is rock or quicksand; that has no aim of such overmastering intensity and directness as to draw to itself every energy and resource of the living teacher; that in every conviction makes room for a doubt, and in every attempt at swaying the thoughts and wills of others regards the chances of success and failure as about even; that wanders over large spaces of feeling and belief with no defined, authorized map of doctrine to guide it; that, in default of settled principles, drops easily under the welcome shelter of negations and compromises, — such teaching in any branch of knowledge must be without value or influence, but eminently so in a department of truth whose primary object is to reform human character and conduct. How far this quality of vagueness prevails among us, we may not be able to determine. Very likely it will be overrated by some and underrated by others. But unquestionably there is enough of it to justify some allusion to its disastrous influence on the pulpit. By common consent, our preaching, as a whole, has not the sinewy firmness of tone, or the clear, ringing articulation of the dogmatic

has ever proved herself the nursing mother of free inquiry, religious liberty, and an ever-advancing civilization." — GARBETT'S *Bampton Lectures*, pp. 30, 31.

and ethical principles of the faith, or the resolute, incisive bearing on the field of controversy, which the general latitudinarianism of the time demands. Now, this fault if we consider preaching in itself, or this evil if we consider it in its effects on those who hear it, can be understood and remedied only by careful study of the causes which have produced it. It will not be easy to mark out these causes with precision, or to place them in such bold relief that all alike will feel their force. They shade off into other things. They operate so gradually and silently as to baffle detection by minds not accustomed to watch the shifting phases of our intellectual and religious life. They are not tied to one spot, but float with the tide. They are not as fixed cogs in the wheel of influence, but rather as gases and exhalations taken up into the common air.

And first, the Church, as represented in the beliefs and lives of its members, does not stand out against the world with a firm, sharp-cut edge: here and there its outline wavers and disappears. The age dislikes dogma, and is restive under discipline. From the drift of things, one might suppose that the Church now and then grew weary or hopeless in the task of teaching the one and enforcing the other. Evidently it finds its chief comfort, amid the present conflict between the secular and the sacred, the speculative and the theological, the things of sense and the things of spirit, in throwing its energies more than ever into the practical work of missions and charities. The half-repressed utterance on the dogmatic side breaks out with the power of an enthusiasm in practical affairs. It expands, if it does not deepen, its life.

It carries its creed to new races, if it does not do much to fortify it among old ones. So far is this true, at any rate, that a resolute determination to push its dogmas at all hazards on the world's attention is not now the foremost fact either in its consciousness or in its work. The Church is not timid, it is not indifferent, it is not forgetful of the deposit committed to it by its Head: rather, with a memory that grasps the experiences of eighteen centuries, it watches and waits for the tide to turn, for the blind eye to be opened, and the deaf ear to be unstopped. Now, naturally but unconsciously the Clergy fall in with this mood. It affects their teaching more than their work. It is at the root of a preference, not always easily explained, of one class of subjects before another. It makes not a little of our preaching plethoric on the ethical, the sentimental, and humanitarian side, and very lean on the side of positive dogma. It produces a certain reserve and hesitancy in declaring the whole counsel of God.

But again: some part of the doctrinal vagueness of our preaching has arisen from sectarian exaggerations and controversial distortions of what the religious anarchy of the age has reduced to the *disjecta membra* of the body of truth. It has been one result of their unhappy influence, to constantly lessen the number of truths to be regarded as of vital importance in the current instruction of the people. But to depress a truth below its proper rank; to change its place in the scheme; to convert the necessary into the contingent, the essential into the expedient; to say of a given doctrine, "It is well enough, but not of very great consequence, a harmless

opinion not to be forgotten, and yet not claiming special remembrance," — to do this, is to rob the truth so treated of all power to kindle the tongue or to stir the heart. It must soon drop into the dead lumber of the pulpit. But every time this is done, it adds a new stammer to the preacher's voice, and helps to spread a hazy indefiniteness along the entire horizon of God's truth. To drop out or slur this or that dogma, does not end with the loss of the particular dogma so handled: every ligature of the system to which it belongs, all the nerve-centres of the one faith, feel the hurt, and resent the loss. And this is as true of the preacher's power as it is of the preacher's message.

Again: the age is in love with free discussion. The freer it is in theology, the better it is pleased. It enjoys the excitement of an open and familiar canvass of all difficulties in religion. Liberty of opinion is the life of knowledge. Better, it is said, a wrong opinion freely chosen, than a right opinion passively held. The winds are unloosed on the old anchorages of the Christian mind. The Clergy are treated to some sneering and a good deal of attempted browbeating by the proud intellectualism of the more advanced schools. They are charged with "still refusing to look their difficulties in the face, with prescribing for mental troubles the established doses of Paley and Pearson, with declining dangerous questions as sinful, and with treading the round of commonplace with placid comfort."<sup>1</sup> Men are tossed to and fro, it is said, between the authority of the Church and the authority of the Bible, the testimony of history

<sup>1</sup> Froude's *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, p. 194.

and the testimony of the Spirit, the ascertained facts of science and the contradictory facts which seem to be revealed. Sad and touching pictures are drawn of the painful condition, on these and kindred subjects, of the average man of the day on one side, and of the heavy, stupid ways of the Clergy on the other. Now, we may resent this tone of remark as insulting; we may declare it impertinent; we may denounce it as part of the dreadful masquerade of modern unbelief; we may boast ourselves beyond its reach. And yet it does affect many of the Clergy. It drives them in from the outposts; it tempts them into silence or feebleness on all save the most essential points; it leads them to concentrate all thought and speech on the effort to rescue something where all is brought into peril. In this way vagueness creeps over much of their teaching, and the light at the centre is fringed with shadows, which deepen as they stretch out toward the circumference.

Again: the most sober and conservative among us must admit that we are far on in a new cycle of religious thought. A transition is going forward. The old questions of theology have not changed, nor can they while the Word of God and the human mind remain as they are; but the modes of viewing the old questions have changed. We are in the midst of an effort, put forth more than once in the history of the Church, to re-state the grounds of Christian belief, and to adjust its proofs to the altered tone of modern inquiry. This effort, before consummating its task, has influenced the Clerical mind in four ways: it has given it more play, lifted it out of some hereditary grooves, knocked away

some conventional props, and inspired it with more independence. In doing this, it has led some to feel less concern for the maintenance of a definite faith, and to give currency to the notion, that the larger a man's mind, and the broader his grasp of the great facts of life, so much the more cloudy must be his creed.

Again: this effort to lay bare the foundations of our religion for the inspection of the faithful, as well as the faithless, has wrought some change in the living sense of the theological terms which we use. "Into the work which God gave those terms to do in the ages which framed them, holy men threw their yearnings and their lives. They were sharp and clear-cut as cameos. When they were used, it was by men who knew exactly what they meant, and who meant exactly what those terms expressed. But time works changes in language. Words often survive their first fervid meaning, and outlast, not the reality, but the form, of their original work." It has been so measurably with the theology of the pulpit, if not that of the schools. The result of this has been to render some of our more elastic and inquisitive minds a little careless in the use of theological terms, and somewhat vague in their statements of doctrine. They have drifted off from the old and still customary terminology, and are themselves unable to invent a new one, and unwilling to trust the Church to do it, even if she showed a disposition that way.

But, finally, this effort to re-state Christianity, and in part to re-build its defences, has thrown many enterprising minds into the double attitude of inquirers and teachers. But how can a man teach what he does not

know, or persuade others of that which is doubtful to himself? How can he offer as a guide and comfort to other men's souls, that which is neither a guide nor a comfort to his own? Such a man, if he be honest, will teach his own struggles and difficulties, his own guesses at truth. He can do no more. As an inquirer, he can pronounce no doctrine "erroneous and strange." The teacher must be a believer, and "a teacher in the ministry of a dogmatic Church must be a believer in a dogmatic faith." What else than an uncertain sound, what else than words as feeble as they are loose, can issue from the lips of one who proclaims, under the solemnity of an official oath, that to be settled truth, which he knows to be afloat in his own mind?

## LECTURE VIII.

### THE CLERGY AS EDUCATORS.

IN the two previous lectures, I have inquired what can be done in the training of candidates for the Ministry, and in preaching, to enable the Clergy to regain ground that has been lost, or to advance to ground not yet occupied. In the present and following lectures, I shall consider other means looking to the same end. I have shown, in my second lecture, how damaging was the blow inflicted upon clerical influence by the general withdrawal of popular education from the control of the Clergy,—a result due, as has been shown, not to the hostility of the secular power, but in the main to the divisions of Christendom. In view of the present attitude of public sentiment and of State legislation, some may think it a waste of time to discuss the possibility of recovering for the Clergy the field from which they have been driven. But it cannot be a waste of time to discuss any subject involving principles of vital moment and of perpetual application, however uncertain and remote may be the practical results. The chief obstacle to-day, in the way of a discussion that would lead to such results, is not so much in the arrangements of the State or in the tone



of public feeling, as in the apathy or matter-of-course acquiescence of the Church herself. It is bad enough that she has abandoned the field, but it is vastly worse that she has lost all hope of recovering it. With a strange unwisdom does she read the signs of the times, and especially those indicative of the future of our present civilization. She seems not, either in her thinking or in her practical policy, to recognize the fact, that modern life, so far from having become fixed in its mould or unalterable in its tendencies, is actually fluctuating and transitional, dimly groping, amid hovering shadows and apprehended convulsions, after some better and firmer order than it has yet reached. The loud cry to-day resounding through its borders, for the absolute separation of Church and State, may die out before its desire is consummated. It is the cry of a now dominant secularism; but this secularism—like rationalism in religion, with which it is closely affiliated if not its lineal offshoot—is only a chapter in human experience, whose last pages are now being written out. Its cure will be in its own shallowness and one-sidedness. As a movement, it is travelling too far away from the normal centres of a salutary and balanced development of human life not to be driven back by a law of social and political as well as of moral and religious gravitation.

If this be so, the Church, so far from resigning herself supinely and hopelessly to her present enforced exclusion from the work of educating the masses, should do what she can to hasten the coming of a re-action that in any event is inevitable; and to prepare herself, by the effective marshalling of her resources and the proper

training of her Clergy, to take advantage of the re-action when it sets in.

Educationally considered, the present outlook is discouraging as to any probable change, in our day, in the attitude either of the State or of the Church. What the former is doing, is shown by a formidable array of statistics open to all who desire to know them. What the latter is doing, is shown by statistics that it would be hardly worth while to gather, except for the purpose of giving a sharper edge to the moral which they teach. Our Christianity, save so far as it is represented by the Church of Rome, which in this matter bears itself with energy and decision, and with absolute consistency with its own principles, is doing scarcely enough to keep alive even a theoretical recognition of its duty. Beyond a few schools and colleges, most of them with a brittle hold on the future so far as adequate endowment and support are concerned, there is little to show that it feels any responsibility for the general training of the people of this land. It will be idle, in the way of rejoinder, to cite its Sunday-school work. Limited to an hour a week, with no power to compel attendance, and reaching only a moiety of the children of the nation, what it does in its own sphere of moral and religious training is necessarily immethodical, often vague and superficial, and everywhere inadequate to the requirement. The only apology for this work is, that our Christianity is doing the best it can to occupy the only field left to it by the present educational policy of the State. But, when most charitably judged, what it is doing amounts to little more than throwing a few buckets of water here and there

upon millions of acres requiring constant irrigation. Some may demur to this figure as being unduly exaggerated; but that it is not so, is amply proved by the sort of character now being worked up into citizenship all over the land. By common consent, it has more intellect than heart, more knowledge than conscience, more ambition for power than love for duty, more greed for money and the things that money buys than for the virtues that build up individuals and communities into strength and glory. But my theme does not require me to go into consequences in this direction. Its concern is for the restoration of the Clergy, as a teaching order, to their due place in the work of popular education, and, *a fortiori*, for the principles involved in all attempts to effect this restoration. Passing over practical measures needed for this end, as belonging to the Clergy and laity to determine in Diocesan and General Councils, I shall confine myself to principles which can never perish because we forget them, or cease to be binding because we fail to apply them.

But, before proceeding to the statement of these principles, I would say, that, as they lost their power in modern life by the long-continued disagreements and schisms of Christendom, so they can regain their power only by the re-union of Christendom. And when I say Christendom, I mean, not sentimental or doctrinal Christendom, or any thing for which the so-called "common Christianity of the day" is deemed an equivalent; but Christendom organically, historically one, — the unity of the one Catholic and Apostolic Church. Every step toward this is a step toward the restoration of the Church,

and of the Clergy as representing the Church, to their normal and ideal function, as educators of the people.

Let us now inquire into the principles, that, from a Christian standpoint, underlie this whole subject.

1. If the Christ took our nature upon Him that He might make it a partaker of His Divine nature, if He became the light and life of humanity that He might become its regenerator and Saviour, then is He the supreme educator of man, and what He does in this capacity must include the whole life of man. For, as He regenerates and saves the whole life of man, so on the basis of this regeneration, and with a view to this salvation, He must educate the whole life of man; the whole life, too, not as an aggregation of parts capable of being quickened and fashioned part by part, but the whole in its organic unity.

2. Every thing that enters into the re-formation of human life in His image falls within His use and control. — as truth which is the object of faith, and truth which is the object of reason, and law which speaks to the conscience, and worship which directs the affections in their acts of adoration, and earthly ties and callings which develop and discipline man as a social being; in short, all things that help to bring man, for time and eternity, in all the relations of life into conformity with the Divine will.

3. As, next to the Holy Spirit of God, truth, which is but the reality of being, is the highest agency in the education of man, so wherever truth is, and in whatever form it is, it is Christ's instrument for this end. But as He holds in Himself the reality of all that is, and so the

truth of all that is, He holds the truth as an organic whole, which is but the reflection of the unity of all being, and of the still higher unity of the Triune Divine Nature. To Him truth in being one is also many, and in being many is also one. We may break truth up into parts, separate it into divisions and groups, give it names expressive of our human conceptions of its diverse aspects. We may call one phase of it science, another literature, another religion, another morality, and so on to the end of the categories of human thought; and for the sake of convenience, or because of the necessity of subdividing the labor of searching after it, or of teaching it when found, we may handle it in fragments and sections according to the labels we put on them. But with Him who made all things, and without whom was nothing made that was made, truth is indissolubly one as His own will is one. And if all truth in the universe is not needed for fashioning the character of man into the image of Christ, the *oneness* of all truth given to us is needed. And so, in fact, Christ, in His training of human character, makes the force and value of every particle of truth, so to speak, depend upon its organic connection with the whole body of truth; i.e., with the unity of all being. Now, if this be so, several results follow: —

(a) We cannot cut up truth into parts, and teach one part as though it had no vital relation with other parts: i.e., as though truth for the intellect, and truth for the heart, and truth for the conscience, and truth embedded in man's personal relation to God, in which all worship and spiritual love and obedience are rooted, could be

adequately taught in their isolated individuality; sending the same human life to one school for one sort of truth, to another school for another sort of truth, and so on until all the varieties of truth originating in our surface conceptions of it had been compassed. Truth can be distinguished according to the aspects it assumes, but it cannot be divided.

(b) Truth must be used, in the education of man, as the Divine Educator uses it; viz., in conformity with its own inherent gradations, and in conformity with the gradations in the structure of human nature. First and last must come spiritual and ethical truth grounded upon what God has revealed of His own nature and purposes; next, truth discoverable by the faculties of man, and resting upon an ascertained congruity between human thought and the objective or subjective reality of things, and taken, moreover, in its order, as truth in the world of duty, truth in the world of mental conceptions, truth in the world of social and political relations, truth in the world of matter. In correspondence with this order in the work of education, must be taken, first and last the spiritual and voluntary, and next the intellectual and æsthetic faculties of man; all being treated as parts distinguishable one from another, and yet as parts of an indivisible, organic whole.

(c) As all power is lodged in the Christ, the highest being exercised in His divine and supernatural Kingdom, it follows that the kingdoms or states organized in the natural order are only lower expressions of His power, and are intended to act in harmony with the Kingdom which embodies the highest power. If this

be true, it follows that there can be no properly educated citizenship in the secular state, that does not lead up to the nobler citizenship of the *civitas Dei* which is not of this world; the earthly and the heavenly training being only different phases of one and the same discipline.

(d) Again: if, as the Christ, the supreme educator, teaches, the present earthly life of man be only the beginning of an eternal life; and if, as the beginning or the seed-time of such an endless life, it be also the period of probation and discipline for that life, — then it follows that there can be no education, worthy of the name, that does not from first to last proceed upon this fact. To train man as a time-creature, when in reality he is meant for eternity, is to do the least, and to leave undone the greatest part of his education.

Now, these, beyond all question, are among the principles (and I have named only such as immediately pertain to my subject) that determine the training of man by the Christ, who, because He is his regenerator and Saviour, must also be his educator. How they cross and contradict the principles that determine the education given by the State to the masses of this land, I forbear to inquire. It is self-evident that either the Christ of the Gospel, the Christ of history, is a vain theorizer, or this Republic is building its life on rottenness and deceit.

4. But if such be the principles of the Christ as the supreme educator of humanity, it remains to be asked, what means He in his infinite wisdom devised to apply them; for truth asserts and establishes itself, not so much by formal or abstract proof, as by doing the work

for which it was given. As matter of fact, He did not leave these principles to operate merely as so many ideas, or as a generally diffused influence working like leaven in the measures of meal. No: to give them practical effect and abiding power, He for this, as well as for other closely related purposes, founded an institution, a Church, that would embody them, and so assure their perpetual application. "As Head over all things to the Church,"<sup>1</sup> He invested it with power and authority to continue among men all the essential offices of his earthly ministry, and, among them, that of educating the race on the basis of an accomplished universal redemption of the race. And then, to guard against any radical failure to administer these offices on the lines marked out by Himself, He gave to this Divine society His Holy Spirit, to guide it into the way of all truth, to keep it in remembrance of whatsoever things He had commanded, and to enable it in all needful ways to perfect its organization and equipment in accordance with instructions given during the great forty days when He spoke "of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God."<sup>2</sup> In whatever sense a universal Kingship and Priesthood may be predicated of this society, it is certain, that, acting under this guidance, it constituted and ordained for all time a Ministry, as most Christians believe of threefold rank, to whom it gave power and authority to execute the offices conferred upon itself, and so to represent officially its eternal Founder and ever-living Head as Mediator, Regenerator, Educator, Saviour, through all the ages of history. Thus broadly

<sup>1</sup> Eph. i. 22.<sup>2</sup> Acts i. 3.



commissioned, it is impossible to regard the Clergy as fully discharging the functions committed to them, if, besides their ministrations at the font and the altar and in the pulpit, and to the individual sheep of their flocks, they fail to care for the training and nurture of the lambs of the fold. They are not only Priests, Preachers, Pastors, but, because they are such, they are also of necessity and in the broadest sense educators. If any thing be more noteworthy than another in the ministry of Christ, it was His tender love for childhood, His sympathetic care for all its wants and capabilities, His boundless solicitude that it should be adequately trained on all sides for the one continuous, immortal life in time and eternity. Clearly it was this feeling that dictated, as the supreme test of St. Peter's love, his constant and faithful feeding of the lambs of the chief Pastor of humanity everywhere and in all ages, — a test of ministerial fidelity as fit and true now as it was at the dawn of Christianity. Nor was this feeding restricted to this or that want of human nature: on the contrary, it was to be as wide as the empire of truth, and as varied as the mind and spirit of man.

It may be said that this view of the duty and work of the Clergy throws them into a larger sphere than any one class of men can possibly fill. Knowledge, it may be said, has become too vast and diversified to be compassed, even for practical purposes, by one order of men, however exclusively they may give themselves to the double task of teaching, and of gathering and assorting the material to be taught. But surely they may do the duty here assigned them, even though their attainments

be not co-extensive with the domain of knowledge, or their skill in handling different kinds of truth fall short of that of experts. One may teach science without being a scientist, letters without being a *littérateur*, poetry without being a poet, art without being painter or sculptor. But the notion here dealt with proceeds on a mistaken view of what can be reasonably expected from the Clergy as educators. As such, their chief office is not to be accomplished in all things, or to be intellectually full beyond other men: their highest function in this work is to have such oversight and direction as will enable them to bring all knowledge falling within the limits of the instructor's task into *moral relations*, to develop and insist upon its moral significance and moral uses, to make it in a practical and vital sense an auxiliary to the will-power and the conscience-power of human nature in its efforts to cease from evil and to do good, and so to lift it where all knowledge, in the final sweep of its influence, is intended to be lifted, — to the plane of the spiritual life, where, so far as it fulfils its noblest office, it will help to broaden out into steady and luminous rays the casual, flitting gleams of Divine light shot through the soul from nature's own lamp. And, I may add, it is just this work that our generation especially needs. Knowledge increases faster than the trained sense of its *moral relations*, faster than it is turned to account in guiding and strengthening the moral liberty of man, faster than it is brought to bear as a quickening element in the process of his spiritual and eternal salvation. Were the Clergy, in their oversight of the education of the masses (should they be called upon to exercise it

once more), to do nothing beyond this, they would do the task, perhaps, most needed in modern life, even though they never entered a laboratory, or traced things "within the rocks," or things from deep-sea soundings, or things of abstraction drawn from the bottomless depths of speculative philosophy.

