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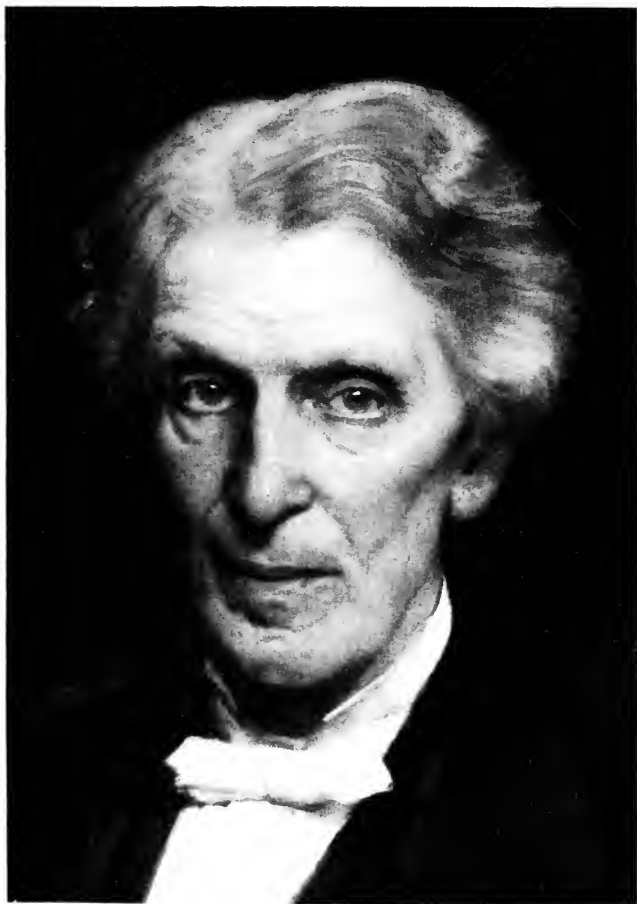




JAMES MARTINEAU







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*1888*



# JAMES MARTINEAU

Theologian and Teacher

A STUDY OF HIS LIFE AND THOUGHT

BY

<sup>Joseph</sup> J. ESTLIN CARPENTER, M.A.

*Second Issue, with Index*

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## PREFACE.

THIS book has been written at the invitation of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, to describe the Life and Work of Dr. Martineau in briefer compass than was possible to his first biographers. The many-sided activity of his unusually long career touched contemporary thought at various points ; and he became widely known through English-speaking lands as one of the leading champions of a spiritual religion, from whom men of all churches might have something to learn. Moreover, for the new generation of the household of faith, with which Dr. Martineau was associated to his latest days, it seemed desirable to relate in some detail the story of the change effected chiefly by his genius operating on the theological, philosophical, and scientific development of his time. On the organised expression of this change he bestowed long and earnest attention, and the history of English Unitarianism as a mode of religious belief and life in the Nineteenth Century cannot be understood apart from him. Readers who find such topics of less interest, because the area of their application is small, can easily pass over the chapters in which they are presented.

My obligations to the two volumes of *The Life and Letters*, by Principal Drummond and Prof. Upton, of course far exceed the references on the printed page. They first told a continuous story, and made possible such a supplemental study as is here offered. To Principal Drummond I am further indebted for copies of the letters to the Rev. George Crabbe (son of the poet Crabbe) which came into his possession after the *Life* was published : and Prof. Upton kindly handed to me the printed extract from the Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, vol. vi., containing the letters to the Rev. J. H. Allen, which became available in the same way. Prof. Upton also read most of the MS.,

and permitted me to discuss some questions of philosophical interpretation with him.

From the family of Dr. Martineau I received every help, as they gave me the freest access to all papers and correspondence hitherto unused ; and even entrusted to me an irregular diary of Mrs. Martineau (1828-1846), written in a shorthand which, by a fortunate accident, I was able to read.<sup>1</sup> This diary contained copies of several very interesting letters from 1840 onwards. The practised eyes of the Misses Martineau were also most helpful in the correction of the press, and they aided me throughout with valuable information and suggestions.

My sincere acknowledgments are also due to Messrs. James Nisbet & Co. for allowing me to cite some passages from Dr. Martineau's Biographical Memoranda already printed in the *Life*. Others appear now for the first time. Mr. Alexander Carlyle gave kind permission to quote the letters of Mrs. Carlyle ; Mrs. Wiley, of Chicago, and Messrs. Houghton and Mifflin readily granted a similar request for the use of the letters to Mr. Wiley printed in the *Atlantic Monthly*, October, 1900 ; while like courtesy was extended by Mr. Rickett and Messrs. Macmillan, and by Messrs. Cassell & Co. for an extract from the brief record of Dr. Martineau's life in their National Portrait Gallery. The portrait by Mr. Emslie has been reproduced with his friendly consent.

Many friends have contributed to this book by the loan of letters, or the recital of reminiscences. The Rev. J. E. Odgers and the Rev. P. H. Wicksteed have generously assisted me with constant advice in MS. and proof : and Prof. J. H. Muirhead gave willing and valuable counsel in the last chapter. But the responsibility both for what is said, and for what is not said, remains with the writer.

<sup>1</sup> The letters of Mr. Martineau to Dr. Lant Carpenter, of Bristol, were in the same script, which was also employed for his sermons and lectures.

J. E. C.

Oxford, April 6th, 1905.

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### CORRECTIONS

Page 23, transpose the figures in the text referring to the notes.

„ 36<sup>1</sup>, after 'Chester' add 'Bristol.'

„ 37<sup>4</sup>, l. 1, for 'Shiell' read 'Steel.'

„ 63<sup>2</sup>, for 'Newcastle' read 'Halifax.'

„ 67, l. 14, for 'Shiel' read 'Sheil.'

„ 82<sup>3</sup>, for 1793 read 1773.

„ 104, l. 10, for 'Review' read 'View.'

„ 104<sup>2</sup>, for 'Soul' read 'Life.'

„ 137<sup>1</sup>, for 1789 read 1798.

„ 140, l. 3, for 'was founded' read 'held its first public meeting.'

„ 207, l. 19, Watts and Neal have been wrongly reckoned with Calamy as Presbyterians. For 'leading Presbyterians' read 'liberal Nonconformists.'

„ 235, l. 7 from bottom, strike out 'i.e.'

„ 349, the second note should be marked <sup>2</sup> in text and below.

„ 444<sup>1</sup>, the words 'for Lancashire and Cheshire' should follow 'Provincial Assembly' in the next line.

To the acknowledgments in the preface should be added the mention of the kindness of Miss Alice Winkworth in permitting the free use of passages in the *Life of Catherine Winkworth*.

Oxford, 27 July, 1905.

## ILLUSTRATIONS.

- Photogravure of Portrait painted by  
A. E. EMSLIE in 1888 . . . . . *Frontispiece.*
- Photogravure of Engraving of Portrait  
painted by C. AGAR in 1847 . . . . . *Facing page 141.*



## CHAPTER I.

### THE EARLY YEARS, 1805-1822.

AT the beginning of the nineteenth century the city of Norwich was, in George Borrow's judgment, 'perhaps the most curious specimen extant of the genuine old English town.' Its streets were still narrow and winding; portions of its old walls stand even to this day; the last of its twelve gate-houses was only demolished in 1808. The stately Norman cathedral, with its spire second only to that of Salisbury, the massive buildings of the Castle, the noble proportions of St. Andrew's Hall—once the nave of the Black Friars' Church,—the unusual number of its parish churches, all bore witness to its antiquity, its wealth, and its importance, and justified the pride of its citizens.<sup>1</sup> Many a famous name had been connected with it; and from the fourteenth century onwards it had been a centre for large and important groups of foreign immigrants, Flemish, Dutch, and Walloon.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Norwich formerly was one of the first manufacturing towns in the kingdom. Every week large quantities of goods were exported to Hanover and Prussia, and the nuns of Italy and Spain were clothed with the manufactures of the city.'—Speech of Mr. Peter Martineau, *Norwich Mercury*, May 14, 1856.

<sup>2</sup> See R. L. Poole, *History of the Huguenots of the Dispersion*, 1880, p. 90.

## I.

To Norwich came Gaston Martineau, a surgeon of Dieppe, when the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 drove him from his own country. He belonged to the South-West, his father, Élie Martineau, having lived at Bergerac in the department of Dordogne. Another branch of the family was settled at Fontenoy (Yonne), where Louis Martineau, wealthy and respected, had a son Denis born to him in 1651, who found refuge in Holland when he could no longer worship in his own country according to the faith of his fathers.<sup>1</sup> They sprang, apparently, from a Romain Martineau, of Landes, living about 1450, who bore the title Sieur de Romas, and was designated as 'Écuyer.'<sup>2</sup>

Among the eighty thousand exiles who poured in to England and Ireland after 1685, Gaston Martineau did not come unfriended. On the same vessel was a family named Pierre, and to a daughter of this house, Marie, he was married at Spitalfields in 1693.<sup>3</sup> There his first child was baptized in 1694. A year later he was established at Norwich, and the records of the Walloon Church in 1695 show him the father of a second child. Six others

<sup>1</sup> Information from Mr. David Martineau : and *Magazin für die Literatur des Auslandes*, 1876, Aug. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Another tradition, which does not, however, tally with the information of the Registers, traced the family line to a Louis Martineau, who was apprenticed to a German printer, and married a Lutheran lady. This Louis, it is said, helped to establish a press at the Sorbonne ; and his descendants were Protestants, no longer of the Lutheran but of the Huguenot type. The story halts a little, because printing was introduced into Paris in 1482, a generation too soon for a Lutheran bride.

<sup>3</sup> A. W. Jackson, *James Martineau*, p. 2.



followed. David, the third, would be a surgeon, too; and his son, David, grown to man's estate, carried on the family tradition. This David married Sarah Meadows, grand-daughter of John Meadows (1622-1696), who was ejected from the living of Ousden, Suffolk, in 1662. Her sister Margaret became wife of Richard Taylor, eldest son of Dr. John Taylor, once the honoured pastor of the Octagon Chapel, Norwich.<sup>1</sup> The sisters were early left widows; to one had been born eight children, to the other seven. The eldest Martineau, bearing the name Philip Meadows, followed the noble service of his father David, who had caught a fatal sickness among his patients and died at the age of thirty-seven. The seventh and youngest, Thomas, became a manufacturer of bombazine and camlet, woollen stuffs for which Norwich had long been famous. Other members of the two families, Martineaus and Taylors, were settled in and around the city, and the most intimate connexions were maintained among them.

Thomas Martineau is described by an old family friend as 'of a quiet calm demeanour of which the value was much felt.' He must have had also a gentle and persistent energy, which enabled him to build up a considerable business. He married Elizabeth Rankin, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and to them was born in the large family house in Magdalen Street on April 21st, 1805, a seventh child who received the name of James. Three

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Taylor was minister at Norwich 1733-1757. The first stone of the New Octagon Chapel was laid in Feb., 1754, and the building was opened in May, 1756.

brothers, Thomas, Henry, and Robert, had preceded him, the youngest of these being already seven years old; and this superiority in age on the part of his brothers often rendered James lonely in his boyhood. There were three sisters also, Elizabeth, Rachel, and Harriet. Harriet could recall in after years how, when nearly three, she had found herself within the door of the best bedroom, 'an impressive place from being seldom used, from its having a dark polished floor, and from the awful large gay figures of the chintz bed-hangings.' That day the curtains were drawn, the blinds were down, and a fire was burning in the grate. An unknown nurse beckoned her across the slippery boards, placed her in a tiny chair, and laid a bundle of flannel across her knees. When it was opened, she saw the little red face of the baby.<sup>1</sup>

Other notable children were then rising into boyhood. Thomas Arnold and Thomas Carlyle were already ten years old. Pusey was five, and John Henry Newman four; the New England Emerson was two. Disraeli, to whom Dr. Martineau ultimately gave in his political allegiance, was born in 1804. To Martineau's own year belonged two men who were to become his friends, Francis William Newman, and Frederick Denison Maurice. The Newmans were of Huguenot lineage through their mother; Maurice was descended from one of the Ejected of 1662. A year later came John Stuart Mill; and Gladstone, Tennyson, and Darwin followed in 1809. Truly, a noble group of minds among which

<sup>1</sup> Harriet Martineau, *Autobiography*, i. 13.

to be ranked: for Gladstone was afterwards to describe him as 'first among living English thinkers.' He himself was proud—not of the ancestry which doubly pledged him to religious faithfulness, but of his nationality. At fifty he could say,—'The course of time and of educational association has worn out whatever was foreign in my nature, and I do not hesitate to pronounce myself emphatically, almost bigotedly, an Englishman.'<sup>1</sup>

## II.

The seventh child—another sister was born yet later—James Martineau was in the same position as Arnold, concerning whom he afterwards remarked that 'a large proportion of the men who have obtained distinction in the world, have been the last members of a large, or, as the Irish expressively term it, a *long* family.'<sup>2</sup> This eminence he was inclined to attribute among the middle classes to the freer hand usually applied by parents to their latest charge, and the larger consequent proportion of self-formation in the character. In his own case, this power was undoubtedly present in eminent measure, but it was first evoked and guided by an influence which only entered his life when he had been sent away from the family home. There, indeed, everything was well-ordered, earnest, and refined, but as the veteran of seventy years looked back upon his childhood, he was conscious that it had not been altogether happy.

The family life was doubtless animated by a

<sup>1</sup> Speech at Liverpool, June 22, 1855.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays*, i. 46.

deep and sincere affection, but this was rather realised afterwards by its results than actually felt at the time. The head of the household left the impression of being 'the most unselfish of men'; and his daughter Harriet further described him as 'humble, simple, upright, self-denying, affectionate to as many people as possible.' He was in no sense a man of learning; but he and William Taylor had stood with their slates at Mrs. Barbauld's knee, and he knew the value of a sound education. So Harriet recorded the gratitude of the whole family to both their parents 'for the self-sacrificing efforts they made, through all the vicissitudes of the times, to fit their children in the best possible manner for independent action in life.'<sup>1</sup> But the pressure of external events was severe. The year of James's birth was the year of Austerlitz. Then came the ascendancy of Napoleon, and the desperate struggle which ruined so many English merchants and manufacturers. Harriet could recall what her father's face was like when he told her mother of the increase of the income tax to two shillings in the pound. When taxation had reached its highest point, and foreign ports were closed against English merchandise, a wide-spread distrust and anxiety filled the most cautious traders with depression and foreboding; and housekeeping was conducted with a rigid economy which later generations could hardly realise.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Autobiography*, i. 127.

<sup>2</sup> The census figures for Norwich are not without significance in this respect: 1801, population 36,906; 1811, 37,313; 1821, 50,288.

The home-life under these circumstances took its tone rather from the mother than the father. Mrs. Martineau came from a sturdy Northumbrian stock. She was a woman of eminent capacity, and often assisted her husband in his business correspondence. 'Married to a man of more tenderness and moral refinement than force of self-assertion,' wrote her son James in the memories of three score and ten, 'she naturally played the chief part in the governance of the household.' That a certain vigour of discipline prevailed in it may be inferred from the general conditions of the time, but in his eightieth year Dr. Martineau could contrast it not unfavourably with the temper of a later age:—

In old Nonconformist families especially, the Puritan tradition and the reticence of a persecuted race, had left their austere impress upon speech and demeanour unused to be free; so that in domestic and social life there was enforced, as a condition of decorum, a *retenue* of language and deportment strongly contrasting with our modern effusiveness. But in the process of change to more genial ways that Norwich home was in advance of the average movement rather than behind; and in few others have I found the medium better observed between the opposite danger of bidding high for profession of enthusiasm and quenching its reality by coldness and derision.<sup>1</sup>

When Dr. Martineau said of his mother that 'her understanding was clear, and her will, with a duty once in sight, not to be diverted,' he really pointed with filial reverence to the source of qualities conspicuous in himself: 'but behind these,' he added, 'and giving them their direction, was an inexhaustible force of affection; and not behind them only, but glowing through them into her expressive features and fervent words.' Happy

<sup>1</sup> Letter to the *Daily News*, December 30, 1884.

was it for him that this wisdom and tenderness were to accompany him to his maturity. The family correspondence of after days bears ample testimony to the supporting guidance and the responsive love of mother and son.

### III.

Neither James nor his sister Harriet was physically robust. At five years old he seemed, in an old friend's retrospect, 'an unusually grave and thoughtful little boy.' He shrank from rough sports and rude companionship. The home lessons were conducted at first by the elder brothers and sister. Thomas, who was 'silent and reserved generally, and somewhat strict,' taught the younger sisters Latin grammar; Henry gave instruction in writing and arithmetic, and Elizabeth in French; and in these studies James was probably the early companion of Rachel and Harriet. The boy had to suffer from some fraternal tyranny, well-meant, no doubt, but exasperating to a shrinking shyness. The brothers took him to the river, and taught him to swim by forcing him to jump off a plank into the stream. But he was already learning lessons of self-command. An early memory was preserved of a certain dish of gooseberries which were to be prepared for cooking. The child was summoned from his garden play, and, overcoming his reluctance, slowly began to pick off the heads and tails. Then he pressed his lips together resolutely, and said to himself,

'The man of Calvary triumphed here,  
Why should his faithful followers fear?'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The couplet is from one of Mrs. Barbauld's hymns.

Grave and reserved was the religious life of such a home. There was the Sunday worship at the Octagon Chapel, of which Mr. Thomas Martineau was sometime a deacon. It had been opened in 1756, and it was described the next year by John Wesley as 'perhaps the most elegant in Europe.' But 'how can it be thought,' added the great preacher, 'that the old coarse Gospel should find admission here?' Dr. John Taylor, for whom the meeting-house was built,<sup>1</sup> was, however, otherwise minded. In his conception religion was independent of all sectarian distinctions. 'We are Christians,' he declared in his dedicatory sermon, 'and only Christians; and we consider all our fellow-Protestants, of every denomination, in the same light—only as Christians—and cordially embrace them all in affection and charity as such.' In such a spirit different forms of belief were able to subsist side by side without irritation and alarm, while a gradual change took place in the direction of a definite Unitarian theology.<sup>2</sup>

The pastor of James Martineau's boyhood was

<sup>1</sup> The old meeting-house of 1687 was pulled down owing to defects in the building in 1753.

<sup>2</sup> The memories of Presbyterian descent, however, were still preserved; and James Martineau afterwards recalled 'his extreme abhorrence, when a child, of Matthew Henry's Catechism, which he always thought the dullest piece of religious instruction he ever had to do with.'—Speech at the Provincial Meeting at Chester, *Inquirer*, June 18, 1846. On the other hand he was early alive to reverence for the grandeur of the world. Pleading at the Sunday School Association, London, 1858, for the admission of 'real knowledge' which should not be stamped as merely 'secular,' he said: 'I can recollect the period when, myself almost a child, I first acquired a picture of the universe, and I do not think any more religious impression was ever produced on my mind.'—*Inquirer*, May 29, 1858.

the Rev. Thomas Madge, who came to Norwich in 1811. He had been brought up in the Church of England, and his secession from the Establishment on doctrinal grounds led him to lay greater stress on the nature and contents of his new faith. Full of quick feeling, he was an enthusiastic student of Wordsworth, and Mr. Crabb Robinson records a visit to Norwich on Aug. 13, 1814, when he stole out from the theatre, whither he had accompanied some friends, to call on Madge, at whose apartments he found 'the great new poem of Wordsworth, *The Excursion*.' Doubtless this admiration helped to shape 'the sweet and solemn impression' which Harriet Martineau remembered as the effect of his preaching. In her brother James the silvery speech of the young minister wrought abiding memories. 'Some of my first awakenings of conscience and of spiritual faith,' he wrote to Mrs. Madge after her husband's death in 1870, 'came to me in the tones of that sweet voice, and the inward echoes were ever renewed when I heard it again, in preaching or in prayer.'<sup>1</sup>

From her earliest years Harriet had been easily moved by religious feeling, and she drew her chief pleasure from that source. She could remember waking one summer morning when she was five years old, in all the splendour of a crimson and

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir*, by the Rev. W. James, p. 324. From another point of view, however, he wrote to the Rev. E. M. Daplyn, then minister of the Octagon Chapel, after his ninety-third birthday—'Endearing as are many of my Norwich recollections, and the Octagon part in their history, they belong to an experience more or less apart from the opening of the chapter of continuous inner life, of what perhaps the orthodox Christian would call the crisis of conversion.'



purple sunrise. The 'baby' was in his crib, and while the nurse slept she contrived to get him to the window, and flung open the casement. 'The sky was gorgeous,' she relates, 'and I talked very religiously to the child.'<sup>1</sup> A little later they were partners in games, as they were later still in studies; and their games and their studies had a Biblical air. A story used to be told of a visitor who, inquiring after the children, was referred to the garden. James was buried in the earth with his head only above ground, and Harriet stood beside. 'Oh,' she explained, 'we're playing at the resurrection, and I've promised him he shall rise again!' Next, she is poring over the geography of the New Testament, making harmonies of the Gospels, and plodding through Belsham's *Exposition of the Epistles*; while he, set to read the Bible on Sunday, flies from Genesis to Isaiah between the return from chapel and dinner; 'skipping the nonsense, you know, Mamma.'<sup>2</sup> Pass on a few years, and the boy from school meets his sister at seven in the morning to study Lowth's *Prelections* in the Latin<sup>3</sup> before breakfast.

Serious, no doubt, was the home atmosphere; but its inmates had many interests; and outside were the large families of cousins who frequently met at each other's houses. The elder brothers teased Harriet about her economic studies; at Christmas games they charged her as a forfeit to

<sup>1</sup> *Autobiography*, i. 17.

<sup>2</sup> The story is told with inevitable variations; compare *Life*, i. 10; and the *Christian Life* for April 21, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> *Autobiography*, i. 101.

make every person present understand the operation of the Sinking Fund; and they addressed mock inquiries to her as to the state of the Debt. But the evening readings in history and biography and the new reviews went on uninterrupted. Harriet made herself a sort of 'walking concordance' of Shakspeare and Milton, and Mrs. Martineau's favourite poet was Burns. Moreover, the Taylor cousins were active in original production, and the Martineaus were called in to help. Large family gatherings were held at intervals, when essays and poems contributed by the circle of kindred were read, and plays of home-composition were acted, in which James could remember taking part.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. John Taylor, who wrote a number of verses and hymns in wide repute, was the friend of Mackintosh; and Mrs. Taylor was quite able to hold her own, composedly darning the family stockings while she conversed with Southey or Brougham. Sir James Smith, the botanist, was also an esteemed writer of hymns for the Octagon services, where he was deacon at the time of his death in 1828. Dr. Rigby, physician and agriculturist, grandson of Dr. John Taylor, apprenticed to David Martineau in 1762, was another kinsman. High in civic repute, he served as Mayor of Norwich in 1805, and his son Edward, who was only a year senior to James Martineau, was his comrade in the Norwich school. At the hospitable house of Dr. Alderson (the Martineaus' family physician), another distinguished

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Mrs. Ross (daughter of Lady Duff Gordon, and great-grand-daughter of Mr. John Taylor), in her *Three Generations of English Women*, 1888, vol. i.

Unitarian, his daughter, Mrs. Opie, widow of the painter, wrote her tales, and cultivated society, and planned her philanthropies. And through William Taylor,<sup>1</sup> the friend of Southey, who had translated Lessing's 'Nathan,' Bürger's 'Lenore,' and Goethe's 'Iphigenia in Tauris,' as early as 1790, the literary outlook was yet further extended. He taught Borrow German, and when the young Martineau was a student at York, and there were family plans for sending him to Göttingen, it is possible that William Taylor may have done a like service for him.<sup>2</sup> Such a society could not fail to stimulate. William Taylor and Thomas Martineau had been school-fellows at Mr. Barbauld's, at Palgrave, in Suffolk: and when they became men, and Mrs. Barbauld sometimes paid a visit to Norwich, she always spent a long morning in the house in Magdalen Street. The children had learned her delightful 'Hymns in Prose'; 'we knew she was very learned,' wrote Harriet, 'and we saw she was graceful, and playful, and kindly, and womanly.'

#### IV.

At ten years of age James Martineau was sent as a day scholar to the Norwich Grammar School. Facing the western front of the cathedral, it was entered from the precincts of the close, and day after day the lofty spire looked down upon the boys as they assembled there; but it did not become

<sup>1</sup> 1765-1836. He was not one of the descendants of Dr. John Taylor, but was connected with the family of Maurice.

<sup>2</sup> A notebook shows him already busy with his grammar in his first college year.

a companion to the lad whose imagination had not yet been awakened. To the Rev. Dr. Jessop in 1888 Dr. Martineau recalled 'the old schoolroom in the Norwich close, where I consorted in the playground or competed in the class with Brooke and Stoddart, Borrow, Rigby, and Dalrymple,<sup>1</sup> and learned to respect the scholarship of our master, Edward Valpy, and laugh at the vanity of our usher Banfather. As sole survivor of that group, I cannot but see its very sins dressed in a tender and softening light.' Borrow, Rigby, and Dalrymple, were his special companions ; but his friendship with the first-named had a dismal close. The story, as reported by Miss Cobbe in later years, has a touch of boyish melodrama.

Borrow had persuaded several of his other companions to rob their fathers' tills, and then the party set forth to join some smugglers on the coast. By degrees the truants all fell out of line and were picked up, tired and hungry, along the road, and brought back to Norwich school, where condign chastisement awaited them. George Borrow, it seems, received his large share *horsed* on James Martineau's back.<sup>2</sup>

The sensitive boy found the general scramble almost intolerable ; and though he retained grateful memories of his teachers (especially in geometry), he could never forget that he had 'suffered keenly

<sup>1</sup> Sir James Brooke, 1803-1868, Rajah of Sarāwak : Charles Stoddart, 1806-1842, beheaded with Conolly in Bokhara, June, 1842 : George Borrow, 1803-1881, author of *The Bible in Spain*, *Lavengro*, etc. : Edward Rigby, 1804-1860, great-grandson of Dr. John Taylor, afterwards a distinguished London surgeon : John Dalrymple, 1803-1852, son of an eminent Norwich surgeon, and himself afterwards famous as an ophthalmic surgeon. There were then about 240 boys.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Frances Power Cobbe*, vol. ii. 117. Borrow, when invited to dinner by Miss Cobbe, withdrew his acceptance on learning that his old schoolfellow was to be one of the party.

under the smart of hopeless oppression and unmerited insult.<sup>1</sup> The instructor in drawing is said to have been 'Old Crome.' The artistic instinct of the boy was not, however, as yet articulate. He could remember the repute of Crome and Cotman, but only as contributing a sensible element to the local pride in his native city 'for which the inhabitants of the place were often ridiculed.'<sup>2</sup> In truth, as will be seen hereafter, while he possessed in a remarkable degree the power of visualising old memories, and investing the most abstract thought with pictorial form, he was too deeply imbued with ethical principles to be in full sympathy with the temperament of the artist.

The school years at Norwich were not happy, and the boy was for a time withdrawn, and placed under the care of Mr. Madge, who wisely turned his studies in fresh directions, and made him read poetry and romance. The tension of his life seems to have shown itself in a curious way in occasional sleep-walking, which brought him once as an involuntary intruder into the Sunday evening supper party, where Mr. Madge, Mr. J. Withers Dowson, and others, were frequent visitors after the services at the Octagon were over.

About the age of thirteen or fourteen I was subject to somnambulism; and, one Sunday night, wound up my first sleep by marching down from the top room of the house in my night-gown straight into the supper-room, creating a confusion and stir which broke the spell and brought me to myself. The look of Mr. Madge's astonishment and of Withers Dowson's sweet compassion I can never forget. My mother led me out,

<sup>1</sup> These impressions are reflected in the essay on Dr. Arnold, *Essays*, i. 63.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to the Rev. E. I. Fripp, July 9, 1894.

put my feet in hot water by the kitchen fire, and sent for Dr. Alderson, who got me into order after a day or two in bed. But the habit returned upon me at intervals, to the terror of some of my subsequent school-fellows at Dr. Carpenter's.<sup>1</sup>

## V.

Looking back over his boyhood from the vantage ground of middle life, the essayist, in pleading for a service of Christian consecration analogous to the Anglican rite of confirmation, once impersonally described the great transition of his youth.<sup>2</sup>

His guide through this passage, which he afterwards called his 'spiritual rebirth,'<sup>3</sup> was Dr. Lant Carpenter, who had removed from Exeter to Bristol in 1817, and there established a small school in his house in Great George Street. Bristol was also the home of some of Mrs. Martineau's kindred; and in the school of her aunt, Mrs. Robert Rankin, Harriet first came under the influence of Dr. Carpenter at the Lewin's Mead Meeting, where he shared the pastorate with Mr. Rowe. Her enthusiasm for her new teacher led her father to place her brother James with Dr. Carpenter, when he was fourteen; and the two years which he spent there (1819-21) supplied the great formative influence of his subsequent career. Dr. Carpenter was then in his fortieth year, full of eager activity in education as in philanthropy; and the contact with him

<sup>1</sup> Letter to his cousin, Mrs. Wilde, Jan. 1, 1885. A tradition was preserved at Great George Street (Bristol) that he was found on one occasion holding one of his room-mates (Lord Suffolk) out of a third floor window! After that incident he slept in a room by himself.

<sup>2</sup> 'Dr. Arnold,' *Essays*, i. 66.

<sup>3</sup> Letter to Rev. E. M. Daplyn.

was so stimulating to the young Martineau that he afterwards wrote—'So forcibly did that period act upon me,—so visibly did it determine the subsequent direction of my mind and lot, that it always stands before me as the commencement of my present life, making me feel like a man without a childhood.'<sup>1</sup>

Soon after his departure from home his mother writes that his father, needing relief from the anxieties of business, will shortly visit him and report the delightful family meeting of Martineaus and Taylors which he had missed by his absence;<sup>2</sup> while two or three weeks later his sister Rachel informs him that he is 'regarded at Bristol as backward in writing and arithmetic, and well up in Latin and Greek.' To himself he appeared in retrospect 'a sallow stripling of fourteen, of shy and sensitive temperament, but superficially hardened by the rude discipline of a public school.'<sup>3</sup> His comrades<sup>4</sup> found him 'serious and diligent, and a little sentimental, but he showed no particular sign of the power which developed itself a few years later.'<sup>5</sup> The school themes, however, now and then strike a personal note. When he writes on 'Fortitude,' the future Martineau speaks in the words—'The

<sup>1</sup> To Rev. R. L. Carpenter, *Memoir of Lant Carpenter*, p. 342.

<sup>2</sup> Sixty-five dined together on that occasion in the Hall Concert-room. The Rev. Philip Taylor came over from Dublin to be present. Mrs. Martineau expresses herself to James as 'deeply impressed by the fine character manifested all through so large an assembly.'

<sup>3</sup> *Life and Work of Mary Carpenter*, p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> These included Samuel Greg (elder brother of Wm. Rathbone Greg), James Heywood, Samuel Worsley, Lord Suffolk, and one, perhaps two, of his brothers.

<sup>5</sup> Samuel Worsley to Rev. R. L. Carpenter, April 11, 1857.

habit of bearing the little disappointments and misfortunes of youth, and not allowing weakness of disposition to overcome us, is the foundation on which the rest must be built'; and on 'Liberty' he contrasts the growth of popular liberties in Europe with the slave trade of Africa, and concludes (at fifteen) with a plea for Catholic emancipation.

This interest in public affairs was largely quickened by Dr. Carpenter's method of awakening the reverence of his pupils for great men among the living and the dead.

Of those who were my companions around the dinner-table, when he read the daily papers to us, and made the parliamentary debates the vehicle for his fine lessons of constitutional wisdom, some have been actively engaged in the struggles of public life,<sup>1</sup> and all have watched from no disadvantageous point the course of social change, and the conduct of party leaders: and I confidently appeal to them, whether they have not found their school-day politics, caught from your father's conversation, or vindicated in their own debating society, an admirable preparation for the graver controversies which engage the legislator or the citizen. . . . I shall never forget how the Manchester massacre kindled his generous indignation; drew forth his stores of constitutional history in eloquent defence of the popular right of petition; and suggested to him great maxims of civil freedom. And the sentences of Grattan's final speech in behalf of the Catholic claims still ring in my memory, as they flowed from your father's fervent lips, and thrilled into me my first and last true love of the principles of religious liberty.

Such an outlook on great public questions sprang from a conscience trained to sleepless vigilance. The primary force of Dr. Carpenter's whole mind was its *moral feeling*: 'I have never seen in any human being the idea of duty, the feeling of right, held in such visible reverence.' To this influence

<sup>1</sup> The late Mr. Robert N. Philips, long member for Bury, once told the present writer that at the first Speaker's dinner which he attended after entering Parliament, the guests on either side of him had been at Dr. Carpenter's school.



James Martineau yielded himself a willing subject. He felt it exercised through the books chosen for classical reading, the moral treatises of Cicero, the *Agricola* of Tacitus, the selections from Juvenal, the dialogues of Plato. He felt it above all in the Greek Testament Class and in that of Moral Philosophy, where 'opportunities naturally arose for the opening of problems in the highest degree interesting to the affections and stimulating to the reflective faculties of young thinkers.'<sup>1</sup>

It was not only in the lessons of the class-room, however, that these deeps were sounded. He had been already instructed in the older literature of Presbyterian devotion, and when some of the writings of evangelical religion (which were much used by devout Unitarians) now fell in his way, the appeals and persuasions of Wilberforce and Hannah More addressed themselves to a mind already prepared. He read them eagerly in his bedroom, not knowing that he thereby broke a household rule, and incurring the rebuke of his teacher for his 'sin of ignorance.'<sup>2</sup> 'Practical Piety,' in particular, took a powerful hold on him, and brought to his mind a sense of sin which could not be accommodated to the metaphysic of Priestley,<sup>3</sup> but nevertheless sank deep and bore ample fruit in later years. The profound note of penitence in his maturest utterances was first sounded in this boyish experience. Meantime he lived in the daily

<sup>1</sup> *Biographical Memoranda.*

<sup>2</sup> Speech to a deputation from Manchester College on occasion of his ninetieth birthday, April 23, 1895.

<sup>3</sup> See the following chapters.

practice of strenuous duty, and the delight of newly awakened personal and religious affections.<sup>1</sup>

There can be no severer test (he afterwards wrote) of an instructor's influence, than the degree of self-restraint which the mere thought of him may induce his pupils to exercise in his absence. To this test your father was more than once compelled to submit by attacks of serious illness, which confined him to his room; and many of my former school-fellows will bear witness with me that when his desk was vacant, the school room was no less silent and orderly, no less a scene of punctual and sustained industry, than if he had been present.<sup>2</sup>

There were, in fact, no obscure reasons for this tranquillity. At the teacher's desk was James Martineau himself, and in the monitor's seat was Mary Carpenter, his junior by two years.<sup>3</sup> 'Mary has great influence among the boys,' reported her mother in the summer of 1820, 'and with her gentle voice, and mild but firm expostulation, can maintain an astonishing degree of order among them.' The following scene in the Lewin's Mead Meeting-house, shows the same clear vision which marks other memories of the early days.

<sup>1</sup> One other influence may here be named, though it did not acquire its full power for many years later—the writings of Channing. 'I can never forget,' he wrote to Mr. Schermerhorn, March 20, 1880, 'my first introduction to his name. I was a school-boy of sixteen, when, in 1821, my master, the late Dr. Lant Carpenter, received from Boston a copy of the Dudleian Lecture on Evidences of Christianity, and both read it to his pupils in private, and, after a preface of enthusiastic commendation, preached it to his congregation on the following Sunday. It laid a powerful hold on me, and seemed to find something in me that had never been reached before. This was but the beginning of an experience which was repeated and enlarged, as, one after another, his great sermons and essays came over and burned their way into new seats of thought and affection.' The experience, however, was not realised or understood till much later. See *infra*, chap. V. § ii.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoir of Lant Carpenter*, p. 343.

<sup>3</sup> Letter of Dr. Martineau to J.E.C., Aug. 8, 1877.

Instead of having my place with the other pupils in the long line of the family pew, I usually sat with an aunt in a seat at right-angles to the other, and with a near front view of it. And as I now range in thought over its series of vanished forms, not one of them is clearer than that intent young daughter, lost to herself and all around, and surrendered to the sweet pieties that flowed upon that winning voice. And at the end of the day, when evening prayers and supper were over, and the juniors had gone to bed, and the rest of us lingered for a precious half-hour of serious talk, she was privileged to sit with her arm in her father's—sometimes as a silent listener, at others helping us to draw from him his thoughts on some problems that perplexed us; or, in lighter moods, tempting him to tell the stories of his college days.<sup>1</sup>

These hours of worship wrought an abiding work in the boy's heart, and prepared the way for the change which came upon him ere he had left school a year. In Dr. Carpenter's house he recognised a religion of absolute sincerity, no far-off dream, but positively busy with the concerns of every day. To this cause did he ascribe the fact that 'he never disgusted even the most careless with religion,—a pre-eminence in which, so far as I know, he stands almost solitary among teachers.'

There was something in his voice, mellowed by the spirit within, that made the reality of God felt; something that broke through the boundary between the seen and the unseen, and opened that 'secret place of the Almighty' whence sanctity descends on all human obligations. I can never lose the unspeakable sacredness which he diffused over the Sunday; and after all the changes of twenty years, its morning and evening come to me still in the same colours that awed and refreshed my boyish mind. And often, amid the labours of that day, or under that preparatory travail of the soul whose severity few suspect, and which it is fitting to bear in silence, have I remembered the peaceful Sabbath hours purchased by your father's faithful service, and thought any toil repaid which can shed such consecration on the seventh part of human life.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Life and Work of Mary Carpenter*, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoir of Lant Carpenter*, p. 351.

## VI.

James Martineau left Bristol at midsummer, 1821. He had already decided upon a profession, and his work at school had been in part arranged as a direct preparation for the career of an engineer. In addition to the regular courses of instruction in science, including geology, natural philosophy,<sup>1</sup> and chemistry, with illustrative specimens, diagrams, and experiments, he had been allowed to devote extra time to mathematics, and he carried with him a good knowledge of Euclid, the Conic Sections, Plane Trigonometry, and the elementary formulas of Spherical. It had been hoped that he might begin his career under the eye of kinsfolk in an engineering business, but they recommended another arrangement. The letters from January onwards are concerned with these prospects: under the date of February 25 he noted afterwards, 'the account of them gives occasion to so much admirable advice and record of experience, that I keep the letter as equally characteristic of my mother's wisdom and high principle.' Finally an opening was found in the machine-works of Mr. Fox at Derby. Before settling there he went with his father and mother to Newcastle, to attend the christening of the first child of his eldest sister. The travellers went on into Cumberland, to visit an old friend of Mr. Thomas Martineau. In the garden of the house near Cockermouth, he saw the distant masses of the Lake hills, and there burst upon him 'the glorious surprise with which real mountains when

<sup>1</sup> This term lingered on for more than a generation afterwards.

first seen fix the eye and fill the mind.’<sup>2</sup> Neither the tranquil charm of the Norfolk Broads, nor even the sea at Yarmouth or the other coast places to which the children were sometimes sent, seems to have awakened his delight like mountain beauty. For this he had hungered, not knowing the meaning of his longing; for this, too, his readings in Wordsworth had specially prepared him; and to this he remained devoted even when he could climb no more.