I have discussed the subject entirely from a Christian standpoint, and my conclusions rest on purely Christian grounds. But it may be well to view it from a national standpoint, if only to show, to those who believe the present educational system of the nation to be established for all time, how fallible and insecure are the grounds upon which this belief is planted. In thus viewing the question, I leave out of the account popular caprices and vacillations, popular fondness for novelty and change, popular re-actions that sometimes as suddenly as inscrutably reverse or shatter state systems and policies apparently lacking in no element of strength and stability. I rest the case upon now generally admitted principles, principles that the best and deepest thought of the day declares to be essential to the organism and work of the modern nation. To see how these principles apply to this nation, the fact must be kept clearly in view, that this nation, speaking generally, while it assumes absolute authority over what are known as its public schools, holds itself responsible only for mental training, and in no formal and definite way for moral training; religious training being, of course, out of the question.<sup>1</sup> It nei-

<sup>1</sup> May 28, 1884, the superintendent of public instruction in the State of New York made an important decision, affecting every school in the State. It is all the more important because it may be regarded as the

ther forbids nor requires its teachers to inculcate moral precepts. In the eye of the law, moral teaching as such is not obligatory, and mental teaching alone is formally recognized as the foremost, and, if they choose to regard it so, as the exclusive business of the instructors whom it employs. Now, if this be the fact, and, being the fact, if it must be accepted as the determining factor in the nation's educational system, I affirm that this system is not and can not be permanent; and I do so on the indisputable ground that it is narrower than the nation's own life, that it fails to reflect what is deepest and strongest in that life, that it leaves out of the reckoning the most distinctive and essential bond between the individual and the nation. The bond to which I refer is distinctive and essential beyond all others, because it is distinctively and essentially *moral*. The individual has personality, has duties and rights, has freedom of choice, is bound

received interpretation of the law touching the subject of religious teaching and worship in the public schools of every State in the Union.

The Board of Education of District No. 4, in Orangetown, Rockland County, N.Y., brought before the State superintendent a case which elicited the following decision:—

“If it were possible to devise some limited measure of religious instruction for adoption in the schools, upon which all these diverse classes and sects could harmonize, it would be a gratifying result. But this is manifestly impracticable and impossible. The only alternative, therefore, to preserve the benefits of the constitutional guaranties in letter and in spirit, and to secure to all absolute equality of right in the matter of religious predilection, must be, however reluctantly the conclusion is arrived at, to exclude religious instruction and exercises from the public schools during school-hours. These principles have been followed by every one of my predecessors in office, no distinction having been made between Scripture-reading and prayers, but each having been held to constitute *no legitimate part of the business of the public schools.*”

by moral law, only because he is a moral being. This personality comes forth under one set of conditions in the family, under another in the nation, and under still another and the highest in the Church. To the full extent that it is ordained to realize itself in the nation, the nation is bound, if it assumes the task, to educate it with a view to its fullest realization. Now, the individual's right to this is a moral right, because it grows out of his personality, which is moral, and relates to an end which is moral because it is the end of the personality. Therefore the individual has a claim, that may not be denied, to be *morally* educated as a moral integer of the nation; to be disciplined and developed in the essentials of his personality, all of which are moral. Now, so far as the nation educates only the intellect, it denies this claim. It educates what belongs primarily to the individuality, only subordinately to the personality of man. In confining itself to mental, to the neglect or exclusion of moral training, it not only puts the cart before the horse; but, to the extent that it does so, it throws out the horse, the living power, altogether, and retains only the cart, a will-less, choiceless mechanism, carrying any load, whether of good or evil, that may be put upon it.

Such, beyond contradiction, is the conclusion to which we are forced when we measure the duty of the nation as an educator by the standard of personal rights. Turning the subject round, and starting with the nation, we shall be brought to the same result. As with the individual, so with the nation, the point of departure is the fundamental postulate that the nation is a mora

person. If it be so, then, underlying and overtopping all other relations that it may have with the individual, there is of necessity a moral relation. But if there be such a moral relation, then it is the parent of moral duties; and among them the highest, the most urgent, and far-reaching must be the duty of training, developing the moral being of the individual. Its intellectual work in his behalf is of moment in the long-run only as it is preceded and accompanied by its moral work in his behalf. Now, there is no escape from this except by denying the nation's personality. But that the nation has personality is proved by its moral attributes and its moral functions, and above all by its recognized place in the moral order of the world. It is so important to my argument to establish this, that it may be well to fortify it by the strong, clear thoughts of one who has made himself an authority on the subject:—

“The nation is a moral person, since it is the organized life of society, and society is formed in the spirit and in the power of a personal life. It is to be governed in the conscious determination of the will, and to act as one who looks before and after. The strength which is to be wrought in it exists only in rectitude of thought and will. Wisdom and courage, steadfastness and reverence, faith and hope, are attributes of it; the highest personal elements become its elements, and are moulded in its spirit. The relation of the individual to the nation presumes, as its necessary condition, the existence of the nation as a moral person. The individual becomes a person in the nation: and this involves the existence of the nation as also a person; for personality, as it is formed in relations, can subsist only in an organic and moral relationship, — a life which has a universal end, even the development of a perfect humanity. It is by reason of its moral person-

ality that the nation can be treated in the sense that it is, as the power and minister of God in history, at once representing and executing in its own sphere an authority delegated from Him.”<sup>1</sup>

Both parties, then, — the individual and the nation, — are moral persons; and if the nation assumes the responsibilities and powers of the supreme educator within its own limits and for its own purposes, it must bear itself as a moral person toward a moral person. It must have regard to the moral elements in its own life, as well as the moral elements in the life of the individual. But, if it do this, the nation must engage in *moral* as well as mental training; must care for the will and conscience, as well as for the intellect; must busy itself with the formation of individual character, as well as with the advancement of individual culture. But this is just what the school-system of this nation is not doing; nay, more, what the nation, through and in its schools, declines to do. Therefore these schools leave undone more than they do; they fail to meet their weightiest requirement; they in no other than a one-sided, superficial way reflect what is best in the individual or the nation. Sooner or later the moral instincts of the nation will radically modify them, or will sweep them away as utterly inadequate to the life of a people that means to be a great moral power in the world. When this crisis shall come, the nation will recall the Church (it must be a re-united Church) to its old task. The Church in idea includes the nation on its moral side, and is, under God, the only authorized and competent custodian of its moral life.

The Church has renovated and enlarged the moral life of the nation, by bringing that life in its nobler moods under the sway of our Lord's own life, the one true redemptive force working upon humanity. The Church can do every thing the nation can do for the training of the individual, and vastly more ; and the time will come when experience (it may be a long and bitter one) will prove to the nation that its best course will be to commit this mighty interest to the agency that can best care for it. Whether this shall happen or no, the foundation on which rest the right and the duty of the Christian Ministry as the chief educator of the people standeth sure. The State under the forms of law, or the people themselves by the force of public opinion, may suspend both ; but they can destroy neither. They can be revoked only by Him who ordained them. They have entered into all life permeated by the leaven of Christianity ; they are among the abiding factors of that life, and can perish out of it only as the authority that gave them shall perish. Therefore no adverse ruling, no neglects or denials of to-day, can shake my conviction, that sooner or later they will re-appear in the ordained circuit of their power, as stars re-appear that have been long lost to view by reason of the vast but unerring sweep of their pathway through the heavens. When the day of their return shall come, God grant, that, purged of the grievous faults and errors of the past, the Clergy may resume their educational functions with a quickened sense of the gravity of the trust, and a profounder insight into the character and example of Christ, the supreme educator of the ages.



## LECTURE IX.

### IMPROVED METHODS IN THE CURE OF SOULS.

ANOTHER indispensable condition of the revival of clerical influence must be sought in improved methods in the cure of souls. This phrase contains more than many in this or in the past generation of clergymen have cared to see. In the proper, catholic, Scriptural sense, it reaches far beyond all public ministrations to organized assemblies. It embraces indeed, as essential to it, teaching and preaching, leadership in worship, and the performance of sacramental offices, — marriage, the visitation of the sick, and the burial of the dead; but it also embraces, as equally essential in its way, the official contact of the Ministry with individual souls, for purposes of instruction, guidance, strength, comfort, as the need may be. Hitherto this contact has been loose and ineffective. One cannot criticise its method, for method it has had none. This is the barren side of the pastorate, — so barren, indeed, that we have shrunk from discussing the causes of it or the remedy for it. It is no satire, but simple truth, to say that the cure of souls, save in ministrations to congregations, has come to mean little more than personal acquaintance with the members of the parish, conventional greetings in the sanc-

tuary or the street, and social chats in the parlor or at the table. As for any direct, systematic, searching dealing with individual lives, in order to help them in their temptations and doubts, or to throw the guiding, strengthening power of a living Priesthood into their struggles with vicious habits eating into the soul like a canker, or to apply to their heart-weary, sin-sick experiences the medicine of Christ,—there has been so little of it as to be hardly worthy of mention in the round of clerical duty.

How we have been brought into this evil case, is no mystery; but how we are to escape from it, is a problem that becomes more difficult, the more we think upon it. I say it is no mystery how both Priests and people have drifted into the present inefficiency on the one side and the present estrangement on the other. Both have their root in the theological systems and the theological tendencies of days long gone by. The Calvinistic theology, by making every thing in the Christian life turn on the doctrines of election and predestination and efficacious grace, helped to produce an increasing shallowness of religious experience, to tone down the intensity of the soul's battle with sin, and to diminish the craving for outside help, especially from the Ministry, in this spiritual warfare. Elected to be saved; predestinated unto life eternal, irrespective of personal righteousness; once in grace, always in grace,—these points determined, why should any soul be profoundly disturbed by its oscillations to one side or the other of the powers of good and evil? or why should it be concerned to open up the secrets of its inner life, and to have its hurts and

griefs touched by priestly counsel and guidance? In any event, the question of ultimate salvation was settled; and victory must emerge, by the power of sovereign decrees, from the present strife. Thus, too, the Ministry was beguiled into dealing more and more with doctrines to be preached, and less and less with souls to be helped and healed. On the other hand, the Arminian theology, leaning as it did strongly toward the Pelagian view of "every man his own saviour," and hence of the ultimate sufficiency of the individual will for all grapples with evil, tended to evacuate sin of its guilt and power, and to make it in all respects a less terrible adversary than it is represented either by God's Word or by ordinary human experience. This, too, worked itself out in both ways. First, it habituated the individual soul to think that it needed no special help; and, next, it persuaded the Clergy to confine themselves more and more to the proclamation of the conditions of the conflict in every human heart between the truth and the Spirit of God on the one side, and the world, the flesh, and the Devil on the other. Further on arose, by way of protest against both these theologies, the fervid, emotional religion of Methodism, issuing in oft-recurring recitals of private experiences, gradually shading off into cant and formalism, and in inquisitorial tests of vital Christianity, that, in a mechanical way, busied themselves in turning the soul inside out for the inspection of the brethren. Like all extreme methods, this in due time was followed by a re-action that carried with it at once the dissent and the disgust of sober Christians. Alongside of this ran the methods of the Romish confessional, with its

sifting, prying examinations, dragging to the light, in common with sins needing help for their extirpation, much else of the soul's inner life, which, for spiritual ends, no tongue need tell and no ear should hear. Both systems, each in its own way and degree, helped to alienate Clergy and people; the one from the duty of giving counsel, and the other from the exercise of the right to be counselled and directed in conflicts too sharp for the private conscience to cope with, or in sins too deep and subtle to be reached by ordinary repentance.

Such are some of the causes that have worked out the present unhappy state of things; depressing, on the one hand, the proper influence of the Priesthood, and hindering, on the other, the healthy growth of spiritual life among the people of God. These causes must have due consideration in all attempts at reform in this matter. It is evident, that, in whatever may be devised to impart to the cure of souls greater meaning and vitality, we can use both the Methodist and the Romish modes of procedure only as buoys to warn us off the shoal-spots in the channel of inquiry along which we must move. To effect a change for the better, to bring the individual soul and the Minister of Christ into more intimate and helpful relations, much careful and patient work will be required on two parallel lines. So generally has private, priestly direction ceased, both as an idea and as a fact, as an inward need of the soul and as an outward function, that there can be no hope of its revival, except as it shall come to us through a new crop of religious feeling and association. And there is no

possibility of this save by an amount of deep spading or subsoil ploughing that we seem as yet unwilling to attempt. The standpoint whence our religion looks at itself, estimates its own character, needs, besetments, and dangers, must be radically changed. A vital and profound *μετάνοια* must sweep over its walls and through its inner courts. It is idle to think of breaking down the present popular theory of Christian life and discipline by direct assault: it has too many side-props, and is too firmly buttressed on the common thought of the day for this. So long as the average Christian is taught, and loyally accepts the teaching, that, given the truth and the grace of God in their ordinary measures and by their ordinary means, and an open field of combat, the individual soul should for its own sake be left alone to meet its adversaries and to work out its salvation, the only way to supplant such a theory is to put alongside of it the deeper, wider, truer one, which for special crises in the soul's experience provides special helps, and for chronic sins and infirmities applies, in connection with all other means, the steady pressure of living authority in the person of the Priest of God and deputy of Christ. But, as has been said, to succeed in this, a new point of view must be gained. To gain this, something like a revolution must be wrought in the Christian consciousness of our day. The drift of modern thought has clouded it with a false and shallow notion of the struggle between good and evil as it goes on in the individual soul and throughout the moral universe, and it has done it by blurring the lines that divide them. This cloud must be dispersed by turning upon it the

fire of God's wrath against all iniquity, and the only less intense fire of the human conscience when educated up to the meaning of this struggle.

Again: this same drift, clothed in the sober, well-knit formulas of philosophical speculation, has lulled the conscience into a false peace by narrowing the measure of human responsibility for the sin that is in the world, and by lessening the guilt and terror of sin itself, under the plea that man's moral liberty is a feeble, superficial thing when compared with the devouring sweep of the fatalism of law and the omnipotent force of external environments. From this false peace the religious consciousness must be aroused by taking it down, through truer processes of thought, to the centre of its own indivisible and indestructible personality, and, above all, by converging on that centre the blaze of light reflected from the pages of Divine revelation, where man is taught, that, in spite of all time or earth limitations, and of all sophistries spun from his own thinking, he is free to choose after the manner of God's freedom.

Still again: the same drift has dropped a veil between man and the coming world, and between man and God as the judge of all the earth: in the former case, by substituting a punishment for the wicked, of indefinite for one of endless duration, and by replacing the one probation in time by any number of required probations in eternity; in the latter, by giving us a God immanent in all nature for purposes of physical evolution, but only dubiously and remotely present in the sphere of our moral freedom, and positively absent in respect of any supernatural interventions. This veil, already to some

minds distressingly dark, and to others the lurid background of mental and moral despair, must be rent in twain by unveiling behind it the continuous, catholic interpretation of Divine revelation touching the future destiny of man, and with this the double witness of the human soul and of the same revelation to the living, universal presence of the God and Father of all in nature, and in the vaster, more real world of the supernatural, the one world of freedom and personality.

But, besides meeting these issues raised by scientific and speculative thought, there is other and more concrete work to be done by our pulpit, catechetical, house-to-house teaching. That teaching must be made more searching and profound, both as regards the nature of moral evil and the soul's relations to it; and this with immediate reference to strictly spiritual ends. We must revive and enforce, with fresh energy and earnestness, the old doctrine as to the nature of sin; its overwhelming power, its unspeakable guilt, its eternal consequences, its selfishness, its anarchy, its corruption, its pain, its wretchedness, — in short, the whole dreadful analysis of its being, the whole appalling record of its ruin and desolation. And, on the other hand, we must tell anew, and in more burning language, with a more fearless fidelity to facts, the story of man's weakness when in conflict with this enemy, — how feeble he is in his use of the helps Christianity offers him; how blind he is, amid the light streaming down upon him from the opened heavens; how vacillating he is, in spite of the firm grasp upon his will and conscience, not only of the moral law pleading for duty as the central fact and

supreme dignity of life, but of the Gospel of the grace and truth of the Son of God fairly flooding his soul with the power and the glory of a humanity lifted into oneness in Christ with the infinite and eternal source of all truth and life, as well as of all power and glory. We want, I say, a revival of the old doctrine on these and kindred subjects. For of this sort was the teaching of the first Apostles and Confessors; bound up, indeed, with the fullest and tenderest exhibitions of the pitying, redeeming love of God in Christ, but always keeping boldly at the front the perfect justice of God as a consuming fire to all unrighteousness, and enforcing at all points the call to repentance and remission of sins. Such has been the doctrine preached in all the great missionary crusades of the Church; and preached, too, without attempts to flatter the heathen into receiving it because of some faint shadow of resemblance to it in their own religions. Such, too, has been the doctrine uppermost on the tongues of Priests and Prophets in all the great revivals and reformations of the faith after periods of sloth and corruption; boldly, irresistibly driven home to the common heart without a thought of commending it to men as only in myth or legend coming from God, while in reality only a mixed and somewhat shadowed evolution from the higher consciousness of humanity. Give us a generation of teaching and work keyed on this note, warmed by the glow and invigorated by the strength of this aspect of God's truth, and there will be no lack of souls trooping, like storm-driven birds to their shelter, to the Priests of God for counsel and life. The deeper life will be followed by the deeper



discipline. The life more sensitive to the touch of sin, more profoundly shaken by the onsets of evil, and more terrified at the risks and chances of the awful struggle with the world, the flesh, and the Devil, will not need to be asked to lay open the hurts and bruises itself cannot heal, to those whose office it is to lead the burdened and wounded to Christ, the Healer and Saviour of man, because He came forth from the Father, and, as incarnate God, made known the love and mercy as well as the justice and holiness of the Father.

But if there is work to be done on this line to awaken souls to a deeper spiritual life and to an adequate sense of the needs of that life, there is also quite as much to be done on a parallel line to prepare the Priesthood for a fuller and more effective performance of their duty as spiritual guides. The training which makes the theologian, the preacher, the catechist, the sacramental ministrant, is not the training for this function. It may be more comprehensive; but it is not so minute and accurate in its knowledge of the human heart, or in its knowledge of sin, or in its knowledge of the ways and means for dealing with both. The one is inclined more to the study of the truth and grace of God objectively considered; the other, to the study of them in their subjective uses, and in immediate connection with all the trials and vicissitudes of inward experiences which are never the same to any two souls. Here the Priest that would do good service must acquire faculties of penetration, discrimination, sympathetic tact, balanced judgment; so disciplined and matured that they will operate, in the world of human motives, human weak-

nesses, and human sinfulness, with something like the intuitive quickness and precision of instincts. If we mean to prepare the Clergy for this sort of work, — and without it their preparation is one-sided and fragmentary, — we must train them not only in the science of Christian ethics, but in casuistry, which is the art of applying it. The word has an ugly sound to so-called Protestant ears, and generally to our English-speaking race. The name has left a bad odor in history, and is synonymous with much that we have learned to dislike. But it does not fall within my scope to recall the ways in which it has been abused, or the ignoble ends that it has been made to serve. It is enough that we bear in mind, that, as every science must have its corresponding art through which it can pass into practical use, so with Christian ethics. It gives us the ascertained principles of right conduct, of right character, of a life brought into harmony with God's will; and casuistry is the art of bringing them to bear on cases of conscience involving doubt and difficulty. Two things are needed to meet the requirements of practical work in this branch of clerical duty. First, we must have a wisely prepared manual of examples and rules for the examination and direction of burdened or enfeebled consciences, covering, as far as may be, the wants of souls seeking help and guidance, and the ways for meeting them sanctioned by God's Word, the Church's discipline, and the Christian experience of all the past. To construct such a manual, will be a task of great delicacy and difficulty. No one mind, nor any one set of minds, will be equal to it. It must, indeed, be a growth, rather than a construction;

a growth bearing a catholic impress, and at the same time carefully adjusted to whatever is characteristic or peculiar in the religious life of the American people. For such a work, ample materials are at hand, both in the Holy Scriptures and in the varied literature on the subject already existing. As might be expected, the Latin Church, in its Gallican, Spanish, and Italian branches, has contributed most largely to this literature. But we are by no means restricted to the authorities of that Church. Certain divines of the Church of England, especially in the seventeenth century, did far more for moral theology than is commonly supposed. And then no one can tell how much might be looked for, in this line of inquiry and analysis, from the mind of the living Church. Once fairly turned in this direction, the same acumen and versatility and patient research displayed elsewhere could not fail to produce important results. Besides, there are some new helps to a more accurate understanding of the phenomena of the will, the conscience, and of the whole passional nature of man, put within our reach by the recent advances of the psychological and pathological sciences. So far have these been carried, that it might almost be said that the strictly moral casuistry of the past is to be supplemented by a casuistry of the emotions and passions; starting at the boundary-line, over which travel to and fro and often blend together the moral and æsthetic elements of our nature; and ending at the opposite line, running with fluctuating curves between reason and instinct on the one side, and between feeling with a moral trend and purely animal appetite on the other.

Passing over details, I shall at present attempt no more than a statement of some of the fundamental principles that ought to govern in the composition of such a manual, and in the training of the Clergy for its practical use.

1. It must contain nothing that will undermine or dilute the sense of personal responsibility to God. This is the central fact in our moral being, and it must be protected and upheld at all hazards. The Gospel magnifies it, the Church develops it, God Himself respects it as part of the foundation on which the works of His grace and providence are built up, and also as part of the dignity of a nature made in His own image. The soul that seeks help must be made to understand that the help given will not put another will in the place of its own will, or another conscience in the place of its own conscience.

2. It should be clearly and strongly taught, that the ideal spiritual life, the perfected life in Christ Jesus, is the life that draws nearer and nearer to the great end which the Gospel aims at; viz., the gradual substitution, in every soul, of a character for an outward law, the steady progress toward a habit of loving obedience to God's will, which supersedes external rules and statutes.

3. It is of moment, that it be shown to those who ask for special counsel, that, in many cases of real difficulty, the ordinary means of grace provided in the Church are sufficient; that it is often rather a craving for some new expedient, a desire of change and novelty, than a real want, that puts souls upon the search for special remedies and extraordinary means. .

4. Nothing should be left unsaid or undone that will serve to show what does and what does not belong to a healthy mode of self or of priestly official examination. As to the former, there is always danger of a morbid kind of introspection, which leads to brooding over sin apart from any honest efforts to overcome it, or to exaggerating sin for the sake of magnifying the difficulty of repentance, or to excusing sin in order to prove that no repentance is necessary; while as to the latter, the examination by the Priest, a prying, curiosity-mongering, meddlesome, hair-splitting method may be adopted, that sifts and inverts the inner life, without a spiritual end, and barren of spiritual profit.

5. There must be clear and definite teaching, —

(a) As to the terms and conditions of forgiveness of sin, so far as they relate to the transgressor.

(b) As to the ground and meritorious cause of forgiveness.

(c) As to the channels, pledges, and assurances of forgiveness: how far, especially in the matter of assurance, the forgiven penitent *may* accept the witness of his own feelings; and how far, by Divine arrangement, he *must* rely not only upon the witness of the Holy Spirit witnessing with his spirit internally, but witnessing also and eminently through the one Baptism for the remission of sins, and subsequently at stated times all through the Christian life in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, which, besides its other offices, is also the pledge and seal of forgiveness.

6. In treating the general subject of the forgiveness of sin, confession and absolution must have their due

place. The time is coming when these will be discussed in better temper and with larger intelligence than they can be now. This, however, will follow rather than precede a profounder, more sensitive spiritual life. The closer discipline will be the child, not the parent of such a life. First the felt needs, then the remedy.

7. There must be a comprehensive and discriminating treatment of the various phases of religious experience as produced either by various temperaments or by various moods of the same temperament. There are the emotional and the unemotional, the quick and the slow, the fervid and the cold, the hopeful and the despondent, the reticent and the demonstrative; and each very largely governs the Christian's inner life. And, besides, there are the shifting moods passing over each one of these types of character. All Christians are not Christians after the same manner.

8. As introductory to all special training, the Priest must be taught clearly and definitely the nature and scope of his authority. There are two kinds of authority, the disregard of either of which will impair his influence and hinder his work. There is moral authority, the essence of which is love, and the outward form of which is character shaped by love. This is the highest sort of power that one soul can wield over another. But there is also the authority of a Divine commission, of a sacred office, in virtue of which Christ's Ministers are required to exhort the people "to obey them which have the rule over them." The two authorities, so blended together that we cannot tell precisely where

the one begins and the other ends, make the perfect guide of souls.<sup>1</sup>

In conclusion, allow me a word or two of exhortation. Let no distaste for, no prejudice against, no ignorance of the subject, let no recollection of abuses in the past, or possible mistakes and perversions in the future, turn aside our attention from it. Let us do what we can to teach Clergy and people the importance of a closer and more searching discipline of the spiritual life. Let us, with as little delay as may be, incorporate with the present curriculum of ministerial training, suitable provisions for methodical instruction in this department of clerical duty. And finally, let the Church, in her organic capacity, mark the close of this century of her life by entering with vigor and earnestness upon the task of lifting her Priesthood and her laity to higher conceptions of the help and guidance to be given by the one, and of the need of such help and guidance among the other.

<sup>1</sup> For a fuller treatment of these and kindred points, see the author's *Conciones ad Clerum*, third edition. Thomas Whittaker, New York, 1880.

## LECTURE X.

### DOGMATIC TEACHING AND THE PRIMARY ENDS OF THE GOSPEL.

IN the present lecture, my subject will be the influence of the Christian Ministry in the closing years of this century as affected by a more positive teaching of certain aspects of "the faith once delivered" now least in favor with the popular mind.

The subject will be handled with a view to showing : —

I. The kind and degree of dogmatic teaching now needed.

II. The evils arising from the undue exaltation of the secondary, at the expense of the primary, ends of the Gospel.

I. In discussing the kind and degree of dogmatic teaching now needed, I shall confine myself to such of its bearings as fall within the limits of the general inquiry proposed in these lectures. More, not less, of dogmatic teaching, I believe to be the demand of the time, provided the teaching be dogmatic in the right sense and in the right direction. Certainly this opinion is not the popular one ; and it requires, I am aware, the



courage of one's convictions thus to cross the grain of the common wish, to stem the current of the common thinking of the day. It may be that I am the victim of a sentimental delusion or of a theological fallacy. With such a risk before me, it becomes me to speak with all humility and subject to correction.

The present aversion to Christian dogma is not so much a phase of the general insurrection against authority, supposed to be characteristic of our time, as it is dislike of authority in its special opposition to the present pronounced bias of reason on religious issues. That is said to be the aptest, wisest teaching, that does most to commend Christianity to the rational judgment of men, and to bring out at the greatest number of points its intrinsic reasonableness. The aim seems to be to make Christianity sit as lightly as possible on human nature, fret and worry as little as may be its normal action, conform itself in all respects to the intuitions or spontaneous verdicts of man, delivered especially in the form of his higher hopes and sentiments touching the dignity and destiny of his being. Now, it is the element of authority in Christian dogma, that stands most in the way of such a mode of presenting Christianity; and so dogma is berated and disliked, not so much because of the particular truth it contains, as because it so embodies and exhibits the truth as, on the one hand, to depress the plastic, sympathetic reasonableness of Christianity, and, on the other, to restrict the freedom of reason considered as the faculty which, in responding to that reasonableness, helps to develop it as the essential if not the exclusive ground of personal conviction. It is

not, then, all authority in religion that excites repugnance among many professed believers, but the particular form of it which just now checks and irritates certain intellectual rights that happen to be uppermost in the common mind.

Again: we must discriminate between the dogmas that excite and the dogmas that escape this antipathy. Of the former sort are the dogmas mainly of mediæval and post-Reformation origin; of the latter sort are those framed by the undivided ante-Nicene Church. It is evident, that, the more the latter are pressed upon living thought, the less they are antagonized by all who profess and call themselves Christians; whatever may be the feeling among ultra-rationalists, who, while clinging to a Christian nomenclature, have really degraded Christianity into a mere product, like other religions, of the human consciousness. The only dogmatic hostility of practical moment to us as teachers of the truth is that within our own lines; and, as has been said, this is directed against dogmas that sprang up after the Church Catholic fell into schism. These, we know, had a twofold parentage. Some were the products of scholastic thought running in speculative channels; and some, of "private judgment" interpretations of the Scriptures, and of "private judgment" inferences from such interpretations. They were for a time the badges and shibboleths of rival schools of theology, first heated and then hardened by the fires of controversy. Subsequently they were pressed into service as the foundations of sect organizations, and further on were sharply maintained to gratify and perpetuate the sect impulse.

In affiliated groups, they one by one consolidated into *isms*, and crowded more and more into the background the great body of Catholic verities. Throughout this process, the tendency was to convert opinions into articles of faith, and prejudices into principles, and non-essential differences of all sorts into life-and-death convictions. Thus, as the area of bondage to the inventions and traditions of men was expanded, the area of lawful Catholic liberty was contracted. A re-action from all this was inevitable, and to-day we are in the midst of it. Christian men are outspoken and resolute, in many quarters, in their opposition to a dogmatic faith, when they really mean to oppose only those forms of it which are of mediæval or post-Reformation growth. If we go deep enough into their feeling, we soon find that the strength of their hostility to these only measures fairly the strength of their instinctive leaning to the Church's witness and teaching during the first five hundred years of her existence, when she affirmed nothing as of the substance of the faith that could not be traced back and identified as part of her testimony from the beginning. And when I say, that, to advance the influence of the Clergy as a teaching body, more dogma is needed, I mean dogma of the primitive Catholic stamp as contrasted with dogma worked out by schools and schisms and sects, — the *dissecta membra* of the body, and therefore the fragmentary progeny of a dismembered progenitor. Now, so far as dogmatic Christianity is concerned, this is the phase of living thought with which we have to deal; and we can deal with it successfully only as we become more definite and positive in our witness to this

aspect of Christianity. What we want, and what our time wants, is more of the authority and force of dogma thus understood, — dogma as the plain, simple expression of the historic facts and historic teachings of the faith formulated by the undivided Church while she yet felt the thrill of the first impulse of her Divine Head, and bore the impress in her visible unity of the original Pentecostal gift of the Holy Ghost. And now, to go a step farther, I claim that more of this dogma is needed — or rather a stronger, bolder utterance of it — for reasons which I can only state, and not attempt to argue.

(a) A definite Christian belief is the only solid basis of a positively Christian practice. But it is the tendency of the time to supplant belief by ethical sentiment or by spiritual sympathies and aspirations. Dogma is essential to belief, as the backbone and ribs are essential to the body. Without a fixed framework there can be no adhering tissues.

(b) Dogma is essential to the conservation of the normal type of the Christian life. It supplies, not only the anchorage of that life, but the perpetual mould in which all its fundamental elements are shaped after the image of Christ.

(c) Dogma is essential to Christian morality. It furnishes, in portable, concrete form, at once the perfect standard and the perfect sanction of duty: the one telling us what we ought to do or leave undone; the other telling us why, supplying the vital, dynamic energy which alone can sufficiently invigorate the will and quicken the conscience.

(d) Dogma is essential to the Church as an *ecclesia*

*docens*. The truth is committed to her to teach as, through the operation of the Holy Ghost, the principle of a new life. But she can teach the truth only as she can give it form. Formless truth is an airy nothing to the intellect and the heart. To be available for use, it must put on the dress of language, and, with the dress, the inevitable limitations of language. There must be a creed to have a *credô*.

(e) Dogma is essential to the continuous maintenance of intellectual activity in the Church working for spiritual ends. It presents truth as the subject of analysis and synthesis, of evidence and logic, of exposition and illustration; in order to evolve the unity and harmony of the revealed testimony of God, and the testimony, in philosophical form, of the natural reason.

But it may be asked, Why rely upon Christian dogma, at best a derived and secondary product, for these purposes, when the Christ, who is its root and ground, is available, — the Christ offered to us in the definiteness and positiveness of an historic person? I answer, Historically definite and positive as the Christ was, mankind, when left to themselves, have differed radically as to who He was and what He came to do; as to whether He was very God or very man, or both in one person; as to whether He came only to show us the true life and how to live it, or, besides this, to offer himself as an oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. In fact, we have the Unitarian Christ, the Socinian Christ, the humanitarian Christ, the Christ of philosophical idealism, the pantheistic Christ, and the Christ of the Nicene Symbol, — the Christ of the

Holy Catholic Church. Now, to disprove and set aside the fragmentary Christs, originating in a rationalistic handling of revelation; to hold and teach the complete Christ of the Gospels and of the Catholic Church; to present Him to men, not only in the fulness of His Divine offices, but as well in the integral force of his human example, He must be held and taught, and men must be persuaded to accept him, as he is embodied in the dogmatic consensus of the whole Body of which Himself is the ever-living Head. Individual minds are constantly shifting their point of view, and with this their reasonings and conclusions. Schools of thought are as constantly modified by fresh infusions from systems of speculation that never continue in one stay, and so with their Christology. The only rock that will hold our feet amid the unsteady waters is the unchangeable testimony of the once undivided Church, the dogma of the Catholic creed. There never has been a time when more than now the Clergy have been required to maintain this dogma with inflexible firmness. The old time-worn assaults upon it are giving way, only to make room for new ones, better adapted to the half-religious, half-speculative temper of our day. A movement is upon us, self-christened as the Theological Renaissance, of which I shall speak more fully later on, but just here only so far as my immediate purpose demands. This movement is relaxing the traditional dogma of Christ on two sides. On the one, it has cut off and thrown aside all that part of it relating to the death of Christ as (according to Catholic teaching) an expiation, a satisfaction, a pro-

pitiation, offered to God for the sins of the world; while on the other it is casting out the consentient, orthodox definitions of the two natures and one person of Christ as so many clogs and incumbrances to the fuller and freer exhibition of His human example. It holds that the living power of this example has been straitened and damaged by the sharp dogmatic lines within which tradition has forced it. It is now demanded that this pattern life shall be emancipated from the trammels of œcumenical councils and petrified creeds, and be brought forth into the common air of every-day needs and aspirations. Such is the claim, such the purpose, of this renaissance of theology, this reformation of Christianity. Now, as for this latter cleavage of the ancient Christian tradition, it can be shown, with an irresistible force of reasoning, from all the facts and issues involved, that this new movement will hinder, not help, the object it has in view; that in clipping the old creed-roots of Christ, driven deep into the Church's consciousness by the witness of the indwelling Spirit and by the experience of the Christian centuries, it will end in giving us an imperfect Christ, and so an imperfect, partially powerless, human example of Christ. It can be shown, too, by the same reasoning, that this movement fails to present an adequate motive for the incarnation of Christ, or a satisfactory view of the universality of Christ's human nature, or a true doctrine of the immanence of Christ in his Church, as the life of her life, and the life of every soul grafted into her and joined to Him by a living faith. It can be proved, moreover, that the dogmatic decisions of the

Universal Councils, so far from being an incumbering, needless surplusage, are necessary to guard the complete doctrine of the second Adam.

“ Christ must be absolutely God ; otherwise, in becoming incorporate with Him we should not really be made one with the source and end of our being. Here is the justification of the Nicene Creed. Christ must have all parts of our human nature, must be completely man ; for our whole nature needs renewing, and what shall renew it save the whole humanity of Christ ? Hence the condemnation of Apollinaris. Christ, once again, must be permanently and forever distinctly man ; for it is here and now that fallen men need from the high heaven a true humanity to be their new life. Hence the Chalcedonian decree. Christ, lastly, must be no individual man, one of many taken up into oneness with God, two persons, man and God ; otherwise the very individual personality of His human nature isolates Him from us, and keeps Him separate. But He is the very and eternal Word, the author of life to all men, the underlying sustainer of all lower personalities, who has taken a human *nature* into His own person, to quicken it with new fertilities of life, and to impart it as a common principle of restoration to the whole race of redeemed man. Here is the justification of Cyril and of Ephesus. All the decrees of the Œcumenical Councils are exempt from the charge of being pieces of unnecessary dogmatism, to any one who really appreciates what lies hid in the title of Christ, ‘ the second Adam,’ and the spiritual relation of Him, the Head, to us His members.” <sup>1</sup>

I repeat, then, that, instead of wanting less, the age really demands more of Catholic dogma touching all the essential verities of the faith ; and, besides more dogma of this sort, it demands from the Clergy, if they would show due regard to their office and influence as a teaching order, a more decisive and explicit utterance

<sup>1</sup> The Church Quarterly Review, 1883.



of it. The Church at sundry times has disintegrated or diluted her dogmatic teaching by various styles of handling the faith, as well in the formal, didactic duty of the pulpit as in her devotional and practical literature. She has had the mystical style, the sentimental style, the ethical style, the rationalistic style. Each in its own way has wrought harm; and, if history teaches any lesson with more emphasis than another, it teaches us what the harm has been.

I believe it to be historically certain that the world has been, in its religious life, profoundly and permanently changed, not by preaching "the inner light," or by preaching Christian sentiment, or by preaching morals, or by preaching the conclusions of human reason, or even by preaching the perfect example of Christ; but by preaching dogma as the underlying substance and concrete form of what is highest and best in all. Take the strongest line,—that of example. This, so far as it consists of the details of Christ's life, was not the foremost theme of the early teachers of Christianity. This was not the line they took in dealing with the Jewish or the Gentile world. Indeed, as has been truly said, "if all the personal allusions in the Epistles of the New Testament were gathered together, we should fail utterly to obtain from them a picture of the *Man*." The world was converted, not by the example of Christ's life, but by the dogmas of His Incarnation, of His essential Divinity and His essential Humanity, of His atoning death, of His all-sufficient sacrifice, of His Resurrection and Ascension, and of His second coming again to judge the quick and the

dead. In these lay the core, the substance, the prevailing power, of the first preaching of the Gospel. How strangely, how widely, how disastrously, is this lesson now forgotten! Quite another gospel is the fashion and the craving of these days; and we see how this gospel is walled in and driven back in impotence by doubt, by worldliness, by wickedness. The essayist of morals, of sentiment, of reason, is a common presence. He charms by his literary finish, by his grace of diction, and by his richness and freshness of ideas. "He never shocks or frightens men, for his gospel is that of modern culture. So it was with Menander and the genteel comedy of the Greeks and Romans, when the stage had given up all idea of reforming mankind, and confined itself to pictures of human life. Great lessons, no doubt, are to be gained by such portraiture, and by the graceful but forcible exposure of the weakness and folly of men." But such is not the work of the Clergy as leaders of earnest men, or as striving for the regeneration of individual and social life; and, when their divine function shrivels up to such a task, it becomes simply a human power wearing a heavenly mask.

II. But this brings me to another angle of thought, the second division of my subject; which will lead me to consider the duty of the Clergy, if they are to advance their influence, to fall back more definitely on the primary ends of the Gospel and on the primary motives to its propagation. Our Lord never merged the primary in the secondary aims of his work: he held all parts of it in their due place; nothing in excess, nothing in defect. What was fundamental, unchangeable,

universal, was uniformly lifted high above what was accidental, transient, and local. He was the light of the world; and He saw all things in the light which presents them as they are, not as they seem. "He always struck through the external forms of evil, to the moral root. He always passed on to the spiritual end to which external betterment points. He was no reformer playing about the outward forms of evil,—hunger, poverty, disease, oppression,—giving ease and relief for the moment. He does, indeed, deal with these; but he puts under his work a moral foundation, and crowns it with a spiritual consummation. Dealing with these, He was all the while inserting the spiritual principle which he calls *faith*, and striking at the sin which is at the root, and at the misery which is its fruitage." An incident, common in its details and surroundings, was the occasion of an act that practically illustrated the chief purpose that brought Him into the world. A man sick of the palsy was laid at His feet to be healed; and when the bystanders expected Him to say first, "Be whole of thy plague," He said first, "Thy sins be forgiven thee."<sup>1</sup> It was as though He had said, I am not unwilling to heal all manner of sickness and disease, but these in their order. Souls must be touched first, afterward bodies. I am come before all else to deal with sin and with sinners; to offer pardon and release to guilty and dying men; to publish the gift of eternal life, and to place within human reach the means of attaining it; to do what I can for the life that now is, but most of all, and before all, for the life to come.