The return journey brought him to Derby, where his parents left him in the house of the Unitarian minister, the Rev. Edward Higginson.<sup>1</sup> The experiment with Mr. Fox was not successful. The boy was only sixteen, but mind, conscience, soul, had been as it were reborn. His intellect was essentially constructive. He longed to work by principles; his master thought it enough to put tools before him, and send him to the turning-lathe or the model room. He wanted scientific guidance; he got the run of the shops. In the absence of adequate theoretic help, the taste for mechanics flagged, and the prospect of five years’ service with

<sup>1</sup> ‘John Kenrick,’ *Essays*, i. 401.

<sup>2</sup> Concerning this gentleman he wrote in 1882 to Prof. F. W. Newman, à propos of Mozley’s *Reminiscences*: ‘Mozley’s account of my father-in-law, Mr. Higginson, of Derby, is far from just; though I can well believe, from the conspicuous character of such faults as he had, that the impression of him in the minds of his orthodox neighbours is honestly reported. I myself greatly disliked the tone of the society in which he moved; and it was in some measure a repulsion from it that drove me from Civil Engineering (which I was learning at Derby) into the Ministry. . . . But Mr. Higginson was neither a ‘scoffer’ nor ‘idle’; and Mozley’s father would never have borne with patience the application of such terms to him.’

no more result than the mastery of a very limited class of machines filled him with dismay. The slow process of discouragement was unexpectedly precipitated into a change of purpose. The religious impressions made upon him at Bristol deepened as he was withdrawn from their source. A sudden and sorrowful incident brought about the crisis. In the adjoining town of Nottingham there lived a cousin, married to the young and pure-souled minister of the High Pavement Chapel, Henry Turner, to whom he became deeply attached. In January, 1822, Mr. Turner died. Beside his grave a new purpose sprang up in the heart of the young apprentice.<sup>1</sup> More than half a century later, as he took part in the meeting which followed the opening of the High Pavement Church, April 28, 1876, he recalled that hour in moving words.<sup>2</sup>

Here in Nottingham it was that, under a sudden flash and stroke of sorrow, which few were able to remember, but of which many retained traces yet, the scales fell from his eyes, and the realities and solemnities of life first came upon him. Here it was that the religious part of his life first commenced; in fact the light was so overpowering and so strong that it bore him from the workshop of his occupation, and turned him from an engineer into an evangelist. He well remembered, under the fervour of the first enthusiasm, how the voices that sounded in our various places of worship appeared to him to be beneath the exigences of the case—too sober and too cold; and amid the broken light of an immature judgment he thought there ought to be some stronger and more spiritual ministry, that should less depend upon our self-help, but should take us off our feet, and fling us into a diviner life than that which prevailed among us.

<sup>1</sup> Relating the incident to Mr. Newman, he says: 'I frequently visited the house, before and after it became a house of mourning; and the contrast of its spirit with what disappointed me at Derby, completed my conversion to a new mode of life.'

<sup>2</sup> Reported in the *Inquirer*.

The sequel was thus narrated by himself: 'At the end of a year I avowed my wish to change my profession.<sup>1</sup> My father, while warning me that I was courting poverty, suppressed his disappointment; bore without reproach the forfeiture of the premium he had paid for me; and engaged to bear the expense of my theological education at Manchester College, York.'

<sup>1</sup> Two months after Mr. Turner's death he had written to his old master, Dr. Carpenter, with a reference to some inward struggles. 'I feel grateful to you for having so kindly given me your advice. I have sometimes felt a wish to apply to you for assistance in some difficulties which I have sometimes painfully felt in the regulation of my religious feelings and the discharge of religious duties; but I felt how much better it would be to surmount them unassisted, which I trust I have in some measure done.' The same letter dwelt on his intercourse with the young widow: 'she is indeed the most holy example of tranquil, pious resignation I ever expect to see.' To Mrs. Henry Turner Dr. Martineau remained closely attached for more than seventy years.—When Martineau was at Derby, there was a child of three in the same town, who, in his adult years, was to abandon the engineering profession for philosophy, and break a lance on more than one occasion with his senior in the same field, Herbert Spencer.

## CHAPTER II.

COLLEGE YEARS, 1822-1827.

THE change of purpose which carried James Martineau to Manchester College, York, in the autumn of 1822, had not met with universal approval among his friends. But it opened to him one precious sympathy which he ever afterwards held in grateful remembrance. He was only seventeen, 'a shy and awkward stripling,' as he described himself in retrospect, yet (as will be seen) full of quick sensibility and hidden fire. Warnings and discouragements naturally drove him in upon himself; but in his eldest brother Thomas, who had vowed himself to the family profession of medicine, he found unexpected support. The difference of age which had before been a barrier, no longer checked their intercourse; the reserve of earlier days was melted; 'his heart opened to me many a secret admiration and reverence as he read his favourite poets or discussed the graver problems of life.'<sup>1</sup> And behind this influence lay another more precious still. In the home of the Rev. Edward Higginson at Derby, where he had lived during his apprentice-

<sup>1</sup> Biographical Memoranda, quoted in the *Life*, i., 40.



ship, were three daughters, in one of whom he had already found an 'elevation of mind and steady enthusiasm' able to bring him 'calmness of soul and fixity of purpose.'<sup>1</sup> Fortified by this affection, which was to be cherished through four silent years, he prepared to resume the studies which his engineering plans had interrupted.

## I.

Manchester College was the heir of an honourable academic tradition. The Act which imposed the obligations of conformity upon every minister, in 1662, included the schoolmaster and the university teacher within its scope. Shut out at once from the national homes of knowledge, the Nonconformists were compelled to make their own provision for education, and especially for the training of a 'godly ministry'; and some ejected man of learning would open his house in the seclusion of the country, and give academic instruction to such as needed it. The first of these was established at Rathmell, near Settle, in Yorkshire, in 1670, by Richard Frankland, and before the end of the century sent forth more than three hundred students. One after another followed, till the fifth in the series, the Warrington Academy, where Dr. John Taylor, Priestley, Enfield and Gilbert Wakefield had taught, came to an end in 1785. Sixth in succession, Manchester College was founded in 1786 and solemnly dedicated by its Principal, the Rev. Thomas Barnes, D.D., 'to

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Mrs. Thomas Martineau.

truth, to liberty, to religion.’<sup>1</sup> Its scheme included ‘a full and systematic course of education for divines, and preparatory instructions for the other learned professions, as well as for civil and commercial life’; and these advantages were to be enjoyed ‘free from any subscriptions, tests, or obligations inconsistent with the sacred rights of truth and conscience.’ In 1803 the College was removed to York, but its aims and methods remained unchanged.

Fifty years afterwards the veteran teacher could recall his bitter sense of the privation which had kept him away from one of the Universities of his country.<sup>2</sup> Yet this recollection was absorbed in the memory of the time when his mind had been roused to its richest activity, and the sense of responsibility awakened into an experience which if solemn was also joyous. He was already well prepared for the years which would exchange the instincts and vague aspirations of boyhood for deeper convictions and firmer principles. As he looked back from the distant heights of life to his College training, he still retained the freshest impression of its meaning. The studies of his maturest age were founded on the class-work of half a century or more before. At York he had first explored wide fields of knowledge; there, as he pored over

<sup>1</sup> Discourse at the commencement, Sept. 14, 1786. It was then called the Manchester Academy, but it was sometimes designated Manchester New College before the end of the century, in contrast with the Collegiate foundation connected with the noble old Church (now the Cathedral).

<sup>2</sup> Speech at the presentation of his portrait to Manchester New College, June 24, 1874. Compare the speech at a College dinner, at the Freemasons’ Hall, June 23, 1859. *Inquirer*.

ancient history and modern literature, new capacities of sympathy had been awakened ; there intimacies with fellow-students were clothed with ideal light and glory ; and there the great masters of thought drew him into friendships which no griefs or disappointments of later years could shake or change. Well might he find compensations, after all, for his exclusion from 'the great ecclesiastical schools of divinity, where learning and piety are engaged to advocate foregone conclusions, and to plead the cause of the altar and the priest,' and, as he laid down the Principalship of the College, declare in emphatic words, 'I was myself its creation, moulded by it to the very marrow of me, formed by its clay, and shaped by its wheel.'<sup>1</sup>

The external arrangements were simple. Three houses stood in Monkgate, outside the ancient Bar, on the Scarborough Road, shut off from the thoroughfare by a wall, and forming within the enclosure a small quadrangle. In the centre lived the Rev. William Turner, M.A., tutor in Mathematics and Philosophy ; and the houses on either side were occupied by the students. A lecture-hall and classrooms had been erected in the rear. At breakfast, dinner, and supper, the students gathered in Mr. Turner's dining-room ; tea was already the cherished opportunity for more intimate intercourse in their own rooms. Behind the College buildings lay a piece of field for exercise and games, pole-leaping being much in vogue ; cricket was not played till 1827, when Martineau was a member of the club.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Speech to Past and Present Students, June 24, 1885.

<sup>2</sup> *Life*, i. 27.

Most of all he loved his boat upon the Ouse, sent by his father all the way from Norwich. The level scenery around York, like his native Norfolk, lacked the mountains for which he always yearned, and the Minster with its noble organ made no special appeal to him. The Sundays were soon filled with Sunday School work, and missionary visits to the villages around. For those who were not thus engaged, there were the regular services in the venerable meeting-house at St. Saviourgate, where the Rev. Charles Wellbeloved, the Principal of the College, ministered.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Wellbeloved had come to York as a young man of twenty-three, to assist the Rev. Newcome Cappe in his pastoral office. When the Manchester Academy became Manchester College, York, the larger part of the teaching fell on him, and only a persistent industry and devotion enabled him to grapple with his varied labours. To a singular gentleness, modesty, and benevolence, he joined a quiet force and an occasional incisiveness of utterance which gave him dignity and secured him respect. He had found time to take an active share in local institutions; his was the voice that could often soothe the unhappy sufferers in the York Lunatic Asylum; while in another field his exact lore as an antiquarian brought him the goodwill of those who were widely separated from him on grounds of religion. Among the ten neat quarto volumes of notes which Martineau carried away from York, not the least prized were those which contained his reports of the Principal's lectures

<sup>1</sup> For sixty-six years. Cp. *below*, chap. VII. § i.

on the 'Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion,' 'Theology,' and the Hebrew and Chaldee languages. The characteristics of the teacher the pupil thus summed up a generation later.

Well do I remember the respectful wonder with which we saw, as our course advanced, vein after vein of various learning modestly opened out; the pride with which we felt that we had a Lightfoot, a Jeremiah Jones, and an Eichhorn all in one, yet no mere theologian after all, but scarcely less a naturalist and an archæologist as well; the impatience with which, out of very homage to his wisdom, we almost resented his impartial love of truth in giving us the most careful epitome of other opinions with scarce the suggestion of his own. Many of us have found the notes taken in his lecture-room our best cyclopædia of divinity during the first years of our active ministry, when books were forced aside by other claims; and when at last some leisure for independent study has been won, and the entrance of the theologic sciences upon new phases has taken us into untried fields, then most of all, if I may generalize my own experience, have we been thankful for our training under a master of the true Lardner type, candid and catholic, simple and thorough, humanly fond indeed of the counsels of peace, but piously serving every bidding of sacred truth. Whatever might become of the particular conclusions which he favoured, he never justified a prejudice; he never misdirected our admiration; he never hurt an innocent feeling, or overbore a serious judgment; and he set up within us a standard of Christian scholarship to which it must ever exalt us to aspire.<sup>1</sup>

Some of his students found him too much addicted to the words 'probably' and 'perhaps.' But he taught as well assured the distinction of documents in the Pentateuch on which the modern view of Israel's history depends;<sup>2</sup> he read the Messianic passages in the prophets by the aid of contemporary political events; and he interpreted many of the predictions in the Gospels then supposed to relate

<sup>1</sup> 'A Plea for Biblical Studies and something more,' Oct. 1858: *Essays*, i. 53.

<sup>2</sup> Not, however, with the modern dates.

to the last judgment, in the light of the great catastrophe to the Jewish state when Jerusalem fell. Among the writers whom he bade his hearers consult, the treatises of Anthony Collins on the 'Scheme of Literal Prophecy,'<sup>1</sup> and of Jeremiah Jones<sup>2</sup> and Nathaniel Lardner<sup>3</sup> on the New Testament, made the deepest impression on the young Martineau. 'To the study of their writings seventy years ago,' he told Mrs. Humphry Ward (June 7th, 1892), 'I owe by far the greater part of my present modes of critical opinion; all that has come since being but the natural development and application (*mutatis mutandis*, no doubt) of what I learned from them and their compeers.'<sup>4</sup> Mr. Wellbeloved, however, was much more than a guide to the knowledge of others. Whenever he quoted an opinion as 'little known and less regarded,' he was followed with an eager attention, for by this formula he was understood to veil the utterance of his own convictions.

<sup>1</sup> Published in 1727, and directed against the view that Jesus was proved to be the Messiah on the ground of prophecy.

<sup>2</sup> 1693-1724: Independent minister, fellow-student of Secker (afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury) at the academy of his uncle, Samuel Jones, at Gloucester. His work on the Canon was published in three vols., 1726-7, and was reprinted at the Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1728 and 1827.

<sup>3</sup> 1684-1786: Independent minister: best known as the author of the *Credibility of the Gospel History*, which occupied nearly thirty years in publication, 1727-1755: other works from the same learned pen followed.

<sup>4</sup> *Life*, ii. 239. Collins's work he had commended to the Rev. George Crabbe (July 26, 1848), as 'not exceeded, for acuteness and good sense, by any of the more elaborate disquisitions of recent times,' mentioning for especial praise his proof of the late date of the book of Daniel.

The classical reading, with the allied subjects of history and literature, was directed by the Rev. John Kenrick. His studies at Glasgow, Göttingen, and Berlin, had secured him an ample range of learning, which his fine sense of proportion always kept in due check in the teacher's chair. Half a century later, when Dr. Martineau had himself had a generation of experience of the same difficulties and privileges, he looked back with admiration to the mastery and completeness of his old instructor. With his own memories of German class-rooms as a standard, he could yet say that in Mr. Kenrick's treatment of every subject, there seemed to be one constant characteristic,—a comprehensive grasp of its whole outline, with accurate scrutiny of its separate contents. 'Nothing fragmentary, nothing discursive, nothing speculative, broke the proportions or disturbed the steady march of his prearranged advance.'<sup>1</sup> In his lectures on Ancient and Modern History the eager young student found the guidance which he needed through the tangled path of centuries,—as the movements of nations and the influence of personalities stood out in clear outline; while a fastidious restraint presided over his judgments in literature and art, though 'not a fountain of true genius was left unvisited.' In James Martineau Mr. Kenrick found a pupil ready to follow wherever he led; he might have to rebuke him for 'intemperate study'; he never needed to spur him out of slackness or indifference. After all, the most precious of a teacher's lessons is that of his own character; and in describing

<sup>1</sup> *Essays*, i. 408.

John Kenrick Dr. Martineau also delineated himself :—

He was above ambition, incapable of pretence, eager to see things as they are, and assured that through the darkness that sometimes enfolds them, the only guide is the unswerving love of truth ; and, accepting life for service, not for sway, he never measured his sphere to see whether it was small or great, but deemed it enough to bear his witness where he stood, and help, as he might, the companions of his way.<sup>1</sup>

The head of the College residence was the Rev. William Turner, who lectured on mathematics and physics, and then conducted his students through the science of mind to the principles of political philosophy and social economy. Martineau's previous studies had carried him ahead of his College comrades in mathematics ; its methods were not indeed altogether congenial to him, but for that reason he compelled himself to greater diligence, and under the ' admirable teaching ' of his tutor, succeeded in mastering Newton's *Principia*. He felt the value of the intellectual discipline, and from time to time in later life resumed his reading to keep his mind open and his will alert. With the elements of psychology, metaphysics, and ethics he had already become familiar through the classes of his old schoolmaster, Dr. Lant Carpenter. Mr. Turner shared the same devotion to Priestley and Hartley, and limited his expositions to the great succession of the English and Scotch schools, from Locke to Reid and Dugald Stewart, from Butler to Bentham. Neither Coleridge nor Kant seems to have been named ; and the stormy voice of Carlyle had not yet found its most impassioned utterance.

<sup>1</sup> *Essays*, i. 421.



The note-books contain elaborate extracts from Brücker's History of Philosophy on the Greek Schools, but neither the classical nor the philosophical tutor lectured on any of the texts of Plato or Aristotle.<sup>1</sup> Hartley's *Rule of Life* and Southwood Smith's *Illustrations of the Divine Government* were favourite manuals; yet Mr. Turner acknowledged that he had not been able 'wholly to satisfy his mind' on the subject of liberty and necessity.<sup>2</sup> 'Though the direct argument for necessity appears unanswerable, yet the views which are deduced from the doctrine even by necessarian writers are so startling, and it requires such an effort to accommodate our new views to the practice of life, and the use of necessarian language to common language, that there are still some difficulties left on my mind.'<sup>3</sup> Whatever misgivings Martineau may himself occasionally have felt, the sweep of a great conception had an intellectual fascination for him. It satisfied his desire for completeness. It harmonised with his previous scientific training; and he readily interpreted the human phenomena by the maxims and postulates he had already learned to apply in the field of external nature.<sup>4</sup> He accepted Priestley as his master; and in four 'orations' on the 'Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion,' com-

<sup>1</sup> The *Apology* and the *Phædo* were read, but with these (as well as some of the easier dialogues) Martineau was already familiar.

<sup>2</sup> This venerable controversy had become acute among Unitarians owing to the dominant influence of Priestley in contrast with Dr. Price.

<sup>3</sup> This was in the year 1825; *Christian Reformer*, 1854, p. 106.

<sup>4</sup> Compare his own retrospect in the preface to the *Types of Ethical Theory*.

posed in the autumn of 1825, he thus expressed his indebtedness to the author of 'the celebrated *Essay On the Analogy of the Divine Dispensations*' :—

So powerfully must the mind be struck on every review of that most interesting speculation, with its beautiful application of philosophy to religion, with its spirit of calm and rational piety, and with the intellectual comprehension evinced in the ease and simplicity with which the sublimest truths are unfolded and illustrated, that it would be as impossible as it would be needless to forget the impression when endeavouring to gain enlightened views on the same subject. Sufficient is the privilege to catch one thought from such a mind ; sufficient is the praise to have revered such a teacher, to have followed such a guide.

## II.

The companionship afforded by a small college, numbering only five-and-twenty or thirty students, was necessarily limited. It had one advantage, however, not usually present in a theological school ; there were men preparing for lay careers as well as for the ministry. Martineau's chief friends, however, were found among the latter group. Some of them were destined in after years to win distinction in the circle of Churches which the College served, where the names of R. Brook Aspland,<sup>1</sup> Samuel Bache,<sup>2</sup> J. R. Beard,<sup>3</sup> William

<sup>1</sup> Son of the Rev. Robert Aspland ; left Manchester College 1826 ; afterwards minister at Chester, Dukinfield, and Hackney ; editor of the *Christian Reformer*, 1845-1863 ; one of the Secretaries of Manchester College, 1846-1857 ; Secretary to the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, 1859 till his death in 1869.

<sup>2</sup> Student at Manchester College, 1826-29 ; afterwards minister of the New Meeting and the Church of the Messiah, Birmingham, 1832-68.

<sup>3</sup> Student at Manchester College, 1820-25 ; minister in Salford, at Strangeways, Manchester, and Sale ; first Principal of the Unitarian Home Missionary Board ; an ardent promoter of popular education, and an energetic theological writer. In 1838 the University of Giessen bestowed on him the honorary degree of D.D. for his services to religious and general literature.

Gaskell,<sup>1</sup> Edward Higginson,<sup>2</sup> and Edward Tagart,<sup>3</sup> will always be held in honoured remembrance.<sup>4</sup> As Dr. Martineau looked back from the vantage ground of four-score years, three figures stood out before him, bound to him in common vows of duty and devotion,<sup>5</sup> Franklin Howorth, John Hugh Worthington, and Francis Darbishire. For the first, who belonged to his own year, he felt to the end 'a deep and

<sup>1</sup> Student at Manchester College, 1825-28; Minister at Cross St. Chapel, Manchester, 1828-1884; one of the Secretaries of Manchester New College, 1840-46, and professor of English history and literature, 1846-53; afterwards Tutor and Principal of the Unitarian Home Missionary Board.

<sup>2</sup> Student at Manchester College, 1823-28; afterwards minister at Hull, Wakefield, and Swansea; an active writer, his best known works being *The Spirit of the Bible*, 1853-5, 2 vols., and *Ecce Messias*, 1871.

<sup>3</sup> Student at Manchester College, 1820-25; afterwards minister at Norwich, and York St., and Little Portland St. Chapels, London; Secretary to the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, 1842-58; author of a treatise on *Locke's Writings and Philosophy*, 1855.

<sup>4</sup> One more name may here be added, that of William Shiell Brown, afterwards minister at Hull and Bridgwater, and subsequently first minister of the Unitarian Church at Buffalo, U.S. In a letter dated Jan. 14, 1865, to the Rev. Dr. Hosmer, Mr. Martineau gave a remarkable sketch of his early friend, which contained one or two interesting autobiographical touches. 'Brown was so much older, that for a session or two it never occurred to me to regard myself as on the level of his friendship. He was among the men—and I almost among the boys of the College. Affinities of temperament, however, work their way through wider distances than this, and Brown, who, though rather a dreamer, was a quick observer, too, found out that some of his enthusiasms were strongly reflected in me. I well remember my surprise at his evident advances towards one much his junior, and as little his match in the knowledge he most prized, of English literature. However we both of us revered Wordsworth in poetry, Berkeley in philosophy, Channing—then a new power among us—in religion; so that there was a common atmosphere enough, at a time when the wings were growing, for many a flight together.' *Inquirer*, June 2, 1866.

<sup>5</sup> Speech to Past and Present Students, June 24, 1885.

reverential affection,' called forth by a singularly pure and elevated character; but though they had sat at the same desk, and given answers in the same class, Howorth's interests were never intellectual.<sup>1</sup> Neither of the other two lived on into maturer age. Worthington, who became engaged to Miss Harriet Martineau, died in 1827; and Darbishire also, who changed his career after leaving College, fell a victim to disease which made its first appearance at York and evoked his friend's tenderest plans for help. They shared advanced mathematical lessons from Mr. Turner, and a devoted and enthusiastic friendship arose between them. In the midst of these somewhat exclusive intimacies, life in the little College was not always smooth. There were occasional 'alienations and remonstrances,' sometimes even 'tragic scenes';<sup>2</sup> there were practical jokes, harmless enough to point a mirthful recollection in later days, though not always of a kind to exempt the perpetrators from rebuke.<sup>3</sup> Beard was regarded as the idol of the 'sinners,' while Martineau was counted chief of the 'saints.'<sup>4</sup> Saints and sinners united in

<sup>1</sup> Speech at the Liverpool Domestic Mission, 1857.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Martineau to Mr. Thomas Hornblower Gill, Aug. 28, 1882; *Life*, vol. i. 33.

<sup>3</sup> In one of these Martineau himself participated. A fellow-student, who afterwards became a large landowner in Hungary, related a generation later that it was once resolved to terrify a timid recluse. Martineau was carried into his room on the shoulders of a comrade, robed in white; a large piece of red beef-steak had been tied round his neck, and his mass of black hair was crowned by a bowl of blazing spirit.

<sup>4</sup> *Christian Life*, Sept. 2, 1876.

debate, in glee-singing, in Shakespeare readings,<sup>1</sup> and the production of the College 'Poz.'<sup>2</sup>

Most significant, however, of these common efforts was the Unitarian zeal which carried the students into the purlieus of the ancient city, and further afield into the villages around. The energy and enthusiasm which afterwards marked Dr. J. R. Beard, may doubtless be traced in this movement, and Martineau willingly followed. In 1823 a sort of missionary society was formed within the College. Aided by a venerated friend on the spot, John Mason, the young preachers taught a Sunday School in a little chapel at Jubbergate in York,<sup>3</sup> and planted small centres of worship in places like Malton, Selby, Bilton near Wetherby, Welburn, and other villages.<sup>4</sup> Mr. Wellbeloved, whose controversy with Archdeacon Wrangham probably supplied an indirect stimulus to these endeavours, was not altogether

<sup>1</sup> At this Club the members also contributed original essays. In his last year on April 27, 1827, Martineau 'gratified the members with the first part of an essay comparing the Practice of Shakespeare with the Rules of Aristotle.' The completion was promised for the next meeting. But the minute-book records no more gratification. The essayist 'pleaded headache in excuse.'

<sup>2</sup> The *Repository*, a College Magazine.

<sup>3</sup> Originally opened in 1796, by a group of seceders from a chapel in Lady Huntingdon's connexion.

<sup>4</sup> It was estimated that about sixty worshippers used to assemble in each place. *Report of the West Riding Tract Society*, Mill Hill, Leeds, May 12, 1824, kindly communicated by Rev. A. Chalmers. The minute book of the College Society mentions that the Selby preacher at first ministered at Howden in the afternoon, but the gradual decline of attendance at the afternoon service and the discovery that most of the hearers 'were in reality Deists—and characters with whom it was disgraceful to be connected' led to the discontinuance of the movement there. The same page declares the Society to be 'under the influence of the Catholic spirit of the Gospel.'

favourable to them ; he did not approve of ' mushroom preachers ' ; and at a later period rebuked a too zealous distributor of Unitarian tracts with the remark that, while still at college, he was not qualified to form a decided opinion. The impulses of the ardent, however, prevailed. It was resolved to build a little chapel at Welburn, near Castle Howard. Martineau, who helped to collect the necessary funds, was supposed, in virtue of his year's engineering, to have a general power of construction. So he was invited, though a junior, to draw the plans, and with characteristic courage allowed himself at nineteen to be installed as architect and clerk of the works. The building was opened in the summer of 1825 ; the crowd of worshippers overflowed into a neighbouring field, where J. R. Beard preached to them with the simplicity of a young apostle.<sup>1</sup> How Dr. Martineau judged these efforts in the light of later experience, the following letter to Mr. G. B. Dalby after his ninetieth birthday will suffice to show :—

London, May 21, 1895.

In recalling the services of the Jubbergate Chapel in 1825-27, you touch some very interesting memories, and place before me again the images of many a beloved companion or revered forerunner, like the good John Mason, who had an influence never to be forgotten on the early experiences of religious life. So deep was the impression of what I owed to these early exercises of pulpit-duty,—which were rather reluctantly permitted by our College Tutors,—that throughout my responsible connexion with [the] College after its removal, I have always encouraged the Senior Students to lay themselves out for Sunday duty either in occasional preaching, or in regular Sunday School teaching. Learning itself seems to me to lose half its zest, and almost all its soul, if made a sole pursuit, and prosecuted by a mind cut off

<sup>1</sup> *Monthly Repository*, 1825, p. 166.

from the conflicting forces of life, unexercised in conscience, and dry in affection. I am sure that the most effective study goes on concurrently with the intensest practical work, and that the persons from whom both are demanded, do best in each.<sup>1</sup>

### III.

The progress of the young student, to whom some honour fell from year to year among the modest distinctions of the College, afforded delight and satisfaction to his parents, and at last secured the approval of friends who had viewed his change of destination as a misfortune. The home relations during these years were always eagerly cherished, and involved an unusual series of heart-searching vicissitudes. Now the report of family gatherings on Christmas and New Year's days cheers the absent son and brother in the north; he hears of the budgets of poems and other papers, and is duly informed that Harriet 'sang a humorous song.' Then comes a Festival, bringing a burst of happy intercourse with distant kindred gathered for the occasion, and musical parties at the cousins' houses, Sir George Smart assisting. Or the note changes, and anxiety for the student's health fills the mother's heart. The story lingered into later days that Martineau had worked twenty-five hours out of the twenty-four.<sup>2</sup> Certain it is that his college

<sup>1</sup> Compare the College Address, 1856, 'The Christian Student,' *Essays*, iv. 42.—To the enthusiasm of this period was due the foundation of the Octagon Sunday School at Norwich, in a College vacation, with the help of 'a few friends of about his own age.' Speech at the induction of the Rev. J. D. H. Smyth, Norwich, *Inquirer*, Nov. 8, 1862. (The date, 1822, must be at least a year too early.)

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Catherine Winkworth* (privately printed).

toils were often interrupted by illness ; and at one time a year at Göttingen was proposed by way of change. But then the home was overshadowed by another care. The health of Thomas Martineau, the young surgeon, suddenly failed. He went with his bride and Harriet to Torquay, but the disease was stubborn and would not yield. At length it was resolved that the invalid should go to Madeira. The family held their last unbroken meeting one Sunday evening for worship at his Norwich home ; the veil of shyness and reserve was withdrawn, and 'brother James,' then only eighteen, poured forth his soul in deep words of prayer. Sorrow was added to sorrow ; the child who should have continued the family name, was buried in the far-off isle ; and Thomas Martineau himself died on the return voyage to Marseilles late in the summer of 1824. To the young widow James Martineau became tenderly attached, and he opened his heart to her with unhesitating confidence.

While Thomas was still abroad, the wise and watchful father proposed a Scotch walking-tour to James and Harriet. Brother and sister had been united in special friendship from their earliest years. They had read and argued together, of late about the freedom of the will, and each departure of the student from home left the partner of his thoughts plunged in grief. In 1823, when he went back to College, 'he told me,' wrote Harriet long afterwards,<sup>1</sup> 'that I must not permit myself to be so miserable. He advised me to take refuge on each occasion in a new pursuit ; and on that particular occasion in

<sup>1</sup> *Autobiography*, i. 117.



an attempt at authorship. I said, as usual, that I would if he would: to which he answered that it would never do for him, a young student, to rush into print before the eyes of his tutors; but he desired me to write something that was in my head, and try my chance with it in the *Monthly Repository*. . . . . What James desired, I always did, as of course; and after he had left me to my widowhood, soon after six o'clock, one bright September morning, I was at my desk before seven, beginning a letter to the Editor.<sup>1</sup> So the pair started for London in July, 1824; there the divinity student heard Edward Irving pray and preach, attended Mr. Fox's chapel, breakfasted with Mr. Rutt, called on Mr. Belsham, and made his way out to Newington Green, where he met Sir James Mackintosh and the poet Samuel Rogers in Mrs. Barbauld's drawing-room. Lord Byron had sent her some Greek newspapers, and he translated a few sentences for his venerable friend. Just before the packet sailed for Edinburgh, July 27, he found time to write to his fellow student, Edward Higginson, reporting sums collected for the Welburn chapel, and announcing the despatch of plans and working drawings to the contractor.

The journey was memorable, for to both 'it was a first free admission into the penetralia of natural beauty.' This was the aspect of Scotland which appealed to him then, rather than its associations of history and poetry,—it was Wordsworth, not Scott, who had kindled his imagination,—and this was the secret of its charm for him to his latest days.

<sup>1</sup> The sequel may be read in the *Autobiography*.

From Perth the pedestrians ranged as far north as the Bruar Falls, and westward to Loch Awe. They felt as if they were entering a sanctuary. 'We walked everywhere with hushed feeling and reverent feet. We were perfectly at one both in the defects which limited our vision, and in the susceptibilities which quickened it, neither of us caring much for the savage romance of Scottish traditions, and both being intensely alive to the appeal of mountain forms and channeled glens, and the play of light and cloud with the forest, the corrie, and the lakeside.'<sup>1</sup> The eager talk 'ran over all surfaces,' and 'plunged into all depths,' metaphysics having already a large share.

I was at that time, and for several years after, an enthusiastic disciple of the determinist philosophy; and was strongly tainted with the *positive* temper which is its frequent concomitant; yet not without such inward reserves and misgivings as to render welcome my sister's more firm and ready verdict. While she remained faithful through life to that early mode of thought, with me those 'reserves and misgivings,' suppressed for a while, recovered from the shock and gained the ascendancy.<sup>2</sup>

In due time he went back to York, confirmed in the faith, to compose a series of three orations on 'Divine Influence on the Human Mind,' in which the constructive character of his thought was to take a great stride forward, declare the universal agency of the Creator, and assert that all human powers of thought, will, and affection, must be reinterpreted as the energy of the ever-present God.

Behind the home-circle, however, there now lay

<sup>1</sup> Biographical Memoranda, *Life*, i. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Biographical Memoranda, *Life*, ii. 262. For the 'reserves and misgivings' of his tutor, Mr. Turner, see *ante*, p. 35. His own change of view is described below, in chaps. VI. and IX.

in his mind visions of the future that touched even College intimacies with a more radiant glow. With Francis Darbishire, a year or two younger than himself, he was knit in 'devoted and enthusiastic friendship.' They were 'like two lovers,' he wrote in 1882, 'and had not a thought kept from one another.' To him was confided the secret of the attachment to the Derby home; during the years of suspended intercourse he was the sympathetic medium of communication; and he was involved in the 'whole group of romantic loves and friendships' centered there. Darbishire himself looked on this experience as a kind of 'regeneration,' lifting him into a world of intenser affection no longer passionate but under calm and clear command. Martineau, on his side, described him to Alfred Higginson, then engaged in preparing for the medical profession, as his 'supporter and delight.' 'I should not be content,' he added, 'did you not know and appreciate him sufficiently to justify my growing affection for him. But I dare not speak of him now; he is near me, and has just been talking to me; and if he becomes my theme just now, I fear I shall say many things which will be too fervent to be intelligible.' To Mrs. Thomas Martineau James wrote of his friend's 'self-control and firmness,' while he deplored his own 'wayward and irresolute spirit': 'I know that the character which I have given of Francis and myself would be transposed by many, particularly of *my former* College friends; but I am absolutely sure that they are mistaken; every day's experience shows me that I am but too right.' So slow and

halting are the steps of self-discipline and knowledge. Here are one or two glimpses of his spirit vouchsafed to the same sister-in-law, as he looks forward to the future alike of work or home.

York, May 11, 1825.

It is the great danger of young ministers, they must have their admirers, and if once they think of their powers whether mental or moral as their *own*, if they make them the source of a deceitful self-complacency, instead of being grateful for them as the instruments of benevolent usefulness, as the means of executing the divine plans, our holy profession is degraded, it loses in our minds its alliance with Heaven, it is made to minister to an earth-born passion which pollutes every spring of thought and action. My sister, may God keep me from frustrating the best wish, the fondest anticipations of my soul, from tainting the pure and exalted conceptions which I have of the ministry by any intermixture of motives and feelings so very base. I tremble to think of what I would be, and what you with others would wish me to be, compared with what I am. But I will not trouble you with my fears and hopes.

As he is approaching his twenty-first birthday, which is to terminate his exile from Derby, he writes again :—

York, March 7, 1826.

The time is very near when the long deep silence will be broken, and the thoughts which have been accumulating shall be interchanged. New motives are about to be presented to me, and brighter feelings with which to surround my hopes for earth and heaven ; if my affections do not become expanded and spiritualised, no earthly discipline *can* exalt and purify my soul. . . .

I am engaged every Sunday for many weeks in consequence of the delivery of a course of doctrinal lectures at our three missionary stations : the preparation for this laborious task claims almost all my spare time. I am obliged to join in this on account of the paucity of our missionaries ; and it does not *always* make me ill on Monday. I am in particularly good health just now, and well I may be, with seven hours' sleep and one hour's walk every day. Francis and I read to each other in the open air at great distances from each other, two days in every week ;<sup>1</sup> and this, together with half an hour's reading daily by myself in my own room, has a wonderful effect in strengthening my voice.

<sup>1</sup> He at one time cherished the idea also of open air study ; it was ' an early romantic hope,' *Life*, ii. 84.

The same letter told of more home anxieties. The news from Norwich had for some time filled him with 'painful sympathy and sad thoughts and fearful expectation.' Severe commercial distress had rendered it necessary to organise an extensive system of public relief and employment outside the poor-law administration.<sup>1</sup> Business was at a standstill. The Spanish trade in which Mr. Martineau had been engaged, had declined under new arrangements with France. He laid his affairs before his creditors; the liabilities of the house amounted to about £100,000. Fifteen shillings in the pound could have been paid at once; but he was confident of his ability to pay all, and struggled on, while the various members of the family began to think how to turn their capabilities and industry to good account, as Harriet had already done. In the midst of these apprehensions, the long strain of affairs wrought its deadly work upon the head of the household. To anticipate, by a little, the course of the family history, it may be here related that early in 1826 Mr. Martineau fell ill. James had not yielded himself for many weeks to the joy of unrestricted intercourse with his betrothed, when he was summoned from York to his father's deathbed. To his friend Edward Higginson he wrote on June 10, 'He requires either Henry or me always with him for help which only a man's strength can supply, and Henry is for the most part needed elsewhere.' It was a sorrowful and agitating time. On Midsummer day Thomas Martineau died. The sequel

<sup>1</sup> The large sum of £4,000 was raised to provide cheap food, the purchasers contributing two-pence out of every sixpence.

is soon told. The mother whose fortune was swallowed up in the calamities which had befallen the business, prepared with her eldest surviving son to wind up its affairs. Three years later the old Norwich house was closed, and finally all debts were completely paid. 'My father,' wrote his daughter Harriet, emphatically, 'did not fail.' These memories doubtless lay behind the speaker's words, when, thirty years later, James Martineau preached a famous sermon, 'Owe no man anything.'<sup>1</sup>

#### IV.

Meanwhile the fabric of his future thought was being prepared. He had already ranged among the poets, and was most at home with Milton and Wordsworth; ethical sympathies chiefly determined his affinities, though the force of Byron and the lyric spontaneity of Shelley had made a strong appeal to him. Through William Taylor<sup>2</sup> he had become acquainted with Lessing's 'Nathan the Wise'; and he could never forget 'the wonder and delight, the awful sense of intellectual space,' opened to him by the essay on the 'Education of Human Kind.'<sup>3</sup> 'No one,' he wrote in his maturity,<sup>4</sup> 'could fall upon it in the eager season of inquiry and conviction, without being haunted for years by the shadows of

<sup>1</sup> Liverpool, Nov. 30, 1856; *Essays*, i. 497.

<sup>2</sup> *Ante*, chap. I. p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> A translation had appeared in the *Monthly Repository* as early as 1806, with the initials of H. Crabb Robinson. To this he expressed his obligation in a speech in 1872: 'he did not hesitate to say that the whole course of his life had been influenced by that work.' *Inquirer*, May 25, 1872.