<sup>1</sup> St. Mark ii. 3-12.

It would seem as though mankind had seen and heard enough of the gospel to save them from forgetting what it was chiefly intended to do ; and yet in every age they have forgotten it, and in this age they are especially inclined to do so. It is curious to observe among ourselves how much of the praise bestowed upon Christianity arises from its supposed great services to some of the temporal interests of society ; and, on the other hand, how much of the blame put on it is due to its alleged failure to help others. The question that presses is not what it can do for and in some distant world, but what it can do *now* and *here*. “Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto you,” does not answer it, for the simple reason that mankind want “the other things,” but not “the kingdom of God.” Two causes have helped on this feeling of late.

1. The materialistic temper of the time inclines men to value all things according to their immediate and tangible uses. Religion, to be worth much, must prove its capacity to be utilized in providing for needs of which the average of the race are most keenly conscious. The cry is for a gospel of comfort, success, material achievement ; a gospel that builds better houses, gives higher wages, grows more wheat, coins more gold, secures quicker transit for thoughts and cargoes, establishes more schools to sharpen and brace the intellect in its struggle with the forces of nature and society ; a gospel of the sinews and the brain, of knowledge, wealth, and empire. And if, among the thronging crowds, some chance to be poor and sick and forsaken, dropping off

into the bruised, bleeding, starving rubbish which modern life piles up along the highway of its progress, then it is desirable to have a gospel follow after, as the Good Samaritan, with a liberal stock of oil and wine; with Dorcas societies to clothe paupers; with refuges and reformatories, hospitals and orphanages, nurseries and dispensaries, and alms-chests; with all the various ministries of help and consolation. But as for the spiritual rock whence living waters flow; as for the spiritual manna for hungry souls; as for the spiritual home for those who account themselves pilgrims and strangers here; as for the Christ who, through His Church, must needs press incessantly certain dogmas about sin and guilt and punishment, about the saved and the lost, about faith, repentance, righteousness, and the judgment to come,—as to all these, if they may not be turned over to the visionary few who cannot abide the heat and dust of the race for the prizes of the world, then the less said about them the better.

2. The second cause I referred to has arisen from the well-meant efforts of the advocates and defenders of Christianity to commend it to popular approval on the ground of its practical beneficence. Themselves somewhat weary of reciting, and believing the world to be weary of hearing, about the external and internal evidences ordinarily adduced to establish the Divine origin of the Christian religion, they have in late years come to rely more upon the good things it has done for man on the temporal and social side of his life. It is not strange that many of us should seek to make the most of this line of argument amid the angry cross-currents

of living unbelief. "The enthusiasm of humanity" is just now one of the catch-phrases among the masses. They admire not only the fruits of this enthusiasm, but the enthusiasm itself as they understand it. What attests love to God is not of so much matter, for that is abstract, remote, unseen: the whole stress is laid on love to man, the visible and concrete expression of the moral sympathy that blossoms into helpful mercies and humanities.

Now, so entirely and beyond all parallel was Christ the exemplar of this enthusiasm, that without Him it would never have had a name among men. And so entirely, moreover, and beyond all rivalry, does the Church of Christ take the lead in this enthusiasm, that it has been quite in the line of our feeling and duty to point the gainsayer to the very sort of evidence which, from the habit of his mind, would be most likely to tell upon him. Thus we have been tempted to turn aside from the old paths of testimony, into new ones promising a shorter cut to popular conviction. And thus, too, we have been tempted to say less about what the Gospel claims *from* man, and more about what the Gospel does *for* man in this life; less about the *God-ward* and more about the *man-ward* aspects of the faith; less about eternal redemption in Christ Jesus, with its corresponding implications of human sinfulness and human helplessness, and more about the intelligence, freedom, power, and dignity of human nature. There are signs of the times which admonish us that we have already drifted perilously far on this tendency of thought and speech. It may well alarm any Minister of Christ, to

be told, that, while he is engaged in elaborate demonstrations of the temporal beneficence of Christianity, he may, by his one-sided leaning, be putting in jeopardy its most essential and distinctive message to man.

This tendency does harm in many ways. For the present I shall notice only two, and both these relate to the Priesthood. Let me preface what I have to say in both directions, by stating two or three axioms. Had there been in man no disease himself could not cure, there had been no remedy from God. If the disease goes down to the very roots of his being, sending its poison, or the fruit of it, into every moral and physical tissue, equally deep and wide and searching must be the remedy. As part of the means for bringing the remedy into contact with the disease, God instituted the Christian Priesthood. This Priesthood is of account only as the disease is real, and the remedy is real; only as the disease is hopeless apart from the remedy, and the remedy is absolutely necessary to the healing of the disease. Now, to weaken and dwarf the Priesthood, you have only to weaken and dwarf either the disease or the remedy. If you can show that the disease is not hopeless when left to itself, it follows that the remedy, however good or well-meant, is not necessary; and to the full extent that the one is not so bad and the other not so necessary as they have been made to appear, to the same extent, the need, and, if the need, the influence of the Priesthood is impaired. Now, these are all self-evident propositions,—so self-evident that I have not hesitated to call them axioms. If they are, there can be no risk of unsoundness in building upon them. Now,

I hold that the tendency already dwelt upon, to substitute the secondary for the primary motives and aims of the Gospel in the way and in the degree I have alleged, bears directly upon both man's disease and God's remedy, and through these upon the office and work of the Christian Ministry.

First, let us examine its view of the disease. It is doubtful what sin is, and it is doubtful what may be its remote consequences in the way of judgment and penalty. It is certain, however, that it hinders, disturbs, and embitters human life. It is certain that its near consequences are painful and destructive, and that Christianity, so far as it helps us to cope with them and with their uncertain cause in the soul, is a very needful auxiliary. But, according to the line of battle here drawn up, our Lord blundered in striking at the sin before he struck at the palsy of the sick man. What He did, and what the disciples of this other gospel would have asked Him to do, throw into the sharpest outline His estimate of sin, as compared with the estimate of all, of every age, who have been of this way of thinking. He, and the inspired men that spoke in His name, exhausted the energy and emphasis of language in describing it. No imagery was too intense or too dreadful to deepen the sense of its power and guilt in the conscience and the imagination. It is alienation from God, the Giver of life; it is the corruption of the life God gave; it is bondage, darkness, death. The blight and the mildew are as nothing beside its power to curse and destroy. It kills body and soul; it is war within and misery without; it is a fearful look-



ing-for of fiery indignation and wrath. None other than the Son of God can bring deliverance to its captives, or sight to those whom it has made blind, or light to its darkness, or healing to its curse, or life to its dead. The water of regeneration cleanses, the blood of a Divine sacrifice washes, the fire of infinite love purifies, the very Judge of heaven and earth takes His throne, with ten thousand of His angels marshalled around Him, to pronounce its final doom. Now, all these references to sin may be thinned away into exaggerated metaphors of the Oriental mind, or resolved into so many phases of a morbid anatomy of the darker facts of life. Treat them as we may, they are undeniably part and parcel of our Lord's conception of sin, or, rather, of His mode of conveying that conception to us. And we may well suppose that this, like other Divine conceptions, lost, not gained, in intensity and depth by putting on the limitations of human language. While true, absolutely true to the thing itself,—the moral disease of man,—it magnified the remedy both as to its efficacy and its necessity, and with these magnified the means, the Priesthood among them, for carrying the remedy into effect.

On the other hand, compare with this the conceptions of sin, and of the instrumentalities (notably the Priesthood) appointed to represent the Christ in dealing with it, embodied in all secondary-motive theories of Christianity. There is the evolution conception, that the miseries of sin are only the growing-pains of life as it breaks through the limitations imposed upon it by imperfect development; and that what we call sin is in

itself only another name for such development. Next, there is the notion which has survived the mass of Platonic speculation, and continued to hold sway over minds that by intellectual instinct are inclined to trace the ills of life to defects of knowledge rather than defects of will and moral sense,—the notion that sin is the child of ignorance, and consequently that man is a sinner only so far as he fails to know the truth. Finally, we have the theory, so much in favor with minds of a pantheistic turn, that evil is only good in the making; that things are good or evil, as they chance to be related to one another and to ourselves; that the distinctions between them are unreal and fugitive; and that our own liberty of choosing the one rather than the other is at bottom a delusion,—a drop of water shut up within walls of crystal, moving, but powerless to get over them. For sin thus conceived,—in the first and last of these notions, emptied of its guilt by first emptying the soul of its responsibility under the implications of fatalism and a confused whirl and jumble of all being; in the second, attenuated into a question of knowing or not knowing what is truest and best,—for sin thus conceived, surely Heaven need not have stirred itself to find a remedy. The cross, the blood, the agony, the darkness of Calvary, were a superfluous tragedy, and the Church of God, its Word, its Sacraments, and its Priesthood, are only logically and consistently treated, when they are declared non-essential to the salvation of man, and transient adjuncts to the mechanism of human progress. Let the Clergy of to-day beware how they borrow “jewels of thought” from

this quarter, or transplant from it into their own teaching what much of our literature for the people parades as so many precious mosaics of philosophical breadth and intelligence. Friendship with all these notions of moral evil is enmity with God, and in the end treason to the Gospel of His Eternal Son.

Thus the Gospel as a remedy, with all its affiliated agencies, the Priesthood included, is weakened and dwarfed by shallow notions of sin, the moral disease of humanity. A like result may be worked out, starting from the other side, and beginning with the remedy as an objective reality. This can and will be divided and impaired, and so with all that is bound up with it, just so far as, in teaching it, we substitute its secondary ends and motives for its primary; its variable and accidental aims, for those which are immutable and universal; what it may and can and ought to do for the life that now is, for what it must do before all else for the life to come; individual amelioration, for individual regeneration; temporal beneficence, social blessings, for the law of righteousness that speaks for a holy God, for the everlasting sacrifice that taketh away the sins of the world, and for a spiritual salvation of man that embraces eternity. After an earnest and prolonged study of the current on which our time is moving, I am more and more persuaded that it is impossible to emphasize too strongly the duty and the danger of the Christian Ministry touching these issues. If it would be a power more than it is now, here it must concentrate its fire, here it must focalize its gifts and energies. If it would have what it offers to men, itself with the rest, more

profoundly esteemed, it must, rising for the time above all lower things belonging to the category of ecclesiastical organization and machinery, above varying but allowable schools of religious thought regarded as occasions of controversy, address itself to the task of inculcating a Gospel whose burden is the story of Christ crucified; of the life hidden with Him in God; of the Holy Ghost as the Giver of this life; of the Church as its home and guide; of the Sacraments, the one as its initial channel and formal seal, the other as its perpetual food; of the Priesthood as in a vital and essential sense the ordained representative of Christ's everlasting mediation between God and man. Nay, more: it must not only deliver such a Gospel, but it must see that it is duly formulated, in harmony with the processes of our best living thought, into a theology which shall make it systematic, concrete, portable for the practical uses of instruction and discipline. Let it understand, the sooner the better, that its official claims will be respected, that its pulpits will kindle with light and throb with power, that its altars will be thronged, and its sanctuaries vocal in every part with praise and adoration, only as it shall fall back for its themes and its authority on the original and fundamental ends and motives of Christ's coming into the world; dealing with sin in the deep, searching, awful way that He dealt with it; causing men to feel, as with a burning thirst, the need of *rescue*, by first causing them to feel the curse that blights, the poison that corrupts, the death that threatens them.

## LECTURE XI.

### THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY AND "THE NEW THEOLOGY."

I now propose to examine "the New Theology" so far as to ascertain what helps, if any, it offers toward lifting the Ministry from its present alleged low estate to a higher plane of influence. It is claimed that the fresher lines of thought on the problems of religion, together with all the recent side-lights thrown upon them by the modern mind, have their common centre in this "New Theology." Its advocates seem to be sanguine in their conviction that the Ministry would enter upon a new era of power and usefulness if it would ascend or descend, as the case may be, to their platform. It has been their mission, we are told, to present to this age the old faith in a new light; and they claim to have done their work so well that Christianity will henceforth be relieved of many inherited obstructions to its growth.

In my second lecture I noted, at some length, several of the characteristic features of this theology, and traced it back to its English founder, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and to its ablest English expounder, F. D. Maurice. For our present purpose, we are fortunate in having,

beside those abroad, several distinguished authorities at home, whose erudition and ability entitle them to the highest respect.<sup>1</sup>

The expounders of the New Theology claim, that, in its underlying principles, it is a "Renaissance" of the earlier Greek theology, which in their judgment was not only older, but "more mature and refined in the expression of its thought, and more true to the idea of Christianity as presented in the New Testament," than the theology of the West as formulated by St. Augustine. The fundamental principles of "the Renaissance" are supposed to embody the characteristic differences between the two theologies of the East and of the West. These differences, it is said, turned upon the mode of God's presence in the world and in the Church, and upon the condition of man as requiring the intervention of a supernatural redemption.<sup>2</sup> Starting from these two points, the two theologies diverged throughout their entire course. Claiming to follow the early Greek theology, "the Renaissance" holds that God in Christ is immanent in humanity as a continuous, living process, as "a Divine and ever-present teacher speaking to men made in the Divine image and constituted for the truth; while reason, conscience, and experience were the ordained and competently endowed recipients

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Elisha Mulford, LL.D., *The Republic of God*; Rev. Newman Smyth, D.D., *Old Faiths in New Lights*, etc.; Rev. Theodore T. Munger, D.D., *The Freedom of Faith*, etc.; Rev. Professor Allen, D.D., *The Theological Renaissance*, etc.; Hon. and Rev. W. H. Fremantle, Canon of Canterbury, *The Gospel of the Secular Life*.

<sup>2</sup> *The Theological Renaissance of the Nineteenth Century*: Professor A. V. G. Allen, D.D.

of the message." This more intimate and omnipresent immanence of God is constantly set forth as the governing idea of the New Theology. Indeed, one of its expounders has, from this standpoint, undertaken to re-write the history of theology, considering it alone as quite sufficient to account for nearly all the departures, in the course of the Christian centuries, from pure and primitive Christianity.

The early Latin theology, as formulated by Tertullian, Cyprian, and Augustine, is charged not only with gross anthropomorphism in its conception of Deity, — a fault from which, it is said, the Greek ideal was exempt, — but with conceiving of God as extra-mundane and far off from man, communicating with the world and the Church only through agencies of formal and arbitrary appointment, and setting forth a Christ who, so far from being ever present to guide the education of human souls, "left behind only a last will and testament, of which the Episcopate was the executor and administrator." Thus the theology of the West, we are told, came to regard revelation as a mechanical method of Divine communication, and to treat it as a deposit embodied in a rule of faith whose integrity was assured by the Church's witness. Thus, too, we are told, Latin thought changed the Sacraments, from symbols of a universal Divine process, into rites possessed of a magical character, and of exclusive power to convey God's grace to men. By the same cause, moreover, it is affirmed that the New-Testament doctrine of eternal life was so disturbed and corrupted that it ceased to be "an ethical and spiritual relationship with God," and became

a synonyme "for endless duration of existence in a state of bliss or in a state of misery." It is admitted, that, after the middle of the fifth century, Eastern theology fell away from its first estate, under the influence of Neo-Platonism and some Gnostic systems of theosophy.

Now, without attempting any detailed argument on the subject (our space does not allow it), we affirm, as the result of our reading and inquiry, that there was no root difference between the early Greeks and Latins in their conception of the Divine immanence. With the plain and emphatic teachings of Holy Scripture on the subject equally open to both, it is most unlikely that any such radical difference should have been developed; and certainly there is no satisfactory evidence that it was. Both held and taught substantially the same truth; the Greeks, because of their peculiar intellectual environment, only more strongly and fully. They differed, not as to the freeness and efficacy of God's grace, only another name for his supernatural immanence, but as to the character and extent of the means ordained of God for dispensing it to man; the Greeks dwelling more upon the grace itself, the Latins accepting the grace as a fact beyond dispute, and insisting more upon the means by which it is made operative, because these were constantly open to dispute, to perversion, and neglect. "The Renaissance" is not as sound on this very fundamental question as the early Greek thought which it professes to follow. If the early Greek could not, in spite of its struggles, altogether emancipate itself from the philosophical drift of its day, this has yielded itself without a struggle to Hegelian



speculation on the universe and its immanent Deity. Inspired by this school of speculative thought, rather than by the teaching of the New Testament or of the sub-apostolic age, it makes the historic Church one thing and the Body of Christ another; in fact, knows no Church of Christ in history, save the fluctuating organization evolved by the Christ-idea out of the ever-changing life of the ages. In keeping with this view of the Church is its view of the Holy Scriptures and of the Sacraments, and, indeed, of all kindred means of grace of Divine appointment. In fact, so radical and sweeping is its doctrine of God's immanence in the Church and the individual soul, as well as in the processes of nature and of history (the revival of which doctrine in modern theology it asserts as its great distinction), that the agencies instituted by Christ to show forth and give effect to His mediatorial work seem to be quite emptied of their virtue, and classed with the superfluous and impertinent mediation contrivances which had their origin in the Neo-Platonic and Gnostic heathenism of the fifth century,—a type of heathenism that "the Renaissance" declares became, under the disguise of a Christian dress, the actual basis, for many centuries after, of Christian thought in all parts of the Church. The inevitable logical outcome of this teaching, should it find any considerable currency, will be another and intenser phase of mysticism in theology and of Quakerism in practical religion. If this be so, the bearing of "the Renaissance" on the authority and work of the Christian Priesthood is too evident for comment.

Again: professing to move in the track of the early

thought of the East, the "Renaissance" view of human nature is quite as much open to doubt and suspicion as its view of the Church, the Sacraments, the Priesthood, etc. When it tells us that St. Augustine's dark and tragic thinking on man was suggested by the dissolving fabric of social and political life in his day, and the terrible disorder consequent upon it; when it treats his doctrine of original sin as a sort of spectral horror thrown off by a mighty genius in a nightmare of logical compulsion and ethical despair, the wiser and calmer theologians of the East meanwhile, it is said, "protesting against its dishonor to God and injustice to man,"—our curiosity, rather than our fear, is excited as to the *terminus ad quem* of such criticism on the founder of the theology of the West. So far as we can see, it has more to say of God's image in man, than of the effect upon that image produced by the fall; of man's capacity for righteousness, than of his depravity and corruption; of his inherent ability to rise from his natural estate, than of supernatural grace to enable him to do so. As might be expected, its profound dissent from the Augustinian doctrine of man carries it so far in the opposite direction, that only a shadowy line seems, at some points, to divide it from the well-known teaching of Pelagius. If it was the fault of St. Augustine that he built up theology too much on absolute decrees and original sin, it is not less the fault of this "new departure" that it builds on a conception of God's immanence that has in it a decidedly pantheistic flavor, and on a conception of man that makes more of his perfectibility than of his sinfulness, more of his union with God as a

fact already accomplished by the Incarnation of Christ, than of his alienation from God as a fact of experience generally operative in spite of the new life offered through the Incarnation. If we have not mistaken the New Theology in its doctrine of human nature, this side of it will be no more favorable than that already commented upon, to the deeper work and higher claims of the Ministry. It is its often-expressed wish, to be regarded, not as seeking to introduce any novelty into the domain of living theological thought, but as aiming to revive what was most healthy and true in the oldest Christian thinking of the East. Freely as it may have ranged over, carefully as it may have studied that thinking, what it has actually given us is mostly traceable to two sources, the mere naming of which will go far toward determining the character of the gift. I refer to the school of Alexandria as, for our present purpose, chiefly represented by Clement, the disciple of Pantænus, the first catechist of that school of whom we have any knowledge; and the school of Antioch, the lineal offshoot of that of Alexandria, as represented by its greatest light, Theodore of Mopsuestia. It seems to have been the mission — certainly it was the aim — of Clement, in the birthplace of Christian theology, to show to the Greeks, the foremost seekers after wisdom, that Christianity was not to be despised as a blind faith that shunned the light of reason, but, on the contrary, that it rested on a basis, and could be made to assume a form, capable of scientific exposition; that, as the highest and truest knowledge, it rightfully claimed the subordination to itself of all other knowledge; that

it fulfilled, enlarged, and harmonized into a nobler unity, whatever was true in all the forms of the Gentile or heathen gnosis. With him, indeed, the true gnosis fused into one the light of revelation and the light of reason, and issued, as its final fruit, in a spiritual, Divine life for the soul, a life such as the mystic in every age opposes, as the true, inward Christianity, to a mere historical faith. He aimed to make knowing and living one process, science and faith interfluent aspects of the same reality. To incorporate in a rationally satisfactory shape the Divine principle of life imparted by Christianity, he sought to throw around it the whole wealth of human culture. His thought working for this end was, as we now see it, a marvel of energy and grasp and versatility. It has never failed, and it never will fail, to attract, and largely to dominate, minds hungering and thirsting after the same result at which he aimed: therefore it is all the more needful that we keep distinctly before us those characteristics of it that encourage a too liberal infusion of the purely intellectual element into expositions of the faith once delivered.

As it was Clement's avowed purpose to conciliate philosophy in the interest of religion, he did not hesitate to avail himself with the utmost freedom of the current philosophical tools of his day. The misfortune was, that he was not always their master, but sometimes their servant. While far from intending to be a rationalist in the modern sense, he not seldom dipped his logic in the many-colored dyes of rationalism. While seeking to place the contents of faith only in the clear light of consciousness, and to develop the unity of the theoreti

cal and practical, the objective and subjective elements of Christianity, he, in adopting a form for the expression of his meaning supplied by the Neo-Platonic doctrine concerning the identity of subject and object, of the *νοοῦν* and the *νοητόν*, was carried perilously far out on the sea of speculation, and merged the authority of the Divine *λογος* too much in that of Gentile thought. Confident as he was of the completeness and sufficiency of the doctrine of our Saviour as the power and wisdom of God, he could not refrain from making that doctrine work in the harness and accept the trammels of Grecian philosophy. The ultimate outcome of this style of handling truth was a conception of Christian doctrine, not as a *παράδοσις*, a transmitted, unchanging deposit, but as a developing process, going forth from the Christian consciousness, and exhibiting itself, with more or less purity, in all forms within and without the Church. Practically this view, when pushed to its logical conclusion, enthroned reason above revelation as the test and measure of truth,—substantially the very thing done by “the Renaissance” in its attempted reconstruction of theology in order to put it *en rapport* with modern thought. Thus it will be found that this new Christian gnosis not merely reproduces, but, under the lead of Hegelian philosophy, expands and intensifies the rationalistic tendency of the old Alexandrian gnosis.

But apparently the “Renaissance” theology has drawn more freely upon the school of Antioch than upon that of Alexandria. Of the two schools, that of Antioch was the bolder, more energetic, and versatile in general intellectual activity, and especially in Biblical

and theological studies, as well as in handling the issues raised between the philosophy and Christianity of that day. The Alexandrian school stood alone in Egypt: it was the sole centre of learning and thought for the whole patriarchate. Authority measurably held in check the spirit of inquiry and criticism when inclined to extravagance. But Syria and Asia Minor abounded in populous and luxurious cities, each with its own schools for the cultivation of Greek letters and art, and many of them with their own schools of sacred learning, working on quite independently of any common bond of authority. Whatever the cause, it is certain that speculations for which Origen was banished from Alexandria were taken up and pursued with impunity in many of the schools of Syria and Asia Minor.<sup>1</sup> By the middle of the third century, the school of Antioch had attained a commanding celebrity, and in the person of Theodore of Mopsuestia produced a scholar, critic, and thinker whose influence over Christendom for centuries was second only to that of Origen and Augustine. The evidences of this influence are, we think, plainly discernible in the New Theology of to-day. Whatever this theology may think of other distinguished names on the roll of the early Greek theology with which it claims to be in such cordial sympathy, or however it may have consulted their writings, it can scarcely be doubted that the foremost name among them all has excited its warmest admiration, and left upon it the profoundest impression. And, what is very significant, the fact that this leader of the Antiochene school, with

<sup>1</sup> Newman's Arians of the Fourth Century, *passim*.

his writings, was condemned by the fifth Œcumenical Council, and the closely related fact that the books of this chief doctor of Antioch, with those of his master Diodorus, translated into Syriac and into Persian, were, beyond all else, the immediate instruments of the formation of the great Nestorian school and Church in farther Asia, do not seem to have operated to his prejudice with the New Theology.

It is of moment to recall in this connection some of the characteristic teachings of this famous doctor. In Biblical interpretation he anticipated the free handling of the Holy Scriptures by the "Higher Criticism" of our day. He diluted inspiration to such a degree as to make it easy to include, in the same catalogue with the writers of the Old and New Testaments, the most eminent writers of Pagan antiquity. He maintained that the real sense of the Scriptures was to be determined, not by the scope of a Divine Intelligence, but by what was in the minds of the human organs of inspiration. Not content with discarding the allegorizing method of the school of Origen, he insisted absolutely upon the literal, one-sense meaning of the sacred text. He held that sacred and secular compositions were amenable to the same rules of criticism. "Insisting that the Canticles must be interpreted literally, he advocated the exclusion of the book from the Canon. He treated the Book of Job as a Gentile drama, and threw out the Books of Chronicles and Ezra, also the Epistle of St. James, though it was contained in the Peschito Version of his Church. He limited the Messianic Psalms to four, denying that the twenty-second and sixty-ninth

applied to Christ. St. Thomas's words, 'My Lord and my God!' were only a joyful exclamation; and our Lord's 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost,' simply a foreshadowing of the day of Pentecost." He explained the doctrine of original sin very much as a modern free-thinker would, and openly denied the doctrine of everlasting punishment. In determining the drift of Syrian theology, he overmastered the sounder thought of St. Cyril, St. Chrysostom, and Theodoret, and, by his learning and logical power, obtained a wide acceptance for errors of which Paul of Samosata had been the forerunner; while from his teaching on the Incarnation was derived the germ of the Nestorian heresy, which separated the Divine Person of Christ from His manhood.

Precisely how much of the formal teaching of the school of Antioch, of which Theodore of Mopsuestia was the acknowledged head, "the Renaissance" has imported into its theology, it may be difficult to tell. It is enough for our purpose, that we find abundant evidence of a strong family likeness between them, in the spirit in which the deepest problems of theology are handled, and in the principles which are to govern the new interpretation of the Christian faith now deemed inevitable, and for the furtherance of which this new school claims to have a special mission. History recounts the scars inflicted upon the Church some fifteen centuries ago, by its battles with this spirit and with these principles; and it seems now as though history were soon to repeat itself on the same lines, in the battles to be fought and the scars to be borne by the



Church of the nineteenth century. However this may be, it is quite certain that the Christian Priesthood of our time is not likely to be stimulated to greater sacrifices, or to be encouraged to nobler ventures for Christ, by a larger infusion into the Gospel it preaches, and into the institutions it administers, of the modern type of that old Greek wisdom which both in Alexandria and Antioch first beguiled, then compromised, and finally corrupted the religion of the Cross.

But from this general view let me proceed to some particulars illustrative of the temper and attitude of the New Theology as bearing upon the theme of these lectures. The New Theology professes to attach great value to the traditional consensus of Christian judgment on all matters of faith. Were this so, we might hope to derive some benefit from it; for it would go far toward giving us the rare, and, in the opinion of some, impossible alliance of energetic and enterprising nineteenth-century thought with Catholic tradition. But this profession, when examined, turns out to be quite meaningless. The consensus is regarded simply as an aggregation of opinions, to be respected as many other things are that have outlived a long series of ages, but with no authority save what may arise from the favorable verdicts of individual thinkers. That there is no thought of accepting it as a formative or guiding principle, is evident from the fact that this theology claims, as one of its distinguishing notes, to have introduced into all religious inquiry a wider and freer use of reason, understanding by reason the whole moral as well as intellectual nature of man; so that,

however promising the start, we may in the end see repeated the familiar license of rationalism, sobered down somewhat by a more cultivated reverence for the old learning, and a more respectful handling of Catholic consent. Its attitude comes out more clearly in its view of the general relation of reason to revelation, and of the function of reason as the interpreter of revelation. It tells us that the only consensus of any use or authority is that which can be shown to exist between revelation and the normal action of human nature. The Scriptures are not the revelation of God, but the history of such a revelation, — a history with a core of truth hedged about with accidental surplusage, a mass of anthropomorphic accretions; and it is the office of reason to disentangle the one from the other. This history, moreover, is an evolution, a development of the higher from the lower, of ethical ripeness from ethical crudity, of race-maturity from race-infancy, of civilization from barbarism, of Christianity from Judaism; and it is the prerogative of reason to determine the successive stages of this evolution, and the meaning of each, and this in such a sense as logically to justify the inference that the whole process is simply a subjective, self-ordered development of humanity, and in no authoritative, exclusive sense originated, guided, and consummated by an external Divine Will — even God Himself. In other words, revelation is reason evolving itself under the conditions of history. God is in the process only as He is in reason, and the contents of revelation are only the original and inherent contents of reason. Thus it follows that the only authority which obliges any man

to accept revelation is not an authority inherent in the revelation, but the authority of reason to adjudge the reasonableness of the revelation. The only binding consensus, therefore, is the consensus of reason with itself; or, to attenuate still further the obligation of belief, of the individual reason with collective reason as it has spoken in history. Quite consistently, therefore, the New Theology curtly dismisses all hitherto accepted methods of interpreting the Scriptures, and, in spite of its sympathy with the old Greek thought, rejects the allegorical and mystical methods as visionary and foolish, and holds up to ridicule the "literal-meaning" method as dry and mechanical, besides being overladen with the superstitious rubbish of the "verbal-inspiration" theory. According to its dictum, all rational interpretation resolves itself into the question, How much is shell, and how much is kernel? When this "Renaissance," therefore, offers to pour new blood into the so-called shrunken arteries of our Ministry, let us understand its source and quality. It is the oft-cited story over again of "fearing the Greeks even when bearing gifts."

Enough, perhaps, has been said to show, that, in the effort to secure to the Ministry a fresh lease of power at this time, little real help is to be looked for in this direction. And yet we are so persistently admonished by what passes for the higher thought and literature of the day, that, unless we can find it here, we can find it nowhere, it may be well to follow the New Theology somewhat farther. On the theistic side, and as against all phases of scientific materialism, the New Theology is

outspoken and emphatic. The notion of the Absolute Being as unknown and unknowable, as without personality, or, if with it, existing possibly apart from conscious relations to the human soul; the notion of law without a Lawgiver, of creation without a Creator, of matter as self-originated and self-moved, of mind as a sublimated gradation of matter, and the product of organization, of the free will of man as only one form of the by-play of necessity, of human society and human history as fast-bound in the meshes of immutable and universal law, of physical evolution, though accepted as the probable solution of the world's growth, without an immanent God to begin and fashion it, of all life as a game of battledoor and shuttlecock between opposing necessities, — against all these and kindred dogmas of materialism, it bears witness with hot energy and disdainful indignation. And, further, it may be justly said that it has sifted and discussed and refuted these aspects of modern thought with a fulness and versatility of literary power worthy of all admiration. It may have said nothing on this subject not elsewhere said, and well said, by Christian thinkers of the traditional school; but certainly it has given its testimony in a style so fresh and stimulating that no live Ministry can help being profited by it. Would that it had done for us in the sphere of revealed religion what it has done in the sphere of natural religion!

Coming back to the former, I would ask you to note its deliverance on the organic life, or, to use its own favorite phrase, on the solidarity of the race. Its view is captivating because of its comprehensiveness, but it

is not true to the facts as Catholic theology understands them. It teaches not only a natural solidarity of mankind, — a solidarity growing out of the same physical, mental, and moral constitution, out of the same origin and blood, the same common trend, — but a supernatural solidarity; as though redemption were not only an accomplished fact, and either actually offered or in the way of being offered to all men, but as though it had already taken effect upon all men, were now their possession as well as their promised inheritance, and in moving a part had moved also the whole race, and this quite independently of the question whether or no the proper fruits of this moving, this new solidarity, be apparent in external life. If I have correctly stated the idea, it would seem to involve the further idea that the spiritual and supernatural unity of the race, which our Lord came to re-create by imparting to men His life, was accomplished by the fact of His coming, or by the fact of His publishing the conditions on which His life could enter into the life of humanity; without regard to the actual gathering of men through the one Baptism into His Body, the Church, whose unity or solidarity is the only supernatural one represented by the Gospel as possible under the exercise of its power. It is right in protesting, and it has our hearty sympathy in doing so, against the theory that holds to "an absolute solidarity of evil, relieved only by a doctrine of election of individuals;" that the world is not saved as well as a fallen world; that Christ is less to it than Adam; that "the links that bind the race to evil are not correlated by links equally strong binding it to righteousness;" that

the redemptive and delivering forces have not a sweep corresponding with the forces that work for the bondage of humanity; that the family, society, the nation, the fields of honest labor whether of mind or body, are outside the operation of the Spirit of God. The fault is, that it pushes the asserted solidarity of the race, in good as well as evil, so far that it gives us a notion of imputed supernatural unity which seems very like another form of the old notion of imputed righteousness. The extreme form of the foregoing protest is due to a re-action from New-England Calvinism, and to a too-stimulating draught of "the enthusiasm of humanity." Catholic theology, true to the Gospel, and to the constitution and commission of the Church, has always declared their field to be no narrower than the world; and that the family, the nation, society with all its normal interests, are divine, not only because ordained of God, but as well because God works in and through them by His Spirit, who in turn works by the Church, constituted of God to be the organ of all redemptive forces. In taking human nature upon Himself, Christ changed a lost into a saved race in respect of the opportunity, the privilege, the capacity, the power, and the means of salvation. In all these regards, humanity as a whole was born again, and the sweep of redemptive virtue was universal; but absolutely, in fact and deed, eternal life is the property of the race only as its individual members, in the exercise of their moral liberty, and apart from all arbitrary election, accept it on conditions annexed to the gift by Christ Himself. Ideally, potentially, the Church, which is His Body, includes all men, as it was

made for all men, and strives to become that for which it was made. Actually, historically, it is bounded by its membership, and is the Church of the race only so far as the race has entered it. And thus, as the new supernatural unity or solidarity of grace can be predicated only of Christ's Body, so it can be predicated of the race only to the extent that the race in its individual parts has been re-created by the life of Christ, and so joined unto His Body. This notion of the New Theology seems to be little more than unregenerate naturalism, wearing the livery and claiming the inheritance of a supernatural regeneration. In effect, by transferring from the Church to humanity at large the solidarity which is and must be the fruit of an appropriated, not a merely purchased or proffered redemption, it strips the Church of its *raison d'être*; reduces it to an aggregation of voluntary societies, representing only in a fragmentary way the unity of a redeemed race, no longer the equivalent of the unity of Christ's Body; and forces into the same degradation the Sacraments, the Worship, and the Priesthood of Christianity. Certainly no help can come to the Ministry from a view that thus radically cuts the ground from under its feet.

But in adverting to this aspect of the New Theology, I have stated the basis in philosophy and theology on which it rests its much-vaunted "Gospel of the secular life."<sup>1</sup> This opens up too wide a field of discussion to be compassed here. I shall traverse only such parts of it as have a bearing upon my subject. No one who has watched the tendencies of the more advanced thought

<sup>1</sup> Canon Fremantle's Sermons (1883).

of the day can have failed to observe the coincidence between the gradual narrowing and occasional disappearance of the distinctions which mark off the natural from the supernatural, and the like process in the distinctions which separate the secular from the sacred. The two processes have gone on *pari passu*, and seem to stand toward one another in the relation of cause and effect. As we are told in the one case that the distinctions have no ground in reason or in the world's real order, so we are told in the other that they are not warranted by the Hebrew or the Christian Scriptures or by man's nature, and that no good end is served by retaining them. It is argued that their disappearance from our current thought and language would be followed by certain happy results; e.g., spiritual processes affecting the individual soul in its relations to the higher life would assume a moral in place of a magical character; faith definitions would be so modified and enlarged, and theology generally so broadened, as to take in the whole of human life and the whole of the world's knowledge; and thus the sympathies of religious thought would be as wide and elastic as those of literature, which, because it has been free to range over both, has stimulated if it has not directed the present revolt against modern theology. The argument is plausible, and the results to which it points might follow in the way it describes, if the way itself were possible without a radical change in the world regarded as representing the natural and secular, and in Christianity regarded as representing the supernatural and sacred. If the lines between the secular and



the sacred are to be treated as unreal, either the world must be raised to the plane of Christianity, or Christianity must be depressed to the plane of the world. If any thing be clear, it is the ground taken on this issue by the Scriptures and by the moral intelligence of man. Both by uniform implication and by explicit statement, the Scriptures declare the world and the Church of God to be moving on radically different planes of motive, and to represent radically different sets of forces; while men themselves, acting from instinct as well as educated reason, have in all the Christian centuries recognized this difference in their ordinary thinking and in their ordinary language. When I speak of the world in this connection, I mean the world as we see it; the world as it is, with its natural laws and processes working in the family, the nation, society at large, and in the necessary industries and callings of men; and the world in its wickedness, disorder, and moral ruin.

Again: as part of the general plea for the further obliteration of the lines between the sacred and secular, it is said that the hitherto over-strained emphasis put upon these lines has tended to fasten upon the common mind the notion that God reveals Himself, and that His Spirit works, in ways helpful to man, only within the limits and under the conditions of a formally established covenant, of which the Scriptures, the Sacraments, the Priesthood, the Church, are the witness and mouth-piece; whereas, in fact, God reveals Himself, and His Spirit operates, with equal fulness and power, outside any special covenant or dispensation, in

the on-goings of all life and intelligence, in the affairs of human society, and in all history ; guiding, helping, blessing man, whether within or without covenants and dispensations : in the one case, perhaps, by formal promise, but in any event in the other by the law of His infinite love, which embraces alike all being as the atmosphere embraces the earth. If this be true now, it has always been true ; and, if it has always been true, it was true of the ages of the world more immediately preceding the advent of Christ, in whom a radically new order of intervention in the affairs of the world was revealed. God was divinely, supernaturally present and operative in those ages, no doubt, in the broadest sense ; but that presence, that operation, whatever it was, so far from superseding the necessity of the profounder presence, the mightier operation of God through a covenant of His own making with man, through an Incarnation in which very God became very man, through a Church which was to publish that covenant, and to diffuse the new life springing from that Incarnation,—so far from the wider antecedent presence of God in all life taking the place of or diminishing the necessity for the latter, it was in reality the preparation for it. The two modes of Divine operation are not incompatible, but mutually complementary. In virtue of the one, the world's order did not cease to be what it had been, a secular order ; in virtue of the other, a new order was introduced, which, because it was not of the world, but a gift, a force from without, whose first actual contact with man and history was the transcendent miracle of the ages, has been named, by

a necessity of human thought and human language, the sacred order,—the order of redemption by the Incarnation of the Son of God; of sanctification by the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life; of sacramental as well as vital union with God by the Son, through the Spirit, in the Church; and of life eternal as the result of all these. By the secular, then, we understand the world with God in it as a governing Providence, immanent in all its processes, but apart from the redeeming Christ, apart from organized Christianity, apart from the Divine Body constituted and ordained by Himself to be His chosen instrument for making Himself known unto men. By the sacred we understand, not merely what is Divine and supernatural,—for these, as we have seen, have entered, after a certain manner, into the secular order,—but what relates to God's covenant with man in Christ, of which covenant the Holy Scriptures are the record, and the living Church is the witness, and, because related to this covenant, intended before all else to show forth the holiness of God as the crown of His attributes, and to promote holiness in man as the final fruit of his redemption. The secular may exhibit God's power, justice, love, beneficence; but the sacred alone can exhibit God's holiness. Times, places, things, ministries, lives, characters, are by God Himself declared sacred, set apart, devoted, to the extent that they serve holy uses and holy ends. It is not the orderly, or the beautiful, or the useful, or even the right or the true, that transmutes the common into the sacred, but the end and the use ultimate with God, and by Him treated as the crown of perfection to all being,—the holy.