<sup>4</sup> In 1854; *Essays*, i. 191.

great thought it flings around him.' Under these masters it is not surprising that his power of expression advanced by amazing strides. Compared with the Bristol themes, his College compositions show a swift development. In November, 1823, he discourses of 'Why we derive pleasure from contemplating ruins'; here are already distinction of language, habits of analysis, imaginative glow. Quaint is the defence of Friendship as 'Consistent with Scriptural Views of Social Duty,' designed to show that the command to love our neighbour as ourselves 'does not exclude more particular regards.'<sup>1</sup> Or he adventures into other fields, undertakes to explain the origin and growth of benevolence, boldly asserts that 'the science of mind is peculiarly the philosophy of Christianity,' and, following his favourite masters, Hartley and Priestley, holds up the Law of Association as 'the instrument for constructing from the gross and corrupt materials of sense that fair and beautiful fabric of the spirit, which, unimpaired, adorned, and strengthened by the hand of time, shall stand an eternal monument to the wisdom and benignity of its Author.'

One group of Essays written in the autumn of 1824 supplies interesting evidence of the freshness of his thought. He sets out to answer the question 'To what Conclusions do Philosophical Considerations lead respecting Divine Influence on the Human Mind?' This really involves an enquiry into the whole nature of the activity of God. General laws,

<sup>1</sup> This was converted into a sermon, and preached at Diss, in Norfolk on July 11, 1824,—his first appearance, presumably in the pulpit.

it is urged, can account for nothing ; they are only statements of facts. If the first movement in creation required an intelligent cause, so does every effect now perceived. Philosophy can only detect invariable sequence ; but something more enters into our idea of causation. This it is the function of religion to disclose, and it declares in no uncertain tones that 'nothing is without God.'

The fields of earth, the boundless recesses of heaven, are the scenes of his ceaseless energy. He is felt in every breeze which blows ; he is seen in every form of beauty and sublimity. It is he who alternately unveils the world in the brightness of the morning hour, and conceals it from the view that the eye of man may be raised to other scenes, and his heart impressed by the silence, the darkness, the magnificence of night. It is he who, as if to allure our attention to his operations by the novelty of perpetual revolution, mysteriously unfolds the elements of vegetation, and reveals from the bare and desert earth the verdure of spring, the hues of summer, and the fruits of autumn. It is he who with unchanging regularity bears the planets on their mighty course, who guides within the sphere of mortal vision the light of more distant worlds, and who works, in regions too remote for human knowledge to explore, wonders which the eye may behold, but the mind cannot comprehend.

By rapid steps the conclusion is reached that 'the powers, not only of sensation, but of thought, volition, and affection, must be resolved into the operations of the same Great Being.'

Let anyone endeavour to recount the thoughts which have passed through his mind during a single day. How great their number ! How diversified their complexion and their tendency ! Upon what a vast variety of previous impressions, of associations early established and perpetually maturing does every one of them depend ! And all these have been but the movements of God's spirit, and his is the power which blends thought with thought in such beautiful and complicated trains. . . . Could we at this or any moment in the history of human nature contemplate the separate lot of all our race, and watch the secret workings of their hearts, we should find all these and countless other varieties of thought and feeling by which each is led to fulfil the purposes of his being. How wonderful then is the



agency of him without whom not a thought nor an emotion can arise. Truly 'nothing is without him': the annals of nature and of time are but the wondrous history of his agency: should he for one moment suspend it, the next would find every trace of created existence perished, and the Creator reigning alone in unshared felicity.

At the outset of the second Essay the philosopher of nineteen is surprised to find himself assailed with inconsistent charges of pantheism and atheism; and modestly confesses that he had written in ignorance that there was a controversy on the question of power. He seeks the origin of our idea of causation, and finds it in experience, commencing from our first voluntary act; and the conclusion is once more affirmed that 'all uniformity in nature is the immediate result of the harmonising agency of God.' But the third essay brings him into conflict with the doctrine of the effects of prayer: and he rises finally on metaphysic wing into the vision of the Eternal.

All that our argument requires is that nothing subordinate to God should be erected into an independent agent, that his will be revered as the only sanctuary of power; and whether we consider him as directing the stream of time, appointing its devious course, and preparing the receptacle of its destination, before its first fountain has sprung to light, or as rolling it onwards as its current proceeds, it is still the same. Indeed the distinction between these two modes of agency is merely apparent, and relative to our limited conceptions. In proportion as our views extend, and we gather our ideas from a wider range of duration both past and future, the distinctions of time become less perceptible, and retrospection and expectation melt into one present emotion. With God, therefore, whose knowledge and whose thought includes the whole compass of time, all ideas must coalesce, the most distant events are contemporaneous, the remotest purposes coexist. The difference therefore between an all-embracing will at the moment of creation, and a succession of separate volitions for the production of every effect, is not real, but amounts to no more than a variation in the manner of conceiving of the same operation of the Divine Intelligence.

Still therefore does philosophy combine with Revelation to

teach respecting God that he is the cause, the means, the end ; that 'of him, and through him, and to him are all things' ; that 'nothing is without him' ; that 'he worketh in us both to will and to do.'<sup>1</sup>

There are no 'reserves and misgivings' here. To this period Dr. Martineau turned in later retrospect :

In youth, if ever we receive a '*serious call*,' it is *the most elementary* religious truths by which the mind becomes entranced. Who can ever forget the intense and lofty years when first the real communion of the living God—the same God that received the cries of Gethsemane and Calvary—and the sanctity of the inward Law, and the sublime contents of life on both sides of death, broke in a flood of glory upon his mind, and spread the world before him, stripped of its surface-illusions and with its diviner essence cleared ?<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These passages have been cited at length to dispel all doubt as to the philosophical position from which Dr. Martineau started. In his interesting *Recollections of James Martineau*, the Rev. A. H. Crawford asserts that his teacher, 'owing to his lingering Deism, sometimes failed to appreciate the *full extent* of God's habitual immanence in the creation.' The repeated allusions to 'the depressing influence of his old indwelling Deism,' 'the old poison of Deism,' 'the fetters of his old Deism,' are based on some imaginary scheme of his development, and are without foundation in the actual history of his thought. Dr. Martineau never was a Deist. The general argument of the three essays (apart from the discussion of eternity in the last), and the texts cited at the close, will be found in a sermon of Dr. Lant Carpenter's on *Divine Agency and Conversion*, with an appendix of 'propositions respecting Divine Agency,' published in 1822. The sermon was actually preached in 1818 ; and with the views which it embodied Martineau doubtless became acquainted between 1819 and 1821. In an earlier sermon (1810) Dr. Carpenter rejects the doctrine that 'when God first created all things, He communicated to them all those properties, and fixed those laws, which would enable them through every succeeding period to contribute their part to the accomplishment of those purposes' (philosophical Deism) : on the other hand, all power is the agency of God, and the laws of nature are the modes of its operation : *Sermons*, p. 451. On the writings of Hartley, the fountain head of these views, see chaps. IV. § iv.

<sup>2</sup> *Loss and Gain in Recent Theology*, 1881 ; *Essays*, iv. 330. This is the other side of the picture of the positive temper to which he confesses in his Preface to the *Types of Ethical Theory* : but the phrase 'the sanctity of the Inward Law' really belongs to a later mode of thought.

It was doubtless with a just recollection of the steadying moral effect of such a conception on a nature already susceptible to every appeal of good, that Dr. Martineau thus described in his *Study of Religion* the result of the idea of God's omnipresence :

Were the experiences of early life laid open, during its years of growing fervour and self-discipline, it would probably be found that both in the orisons of the closet and in the encounter with temptation, the attempt to realise this thought played a great part and wielded the chief power. The consciousness of his spirit whether at noon or night, abiding through every change, calm alike on the restless sea or on the steadfast mountain, with centre here or on the horizon or behind the moon or in the milky way, and radius touching every point of life or thought, holds the mind in sleepless wonder, and renders the risings of passion impossible.<sup>1</sup>

## V.

Under these influences the young student's power was rapidly maturing. In the spring of 1826 his mother reports to her 'dear bairns' that his old schoolmaster, Dr. Carpenter, 'had heard of James's performance at Manchester,'<sup>2</sup> and invites him to preach at Bristol in the next vacation. The prospect was cheering to the father who was face to face with death. 'Whether James accepts this proposal or not, it is gratifying that our dear lad is becoming known and approved, and our hearts are full of joy because we think he will be estimated as he deserves. As to his pulpit powers, I never was more surprised than to find they are so good, and if he is able now

<sup>1</sup> *Study of Religion* (1888), ii. 171. The whole passage with its description of the fuller religious consciousness of Pantheism deserves careful study. For a definition of the Deism which he never held, see the same volume, p. 143.

<sup>2</sup> At the great Cross St. Chapel.

in his delicate state to preach with spirit and energy in such a place as Cross St., when his health is better we may hope that he will be still more powerful in the pulpit.' The preacher's work was not, indeed, always performed under favourable conditions. He is at Derby on Saturday morning in September (1826) with a Sunday engagement at Manchester, and a place booked and paid for on the Defiance coach. But the coach comes in full, and the proprietor sends him round by Birmingham; and he only reaches Manchester at seven the following morning. Next day, after his Sunday services and a second night journey, he is in his place at York. Three weeks later Miss Higginson remonstrates with him for excess of toil: he has preached three times on the previous Sunday at Thorne, and walked sixty miles to and fro: not without reason was it that the next letter should narrate her distress at his being again ill: nor again, was it without reason that he should afterwards describe himself as converted from an engineer into an evangelist.

The last year of College (1826-27) was full of the student's hopes and fears. Even before it began Miss Higginson reports (Sept. 13) that her brother Edward, who has been at Loughborough, brings him an invitation to settle there. Later on comes a proposal from Taunton, and then another from the Ancient Chapel, at Toxteth Park, Liverpool: but prospects are darkened by ominous consultations with a doctor at York about his fitness for ministerial work. The result was that he accepted an invitation from Mrs. Carpenter, of Bristol, to

take temporary charge of the school, during her husband's absence from ill health. This plan had the advantage of relieving him from the immediate strain of pulpit duty, but in consenting to undertake the work which threw that into the background, he reserved his freedom in the future to dedicate himself to its high, if also its exhausting, calling.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile he rearranged the College library—'books,' wrote Miss Higginson, 'are one of your passions,'—and prepared for his farewells. There was a students' party at Bishopthorpe three miles away, which could be reached by road or river. Tea at the village inn was followed by a game at bowls; in days before temperance agitations had invaded theological colleges, the healths of departing comrades were drunk in punch. On that occasion, as one of the little band well remembered, 'Martineau expressed regret for having confined himself so exclusively to one friendship during part of his College course, and said that, if he had his time over again, he should wish to avoid that error, and be more generally companionable.'<sup>2</sup> His last sermon was delivered before the Trustees of the College, from *1 Cor.* iii. 21-23<sup>3</sup>; a few days later he preaches on July 4 one of the annual sermons of the Eastern Unitarian Society at Halesworth, Suffolk, from *John* iv. 35. Around him are the fields ripening for the harvest, and he enlarges 'on the exertions

<sup>1</sup> Correspondence with his mother, Jan. 19, 1827.

<sup>2</sup> Recollections of Mr. Alfred Paget, Leicester, who left at the same time, *Life*, i. 43.

<sup>3</sup> 'Wherefore let no one glory in men. For all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas,' etc.

which the present age demands, and the facilities it affords for the diffusion of knowledge and truth.’<sup>1</sup> On August 1 he leaves Derby for Bristol. He has not allowed himself much of what he afterwards described as ‘that richest of all vacations which lies between the University and the world.’<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The preacher next morning was the Rev. Michael Maurice, father of Frederick Denison Maurice, who was not yet ready for his life-work. After the meeting there was a collation, when the thanks of the Society were voted to Lord John Russell for his readiness to assist the Dissenters in obtaining the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. *Monthly Repository*, 1827, p. 850. See below, chap. IV. § 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays*, i. 403.

## CHAPTER III.

FIRST MINISTRY : BRISTOL AND DUBLIN, 1827-1832.

AT Bristol James Martineau re-entered as teacher the home from which as pupil he had carried away life-long impressions. There was the familiar house with the same punctual administrator of all its details at the head in the person of Mrs. Carpenter, and the same three sisters of whom he had taken a boy's leave six years before. But in the interval he had 'become a man.'

### I.

The school-work which immediately engaged him was arduous. Dr. Carpenter had never spared himself; it was not likely that his representative would be more self-considerate. Remonstrances began to flow in upon him without delay; but the natural adjustments of new labour gradually brought greater ease, and after some weeks his chief correspondent was satisfied that he was not finding his multiform engagements, including the supply of Lewin's Mead pulpit for one or two months, too much for him. Such duty was full of interest to him. But it was also full of toil. 'I never could write to order,'

he once said in his last years (1896), 'I only make a mess of it till it spontaneously comes, and I cannot help it'; and throughout his ministry the preparation of sermons involved a kind of effort not far removed from severe, if purifying, pain. Moreover, even before he left College, his sister Harriet had sent him prudent advice to be reticent in matters of opinion which might startle his hearers; one of his old school-fellows had already been shocked by a remark, couched no doubt in the strain of his Principal's teaching, about the prophecies. Under these circumstances composition could never be easy to him. Tradition, long preserved at Great George St., related that he would shut himself up on Saturday evenings with a caddy of green tea. In the morning the sermon was finished, and the caddy was empty.

Bristol had ceased to be the second city of the kingdom, but it contained men of no less distinction than Martineau's native Norwich. John Prior Estlin, one of the ministers of Lewin's Mead Meeting (1771-1817), had been the friend of Priestley and Mrs. Barbauld, Southey and Coleridge. The scientific eminence of his son, Mr. John Bishop Estlin, the beloved adviser and friend of Dr. Carpenter, 'a figure most dear while visible, and sacred ever since,'<sup>1</sup> brought Martineau at once into intimate relations with an active group, which included Dr. Prichard, who had already taken the first steps in his studies of anthropology<sup>2</sup>; the Rev. W. D.

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Miss Estlin, May 11, 1895: *Life*, i. 49.

<sup>2</sup> His *Researches as to the Physical History of Man* had just been issued in a second edition, 2 vols. 1826.



Conybeare, the early master of Sedgwick in geology, who founded the Bristol Institution and Museum in conjunction with Sir Henry de la Beche; John Foster, the essayist; and Robert Hall, the preacher. Martineau's own scientific tastes inclined him to botany. When Mary Carpenter (then away from home) reached her twenty-first birthday in April, 1828, he sent her (with characteristic elaborateness of expression) 'a few specimens from the simplest and most graceful department of Nature's productions.' They were plants from his own modest herbarium. In the great Baptist preacher Robert Hall, Martineau found indeed no model for imitation; he never attempted in these years to pray or preach extempore; but in the sermons at the Broadmead Chapel he discerned an attitude of spirit which became afterwards his own. Not till the speaker had lost himself, he would say, and all consciousness of his hearers had faded, could he discharge his true function, and pour out his soul before the only Holy. The essence of the sermon was soliloquy.

So the months ran swiftly on, and 1828 opened. Various interests gleam through the family letters. Now it is the singing of 'Tom Moore,' whom Miss Higginson has met at the house of Mr. Strutt:— 'he sits down to the instrument and plays a soft and sweet accompaniment, and with the tiniest voice imaginable, and face upturned as if it saw nothing but the subject of his song, sends every word distinct and clear, and with its own peculiar expression, to your heart.' Now it is the petitions of Dissenters for the repeal of the Test and Corpora-

tion Acts<sup>1</sup>; and then the alternations of hopes and plans for the future. The first mention of a vacancy at Dublin reaches him in February; early in March he decides to give up his school engagement at mid-summer; then he is invited to preach at Dublin and is warned not to be metaphysical; while in April his future wife writes joyously 'I have an idea that you and I shall be young at heart to the last day of our lives, how long soever they may be.' The visit to Dublin was not decisive; the congregation at Lewin's Mead learned that Dr. Carpenter would close his school and resume his pastorate, and they begged Martineau to remain as his junior colleague; there was even a plan for a school in the neighbouring village of Frenchay, and a ministry in the little chapel there.<sup>2</sup> At length, however, the chief difficulties were overcome. The farewells were said at Great George St. The boys wrote of the happiness they had enjoyed in his society, the advantage they had derived from his instruction, and his unprecedented kindness in their hours of recreation and amusement: and he in reply spoke of 'the humble and humbling distance' at which he had followed their other instructor.<sup>3</sup> To the three sisters he wrote in terms very different from those

<sup>1</sup> This was carried in 1828, see below, chap. IV. § i.

<sup>2</sup> Long the scene of the labours of the Rev. Michael Maurice.

<sup>3</sup> Many years after he wrote (in 1860) to the Rev. J. H. Allen, of Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts: 'I can sympathise from experience in all your pedagogic troubles and satisfactions. On the whole, I have a good opinion of boy-nature; trustfully and generously treated, it seldom fails to yield a rewarding response. But it keeps one awake, and needs for its management the full vigour of manhood. *Old* schoolmasters should be prohibited: I would pension them off as *emeriti* at 45.'

of the boyish leave-taking of seven years before, accepting their parting gift 'as the memorial of a kindness which has made me in spirit your brother, which has cheered the darker moments of a year of solicitude and perplexity, and infused into its happier hours a degree of domestic enjoyment which, during a year of solitary duty, I had no right to expect. Farewell, my dear friends. Your lot as well as my own is involved in much uncertainty. Be not anxious and troubled; with a confiding heart I commend you all to Him in whose hands our times are.'

## II.

The next stage in the story is thus related in Dr. Martineau's own words.

I remained at Bristol only a year. At the end of that time I was invited, on occasion of the retirement of Rev. Philip Taylor<sup>1</sup> from active duty, to the post of Junior Minister of Eustace St. Presbyterian Meeting House, Dublin; the Senior acting pastor being the Rev. Joseph Hutton.<sup>2</sup> Intent upon reaching the end to which I had dedicated myself, I accepted the invitation, disregarding the surrender which it involved of half my income. My decision induced Dr. Carpenter to relinquish his boys' school, and devote his house to the education of girls under the direction of Mrs. Carpenter and his daughters. I was in consequence urged to take with me to Dublin several of our older pupils, and especially to provide a home which would enable two brothers, to whom I was much attached, to live with their widowed mother under my roof. She had sufficient confidence in me to offer the necessary advances (nearly £700) for purchasing the leasehold interest of an adequate house; and in December, 1828, I married Helen, eldest child of Rev. Edward Higginson, of Derby, and took my

<sup>1</sup> First cousin of his father, Thomas Martineau. He had begun his ministry there in 1777.

<sup>2</sup> Grandfather of the late Mr. Richard Holt Hutton.

wife home to the administration of a large and various household, including half-a-dozen pupils, half of them entered at Trinity College, and half still under my sole care.<sup>1</sup>

He had escorted his mother to Newcastle, and passed thence to Carlisle. The September voyage to Portpatrick was stormy, but the welcome of his kinsfolk at Harold's Cross, near Dublin, soon obliterated the recollection of the tossing vessel. His first service was conducted on September 28, and he reported—'Though I did not finish my sermon till Sunday morning, I was not hurried as usual : I had made regular progress with my subject without excitement or difficulty, and was in no degree pressed for time.' The agitation for Catholic emancipation was creating grave apprehensions in England ; the new-comer, finding everything peaceful, only laughed at the 'transmarine alarm,' and proceeded to develop rapid plans for the education of the young. The pulpit duties were not exacting, only one sermon a fortnight falling to his share. After the second had been delivered, he writes 'full of the new and deep interest of preaching to my own people, with a settled feeling of responsibility and hope.' On October 26 he was solemnly ordained.

The congregation which had worshipped for more than a hundred years in the Presbyterian Meeting in Eustace Street, derived its origin from the Act of Uniformity, when Samuel Winter, D.D., Provost of Trinity College, and Samuel Mather, a Senior Fellow, co-pastors in the parish of St.

<sup>1</sup> Copious letters to Bristol show how he relied on Dr. Carpenter's advice and aid in all the business negotiations.

Nicholas, gave up their preferment. Its history was analogous to that of the congregations of Norwich, York, and Bristol, with which James Martineau had been in turn associated. The religious significance of this development he had yet to learn; in the meantime he found himself in the midst of a new type of organisation. The Irish Presbyterians had retained some of the forms of ecclesiastical association and ordinance which their English brethren had either never instituted, or had long ceased to use. There was a Dublin Presbytery, which belonged to the Synod of Munster, whilst the non-subscribing Presbyterians of the North<sup>1</sup> formed the Presbytery of Antrim. So it came to pass that on Sunday, October 26, the Dublin pastors assembled at the Eustace Street Meeting for the ancient ceremony of the 'laying on of hands.' Four ministers took part in it: the Rev. Joseph Hutton preached on the Christian's character, duties, and privileges; the Rev. James Armstrong, 'senior minister of the Presbyterian Church of Strand Street,' followed with a discourse on the nature and validity of Presbyterian ordination<sup>2</sup>; the venerable Philip Taylor, acting as Moderator,

<sup>1</sup> These had been ejected in 1726 from the Synod of Ulster in consequence of a vote imposing adherence to the Westminster Confession.

<sup>2</sup> It was characteristic of contemporary English Unitarianism (which was strongly Congregational) that after the publication of these proceedings this discourse was severely criticised in the *Monthly Repository*, 1829, by W.T. (presumably the Rev. William Turner, of Newcastle). Mr. Martineau anticipated such criticism; in announcing the expected pamphlet to Dr. Carpenter, Jan. 25, 1829, he says 'I shall prefix a short preface, in defence of ordination services for the good of the radical Unitarians of my own country.'

offered the ordination prayer<sup>1</sup>; and the Rev. William Hamilton Drummond, D.D., delivered an impressive charge to the new minister and his congregation.<sup>2</sup> The most significant part of the proceedings was the testimony of the congregation to their adherence to their 'call,' and the declaration of the young pastor concerning his views of his office.<sup>3</sup> Affirming that every Minister of the Gospel is 'the servant of Revelation, appointed to expound its doctrines, to enforce its precepts, and to proclaim its sanctions,' he ascribed to the Creator, and to him alone, every conceivable perfection :—

He is the source of power to whom all things are possible—He is boundless in wisdom, from whom no secrets can be hidden—He is love; the origin of all good, himself the greatest; and the dispenser of suffering only that we may be partakers of his holiness—He is spotless in holiness; his will the only source of morality, and the eternal enemy of sin—He is self-existent and immutable, for ever pervading and directing all things,<sup>4</sup> and searching all hearts; the being from whom we came, and with whom, in happiness or woe, all men must spend eternity.

The Irish type of doctrine on the person of Christ was prevailingly Arian: it will be noticed that in the following exposition controversial differences are avoided.

<sup>1</sup> At the words 'We devoutly pray that the choicest influences of thy Holy Spirit may descend on this thy servant,' the ministers laid their hands on James Martineau's head. 'The action is merely momentary,' wrote the young minister a week later to Dr. Lant Carpenter, 'and, certainly as it was used on the late occasion, appeared no more than a natural *epideictic* gesture.'

<sup>2</sup> 'Full of practical Evangelical wisdom,' said the letter just quoted, 'pointedly and powerfully expressed.'

<sup>3</sup> 'In compliance with the general practice in Ireland, I did this extemporaneously.' *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> This phrase must be understood in the light of the passages cited in chap. II. pp. 50-52.

Him I acknowledge as the Mediator between God and man, who was appointed to produce by his life, and yet more peculiarly by his death, an unprecedented change in the spiritual condition of mankind, and to open a new and living way of salvation.<sup>1</sup> No pledge of divine love to the human race impresses me so deeply, as the voluntary death of Jesus Christ, and his exaltation to that position which he now holds above all other created beings, where he lives for evermore, and from which he shall hereafter judge the world in righteousness. I receive and reverence him, not merely for that sinless excellence, which renders him a perfect pattern to our race; but as the commissioned delegate of Heaven, on whom the Spirit was poured without measure—as the chosen representative of the Most High, in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. As authorities for our duties, as fountains of consoling and elevating truth, Jesus and the Father are one; and, in all subjects of religious faith and obedience, not to honour him as we honour the Father, is to violate our allegiance to him as the great Captain of our salvation. When Jesus commands, I would listen as to a voice from Heaven; when he instructs, I would treasure up his teachings as the words of everlasting truth; when he forewarns of evil, I would take heed and fly as from impending ruin; when he comforts, I would lay my heart to rest as on the proffered mercy of God; when he promises, I would trust to his assurances as to an oracle of destiny.

Hence, I regard it as my duty to lead my hearers to this Saviour as the way, the truth, and the life; to urge on them his injunctions; to awaken in them a vital faith in his mission, an awe of his authority, a reliance on his predictions. More especially would I impress them with the conviction that this life is the infancy of existence; that its discipline is designed to conduct them to a state where all that is imperfect shall be done away; and that as they know not the day nor the hour when the Son of Man shall appear, it becomes them, by vigilance and prayer, to hold themselves ready at every watch.

The primary duties of the Christian minister were, accordingly, 'to awaken devotion to God, obedient faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and practical expectation of eternity.' Among his secondary duties were the study and explanation of 'God's word.'—

In these inquiries and instructions he requires, and can receive, no aid from the authority of any man, or any church. His most

<sup>1</sup> The Arian view which ascribed to the death of Christ a positive influence upon God, as a condition of human salvation, is here excluded.

valuable guides are his own mind, and his own conscience ; and his most valuable privilege in the use of these, is his unquestionable right of private judgment. Whether he study, or whether he teach, let him stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made him free.

Such were the young pastor's aims, and he prayed that he might pursue them with charity towards all, and a prevailing sense of accountability to the great Searcher of hearts.

Full well do I know that I must review hereafter, in the unveiled presence of God, the ministry on which I have now entered ; and that I must then meet those who surround me now, and whose spiritual interests I bind myself to serve. That no one then may appear to reproach me with unfaithfulness—that there may be no wanderer from the fold of Christ, whom my neglect may have caused to stray, is the earnest and solemn desire which I now profess before God and my brethren.

### III.

The ministry thus begun was swiftly involved in what outsiders might designate political agitation. With his senior colleague, Mr. Hutton, Mr. Martineau had signed a Protestant declaration in favour of Catholic emancipation.<sup>1</sup> A few days after the

<sup>1</sup> Out of this arose an incident which Mr. Martineau thus described in a speech at Liverpool, Dec. 18, 1868, just after Mr. Gladstone had formed the ministry which was to disestablish the Irish Church. 'When I first settled in Ireland, and saw what the spirit of Protestant ascendancy was, it produced on me a shock perfectly indescribable. I remember very well, during the agitation in the early part of O'Connell's career for Catholic Emancipation, signing with my colleague, the father of the late Dr. Hutton, a petition in favour of Catholic Emancipation ; and how two or three of the elders of our congregation came to us and remonstrated with us for daring to sign such a petition in the capacity of ministers. Their concluding sentence was : "Gentlemen, we have been credibly informed that it is very improper for ministers to meddle with politics" ; and I very well remember the quiet dignity with which Mr. Hutton replied : "Well, gentlemen, if you have been so informed, you have been



ordination service the windows of the Eustace Street Meeting were broken by a mob; and the damage was laid at the door of the Orange party. Writing to England on November 4, Mr. Martineau gave a simpler explanation: it was 'really a mob of glaziers' boys, availing themselves of a Brunswick dinner to collect a crowd, and find an excuse for creating work for their masters.' It was needful to reassure his English relations. His sister Harriet was full of the most definite presages of ill, and asked whether he was prepared for separation and a long protracted war between the two countries. Miss Higginson, on the other hand, applauded 'Shiel's glorious speech,' and added, 'Be it enthusiasm or what you will, I glory in the thought of going to Ireland in her wrongs, and as it were adopting her in her affliction.' At length the difficulties of finding a suitable home for wife and pupils were surmounted. A house was secured

misinformed."—His interest in politics carried him from meeting to meeting to hear O'Connell, and he was often at the house of the 'United Irishman,' Alexander Rowan Hamilton, *Centenary Address*, p. 29. He was hardly back from his wedding tour when he attended the great meeting on behalf of Catholic Emancipation on Jan. 22, 1829. 'It was indeed inspiring,' he reported to Dr. Carpenter, three days later, 'like the uprising of a nation determined to be free.' This note of ardour breaks out even more triumphantly on another occasion (to the same friend, Sept. 9, 1830): 'France! glorious France! Has there ever been a week since the Resurrection which has promised such accumulated blessings to our race, as that week of national regeneration? Where will it end? The invigorating shock must pass through the Netherlands, Spain, Italy. When that revolution is compared with any period of history, in what an encouraging light does it exhibit modern character and mind. The whole struggle has been conducted in a spirit of disinterestedness which to me is impressive in the highest degree. Such a people must be almost within sight of the value of religious truth.'

in Blessington Street, and furnished early in December; and Mr. Martineau left for England to claim his bride. They were married at Derby on December 18, took a 'quiet course through the mountain solitudes of Wales,'<sup>1</sup> and on Sunday, January 11, 1829, Mrs. Martineau summed up the hopes and fears of many years in her first entry in her journal at Dublin, after hearing her husband preach in his own pulpit, 'It has all come true.'

For the next three years the home was full of eager and laborious life. When the preacher a quarter of a century later emphasised 'the prior discipline of care and patience, the Spartan bread of toil and self-denial, the slow command of wages saved, the cautious use of that incipient store,' which lay the true foundation for the merchant's thrift and faithfulness,<sup>2</sup> he described what had been the rule of his own establishment. The same spirit of economy as a duty, because time, like wealth, was a trust, watched over the allotment of his hours. To his numerous pupils, in their several stages of advance, he always gave his best with unflinching regularity. The congregational lecture, the catechetical class (the success of which gave him much gratification), required careful preparation; and this he could always engage to discharge. Some of his Dublin note-books show how wide was his range. He had to revise his mathematics and learn the differential instead of the fluxional notation: he had to revise his Hebrew, which Mr. Wellbeloved

<sup>1</sup> 'A land of marvels even to a lover of Scotland,' he wrote to Dr. Carpenter, Jan. 25, 1829.

<sup>2</sup> 'Owe no man anything,' Liverpool, 1856; *Essays*, iv. 503.

had taught without the points.<sup>1</sup> Now it was science, chemistry, light, electricity, with earlier materials from his Bristol school-days; now it was literature, with glances at Greece and India, Persia, and Chaldea, or even at China by the help of the Jesuit fathers and their *Lettres Édifiantes*. All these were within the compass of the scholar's energy. But the preacher's word could not be thus punctually summoned; and in July, 1829, Mrs. Martineau wrote to her brother Edward Higginson, 'The sermon production is the more slow and anxious because not at the command of mere will, but largely dependent upon moods of mind that cannot be unconditionally forced.' The Saturday hours were often insufficient; fastidiousness of expression added its embarrassment to weight of thought and intensity of feeling; and the last words were often written while the car waited at the door, or even in the vestry or the pulpit.

Beyond his pastoral circle lay a wider range. The Eustace St. congregation was conspicuous for its philanthropies. Besides an almshouse for twelve poor widows, there were admirably managed charity schools for boys and girls. Admission to these schools was by election in the open vestry of the congregation. On one occasion an orphan was brought, whose guardian confessed on enquiry that one parent was a Catholic. The anger of the chairman, usually 'a very pattern of Christian

<sup>1</sup> There were other divines in worse case than himself. Taking part one day in an examination of candidates for the ministry, he noticed that some of his elder colleagues in the Presbytery held their Hebrew Bibles upside down.

courtesy,' roused the young pastor's amazement and indignation: 'From that moment I made up my mind that there never could be the least hope for this country until the blot of Protestant ascendancy should be utterly and entirely erased.'<sup>1</sup>

Such experiences filled him with dismay; they revealed a spirit so different from that of the English Liberals led by his political hero, Lord John Russell. Speaking at a meeting of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association at Manchester in June, 1830, he described with some bitterness the difficulties which its cause had to encounter in Ireland.

The effect of the discussion of that great question which has now been for ever set at rest,<sup>2</sup> has been to divide the country into two great parties, the Protestant and the Catholic. All parties have oppressed the Catholics, and even the Dissenters, so far from coming forward to assist the injured Catholics, have stood close to the Church and supported them in their unrighteous domination. The early history of Presbyterianism has spread those habits of crouching to power which are inimical to universal liberty. A century and a half ago the Presbyterian Church comprised all the gentry and nobility. Since that time the Establishment has like a vortex swallowed up this influence; but the ministers of the Gospel, according to their usual practice, instead of leading public opinion, have followed the ebbing tide, and prepared to plant their feet in a dry place.

It was natural, therefore, that the young pastor, full of the zeal kindled at York, should seek to awaken a similar enthusiasm in Ireland. Already in the first year of his settlement he was astir. The ministers of the two Dublin Congregations united

<sup>1</sup> Speech at Liverpool, Dec. 18, 1868.

<sup>2</sup> Catholic Emancipation was passed in 1829. He had awaited it with high expectations. 'What glorious times are these,' he wrote to Dr. Carpenter, Feb. 25, 1829. 'I pity the unhappy souls who cannot feel the exultation and hope with which we must look on the progress of events.'

in a course of lectures at Strand St. in March and April, 1829. 'Nothing of the kind has yet been attempted here,' explained Mr. Martineau to Dr. Lant Carpenter, 'and in spite of the apprehensions of the timid, I anticipate good results from it.' Prof. Henry Ware, who had sailed from Boston for England in April, 1829,<sup>1</sup> made a summer visit to Belfast and Dublin. They were 'full of business and excitement to us,' he wrote to Prof. Andrews Norton in August, 'owing to the present state of religious parties, and the organisation which is now making, of the Unitarian body.'<sup>2</sup> Ten days later the same witness testified to Dr. Lant Carpenter, 'I passed a fortnight in Ireland with great satisfaction. The state of things among our brethren is full of interest and life; and I believe they are wide awake to the call of the times, and fully equal to the emergency. There are fine spirits among them.'<sup>3</sup> In that number he no doubt included the junior pastor of Eustace Street.<sup>4</sup> Dr. Martineau

<sup>1</sup> He had just exchanged the ministry of the second Church, Boston, for a chair in the Divinity School at Harvard University.

<sup>2</sup> This reference probably included the plans for the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, formed in 1830, as well as the Association mentioned below, to which there is already an allusion in a letter to Dr. Carpenter, May 18, 1829: 'On Saturday next it is probable that an Irish Unitarian Association will be organised, or at any rate that steps directly preparatory to such a measure will be decided on.' The future Martineau already speaks in the same letter: 'I think that Unitarianism in this country must in some respects assume more the aspect it has in America than that which it bears in England. I mean that instead of forming the distinct and nominal characteristic of a sect, it must rather run through previously existing sects. Presbyterianism will still exist here and give us our name.'

<sup>3</sup> *Life of Henry Ware, Junior*, Boston, 1846.

<sup>4</sup> To Dr. J. H. Allen, of Cambridge, Mass., Dr. Martineau wrote in 1891 in acknowledgment of a family *Memorial of Joseph*

himself afterwards dwelt with affectionate remembrance on his intercourse with some of the *alumni* of the Warrington Academy, such as Dr. Bruce of Belfast.<sup>1</sup> But his hopes for the future centered in a younger generation, 'Dr. Drummond, the very flower of Christian sympathy, and the noble, the rich-minded Montgomery.'<sup>2</sup> On St. Patrick's Day, March 17th, 1830, an influential meeting was held in Dublin to constitute the Irish Unitarian Christian Society. It embraced both individuals and congregations.<sup>3</sup> The terms Arian and Socinian were avoided, for such names would place them in the ranks of human leaders, and divided by minor shades of sentiment those who were united in one grand principle. In his speech in promoting this foundation Martineau gave emphatic utterance to his love of liberty. Free discussion and free inquiry were kindred rights; their promise was written on the same page in the charter of human

*and Lucy Clark Allen*, 'The early pages carried me back to my Dublin ministry, during which both Dr. and Mrs. Kirkland and Henry Ware, junr., and wife were repeated visitors at my house.' Dr. Kirkland was President of Harvard University. Of Mr. Ware the host wrote to Dr. Carpenter, 'He is a truly intelligent and good man; but he has a little, I thought, of the personal coldness and national vanity, which, in spite of their levelling principles and *collective* ardour, republics perhaps tend to produce.'

<sup>1</sup> *Centenary Address*, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Speech at Manchester, June, 1830. Dr. Henry Montgomery was the well-known minister of Dunmurry, four miles from Belfast. In private correspondence, however, he confessed that he found both ministers and laymen 'marvellously slow in all their movements.'

<sup>3</sup> How Dr. Martineau afterwards came to reject this type of denominational organisation, will be described hereafter. See chaps. VII. and XIII.

freedom ; and the hand that would tear away the one, would inevitably cancel the other. It was natural therefore, for him to declare that ' while professing attachment to the principles of Unitarian Christianity, we prize yet more that privilege of free inquiry from the exercise of which they spring ; regarding it as the noblest prerogative of religious beings, we purpose, in our language and conduct, freely to use it for ourselves, and habitually to reverence it as the equal right of others ; to resist every open encroachment and protest against all secret influence, which may interfere with this boon from the God of truth.'<sup>1</sup>

Such words were really in advance of the temper of his people. When he let fall an expression implying the simple humanity of Christ, he lost in Dublin the most attached friend he had among his hearers, who took his household away from him with lamentations and tears.<sup>2</sup> It was not unnatural, therefore, that when he came back from the Manchester meetings to preach before the Synod of Munster at Cork on July 7, he should choose for his subject ' Peace in Division : the Duties of Christians in an Age of Controversy.' The sermon was printed,—it was his first publication<sup>3</sup>—and evoked in England a warm welcome : ' it makes our hearts glow with a delightful hope of the good to be accomplished by its author in the future of his ministerial labours.'<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Monthly Repository*, 1830.

<sup>2</sup> ' Memorial Preface ' to *A Spiritual Faith*, sermons by John Hamilton Thom, 1895.

<sup>3</sup> Reprinted in *Studies of Christianity*, 1858.

<sup>4</sup> *Monthly Repository*, 1830, p. 783.

From Cork he returned home to the first sorrow of his wedded life. On July 14 the infant daughter, born in December, 1829, passed from her parents' keeping. Three days later she was buried in the French Protestants' burial ground, and Mrs. Martineau recorded the 'melancholy consolation' felt by the stricken father in giving her to a spot consecrated to his ancestors who suffered for conscience' sake.<sup>1</sup> The home was not long solitary. A few months later a boy was born, whom his father named Russell after the English champion of civil and religious liberty, and in the spring of 1832 came another daughter, Isabella. But the hopes buried in the little grave were never forgotten. Ere they left Ireland that summer, the father and mother made their silent farewells beside it. Threescore years after, while Trinity College was celebrating its Tercentenary festival, one of its newest graduates, still erect at eighty-seven, left the academic halls for the ancient cemetery, and with yet another daughter stood by the spot hallowed by early grief and the victory of faith.<sup>2</sup>

#### IV.

The following year brought interesting and decisive events. Mr. Martineau had been for some

<sup>1</sup> The French refugees had originally formed two Presbyterian congregations in Dublin.