The issue here raised by the New Theology is really none other than the issue between nature and grace; an issue as old as Christianity itself, or rather as old as the attempts of human reason to dovetail into its own processes whatever in Christianity claims to be an immediate and distinctive revelation from God. If we go back to the early days of the theologies of the East and the West, Alexandria and North Africa, we find that the former was inclined to enlarge the idea of inspiration so that it would apply to all, in every age and every land, who had rendered important service to the cause of truth; while the latter was quite as decidedly inclined to limit the idea to those through whom God had spoken in the order of grace. The two did not antagonize. The East, in taking the broader view, held, with the West, that God had spoken in the Holy Scriptures as He had not elsewhere, in respect both to the quality and the degree of the knowledge communicated. The West, in insisting upon certain limitations of the idea, held, with the East, that there was a sense in which the Divine Spirit had wrought in the minds of the leaders of the old humanity. Their differences were reconciled in a higher unity. The attempt of the New Theology to put the ancient East and the ancient West at variance on this point is futile. Both were true to a common tradition as to the fundamental distinction between nature and grace: only the East, because of its environments, went to the farthest verge of concession to the demands of reason; while the West, differently situated as to external surroundings and as to intellectual temperament, shaped its course more exclusively within

the lines of grace. Tendencies difficult of reconciliation then have continued so ever since. To-day we are familiar with the school—nay, we are now dealing with it—that finds it easy to so widen out the Divine gift of inspiration as to include in the same category with Christ, Plato and Socrates, Buddha and Zoroaster; while to the general feeling of Christians it is only less than profanity to regard the so-called ethnic but really pagan religions as proceeding from God. Christianity itself is the only successful mediator between these opposing camps. It cannot explain or defend its *raison d'être* without making room for and adjusting the two economies,—the one, that of the Spirit proceeding from the Father; the other, that of the Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son. In the order of nature, God as the Father of all is immanent in all. Whatever lives, lives in and through His life. Science is at its highest and best when it presents nature to us by demonstration and illustration as a living organism. The old Greek thought proclaimed the idea without the proof: the newest modern thought gives us both. Of this organism, man himself being the crowning because the conscious, rational part, God is the vital principle, the all-governing and sustaining force. The Holy Ghost as the Spirit of God is this principle, this force. The Holy Ghost is in all spheres, all grades of life, the Lord and Giver of life, as well to matter and intellect as to spirit. If poets, philosophers, sages, great moral teachers in any age, have spoken well and wisely of the deep things of God and of humanity, they have spoken as the Spirit of God has given them utterance. But

this Eternal Spirit, this Lord and Giver of life, has His procession from the Son as well as from the Father: and so He works after one sort in nature, and after another in grace; after one sort upon the old and fallen life of the first Adam, after another upon the new and risen life of the second Adam. The afflatus of the Spirit — the inspiring, energizing impulse communicated to man by Him on the plane of nature — within a world dead in trespasses and sins, and not yet stirred by a throb of redemptive power, differs from what He does in and for man as the subject of that redemptive power, precisely as God the creator, the governor, and sustainer of all, differs from God manifest in the flesh, — God in Christ unveiling the hidden glory of His being, and moving as redeemer and reconciler upon humanity in its sin, alienation, and wretchedness. The life dispensed by God in Christ is said to be the new life, because it is the fruit of a new moral creation. The source of this new creation is the Eternal Son of God, in whom the two natures, Divine and human, were forever united. And it was the miracle of Pentecost, that He sent the Holy Ghost to communicate the new life springing from this new creation, to a race spiritually dead. The Christ, the author of the new creation, is careful to tell us that in this work the Holy Ghost, though the Lord and Giver of life, takes not of His own, but of the things of Christ; takes not what was His before the incarnation, — the things of the Father in the order of nature, the things made known to men, breathed into them as a divine afflatus under that order, — but the things of the new order of grace in Christ

Jesus. So original, so radically unlike any thing seen before, was the work of the Spirit under the economy of Christ, that the Word of God speaks of Him as a *new* power, and men, when asked if they knew Him, were constrained to say that they had not so much as heard whether there were any Holy Ghost. However, then, the two economies, the sacred and the secular, may be correlated or interfused or superimposed, they are distinct, and cannot be confounded without violence to the nature of things, to the common thought and language of mankind, and to the plain teaching of God's written Word.

Again: this "gospel of the secular life" has another chapter worthy of our notice. It tells us that the theology it seeks to displace, the religion it aims to widen out, has massed human life too much in a few ideal conditions; has balanced itself too much on successive pivotal points, as sin, the Divine sovereignty, the atonement, justification, sacramental grace, Church authority; and, as a consequence, has "touched human nature and human interests generally as a sphere touches a plane, — at one point only at a time," and so alongside their breadth has put its own narrowness and angularity. Thus Christianity has withdrawn into its own little round of dogma and worship, and squandered both its opportunity and its power to establish its supremacy over science and art, literature and politics, and all the recognized avocations of men. It were easy to show, that, so far as this is true, it is true of modern religion when rent by schism and organized into sects, thus presenting itself of necessity in fragmentary forms, and

pressing upon life at only a few isolated points; and, further, it were easy to show that wherever and just in proportion as modern religion has reverted to the primitive Catholic basis, it has drawn to itself larger areas of society, mingled with more varied interests, and developed a living sympathy with the labors and aspirations of men in every department of their life. But I pass on to the cure which this new gospel prescribes for these failures of modern Christianity.

1. We are to present religion so as to antagonize human nature at as few points as possible. To this end, we are to eliminate as much as we can its mysterious, and rely upon its moral aspects. The Cross of Christ was an offence to the Jew, the Greek, the Roman,—the three generic types of character to the end of time. St. Paul, indeed, could devise no mode of preaching it that would make it otherwise. But the world moves; humanity grows; the Cross takes on new adaptations and new meanings under fresher lights; and because it was once an offence, is no reason why it should not be so taught now as to conciliate rather than repel the natural man. Acting on the same line, we are to bring the Sacraments down to a purely moral and rational basis, by showing how they fit into and serve certain moral and rational uses in religious training; and the Priesthood we are to reduce to the same basis, by denying any grace of orders or God-given authority for prescribed functions, and finding in it just the amount of grace which the goodness of the individual Priest will yield, just the amount of authority which his character and attainments entitle him to as a man among men. But this is



not Christianity, except in the "Renaissance" conception of it.

2. We are to teach Christianity, not as a faith to be believed, as well as a rule of life to be obeyed, the belief and the life being only opposite sides of one and the same principle; but as a cluster of sympathies and aspirations, with a life growing out of them, and conformed to them as its roots. But this, too, is not Christianity.

3. We are to regard "the Church as a social state, in which the spirit of Christ reigns;" a social state asserting itself as well without as within the recognized field of the Church's energy, and into which state men in every calling — scientists, men of letters, artists, politicians, soldiers, tradesmen, it matters not who — are to be considered as having entered, and as properly belonging to it, who in their work or vocation exhibit the spirit of Christ, i.e., as here defined, the spirit of self-sacrifice; and this, though they confess not Christ before the world by receiving the one Baptism for the remission of sins, and by submitting themselves to the discipline of his Church. The Church may continue to teach, to maintain public worship, to ordain a Priesthood, to watch over souls in their sin and sorrow, to uplift the Cross as the symbol of the one atoning sacrifice; but these, so far from being its foremost aims and functions, must all give way to the idea of the Church "as a social state," to be entered independently of Creed, Sacrament, or Ministry, and with no acknowledgment or practice of worship as a fundamental duty. This, too, is not Christianity, whatever else it may be.

4. But the above conception of the Church, as "a social state permeated by the Christ-spirit," is expanded and intensified by an application of the doctrine of the universal Priesthood of believers, which affirms that every man exercises a function or ministry of the Church who carries into his calling or sphere of influence an unselfish motive, love toward his fellow-men, a desire to be useful, honest, industrious, for the sake of others as well as for his own sake, and to imitate Christ generally so far as he can do it without obedience to some of Christ's most explicit commands. In other words, a man may take his place in the universal Priesthood of believers, and exercise a function or ministry of the Church, though he has never recognized the Church itself, but has always lived outside of and apart from it. This, again, is not Christianity, however it may afford the New Theology a basis for its gospel of the secular life.

The remedy is worse than the disease. Better that Christianity should cover less of human life, and retain its essential type, than that in the effort to cover, in this nineteenth century, the whole of it, it should part with so much of that type as to endanger what little might be left. This is simply the last of the series of attempts in history, to popularize religion by cheapening it; to convert pagans by dropping out what pagans dislike; to win over unbelief by watering the faith down to its requirement; to conquer the world by going down, through big words about ethics and humanity and science and eternal laws and human progress, to its own plane. Doubtless it would be well if our Christian

teaching had more breadth; but to have more breadth, and to have it safely, it must first have more depth and more height on the God-ward side. Sect-Christianity may have presented religion as balanced on its own particular dogmatic pivot, and so as an inverted pyramid; but in this scheme we have the same process over again, only the pyramid is inverted by a philosophical idealism, under whose guidance the individual reason strips Christianity of its organic constitution, its organic force, its organic authority as the Kingdom of Christ, and resolves it into the person of Christ, concerning whose attributes it breeds the most radical differences of opinion; or into the spirit of Christ, which every man is free to interpret for himself: individualism, in either case, being the small end of the pyramid, and the chief point of contact between the Christian faith and human life.

I come now to another deliverance of the New Theology, — another of its conceptions of Christianity, which is of vital moment to the office and work of the Ministry; a conception, not so much of sin, as of God's mode of dealing with it, which cuts sheer through Catholic tradition, especially as to the latter; empties our Eucharistic Office in particular of a large share of its meaning; makes nonsense of much of the language that the Church, following the use of Holy Scripture, puts into our mouths; and strips the Ministry of every lineament of priestly function or prerogative. If I have rightly interpreted the conception I am about to bring to your notice, it makes it only additionally certain that we are to be hindered, not helped, by this latest revision

of theology, in any attempts we may put forth to recuperate and advance our sacred vocation. This theology is strong and explicit, but not complete in its view of sin. It emphasizes the power, the anarchy, the misery, the death-dealing property of sin; describes it as alienation from God and from humanity; as self-seeking and self-isolation, variance from the moral constitution of the world, rejection of the law of righteousness, defect and defeat of personality; as a universal taint and corruption of human nature, imposing upon that which is free in itself bondage to that which is external to the sphere of freedom. And yet, while so full in all these particulars, it has the least to say of that aspect or quality of sin, its guilt, on which the Word of God and Catholic theology have most to say. There is, somehow, a disposition to regard the will of man as only in part responsible for its own corruption and enslavement,—to plant, so to speak, one foot of human responsibility in outward environments, leaving the other rather weakly poised on the soul's self-determining power; and consequently, to lessen the enormity of the guilt of sin. Certain it is that its handling of this feature of sin causes it to appear as a much less dreadful thing than it is made to be by the older theology. When I recall how strong and full is its characterization of sin in all other respects, I might suppose this to be my own inference, rather than the fact, but for its views of punishment and penalty,—punishment being regarded as emanating from the Divine Lawgiver, and as an expression of His wrath against the guilty in the form of adequate suffering to meet the demands of justice;

while penalty is simply violated law, working out, in the sphere of cause and effect, its own reprisals and revenges. Punishment as thus understood is treated as a forensic, extra-mundane conception, growing out of the old traditional idea of God's absolute authority as Sovereign of heaven and earth, and of a direct personal rulership that intervenes in each case requiring judgment and sentence. This conception is set aside entirely in favor of another, which, in making God immanent in the order of nature (an order that puts the will under law, as well as every thing else), makes the operations of nature the sufficient expressions of God's personal feelings in their punitive office. "When a man breaks a law of God, a sense of the wrath of God at once asserts itself if the conscience is healthy; if it is hardened, it slumbers, but sooner or later it awakes. And thus the wrath of God against sin is wrought into the very automatism of the body and the mind. We do not know that there is any other way in which God can lay hold of a sinner to punish him. He is not limited in Himself, but in the offender, who can be reached only through *law*;" because, I add, in keeping with this view, his only relation to God is a relation of law, and if he breaks law, his only punishment, or rather penalty, consists in the fact that he is shut up with the violated law and its inevitable effects.

But if man's only relation to God in the matter of his sin and its punishment be one of law, the same must be true of his relation to God in the matter of his sin and its pardon. If this be so, the whole scheme of redemption must not only in its operation be under

law, but in its inception and introduction into the world must have been the creature of law. But if this be true, then it follows that the Incarnation, Atonement, and Resurrection of Christ, the pivots on which the whole scheme swings, so far from having been miraculous events through which God, in the exercise of His untrammelled freedom and in the plenitude of His infinite love, injected a new and supernatural force from without into human life moving on in the framework of natural law, were themselves only so many *stadia* in the march of law, so many evolutions from an immutable and universal order. Thus the doctrine of God's immanence in law turns out to be little better for human thought and human uses than the old hard and fast conception of law as the ultimate and unchangeable term of all activity. Practically God is so blended with law, in itself only a mode of His action, as to merge His free personality in law; the outcome of which is, to the common sense of mankind, but a very slight improvement on the notion of necessity, the law lifted above the lawgiver. Thus, too, we have a theology, which, starting with the largest conception of God's self-determining personality, ends by leaving to that personality no room outside the mechanism of law for the free exercise upon the sinner of its providential power, either in the form of wrath and punishment, or of mercy and forgiveness; and, still further, sweeping away the eternal Judge and eternal judgment, by absorbing both in the self-executed processes of law, and making no provision for judicial as well as natural penalties, on the ground that Divine justice, when offended, needs no

other vindication or satisfaction than the future good behavior of the offender.

Still wider, however, is the departure of the New from the Old Theology in its view of God's plan for reclaiming to obedience and love our fallen race. In avowing what it wishes to find in this plan, it forecasts the results at which it arrives. It sets out with a purpose; and this purpose predetermines as well its logic and its intuitive convictions, as its interpretation and general use of the Holy Scriptures. It begins by insisting upon a redemption governed and shaped by the laws of eternal morality, and therefore disencumbered of all arrangements resting on a "mechanical legality," and, as far as possible, of all mysteries that God only can solve. It will have a moral atonement that violates no human instinct of justice, that calls into play the known laws and sentiments of human nature, "that saves men by a process that reason can trace, imposing the least burden upon faith," and securing oneness with the Christ without troubling itself about dark problems concerning the counsels and decrees of God, or the inherent demands of eternal justice considered as the foremost interest of the Divine government.

There is no doubt that all this falls in admirably with the current of modern thought, and that, in the race for popular favor, it is far outstripping the older view of the atonement. But currents of thought are quite as subject to change as currents of air, and popular sympathy really decides nothing in faith or morals. It is well, then, to ascertain whether the result foreshadowed by this liberal and comprehensive prospectus, and, indeed,

already consummated and advertised from many pulpits and by much of our religious literature, covers all the facts; and whether, as a consequence, the old Catholic teaching on the one Sacrifice once and forever offered for the sins of the world has been hopelessly breached. The last word has by no means been spoken on this subject. The man-ward side of it has had free course of late; the God-ward side must re-appear. Signs are not wanting, in the higher circles of devout as well as learned thought, of its renewed agitation. The New Theology has cut up and thrust aside, as so much underbrush, some of the plainest, and, both ethically and doctrinally considered, some of the most fundamental parts of God's Word. It has put its own prejudiced gloss on the moral intuitions of human nature which are involved in the matter. It has not gone to the bottom of moral evil in its relations to Divine justice, nor has it compassed the requirements of Divine justice in its dealings with sin. It has undertaken to lift the Cross of Christ out of "time relations," into the realm of universal and eternal laws; and in doing so has muddled the whole subject with notions that break down or evaporate in the attempt at intelligible formulation. It has put too heavy a strain on what it calls the vindictive aspect of God's government, as interpreted by the traditional dogma of the atonement, and has relied too much upon its clever satire in stigmatizing that dogma as the commercial conception of redemption,—so much sin, and so much blood to wash it out; so much wrath of God against sin, and so much sacrifice to conciliate Him. And, finally, it fails to satisfy that darkest and perhaps



deepest instinct of the soul,—contrition for wrong-doing, remorse for crime, which cannot be made to believe, and in earthly courts is not allowed to believe, that repentance alone will put all things square, or that man alone, by any thing he can do, can restore to their normal place moral relations which he has breached and outraged.

Justice is as much an essential of God's goodness as love. Indeed, God is perfect love only because He is perfect justice. Justice is only truth applied to relations of which a moral government must take cognizance. It is the principle of order, as love is the principle of beneficence, in the universe. Justice is that attribute of God which gives each thing its due, each thing its place and relations. It is at once the constructive and conservative principle of the universe. This new notion seems to suppose that the justice of God came into play only as a correlative or consequence of moral evil, and, therefore, that if man had not sinned it had found no cause for its being, no sphere for its operation. So far from this being true, the vindictive, punitive function of justice toward moral evil presupposes a justice universal, eternal, and absolute, of which this punitive function is only a time-phase developed by the disobedience and transgression of our fallen nature.

The whole trend of this new, and, as it claims, more rational theology of our day, throws into shadow this side of God's being and moral administration. So far from being new, it is as old as the oldest of the heresies that have vexed the Church of God, as old as one of the loosest and most speculative of the Greek schools of Alexandria. It is trying now, as it tried then, to

make Christianity easy and satisfactory to reason by paring down its mysteries. It is trying now, moreover, as it tried then, to make it easy to the conscience, by thrusting aside God's justice in order to surrender the whole field of moral obligation and moral guilt to God's love.

For these reasons, I say, the great debate has not ended; and I believe it will yet be shown at the bar of our modern Christian judgment, that the greatest theologians of the past, in nearly all the branches of the Catholic Church, understood as well as any of their class to-day, all the elements, Divine and human, involved in this doctrine, and particularly the inspired handling of these elements by Prophets, Evangelists, and Apostles; and moreover, that, as with regard to God's sovereignty and man's depravity, so with regard to the atonement, St. Paul's utterances, so vivid, so strong, so frequent, on these points, were not so warped and colored by the corruption of Roman society, or by the Roman sense of authority, or by Roman forms of justice, as to make him an unfaithful or incompetent vehicle of the mind of the Holy Ghost.

But I must not wander too far from the purpose that led me to take up the subject in this connection. That purpose will be served by a very brief outline of the Atonement dogma as now presented by the new thinking, and of its effect on the office and work of the Priesthood. The dogma is given to us in the following statements (redemption being considered synonymous with atonement): —

“The Christ redeemed the world by the manifestation

and realization, in the life of humanity, of the coming and life of the Spirit."

"The Christ redeemed the world by the realization of a perfect life, in the fulfilment of perfect righteousness, in oneness with humanity, and in the conquest of all the forces by which humanity is alienated from God, and men are alienated from each other."

"The redemption of the world in and through the Christ was the manifestation of the will of God, the manifestation of the love of God for the world, the manifestation of what is eternal in the being of God.

"The redemption of the Christ is wrought in his oneness with humanity in and through the life of humanity. Through the relation of the Christ with humanity, the redemption of the world has its continuous realization in the life of humanity. The law which was fulfilled in the Christ is the law of the life of humanity;" or, in plainer phrase, Christ as the second Adam, the head of the body, imparts to the whole human race, through the union of their nature with His, a new principle of life; so that in His death all die, in His resurrection all are made alive. Thus we are told, "The sacrifice of the soldier who dies in battle for the nation is not the mere conformance to a law of historical necessity, but in such suffering and sacrifice there is the redemptive life of the world;"<sup>1</sup> and this irrespective of the soldier's knowledge of Christ, or faith in Christ, or having in any way been united with Christ save as a sharer of the human nature which Christ took upon

<sup>1</sup> These quotations are from the chapter on the Atonement in Dr. Mulford's Republic of God, "An Institute of Theology."

Himself: so that, wherever there is self-sacrifice, whatever the motive,—be it fame, patriotism, any thing that takes a man out of himself,—there is the redemptive life of Christ, the atonement of the Cross.

Now, we gather as plain inferences from these statements, and they cover the whole teaching of the New Theology on the subject, that, whatever the effect of the sacrifice of Christ upon the relations between God and man, it was limited to man. It was offered solely to enable him to overcome sin, and to live a life acceptable to God and beneficial to his fellow-men. In no sense did Christ take upon Him our sins, except to show us how to turn away from them, how to escape their bondage and misery. In no sense was Christ bruised for our transgressions, except to teach us how to be rid of them and of their consequences. In no sense did He who was holy, harmless, and undefiled, die for us, the just for the unjust, save to educate us to become holy, harmless, undefiled, and just. He did not suffer for us to release us from the suffering due to our sinful nature. In no form or way, either as regards death, or punishment, or pain, or any other consequence of moral guilt, did He offer Himself to God as a substitute for man. His death and sacrifice were in no sense a propitiation, except to win the favor of man. They expiated nothing, because there was no demand for expiation. They reconciled no one but man, because there was no one else needing to be reconciled. Christ died, not as a satisfaction to Divine justice, because Divine justice has all the satisfaction it requires by the establishment of justice: all wrongs, all iniquities, all crimes, are con-

doned and forgotten the moment they cease, and their opposites take their place. Justice has no back scores, no unpaid debts, that are not cancelled by resolving to make no new score, to contract no new debt. There is nothing needed to wipe out misconduct in the past, except good conduct in the future.