<sup>2</sup> To Dr. Carpenter, the day after his bereavement, he had written, 'We are human, perhaps too full of unchastened human feeling; but while we own the stroke to be very heavy, never had we a firmer conviction that we are in the hands of a Father who loves us yet better than we loved our child.'



time engaged in preparing a new hymn-book at the desire of his congregation. He was much concerned with 'the part which the imagination and affections perform in true worship,' and was anxious to 'bring all the resources of lyric poetry (the poetry of the affections) into the service of religion.' The philosophy of Priestley—apart from his own devout expositions of it—had not been altogether favourable to this aim.<sup>1</sup> The compilers of a hymn-book issued at Warrington in 1819 'thought it right to exclude the term "soul," which cannot fail to excite unpleasant feelings in many serious minds while engaged in the solemnities of public worship.'<sup>2</sup> With this remorseless consistency, Mr. Martineau, ardent Priestleyan as he was, had no sympathy. His collection, which included 273 hymns, was based on one previously employed at Eustace Street; but it introduced a large number of new hymns. The Norwich writers, John Taylor and William Taylor, Sir J. E. Smith, and Harriet Martineau, were naturally well represented. But beside Doddridge, Watts, and Steele, and the contemporary Montgomery, there now appeared the latest voices of Anglican piety, Milman and Heber,<sup>3</sup> no less than eighteen hymns being derived from the latter, and the preface giving to him 'the merit of first liberalising the style of the poetry designed for our

<sup>1</sup> See chap. IV. § iv.

<sup>2</sup> The reason was that 'after the late investigations on this subject many Christians are satisfied that the doctrine [of an immaterial and separable principle in man] rests on no foundation whatever.'

<sup>3</sup> Heber's hymns were published posthumously in 1827; the collection included 13 by Milman.

churches.' With the Wesley hymns, which afterwards moved the editor so deeply, he was evidently as yet unacquainted. The practice of doctrinal adaptation was earnestly defended, but 'there has not been any fastidious rejection of the form of address to our Lord.' Poetical invocation need not be confounded with religious homage.<sup>1</sup>

Four days before the preface was written (Oct. 1), the venerable senior Pastor, Philip Taylor, died on Sept. 27. Grave were the issues of the event for his young colleague. A week after the funeral sermon had been preached by Mr. Hutton, Mrs. Martineau wrote, 'Regium Donum is coming on, and we know not what the issue will be; we only know what it is right to do. The realities of life are on us indeed.' The same entry in her journal added that her husband had a firm conviction that an attack of cholera was impending, and felt himself perpetually influenced by it: 'it is likely to help us more to a realisation of death and futurity than anything to which this world commonly subjects us.'

'Regium Donum' had evidently long been in the minds of the young couple, and they had decided on their course. The Regium Donum was the

<sup>1</sup> On this ground Mr. Martineau's later hymn-book, *Hymns for the Christian Church and Home*, (first published in 1840, see chap. VIII.) was exposed in 1852 to some severe criticism. In defending it (*Inquirer*, Dec. 25, 1852) Mr. Martineau urged that 'the hymns now most objected to were selected by me and adapted to public worship in Dublin twenty-three years ago, at a time when, as to intensity and rigour of Unitarian opinion, I was a very Hebrew of the Hebrews, steeped in the philosophy of Priestley, held fast in the exegesis of Cappe, and an Ebionite in stringency of zeal.'

name of an annual grant then bestowed by Parliament on the Presbyterian ministers.<sup>1</sup> The death of Mr. Taylor vacated a portion of stipend from this source, which now fell to Mr. Martineau as his successor. But he could not bring himself to receive it. In his own retrospect he described the position in the following terms :—

Before accepting ministerial duty in Ireland, I ought to have acquainted myself fully with the relations between the Presbyterians and the State, and considered whether I could make myself a party to them. As, however, the retiring Pastor retained the Regium Donum attached to his office, so long as he lived, the question did not press itself upon my attention, and I carelessly passed it by, with a vague feeling, I believe, that nothing depended upon it beyond a little more or less of ultimate salary. Before four years had expired, Mr. Taylor's death, devolving the grant upon me, brought the problem up for solution. Whether the theoretical objections which I then felt to any organised connection between Church and State, would alone have been decisive, I cannot tell. But, during my residence in Ireland, the gross injustice involved in the relative position of the Catholic Church and the two chief Protestant bodies had become so oppressive to me that the very idea of being personally participant in it affected me with shame. In a letter to my congregation I explained why I could not accept my succession to the Regium Donum, and expressed my willingness to dispense with the addition it would make to my salary ; or, should this concession to a personal scruple risk a permanent forfeiture for which they were not prepared, to place early in their hands the resignation of my office.

This letter<sup>2</sup> was read to his congregation on Sunday, Oct. 30, and the decision upon it was adjourned for a fortnight. His sister Harriet, who was staying at Blessington Street, reported to her mother that the young people were all in sympathy, but the

<sup>1</sup> The total for England and Ireland amounted to upwards of £20,000, of which four-fifths were allotted as a distinct grant to Ireland. The history of it goes back to the reign of Charles II.

<sup>2</sup> Printed in full in the *Monthly Repository*, 1831, p. 834.

influential members were all on the other side. On the eve of the meeting which involved her son's future, Mrs. Martineau wrote in warm approval of his action, and his brother Henry confirmed her view: the Norwich home was naturally full of anxiety for the morrow's settlement, and one reads with a curious sense of changed conditions the concluding aspiration, 'Oh that there were a telegraph!'

The issue was unexpected. At the adjourned meeting, Nov. 13, the letter was construed into an immediate resignation unless the congregation forthwith relinquished the grant in permanence; and it was proposed that the resignation should be accepted. Mr. Martineau's friends supported an amendment authorising him to act in the matter of the Royal Bounty according to the dictates of his conscience, without resignation. A division produced equal votes, and the chairman, giving his casting vote in favour of the existing practice, declared Mr. Martineau's ministry there and then at an end. The late junior Pastor, if he came into the meeting, could attend as a hearer only, which he actually did. A month later this strange situation ended with the unanimous adoption of an address asking him to continue his ministry as colleague with Mr. Hutton, now senior Pastor, till June, 1832. To this request he acceded. The result is thus related in his Biographical Memoranda.

The crisis was a serious one in my affairs. It broke up my establishment of College students; to perfect which I had expended large sums upon my house; and it compelled me to sell the house in a fallen market, and ask indulgence of time from the friend who had enabled me to make the purchase. I had

disqualified myself for resettlement among the Irish Presbyterians: and through my residence on the west side of the Channel, I was unknown in England.<sup>1</sup> A proposal was pressed upon me to establish in Dublin a congregation independent of all ecclesiastical connection, and so free to exemplify the true principles of union for the promotion of the Christian life. But the first elements of such a society would have been drawn from the Church which I was leaving: and I declined to impair the unity and practical efficiency of congregations which had the prestige of a venerable history, and the conditions of reformed action in the future. Mr. W. J. Fox, who had visited me in Dublin<sup>2</sup> and christened my eldest son Russell (after the reputed author of the Reform Bill), would have committed to my hands the organisation and conduct of the Domestic Mission in London, then projected though not commenced<sup>3</sup>: but I was conscious of no adequate store of resource and hopefulness for such a work. The suspense ended by my becoming colleague of Rev. John Grundy, in charge of the congregation of Protestant Dissenters meeting in Paradise St. Chapel, Liverpool. In the summer of 1832 we vacated our first home, went the round of farewell visits to the friends who had brightened it by their affection, stood in silence together in the French Churchyard by a little grave which bears the name of our first-born, and then crossed the sea with a son and daughter, to enter upon our second and longest term of unbroken service.

<sup>1</sup> This modest estimate ignores the fact that his action had excited much interest and sympathy. He preached the Annual sermon to the Young at Finsbury Chapel, London, on Jan. 1, 1832, and conducted the services at Stamford St., Blackfriars, the following Sunday, as a candidate for the vacant pulpit. But 'the resonant echoes of the naked floor, and the disheartening way in which my words seemed to return to me, made me think I had better work in another sphere.' Speech at Stamford St., June 6, 1877.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Fox had preached at the first anniversary of the Irish Unitarian Christian Society in Dublin on Easter Sunday, 1831.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Martineau had himself supported a resolution urging its establishment at the meeting in Manchester, June, 1830. See p. 70.

## CHAPTER IV.

### RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY IN ENGLAND, 1805-1832.

THE England to which James Martineau returned in the autumn of 1832 had just passed through a great constitutional crisis. The royal assent had been given to the Reform Bill on June 7th. The day before, one of the most conspicuous personalities among the creators of the new era had passed away. Jeremy Bentham died on June 6th. The air was full of fears and hopes, and loud cries against abuses of all kinds rose on every hand. The voices which had been awakened by the French Revolution, had never been silenced; the political philosophers and the poets had both had their share in shaping the lines of change and moulding fresh national ideals. Pauperism, education, the slave trade, revision of criminal law, reform of municipal institutions, the application of sound principles to public finance,—these and a multitude of other questions had been long ripening in the public mind. Practical experience in the shape of the burning of ricks and the breaking of machines disclosed the difficulties which beset the slow processes of the transformation of industries, and the terrible pressure exerted upon the poverty-stricken hosts among the labourers

of town and country. The generation which preceded the Reform Bill witnessed the rise of a wide variety of movements of thought which were destined to exercise enormous influence on the religion and philosophy, as well as on the politics, of England. In the midst of some of these James Martineau had been himself brought up; and it seems fitting, therefore, to preface this account of him as theologian and teacher with a brief sketch of the forces which were in action around him, and the opportunities which they provided for his work. It was his lot to labour in the midst of a small religious community whose principles were often misunderstood; and their attitude towards the theological and other problems of their time is not undeserving of regard.

## I.

No Unitarian gathering of this period ever failed to do honour to the sentiment of 'Civil and Religious Liberty.' The hero of James Martineau's youth, Dr. Priestley, had been its devoted champion, and two generations were occupied in securing the freedom which he had been among the foremost to demand. The odious legislation of the seventeenth century had all to be undone. In his *Essay on the First Principles of Government*, published in 1768,<sup>1</sup> Priestley had boldly proposed the abolition

<sup>1</sup> It was under the influence of this essay that Bentham was said to have formulated his principle of 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number'; Sir Leslie Stephen, however, believes that the phrase was really due to Hutcheson, *English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, ii. 61.

of all penal laws in the sphere of religion. Every member of the community ought to enjoy all the rights of a citizen, whether he chose to conform to the established faith or not. The Unitarian movement in the Church led the way to the first steps towards this ideal. In 1772 a petition was presented to the House of Commons bearing two hundred signatures, embodying the suggestion of Archdeacon Blackburne<sup>1</sup> to substitute a profession of belief in the Scriptures for a subscription to the Articles. For three successive years was the question debated, until it became clear that within the Church there was no hope of relief. But the case of the Dissenters stood on a different ground. The Toleration Act required that all ministers of religion, tutors, and schoolmasters, should subscribe the doctrinal Articles of the Establishment. When the nonconforming Unitarians defied this law, they were liable to fines, imprisonment, and exile.<sup>2</sup> Their position enlisted the support of Edmund Burke, who joined Sir Henry Houghton in promoting a bill in 1772 designed to allow a declaration of belief in the Scriptures as containing a divine revelation. Twice was this bill sent up to the House of Lords, and twice was it rejected through the influence of the bishops.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In his *Confessional*, 1766, 3rd ed., 1770.

<sup>2</sup> The difficulties of the Rev. Theophilus Lindsey in opening a place of worship in Essex Street, London, in 1774, are related in his *Memoir*, by Mr. Belsham.

<sup>3</sup> See Dr. Toulmin's *Two Letters addressed to the Right Reverend Prelates who a second time rejected the Dissenters' Bill*, 1793. In a *Letter of Advice to those Dissenters who conduct the Application to Parliament for Relief from certain Penal Laws*, 1773, Priestley animadverted severely on the language of one of his old pupils, Rev. Philip Taylor, at his ordination at Liverpool, June 21, 1770.



Six years later the bishops unexpectedly surrendered, and in 1779 the first victory in the long battle was secured.

The next point of attack was found in the Test and Corporation Acts. In 1787—the same year in which the Committee was formed for the abolition of the slave trade—Mr. Beaufoy brought forward a measure for their abolition. The motion for leave to introduce it was thrown out by a majority of 178 against 100. The hostile speech of Pitt called forth a letter from Priestley,<sup>1</sup> in which he further demanded the repeal of the statute of William III. which made it blasphemy to impugn the doctrine of the Trinity, liberty for Unitarians to be married by their own ministers, as well as the opening of the Universities, Oxford requiring subscription to the thirty-nine Articles even for matriculation, while Cambridge was satisfied with claiming it for the M.A. degree. The effort was repeated in 1789, and again in 1790, when new difficulties appeared. Fox had taken the measure under his charge, and made one of his loftiest speeches in its support. But events were too strong for him. The French Revolution had begun. The previous November (1789) Dr. Price had preached to a society for commemorating the revolution of 1688.

Mr. Taylor, while professing himself a hearty friend of the dissenting interest, added an expression of his disapproval of those who took a malicious pleasure in continually exposing the defects of the religion of their country, and in pouring out uncharitable censures against those who support and defend it. This was the future minister of Eustace St. Meeting, Dublin, and kinsman of James Martineau: *ante*, chap. III., p. 61.

<sup>1</sup> *Works*, vol. xix.

His *Discourse on the Love of our Country* enforced the need of complete religious toleration and of parliamentary reform, bade the governments of Europe consider the lessons of Paris, and was of sufficient importance to call Burke into the field with his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, 1790.<sup>1</sup> The House of Commons was alarmed, and Fox's motion was decisively rejected. More than a generation elapsed ere it could be renewed. One further proposal on behalf of the Unitarians was made two years later. Undeterred by the Birmingham riots of 1791, and the odium which had gathered round the names of Priestley and Price, the same brave champion of religious liberty moved on May 11th, 1792, for leave to bring in a bill to repeal the act of William III. which made the denial of the doctrine of the Trinity a penal offence. Burke found his arguments in the toasts which the Unitarians had drunk at the first annual dinner of their Book Society a year before,<sup>2</sup> and the danger which their principles involved to the Establishment: 'Such people were not fit men for relief or encouragement from their sentiments and connexions.'<sup>3</sup> Lord North and Pitt both opposed the motion, which was of course lost; but a young member who followed Burke in the debate, and courageously avowed himself a Unitarian, Mr. William Smith, was destined afterwards

<sup>1</sup> To these Priestley replied in the inevitable *Letters to the Right Hon. Edmund Burke*, 1791.

<sup>2</sup> See *below*, p. 109<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> *Parliamentary History*, vol. xxix. p. 1394.

as member for Norwich to get a similar measure carried.

Events marched rapidly in France, and the reaction in England was severe. The heroes of the Unitarian struggle for religious liberty, Price and Priestley, passed away. The protagonists in the Parliamentary arena, Pitt and Fox, both died in 1806, but not before another great measure had become necessary in the judgment of both statesmen, Catholic Emancipation, which the act of Union with Ireland in 1800 had rendered inevitable. In May, 1805, when James Martineau lay in his cradle, Fox brought in a bill for Catholic relief, and a similar bill was introduced by Lord Grenville in the House of Lords; but both efforts were in vain. The Unitarians, however, were clear-sighted enough to see that the Catholic plea rested on principles of the same nature as their own, and they were not deterred by any religious prejudices from fighting in the same cause.<sup>1</sup> The Protestant Nonconformists, however, were the first to obtain legislation in their favour. The progress of the Evangelical movement had called forth a large number of preachers whose zeal considerably exceeded their education. In 1809 Lord Sidmouth

<sup>1</sup> *The Monthly Repository*, for example, founded in 1806, gave it unvarying support. In 1812 it circulated Butler's *Address to Protestants*. The same volume contains speeches by the pastors of Lewin's Mead, Bristol, the Rev. John Rowe, and Dr. Estlin, designed for delivery at a meeting in the city, where Mr. Rowe with difficulty secured a hearing, and Dr. Estlin was not allowed to speak. Belsham preached for it in 1813, Fast Day, March 10, saying that his feelings were more than usually interested by the consciousness of being himself a member of the only Christian sect still proscribed by pains and penalties.

moved for a return of licences granted to Dissenting ministers in the dioceses of England and Wales since 1780. The return was ordered since 1760, and the facts which it disclosed excited anger and alarm. In the county of Middlesex, for example, in 285 licences the words 'Dissenting Minister, Teacher, Preacher, Gospel,' were misspelt by the applicants who signed the rolls in eighteen different ways.<sup>1</sup> The greater number of these, doubtless, belonged to the Methodist bodies; and the clergy who clamoured for restrictive legislation, declared that their own labours were defeated, and the people were taught to despise the Church catechism. Lord Sidmouth's bill, introduced in 1811, was designed to regulate the qualifications of Nonconformist ministers. It aroused the immediate apprehension of almost all the friends of religious liberty.<sup>2</sup> Mr. William Smith, now member for Norwich, and chairman of the Deputies appointed to protect the civil rights of Dissenters,<sup>3</sup> was strongly opposed to it. Meetings were held; petitions poured in; the Government, on the second reading of the bill in the House of Lords, declined to support it,—and the measure was lost. The Nonconformists took advantage of their newly awakened enthusiasm, and pressed for the repeal of the Conventicle and Five-Mile Acts. On May 11th, 1812, Mr. Aspland and two other gentlemen had a satisfactory interview with the Prime Minister, Mr. Perceval; two hours

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of Robert Aspland*, by R. Brook Aspland, p. 260.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Belsham gave Lord Sidmouth a qualified support.

<sup>3</sup> This body had been constituted in 1732. See below, § iii.

afterwards he was shot on entering the House of Commons.<sup>1</sup> The catastrophe did not arrest the movement. Lord Liverpool, who succeeded to the Premiership, introduced an Act before the close of the session, abolishing the obnoxious statutes, though licences were still required for both preachers and places of worship, and not more than twenty might meet in an unlicensed place. The bill passed both Houses without opposition. In the next year, 1813, Mr. William Smith succeeded in obtaining the royal assent to *An Act to relieve Persons who impugn the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity from certain Penalties*.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Smith had been the friend of Fox, Priestley, and Gilbert Wakefield; he was united in 'almost brotherly love' with William Wilberforce, Granville Sharpe, and Thomas Clarkson. 'Of all their fellow-labourers,' afterwards wrote the historian of the Clapham sect, 'there was none more devoted to their cause, or whom they more entirely trusted. They, indeed, were all to a man *homousians*, and he a disciple of Belsham. But they judged that many an erroneous opinion respecting the Redeemer's person would not deprive of his gracious approbation, and ought not to exclude from their own affectionate regards, a man in whom they daily saw a transcript, however imperfect, of the Redeemer's mercy and beneficence.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of Aspland*, p. 272.

<sup>2</sup> Belsham, preaching upon it at Essex St., July 25, said 'The whole has the appearance of a wonderful and delightful vision.'

<sup>3</sup> Sir James Stephen, *Essays in Eccl. Biogr.*, 4th ed., 1860, p. 544. Mr. Smith remained member for Norwich till 1830, and must have been often thrown into close relations with the Martineau and Taylor families.

Forty years after Mr. Smith had acted as teller in the unsuccessful division on Mr. Beaufoy's motion in 1787, he was still vigilant in the same cause. Early in 1827 the newly formed British and Foreign Unitarian Association<sup>1</sup> addressed a letter to the Committee of the Deputies, urging them to convene a general meeting of the bodies of Protestant Dissenters in London, for the purpose of bringing the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts before the public. Over this meeting Mr. Smith presided. By his help a conference with members of both Houses of Parliament was held on April 6th.<sup>2</sup> Lord John Russell willingly took up the cause. A united Committee was formed—to which, however, the Society of Friends, the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, and the Presbytery of the Scottish Church, would send no delegates—and the agitation was begun. Mr. Edgar Taylor<sup>3</sup> prepared a 'Statement of the Case,' which was carried within the covers of the Quarterly and Edinburgh Reviews into college halls and libraries, the country seats of the landowners, the rectories of the clergy. Resolutions were passed and petitions signed;<sup>4</sup> the cause survived the catastrophe of Canning's death on Aug. 8th; and on Feb. 26th, 1828, Lord John Russell moved in the House of Commons that there should be a Committee of the whole House to consider the Acts. The result was an Act abolish-

<sup>1</sup> Founded in 1825; see *below*, § iii.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of Aspland*, p. 468. A second Conference took place on May 23, *Monthly Repository*, 1827, p. 450.

<sup>3</sup> Great grandson of Dr. John Taylor, of Norwich: *ante*, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> See *ante*, pp. 56, 59.

ing the sacramental tests, which some of the Bishops supported, and the Duke of Wellington was ready to accept. Lord Eldon opposed it to the last. The royal assent was given on May 9th, and the Duke of Sussex presided at a dinner to celebrate the victory. It was the only occasion when a son and brother of kings proposed as a toast 'The Protestant Dissenting Ministers, the worthy successors of the ever-memorable Two Thousand who sacrificed interest to conscience.'<sup>1</sup>

A few days after this celebration a meeting was held at the town house of the Duke of Norfolk. Catholics of old English families mingled with well-known Jews of still more ancient pedigree, and Unitarians like Robert Aspland, John Bowring, and W. J. Fox. The immediate subject for discussion was the expediency of forming an association for the advancement of religious liberty. As the year wore away, it became apparent that the question was rapidly ripening. Lord John Russell wrote to Mr. Aspland suggesting that congregations should petition 'for the removal of all remaining oaths which require a declaration of religious opinion as a qualification for the enjoyment of civil rights.'<sup>2</sup> The Unitarian congregations throughout the kingdom were recommended by their Association to ask Parliament for the abolition of all religious penalties and civil disabilities. A small minority of the London Dissenting ministers thought it needful to oppose the emancipation of the Catholics from

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. Robert Aspland replied: *Memoirs*, p. 482.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of Robert Aspland*, p. 491.

the restraints which had just been broken for themselves. But the great body of the Nonconformists overcame their religious scruples in favour of political justice. The measure was introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. Peel on the 5th of March, 1829, and on April 13th a reluctant assent was extracted from the Crown. It was amid the struggles thus consummated that James Martineau had imbibed from Dr. Lant Carpenter his 'first and last true love of the principles of religious liberty.'<sup>1</sup>

## II.

In the movement which has just been briefly described, the chief parts were played by the Church on the one hand, and the 'Three Denominations' on the other. These 'Three Denominations,' Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Baptists, were the historic representatives of Nonconformity. They were the heirs of the men who had secured the Toleration Act of 1689, before Wesley had founded Methodism, or the Society of Friends had produced its quiet ranks of philanthropists. Ever since the accession of Queen Anne, the ministers of the Three Denominations residing within ten miles of London and Westminster had been accustomed to act together; and the small annual bounty from the

<sup>1</sup> *Ante*, p. 18. On June 25, 1829, the usual dinner of the friends of Manchester College, York, took place at the close of the academic year, when Mr. Boothman, a Roman Catholic gentleman, 'alluded with much eloquence and feeling to the measures then in progress through Parliament for the relief of His Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects.' *Monthly Repository*, 1829, p. 583.



Government known as the *Regium Donum* was distributed through their agency.<sup>1</sup> In 1732 a further organisation was created out of their Churches to take action in matters affecting their civil rights, by means of an assembly constituted out of two deputies from each congregation.<sup>2</sup> The larger national organisations of modern times had not yet been created.<sup>3</sup> In the course of the eighteenth century changes of thought carried the Presbyterians in the direction of Unitarianism, while the Congregationalists and Baptists were powerfully affected by the great Evangelical revival. The Baptists were the first actually to enter the missionary field. In 1791 William Carey, who had acquired at his shoemaker's bench considerable knowledge of several languages, was already urging his hearers to 'expect great things from God,' and 'attempt great things for God.' At Kettering in October, 1792, twelve ministers and one layman formed the Baptist Missionary Society, and started with subscriptions amounting to £13 2s. 6d. The next year Carey and Thomas sailed for India, and began the labours which have since spread all round the globe. The Congregationalists were not

<sup>1</sup> They were known as 'the General Body of Protestant Dissenting Ministers of London.' For the *Regium Donum* cp. p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> The relative strength of the three groups may be estimated from contemporary figures:

	Presbyterian.	Congregational.	Baptist.
Ministers.....	74	49	45
Meetings.....	54	37	26

<sup>3</sup> Under the danger of Lord Sidmouth's Bill a 'Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty' was formed in 1811. The Baptist Union was founded in 1813: the Congregational Union in 1832.

long behind. David Bogue, preaching at Salters' Hall in 1792, pleaded that 'the field is the world.' The appeal went out to the Congregational churches in 1794, and in 1795 the London Missionary Society was established. Before the century expired, the Church Missionary Society was founded in 1799: but the extension of the episcopate was slow. Not till 1814 was the first diocese created across the seas, when the Bishop of Calcutta was consecrated. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Manners Sutton, proposing his health after the ceremony, concluded by saying—'Remember, my Lord Bishop, that your Primate on the day of your consecration defined your duty for you;—that duty is to put down enthusiasm and to preach the Gospel.'<sup>1</sup>

The political opposition between the Church and orthodox Nonconformity did not at all preclude common action on Evangelical principles, as in the Religious Tract Society (1799) and the Bible Society (1804). In the philanthropies which were the glory of Evangelicalism, Churchmen and Nonconformists could work side by side. Differences, indeed, might arise over education,<sup>2</sup> but, in the absence of a definite theory of the Church, clergymen some-

<sup>1</sup> A. H. Hore, *The Church in England from William III. to Victoria*, vol. ii. p. 239. 'Enthusiasm' was of course used in the contemporary sense of fanaticism. Hartley defines it as 'a mistaken Persuasion in any Person that he is a peculiar Favourite with God; and that he receives supernatural Marks thereof,' *Observations on Man*, 1749, part i. p. 490. Priestley pleads that the character of Jesus proves that he was not an enthusiast or an impostor; and apologists were anxious to show that the apostles were not enthusiasts. Cp. Hartley, *op. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 187.

<sup>2</sup> See the account of Mr. Brougham's Bill, *below*, § iii.

times adopted the dissenting ministry or encouraged their converts to do so. Moreover the Nonconformists enjoyed a freedom which the Establishment only gained with difficulty. They could enter any parish, and, by paying sixpence, obtain a licence and open a place of worship. To build a Church, however, was a very complicated matter: for the subdivision of a parish required an act of Parliament. Meantime, under new industrial influences the towns were growing rapidly. To meet this expansion the Church could do nothing. During the long metropolitan episcopate of Dr. Porteus (1787-1808) not one new Church was opened in London.<sup>1</sup> Between 1801 and 1820 only ninety-six were built in the whole country.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand in the first twelve years of the century the number of annual licences for the erection of dissenting places of worship averaged 518.<sup>3</sup> At length in 1818 the Incorporated Church Building Society was formed, and the government carried a bill through Parliament appropriating the huge sum of one million sterling for its objects, Lord Liverpool frankly stating in the House of Lords

<sup>1</sup> The Bishops understood their duties differently in those days. When Dr. Porteus was once asked to preach a certain charity sermon, he excused himself on the ground that he only gave one a year, and the one that year was bespoken. Hore, vol. ii. p. 202.

<sup>2</sup> Hore, ii. p. 222.

<sup>3</sup> The statistics of the *Quarterly Review*, vol. x. p. 54 (Oct., 1813) really start from 1799. During the years 1760-1774 the average was only 90 per annum. In 1881 parishes, containing a population of nearly 5 millions, there were 2,553 churches and chapels capable of accommodating 1,856,000: the places of dissenting worship numbered 3,438.

that the purpose of the measure was to 'remove Dissent.'<sup>1</sup>

A Church thus stagnant was unresponsive to the appeal of clearer knowledge or wider thought. Its opposition to the Catholic claims thrust it back upon the Bible, and the doctrine of inspiration in its most rigid forms was common alike to the theology of the Establishment and of Evangelical Dissent. When Dr. Marsh of Cambridge, who had studied at Göttingen, published in 1801 a dissertation on the origin and composition of the First Three Gospels, as the sequel of a translation of the *Introduction to the New Testament* by Michaelis, the Bishop of Oxford, Dr. Randolph, directed an anonymous pamphlet against his researches, which he censured as 'derogating from the character of the sacred books, and injurious to Christianity as fostering a spirit of scepticism.' There were no doubt prelates of scholarly tastes as well as of ample revenues; there was learning, of a kind, as well as pomp and dignity, upon the episcopal bench. But over the whole Church there was, in the eyes of its critics, a taint of worldliness. Vast endowments enabled the more highly placed clergy to accumulate large fortunes; while the system of pluralities degraded the clerical office, and often led to gross neglect both of the fabrics and of the appointed services. Mr. Gladstone recorded in 1874 with

<sup>1</sup> May 15, *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. xxxviii. p. 710. An amusing description of a local effort for this laudable end was appended by Mr. Martineau many years later to his striking essay on 'Distinctive Types of Christianity' (1854), founded doubtless on a reminiscence of his college days. *Studies of Christianity*, 1858, p. 28.

emphatic words his impressions of the Church before the great Anglican revival. He declared the state of things 'dishonouring to Christianity, disgraceful to the nation; disgraceful most of all to that much-vaunted religious sentiment of the English public, which in impenetrable somnolence endured it, and resented all interference with it': 'our services were probably without a parallel in the world for their debasement.'<sup>1</sup> Even a Brahmin or a Buddhist would have been shocked at their degradation: 'they could hardly have been endured had not the faculty of taste, and the perception of the seemly or unseemly, been as dead as the spirit of devotion.' What Dr. Hook observed in the parish Church at Leeds as late as 1837—the surplices in rags and the service books in tatters,—the churchwardens piling their hats and coats upon the holy table at a vestry meeting, or even sitting upon it—was probably no exaggeration of the average neglect or irreverence.<sup>2</sup>

In the middle of the third decade, however, fresh influences began to work, and the preparation for a new era was laid. Many minds were dissatisfied with the lethargy around them, and were feeling after something more nourishing than commonplaces which had grown stale by repetition. At Cambridge the dominant influence was still that of Charles Simeon; the impulses which were to shape the

<sup>1</sup> 'The Church of England and Ritualism,' *Contemporary Review*, Oct., 1874, reprinted in *Gleanings*, vol. vi. pp. 118, 119.

<sup>2</sup> The abuses of the diocese of Norwich, during Martineau's youth, under the administration of 'the good Bishop Bathurst,' 1805-1837, are described in the *Memoirs of Edward and Catherine Stanley* (1879), p. 33.

immediate future were to proceed from Oxford. The first definite utterance which taught John Henry Newman his theory of the Church, was heard in the *Letters on the Church*, by an Episcopalian, 1826. They owed their thought if not their precise form to Dr. Whately.<sup>1</sup> Here was set forth 'the conception of an organised body, introduced into the world by Christ himself, endowed with definite spiritual powers and no other, and, whether connected with the State or not, having an independent existence and inalienable claims, with its own objects and laws, with its own moral standard and spirit and character.'<sup>2</sup> Newman was not yet at St. Mary's; but he had already preached the sermon 'Holiness necessary for future Blessedness,' which opens the long series of his pulpit teachings. A reaction against indifference and slackness was at hand. In a spirit which was to move England, Newman began to demand that life should conform to a lofty moral rule, and conduct be fashioned on the principles of Gospel austerity. Nor was other aid wanting. The *Christian Year* appeared in 1827; and the gentle verse of Keble appealed to thousands who knew nothing of theology, but were ready to be led back by graces of imaginative piety to the offices of the Church.

From a different side the Evangelical assumptions were assailed by the first efforts of historical enquiry. The fulfilment of prophecy was a favourite Biblical theme. To this Alexander Keith consecrated his

<sup>1</sup> Newman, *Apologia*, chap. I.

<sup>2</sup> R. W. Church, *The Oxford Movement*, p. 5

first work in 1823<sup>1</sup>; five years later he elaborated the argument in a well-known treatise which traced the dealings of Providence down to the nineteenth century, and justified American slavery by the curse pronounced on Ham.<sup>2</sup> But John Davison, who became Fellow of Oriel in 1800, had already laid stress on the moral elements of prophecy, and the progressive character of revelation, in his Warburton Lecture in 1824.<sup>3</sup> German learning, indeed, was still dreaded. Thirlwall issued anonymously in 1825 a translation of Schleiermacher's *Essay on Luke*, in the preface to which he treated the doctrine of verbal inspiration as already exploded, and the opening chapters of the Third Gospel as poetical. English theology, however, was not yet ripe for such a conclusion. A young Oxford scholar who had been recommended by the Regius professor of Divinity, Dr. Lloyd, to learn some German, spent two years at Göttingen, Berlin, and Bonn, in diligent study both of the Semitic languages and of the different schools of religious and philosophical thought. But the treatise in which Pusey embodied his results<sup>4</sup> revealed so considerable a departure from Evangelical standards that the alarm was raised; and both the first book and its sequel two years later were ultimately withdrawn. An-

<sup>1</sup> *Sketch of the Evidence from Prophecy.*

<sup>2</sup> *Evidence for the Truth of the Christian Religion derived from the Literal Fulfilment of Prophecy.* This book which reached its fortieth edition in 1873, has now become extinct.

<sup>3</sup> *Discourses on Prophecy, in which are considered its Structure, Use, and Inspiration.*

<sup>4</sup> *Historical Inquiry into the Causes of the Rationalist Character lately predominant in the Theology of Germany, 1828.*

other student of the past, poet and Sanskritist to boot, undertook to relate the *History of the Jews* for the 'Family Library' of Mr. Murray. Milman portrayed the heroes of Genesis as he conceived them to have actually lived. Abraham became an Eastern sheikh. The co-operation of natural causes was admitted in the plagues of Egypt, and the passage of the Red Sea. The story of the wanderings was not a contemporary record; and as the actual events receded further and further from view, allegory and imagination diffused over them a haze of poetic glory. Such treatment might be fit enough for Roman legend; it was intolerable in the sphere of Revelation. The sale of the book was stopped; and the issue of the Family Library came to an end.

Here and there were minds of sufficient native vigour to shrink from no consequences to which criticism might lead. In August, 1828, Arnold went to Rugby as head-master. For years he had thought about questions of the interpretation of Scripture and church-reform, and with unflinching courage he flung out his thoughts like challenges.<sup>1</sup> To Whately's theory of an organic body founded by Christ and entrusted with certain definite powers, the exercise of which must be duly regulated, Arnold opposed the idea of the *societas* or fellowship of Christians which was independent of any central government. In any particular Church the constitution was largely the result of political accident;<sup>2</sup> and conformity and nonconformity were matters

<sup>1</sup> In his article 'Letters of an Episcopalian.' *Edinburgh Review*, Sept., 1826.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to Dr. Hawkins, 1830.



of civil law. His principles of comprehension drew the line, indeed, at Unitarians who could not worship Christ. But even to these, he wrote to William Smith, the late member for Norwich,<sup>1</sup> he would not deny the Christian name, if they truly loved Jesus. No particular organisation, therefore, could claim any divine authority. The office of teacher should be properly guarded, but carried with it no specific commission; there were sacraments through which the grace of God flowed in on man, but these were not the property of a priesthood, nor even limited to the two which had been recommended or enjoined by Christ. For Arnold there was a sense in which the Church and the State were ideally the same persons organised for different ends. To make this ideal actual he strove ardently to bring the Dissenters in. The long resistance which the Church had offered to the claims of nonconformists, Protestant or Catholic, for relief from penal disabilities, and the votes of the Bishops against Parliamentary reform, aroused a storm of angry criticism. Her wealth, her antiquated and rigid forms, her monopolies, and her indifference to popular welfare while seeking popular support, drew down fierce denunciations. 'The Church, as it now stands,' Arnold wrote to the Rev. J. E. Tyler, June 10, 1832, 'no human power can save.' To Mr. W. K. Hamilton, a few months later, Jan. 15, 1833, he explains the object of his pamphlet.

I have been writing on Church Reform, and urging an union with the Dissenters as the only thing that can procure us the

<sup>1</sup> March 9, 1833. See *ante*, p. 86.

blessing of an established Christianity; for the Dissenters are strong enough to turn the scale either for an establishment or against one; and at present they are leagued with the anti-christian party against one, and will destroy it utterly if they are not taken into the camp in the defence of it. And if we sacrifice that phantom Uniformity, which has been our curse ever since the Reformation, I am fully persuaded that an union might be effected without difficulty.<sup>1</sup>

How far were these hopes to be realised? And what response could a Unitarian like James Martineau make to such an appeal? How profoundly he, too, was affected by the idea of a federation between the Episcopalian and other churches in this country, will appear in the sequel.

### III.

Separated from the Church on doctrinal grounds, and shortly to be discharged from the alliance of the Three Denominations,<sup>2</sup> were the Unitarians. These were the heirs of Locke in theology, and the owners, as they supposed, of chapels of Presbyterian foundation all over the country. The story of these chapels, which wholly transformed James Martineau's views of the right basis of religious organisation, will be told in a subsequent chapter.<sup>3</sup> It must suffice here to indicate the characteristics of their occupants.

In his essay on the 'Reasonableness of Christianity' Locke had avoided the higher questions

<sup>1</sup> On the other hand the author of the *Letters on the Church* declared that 'the connexion such as it now subsists, between the State and the Church . . . is not only in principle unjustifiable, but is, in every point, inexpedient for both parties.' p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> See chap. VII.

<sup>3</sup> See chap. VII.

of Christology. He was ready to give the Christian name to all who accepted Jesus as the Messiah, without imposing on them any particular interpretation of his person. He was neither Calvinist, like the majority of contemporary Presbyterians, nor Athanasian. On the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation he maintained a careful reserve. He sometimes disowned the name Socinian, but he repeatedly quoted Biddle. The Messianic conception of Jesus was historical, not metaphysical; and it rested on two main supports, the fulfilment of prophecy, and the evidence of miracles. These were sufficient to prove Jesus to be a teacher commissioned from on high; and were the external guarantees of Revelation. This line of thought, coupled with the Presbyterian principle of the sufficiency of Scripture and the rejection of all human creeds, guided the way to a gradual theological change. Through Arianism the tenants of many of the Presbyterian chapels gradually found their way to Unitarian thought. But the fundamental conception of Revelation remained. Unitarianism was true because it was the doctrine of the New Testament. Trinitarianism would be true, if it could be proved from the same supernatural source. It was not rejected because it was incomprehensible, but because it could not be found in Scripture.