I may not dwell upon the grave difficulties thrown in the way of this conception of the atonement by God's Word, whose authority ought to be supreme upon one of the central, fundamental facts of revelation,—a fact shading off on all sides into mystery; a fact confessedly undiscoverable by reason, and transcending all explanations of reason. It is enough, perhaps, to say here that this theory can hold on its course only by throwing one side, as useless and unmeaning Hebraisms, or Latinisms, or some other isms, certain Scriptures, on the face of them as clearly the inspired utterances of the Holy Ghost as any other parts of the revealed Word. And I may add, not as an argument, but as a fact, that this theory would demand a reconstruction of much of the most frequently recurring language of our Ritual, or a radical revolution in our ideas of its meaning. But the chief point just now is the bearing of this theory on the Christian Ministry,—a point of surpassing interest to us while we listen to the persuasive calls of the New Theology to abandon the stifling fens of old traditions, and mount up to its breezy, bracing airs.

Now, whatever takes from or disintegrates a function of the Sacred Office, does the same to the Office itself. In this case, the function of the pulpit and the function at the font are spared; nay, the former is magnified,

while the latter, if touched, is not directly assailed. It is the function at the altar that suffers most. The Ministry (or I might say the Priesthood: but things, not words; verities, powers, virtues, graces, not phrases, are now in mind), — the Ministry and the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood rejoice or suffer, live or die, together; for in this Sacrament the Ministry shows forth unto men, after the institutional, incorporated method of Christ's appointment, as it cannot do in the pulpit or at the font or in the pastoral office, his perpetual mediation between God and man, of which his Incarnation, Sacrifice, and Resurrection are the triple foundation. This mediation has a twofold purpose, — the reconciliation of God, and the reconciliation of man to God; the former by the oblation and satisfaction made to God by the death of Christ; the latter by manifesting the love and mercy of God, and by conveying to humanity, through Christ as incarnate God and as the second Adam, a new principle of life. This twofold purpose has its continuous and visible exhibition in the Sacrament. In and through the Sacrament, the Ministry not only remind men of what Christ did and suffered for them, and what he demands from them; but plead before God the slain and offered Christ as the propitiation for the sins of the world, as the eternal and all-sufficient advocate with the Father of a race dead in trespasses and in sin. This, briefly, is the teaching of Catholic theology, and of God's Word when allowed to speak in its integrity. It runs through our Eucharistic Office, and through our worship generally, as the life-blood through the body. It is woven into them, thread

by thread, as the nerves are woven into our flesh. More than any thing else, it explains and justifies the office and work of the Ministry as ordained of God for the salvation of man. But here is a theory, new chiefly in its terminology and in its literary form and philosophical basis, which cleaves asunder the twofold purpose of the holy Sacrament and of the holy Priesthood, consigning the one part to the rubbish of dead superstitions, and leaving the other, as we believe, to go on its way as a fractured and bleeding limb torn from the body of the faith once delivered.

We cannot turn from this inquiry into the relations of the New Theology to the Christian Ministry at the close of this century, without cordial acknowledgment of its service in recalling the attention of the various Ministries of the inorganic Christianity of the time, from the modern dogmas of schools and sects, and from all theological litigations and controversies as the subject-matter of preaching, to the preaching of the Christ in the essential, all-pervading personality of his life, character, and work, beginning with the primal fact of the Incarnation as the key to all the subsequent facts. In this mould was cast the preaching of the Apostolic Fathers and Saints of the undivided Church in the first five centuries, — preaching that, for its power over the hearts and minds of men, no after-period of the Church has matched; preaching that did its mighty work apart from speculative philosophies of religion; preaching that has never died out from the memory or the use of loyal and intelligent disciples of the Catholic faith; preaching that the Church has always made a necessity,

not merely a preference, by her Sacred Year, with its vivid; continuous, almost dramatic recital, in her ritual for the people, and in her forms of the altar, of the facts of our Lord's life.

The New Theology, however, has as yet only partially done its work in this direction. It will have to enter on a fresh *stadium* of its education, before it can do it fully. It remains that it learn for itself, and that it teach all who are inclined to follow its lead, that this sort of preaching can take permanent hold, and become a living power, only as it shall put at its back an order of worship that rehearses day by day, in creed and prayers and sacrament, the historic facts which it handles.

Finally, then, it may be said in all soberness and candor, that the really good fruit of the New Theology is as old as the Church itself, and that all the rest must be classed with the new philosophies of man and nature, and the new phases of religious thought springing out of them, containing much that is attractive, curious, and profound, but whose ultimate uses and fortunes are yet things of the future.



## LECTURE XII.

### CHARACTER.

CHARACTER is the highest expression of the whole man. It organizes for practical influence the vital forces of our personality. It gathers into itself, and combines for present uses, together with all lower elements of thought, life, and temperament, whatever there may be in us of knowledge, culture, will-power, experience, moral conviction, spiritual sympathy, devout aspiration. Character is needed to work upon character. As it is an effect of all influences that have wrought in us, so it is the most powerful cause, under God, of all changes to be wrought in others. And as it is the chief end of the Ministry of reconciliation to lift individual character more and more out of what is worst, and toward what is best, as God sees the worst and the best, so the power of that ministry will depend upon the amount of individual character baptized into its own spirit which it can bring to bear upon its chief end.

In the foregoing lectures, I have discussed the conditions which help or hinder the development of this highest human force in the sphere of the Christian Ministry: now I am to examine the force itself, and with special reference to what is demanded of it in the closing

years of this century. The subject, however we may regard it, cannot be too often in our thoughts and our prayers. Time was, when this Ministry, and the type of individual character intended always to be an inherent part of it, were absolutely new to the world. Both were among the gifts of Pentecost, and began with the first Apostles. Anterior to these, mankind knew nothing of a stewardship, an office with a character to match it, devoted, as to its governing object, to a perpetual warfare against human ignorance and human sin. It was one of the great innovations of Christianity, to assign to a permanent and definite place among the recognized pursuits of life a call and mission which set before a man as his appointed work the teaching, comforting, warning, elevating of human souls, by the communication of the grace and truth and peace of Christ. We can imagine, but, save in rarest instances, can scarcely hope to reproduce in the fervor and energy of its first appearance among men, the type of character spontaneously generated by this sublime vocation. What was once new is now old ; what once appeared as a creative, original force, has now an established and familiar place amid our habits of thought and life. It might have been expected that this force would improve with the lapse of time. Its varied fortunes through the Christian centuries have, indeed, vastly enriched its experience ; but they have not raised it to a higher level. Use and custom have dulled its finer edges. In taking on, as was inevitable, a professional cast, and falling into lines of activity running on parallel with those of the ordinary pursuits of men, it dropped into routine and

commonplace, and through these into poverty and deterioration of motive. Earnest purpose and commanding service have not saved it from the lowered tone and dulness of spirit which invade sooner or later all the callings of real life: so that to-day we have to deal with it, not only as a thing of noble aims and inspirations, bearing on its face the traces of a heavenly origin, but also as subject to the torpor and slackness that human nature is sure to carry into its highest employments.

We have not to construct a new ideal of priestly character, or to set up a fresh standard of priestly duty. Both these are behind us. They began with the Christian Priesthood, and have lived on unchanged by the changes among which it has done its work. Whatever the improvements, the innovations, or the special urgencies of this generation, it has nothing to add to the original ideal or the original standard. Both emanated from the perfect Ministry of our perfect Lord, and both are as perpetual as the Sacred Office which he instituted. Mankind, when left to themselves, and even when under the sway of Christian influence, modify, from age to age, their ideal of moral character, however they may leave unaltered the standard of right and wrong. But the Christian Priesthood, because of its source, its authority, its purpose, can essentially change neither. We have, then, a fixed ideal and a fixed standard; and these not merely in the form of a written record or historic portraiture, but definitely and unchangeably embodied in the Son of man, the Great Shepherd and Bishop of souls. Thus the subject is lifted at once out of the realm of a fluctuating moral taste, and equally out of that of speculative imagination.

My next thought is, that, while character in the long line of the Priesthood has shown wide variations, it has never for any considerable time radically fallen away from its primitive type. It has, so to speak, shifted its centre of gravity, as the Church has shifted hers, amid the vicissitudes of history. It has been active and contemplative, aggressive and stationary, missionary and pastoral, itinerant and parochial, educated and ignorant, refined and rude, energetic and lethargic, zealous and indifferent, watchful and careless, self-denying and self-indulgent, living in the light and life of the Master, and living, too, under the broken and shadowed reflection of both. And yet, whatever its variations or accretions, it has never been without the image and superscription of Him who gave it being.

Now, what we have to do with this character is to disentangle it from these variations and accretions in the past, and to study it afresh under the twofold light of its own Divine ideal, and of its providential relations to the present and to the near future. The light is twofold, because it is the light from Christ as the author of the Ministry of reconciliation and of the character bound up with it,—both given to the Church at a certain time and place; and because it is the light from Christ as He works perpetually through the Church in history, ordering thereby the needs and the duties of His ordained deputies, as He orders the relations to the world and humanity within which they must work.

The question, then, before us, is to ascertain, in view of these relations, what aspects, what gifts, what graces, of the priestly character, are now to be chiefly relied

upon to advance it to a higher level of power and influence. In this inquiry, philosophy, science, art, literature, society, the nation can help us only as they enter into the relations under which this character is to perform its tasks. Before all else we must study the Divine ideal after which it was patterned at the start, and in virtue of which it is the property of no one age, but equally of all ages, with an aim as universal as the redemption of man combining a faculty of adaptation as varied as the needs of man.

To see how the character of the living Ministry, as representing this ideal, should speak to this age, let us place side by side some of the salient features of both. Whatever we find in the ideal, we ought to find in some degree, broken and diluted though it be, in the character that represents and pleads for it before the world; and whatever we find in the age needing reconstruction or amendment, describes the wants which that character, with its cognate forces, was ordained of God to remedy.

I. First, then, this age is overweighted and blinded by an excess of the time- and world-spirit. It clings to the seen and earthly, as opposed to the unseen and eternal. When it speaks of the spiritual, it commonly means simply matter so refined as to elude the senses; and, when it speaks of endless duration, it means the eternity of matter. Its thought and feeling, its moral convictions are often treated as only sublimated forms of matter, or as outgrowths from experiences whose roots reach down into the material organism. It is so doubtful whether or no there be a soul, that it prefers to take the risk of losing it if it can be sure of gaining

the world that now is. Or, again, to put it in another shape, it places nature above the supernatural, and knows no real world outside the former. It inclines to the belief that moral liberty, or man's self-determining power, is a delusion, and that the only real guardianship is to be found in immutable law. Naturalism is its favorite touchstone of truth in religion, in morals, and in all the processes of life. Its general attitude is radically the reverse of that which Christianity declares to be the only true one for man constituted as it represents him to be. Therefore, of necessity, it not only narrows the domain of faith, but drops a blind at every turn over the eye of faith; and in this sense it may be said to be a pre-eminently faithless age, doing its work as best it can "without God and without hope." And so it has come to pass, that the only really positive service is that for humanity and the present world, and the only uncertain and indefinite service is that for God and the world to come. Practically the idea is largely abandoned, of attempting to maintain any proportion between the claims respectively of the two worlds; because, in the common estimate, there is really but one world. Such is the thought of the reigning philosophy, and the moral temper of the multitude responds to it. Its chill penetrates beyond its own lines, and is felt in our average Christian life. Too many are there among us, who, without any formal surrender of their belief, or open departure from habits and associations built up on their belief, have fallen away, under the dominant influence of the time, from all vital trust in the covenant promises of God as revealed in his Word

and witnessed to by his Church. Certainly intense religious convictions, fervent experiences of the soul's wants and of God's gifts, a profound sense of things invisible and eternal, are not among the marked characteristics of our prevailing Christianity.

Now, there is wanted in the character of our Christian leaders and pastors more of that quality which shall be to this aspect of the times what water is to the thirsty ground, or flame to the frost, — even faith, the new sense, the second-sight of the soul, that gives us the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen; not without relations to reason and conscience, but really an intuitive perception which habitually pierces the veil of sense, and rests on the Invisible and Eternal Personal God. The word is often enough on the popular tongue. Men have much to say of faith in the future, faith in their destiny, faith in progress, faith in humanity, meaning thereby little more than faith in themselves; but that is quite another faith which is wrought in us by the Holy Spirit, and joins us to Christ the living Head. The one is only a vague and dreamy grasp on things hoped for from an earthly stand-point, with no thought of sacrifice for things the other side the veil; the other kindles into activity the inmost energies of the soul, and puts them at the service, not only of the fortunes of our race on this planet, but of the destiny of its individual members in the eternal world. This faith is in itself the highest form of power, because it makes us sharers of God's power in the discipline and development of humanity. It was by this power that the men of old

“subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.”<sup>1</sup> This was the power that upheaved the fabrics of Judaistic race-selfishness and of Greek and Roman paganism, and on their ruins built the foundations of Christianity. This was the power that evolved from the barbaric anarchy of the after-ages the characteristic elements of our modern life. This was the power that fought the great fight of the Reformation, reviving in some measure the Gospel’s original impulse and the Church’s primitive order. This was the power, that, working in the great Plantagenet kings and statesmen, made England what it has been as a bulwark of authority, order, and liberty. This was the power, too, that planted and nourished, with toil and tears and death, the beginnings of our American life. Indeed, apart from it, there has been no beneficent greatness of any sort in the past eighteen hundred years.

Now, the world-spirit, whether in the form of scepticism, or mammon-worship, or light-hearted pleasure, takes it for granted, in all its estimates of the Christian religion, that there has been a loss of this power in the Christian body generally, and eminently in the Christian Ministry, and a corresponding loss in the influence of both. Says a brilliant anti-Christian writer, “We laugh at the scholastic nonsense of Irenæus, and are disgusted at the unseemly violence of Tertullian; but these men were ready to die for their beliefs, and *we*

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xi. 33, 34.



*are not* " — as well we the priests of infidelity, as you the priests of Christianity. This assumption would not be put forth in this matter-of-course way, were it altogether groundless; and the only way to meet it, and the diminished respect for our order that it implies, is to prove that the old power still lives, that "all things are" still "possible to him that believeth," that faith in God and in the supernatural agencies of His Kingdom is still the greatest of forces that can move the human soul, and that the sense of the Unseen and Eternal can still fire our energies with irresistible enthusiasm for truth and righteousness. And I may add, this side of Christian character in general, and especially of Ministerial character, demands a fresh stimulus, not only because of the vagueness and lassitude that have crept over our Christian motive-power, but also because of the evils that threaten our Christian civilization. We are on the verge of grave changes in the industrial, monetary, and social order of modern life. The revolutions at the beginning of this century related chiefly to the structure of civil government, the extension of civil rights. How these loosened the bands of order, and stirred the passions of men, we need no one to remind us; and we as little need any prophet to tell us how the revolutionary movements at its close will be kindled into frenzy by questions of wages and property and social rights. To surmount these coming perils with safety and honor, will task, as they have scarcely ever been tasked before, the devotion, the unselfishness, and courage of both Church and State. And it belongs to us of the Christian Ministry to decide whether the

productive cause of the highest moral force shall be there, and equal to the emergency.

I have not dwelt on the need of a stronger and clearer faith, to enable us to work on hopefully and earnestly in the use of means in the Church that have no obvious or traceable relation to their ends, and to meet the kindred trial arising from the long delay often interposed between the planting and the harvest. This falls so obviously within the ordinary range of our discipline, that it can best be left there without comment.

How, then, is clerical character to re-enforce itself with this commanding power of faith demanded so imperatively by the tendency of these times? I reply, By a closer and more devout study of its own Divine ideal, the character of the Son of man. To Him alone can we go for the light, the life, the energy, the grasp on the unseen and eternal, and with them the intrepidity, patience, humility, and fervor, required by the environments of the Sacred Office. He only perfectly combined the work of time and human life with that which is beyond sight and time; dwelling on earth, yet never for a moment divided from heaven; in perpetual and most intimate communion with God, and yet engrossed in the rude, hard work and sufferings by which He set up among men the Father's Kingdom; pressed by the labor and care, the details and calls, of the busiest Ministry, and yet eternity, like a luminous background, looming up behind all that He says and does; "living a life of unwearied service, and yet a life of absolute heavenly-mindedness; habitually devoted to his brethren, yet always one with the thought and will of God;"

with a faith so perfectly balanced, so transcendently clear, that it recognized all in the world that could claim a human interest, and yet that ranged on unfettered wings over the ages, and beheld issues in eternity as already realized in time. It is not in us to mount to such a height; but it is allowed us to breathe its atmosphere, to feed on its inspiration, and so to grow toward it.

II. Again: it is now apparently more than ever the besetting temptation of mankind, to take false views of what alone is real and great in life; to reverse the proportion that God has established among the objects of human pursuit; to mistake shadow for substance, dreams and visions for facts, and things that are to pass away for things that are to endure. Thus the souls of men are given over to cheats and delusions respecting what it most concerns them to see and know as it is; and at critical moments in the lives of individuals and peoples, a cry, as of pathetic despair, fills the air, *Who will show us any good? Who will lead us to the rock that is stronger than we?* This, it is often claimed, is, more than any other that has gone before it, a truth-loving, truth-speaking age; an age bent upon getting at facts, and averse to all shams; an age passionately devoted to criticism and investigation, with a view to making an end of prejudices and superstitions and false idols of every name. No one will dispute this claim when it is confined to things that fall in with the dominant impulses and favorite ends of the age; that flatter its pride of achievement, minister to the exaltation of intellect, promote riches and power, pleasure and glory,

and generally help on man's control over the world that now is. On the other hand, this claim has to be seriously discounted when the age is confronted by the highest ends of life, and the discipline of belief, motive, and self-restraint needful for the attainment of these ends. Start the old problems of duty; apply the old tests of obedience to an authority not of its own creation, and of a righteousness transcending its own standards; challenge its ownership of the world; scale the relative importance of the objects of human pursuit contrary to its tastes; invade its lust of the flesh and lust of the eyes; curb its pride of life; smite the idols of its ambition; let in upon its gathered treasures and its haunts of revelry the warning from an unseen world of a judgment to come, — try this, and see how it will crowd into the forum of the great debate, special pleadings, sophistries, equivocations, false apologies. On all this side of its life, so far from being better, it is really worse, than its predecessors; and it is only a silly optimism that would speak of it as truth-loving and truth-speaking. So far from being inclined to either, it loves darkness rather than light on most subjects on which God has revealed His mind to man. The intellect of the day puts forth special pretensions to candor and breadth in its opposition to the dogmatic statements of the essential truths of Christianity. It gives many reasons for this opposition; but, when sifted, these reasons point to another deeper than themselves. The statements are disliked, not because they are dogmatic, but because of the truths they embody. It is idle to arraign them as involving the “stagnation of thought,”

or "the imprisonment of thought," or "the paralysis of thought." The real grievance is, that they demand a submission of thought which much of the intellect of the time will not yield; and yet the submission is the same in degree with that demanded by all other ascertained truth. The trouble is, the submission is different in kind, involving, as it does, the will as well as the intelligence.