'No Unitarian that I know or have read of,' wrote Theophilus Lindsey,<sup>1</sup> 'could ever object to any part of a divine revelation, because it was beyond his comprehension. Let me know but clearly that God has signified his mind and will; and then, let the subject be ever so unfathomable by me, I will receive and

<sup>1</sup> *Examination of Mr. Robinson's Plea*, preface, p. 24.

believe it ; because no better reason can possibly be given for anything, than that God has said it.<sup>1</sup>

The theology of Manchester College, York, rested on the same foundation. Its Principal, the Rev. C. Wellbeloved, declared in his controversy with Archdeacon Wrangham<sup>2</sup>:—

I adopt the common language of Unitarians when I say, 'Convince us that any tenet is authorised by the Bible, from that moment we receive it. Prove any doctrine to be a doctrine of Christ, emanating from that wisdom which was from above, and we take it for our own, and no power on earth shall wrest it from us.'<sup>3</sup>

It was natural that Mr. Wellbeloved's pupils should start from the same position. At his ordination in the Protestant Dissenting Chapel, Mosley Street, Manchester, in 1821, the Rev. John James Tayler declared that the Christian minister 'must discard from his mind all bigoted attachment to human formularies of faith, and make the Scriptures alone as containing the revealed will of the Deity the subject of his constant study and meditation, and the sole ground of his exhortations and warnings. Whatever the Scriptures teach as indubitably the word of God, it is his bounden duty to recommend and enforce.' With similar emphasis

<sup>1</sup> Belsham, *Letters upon Arianism*, 1808, said in a similar strain, p. 81 : 'If a well attested revelation distinctly teaches that the world was made and is governed by delegated power, and that Jesus of Nazareth is the person to whom that power was entrusted, I must bow to its authority, and admit the fact.'

<sup>2</sup> *Three Letters*, 1823, p. 51.

<sup>3</sup> Compare *Three Additional Letters*, 1824, p. 151. 'If Jesus had received commandment from the Father to teach it [the doctrine of the Trinity] to his disciples, and had charged them to publish it to the world, I should deem it incumbent on me, at the command of God, to lay prostrate the understanding derived from his inspiration, and on this subject to renounce the use of that reason which he has made the glory of my frame.'

under similar circumstances did James Martineau affirm in 1828—‘When Jesus commands, I would listen as to a voice from heaven ; when he instructs, I would treasure up his teachings as the words of everlasting truth ; . . . when he promises, I would trust to his assurances as to an oracle of destiny.’<sup>1</sup>

The special promise thus bequeathed was that of the life hereafter and the judgment before Christ’s throne.

‘To believe in the Christian revelation,’ asserted Mr. Belsham, ‘is to believe that Jesus of Nazareth was a teacher commissioned by God to reveal the doctrine of a future life, in which virtue shall find a correspondent reward and vice shall suffer condign punishment ; and that of this commission he gave satisfactory evidence by his resurrection from the dead.’<sup>2</sup>

This expectation played a great part in the religious life of Unitarians, as its share in their hymnody sufficiently proves. It was not injured by the adoption of the current critical view of the composition of the Pentateuch,<sup>3</sup> or by the announcement that the Mosaic cosmogony could not be harmonised with modern science.<sup>4</sup> And it had the advantage of conciliating the language of Scripture with the current philosophy of Priestley, which denied the existence of a separate soul and cheerfully awaited the resurrection after an indefinite interval of unconsciousness.<sup>5</sup> Unitarian thought was

<sup>1</sup> See the whole passage already quoted, chap. III. p. 65.

<sup>2</sup> *A Summary View of the Evidence and Practical Importance of the Christian Revelation*, 1807, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 116.

<sup>4</sup> Belsham, *Reflections on the History of Creation in the Book of Genesis*, 1821, p. 26.

<sup>5</sup> See three sermons on the ‘State of the Dead’ by Rev. T. Kenrick, published in 1805, and compare the protest of the reviewer in the *Monthly Repository*.

not, indeed, at one upon this theme. If it be true, as Coleridge said, that every man is born a Platonist or an Aristotelian,<sup>1</sup> there is no difficulty in distributing the parts between Priestley and Price. The exquisite little verse of Mrs. Barbauld, moreover, shows that Priestley had not full possession of the field.<sup>2</sup> The prominence of the doctrine, however, under both phases, led to earnest protests against 'the Brief Observations addressed to Sceptics and Unitarians' in Wilberforce's *Practical Review*, and vehement repudiation of his description of Unitarianism (which has pointed so many denunciations ever since) as 'a sort of half-way house' between nominal orthodoxy and infidelity.<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Piozzi, too, in a treatise on *British Synonymy*, under the head of 'Infidelity, Atheism, Deism, and Socinianism,' vaguely contrived to include Deism as 'the creed of unbelief, synonymous to Socinianism, well understood.'<sup>4</sup> Dr. Joshua Toulmin, preaching at Tiverton in 1797 on 'the Injustice of classing Unitarians with Deists and Infidels,' dwells fervently

<sup>1</sup> *Table Talk*, July 3, 1830. He added, 'I do not think it possible that any one born an Aristotelian can become a Platonist; and I am sure no born Platonist can ever change into an Aristotelian.' But the Platonist might, like Martineau, be brought up in the wrong school, and spend the rest of his life in rectifying the error.

<sup>2</sup> 'Soul, we've been long together.'

<sup>3</sup> Chap. VII. § iii. p. 475 (ed. 1797).

<sup>4</sup> Vol. i. p. 309; a postscript, p. 310, adds 'Since the above was written, I've been told, that SOCINIANS only deny the divinity of Christ, while DEISTS doubt even his mission. This certainly does bring the followers of Socinus at least as near to the true Christian Church, as are the rational and orthodox followers of Mahomet; for *he* too acknowledged the Son of Mary as a prophet.' Such were the amenities of amateur theology.

on the firm expectation of a righteous and solemn judgment, and the assured hope of eternal life, and asks 'Shall we, then, be classed with Deists and infidels? Shall we be represented as disaffected to the true character and government of God? Shall we be stigmatised as profane and scornful unbelievers?' The reproach cut deep. More than twenty years later<sup>1</sup> Mr. W. J. Fox discoursed of 'the Duties of Christians towards Deists,' on occasion of the prosecution of Mr. Carlile for the republication of Paine's *Age of Reason*. After enumerating three points common to Unitarians and other Christians in which they differed from Deists,<sup>2</sup> he added as a fourth, distinguishing Unitarians from other Christians, that they rested 'the hope of future existence upon the doctrine of the Resurrection, *and not upon the Orthodox and Deistical notion of the natural immortality of the soul.*'

Tightly was the cordon of revelation drawn around the Bible. At Manchester College Mr. Wellbeloved might surrender the prophecies to the interpretation of history, but the more stress fell on the commission of Jesus. On the other hand he led his students on brief excursions through the natural theologies of Greece and Rome, with results that were not always expected. His most distin-

<sup>1</sup> Oct. 24, 1819.

<sup>2</sup> (i) That a series of revelations confirmed by miracles has been made by God to mankind. (ii) That the Old and New Testaments contain an authentic account of those revelations. (iii) That Jesus had a divine commission, that he rose from the dead, and that he will come again to judge the world.—Of course, Deists here are named in the historico-theological sense, not the philosophical.

guished pupil, pleading after his death for 'Biblical Studies and Something More,' thus records the emotions kindled by the wider outlook.<sup>1</sup>

I well remember (perhaps it is only a personal confession which I make) the half guilty feeling with which, in young and fervent days, I found myself surprised into passionate admiration by the story of Socrates, and taken captive by words that seemed to me of unspeakable religious depth in Plato, or even in Cicero and Seneca. I accused myself of an unchristian perversity,—a want of Evangelical simplicity and humbleness,—because often Greek and Roman history stirred the tides within me more than the image of Galilean apostles,—because the struggle for Hellenic freedom appeared more sacred than the conquest of idolatrous Canaan, and Leonidas nobler than Gideon,—because, read what I might in favour of a general resurrection in the body, the Phaedon tempted me to hope rather for the immortality of the soul.

Within the limits of Revelation, however, considerable divergencies might exist side by side. Opinions might vary on the historical value of the narratives of the miraculous conception; they might vary no less on the person of Jesus—did he or did he not pre-exist?—was he to be interpreted after the Arian or the humanitarian manner? In this respect, however, there was a marked divergence between the older Presbyterians and the newer Unitarianism. Those who had been bred in the venerable traditions of their ancient meeting-houses, were less disposed to emphasize their precise attitude. They were aware that they, like their predecessors, were passing through slow processes of doctrinal change; they loved the old Scripture phrases with the interpretations endeared by long use and wont; and they did not care for the definitions rendered necessary by theological polemics. Many of the ministers were

<sup>1</sup> 1858, *Essays*, iv. 69.



tinged more or less with Arianism,<sup>1</sup> though they agreed upon two points ; that worship was due to God the Father only, and should not be offered to the pre-existent Son<sup>2</sup> ; and that the death of Christ, whatever was its mysterious connexion with redemption, had not produced any change in the Divine Being towards man. The activity of Priestley and Lindsey, however, and their successors Belsham and Aspland, laid a new stress on Unitarian doctrine. These eminent teachers had all embraced their faith with ardour, and sacrificed for it various forms of ecclesiastical allegiance. They were, therefore, all strong denominationalists. Priestley evidently thought it a recommendation of his philosophy that it was equally unfavourable to the Catholic view of purgatory and the worship of the dead, and to the orthodox or even the Arian hypothesis of Christ's prior and exalted being.<sup>3</sup> Belsham was strenuous in his opposition to Arianism, and published a series of severe strictures on its defence by Mr. Benjamin Carpenter.<sup>4</sup> All, indeed, were agreed in repudiating subscription to any articles of faith. But in the new organisations which arose under their influence, a fresh note of dogmatic stringency was heard. When the foundation stone

<sup>1</sup> The leader in London was Dr. Abraham Rees, of the Chapel in the Old Jewry, editor of the well known Encyclopædia.

<sup>2</sup> Belsham called them 'low Arians.' Cp. note to Toulmin's Sermon to the Southern Unitarian Society, Portsmouth, 1802, *The Doctrine of the Scriptures concerning the Unity of God and the Character of Jesus Christ*.

<sup>3</sup> *A Free Discussion of the Doctrines of Materialism*, 1778 ; Works, vol. iv. pp. 105, 81.

<sup>4</sup> *Letters upon Arianism*, 1808.

of the New Gravel Pit Meeting at Hackney was laid in 1809, Mr. Aspland took pleasure in declaring— ‘Your belief is, with very few exceptions, and those comparatively unimportant, expressed in that unquestionably ancient, but certainly not apostolic, symbol of faith, called the Apostles’ Creed, the simplest and best composition of the kind, next to the confession of the Messiahship of Jesus in the New Testament, which was ever framed.’<sup>1</sup> There was a certain appeal to authority in the words ‘You hold professedly, and as a body, no articles of faith which are not, and have not been always, held by the universal church.’ Quite a different spirit breathed through the caution and reserve of John James Tayler’s ordination utterance, ‘I do declare it to be my firm belief, *so far as I have hitherto enquired*, that Jesus Christ was expressly commissioned by God to reform and instruct the world.’ This was not only the result of a difference of personal temperament, it implied also a contrast of theological and ecclesiastical attitude. To the man of Presbyterian descent and training there were open questions, which the ardent and convinced Unitarian regarded as settled. ‘We think,’ remarked the reviewer,<sup>2</sup> ‘that he has been too much alarmed at the idea of giving a “confession of faith.”’

The organisations, accordingly, which belonged to Martineau’s youth, were all established on a well-defined Unitarian basis. The ‘Unitarian Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, and the

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs*, p. 232.

<sup>2</sup> *Monthly Repository*, 1822, p. 501.

Practice of Virtue, by the Distribution of Books,' was founded in 1791. The plan was suggested by Thomas Belsham, who drew up the preamble to the rules.<sup>1</sup> It was founded on two principles, (i) that there is but One God, the sole Former, Supporter and Governor of the universe, the only proper object of religious worship, and (ii) that there is one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus, who was commissioned by God to instruct men in their duty, and to reveal the doctrine of a future life.<sup>2</sup> Other societies of the same sort followed in different parts of the kingdom, and in 1805 preparations were made for a further step. The activity of the other denominations awakened Unitarian zeal; a cry arose for more popular missionary preaching; and to provide men and means for this enterprise the 'Unitarian Fund' was established in 1806. It did not at first secure unanimous support. There were some who feared that the Unitarian cause would be degraded, if they put themselves on a level with the Methodists.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Belsham himself at first held aloof. But the important resolution of a General Meeting in 1806 to issue a new translation of the New Testament enlisted his co-operation, and he took a chief share

<sup>1</sup> See his *Memoirs of Theophilus Lindsey*, pp. 226-236.

<sup>2</sup> A similar declaration was made by the Western Unitarian Society, founded in 1792. Both Societies declared certain opinions and practices to be unscriptural and idolatrous; Mr. Belsham candidly admits that the latter epithet was offensive to many. It was at the first annual dinner of the parent Society, at the King's Head in the Poultry, in April, 1791, that the obnoxious toasts were drunk which so angered Burke: *Memoirs of Lindsey*, p. 231; cp. *ante*, p. 84.

<sup>3</sup> *Memoirs of R. Aspland*, p. 198.

in the production of what was known as the *Improved Version* in 1808.<sup>1</sup> Meantime the managers of the Fund proceeded to reopen closed chapels, to assist new congregations, and to send out missionaries to nearly every part of the kingdom. The demand for religious teachers of a more popular type soon exhausted the supply; there was an immediate call for more men; and steps were taken in 1811 to give them the necessary training by establishing under the indefatigable direction of Mr. Aspland, a Unitarian Academy, carefully protected from competition with the older College at York.<sup>2</sup> For seven years it did its modest service with the aid of tutors in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Mathematics; it trained some earnest and devoted ministers; but after a long struggle on insufficient means its doors were closed, and at the end of the session of 1818 the students separated to return no more.

The Unitarian Fund had lent its utmost aid to Mr. William Smith in 1813; but there yet remained difficulties in the Unitarian's way. He was obliged, for instance, to be married at Church, under religious sanctions in which he did not believe. When Lord Liverpool expressed the hope that

<sup>1</sup> For an account of this version by Mr. Belsham himself see his *Memoir of Lindsey*, pp. 349-359. The present writer has endeavoured to describe its place in the series of efforts culminating in the Revised Version, in his lectures on *The Bible in the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 63-65.

<sup>2</sup> 'The name Unitarian,' says Mr. R. Brook Aspland, 'was given to the Academy, not for the purpose of pledging either its students or supporters to any particular system of faith, but because it expressed the leading opinion of those who interested themselves in its formation, and their expectation of its results.' *Memoirs*, p. 303.

Unitarians would be satisfied with the Trinity bill, Mr. Smith frankly warned him that the account of reparation was not yet closed: 'We shall not be satisfied while one disqualifying statute in matters of religion remains on the books.' To work out complete freedom, an 'Association for protecting the Civil Rights of Unitarians' was formed in 1819.<sup>1</sup> There were thus three distinct societies centred in London. Amalgamation soon became inevitable. The Unitarian Fund and the Association for Civil Rights were merged in 1825 under the comprehensive name of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association; and with this the Book Society was united in the following year.

The foregoing recital has shown that Unitarians took their full share in the great struggle for civil and religious liberty.<sup>2</sup> It is worth noticing, however, that neither then, nor since, were they united on the question of the support of religion by the civil power. If Milton had laid it down that 'a Commonwealth ought to be but as one huge Christian personage,' Locke's maxim *sub evangelio nulla prorsus est respublica Christiana* led straight to the separation and independence of Church and State. Priestley's outspokenness provoked the denunciations of Burke,

<sup>1</sup> There were already disquieting symptoms that the right of Unitarians to the continued enjoyment of the endowments derived from their Presbyterian ancestors would be disputed. See *below*, chap. VII.

<sup>2</sup> It is not a little remarkable that down to the second and third decades of the last century they still found it necessary to vindicate their right to organise their own worship. This was a survival of the earlier struggle when Burke had poured ridicule on Dr. Price for trying to improve on Nonconformity, by adding another to its sects.

and he was led on from demands for reform to suggestions of complete disestablishment. Even Mrs. Barbauld wrote of the 'ill-assorted union.'<sup>1</sup> Belsham, on the other hand, with a remarkable reversion from his theological rigidity to older Presbyterian theories of comprehension, dreamed of a national church where there should be 'no doctrinal test but the profession that Jesus Christ is a teacher come from God, that he died and rose again, and that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain every thing necessary to faith and practice.' He was even willing not only that 'public teachers of religion should be supported out of the public purse,' but that Christianity should 'occasionally lift her mitred front in courts and parliaments, that so there may be teachers of religion corresponding to the various gradations of civil society.'<sup>2</sup>

The time was hardly propitious for such sentiments. The protests of Nonconformity were gathering strength, and a signal instance was to be given of Church claims. Popular Education has always been

<sup>1</sup> Still in an *Address to the Opposers of the Repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts*, 1790, she had said, 'Nor need you apprehend from us the slightest danger to your own Establishment . . . . Your Church is in no danger because we are of a different Church : they may stand together to the end of time without interference. But it will be in great danger whenever it has within itself many who have thrown aside its doctrines, or even who do not embrace them in the simple and obvious sense.' *Works*, vol. ii. p. 368.

<sup>2</sup> Three Sermons entitled *Christianity Pleading for the Patronage of the Civil Power, but Protesting against the Aid of Penal Laws*, 1820. Mr. Crabb Robinson, *Diary*, vol. ii. p. 128, reports a discussion at Mr. Belsham's, July 7, 1819, when the host said 'I think my Church ought to be established ; but as that cannot be, I would rather the Anglican Church should be maintained,' There was a Martineau among the guests, and Mr. John Kenrick was present, on his way to Germany.

a thorny subject ; and when Mr. Brougham took it up, he did not divest it of its difficulties. The Unitarians had consistently been its promoters. Some of the older congregations had long had their own school-foundations.<sup>1</sup> They had eagerly supported Lancaster's work, and innumerable sermons had been preached for the general cause. As early as 1807 Mr. Whitbread asserted in Parliament that Government was bound to provide the people with sufficient means for education. After a Parliamentary enquiry, begun in 1818, Mr. Brougham brought in a bill in 1820 for establishing parish schools out of the rates. The schoolmasters were to be members of the Church of England ; the ratepayers were to choose them, but a veto was to be entrusted to the incumbent. The bishop, the dean, and the archdeacon, were to be visitors ; the scholars were to learn the Church catechism and attend the parish church, though a conscience clause exempted the children of Dissenting parents. The bill had been prepared in consultation with the Rev. William Shepherd, an eminent Unitarian minister, of Gateacre, near Liverpool, who appeared publicly as its defender.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Aspland ranged himself vigorously with the opposition. The Protestant Society and the Ministers of the Three Denominations sent up petitions against the scheme ; fierce pam-

<sup>1</sup> Lewin's Mead, Bristol, for example, and Eustace St., Dublin. Mr. Martineau's zeal for this object will receive abundant exemplification hereafter.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of R. Aspland*, p. 425. Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Shepherd was the friend of William Roscoe of Liverpool, and author of a *Life of Poggio Bracciolini*, 1802. He also co-operated in *Systematic Education* with J. Joyce, and Lant Carpenter.

phlets were issued, to which Brougham replied in the *Edinburgh*; and after the first reading of the bill in 1821 the scheme was dropped.

The activity and influence of the Unitarians during James Martineau's youth were frequently recognised. Their energy was the consequence of religious principles which seem in retrospect difficult to conciliate with their prevailing philosophy. They were still imbued with the conceptions of the previous century which regarded Christianity as a system of truths whose reasonableness was the first thing to be proved. Confronted with the occasional excesses of the Evangelical movement, they shrank from what Isaac Taylor afterwards designated 'enthusiastic perversions of the doctrine of divine influence.'<sup>1</sup> They distrusted transitory excitements, doubted when they heard of visible displays of supernatural power, and felt a sort of shame at extraordinary turbulence of emotion, as if the privacy of the soul were violated. When it was proposed to send out missionary preachers, there were those who preferred the less aggressive method of circulating books. 'This mode of persuasion and conversion,' it was observed,<sup>2</sup> is 'peculiarly congenial with the system in whose behalf it is used; which

<sup>1</sup> *Natural History of Enthusiasm*, 1829, sect. iii. For a very careful statement see a sermon by Dr. Lant Carpenter *On Divine Influences and Conversion*, 1822, in which scripture, philosophy, and experience, are very curiously balanced. As an instance of the claims which it was intended to meet, he quotes an inscription from the tombstone of a profligate drunkard, who fell from his horse in a state of intoxication, and expired immediately:

'Between the stirrup and the ground,  
I mercy sought, and mercy found.'

<sup>2</sup> By an anonymous writer in the *Monthly Repository*, 1806, p. 40.



is founded not upon the moral and intuitive sense, not upon a frame of feelings, not upon preternatural communications and divine impressions, but upon argument and reason.'

The type of religious life which emerged under this mood of thought was marked by calmness rather than fervour; it preferred tranquillity to raptures; and found its strength in the daily walk of duty and faith. There were minds which were prepared to welcome Wordsworth, for had not Mrs. Barbauld written in her *Address to the Deity*—

At thy felt presence all emotions cease,  
And my hushed spirit finds a sudden peace :

Till all my sense is lost in infinite,  
And one vast object fills my aching sight.

This note of mysticism is less rare in the Unitarian literature of this age than is commonly supposed. The mother of Frederick Denison Maurice did, indeed, complain to her husband of the lack of Unitarian works which would help to give her children serious impressions: 'I am driven to read books which continually introduce doctrines that I cannot discover in the Scriptures, because I find so few Unitarian publications that make an impression on the heart, influencing it by forcible motives to right conduct.'<sup>1</sup> It is quite true that the books which have moved the heart of Christendom, either have the 'weight of ages' behind them,—an immemorial piety such as breathes in the *Imitation of Christ*,—or disclose an intensity of personal experience like *Pilgrim's Progress*. These products of the spirit

<sup>1</sup> This was in 1816. *Life of F. D. Maurice*, vol. i. p. 24.

require an atmosphere in which to grow : and the atmosphere of the eighteenth century was not favourable to them. When Dr. Lant Carpenter compiled a collection of daily prayers, he went back to Baxter, Matthew Henry, and Jeremy Taylor, beside Doddridge, and 'the great Dr. Hartley.' But the children of families in whom the devotional habit was cherished, were trained in the serious practice of self-examination. Corbet's *Self-Employment in Secret* among older works, and Shepherd's *Thoughts preparative and persuasive to Private Devotion*,<sup>1</sup> were favourite gifts ; and the young Martineau read Wilberforce and Hannah More in his bedroom at school. To Wilberforce Belsham pleaded that as 'Christianity sums up the whole of human duty in the love of God and our neighbour,' and requires that all our time should be employed to the best account, and every action consecrated to God, so 'to a true Christian every day is a Sabbath, every place is a temple, and every act of life an act of devotion.'<sup>2</sup> This constant dedication of all thought, desire, and will, to a heavenly service, produced a lowly reliance on divine support which lifted men above fear and querulousness. 'God has impressed me with the idea of trust and confidence,' wrote Mrs. Barbauld,<sup>3</sup> 'and my heart flies to him in danger ; of mercy to forgive, and I melt before him in penitence ; of bounty to bestow, and I ask of him all I want or wish for.' And Belsham,

<sup>1</sup> Published in 1823 and frequently afterwards : John Shepherd, 1785-1879, was an Anabaptist (*Dict. of Nat. Biogr.*)

<sup>2</sup> *Review of Wilberforce's Treatise, etc.* 1798, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> *Thoughts on the Devotional Taste*, 1775 : *Works*, vol. ii. p. 240.

whose religion Dr. Arnold could not away with, breaks out---‘Such is the God of my faith and adoration, the God of nature and revelation, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that God whose existence, attributes, and government, are the joy and confidence of every enlightened and virtuous believer.’<sup>1</sup>

The hero of this type of piety was undoubtedly Dr. Priestley. On May 21st, 1791, he preached at Dudley a sermon on *Habitual Devotion*, which served as a kind of text-book for the next generation.<sup>2</sup> He described the truly good man as living in the constant vision of him who is invisible: ‘He sees God in everything, and he sees everything in God. He *dwells in love*, and thereby *dwells in God, and God in him.*’ The man who keeps up an habitual regard to God, ‘has a kind of union *with God*, feeling, in some measure, the same sentiments, and having the same views’: such a life breeds courage, confidence, unworldliness: ‘he will walk with God all the day long, and proceed in the path of his duty with a calm, and equal, a steady, and a persevering progress.’ These sentiments were soon to be severely tested. Ere two months passed, on July 14th, the Meeting-house in which he preached had been burned, his home wrecked, his library, his apparatus, and his papers, destroyed.<sup>3</sup> With what

<sup>1</sup> *Review of Wilberforce's Treatise*, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Published the same year in a small volume to which Dr. Price also contributed.

<sup>3</sup> The riot was ostensibly occasioned by a dinner at which, however, Priestley was not present, in celebration of the anniversary of the fall of the Bastille. The Unitarian resolutions of

spirit did he meet the trial? In his *Illustrations of Philosophical Necessity* he had declared that his doctrine should produce 'the deepest humility, the most entire resignation to the will of God, and the most unreserved confidence in his goodness and providential care.' These fruits of his spirit were not wanting now, and won for him respect and admiration, even love. This noble temper pervaded Lindsey's *Conversations on the Divine Government* (1802). Belsham touched his highest strain of thought when he pleaded that the doctrine generated 'self-annihilation,<sup>2</sup> or that complete and habitual conformity of the will of man to the will of God in which the true dignity and happiness of human nature entirely consist.' . . . 'In the end the will of the pious and upright mind will be so completely absorbed in that of God, as to desire nothing to happen different from what actually comes to pass.'<sup>3</sup> Large prospects of divine beneficence were presented by Dr. Southwood Smith in his *Illustrations of the Divine Government* (1816); where the entire course of events was exhibited in the light of one vast design of infinite wisdom and goodness, by which evil should be vanquished and should

April had been republished in the *Moniteur* and other French journals. The spirit of English Unitarianism is reflected a year later in Mrs. Barbauld's *Address to the French Nation*, 1792:

'Rise, mighty nation, in thy strength,  
And deal thy dreadful vengeance round.'

<sup>1</sup> For a fine description of Priestley's calmness, see Martineau's Essay in the *Monthly Repository*, 1833: *Essays*, i. 32.

<sup>2</sup> This phrase came from Hartley; see § iv. below, p. 127.

<sup>3</sup> *Elements of the Philosophy of Mind*, 1801, p. 313. The whole list of the moral advantages of the view in question deserves serious study.

disappear.<sup>1</sup> The two treatises of Priestley and Smith awoke the highest admiration of James Martineau in his college years. Fresh from their study, he wrote to his sister-in-law, Mrs. Thomas Martineau, (York, May 11th, 1825), 'I do not know what that heart can be which is not deeply impressed with the most beautiful views of the divine government contained in these two books. . . I cannot express the veneration and deep-wrought enthusiasm with which I think of them.'<sup>2</sup> Thought, as he said a little later, was kindled into worship. The Unitarian hymnody might be untuned to the deepest note of penitence; remorse might be described as a 'fallacious feeling'; Priestley might say that a Necessarian 'cannot accuse himself of having done wrong in the ultimate sense of the words'; the expositor of the New Testament might not penetrate to the secret of Jesus, and was certain to misinterpret St. Paul; but nothing could rob him of his serene and happy trust. 'Every thought, every volition, every power, every property, every motion, every change throughout every part of the unbounded universe,' affirmed Dr. Lant Carpenter with breath-

<sup>1</sup> This book found warm admirers in Byron, Moore, Wordsworth, and Crabbe. (Rev. Alx. Gordon, in *Dict. of Nat. Biogr.*)

<sup>2</sup> In a similar strain he wrote to Alfred Higginson, then studying medicine (Nov. 21, 1825), commending Priestley's *Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever*: 'there are few things on which it does me more good to think, than such a mind as his, cultivated, acute, and powerful, tempered by the simplicity of Christian truth, and finding its most welcome enjoyments in the prospects of Christian hope. How I long to talk over such subjects as these with you, dear Alfred; they are my delight and glory; and, I sometimes think, will, when I leave College, occupy a principal part of my time and studies.'

less eagerness of joy, 'are instances of the exertion of his power by whom are all things. And the Gospel leads us to view this Almighty Being as *our Father and our Friend*.'<sup>1</sup> Yet so little did orthodoxy comprehend such a faith, that Robert Hall accused the father of Frederick Denison Maurice, when he employed the baptismal formula 'in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,' of baptising 'in the name of *an abstraction, a man, and a metaphor*.'<sup>2</sup>

#### IV.

If it was difficult for contemporary orthodoxy to realise the nature of Unitarian piety, it is still harder for the modern student of philosophy to appreciate the atmosphere of current speculation. Great names had made English thought illustrious in the earlier half of the eighteenth century, Locke, Butler, Berkeley. But at the opening of the nineteenth the national genius was taking fresh flights, and the influences which were to shape the higher religion of the next age, were found rather in the new poetry than in the teachings of the schools. One great step, however, had been made. English philosophy had been definitely committed by Hartley to the psychological method.<sup>3</sup> Lecturing in Lincoln's Inn Hall, Sir James Mackintosh laid it down that the

<sup>1</sup> *Sermons*, 1810, p. 453, 'God the source of all,' see *ante*, p. 52<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of F. D. Maurice*, vol. i. p. 123. The curious reader will find a contemporary Unitarian interpretation in Wellbeloved's *Letters to Wrangham*, p. 120.

<sup>3</sup> In the *Observations on Man, his Frame, his Duty, and his Expectations*, 1749.

law of Association 'formed the basis of all true psychology, and any ontological or metaphysical science not contained in such (i.e. empirical) psychology was but a web of abstractions and generalisations.'<sup>1</sup> The discovery of this law he attributed to Hobbes;<sup>2</sup> its full application to the whole intellectual system was due to Hartley, who stood in the same relation to Hobbes as Newton to Kepler, 'the law of association being that to the mind which gravitation is to matter.'<sup>3</sup> Starting from an elementary physiology of the nervous system, Hartley sought to account for the entire fabric of our experience out of sensations and the ideas into which they were transformed when the external stimuli ceased. For the whole processes of the mind a physical basis was found in the brain, whose medullary substance was supposed to vibrate in connexion with an elastic ether. Groups of these vibrations had their counterparts in consciousness as groups of ideas. The varied operations of the intellectual life, memory, imagination, and reason, the emotions and the will, resulted from the interaction of sensations and ideas under the laws of association.

The doctrines of Hartley were ardently espoused by Priestley, who showed, however, a disposition

<sup>1</sup> Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria* (1817), vol. i. p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> Coleridge has no difficulty in carrying it back to Aristotle; so, afterwards, Sir Wm. Hamilton. Cp. Prof. G. Croom Robertson, 'Association,' in *Encycl. Britannica*.

<sup>3</sup> This comparison was made by Hume, *Treatise on Human Nature* (1739), book i. part i. § iv.: vol. i. (ed. Green), p. 321. Cp. Stephen, *English Utilitarians*, ii. p. 289.

to drop the hypothesis of vibrations.<sup>1</sup> Their materialistic implications were in part evaded by a tentative adoption of the speculations of Boscovich, who conceived matter to consist of indivisible centres of force, and denied to it the old attribute of impenetrability<sup>2</sup>; and in part supplemented by an earnest faith in the resurrection and the life to come, based on the Christian revelation. Coleridge, however, who had himself lived in the Hartleyan principles, and given his master's name to his eldest son, came to perceive that 'the existence of an infinite spirit, of an intelligent and holy will, must on this system be mere articulated motions of the air.' If there were no knowledge except what was ultimately derived from sensation, a God who could not be seen, heard, or touched, could 'exist only in the sounds and letters that form his name and attributes.' He saw, therefore, clearly that the process by which Hume had reduced the notion of cause and effect into 'a blind product of delusion and habit,' would not stop there; it 'must be repeated to the equal degradation of every *fundamental* idea in ethics or theology.'<sup>3</sup>

This was in fact the philosophical result of the method in the hands of its keen and vigorous champion, James Mill. Early in his career as a thinker, he had felt the powerful impress of Hartley's work, and conceived the design of completing what his teacher had begun. This purpose was carried out by the publication in 1829 of his *Analysis of*

<sup>1</sup> He republished the *Observations* without them, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> *Disquisitions relating to Matter and Spirit*, 2nd ed. 1782, p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> *Biographia Literaria*, i. p. 121.



*the Human Mind*.<sup>1</sup> All philosophy must start from facts, and the primary fact in human consciousness is feeling. 'Think,' he says elsewhere,<sup>2</sup> does not include all our experience, but 'there is nothing to which we could not extend the term "I feel."' Out of feelings, the ideas into which they are transformed, and the groups into which these ideas are associated, Mill endeavoured to construct the whole activity of the mind. Here were the ultimate elements of all its powers, reasoning, imagination, abstraction, memory, belief. What, then, became of the great ontological conceptions, space, time, cause, God? They were all dissolved. 'Cause' was nothing but antecedence and sequence; time only an idea of successions, 'it consists of this and nothing else'; and God and the devil were the results of arbitrary combinations of ideas as much as the unicorn and the cyclops.<sup>3</sup> For this book James Martineau long cherished a sincere admiration. Its boldness, its lucidity, its analytic skill, satisfied his passion for completeness of construction. He at once began to use it in his teaching,<sup>4</sup> and he was not conscious of any conflict between the solvents of his philosophy and the affirmations of his religion. Enshrined in the sanctuary of Revelation, faith was beyond attack.

<sup>1</sup> See J. S. Mill's preface to the edition of 1869, vol. i. p. 17

<sup>2</sup> *Education*, p. 6, quoted by Stephen, *op. cit.* ii. p. 290.

<sup>3</sup> *Analysis*, vol. ii. p. 62.

<sup>4</sup> See *below*, chap. VI. In later days when he had abandoned its methods, he still recommended it to his students as the ablest exposition of its kind. In its sequel, the essay on Mackintosh's *Dissertation*, though he deplored its temper, he recognised an even greater power.

Hartley and Priestley never formally faced the problem of accounting for our belief in the external world. Their principles led, in the hands of James Mill, to what is technically designated 'Empirical Idealism.' It was an ancient maxim that 'like only can know like.' For this dictum no proof was offered; it was treated as self-evident; and in its application to the mind it resulted in the doctrine that we can know nothing but our states of consciousness, our sensations, and ideas, while matter became only what John Stuart Mill afterwards called 'a permanent possibility of sensation.' Against this position Reid had lifted up his voice at Glasgow in protest.<sup>1</sup> In the name of 'common sense' he pleaded that it was the *πρῶτον ψεῦδος* of philosophy from Descartes to Hume to insist 'that all the objects of my knowledge are ideas in my own mind.' In the act of perception there is an immediate and intuitive distinction between the self and the not-self, and the reality of the external world was guaranteed as a direct object of our consciousness. The writings of the Scottish school were not unknown in the class-room at York, but they made no impression on the young Martineau. In 1829, however, a new and powerful writer entered the field. The *Edinburgh Review* for October contained an article on 'the Philosophy of the Unconditioned.' It was the first number under the editorship of Macvey Napier, and his predecessor Jeffrey was horror-struck at his acceptance of 'the most unreadable

<sup>1</sup> He followed Adam Smith as Professor of Moral Philosophy, 1764-1781.

thing that ever appeared in the Review.' Nothing could more characteristically display the poverty of English philosophy at that date, than the fact that the first essay of Sir William Hamilton, a criticism of Cousin, should be denounced by Jeffrey as 'sheer nonsense.' Here was a writer who could speak the language of Kant and Schelling, not 'with bated breath and whispering humbleness,' nor in the vague and rhapsodic style of the Highgate sage, but as an equal disputant upon the field. The defence of Reid was conducted a year later in another essay, 1830, on 'The Philosophy of Perception,' when Hamilton declared himself a 'Natural Realist,' and affirmed his reliance on the direct testimony of consciousness to the existence of an outside world. With the difficulties involved in his further doctrine that 'our knowledge whether of mind or matter can be nothing more than a knowledge of the relative manifestation of an existence which in itself it is our highest wisdom to recognise as beyond the reach of philosophy,'<sup>1</sup> his successors were afterwards abundantly busy. It must suffice here to quote Martineau's later estimate<sup>2</sup> :—

The great critic and metaphysician of Edinburgh has rendered inestimable service by reducing the leading problems of philosophy into a better form than they had assumed in the hands of any of his predecessors, and by admirable examples of the true method of discussion. But he has rendered a higher and yet more fruitful service by awakening the dormant genius of British philosophy, rebuking its sluggishness, reviving its aspirations, and training a school of studious and generous admirers, who will emulate his example and reverently carry on his work.

<sup>1</sup> 'The Philosophy of the Unconditioned' in *Discussions on Philosophy and Literature*, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> See 'Hamilton's Philosophy,' 1853, *Essays*, ii. 488.

The reduction of all knowledge to sensations and the ideas derived from them involved a corresponding origin for the moral life. That some sensations produce pleasure and others pain, is an ultimate and irresolvable fact in human nature; and it sufficed in the hands of Hartley and James Mill to supply the foundation for a whole theory of virtue. But the picture of character in Hartley's *Rule of Life*<sup>1</sup> was very different from the uncompromising selfishness of Mill's *Analysis*. Not only did Hartley admit qualitative distinctions between 'gross' and 'refined' self-interest, and recognise that some pleasures were 'purer' than others, he also called in his principle of association to explain the process by which hope and fear might become 'the chief Foundation of the pure disinterested Love of God and of our Neighbour.'<sup>2</sup> With the help of the sympathetic affections, associations may be formed which will engage us to forego great pleasure, or endure great pain, for the sake of others; and without any direct or explicit expectation of reward either from God or man, or even the express appointment of concomitant pleasure in a generous action, the forces of human activity are spontaneously directed along the channels of disinterested benevolence.<sup>3</sup> Higher and higher does the purified character ascend, 'till we take our Station in the Divine Nature, and view everything from thence, and in the Relation which it bears to God.'<sup>4</sup> This

<sup>1</sup> Originally chap. iii. in *Observations*, vol. ii. but well known afterwards in a separate form as a handbook of Moral Culture.

<sup>2</sup> *Observations*, i. p. 465.

<sup>3</sup> *Observations*, i. p. 474.

<sup>4</sup> *Observations*, ii. p. 310.

is 'perfect Self-annihilation, and Resting in God as our Centre.'<sup>1</sup> Thus does a philosophy of sensation start from animal self-gratification to end in the beatific vision. It was this ardent vindication of the intrinsic worth of the love of virtue for its own sake which engaged the young Martineau's affections at College,<sup>2</sup> and put a powerful weapon in his hand when he undertook to criticize Bentham's *Deontology*.<sup>3</sup>

Hartley, especially as interpreted by Priestley, had practically entire command of the Unitarian field, for the influence of Price was little felt. Anglican orthodoxy meanwhile turned to Paley for its moral philosophy, and rested in his well-known definition of virtue as 'the doing good to mankind in obedience to the will of God, and for the sake of everlasting happiness.'<sup>4</sup> This was theological utilitarianism of the crudest sort.<sup>5</sup> The whole stress of the system fell on the promise of heaven and the fear of hell. Between prudence and virtue the difference 'and the only difference' was this: 'in the one case we consider what we shall gain or lose in the present world; and in the other case we consider also what we shall gain or lose in the world to come.' Do you ask why you are 'obliged' to keep your word? The answer is that obligation contains two elements, external constraint, and

<sup>1</sup> *Observations*, ii. p. 282.

<sup>2</sup> See *ante*, chap. II. p. 49.

<sup>3</sup> *Monthly Repository*, 1834, p. 620. On the authorship of the article see Mr. Upton's remarks, *Life*, ii. 265. Cp. chap. VI. § i

<sup>4</sup> *Moral and Political Philosophy*, 1785, Book i. chap. vii.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Martineau used to say, after his own great change, that it 'comprised the maximum of error in the minimum of space.'

the command of a superior : the second is the operative force for ordinary men : if you lie, God has announced that he will throw you into everlasting fire. To Bentham, on the other hand, these threats suggested no terrors. The calm assurance with which Paley built up his whole system on a disputable authority and a doubtful future, could not move him from his fundamental principle,—‘ Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure*. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do.’<sup>1</sup> Happiness, then, was the sole aim of man ; and ‘ the greatest happiness of the greatest number ’ was the object not only of social organisation but of personal conduct.<sup>2</sup> To this end certain ‘ sanctions ’ of pleasure and pain are attached to different actions, and Bentham, deeply concerned for the reform of legislation, interested himself in these from the political side. The legislator’s business was to promote happiness ; whatever produced most happiness was just. Obligation, on the other hand, was only a ‘ fictitious entity,’ and the word ‘ ought ’ ought to be banished from the vocabulary of morals.<sup>3</sup>

Against this utilitarian legalism Coleridge raised an impassioned though irregular protest. In Bentham and Coleridge John Stuart Mill saw ‘ the two great seminal minds of England in their age ’ ;

<sup>1</sup> *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, chap. i. *Works*, part i. p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> On the origin of this formula see *ante*, p. 81.

<sup>3</sup> *Deontology*, i. p. 32.

and when he criticised his great master on the ground that his system provided no recognition for sentiments like the sense of honour or the love of beauty,<sup>1</sup> he made concessions to moral idealism which greatly scandalised the faithful. Coleridge had never possessed the calm and self-controlled temper commended in the *Rule of Life*, and practised with such serenity by Priestley. The first access of trouble upset him. 'Yea my friend,' he wrote to Mr. B. Flower in 1796,<sup>2</sup> 'I have been sorely afflicted; I have rolled my dreary eye from earth to heaven; I found no comfort till it pleased the unimaginable high and lofty One to make my heart tender in regard of religious feelings. My philosophical refinements and metaphysical theories lay by me in the hour of anguish as toys by the bedside of a child deadly sick.' From these distresses he was delivered by the studies opened to him during his residence at Göttingen (1798-99). At Keswick about 1802 he began the serious reading of Kant; and a few years later he had completed the great transformation of ethics from outward sanction to inward principle:—

No magistrate, no monarch, no legislature, can without tyranny compel me to do anything which the acknowledged laws of God have forbidden me to do. So act that thou mayest be able without any contradiction to will that the maxim of thy conduct should be the law of all intelligent beings—is the one universal and sufficient principle and guide of morality. And why?

<sup>1</sup> *Dissertations*, vol. i. p. 360, 'Bentham,' 1838. 'Every Englishman,' he afterwards wrote (*ibid.* p. 397, 'Coleridge,' 1840), 'is either a Benthamite or a Coleridgian': 'whoever could master the premises and combine the methods of both, would possess the entire English philosophy of his age.'

<sup>2</sup> *Monthly Repository*, 1834, p. 654.

Because the object of morality is not the outward act, but the internal maxim of our actions.<sup>1</sup>

When, however, this principle was translated into conduct, the result was in curious harmony with the utilitarian scheme. The outward object of virtue, he affirmed,<sup>2</sup> is the greatest producible sum of happiness of all men. This 'must needs include the object of an intelligent self-love, which is the greatest possible happiness of one individual; for what is true of all, is true of each.' In the same spirit did Sir James Mackintosh, in his *Dissertation on the Progress of Ethical Philosophy*,<sup>3</sup> distinguish between the theory of the moral sentiments, and the criterion of morality in action. The moral sentiments he found to be a part of the original equipment of human nature. They were indeed awakened by intercourse with the world without; but they were conformed to an inner law. The disinterested affections were not the result of the jugglery of association; they possessed a native worth; and among the manifold propensions within, conscience, as Butler had taught, exercised an independent and sovereign sway. But the difference between right and wrong in human conduct could not be judged on the same ground; the law within carried its own justification with it; the obligation to do good was an ultimate and irreducible element in the moral life; but what this

<sup>1</sup> *The Friend*, i. 340, originally published in 1809.

<sup>2</sup> *Aids to Reflection*, 1825, aphorism xxxiv. c.

<sup>3</sup> Written in 1829, and prefixed to the seventh edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, of which Macvey Napier was editor. This was the discourse that roused James Mill to fury.



law prescribes in any particular case, 'agrees with the rule rightly understood of bringing forth the greatest happiness.' Only slowly did the reviving intuitive philosophy feel its way through the utilitarian environment.<sup>1</sup>

The reader who passes from the first volume to the second of Hartley's *Observations on Man*, is surprised to find a philosophy which reduces all knowledge to sensation, suddenly allying itself with metaphysical reasoning, and producing an ontological argument for Theism: 'Prop. I., Something must have existed from all Eternity; or, There never was a Time when nothing existed.'<sup>2</sup> Step by step the demonstration advances. There cannot have been a mere succession of finite dependent beings; there must exist, at least, One infinite and independent. Power, knowledge, benevolence, are successively assigned to him. He is the sole cause of all things, of all motions in the material world, and ultimately of all the actions of man. But Hartley's conception escapes from entangling Deity in a struggle with reluctant matter, whose difficulties must be overcome by mechanism, contrivance, and design. The Infinite and Eternal may be described as omnipresent, in the sense that there is no other power but his; yet he does not exist in succession; all time to him is one everlasting Now. Time belongs only to finite beings; space is but the relations of material things. Above these limitations is the sublime immutability of the Only Holy, the

<sup>1</sup> For Martineau's early views (1834) see further, chap. VI.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. ii. p. 5.

First and the Last. Annihilate self, therefore, urged Hartley, and ascribe all to God,<sup>1</sup> whose sole energy fills and guides the worlds, and blends the conflicting passions of men into one ultimate and universal good. It was characteristic of Hartley's optimism that he found a strong support for this necessarian triumph in his moral protest against the doctrine of eternal punishment.<sup>2</sup>

Hartley, therefore, was not among the predecessors who suggested to Paley the famous argument about the watch. But to Priestley it was more natural. 'For the same reason that the table on which I write, or the watch that lies before me, must have had a maker, *myself* and the *world* I live in must have had a maker too; and a design, *a fitness of parts to each other*, and to an end, are no less obvious in the one case than in the other.'<sup>3</sup> Priestley, accordingly, drew a sharper distinction than Hartley between the universe and God. To the critic who should have classed him along with Hartley as a 'materialist Spinoza,'<sup>4</sup> Priestley was ready to reply that Spinoza made the universe itself to be God, and so, in fact, denied that there

<sup>1</sup> Vol. ii. p. 61.

<sup>2</sup> 'It is true, indeed, that the Arguments against the Eternity of Punishment are shorter, stronger, and clearer, upon the supposition of Necessity, of God's being the real, ultimate Author of all Actions, than upon the Supposition of Free-will. But then this seems, if all Things be duly considered, to be rather a presumption in favour of the Doctrine of Necessity than otherwise.' Vol. ii. p. 65.

<sup>3</sup> *Disquisitions Relating to Matter and Spirit*, § xvi., vol. i. p. 188, ed. 1782.

<sup>4</sup> Cp. Stephen on Hartley, *English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. ii. p. 65.

was any.<sup>1</sup> But the religious consequence was much the same. Priestley had his full share of the *amor intellectualis Dei*.

'I own,' he wrote, 'that for my part I feel an inexpressible satisfaction in the idea of that most intimate connexion which, on my hypothesis, myself and everything in which I am concerned, have with the Deity. On his will I am entirely dependent for my *being*, and all my *faculties*. My sphere and degree of influence on other beings and other things, is his influence. I am but an instrument in his hands for effecting a certain part of the greatest and most glorious of purposes. I am happy in seeing a little of this purpose.'<sup>2</sup>

In his maturest years Mr. Martineau could never forget the impression of solemnity created in his early thought by this religion of causation, and he thus described it in a well-known sermon on *Three Stages of Unitarian Theology*<sup>3</sup>:—

You pass through an experience at once subduing and exalting, when you part from all realities but the Supreme, and find yourself with Him alone; when the throng of secondary causes ceases to distract and to conflict, and, as it sinks into semblance, drops into the lines of an eternal order; when you try to empty the running waters and the sweeping winds and the teeming earth of any forces of their own, and bid them speak and look for Him alone; when the passions of men rise up against you, and you stand still and answer not, because they subside before your eye into a pulsation of His will; when the very thoughts you seem to think resolve themselves before you into phenomena of His life passing a conscious point of space; when, in short, life becomes to you a sacred dream, and history a soliloquy of God, and the possibility is gone of anything less than the Divine. As if to test at once the sustaining efficacy of this faith, its great apostle in the last century was driven, the victim of ruinous outrage, from the country he had instructed and adorned; and never did it receive more impressive comment than in the lofty patience, and serene trust, the unexhausted benevolence, of the exile of Pennsylvania.

The argument from design received powerful

<sup>1</sup> *Disquisitions*, i. p. 88.

<sup>2</sup> *Disquisitions*, vol. i. p. 43.

<sup>3</sup> In 1869; *Essays*, iv. 573.

expression in the book which crowned the series of Paley's works, his *Natural Theology*, published in 1802. Not a little remarkable is it that Dr. Martineau, who used to say that this was the only book that ever made him doubt, returned in later life to some of its leading ideas, though in his hands they assumed fresh forms. God, as Paley presents him, is neither the Infinite Geometer of Plato, thinking out the universe by a vast process of deduction from ideal principles of his own being, nor the 'perfect poet,' who spontaneously lives out his own creations. He is a giant Contriver, for it is only by the display of contrivance that his existence, agency, and wisdom, can be testified to his rational creatures. Whatever is done, God could have done without the intervention of instruments or means. But it is in the construction of instruments, and in the choice and adaptation of means, that a creative intelligence is seen. For the purpose, then, of revealing himself to man, God has been pleased to prescribe limits to his own power, and to work his ends within these limits.<sup>1</sup> Paley, however, discerned clearly enough that this argument could not carry him further than a unity of designing mind. There was one plan for the universe, but its execution might be delegated to a plurality of agents.<sup>2</sup> The conception of a God at once immanent and transcendent, presented by Hartley, was thus converted into a kind of imperialism represented departmentally by

<sup>1</sup> Chap. iii., *Works*, vol. iv. (1845), p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> 'The whole argument for the divine unity goes no further than a unity of counsel': 'no arguments that we are in possession of exclude the ministry of subordinate agents,' chap. xxv.

local powers. If Priestley had emphasized a certain distinction between the universe and God, Paley heightened it indefinitely with his stress on the mechanism of limb and muscle, the chemistry of the bile, the physiology of respiration, and the provision for the foetus. Here is no hint of ineffable mysteries beyond space and time. The great Artificer creates his own materials, elects his own ends, and under the familiar conditions of our common experience produces a world where we make a watch.

This mechanism of creation excited a deep abhorrence in the mind of Coleridge, when once the reaction against the philosophy of his youth began. In his cottage at the foot of the Quantocks he devoted his thoughts and studies to the foundations of religion and morals.<sup>1</sup> What proof had he, so he asked himself, of the outward existence of anything? Such proof he declared to be in the nature of things impossible. 'Of all modes of being, that are not objects of the senses, the existence is *assumed* by a logical necessity arising from the constitution of the mind itself.' Here was a new weapon of combat, supplied to him by German analysis. It led him away from a philosophy of sensation, and opened to him, whether through Plotinus or Schelling, what Wordsworth had designated 'the vision and the faculty divine.'<sup>2</sup> The hint of earlier years that 'religion must have a *moral* origin' became the chief theme of his *Aids to Reflection* in 1825. In this work, with its rambling aphorisms and still more rambling

<sup>1</sup> *Biographia Literaria*, i. p. 194.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 244.

commentaries, he sought to establish the distinct characters of prudence, morality, and religion. The second, in his view, required the first; the third contained and supposed both the former. But religion did not rest solely upon ethics. It belonged to the whole of man's higher nature. Adopting the Kantian distinction between the Understanding which deals with our common experience, and the Reason which brings 'a unity into all our conceptions and several knowledges,' he pleaded that on this unity the whole fabric of knowledge depended. The world could only become intelligible on the assumption of a One as the ground or cause of the universe, behind all succession, subject neither to time nor change.<sup>1</sup> How this Idea was raised by morality and religion into the supreme object of faith, love, fear, and adoration, was the great theme of Coleridge's philosophy. From the demonstrations which started from the signs of order and purpose in nature, he turned away as inadequate or superfluous. They either failed to get beyond the proof of a mighty Demiurge who resembled a vast and non-natural man; or they presupposed the idea of God without being able to authenticate it. The human mind itself bore within it the impress of the Divine; and the infinite Reality was recognised beyond, because it had first been discerned within the soul. In Reason lay the roots of all our thinking; on the side of knowledge supplying the ideas of cause, of unity, and infinitude; on the side of action opening to us mysteries of

<sup>1</sup> Aphorism xcvi. c. 5.

freedom, with heavenly attributes of holiness, providence, love, justice, mercy, and human recognition of the solemn sanctities of obligation. The immediate effect of this was to break down the rigid limits of 'revelation.' It could no longer be conceived as the utterance of a 'superhuman ventriloquist'; it was not restricted to a canonical Scripture; it was an essential element in all true religion; for the reason which was its organ was not of our own making, but reflected under the forms of our consciousness the very realities of the Eternal.

Other voices beside that of Coleridge uttered the same plea, but in less technical language. Wordsworth has often been described as a philosophical poet; though no one reads him aright who endeavours to fit his utterance into a definite scheme of systematic thought. Yet he led the way in the revolt against the mechanical interpretation of the world, and portrayed its life and beauty as the expression of an ever-present Spirit.<sup>1</sup> Nor was he the poet of nature only; between the 'Ode to Duty' and Bentham's 'Deontology' was a great gulf fixed; and no less a chasm separated it from the Evangelical formula which labelled all natural righteousness as 'filthy rags.' Shelley stood outside the sphere of recognised religion, but he is at the antipodes of philosophical materialism. The world, as he viewed it, is full of spiritual forces: and with a boundless confidence in them he depicts the triumph of man over social wrong and the tyranny of outworn creeds. Wordsworth had seen hope shattered,

<sup>1</sup> The 'Tintern Abbey' Lines were composed in 1789, four years before Paley's *Natural Theology*.

and faith eclipsed ; with infinite pain he built up again the edifice of trust. Shelley comes to the same problems almost a generation later ; the reaction of authority and privilege has set in ; he flings himself passionately against it ; but he invokes no power of the sword ; the regeneration which he prophesies so ardently<sup>1</sup> is wrought out only by faithfulness and love. With a sterner defiance did Byron hurl his protest in *Cain* (1822) against the prevailing theology, 'the most powerful, the most human, the most serious thing he ever wrote, and the most effective.'<sup>2</sup> The clergy might be indignant, and Jeffrey might scold ; but it was needful that current doctrines of punishment and atonement should be done away to give room for thoughts of a higher justice and love ; and it was well that the work of destruction should be initiated by a poet who could compel his countrymen to listen.

Meanwhile a new and powerful voice began to resound in the English periodicals. Thomas Carlyle was passing through agitated and stormy years. As early as 1819 he had commenced the study of German ; in 1824 he issued the translation of *Wilhelm Meister*. Article after article presented successive delineations of the masters of German literature. Arrived in London, he, too, made a pilgrimage to Highgate ; he, too, dwelt on the distinction between the Understanding and the Reason ; he, too, was for a while the champion and interpreter of Kant. No more than Wordsworth, however, was Carlyle,

<sup>1</sup> *The Revolt of Islam*, 1818 ; *Prometheus Unbound*, 1820.

<sup>2</sup> *The Development of Theology as illustrated in English Poetry from 1780 to 1830*, by the Rev. Stopford A. Brooke, 1893, p. 39.



using prose instead of poetry as his medium, a systematic thinker. In Goethe did he find his prophet. There was a teacher who had turned his back on the creeds of the Church without sinking into the worship of utility; who had reached a lofty conception of the universe unencumbered by Biblical literalism; and found a new dignity in life by placing it under the sway of ideal ends of truth, beauty, and goodness. But in 1831 Carlyle parted company altogether with the philosophers, and in the Essay on 'Characteristics'<sup>1</sup> announced his doctrine of 'unconsciousness'; declared that man's true health is to have a soul without being aware of it; and held up the products of science and reflection as the outcome of a kind of disease: —'If Adam had remained in Paradise, there had been no anatomy and no metaphysics.'<sup>2</sup>

With the rising developments of science the passionate spirit of Carlyle had little sympathy. But France gave the lead to a new teacher, when Comte published in 1830 the first volume of his *Cours de Philosophie Positive*. England was to wait nearly a generation for a thinker who should in like manner boldly attempt the task of co-ordinating the sciences under the general conception of Evolution. Meanwhile the ground was being surveyed. Lyell produced the first part of his *Principles of Geology*. In the same year, 1830, Herschel expounded the ideas that underlay all scientific method in his noble *Discourse on Natural Philosophy*. Two

<sup>1</sup> *Edinburgh Review*, cviii.

<sup>2</sup> Criticised by Martineau in *Endeavours after the Christian Life*, vol. ii., 1847, 'Christian Self-Consciousness,' vi.

years later, when the strife of Reform was momentarily hushed, the British Association for the Advancement of Science was founded in Oxford, in the summer of 1832. A new era was at hand. The voices of Shelley and Byron had been silenced. The representatives of great movements in literature and philosophy, Goethe, Bentham, Scott, were passing away.<sup>1</sup> Fresh problems were to arise which no Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge<sup>2</sup> would avail to settle. The very next year a vast series of developments would begin. John Henry Newman, who had helped to found the *Record* in 1828, would publish his *Essay on the Arians*, and start *Tracts for the Times*. Carlyle would utter the poignant cries of Teufelsdröckh, and conduct him to the 'Everlasting Yea.' Tennyson and Browning would lead the way on new paths of poetry. Strauss would be at work on the *Leben Jesu*. And through the medley of conflicting cries in science, philosophy, and Biblical criticism, James Martineau would slowly realise the task to which he was called, to vindicate the great conception secreted in the heart of the noblest utterances of his youth, which he afterwards defined as 'the perennial Indwelling of God in Man and in the Universe.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Goethe died March 22 ; Bentham, June 6 ; Scott, Sept. 21.

<sup>2</sup> The first Committee met in April, 1825.

<sup>3</sup> 'Personal Influences on Present Theology, Newman, Coleridge, Carlyle': *Essays*, i. p. 280.





*James Martineau*  
1847

## CHAPTER V.

### EARLY LIVERPOOL MINISTRY: 1832-1836.

ON the 29th June, 1832, James Martineau had left Dublin alone for Liverpool. The family, who followed, were sheltered at first in the friendly home of the Misses Yates at Farmfield,<sup>1</sup> which was so often to open to them in future years for quiet and refreshment after the exacting labours of the town. The close of the Dublin settlement had involved heavy loss; but this was relieved by the generosity of the Congregation in Liverpool, who presented the junior pastor with £100 in advance and a share in the Athenæum;<sup>2</sup> while the friends from Eustace St. sent over a still larger sum as a tribute of affectionate admiration. Six weeks after reaching Liverpool, Mr. Martineau established himself in a new home at 3, Mount Street.

'One precious link there was,' he wrote afterwards, 'which prevented the breach with the Dublin life from being absolute. The dear friend, with her two sons, who had passed with us from Bristol to Dublin, now took a house near us in Liverpool; her younger son entering a solicitor's office for his legal training, and the elder prosecuting those scientific and medical studies which have made him one of the most accomplished of living men. In spite of great losses by removal, I managed before long to discharge my debt to her, and with it the last lingering anxiety of the Dublin crisis.'

<sup>1</sup> In the beautiful estate known as the Dingle.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to Dr. Carpenter, July 16.

The ten or twelve years that followed, were in many ways the most difficult and laborious in his whole career. They determined the character of his activity, shaped the fresh forms of his thought, enabled him to reconstruct his whole theology and philosophy, and fixed the lines of his future influence.

## I.

The chapel in Paradise Street which was to be the scene of Mr. Martineau's ministry, had been built in 1771. Like the religious home of his early years at Norwich, it had the shape of an octagon. There, Sunday by Sunday, for sixteen years, he lived his intensest life, and exercised with unwearied energy the gift of teaching. That his preaching had peculiar characteristics, and could not make an equal appeal to every mind, he was well aware; to his revered friend Dr. Carpenter he thus made his explanations.

Liverpool, July 16, 1832.

I receive with grateful welcome your wishes, always sincere and sound as well as affectionate, for my welfare and usefulness here, and your suggestions respecting the best means of rendering my preaching subservient to this end. I am aware, often to a painful and almost overpowering degree, of the faults and defects of my pulpit services, both in the particulars which you mention, and in others; but the plain truth is that the existing tendencies of my own mind (which I believe to be constitutional) towards certain modes of thinking and feeling, are so strong that I cannot overcome them; the attempt, even if it makes me plainer, produces constraint and coldness—worse evils than those which I avoid. Unless I feel strongly, I cannot write; and I cannot feel unless I indulge the views and reflexions which I love, and experience to be useful to my own mind. The question is not whether there might not be a more effective style of preaching; I know there might. But the question is whether a man with my particular constitution of mind could attain this better style; and I believe that I could not. So I have made up my mind

that I must be content with usefulness to a certain class of minds, and forego the far nobler privilege of influence on the human mind in general. Forgive me these few lines about myself; they are really written not in the spirit of self-defence, but in that of confession.

Many of his hearers, for a long time to come, were to follow him with difficulty. To a natural shyness he added a peculiar reserve on the deep things of the heart, which made any attempt at familiar speech concerning them seem like desecration; in the ordinary intercourses of life he could never introduce such topics because it might be professionally expected of him; but in correspondence the barrier was again and again withdrawn; and the semi-publicity of the class constantly supplied an opportunity in the midst of the growing interests of the young, of which he was ready to avail himself to the full. Within three months of his settlement he organised a morning lecture before service, on Natural Theology, intended to lead up to Scripture criticism—'he has a grand attendance,' noted Mrs. Martineau approvingly at the end of the year,<sup>1</sup>—and after service came a second class for younger members. By these means he really educated a future congregation to his own modes of thought and feeling;<sup>2</sup> they understood the concentrated reasoning and the elaborate expression of the sermon, because they had first grown familiar with the beloved voice in the more intimate discussions of the lecture-room. To these were

<sup>1</sup> The morning lecture was long attended also by hearers from the Renshaw Street congregation.

<sup>2</sup> At one time there was an additional class for girls at 4, followed by one of boys: then came tea in the committee-room, and evening service at 6-30.

sometimes added week-evening conferences,<sup>1</sup> when difficulties might be stated and removed ; and others besides the devoted wife could sympathise with such an entry in the irregular journal as this, ‘ a glorious revelation of J.’s soul to-night at the conference, on his grand subject, the arguments for human immortality.’ How he appeared to the sympathetic hearer at this season may be gathered from the well-known words of the Rev. Charles Wicksteed, then minister of the Ancient Chapel, Toxteth Park, who recalled his impressions in 1877 :—

Well does the writer remember, though it is forty-five years ago, how the circular staircase of the somewhat conspicuous pulpit was quietly ascended by a tall young man, thin, but of vigorous and muscular frame, with dark hair, pale but not delicate complexion, a countenance full in repose of thought, and in animation of intelligence and enthusiasm, features belonging to no regular type or order of beauty, and yet leaving the impression of a very high kind of beauty, and a voice so sweet, and clear and strong, without being in the least degree loud, that it conveyed all the inspiration of music without any of its art or intention. When this young man, with the background of his honour and courage, rose to speak of the inspiration that was not in the letter but in the soul, and (for that time of day) boldly distinguished between the inspiration of Old Testament books and Old Testament heroes, he completed the conquest of his hearers.<sup>2</sup>

Year by year the preacher’s power grew ; but with the growth came also a consciousness that the deeps of feeling out of which the sermon issued could not be punctually opened every week. This was one of the reasons why he sometimes devoted courses of evening lectures to subjects of theology, suggested by his evangelical environment in Liverpool, or the rising Tractarian movement, or the rapid advances alike

<sup>1</sup> These began in 1836.

<sup>2</sup> *National Portrait Gallery* of Messrs. Cassell & Co., part 78.



of Biblical criticism and of science. This, too, was the reason why he could not be induced to preach extempore: in the act of speech he could not be alone with God, wrapped in that solitude of spirit which he found needful to enable him to bring the wants and aspirations of the soul beneath the consecration of the Eternal. Once or twice did he attempt it in his earlier years.

He gave us in the evening (reported Mrs. Martineau, April 13, 1835), his beautiful expository sermon on Christ to the thief on the cross, and talked it over with me whether he could venture on something of the same style of expository sermon extempore. It is curious enough that the very next Sunday should have driven him to try his powers in this way. There was no gas,<sup>1</sup> nor had he even the power of having pulpit lights. So he took the text of the sermon he was intending to preach, having read the chapter previously, and with no other preparation than having read over his sermon beforehand, explained the text 'In the beginning was the Word,' etc. The subject favoured him, being of the expository kind which he would choose for a beginning of extempore preaching, and to my mind it was a beautiful earnest of what his power in this way may prove. He was quite clear and self-possessed throughout, being perfect master of his subject, and that subject being of the argumentative explanatory kind. He needed not any burst of feeling which might have bewildered him and put him out.<sup>2</sup>

For expository preaching, however, Mr. Martineau had a decided distaste. The scholar and historian in him were too strong, and insisted on having their rights. The discussions which they demanded were, in his judgment, unsuitable to the pulpit, and obtruded the difficulties of the critic into what should be the colloquy of the soul with God. On this theme he thus expressed himself in retrospect at ninety

<sup>1</sup> Tradition related that it went out during the service.

<sup>2</sup> It was said that nothing was observable except that the sermon was rather shorter than usual.

years.<sup>1</sup> The passage throws interesting light on his idea of the function of a text.

The method of explanation 'presupposes an insight into a crowded mass of personal, social, geographical, historical, and religious, particulars; from the combined operation of which results the meaning of the text. To put his reader in possession of these, and make him at home in the scene of them, is therefore the business of the expositor. So little appropriate to the pulpit is this task that no genuine preacher will undertake it there. It belongs to the prolegomena of a commentary, where the meaning of the phrases, the content of conceptions, and connexion of clauses are set forth, and made to yield the author's thought. This didactic process is in the province of the philologist and grammarian, and must be looked for in their books, and cannot be carried thence to be retailed in church. The preacher's function, on the other hand, is to take out of Scripture some thought so little entangled with conditions of time and place as already to speak for itself, and thence to transfer it unchanged to his hearers' experience and duties in their different time and place. In doing this he will be detained within the drama of their life, will go with them into their temptations, carry light into their sorrows, and throw himself into their aspirations and their prayers. This application of a text already understood is quite a different act from the discussion and elucidation of its meaning as it came into its context from the author's mind; so different that I deem it impossible to satisfy in one composition the requirements of a good exposition and a good sermon.'

In the spring of 1835 the senior minister of Paradise St. retired,<sup>2</sup> and the undivided charge was committed to Mr. Martineau.<sup>3</sup> 'The Sunday before last was the first of my husband's sole ministry,' noted Mrs. Martineau on April 13th, 'an eventful day to us as marking a new and perhaps very important

<sup>1</sup> Preface to *A Spiritual Faith*, Sermons by J. Hamilton Thom.

<sup>2</sup> In consequence of disease of the brain. On his death in 1843 Mr. Martineau preached a sermon in which he declared that his relation to him as colleague 'was never weakened or made painful by any ungentle word or thought, never for a moment embarrassed by any discordances between the wisdom of the elder, and the enthusiasm of the younger.'

<sup>3</sup> Prior to this, at the close of 1834, the congregation had made Mr. Martineau a third present,—this time £150.

era in our lives. "I should rather," said he, "consider it a great change to myself, than make any great external changes or professions." In his own retrospect the matter was thus described:—

The retirement of my excellent colleague rendered my position at once more stable and more responsible. There had been no more difference between us than is almost inevitable between two successive generations: and he had never availed himself of his authority as Senior to put the slightest check upon my plans. But out of personal deference to modes of thought other than my own, I had put a check upon myself, and suppressed many a natural word and wish of which I could foresee his disapproval. The undivided office left me now without excuse, if I failed to shape my work into a form consistent and complete. Complete it certainly never became. Consistent I believe its various parts really were at any one time; but, on comparing separated times, contrarieties undoubtedly appear; nor did my ways of thinking and teaching at any period undergo more serious change than during the first few years of my sole ministry.

## II.

During his Dublin ministry James Martineau had remained constant to the convictions of his College years. In 1830 he wrote to Dr. Carpenter on April 5, expressing the warmest admiration for a series of papers by Mr. W. J. Fox occasioned by the death of Mr. Belsham, Nov. 11, 1829.<sup>1</sup>

Have you thought of reprinting from the *Repository* Mr. Fox's most beautiful sketch of Mr. Belsham's life and writings? I do not know whether it is quite adapted for separate publication; and yet I wish that it were accessible to every Unitarian. I would give up two-thirds at least of Dr. Channing's writings for those papers. I never received so much delight and improvement in so short a space from anything out of the Bible.

The same spirit of ardent discipleship breathes in the essay on Priestley, written after his removal

<sup>1</sup> *Monthly Repository*, 1830, Feb., March, April.

to Liverpool.<sup>1</sup> But a new ethical note is sounded in the review of Bentham's *Deontology*, in 1834.<sup>2</sup> He has no patience for the 'intolerant scorn with which Mr. Bentham thinks it incumbent upon him to treat all schemes of morality different from his own'; and pronounces indignant censure on his 'defamation' of Socrates and Plato. He still thinks that happiness is 'the divine signature by which alone Providence has made intelligible his oracles of human duty.' But he passes unconsciously—through a spirited vindication of the reality of the disinterested affections (founded on Hartley's explanation of their growth)—to a fresh moral basis. He charges Bentham with substituting trial by consequences for trial by motives.<sup>3</sup> This is to be the ground of his future defence of the authority of conscience. He already appeals from the Utilitarian philosopher to 'the universal sentiments and language of mankind.' Nay, the Gospel itself is on his side: 'their feelings are in accordance with the maxim, "If ye do good to them that do good to you, what thank have ye?"' The slow change of theology started from an ethical root, from new values for the moral and spiritual affections.

The refuser of the *Regium Donum* and the expositor of Priestley was early marked out for distinction

<sup>1</sup> First published in the *Repository*, 1833.

<sup>2</sup> *Repository*, pp. 612-624.

<sup>3</sup> In criticising Dr. Wardlaw's *Christian Ethics* in the same year, he laid it down that 'Moral philosophy proposes, as its end, the perfection of man as a voluntary being; it aims at the creation of a perfect system of voluntary action, and such an adjustment of the internal dispositions as will best secure it.' Note to the Unitarian Association Sermon, 1834, p. 32.

among the members of his denomination. In March, 1833, he was called to a great gathering at Birmingham in commemoration of the Centenary of Priestley's birth;<sup>1</sup> and in the following year he preached the anniversary sermon of the Unitarian Association in London.<sup>2</sup> Before a society constituted on a theological basis he chose a cognate theme, the relation of theology to religion, or, after the elaborate phrasing of an earlier day, 'The Existing State of Theology as an Intellectual Pursuit, and Religion as a Moral Influence.' The discourse is noteworthy for several reasons. How swift is the development of his powers! Here are the beginnings of epigram, of irony, and metaphor, which were afterwards so sorely to bewilder his critics; here the rich and sustained eloquence which sounds so often in his writings like a mighty diapason note through harmonies of reason and emotion; here the background of historical and scientific knowledge; here the appeals to poetry and imagination as the true helpers in the interpretation of the great theological constructions of the past; here the outlook to the devotions of other schools of religious thought and life; here the definite demand that theology must be 'scientific,' and the clear implication that its real *data* are not, after all, to be found in outward events, but in the inner drama of the soul's affections; and here the impassioned protest against sectarianism, and the prophecy of a fellowship in which their 'little community of reformers' should be

<sup>1</sup> For his attitude on this occasion, see chap. VII. § ii.

<sup>2</sup> At South Place, Finsbury, the scene of the ministry of his revered friend, Rev. W. J. Fox.

‘lost in the wide fraternity of enlightened and benevolent men.’ The student of science feared nothing that astronomy or geology could teach—‘Through what a host of difficulties, amid what a storm of hostility, had geology to struggle into existence! With what countless absurdities of speculation was it long encumbered, what incredible distortion of facts! And all that the dates of the Old Testament might remain intact!’ A new sympathy spoke in the words—‘It is the spirit of the soul’s natural piety to alight on whatever is beautiful and touching in every faith, and take there its secret draught of pure and fresh emotion. . . . Who does not feel the refreshment, when some stream of pure poetry, like Heber’s, winds into the desert of theology! when some flash of genius, like that of Chalmers, darts through its dull atmosphere! some strains of eloquence, like those of Channing, float from a distance on its heavy silence!’ The author of the sentence—‘They desire to reach the end of this long and hard theological ascent, and, resting on the elevation to which it should conduct them, gaze down on the outspread scenery of life and Providence, and watch the gliding of its shadows, and trace the streams of its mighty tendencies’—had not wandered among the hills, and read Wordsworth, for nothing. The spirit of something more than the enthusiastic young Whig reformer begets the exhortation—‘While theologians are discussing the evidences of creeds, let teachers be conducting them to their applications. Let their respective sources of feeling and conception be unfolded before the soul of mankind; let it

be tried what mental energy they can inspire, what purity of moral perception infuse, what dignity of principle erect, what toils of philanthropy sustain.' And the preacher must have moved far from the psychology of Hartley and Mill towards the idealism of his favourite Plato, who could conclude his sermon with such an image as this—' Like the ethereal waves whose inconceivable rapidity and number are said to impart the sensation of vision, the undulations of opinion are speeding on to produce the perception of truth : they are the infinitely complex and delicate movements of that universal Human Mind, whose quiescence is darkness—whose agitation, light.'<sup>1</sup>

The first definite notes of departure from the traditional Unitarian position as he himself had expounded it at his Dublin ordination,<sup>2</sup> were sounded in the little book which soon made him widely known, *The Rationale of Religious Inquiry*.<sup>3</sup> These six lectures on the question of the true foundations of religious belief, delivered at the close of 1835, involved the same kind of survey as his latest treatise on *The Seat of Authority in Religion*, but the point of view was by no means identical. After five and forty years there will be the same general line of argument against the pleas for an infallible church or an infallible Scripture ; but the whole conception of revelation will have changed ; German anti-

<sup>1</sup> Contemporary reports describe the sermon as 'a highly original, philosophical, and energetic discourse,' *Christian Reformer*, 1834, p. 420 ; 'a most eloquent, philosophical, and animated discourse,' *Unitarian Magazine and Chronicle*, p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> *Ante*, pp. 64-66.

<sup>3</sup> *Or, the Question stated of Reason, the Bible, and the Church*, 1836

supernaturalism will be dreaded no more ; Christianity will be disentangled from the envelopment of unhistorical accretions ; and instead of being conceived as a system of truths announced by Messiah and divinely accredited by miracle, will be presented as a religion personally realised in the holiest soul of human kind, around whom his disciples threw the investiture of a Messianic dignity which he had himself disowned.

The point at which Mr. Martineau diverged from contemporary Unitarianism, was not so much in his estimate of the Evangelists—‘perfectly human, though recording superhuman events’<sup>1</sup>—as in his frank erection of the claim of reason to control revelation. The language of an elder generation had been explicit ;<sup>2</sup> whatever is taught by the Bible must be unquestioningly received ; prove that the doctrine of the Trinity lies in its pages, and all difficulties of reason are immediately silenced.<sup>3</sup> This position Mr. Martineau now formally abandoned. In the lecture on Rationalism he affirmed that ‘no seeming inspiration can establish anything contrary to reason ; that the last appeal, in all researches into religious truth, must be to the judgments of the human mind ; that against these judgments Scripture cannot have any authority, for upon its

<sup>1</sup> See a similar phrase in the Sermon preached at the 50th Anniversary of Manchester College, January 24, 1835 ; ‘the Sacred Writings are perfectly human in their origin, though recording superhuman events,’ *Essays*, iv. 366. The passage is interesting as marking the definite adieu to an older and no longer tenable position.

<sup>2</sup> See *ante*, chap. IV. p. 102.

<sup>3</sup> For the language of Dr. Carpenter, see the *Rationale*, p. 240.



authority they themselves decide.<sup>1</sup> The Unitarians, he observed, 'have repeatedly said: if we could find the doctrines of the Trinity and the Atonement, and everlasting torments in the Scriptures, we should believe them; we reject them, not because we deem them unreasonable, but because we perceive them to be unscriptural. For my own part, I confess myself unable to adopt this language.'<sup>2</sup> When further he denounced the method of interpretation in which he had been brought up—'The Unitarian takes with him the persuasion that nothing can be scriptural which is not rational and universal, and he finds a preceptive system in which local and circumstantial beauties are frittered into cold ethical generalities, and a doctrinal theory, in which burning Orientalisms are turned into pale and sickly truisms,'—suspicion awoke wrath;<sup>3</sup> and the curious definition of revelation as 'an anticipation only of science' excited angry protest. Vainly did he deny the Christian name to those who themselves denied the miracles;<sup>4</sup> his critics were not appeased.

<sup>1</sup> *Rationale*, p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> *Rationale*, p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> In this matter he could already formulate the well-known maxim of Jowett: affirming that 'the business of the understanding in the interpretation of Scripture is the same as in the case of any other book, to furnish itself well with all such knowledge of language, of history, of localities, of the sentiments of the age and nation, as may have any bearings upon the writings; and then to give itself freely up to the impression which they convey, without any attempt to modify it by any notions, whether derived from an ecclesiastical creed or an individual theory, previously in the mind.' *Rationale*, p. 115, 1st ed.