But this reference to the bearing of the age toward Christian dogma is only by way of illustrating its general estimate of the contents and aims of life so far as they are affected by the inherent truth of things, and especially of the highest things. As we have seen how in this relation it comes behind, and in what it fails, so we see what, in the same relation, the character of the Clergy must be expected to supply. They are ministers of God only as they are ministers of truth, and they are ministers of truth only as they are witnesses and examples of truth, and they are these only as they are ready to be so at any risk, at any cost, even though they be driven to the desert and the caves of the mountains, or to the sackcloth and ashes of personal abasement, or to the locusts and wild honey of personal denial. They must be simply, severely true in the search for truth, in the proclamation of truth, in the guardianship of truth, and in the application of truth to themselves and to others; and this as opposed to all the hidden dishonesties of conviction, and hypocrisies of profession, and adulterations of motive, which mankind are quick to condone because so few are in a position to cast the first stone. They are to be simply and severely true as

reflecting the unspeakable seriousness and earnestness of the Gospel's view of life, and as exhibiting a mind and spirit, a zeal and energy, proportionate to the gravity and nobleness of the vocation to which they have been set apart. Facing every thing, whether it be error, or vice, or wretchedness, or the misleading pomps of the world, without disguise or mistake, and planting themselves on unshrinking, unexaggerated truth, they are to be simply and severely true to their message as the Prophets and Priests of the Great Master of truth and reality. They are to be as straightforward, thorough, and complete, as are the facts of life. Upon riches, business, learning, art, it matters not what, they are to impose the serious and high view of conduct, never the low and self-indulgent one. Let what will happen, they are to hold up, in its inexorable claims, the noblest ends of human action; to drive home to the inmost soul of this generation the truth that the greatest power, the greatest knowledge, the greatest liberty, is the greatest trust. They are to stand for the duties of men, in an age which thinks chiefly of the rights of men. They are to stand for authority, in an age bent upon having its own way, and being a law to itself. They are to stand for the unseen and eternal world, for its warnings, its mysteries, its imperishable realities, at a time when men are turning itching ears to the new "gospel of the secular life." They are to stand for fonts and altars and pulpits and sanctuaries, and all that concerns the worship of the Triune God, when the world is drifting off into the worship of itself, finding the only god it cares to know in its own mechanisms of matter and

force. Finally, they are to stand for the salvation of humanity through Jesus Christ, in an age when humanity is coming to believe more and more that it can save itself.

Here, too, our strength and sufficiency are of Christ, the everlasting Son of God, the sovereign ideal of the Ministry whereunto we are called. He saw, as they are, all being and life. He knew, as it really is, what is in man and nature. Past, present, and future were to Him all one. To Him, the farthest ends, the remotest destinies, were as things already consummated. The plummet thrown by His hand went to the bottom; the measuring-rod he used scaled with absolute accuracy the motives, the ends, the callings of men. In manifesting the eternal life, He entered into, and held at its true worth, this time-life, which was to be taken up into His own life. Before His eye, the shows of things dissolved as vapor before the sun, and their underlying reality, their essential truth, came forth as the earth from the darkness at the dawn of day. With such insight into all, with such mastery over all, nothing in His character or conduct, perhaps, so profoundly impresses us as the matter-of-course way in which He treats as valueless to Himself precisely those things which most stir the desires and ambitions of mankind. As the Master of truth, he seems to say to us that He cannot deal truthfully with human life without a radical reversal of its aims and methods, making that to be greatest which men hold to be least, and that to be least which men hold to be greatest; and this with regard to their rights and duties, their callings and capabilities, their hopes

and ambitions, their successes and failures. When they talk of the world, and of what it owes them or of what they owe to it, He tells them, in words that seem vague because they mean so much, about the treasure in heaven, the single eye, the pearl of great price, the taking of the kingdom of heaven by force, the impossibility of giving any thing in exchange for the soul; and in telling them so, He is only setting forth the reality, the truth of things, and with this truth, the other truth, the other reality, involved in the proportion in which God has placed things, one as above or below another, and in which human zeal and energy are to be expended upon them. It is because of man's obstinate and fatal neglect of what he says in this direction, that, as with a cry of pain, the words are wrung from him, "Many are called, but few are chosen;" "Strait is the gate, and narrow the way, and few there be that find it;" "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" It is this knowledge of human nature, this view of its false leanings and its one-sided judgments, that determine Christ's preference, and, if we be His, our preference, for the hard lot and the bitter side of life, for mourning, for poverty, for persecution, for the blessing on those of whom men speak ill. The Master was only simply, severely true, when He poured these sharp words into the world's ear. It is well that we should often hear them as we go on in our work of building our own characters and the characters of those to whom we minister. They stand for the price, that in some shape, in some degree, sooner or later, each of us must pay for all true and high living, for all attempts



at any thing above the dead level of custom, and in accord with a truly Christian standard. "The higher ends of life — higher because truer and more real — may be the object of fervent effort where the eye of the looker-on rests upon what seems too busy, too exalted, or too humble to be the scene of the greatest of earthly endeavors, the inward discipline of the soul. And yet, masked behind the turmoil of outward life or the busy silence of study, this discipline can and should go on, with its bitter surrenders of will, its keen self-control, its brave welcomings of trial, stern and high in its choice, stern in its view of the world, stern in its judgment of itself, stern in its humility; and all this while nothing is seen but the performance of the common round of duty, nothing is shown but the playfulness which seems to sport with life."

Se sub serenis vultibus  
Austera virtus occultit,  
Timens videri, ne suum  
Dum prodit, amittat decus.

III. We have now so far considered certain features of life at the close of this century, as to show why and in what ways the priestly character of the day needs more of the faith which habitually discerns the unseen Father of all in the on-goings and activities of the present, and more of the truth-sense, the truth-power, which pierces down to the reality of things, seeing them as they are, not as they seem; which adjusts conduct to the pursuits and ends of life according to their proportionate value, and distinguishes, with a view to its practical

influence on the internal discipline of the soul, between the solid and the vain, the essential and the accidental, the permanent and the fleeting, in the processes of the world and of human life.

We have now to notice a characteristic of the time, and a corresponding need in the character of the Ministry, of even wider and deeper reach. And certainly much that I shall say under this head would seem but an ideal dream, had not the Son of God gone before, and made attainable what otherwise had been impossible. I am to speak of that quality in the Ministry which God himself has declared to be more than any other the embodiment of His own being, and in our Lord and Christ the very power of salvation,—love. Love perfected, love in the final reach and use of its energy as a motive working on the will, may be a simple affection possessed of an absolute oneness of character and power; but here it will be treated in its manifold relation to other spiritual gifts, as the living root of other virtues, and especially as it circulates, as an element of warmth and vigor and attraction, through all the higher moral forces of our nature when created anew in Christ Jesus. When, therefore, we speak of it as thus regarded, we mean not only itself bounded by the limitations of the word that names it, but also the graces that it includes, and from which it never stands apart,—as sympathy, tenderness, pity, brotherly kindness, long-suffering, humility, self-sacrifice, joy in goodness, hatred of evil; qualities of the supernatural life, because taken out of nature, and enlarged, purified, transfigured by the Divine life of the Son of God. Let

it, then, be understood that the field of thought opened to us in discoursing on this theme is as wide as that described by love and the affiliated virtues that it nourishes.

All sin may be resolved into selfishness ; and, as the world is always full of the one, so it is always full of the other. Any thing so continuous and universal might be left without comment or special illustration. Each generation, however, develops it under fresh lights, and discloses it from new angles of observation ; and surely this one is no exception. Some might charge me with being narrow and unfair, insensible even to the so-called great law of evolution by which man is said to be advancing to a wider and nobler life, were I to say, that, in changing somewhat the tone of its moral life, shifting a little its acknowledged centres of thought and aspiration, this generation had only altered the forms without lessening the intensity of the selfishness common to human nature in all ages. And yet just this is what I affirm ; and I do so in spite of all the philosophy, poetry, and eloquence affirming the contrary. These will be prompt to remind us of the manifold betterments of man's condition worked out by this century, of the vast sweep of the orbit along which he has travelled away from a thousand dark and bad things in the past, and of the great projects of reform and amelioration which are to render illustrious in history the closing decades of this century. We shall be told of the quickened sympathies between remote peoples, of the active philanthropy that never rests from its errands of help and mercy, of the thrill of pity sent

through the common heart of the world by calamity and misfortune in any, the obscurest part of it. No one, surely, with a spark of manliness or Christianity in him, would rob this aspect of our modern life of a single ray of the glory thus shed upon it; but, on the other hand, no one who means to take in all the facts of our time, and to judge it by all the facts, will allow himself to concede to these manifestations more than they deserve. Let our judgment be charitable, sympathetic; but let it also be true and just. There is more in the present estate of mankind to rejoice us than ever before, and there is also more to sadden and alarm us; so much, indeed, of the latter, as to oblige us, with the whole subject in view, to regard the boasted humanities and tendernesses and ameliorations of the time as little more than surface-eddies playing over the vast throbbing sea of human selfishness. Looking down into the black, abysmal depths of this sea, and at the stupendous wreckage of rights, duties, hopes, labors, fortunes, sinking into or floating over them, we might well conclude, that, aside from the work done and doing by the Church of God, the much-vaunted progress of the recent ages had only clothed the selfishness of man in more polished armor, and put into its hands more death-dealing weapons. I may not even glance at the problems crowding upon us for settlement, which are the certain outgrowths from this principle as it works in individuals, classes, communities, nations; problems of vice and crime, of poverty and wretchedness, of contention and anarchy, which cast the dark portents of coming convulsions and revolutions over

the closing years of the century. That is a stormy and threatening array of enemies to its peace and order, which our civilization, in the day of its greatest pomp and pretension, has raised along the highway over which lies its future journey. No civilization of the past has seen one more formidable. Who wonders, that, beneath its garlands and trophies, the tears of remorse are sometimes on its cheeks, and a cry of agony often on its lips? Since the Rome of the Cæsars, some fifteen centuries have counted themselves off. There is far less now than then of coarse cruelty and heartless brutality, less of beastly sensuality, less of chains and dungeons, of swords and axes, at the command of irresponsible tyrants; but is there less of the moral causes that always sooner or later create these things, — less of the greed of riches, luxury, pleasure, less idolatry of wealth and empire, less covetousness, less pride and self-assertion, less of the disposition in man to be his own centre, his own ideal, his own end, his own God? Who will affirm it? And yet these are the chosen progeny of selfishness, that, wherever they have borne sway, have raised to the lips of nations the cup that has first inebriated, and then poisoned them unto death.

But, still further, the intellect as well as the heart of the time, so far as it is true to its own instinct, is selfish, — profoundly, noisily, proudly selfish. I speak of it as a rule. No one will need to be told of the exceptions. There are enough of them to keep up the spirit of protest and rebuke; enough to scatter over our culture the salt of an opposing principle, and so to save it from the doom of the older cultures of pagan life.

Somehow our much-praised systems of education have trained a vast amount of intellect that works for hire, putting not only its gifts, but its opinions, its conscience, in the market; a vast amount that works for applause and reputation, with no moral end ahead; a vast amount that unites the offices of the cynic and the sophist, coldly, remorselessly critical and destructive, rejoiced rather than alarmed at the ruin it works in the souls of plain people or beneath the shadow of God's altars; a vast amount more, that, with a lifelong stare at the face of nature and of man, sees nothing so great as itself. Now, this, like every kindred evil, can be overcome only by good. It will yield only to the expulsive power of a motive stronger than itself; and the only motive that has this power is the love that had its perfect revelation and example in Christ Jesus, the High-Priest of humanity, and the Author of the Priesthood committed to us. It was not in man to discover this motive: it was God's gift to man. It came to him with the gift of eternal life. Love completing itself in sacrifice is life eternal; and Christ is the Saviour of man, because, as the perfect manifestation of this love, He was also the perfect manifestation of life eternal: and this life is in us only as love, which is its animating soul, is in us. Love fulfilling itself in the sacrifice of self was made, through the incarnation and death of the Son of God, the redemptive force of the world; and no man is a complete sharer of His Priesthood, except as in character and work, as well as in office, he is a vehicle to others of this redemptive force, this power of deliverance from the bondage of selfishness, and of the sins which are its offspring.

As Christ loved us, and gave Himself for us, so we are to love all for whom He died, and to give ourselves for them; and, in doing so, to supplant in them in Christ's name, and through the operation of the Spirit, the fallen life of nature with the risen life of a new creature.

It may be said, This motive may be admirable and beneficent, but where is the evidence of the power claimed for it? It has had nearly two thousand years of conflict with its antagonist; and yet, by your own showing, that antagonist is as prolific of evil as ever. We reply: It has conquered enough hearts to show that it can conquer all hearts; and that it has not done so, belongs to the double mystery of man's free will and God's patience. One thing is sure: if this mind, this love that was in Christ Jesus, be not the cure for the world's selfishness and for all that springs out of it, the universe has none, and the race is thrown back upon the eternal dualism of good and evil. God has brought to bear the supreme motive, the sovereign energy of his own moral being; and there is nothing behind it. That is a mighty army of the redeemed already camped in the heavenly places, but it is only the vanguard of the host that is to follow. The generations drop off like leaves shaken from the tree of life. The world grows old. The race stumbles and staggers on its course. But this force of God, this living energy of a Divine deliverance, this power of victory over evil, works on in the undecaying freshness of its morning hour; and it is the strength and glory of the Christian Priesthood, that it is the consecrated witness to this fact.

Now, if such be the selfishness, and consequently the

sin and sorrow, of these days, and if this be our line of battle against it, this the sign under which we are to conquer, what an appeal is there in these facts to us to make the most of this Divine force in the discipline and development of the character of the Ministry! This love, reaching out until it consummates itself, not merely in pity, or in patience, or in kindness, or in resignation and humility, but in all the countless forms of self-sacrifice, may and ought to utter itself in teaching, in sacramental functions, in pastoral duties, in private studies, in inward discipline, in spiritual contemplation; and yet beyond these there is a nobler and mightier channel of its power, even character, or life organized in all its faculties for the service and guidance of humanity. This, and not words, or professions, or badges and liveries of office, is what the practical instinct of our time demands. The more strongly to commend this love as the formative energy and crowning glory of priestly character, I need not recall the exalted, rapturous language in which it has been preached and sung by the various schools of piety and devotion that have adorned and blessed the Church in bygone ages, —schools represented by Sts. Chrysostom and Bernard, by à Kempis and Savonarola, by Pascal and Fénelon, by Tauler and Spener, by Jeremy Taylor and Ken, by Henry Martyn and Keble. It is enough that we fall back upon the sober, serene, measured words of Evangelists and Apostles, on whom was stamped the first impression of the life and character of the Son of man; nay, upon the yet simpler words of our Lord Himself, explained and certified as they were by His own exam-



ple. Since He dealt with this principle, there has been no room for conjecture or speculation concerning it. He was new and without parallel in that He planted it as a living heart at the centre of all life. With Him all truth, duty, worship, sympathy, service, ended in love,—love inexhaustible and infinitely varied in its application. In Him the whole nature of man—spirit, conscience, will, intellect, feeling—was fused into this one commanding force, and as such poured itself forth along all the avenues of practical goodness. At one time this “power of salvation” showed itself in condescension, compassion, consolation; at another, in healing the sick, casting out devils, forgiving sins, cleansing souls; at another, in preaching the Gospel to the poor, in binding up the broken-hearted, in setting at liberty them that are bruised, in giving rest to the heavy-laden; and, at last, in the absolute sacrifice of self on the Cross. It is only as we rise to the level of this conception of Christ, that the Sermon on the Mount becomes to us what it really is: “not a code of precepts, but the expression of a character; not a chapter of law, but the living interpretation of the Divine power which had come with Christ to regenerate the world.” Oh, how deep, how real, how free, how universal is this power! How filled with the fulness of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! How sublime the Ministry commissioned to proclaim and exemplify it! How impossible that a Ministry faithful to this trust should in this or any other century be less than the foremost function among men in dignity and influence!

IV. Finally, the Priest's lips must keep knowledge.

In the character demanded of him in these days, he must, to faith, truthfulness, and love, as they have been portrayed, add the light that is born of the power to think and to know. This comes last in the order of our thought, not because it is the chief thing, but because it is the essential condition of highest power in those transcendent elements of character. To show what the Priest ought to know and how he ought to think, or to set forth generally the intellectual status at which he should aim in order to lift his character, as a deputy of Christ, to the required level in these last years of the most remarkable of the ages, I need not catalogue the departments of knowledge, or repeat the commonplaces about the vigor and versatility of our nineteenth-century intelligence. It will suffice to mark its animus, and outline its main currents. The human mind as a whole is, more than ever before, conscious of its powers, and eager to use them. It is active, bold, and hopeful; asking questions, pushing conclusions, examining foundations, interpreting facts: doing all this in various tempers and with various motives; sometimes in honesty and good-will, too often of envy and strife and wanton mischief. Men's eyes are opening wider and wider on the hitherto unknown works of God, and their ears are more and more turned to catch fully and truly the voice that is heard through all nature, and their hands are grasping new and strange forces. Society itself is being analyzed and sifted and catechised, to ascertain what in its organism is divine and perpetual, and what is human and subject to change; what in it helps and what hinders the well-being of its members; what are the rela-

tions of classes and interests and vocations, and what are the rights and duties growing out of them; what are the sources of pauperism and crime and misery, and what the sources of prosperity, order, and happiness. These are old questions, and men have handled them in one way and another for ages; but they have never turned them up to the light or grappled with them in such resolute, passionate earnestness as now. In civil government there is less of serious agitation, less of deep thoughtfulness, less fervor and restlessness, only because men, in grounding the political fabric on the democratic idea, can push the distribution of power no farther. The central subject, however, to-day, as always in periods of change and movement and mental activity, is man's relations to God,—religion. This is the real pivot of the intellectual conflicts of the time. It involves what is deepest and highest, what is most hopeful, fearful, pathetic in life. The mind of this generation cannot dismiss it, cannot stand aloof from it. Now, as ever, every battle with evil, every feeling of remorse, every sagging of the will and conscience away from the liberty and truth which are their heritage, every freshly opened grave, every glance into the face of the sphinx-like future,—these, and a thousand other nameless things, compel men, however irreligious, to think of religion, and to make all their knowledge subsidiary to the solution of its problems.

Now, standing abreast of all this, and obliged to deal with it, the ordained witness to God's greatest gift, the Minister of unseen and eternal realities, must not only remember who he is and for what he was sent, but

must be man enough, intellectually as well as morally, to compel others to remember it. Believing himself, he must know how to meet and enter into the thoughts of men who can not or will not believe. Progress, activity, energy of every sort, change, liberty, are around and upon him. He cannot but be swayed by them ; and he ought to know how to make room for them in his own thought and teaching, while he keeps and guards the faith which cannot change. The Priest of God is a debtor, not only to Christ, who made him what he is, but also to the time in which he lives, because it is at once the theatre and the environment of his sacred function. He owes it as well to his age and his country, as to the Church of all ages and all countries, to be not only a pains-taking and hard-working, but a learned, Priest. He owes it to the ignorant, the restless, the disquieted. He owes it to the doubt as well as the belief of the day. He owes it to the young, who look to him for guidance into the ways of truth and righteousness ; to the mature, who, out on the unsteady sea of inquiry and trial, strain their eyes to catch a glimpse of the light that shall lead them to the Father's house ; to the old, who are folding their tents for the march into eternity ; and finally, and more than all, he owes it to the Cross of the Son of God, which claims the right to be enthroned on the heights of human intelligence.

I have nothing to urge as to the variety or comprehensiveness of this learning. He is not expected to know every thing, or to know more than other well-trained men know. But he is expected to know his own special subject in itself, and its relations to the

great branches of knowledge, in the way that other things are known by those who profess to cultivate and teach them. "No man can know every thing; but the men who influence the thought of their time are not those who try to know all things, but those who have learned one thing so well that they know, and show others also, *what knowing means*." It is the trained faculty of insight, the disciplined power of grappling with knotty, troublesome themes, the mental poise, the complete balance of judgment, that can hold opposing truths, opposing questions, opposing interests, in the scale, and so weigh them as not only to discern what they are in themselves, but their mutual and necessary limitations. This is higher and stronger than learning. It is the flower and fruit of knowledge, the fine gold of the intellect.

Brethren, "our awful Ministry starts from the foot of the Cross on which Jesus Christ died, from the grave from which He rose, from the mountain whence He went up; and it looks forward, as to its close and goal, to the day when we shall all stand before Him." We are the messengers of a Divine forgiveness, ministers of a Divine reconciliation, heralds of an everlasting peace. We are sent to feed the flock of God, to be gatherers of wandering souls into their Father's house, the stewards of His mysteries, the preachers and prophets of the Light of the World. There are many orders of work in God's world, and this is our work. Whatever else we fail in, let us not fail to do what we can, with God's help, to bring our personal and official character into conformity with this work. To character and the influence

that grows out of it, more than to any thing else, our Lord committed His cause. In personal service, personal devotion, personal purity, personal holiness, He founded His Church. By these it was to stand; apart from these it cannot conquer. So far, then, as human infirmity will allow, may we adopt as our own the words of St. Paul to his fellow-laborers in the Church of Corinth: "Giving no offence in any thing, that the Ministry be not blamed: but in all things approving ourselves as the Ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."<sup>1</sup> As those ordained to speak for Christ in these closing years of this Nineteenth Century, may we so grow into the likeness of His Ministry, that these words will not seem too strong or too great to embody our parting message to the men who will take up our work at the dawn of the Twentieth!

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. vi. 3-10.









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