<sup>4</sup> An interesting note, containing a criticism on a well-known Evangelical writer, Dr. Wardlaw, indicates his future way of escape: 'If indeed the *essential features* of Christianity are to be found in the doctrinal or preceptive parts of the scripture, it is difficult to deny to any one who holds the doctrines and

Yet the book contains many hints that his mind will not permanently remain just at that poise. He was rebuked for destroying all external authority : he cannot yet reply by pointing to an authority within, for he has not yet investigated the real nature, scope, powers, and source, of reason. But he does present religion in lofty language as a ' form of truth,' a ' form of emotion,' and a ' principle of duty,' as ' the last and noblest exercise of reason and love and conscience.'<sup>1</sup> What these energies really were, the studies of the next few years were to disclose to him.

The closing lecture, delivered on the last Sunday of December, 1835, was devoted to a brief sketch of the influence of Christianity on human morality and civilisation. By its sentiment of universal brotherhood, observed the preacher, it has produced the benevolence of class to class. To this kind of activity Mr. Martineau attached great importance. The question was by what agencies and in what forms it could be most effectively promoted. The

venerates the precepts he finds there, the title of Christian ; and it is only on the supposition of the religion of Christ being *essentially historical*, that we can make a belief in *the facts* the basis of our definition,' p. 246. It is still ' doctrine ' and ' precept ' ; the source from which these issue, the real person, has hardly yet (in the face of Hartley and James Mill) come into view. A hint, however, is given in the reference (p. 32) to the voice at the baptism and the transfiguration, ' distinctly singling out *the one infallible point*, when they pronounce him *beloved*, *the object of perfect moral approbation*, the image of finished excellence,' etc. Compare the language of the College Jubilee sermon, ' thus to pass behind the veil of antiquity, is the only method of rising to a genuine appreciation of the mind of Christ, or of attaining a clear vision of the perfect religion which it enshrines,' *Essays*, etc., iv. p. 367.

<sup>1</sup> *Rationale*, pp. 150-1.

following year, 1836, was to see the foundation of an institution for this purpose. On the one hand, Mr. Martineau had steeped himself in the conceptions of the new science of Political Economy ;<sup>1</sup> and to its severer methods—after a period of agitated dissatisfaction—he remained constant all his life. On the other hand, he was profoundly moved by ideas of social duty, and, though not feeling himself called into the field of active service among the poor and suffering, he recognised the Christian claim, and sought anxiously to fulfil it. The Boston Unitarians, under the inspiration of Channing, and through the remarkable initiative of Dr. Tuckerman, had worked out a practical scheme of ministry among the poor. Mr. Martineau's own aid had been sought by Mr. W. J. Fox when similar efforts were set on foot in London by the Unitarian Association. In 1834 a proposal to sever this missionary labour from its direction was earnestly resisted by him (at the meeting after his sermon), on the ground that it was the only object which redeemed the Association from the charge of indifference to the actual wants of the people. There were two classes of evidence, he added, on which religion depended ; one was to be found in Scripture, the other in the adaptation of religion to men's social condition. He was prepared, therefore, to feel the full effect of the stimulating presence of Dr. Tuckerman,

<sup>1</sup> To him by no means 'dismal.' In his sermon on Halley's Comet, there is an emphatic expression of the hopes which Adam Smith's teaching had inspired. *Essays*, iv. 349. Writing as an 'adopted Hibernian' to Dr. Carpenter from Dublin, Sept. 9, 1830, he said, 'I believe that Mr. Hume and the Economists can do more for us than we can do for ourselves.'

who visited Liverpool in the spring of 1834, and stayed at the hospitable home of Mr. Rathbone at Greenbank.<sup>1</sup> The minister of Renshaw St. Chapel, the Rev. John Hamilton Thom, to whom Mr. Martineau was already bound by fraternal sympathy and friendship,<sup>2</sup> took the opportunity on Christmas Day, 1835, to preach a sermon urging the establishment of a Domestic Mission in Liverpool. The lectures afterwards printed in the *Rationale* were drawing to a close, and at the earliest practicable date, the preacher asked his friend to repeat the sermon in Paradise Street. No time was lost. On Good Friday, 1836, a meeting was held at Renshaw St., under the presidency of Mr. Rathbone, to establish the new Mission; when the speeches of the two young ministers produced a profound impression.<sup>3</sup> Succeeding years brought inevitable changes of the original plan; but whether in Liverpool, or in later days in London, Mr. Martineau adhered to the view that these Missions, with the various agencies which gathered round them, more nearly realised his ideal for the discharge of Christian social duty than any other institutions which the nineteenth century produced. To the last they enlisted his untiring support.

<sup>1</sup> For a brief account of Dr. Tuckerman, and another American visitor, Mr. Jonathan Phillips, the friend of Channing, see the Preface to *A Spiritual Faith*, p. xv. 'Their benevolent and devout enthusiasm came upon us like the angel descending to stir the sleeping waters, and their recital of what was being done to uplift and evangelise the neglected classes in Boston fell as a convicting and converting word, and yet a word of hope and zeal, upon our conscience.'

<sup>2</sup> See p. 161.

<sup>3</sup> *Christian Reformer*, 1836, p. 571.

## III.

Around the study in Mount Street where all these labours had their centre, gathered a rich and various life. Other children were added to the sister and brother who were brought from Ireland, till, in ten years, a family of seven brought their daily joys and cares. For these the father toiled unceasingly, superintending their lessons, and sharing their pleasures as far as his busy life permitted. From their earliest years they were placed in the closest touch with reality. The little Russell, making enquiries about the destination of his food, is referred by his mother to the 'bone-man,' and next morning 'Papa' gives him a lesson on a much-treasured skeleton. From Dublin Mr. Martineau had brought Priestley's electrical machine, which no doubt played its part in the home-teachings; and the lessons on physical geography were remembered with especial delight, as the children were set to draw the outlines of different countries with the help of lines of latitude and longitude upon a blank slate globe. They noticed, too,—what they understood better in after years,—how these early instructions 'were characterised by the truest sympathy, and a remarkable power of placing himself in the position of the young learner, and adapting his illustrations to the capacity of each child.'<sup>1</sup> English grammar he taught upon

<sup>1</sup> Family reminiscences. Liverpool provided one help in its shipping. 'The children still talk of Aunt Harriet and the ship,' wrote Mr. Martineau to his sister Harriet, after she had sailed for America. 'Baby is such a wise little chatterer that she has lost almost all title to the name of Baby, and this is well, as there may be a new claimant to the appellation in August. R. promises to be thoughtful and intelligent beyond my hope,

a plan of his own ; and Greek followed, before Latin, as he thought it best to take the most difficult language first.<sup>1</sup> There were joyous holiday seasons, and happy festival days ; the year sometimes seemed to the busy mother who could not control its flight, only a succession of birthdays ;<sup>2</sup> and Christmas Day, even under William IV., must have its holly tree in a tub, covered with oranges and apples, and white paper parcels sealed and directed, no doubt with exquisite neatness. The interests of a large family circle brought constant visitors to Mount St. ; first one sister, and then another, settled in Liverpool ; the eldest, Miss Rachel Martineau, in 1837 opening a school of rare educational value, in which her brother rendered active help. Sometimes the friendly sisters Yates brought mother and children to Farmfield, and the father divided his time between town and country homes. ‘ James not only bears it,’ shrewdly observed the watchful wife, ‘ he makes the best of it, and enjoys a great deal of it. For last Sunday he wrote his pre-existence sermon, a glorious work, and one which I rejoiced unusually in his achieving, because it had been long in his mind, and he was full of apprehensions about it.’ Opportunities of travel were rare, but one summer Mr. Martineau accom-

and his entire confidence in us gives him a thorough transparency and truth, which may be made the foundation of a noble *morale*. As for little I., she is a true girl, volatile, original, sensitive, the cause of the greatest amusement, and the greatest difficulty, of the set.’

<sup>1</sup> The daughter who records this answer to her question why, when they were young, they learned Greek first, expresses her surprise that it was supposed to be the harder. *Life*, i. p. 79.

<sup>2</sup> These were celebrated not only with gifts, but with excursions into the country or on the river.

panied the Misses Yates to Switzerland. Usually the summer holidays saw the whole family among the hills, where Mr. Martineau could indulge his scientific tastes, resume his botanical studies, or, hammer in hand and 'Phillips' in his pocket, could wander over the mountains, and roughly work out the geology of the district.<sup>1</sup>

To the duties of the congregation and the home were soon added various classes which enabled Mr. Martineau at once to increase his income and to exercise his rare gift of teaching. In the autumn after his settlement he has already students in mental philosophy and algebra, with whom his wife finds time to associate herself; and younger pupils gather round in enlarging numbers.<sup>2</sup> His notebooks contain traces of preparation for lectures on chemistry and astronomy delivered gratuitously at the Liverpool Mechanics' Institution; and the abundance of scientific metaphor in his writings illustrates his practical familiarity with studies that usually lie outside the range of the minister of religion. All this added to his efficiency as a teacher, which impressed young men and women alike. The son of his colleague at Paradise St. thus afterwards recalled ineffaceable memories:—

The Rev. James Martineau was not handsome, but what

<sup>1</sup> Thus in 1836 at Llanberis he was three times on the top of Snowdon ('sublime beyond all conception,' of the ascent from Capel Curig), and devoted much time and calculation to mountain measurement.

<sup>2</sup> At one time his engagements were so numerous that one of his young men's classes assembled at his house at 7 a.m. The diary shows that there was an occasional difficulty in getting ready the coffee with which students were welcomed to a discussion of Thomas Brown's theory of causation, or other topics

a splendid fellow he was! . . . I loved that man; I studied with him for a year or two, and whatever is good in me I date to that time, and for it honour him. He taught me to think; I followed his flowing periods, flowery eloquence, and close reasoning with an appreciation, veneration, and attention, I have never felt for man since; for he fascinated my expanding intellect, because he had not only a great brain, but a great *heart*. I have lived a useless lifetime since then, but at least I have never forgotten that prince among men.<sup>1</sup>

Among the gracious women who either then, or later, came under the same influence, and found in it the beginnings of life-long friendship, Miss Anna Swanwick, the sisters Susanna and Catherine Winkworth, Miss Julia Wedgwood, have all borne testimony to its inspiring power. 'When Mr. Martineau first came to Liverpool,' wrote a friend to Miss Swanwick, 'my mind seemed to be suddenly opened. I saw things I had never before even imagined. I took an interest in things I could not appreciate before he came; in fact every day I felt myself to be acquiring new powers and interests. I look back to that time as the happiest part of my life, and most thoroughly did I enjoy it.'<sup>2</sup>

Around the home lay a growing circle of intimacies, in which Mr. Martineau was destined to find increasing support. For elder friends, Dr. Lant Carpenter

<sup>1</sup> *Pictures of the Past*, by Francis H. Grundy, C.E., 1879, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> *Anna Swanwick, a Memoir and Recollections*, by M. L. Bruce. 1903, p. 23. When Miss Swanwick published her first volume of translations from the German in 1843, she sent a copy to her old teacher. In acknowledging the gift Mr. Martineau says that from its perusal he will 'see whether severer pursuits, to which hard necessity too much limits me, have quite killed out the passionate love of poetry that haunted my earlier days. Of one thing I feel sure: that you will not change my old preference (so ignorant in the eyes of the thorough Teutonic) of Schiller over Goethe.' This preference was shared by Mr. Martineau with J. S. Mill; from whose estimates, however, as will appear later on, Mr. Martineau was more and more to dissent.



and Mr. W. J. Fox, his veneration never flagged. Within reach at Manchester were old fellow-students, Mr. Gaskell and Mr. J. R. Beard, who kept alive the memories of College days. His own distinction in that band was indicated by his selection as preacher, in conjunction with the Rev. John Kenrick, at the College Jubilee in 1836. At Manchester, too, was the Rev. John James Tayler, with whom he was to be associated for all but thirty years in partnership of professorial labours. A difference of ten years in age was no barrier to complete sympathy of purpose; from his friend's large and catholic spirit James Martineau was to draw continually growing help. In Liverpool itself Mr. Charles Wicksteed was minister at the Ancient Chapel, when Mr. Martineau first settled there;<sup>1</sup> and at Renshaw St. the Rev. J. Hamilton Thom had begun the ministry which was to outlast Mr. Martineau's Liverpool service. Mr. Thom was of Irish birth and education, and could enter at once into the difficulties which had terminated Mr. Martineau's Dublin career. Bred in the Ulster Arianism, he slowly modified his early theological conceptions, and prepared himself to comprehend and appreciate, if he could not always follow, Mr. Martineau's movement of progressive change. A trained scholar, he nevertheless had not the imperious scientific demand for historic reality which marked Mr. Martineau's mind. He dwelt habitually in a region of exalted spiritual life, which gave to his preaching a peculiarly searching character. With

<sup>1</sup> After his removal to Leeds, his pulpit was filled by the Rev. Henry Giles.

this were combined graces of humour, and a capacity for just indignation, which, on the one hand, made his speeches full of charm, and, on the other, stirred the deeps of feeling, either in public address or private intercourse. To him James Martineau was knit in the most devoted friendship of his life.

Through Mr. Thom and the circle at Greenbank Mr. Martineau became acquainted with Blanco White.<sup>1</sup> The acquaintance was not altogether without difficulty, at least in the later stages of Mr. White's theological movement, but it had considerable effect on Mr. Martineau.<sup>2</sup> At the opening of their intimacy Mr. Martineau enjoyed to the full the rich variety of intercourse to which he was thus introduced; and one sacred recollection seemed in after-days to hallow all the past. 'For me the memory of his sensitive features, grave expression, and deliberate speech, is inseparably associated with a dedication service at home in November, 1835, in which he consecrated our infant boy Herbert, a consecration perfected in death eleven years later.'<sup>3</sup> Mr. White came from the archiepiscopal

<sup>1</sup> See the *Life of Blanco White*, edited by Mr. Thom, 3 vols., 1845.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. White criticised the refusal of the Christian name to those who denied the miracles, in the *Rationale*. To this Mr. Martineau replied in the preface to the second edition, which appeared before the close of 1836. Christianity was still the name of a particular belief. The movement of his mind is indicated in the letters cited below in chaps. VI. and VII. By 1840 he had come round to Mr. White's view, though he did not state it till the third edition of the *Rationale* in 1845.

<sup>3</sup> Preface to *A Spiritual Faith*, p. xvii. After the appearance of Mr. Thom's *Life* of his friend, Mr. Martineau wrote to Mary Carpenter, May 30, 1845, 'I understand Archbishop Whately is very angry at the publication, though it was expressly enjoined by Mr. White himself, and provision made for accomplishing the purpose. The Archbishop speaks of him as having been "partially

table at Dublin; but if Liverpool was the natural gateway from Ireland, it was no less the chief place of landing or departure for American visitors. The visit of Mr. Jonathan Phillips and Dr. Tuckerman in 1834 has been already mentioned. The year before Ralph Waldo Emerson had arrived with introductions from Prof. Henry Ware; and from New York came Dr. Orville Dewey. For Emerson Mr. Martineau had a strong personal affection, but while he afterwards followed the movement of New England Transcendentalism with close attention, he found the Essays of the New England seer lacking in continuity of systematic thought, and they did not appeal to him with the force which he recognised in Channing. With Dr. Dewey he formed an enduring friendship, which produced in after years an intimate though intermittent correspondence.

Of some of these relations we gain a glimpse in a letter to Mr. Wicksteed, then on a visit, with Mr. and Mrs. R. V. Yates, to Rome.

Liverpool, Dec. 17th, 1834.

Dearly beloved Brother of Toxteth,

With a head empty of news and a heart having nothing better for you than the stale offerings of friendship, I have no excuse

deranged." This really is too bad. Mr. White had no doubt constitutional peculiarities which affected—I think, in an unhealthy way,—his modes of reflection and judgment. But so have we all; and Whately has no reason to pronounce these idiosyncracies *derangement*, except that they were different from his own. The great fault in Mr. White's mind was, its *critical* character; which almost ran its sensibility into querulousness, and rendered all his changes of opinion *repulsions from* falsehood and deformity, rather than attractions to a new light of beauty and truth. But how natural this in one who, with such endowments, and such sincerity, was trained in a Church system which was no better than an "organised hypocrisy," and forced into habits of suspicion in everything connected with religion.'

for inditing an epistle, unless it be to guard your young mind from the abominations of Popery, and your ambitious head from the attractions of a cardinal's hat. Since, however, the Tories assure us (see Lord Keizer's last lucubration on the Apocalypse, O'Connell, and the Pope) that in a few years not a Protestant will be left in these islands, I recommend you to make the best terms you can with the venerable establishment under whose shadow you will read this. We hold our second meeting with our Manchester brethren<sup>1</sup> in that dirty town on Saturday next, when brother Thom and I mean to call the Bishop of Cross St. to account for having done nothing about the Hewley business,<sup>2</sup> after having himself proposed that the funds should be ready for distribution by Christmas. Indeed, in spite of that good gentleman having, as you remember, made himself and the Provincials merry at our expense in the summer, all the work in this matter has hitherto been done at the west end of the railway. My dear fellow, how you must despise all this chit-chat, and spurn it from you with the boast, *Vidimus flavum Tiberim!* How could I think of writing about our Presbyterian mendicinity to the banks of the Tiber? Forgive me that I forget our difference of position for a moment; that, while I squat myself down in my armchair in Mount Street in full view of the joiner's shop, you wander near the cradle and the grave of the ancient civilisation of the West, dreaming of the wondrous contrasts presented by his majesty, the Capitol, and his reverence, the Vatican,—the republic and the papacy, Brennus and Buonaparte, Cicero and Paul. *Possis*, as Horace says to the sun, *nihil urbe Roma visere majus*. What the sun may think of the matter, it is impossible to tell; but if you like anything better than the city of the Cæsars, and talk, as Mr. Dewey did, of nothing but the dirty streets, I shall set you down with the Yankees, as one who, in the sublimest monument of history, can think more of the cleanliness of the present than of the grandeur of the past, and prefer a whitewash to the mould of time. . . . The church naturally reminds a man of my politics of the state. I do not know with what facility you obtain British news: lest you should have a difficulty I will tell you that last night it was announced that Sir R. Peel is Chancellor of Exchequer and Premier, Duke of W. Foreign Secretary. . . . Other appointments of less importance I do not mention; you have a goodly specimen here, and see what we have to expect. The party in power will gain greatly by the

<sup>1</sup> These meetings were organised for ministerial fellowship and co-operation every quarter. In a letter to Mr. Gaskell, May 4 (probably 1836), Mr. Martineau summons 'the Manchester brethren' (Gaskell, Beard, Tayler, and Mr. Robberds) to rusticate with him in his 'last days of pastoral life in Toxteth Park' (i.e. at Farmfield). They were to dine at four o'clock.

<sup>2</sup> See below, chap. VII.

elections. The contest in Liverpool will be very severe. . . . Here I am at the end of my paper and you at the end of your tædium. I must tell you, however, that I had a letter yesterday from my sister Harriet, written from Dr. Priestley's place of refuge and his tomb, Northumberland, Pennsylvania, whither she had made a pilgrimage, and where she had gathered some interesting traditions of the good philosopher. H. sends her kindest remembrances to you and (with mine) to Mr. and Mrs. Y.

Ever, dear friend, thine fraternally,

JAMES MARTINEAU.

One other friendship may be named here, which brought with it literary and philosophical interests belonging to a different circle. Mr. Martineau's contributions to the *Monthly Repository* attracted the attention of Sir William Molesworth and Mr. John Stuart Mill, the latter being also one of Mr. Fox's helpers in the same periodical.<sup>1</sup> 'On the establishment of the *London Review*,' wrote Dr. Martineau in 1888,<sup>2</sup> 'I was asked by him and Sir W. Molesworth to be one of their staff of contributors;<sup>3</sup> and though too busy to write often for them, was in frequent communication with Mill, always calling on him at the Old India House, when I was in town, and occasionally meeting at Charles Buller's and elsewhere.' A glimpse into what Mill supposed his correspondent's position to be, is afforded by a letter dated from the India House, May 26, 1835.

<sup>1</sup> Among his articles were the papers on *Poetry* reproduced in his *Dissertations*. 'The latter,' said Dr. Martineau to Mr. W. L. Courtney, 'I have the more reason to remember, because I was incidentally the means of their production.' In writing to Mr. Martineau (1835) Mill mentioned that they had been suggested by speculations propounded in the last two pages of the *Essay on Priestley*.

<sup>2</sup> To Mr. Courtney, then at work upon a study of Mill.

<sup>3</sup> Sir William Molesworth's letter mentions Blanco White, E. L. Bulwer, Charles Austin, and others.

In the opinions you express respecting a Church Establishment I entirely agree, and though some of the habitual contributors to the review still differ from us, the general tone of the review will, I have reason to hope, be that which you approve. A considerable change is, I think, taking place in the tone of thinking of the instructed Radicals on that point. Indeed, as they have (very generally) so far departed from Adam Smith's doctrines as not to admit the voluntary principle even with respect to secular education, it would be very strange if they admitted it with regard to religious. The mistake, I think, is in applying the *test* to the *doctrines* which the clergy shall teach, instead of applying it to their qualifications as teachers, and to the spirit in which they teach. When you give a man a diploma as a physician, you do not bind him to follow a prescribed method; you merely assure yourself of his being duly *acquainted* with what is known or believed on the subject, and of his having competent powers of mind. I would do the same with clergymen. . . . . One of the most important objects which the review could be instrumental to, would be to discredit dogmatic religion and encourage the boldest spirit of rationalism. This too is the spirit which is spreading among the young and cultivated members of the English clergy. This I know from my acquaintance with some striking instances of it. There will shortly appear a posthumous work of Coleridge (which I saw in manuscript before his death) altogether smashing the doctrine of plenary inspiration, and the notion that the Bible was *dictated* by the Almighty, or is to be exempt from the same canons of criticism which we apply to books of human origin.<sup>1</sup>

Looking back upon these early days, Dr. Martineau found the habit of Review writing thus begun 'conducive to vigilance and exactitude in study,' and, 'when kept in due subordination,' the best expenditure of all spare time.<sup>2</sup> But among the contributions to the *London Review* he preserved none afterwards as having any permanent worth.

<sup>1</sup> This at length appeared in 1840 under the title *Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit*.

<sup>2</sup> Biographical Memoranda, *Life*, vol. i. 72.

## CHAPTER VI.

PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL CHANGE,  
1832-1842.

THE opening years of Mr. Martineau's ministry in Liverpool were marked, as has been already described, by rapidly maturing power. His activities of thought were spread over a wide field; and their operation was at first most conspicuous in modifying his theological conceptions of the nature of Revelation and the significance of Christianity. But as these changes advanced, it became more and more clear that they depended on new interpretations of personal experience; and must be ultimately justified, if they were justified at all, neither in a court of historical inquiry nor of religious rationalism, but by fresh estimates of the contents of human nature. To the psychological method in philosophy Mr. Martineau remained constant all his life: he regarded it as the distinctively English treatment in contrast with the deductive schemes of ancient Greece or modern Germany. He made no secret of the fact that the great evolution in his thought which conducted him out of his discipleship to Priestley, and set him in ethical succession to Butler and Kant, had no other origin

than his own processes of self-reflection.<sup>1</sup> To follow these processes in detail is no longer possible; but some attempt must be made to indicate their sources, to estimate their significance, and to trace the consequences to which they gradually led.

## I.

For ten years James Martineau had lived in willing adhesion to the principles of Priestley when, in 1834, he was called on to review the posthumous work of Bentham on *Deontology*.<sup>2</sup> The classification of ethical systems contained in this essay is repeated in an undated outline of a course of lectures on 'Moral Philosophy,' in which he ranges himself unhesitatingly with those who find the 'criterion of right' in 'the tendency of an action to promote the happiness of the agent.' Nevertheless, in the stress which he lays, against Bentham, on the reality and worth of the disinterested affections, he is in reality preparing the way for a wholly new set of moral values<sup>3</sup> :—

Show them that in his acts of kindness a man is looking to his own ends, that he is meditating a draught on the good-will fund, and the spell of admiration is broken: it may be all very

<sup>1</sup> 'It was the irresistible pleading of the moral consciousness which first drove me to rebel against the limits of the merely scientific conception. . . . The secret misgivings which I had always felt at either discarding or perverting the terms which constitute the vocabulary of character—"responsibility," "guilt," "merit," "duty,"—came to a head, and insisted upon speaking out and being heard.'—*Types of Ethical Theory*, i., pref. p. xii.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. *ante*, chap. V. p. 148.

<sup>3</sup> *Monthly Repository*, 1834, p. 623. This must be remembered by readers who may be too readily disposed to accept his later estimate of himself in these years as 'some tight-swathed logical



well ; he may be a shrewd fellow enough, and wonderfully long-sighted, but as for generosity or benevolence this banking system will never win such praise. And the people are not wrong. There is no delusion in the belief that thousands of kind actions are performed every day, which are not offered to society as deposits to be posted in its books, but tendered in the pure spirit of a free gift ; acts silent, unseen, let fall where they can never bear a harvest of praise, acts to the child, to the outcast, to the insane, to the dying. The impulse which produces all that the heart most loves in virtue, which bears on such men as Howard and Washington, is an impulse from within, inspiring them with a love not of praise, but of praiseworthiness, and, instead of leading them to look abroad for their reward, enabling them to stand alone and yet erect in the mere strength of a high purpose. Scepticism of such forms of virtue will gradually degrade all the nobility of human language, as well as mar the purest sympathies of human life.

It is in accordance with this view that in his early lectures he appeals to Clarke, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, and above all to Butler, on behalf of the reality of disinterestedness ; and while he apparently knows nothing of Kant, justifies himself against the denials of Hobbes on the one hand, and the mystical excesses of Fénelon and Mme. Guion on the other. But he takes his stand in opposition to Butler on the question of the *origin* of the moral sentiments : he will not admit that they are primary or 'instinctive.' An instinct should exhibit three marks, (a) uniformity throughout a species, (b) incapacity of gradation, (c) insusceptibility of growth. None of these characteristics, however, belongs to the moral sentiments ; while the arguments derived from their apparent simplicity, and from the supposed meanness of their

prig, in whose jerky confidence and angular mimicry of life I am humbled to recognise the image of myself.' *Types of Ethical Theory*, vol. i., preface. Truly did his friend Mr. Thom (who had first known him in this period) say that his 'spiritual identity' had never changed.

origin if they are not freshly planted in the soul by the Creator's hand, are alike inconclusive.<sup>1</sup>

The exhibition of the associative process by which 'the experience of life conducts to the formation of a moral sense,' finds a place for 'the application to morals of the ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful.' To this æsthetic appreciation of what is noble and lofty in character, the young preacher appeals again and again in the succeeding years. It is the gate by which he will pass into new realms of thought. Already in 1835 he can declare that God is the 'illimitable fount of the beautiful and perfect';<sup>2</sup> and he 'who framed the human mind, . . . . knew that there are in us two human hearts, the one the residence of interest and self, the other enshrining the vitality of love; that within our coarse and common nature there is an interior recess, the retreat of a thousand pure and viewless emotions, where lurk unconsciously susceptibilities to moral beauty, and indistinct longings after moral excellence, and tendencies to penitence, and affec-

<sup>1</sup> A reference to Phrenology at this point of the 'Outline' shows that he was already considerably interested in speculations concerning the physical basis of thought. In April, 1830, he had written to Dr. Lant Carpenter, after meeting Spurzheim in Dublin: 'He is a very interesting man, in private and in the lecture-room. I want *evidence* on the subject at present, and am neither believer nor disbeliever. I cannot help thinking that there is not the hostility which the Phrenological and Metaphysical Schools imagine between the old mental philosophy and Dr. Spurzheim's new system.' Six years later Mr. J. S. Mill wrote to him, 'I think of phrenology very much as you do. A really philosophical review of Combe's book would, I think, be much read and talked about, and I know no one so competent to write it as you.'

<sup>2</sup> MS., Sept. 13, 1835.

tions ready to spring towards the immortal.<sup>1</sup> Traces of the Priestleyan language still linger in the *Rationale* of the same year: but there, the revolt against Eudæmonism has plainly begun. The next year the contemporary Unitarian will be presented as a Pharisee of the intellect: 'There is a complacency of disbelief no less than of belief; a pride in detecting the fallacies of other men's creeds; a piety that never prays without hinting at the highly rational character of its worship';<sup>2</sup> while the contrasted piety of the Publican renders the thought of God 'the vast receptacle of all its imaginations of the fair, the holy, the tender, the majestic.'<sup>3</sup> The description of Jesus 'with whom negligence, and unkindness, and the sleep of indulgence, and the insensibility to wrong, and exclusion from the spectacle of sorrow, and life itself at the price of compromise, would have been the utmost torture of self-denial, the crushing of his most craving desires,'—may still be susceptible of the utilitarian interpretation.<sup>4</sup> Yet another twelve-month, however, and the early College scheme of twelve years before, which resolved all movements of the human mind, as well as of the physical universe, into the direct agency of God,<sup>5</sup> is formally discarded, because all distinct personality and voluntary activity, the essential marks of character, are in reality denied

<sup>1</sup> *National Duties and other Sermons*, p. 255. In the same year he describes the evolution of man's character; 'in the gradual erection of a voluntary power over his whole nature, his elevation into a nobler being will mainly consist' (MS., Feb. 15).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 152, 1836.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 156.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 182, 1836.

<sup>5</sup> See *ante*, chap. II. p. 50.

to him ;<sup>1</sup> and the equal source of evil as of good has no claim to the august name of 'Holy.' In his plea for the doctrine of justification by faith, belonging to the same year, 1837,<sup>2</sup> the moral protest against an intellectual religion is practically complete, and an ethical test is substituted in its place.<sup>3</sup>

Many influences no doubt contributed to this change. The growth of his own nature carried him beyond the limits of early education ; nothing but his deep-seated reverences could have detained him within them so long. The repeated collocation of the 'fair and good' implies that he is already learning of Plato the transcendent character of ethical ideals. Wordsworth and Coleridge are his two favourite poets.<sup>4</sup> Carlyle has begun his passionate protests against Benthamism ; and twenty years later Martineau could say that to the succeeding age it might appear that Carlyle had become a greater power than any theologian of the time.<sup>5</sup> The evangelical doctrine by which he was confronted in Liverpool, wounds his sense of justice ; but its piety awakes the distant echoes of early years, when he read the books of Wilberforce and Hannah More ; he is haunted by a 'deep sense of personal imperfection' which breaks forth again and again in the language of penitence, aspiration, and en-

<sup>1</sup> *National Duties and other Sermons*, p. 226, 1837.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

<sup>3</sup> To this year belongs a sermon (MS.) founded on *John* v. 30, and entitled 'Out of Self we can produce nothing,' which deliberately renounces Utilitarianism.

<sup>4</sup> The only two named in a list of literature drawn up for the family reading of one of his congregations. Cp. *infra*, chap. XV.

<sup>5</sup> Speech at Liverpool, June 19, 1856.

deavour; the Wesley hymns have stirred the profoundest recesses of his being; and his persistent New Testament studies have led him to find new meanings in the language of Paul. Moreover, with the readiness to receive fresh impressions which characterised him to the last, he is perpetually reshaping his ideas in contact with the young minds around him. The teacher's function brought him face to face with early problems of experience, which did not always fit the moulds which he provided for them; and in attempting to satisfy the demands of others, he slowly modified the fundamental conceptions of his own thought.<sup>1</sup>

On his scientific studies, indeed, he retained a firm grasp; but from the system of cause and effect in the outward world he gradually withdrew the interior range of activities, which he came to view as the proper manifestation of character out of the hidden sphere of personality. When he denies that 'any intensity of desire can carry us aloft at once,' and pleads that 'step by step must the ascent be won, often, like the journeys of Paul, through perils of the wilderness, in weariness and watching,'<sup>2</sup> he is again enforcing demands for effort, which his psychology of association and his ethics of individual

<sup>1</sup> To this element in the Teacher's life he attached great value. See his reference to its importance in his own mental history, *Types of Ethical Theory*, vol. i. preface. In a conversation with Miss Wedgwood after his ninetieth birthday, he expressed his regret that Mr. J. S. Mill had never himself had this discipline; believing that he would have gained so much if he had ever engaged in the endeavour to instil what he thought true into the minds of the young, 'where one often sees objections that would never have occurred to oneself.'

<sup>2</sup> *National Duties and other Sermons*, p. 259: 1835.

eudæmonism could not justify. In such moods he is ready to give fresh hearing to the Transatlantic voice, to which he had formerly preferred the English Belsham. Listen to the proclamation of the Christian's duty—'To set up within our mind an ideal of perfected goodness, the very image of Christ, to aim at expressing its beauty in the life, and, in spite of failure, to renew the faithful effort day by day, to feel a fresh penitence at every fall, and rise again saddened but not defeated,'<sup>1</sup> and you detect the devotional idiom, not of the follower of Priestley, but of the student of Channing.

'When the tones of the New England prophet reached us here, why,' he asked a generation later,<sup>2</sup> 'did they so stir our hearts?' The answer recalls the impressions of this period: 'They brought a new language; they burst into a forgotten chamber of the soul; they recalled natural faiths which had been explained away, and boldly appealed to feelings which had been struck down; they touched the springs of a sleeping enthusiasm, and carried us forward from the outer temple of devout science to the inner shrine of self-denying Duty.' With Channing's sense of moral beauty Martineau was now brought into immediate sympathy; and it prepared him to receive the further doctrine of human nature as the seat of heavenly powers, where Conscience sat enthroned, at once 'a Revelation and a Type of God.' Useless was it, he once observed,<sup>3</sup> for a

<sup>1</sup> *National Duties and other Sermons*, p. 261; 1835.

<sup>2</sup> 'Three Stages of Unitarian Theology,' 1869; *Essays*, iv. 576.

<sup>3</sup> Speech at the Channing Centenary, St. James's Hall, 1880.

Hartley or a Helvetius [may we not in this connexion say a James Mill ?] to preach the originality and supremacy of self-love to affections like Channing's ; he knew the possibility, the obligation, the privilege, of living for others, of free self-sacrifice, of identification with God's infinite love ; and once possessed of this knowledge, could never be persuaded to give humanity a lower aim. From Channing, then, did James Martineau learn with new meanings the profound lesson of religion, that 'moral perfection is the essence of God, and the supreme end for man.' It carried with it far-reaching consequences. It transformed the conception of Revelation ; from the communication of objective truths by a heaven-accredited messenger, the function of Christ came to be interpreted as the manifestation of the divine character under the limits of humanity, which received its attestation from the witness of the soul within.<sup>1</sup> It elevated the person of Jesus into a centre of supreme reverence and affection as the 'image of God' ; and enabled the disciple to preserve his moral homage undisturbed, in spite of the plainest intellectual limitations in the object of his spiritual faith.

But not only was the significance of Christianity thus raised and glorified, a fresh foundation was laid in the conscience, and its executive agent, the will, for the theory of Man and God. When once the fact of obligation rose into clear recognition as the core of moral experience, the human spirit

<sup>1</sup> See the first approaches to this position in the *Rationale*, already cited, *ante*, chap. V. p. 153<sup>4</sup>, and its full statement in the Liverpool controversy, *infra*, p. 180.

acquired a new dignity. Man is himself a cause ; different in scale, indeed, from the Creator ; but resembling him in capacity to perceive the same distinctions between good and evil. These are no products of our pleasures and pains ; they have their roots in the Eternal Mind ; and the good we know shares in the majesty of Infinite Holiness and Everlasting Right. But if Man is not involved in the vast sequences of the scientific order, if he is invested with rights and submitted to obligations, his causal power is exercised through preference ; choice is the act of will ; and Will becomes the supreme type of all causality.<sup>1</sup> Channing was no systematic thinker : he was not concerned to give philosophic form and coherence to the truths which were spiritually discerned. To Martineau this was an imperious intellectual need. He had been, as it were, possessed by Priestley, because, in the philosopher's teaching, he found a scientific unity providing an adequate interpretation of the physical world. The experience of life had now forced him to recognise a world within. He awoke to its meaning almost as with a sudden shock. The reaction was complete.<sup>2</sup> He had found in human nature a new key which he would apply to Man, God, and the Universe.

<sup>1</sup> ' William Ellery Channing,' *Essays*, i. 112.

<sup>2</sup> See the passage quoted from the Liverpool Lectures, *infra*, p. 182. In his sermon on Channing's death, Nov. 6, 1842, he thus emphasized the religious rather than the philosophical gain : ' However many may be still unmelted by the fervour of his faith, he has at least convinced us that we are cold, and to not a few he has brought an inwardness and spirituality of religion, a sanctity and tenderness of moral experience, a generous and hopeful estimate of human things, by which their whole character has been transformed.'



## II.

The years in which external activity and internal change were thus at work in the preacher of Paradise St., were years of rapidly growing influence. Already in 1837 the Wesleyan Conference was urged to make special appointments at Liverpool in consequence of the presence there of the brilliant Martineau.<sup>1</sup> When the British Association met there in September, Mrs. Martineau noted, 'We have had open house, beginning with a great breakfast party every day this week, and shall have to its close.' And, with wifely pride, she went on to record her attendance at two great public functions 'in a beautiful new dress which my husband put me up to procuring.' The following year the family outgrew their first home in Mount Street, and moved to a larger house in Mason Street, Edgehill.

It was 'next door to Dr. Raffles,' relates Dr. Martineau,<sup>2</sup> 'who was always a pleasant neighbour. In the same terrace lived Rev. Mr. Hull, the liberal incumbent of the Church for the Blind. The street for the most part belonged to an eccentric old man, who picked his tenants by unaccountable whims of fancy. On my applying for the house, he kept me in suspense while he catechised me in the drollest way to find out who I was : at last he said, "Yes, sir, you shall have it ; and then with the Rev. Mr. Hull, the Rev. Dr. Raffles, and the Rev. Mr. Martineau, it will be strange if we have not a trinity that will keep the devil out of the street." On the credit of this function I remained there seven years ; and there my youngest son and daughter were born.'

The sentiment of ecclesiastical partnership implied in this arrangement with the landlord, was not

<sup>1</sup> Gregory, *Side Lights on the Conflicts of Methodism*, 1899, p. 247 ; quoted by Rev. Alx. Gordon, *Dict. of Nat. Biography*.

<sup>2</sup> Biographical Memoranda, *Life*, i. 97.

generally entertained in Liverpool. The position of the two congregations under the ministry of Mr. Martineau and Mr. Thom was so conspicuous, by the distinction of their pastors and the social and civic eminence of their members, that some effort, it was felt, must be made to warn the Unitarians against their own danger, and the public at large against the perils of being misled by them. On Jan. 21, 1839, the Rev. Fielding Ould, 'Minister of Christ Church,' issued an address 'to all who call themselves Unitarians in the town and neighbourhood of Liverpool,' announcing that he and his reverend brethren were about to undertake 'an enquiry into, and an endeavour to expose, the false philosophy and dangerous unsoundness of the UNITARIAN SYSTEM.' The result was a controversy involving a long correspondence, which imposed no light strain on its chief author.<sup>1</sup> Thirteen lectures were delivered in Christ Church on Wednesday evenings, beginning on February 6. The counter-statements were made from the Paradise Street pulpit on the successive Tuesdays. Five of these fell to Mr. Martineau's share; Mr. Thom, and Mr. Giles of Toxteth Park, each contributing four. Mr. Martineau's ordinary work went on as usual, his Sunday services with their tributary classes, his week-day teaching whether at home, or at the newly founded school of his sister Rachel, or at the elementary schools maintained by his congregation. Wednesday evening was devoted

<sup>1</sup> The language of modern theological debate happily exhibits less acrimony than was then deemed legitimate.

to attendance in the 'condemned pew' at Christ Church, in preparation for the ensuing week's discourse. The lectures were printed as fast as possible, sometimes with extensive notes, the product of much learning. 'More than a three months' turmoil of spirit has been forced upon us,' wrote Mrs. Martineau ruefully on her husband's birthday, April 21. He was just recovering from a serious attack: 'Oh, how ill he was this day week, yet preached in the morning, and went on, hoping to patch himself up for his Tuesday evening's controversial lecture. But it would not do; that lecture had to be put off.'<sup>1</sup> His vigour, however, returned; and no one would surmise that the concluding lectures were written under the shadow of sickness.

Full of brilliant exposition, incisive criticism, and noble eloquence,<sup>2</sup> these lectures are interesting rather as marking the movements of the author's mind than as permanent discussions of themes now vital. They are directed against conceptions of the Bible that have passed away,—Evangelical presentations of the Atonement that no longer sway men's minds, Tractarian pleadings that have assumed other shapes. The most novel in its treatment was the discourse entitled 'The Scheme of Vicarious Redemption Inconsistent with itself,' which allowed

<sup>1</sup> The attendance at Paradise St. never quite recovered from the shock.

<sup>2</sup> The *Eclectic Review*, Dec., 1840, p. 667, dwelt on 'the power and refinement of his understanding, the beauty and brilliancy of his imagination, and the chasteness and force of his style.' The *Congregational Magazine*, March, 1841, called him 'the English Channing,' and noted 'his singular freedom from sectarian bias, his courageous pursuit of truth.'

the preacher full play for his unrivalled power of detecting the weak places in an opponent's system, as well as for his passionate protest against a doctrine profaning, as he understood it, the great moral qualities which render God himself most venerable. Fresh in the field of Unitarian theology was his exposition of the significance given by the Apostle Paul to the death of Christ, in connexion with the scope of his work for all mankind. Had a Messianic reign been set up in his lifetime, he argued, the Gentiles must have been excluded :—

The Messiah must cease to be Jewish, before he could become universal ; and this implied his death, by which alone the personal relations, which made him the property of a nation, could be annihilated. To this he submitted : he disrobed himself of his corporeality, he became an immortal spirit ; thereby instantly burst his religion open to the dimensions of the world ; and as he ascended to the skies, sent it forth to scatter the seeds of blessing over the field of the world, long ploughed with cares, and moist with griefs, and softened now to nourish in its bosom the tree of Life.

More significant for the future was the obvious fact that since the *Rationale* a great movement of thought has taken place. The old conception of Revelation as a communication of truth, certified by miracles, is practically abandoned. In its place appears a new principle, approached before, now definitely realised ;—that Revelation is effected through character, that its appeal is to the conscience and affections, and its real seat is a soul. Accordingly we hear for the first time of the ' internal or self-evidence of Christianity ' ; stress is laid on the spiritual attraction of Christ ; his power is not in his precepts, but in his person ; it is even said that ' apart from him, his teachings do but take

their place with the sublimest efforts of speculation, to be admired and forgotten with the colloquies of Socrates, and the meditations of Plato.' The reason is that James Martineau has at last broken definitely with his old master, Priestley. The religion of causation, the religion of the understanding, satisfies him no more. The universe, indeed, is still the measure of the *scale* of Deity; but Christ has filled it with his own spirit: 'it is as the type of God, the human image of the everlasting Mind, that Christ becomes an object of our *Faith*.' He sets aside Priestley's argument, therefore, from the miraculous acts to the doctrinal inspiration of Christianity. Miracles are indeed still facts, but their significance is not to guarantee a truth, but to call attention to a person. The result will be inevitable; you may be a Christian without them.<sup>1</sup>

Most marked of all was the elaborate argument of the lecture on 'The Christian View of Moral Evil' against the conception of Philosophical Necessity, in which he formally abandoned the doctrine which had been slowly undermined in the preceding years. At the outset he strikes a fresh note: 'The primitive conception of God is acquired, I believe, without reasoning, and emerges from the affections; it is a transcript of our own emotions,—an investiture of them with external personality and infinite magnitude.' Reasoning about causation produces a secondary idea out of the intellect. The result is a collision between the intellectual idea of 'God

<sup>1</sup> He was not yet prepared for this inference, though he soon reached it; see the letter to Mr. Macdonald, *below*, chap. VII.

the Creator,' and the moral notion of 'God the Holy watch of virtue.' To resolve this conflict is the object of the lecture: and the solution is found in a declaration of ethical individualism as uncompromising as was ever penned:—

Let each consider his own life as an indivisible unit of responsibility, no less complete, no less free, no less invested with solemn and solitary power, than if he dwelt, and always had dwelt, in the universe alone with God. There is confided to him, the sole rule of a vast and immortal world within; whose order can be preserved or violated, whose peace secured or sacrificed, by no foreign influence. We cannot, by ancestral or historical relations, renounce our own free-will, or escape one iota of its awful trusts. No faith which fails to keep this truth distinct and prominent, no faith which shuffles with the sinner's moral identity, contains the requisites of a 'doctrine according to godliness.'

God has thus ceased to be for him, with Priestley, 'the Only Cause,' the 'ultimate happiness Maker, by no means fastidious in his application of means, but secure of producing the end'; he has discovered that under the Necessarian representation God 'no longer remains a really *holy* object of thought'; he has learned of Plato to call him not only 'the supremely good,' but also 'the supremely fair.' There is alike an ethical and an æsthetic revolt against the implied doctrine that man's mutual injuries and crimes are the chosen method of the Divine government. The spectacle of such desolation affronts him; the Right and the Beautiful are both violated; and the force of protest carries him to the utmost limits of opposition to his early trust.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On June 4 a meeting of the congregations of the three Lecturers was held in Paradise Street Chapel, when warm resolutions of gratitude were passed to all three disputants. To Mr. Swinton Boulton (who had forwarded them), Mr. Martineau wrote,—'To

This was at once noted by Dr. Channing, when the printed lecture reached Boston. 'Nothing,' he wrote (Nov. 29, 1839), 'for a long time has given me so much pleasure. I have felt that that doctrine, with its natural connections, was a millstone round the neck of Unitarianism in England.'<sup>1</sup> To this letter James Martineau next summer sent the following reply.<sup>2</sup>

[Between July 18 and September 7, 1840.]

I have long reproached myself for having never expressed to you the delight and gratitude which you awakened in me by your friendly criticism on my lecture on 'Moral Evil.' I have been constantly expecting, however, the opportunity of sending to my American

be so sustained, not merely by the assurances of personal regard, but by the suffrages of sound and well-informed judgments,—judgments incapable of approving of anything wrong in feelings and unsupported by reason and Christianity, may well compensate us for the railings of an intolerant but triumphant theology, and the anxieties of a highly responsible yet unpopular position.' On January 14, 1840, a joint letter in Mr. Martineau's handwriting conveys his own thanks and those of Mr. Thom to the three congregations for 'munificent acknowledgment of their labours' (a presentation-inscription to Mr. Martineau recorded a gift of £150). The following words indicate his attitude:— 'In these times of mingled fanaticism and fear, it is animating to find, and an honour to sustain, a Church not refusing to go forward in the spirit of a Progressive Christianity, and having such entire trust in the God who was manifested in Christ, as to be *first* to yield to the sincere persuasions of reason and conscience, and the *last* to cower beneath the alarms of superstition or the menaces of intolerance.'

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir*, vol. ii. p. 444. In England the lectures were ignored by the chief Unitarian periodical, the *Christian Reformer*, after an announcement of the opening of the controversy. The year before, Mr. Martineau's speech at the Aggregate Meeting of the denomination had given great offence, (see *below*, chap. VII.). The *Christian Teacher* was now in the hands of Mr. Thom, and his editorship precluded any review.

<sup>2</sup> Transcribed without date or place in Mrs. Martineau's diary.

friends a few copies of the accompanying publication <sup>1</sup>; and my letter of acknowledgment to you having once been deposited by my imagination in that parcel, has suffered postponement with every new delay from printers and binders. Nothing, except the natural peace of truth-loving and truth-speaking, could have given me a higher satisfaction than your sympathy and approbation; which were the more welcome because the views which I hold on the subject of moral evil meet with no response from my brethren in this country, and are considered as a sort of eccentric departure from the recognised Unitarian authority of the last generation. The truth is that, notwithstanding repeated denials in our journals and in English editions of your works, your celebrated estimate of Dr. Priestley's influence on the development of Unitarian Christianity in this country, is essentially correct; if less correct now than at the time of its first publication, this is mainly owing to the profound impression which your writings have produced for many years. It is quite true that we have no habitual reference to the opinions of Dr. Priestley, or Mr. Belsham, as to those of acknowledged leaders: we have many examples in our sectarian literature of departure from them in detail, and perhaps a very few of dissent from their fundamental speculative principles. Nevertheless, their influence has practically determined the whole form of our theology, and what is more to be lamented, the general spirit of our religion. No one can well owe a deeper debt of gratitude than I do to the writings of Priestley, to which I attribute not only my first call to the pursuit of religious philosophy, but the first personal struggles after the religious life. For many years I was an ardent disciple of his school, and I should think myself a castaway if I ever ceased to admire his extraordinary powers, and venerate his faithful use of them. Yet do I feel persuaded that

<sup>1</sup> *Hymns for the Christian Church and Home*, see chap. VIII.



his metaphysical system is incapable of continued union with any true and deeply operative sentiments of religion; that it is at variance with the characteristic ideas of Christianity; and will spontaneously vanish whenever our churches become really worshipping assemblies, instead of simply moral, polemical, or dissenting societies.

It is quite obvious, however, that great changes are silently going on in our religious body—as in all others—in this country; changes which are very likely, I think, to bring it to dissolution, not, however, without first scattering the seeds of some nobler growth. The most remarkable feature of those changes is this; that there is a simultaneous increase, in the very same class of minds, of theological doubt and of devotional affection; there is far less *belief*, yet far more *faith*, than there was twenty years ago. Alarm at one half of this phenomenon, and insensibility to the other, have led apparently, among the professors of the old Orthodox Unitarianism, to a somewhat more dogmatic temper, and a less fresh and more traditional administration of Christianity. Whilst this consolidates the forces peculiarly their own, it fails to meet the various wants and earnest difficulties of those whose minds become involved in the movement; of these, again, there appear to me to be two perfectly distinct classes. There is a set of mere antisupernaturalists chiefly proceeding from the phrenological school, or from the numerous ranks of thinkers indirectly created by it. To these, the discovery of an organ of *wonder* in the brain explains the origin of all accounts of miracles, whilst the organ of *veneration* makes it quite proper to be devout. Their faith is, accordingly, rather in the religiousness of man, than in the reality of God, respecting whom it seems very doubtful whether they would have much concerned themselves, had it not been for the cerebral provision of the thought of him; but something must be done, or at least said, in order to satisfy this. I need not say that

in such a style of thought, there can be no real earnestness, but only those spurious imitations of living religion which, in the end, turn out to be all that a materialistic philosophy can produce. In this case, however, there is great personal amiableness, considerable, though undisciplined, intellectual activity, and much social and popular exertion particularly for the diffusion of scientific knowledge among the masses of the people. An 'Enquiry into the Origin of Christianity,' by Mr. Hennell (of Mr. Aspland's congregation, Hackney), may be considered as representing, very favourably, the character of this school<sup>1</sup>; and although Mr. Fox is a man of too much force of mind to belong exclusively to them, his influence more nearly coincides with theirs than with any other. I believe that they are very numerous among us, and likely to increase.

The class just noticed appear to me to have gladly availed themselves of the recent investigations which, in Germany especially, have thrown doubts upon the strict authenticity of the Gospels; and *in order to justify* a previous disinclination to believe in miracles, to have seized upon results of whose soundness they have hardly the learning to judge. We have, however, another class, who, having really followed the researches in question, have very reluctantly come to the conclusion that Lardner's and Paley's theory of authenticity is not solid enough to sustain the weight of Christianity; that there is too much obscurity about the kind of testimony which we have in the historical books of the New Testament, to stake everything upon its certainty and exactitude; that to attempt to prove the miracles by appeal to evidence which, judged by mere external rules, is to a large extent anonymous, and

<sup>1</sup> Writing on 'the Creed of Christendom' (by Mr. W. R. Greg) in 1851, Mr. Martineau spoke of this book as follows: 'its influence, considerable in itself, and increased by the sweet and truthful character of the author, is still traceable in the pages of Mr. Greg.' *Studies of Christianity*, p. 269.

then from the miracles to prove the doctrinal infallibility of Christ, is a process full of difficulty and uncertainty. Yet these enquirers feel the impossibility of disentangling the miraculous from the natural parts of the evangelic narratives, and strongly object to the rude mechanical divulsion of these from each other by the anti-supernaturalists; nor have they apparently the slightest repugnance of feeling, rather the contrary, to the reception of miracles. Simultaneously with this diminished reliance upon the merely external evidence, has arisen a profounder sense of the intrinsically divine character of Christianity; a more penetrating appreciation of the mind of Christ; a more trustful faith in him for his own sake, and because he carries his own witness into the inmost reason and conscience. This, you will perhaps say, is something like the 'intuitive perception' of the truth of Christianity,' which Prof. Norton treats with so much scorn. No doubt there is some resemblance in the spirit of the two sentiments. But, judging from what I have read of the Boston controversy, I must say that the class of which I speak, differs widely from the corresponding one in Boston; making no pretensions to any new system of philosophy; being conscious perhaps of a somewhat unstable and transitional state of mind, and acknowledging that time will be required before they can see their way clearly. Meanwhile, they dwell principally on the spiritual and moral elements of Christianity, permitting the miracles to follow rather than lead these. Receiving the miracles themselves, they refuse to make the reception of them the test of a man's Christianity, maintaining that as these events are in any view but instruments for producing a faith in our Lord's divine authority, this faith, however procured, must make the Christian, and entitle to the name, though it flow from other considerations than the belief in miracles. This class is also on the increase among us. With an undoubted danger of mysticism (which, however, the practical turn of the English mind

will probably check), there appears to me more deep and earnest religion among them than has hitherto characterised English Unitarianism. From want of any strong attachment to a dogmatic system, they are deficient in anything like sectarian zeal; and from a somewhat over-refined and scrupulous order of sympathies, they are apt to shrink too much from social and public activity. The *Christian Teacher*, edited by my friend Mr. Thom, may be considered as to a great extent the organ of this school, and Mr. J. J. Tayler, of Manchester, as its most accomplished representative.

### III.

The movement of his thought during this period may be further illustrated by letters which answer objections or meet difficulties suggested by more formal utterance.

#### TO MARY CARPENTER, Bristol.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps if we were to compare notes very closely, we should not so much differ about the miracle question. It strikes me that you are hardly aware how much of your language on this matter is purely figurative. Thus, a miracle makes a distinction between the performer and other men, by establishing that *he is from God*: but then, are other men *not* from God; or less from God? In point of *origin*, all things, all persons, all offices, all ideas, are equal and immediate derivatives from the Supreme will, without slur in their design, or foreign admixture in their production. Whatever sanctity is imparted by their *Source* and *Causation*, belongs alike to all; unless you admit some Satanic, or material, or

<sup>1</sup> The letter, with unusual carelessness, bears neither date nor address, but is endorsed by the receiver, 'Feb., 1841.' The first part dealt with a scheme of a Congregational Visiting Society, carried out at Bristol, and is quoted below, chap. VIII.

other extraneous causes lying *outside* the limits of Providence from which objects unrecognised by God might be sent into existence. The distinction then of beings as to *divinity of origin* is surely *verbal* only, having nothing corresponding to it in reality. Yet it is evidently only *this* sort of divinity that a supernatural event can establish, the very argument consisting in an inference from the act to the *only Source* that could produce it. The true *divinity* of any thing seems to me to be, not in its *origin* (wherein all things are equal) but in its *intrinsic character and influence*; in its *internal* beauty, truth, sanctity (wherein things are separated by differences quite infinite): of *this* no external assurance can even be imagined;—every fancied proof of the sort referring you back to the idea of mere *origin* from God. This kind of divine element in a person or a sentiment can only, I think, be ‘spiritually discerned,’ and was never otherwise made known to any one’s *soul*, however familiarized to his lips and *forms* of thought. *After* this reception of Christ for his own sake, his miracles may be believed; but I doubt whether there ever was a mind in which this order was inverted. After the havoc which modern investigation has made with the old doctrine (which I think no judicious person can longer maintain with any confidence) of the genuineness (*i.e.*, personal authorship by apostles or apostolic men) of the Gospels, it seems to me impossible to maintain the authority of Christianity on purely historical and testimonial grounds; and that the internal evidence to which I refer must, to say the least, take the primary place. However, Christ himself has given the choice:—‘*If ye believe on me, believe the works*’; some of us take the first half of the alternative, others, the second, as the essence of our faith.

And now what is to become of your definition of poetry, at this forlorn end of my note? Alas for definitions! If you turn to Dr. Reid’s *Essays* you will find that almost the words in which you define poetry

constitute his definition of—the five Senses ! In truth I am glad to find that poetry *cannot be defined* : for I am persuaded that anything that *can* has nothing sacred in it, but belongs to the mere finite and scientific portion of our nature. So let us put down poetry with Religion, Goodness, Love ; which, transcending, and having authority over our understanding, refuse to be surveyed and enclosed by it. We are all well and send love to your family circle.

Ever, my dear Mary,

Your affectionate friend,

JAMES MARTINEAU.

To the REV. GEORGE CRABBE.

Liverpool, October 25th, 1845.

Reverend and dear Sir,—

I have been inexcusably long in answering your gratifying and interesting letter. To the fault of delay I will not add the offence of self-justification or fruitless apology : but, in reliance on your forbearing disposition, proceed at once to the main subject of interest between us.

In your general position that mere textual controversy can never settle the points at issue between the Unitarians and their Orthodox opponents, I entirely concur. No doubt there is a preliminary question to be set at rest as to the degree and kind of authority to be conceded to the Scriptures : and a controversy between two parties secretly at variance on this preliminary is an aimless battle of the blind. That the Unitarians in general *do* differ from other churches on this point ; that they see a much larger *human* element in the sacred writings ; that they are more prepared to acknowledge the manifest discrepancies in the historical portions and inconclusive reasonings in the doctrinal ; that, practically, their submission to Scripture is *conditional* on its teaching no nonsense, I am fully persuaded. And believ-

ing this to be their state of mind—often ill-defined to themselves—I cannot but disapprove as insincere their professions of agreement with the orthodox on everything except Interpretation; their appeal to the Scriptures under the misleading name of ‘The Word of God’; their affected horror at every one who plainly speaks about the Bible the truths which they themselves if they would dare to confess it, privately hold; and the various other artifices of theological convention, by which they delude themselves, and hang out false colours to the world. To this moral untruthfulness, and the unreality it gives to their position, much more than to their errors and unsoundness as interpreters, do I attribute the small amount of their success as a religious sect. I believe indeed, with you, that their interpretations of the writings of the Apostles John and Paul are altogether untenable; and that, so long as the people gather their theological faith, without discrimination, from the Epistles and 4th Gospel, our doctrines cannot prevail. But then, I am unable to accept the other half of your proposition; I cannot admit that, because the Unitarians, as interpreters, are wrong, the Evangelicals are right. If the Apostle Paul could come and hear one of Hugh McNeile’s Sermons, I am persuaded he would be aghast with indignation, and protest vehemently against the wretched perversion of his letters to the early churches. So long as both parties take for granted that Paul, with full knowledge of the destinies of Christianity as the religion of successive ages, wrote on the theory of human nature in its moral relations to God, and laid down universal truths as the scheme of the Divine Government from the Creation to the Judgment, so long both parties must go astray. No just view can, in my opinion, be reached, till it is remembered that the Apostle wrote everything, judged everything, from an erroneous assumption as to the approaching end of the world. This is not a slight matter, which can be put aside as an incidental imperfection in his opinions. From

its very nature, so grand, so transporting, it necessarily absorbed everything into it ; tinged all his theory of the Past, and his visions of the Future ; determined his estimate of Christ's mission ; and gave a peculiarity of the highest importance to his sentiments in reference to the relative position of the Hebrew and the Pagan world. From their entirely missing his point of view, the Evangelicals appear to me to be no less completely wrong than the Unitarians in their interpretation of Paul. I do not know whether the publications connected with the Liverpool Controversy in 1839 have attracted your attention at all : but if they have, you will recognize in my present statements the opinions more fully expressed in the 5th and 6th Lectures of the Series. Though questions of interpretation shrink to a very diminished importance, as soon as we cease to stake our faith upon them, a clear understanding of what the Apostle Paul really meant is more than a matter of curiosity. It is a vast relief to men accustomed to a Calvinistic reading of the Epistles to discover in them, without the slightest straining, a very different system of ideas, and the 6th Lecture to which I refer has, I know, among Joseph Barker's people, been the means of bringing hundreds over from the ranks of orthodoxy.

Still, no satisfactory way can be made towards the pure truth and the free heart, till the prevalent Bibliolatry is overthrown. And, for my own part, I have never shrunk and hope I never shall shrink from taking my little part in the iconoclastic work. At the same time, I so heartily reverence all sincere and earnest religion, that the simply destructive procedure of controversy is only half-welcome to me and performed with some reluctance. I am always ready for it in self-defence ; but dislike it as a measure of aggression. To draw forth the permanent elements of Christianity from the Scriptures ; to impart to man such a consciousness of the adaptation of these to their nature that all doubt of their *sufficiency* shall become impossible ; to make no disguise



about the temporary and questionable character of all the rest—to attack any inordinate claims set up for it, when requisite—but for the most part to let these claims die out by forming men's spiritual and moral taste on better models and by the constant presence of higher ideas;—this appears to me to be the true course for those who love Christianity for what it *is*, more than they dislike its counterfeits for what they are *not*. Bigots of all classes will refuse a hearing to those who—with or without a name—boldly challenge their favourite opinions; and all other men—such at least is my cheering faith—are more readily *drawn* to noble and true ideas, than *driven* from mean and false ones. What comparisons, for instance, can there be between the amazing influence of Channing on the sentiments of his age, and the most brilliant success that could attend on any writings that stopped with the *disproof* of prevalent theological errors and superstitions? I think, however, you will admit that I am not chargeable with *reserve* on the question of Inspiration; and that especially in the 2nd Lecture of the Liverpool Controversy ('The Bible, what is it, and what it is not'), the very sentiments to which you attach importance are plainly advanced.

At all events, my dear sir, I am greatly indebted to you for your valuable suggestions. Possibly, if I were a man of leisure, I should put them at once into practice. But my course of labour—as Minister of a large Congregation—as Professor in a public College—as an Editor of the *Prospective Reveiw*,<sup>1</sup>—and, not least, as father of a large family whom I educate at home—is very much marked out for me; and I must hope, by faithfulness in these several callings, to do incidentally some small portion of the good work which your kind opinion would assign to me by a directer process.

<sup>1</sup> For an account of Mr. Martineau's lectureship in Manchester New College, and his editorial labours on the *Prospective*, see chap. IX.

## IV.

To a brother minister enquiring how far one in doubt ought to satisfy himself to remain in the ministry.

Liverpool, October 1st, 1842.

You do not err in supposing that I should feel the deepest interest in the case which you have submitted for my opinion. The increasing frequency of its occurrence renders a right decision upon it very important, not only to individual peace of mind, but to the future destiny of our Churches. Truly shall I rejoice if I can render the slightest comfort or guidance to a conscience which, it appears, some expressions of mine have tended to disturb. The process through which my own mind has passed, enables me at least to sympathise deeply in your perplexities. Whether this is a qualification or a disqualification for judging rightly respecting it, I know not.

Let me say, in the first place, that I adhere to every word of the sentence which you quote as condemning you. This I take to be the centre of all moral certainty, that there can be no co-existence of religion, much less of religious operation upon others, with anything like insincerity and pretence. We must get our foot off all hollow ground of that sort on to some firm real faith, before we can properly *live* at all, to say nothing of teaching others how to live : so that no situation can be a part of duty which is held on condition of leaving false impressions upon others, or suppressing cherished convictions of our own. This general rule appears to me plain and beyond controversy.

The application of it, however, to particular cases not happening to one's own conscience, is far from easy. It by no means appears to me to require that we should lay bare in the pulpit all our processes of theological research, and the doubts in which the historical criticism of the Scriptures may involve us. Even if the pulpit were a place for theological instruction instead of for

religious impression, we ought surely to wait, out of pure reverence for truth itself, till we had some clear and worthy results to communicate, and consider a mere bewilderment in our own thoughts as a call not for speech, but for silence, on the topics that perplex us. But I would go further, and say that even the actual results of enquiry, when they are of a negative and destructive character, ought not to be presented in our public services. That which we disbelieve is thereby withdrawn from further religious capabilities for us ; and we can no longer make it the motto for any living devotion, but only the text for mere dead disquisition. It lies outside our worship, and has no honest business there any more. I do not therefore call this silence ‘ concealment of anything on which we doubt.’ When we meet to pray, and find some sanctity for our life, no one has any right to expect a treatise on what we *don't think true* ; and we profane our duty, if, instead of scattering the seed of life, we go about proving that a husk is a husk. When occasion arises, either in private society or in direct theological teaching, or in controversial publication, for bringing our views before minds sufficiently near our own to apprehend them, and indeed to make the communication natural, then all reservation and disguise are surely criminal and false.

All this, however, proceeds on the supposition that when scepticism has done its worst, the preacher feels that he has still a divine gospel to preach. And here lies the real difficulty of answering your question : ‘ When a man falls into doubt about the miracles, is he fit to be a Christian minister ? ’ That depends, I should reply, on what is left behind with him, when the miracles are gone. If he feels that the main ground of his religion is gone too, and that though without disbelief, he is in unbelief, so that worship and trust and devout hope have become dubious and faint, then certainly he cannot indicate to others the cardinal points which have vanished from himself, and he is disqualified for a

religious guide of any kind. If, in parting with the miracles, he does not part with the great spiritual truths to which they had given support, but has a faith as firm as ever in the characteristic sentiments of Christianity, then he has lapsed into no unfitness for a ministry truly sacred; but whether precisely for the Christian ministry depends perhaps upon a yet further distinction. A man may hold *opinions concurrent with the Christian faith* without holding them on the Christian tenure. He may see no force in any of the methods by which the Christian system would evidence them to his mind, and may feel himself indebted to reasonings and influences foreign to the Gospel for his repose upon them. In this case I could not consider him—he could not consider himself—a disciple. He holds a natural religion accidentally agreeing in its results with Christianity. But it is quite possible to feel that historical doubts about the miracles leave the divine authority of Christ untouched; to own in the inmost heart that authority still; to hold the soul's faith *direct from him*; and to be conscious that but for the persuasion which his inspiration exercises over us we could not reach our present belief and trust. One who is in this state of mind cannot surely be denied the name of a 'follower of Christ.' I would only add that even here a distinction must, I think, be drawn between mere philosophical scholarship and true religious discipleship. If I yield conviction to *argument* adduced by Christ himself, if he has simply indicated *the steps of thought* by which I may satisfy myself of the truths which I now hold, then my assent is purely scientific, not sacred, and the relation between the master and follower is intellectual, not religious. To constitute this further and higher relation, the truths imparted must come to me as revelations, not as results of reasoning. I must, in some sense, *take them on trust*, and feel that they descend upon me *from above*, instead of being reached by slow ascent from the previous level of my knowledge.

Of all these states of mind which may be left behind notwithstanding all doubts about the miracles, the *last alone* appears to be compatible with the obligations of a Christian minister. If I understand you aright, 'tis that which you, my dear sir, *desire* to experience, but hardly know how to reconcile with your uncertainties about the Gospel-history. And certainly if there be no way of reaching a faith in a prophet's *inspiration*, except by *external evidence*; if physical miracles are the sole credentials of his authority; if on the detection of some error in his modes of thought, we lose all means of assuring ourselves of his infallibility in anything; our apprehensions would be only too well founded! It is, in my opinion, quite clear that Jesus largely partook of the Messianic notions of his country, and applied them to himself—that he expected to return in person to this world during that generation and close the system of human things, and establish in its place a terrestrial theocracy. And as to the miracles, though I feel no difficulty in holding to them still, with certain special exceptions, yet not one of those which rest for their evidence merely on the attestation of the three first Gospels or the Book of Acts, can be considered secure enough to afford a foundation for anything. But all this moves me not at all; and so little help should I derive from the whole system of external proof, were it ever so sound, in discerning the inspirations of Christ, that I look upon the miracle controversy as of very trivial moment. Did my space allow me to pause, I should stop to limit this statement somewhat as regards the Resurrection; but at present this restriction must pass unnoticed. Yet though I make this estimate of the Anti-supernaturalist controversy, I do not hesitate to say that the conjunction of something preternatural is essential to devout faith; and that without miracle there is no religion. To reconcile this apparent contradiction will not be difficult.

In order to do so, however, I must endeavour to

communicate in a few words what appears to me to be the true idea of a Revelation. For my own part I am persuaded that there is only one way in which religion can enter a human heart, viz., by the agency of a higher soul over a lower, an agency natural, indefinable, irresistible. The moments of real consecration to all of us are those in which we stand before some being to whom we look up as nobler and purer than ourselves, who serves the obligations to which we are faithless, and quietly bears sufferings from which we shrink. I know not how to express my sense of the purifying power of this kind of experience. The startling way in which it reveals us to ourselves, and places us in reverential relation to a holiness higher than our own, the manner in which the influence spreads through all the dimensions of the soul at once, and fills it with a clearer atmosphere; the gladness with which we own the power of the greater spirit over us—appear to me to be peculiar and mysterious. I see no reason to believe that a *solitary* human being could reach any religious faith whatsoever, either by inference from the structure of creation, or by internal private consciousness. This great characteristic of our nature is not a *self-light* belonging separately to the constitution of every man; it must be given to us through an external medium of suggestion; and the particular medium whence alone it comes, appears to me to be not the *material contrivances which we comprehend* and so put on a level with us, but *the minds we do not comprehend and so feel to transcend us*, not *effects* which are *beneath* us, but *causes* which are *above* us. These we intuitively recognise the instant they fairly appear before us; they exercise a prophetic and divine influence over us; and with deep response of heart we become their disciples. Thus it is in the natural and conscious subordination of spirit to spirit, in the spontaneous assumption by us all of our rank in the great community of souls, that I place the essence and origin of all religion. And this view surely is in harmony with

the general experience of mankind on a large scale, no less than with our personal consciousness. All religions are traditional and historical, not scientific and individual; gifts from the past, not inventions of the present; and each bears the impress of some one great soul from which it appears as a communicated influence: that soul itself, however, owing still an allegiance to some earlier object of reverence, and not pretending to break the vast chain of spirits through which the flash of devout conviction is discharged upon the world from the clouds that hang around the birth-hour of our race. Protestant Christianity is the influence of Luther's transcendent mind; Luther being the disciple of Paul, Paul of Christ; Christ himself not beginning afresh, but tracing his divinest wisdom to the Law and Prophets of his forefathers, and worshipping the God of Moses; and Moses still looking back to the guardian Providence of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and so on, till we are lost in the region where the human and divine visibly and inextricably mix.

From this view of the source and nature of the religious sentiment many considerable consequences might be shown to follow. It entirely discourages all hope of much influence for any Natural Religion of the Paley and Bridgewater Treatise School, and warns us to beware of that great mistake. It shows us that, as we all live by *communicated religion*, we cannot peacefully and devoutly subsist without some 'author and finisher of faith.' It implies that in all of us there is a power of recognising, when presented, a sanctity and truth that is above us; that the highest form of historically realised perfection must become our *prophet*—of *ideal* perfection, our God. It divides all mankind into two classes; the great sequacious mass in which all we lower spirits find ourselves, and whose noblest attribute it is that we can discern whom we ought to trust; and the few, in whom there is a spontaneous origin, of divine perception and holy truth, underived, self-evidencing, authoritative.

This fresh origination of religious discernment is what I understand by inspiration ; its communication to other minds (not by argument, but by their instinctive response to it as *what they also discern* now that it is put before them) is what I understand by *Revelation*. Any one who will reflect on what alone we can really mean by inspiration, will, I think, arrive at the idea of it just given ; the silent, untraceable, irresistible entrance into the soul of sacred thoughts about which doubt and question are impossible, and which present themselves as infinite realities, solemn as if overheard from some soliloquy of God. If, on their utterance, they pierce with like influence into other minds (and if they can evidence themselves to the receiver, why not to others ?), and prove true to the souls of multitudes, then they are no private communication of the divine Spirit, but veritable *Revelations*, given through one to all. Now such inspiration must always appear to us *miraculous* as well as *divine*. For when we consider what it is that makes a miracle, we find that it is simply our inability to *account for it*, i.e., to trace it back to any antecedent conditions necessitating it ; in other words, its spontaneity. That which we cannot get, before our mind's view, into the position of *an effect*, but which, after all our efforts, remains a pure *cause*, and a cause, moreover, of such a kind that its effects are beyond our ken and calculation, is miraculous. And all things thus spontaneous we necessarily refer to God, the great source of all Causality. A physical change of this kind like, the spontaneous and instantaneous departure of a deadly disease or bodily infirmity, strikes us as from the immediate 'finger of God' ; and such are the evangelical miracles. A spiritual phenomenon of the same kind, e.g., the spontaneous appearance in a human soul, of a wisdom and insight like that of Christ, strikes us as from the thought of God.<sup>1</sup> So long as the facts remain

<sup>1</sup> The diary has 'Christ,' which is manifestly erroneous.



unaccounted for, they must in either case appear as supernatural things. Whoever then thinks he can make out that Christ and his religion are an intelligible *effect* of previous conditions, whoever can speak of them as products of the age and circumstances, appears to me destitute of the mode of feeling which constitutes discipleship. Whoever sees in Christ, on the other hand, a pure spontaneous irresolvable cause of the divinest truth [and] guidance we possess, is, be his theology what it may, his genuine follower. To this state of mind in regard to Christ, it is evidently essential that he should be regarded as infallible *somewhere*, and worthy of *implicit trust*. But absolute exemption from intellectual error, total separation from the cast of thought belonging to his age, is clearly not necessary at all. Historically realised perfection (constituting the *prophet* or *divine messenger*) is distinguished from ideal perfection (constituting the character of Deity) by its limitation within the bounding conditions imposed upon all human realities. The relations of our existence cannot be assumed without its liabilities. The divinest child of God is formed under the compression of time and place, and must bear some features of their shape ; and Jesus, being actually in some relations of home, of society, living in the constant light of natural thought, and covered with an oriental atmosphere of life, could not remain unaffected by them, an example of action without reaction. This partial fallibility is perfectly compatible with our idea of divine inspiration.

I think, then, that I have explained what I mean when I say that 'without miracle there is no religion.' To be disciples of Christ we must recognise something supernatural about him, in the sense before expounded. But whether this element of wonder is discerned in his *lot*, in his *life*, or in his *soul*, is indifferent to our faith. If, while we suspect on critical grounds that miraculous acts have been attributed to him which he did not perform, we still look upon himself with undiminished

wonder, veneration, and love, we simply throw back upon his *mind* the miracle that has been withdrawn from his *history*. We do not discard the miracles as things that *could not be true*, but view them rather as things that *might have been true*, though they fail to find a sufficient historical basis. We regard them, if not as realities themselves, at least as the symbols of a reality quite as great, 'signs' of the wonderfulness there was in Christ, of the subduing majesty and power of his spirit, of which no adequate impression could otherwise be given than by exhibiting material nature and mortal suffering crouching and submissive at his feet. Not only would I admit such a view to be Christian, but I believe there may be in one who holds it a more true, loving, simple discipleship, than in many a hard historical believer, who has so little trust in Christ himself as to be afraid of losing a grain of recorded miracle respecting him. If there be faith in the *person*, will there be this constant and scrupulous reference to his 'credentials?'

I do not know, my dear sir, whether you will find yourself described in any of the various states of mind which I have endeavoured to indicate. Your own statements hardly give me data sufficient for a categorical answer; so I fear that in my desire to comprehend all cases with which the assumed conditions of yours seemed to agree, I have spread out my attempted solution of the problem to a wearisome breadth. Should your state of mind be still indeterminate, and have taken none of the directions I have imagined, is not the first duty to clear away the nebulous condition of thought, and work out a conviction sufficiently definite to afford grounds for action, continuing meanwhile the exercise of the immediate duties of your profession? I do not think that exactly your present mode of thought, being apparently a hesitancy or feeling forwards towards something ulterior, *can* long remain; and if it be a transition state only, it has hardly any sufficient title to prescribe a tumultuous change affecting your whole

subsequent practical life. Self-surrender to the immediate calls of duty day by day, still more than speculative thought and research, cannot fail to induce a healthier and happier tone of mind, especially if the scanty light permitted now be trustfully submitted to as a trial not unworthy of endurance, while it lasts. Truly shall I rejoice in your action, and deeply shall I honour your decision (be it what it may), if you obtain light to find the truth, and strength to do the right.

Believe me, my dear sir,

Yours very faithfully,

JAMES MARTINEAU.

## CHAPTER VII.

### DENOMINATIONAL UNITARIANISM : 1833-1844. THE ENGLISH PRESBYTERIANS AND THE DISSENTERS' CHAPELS BILL.

THE Irish Unitarians among whom James Martineau began his ministry, retained some of the elements of Presbyterian organisation. In England in spite of a well-marked historic line of descent, the external forms had almost wholly disappeared.<sup>1</sup> The stress of events had thrown the emphasis of interest on the Unitarian theology rather than on the spiritual freedom of the congregations. That there was a close connexion between the two was plain ; but in the necessity of vindicating civil rights, and establishing Christian claims, attention was concentrated on particular results which had acquired a temporary prominence, rather than on the permanent principles of religious union which lay behind them. When James Martineau left Dublin, he was a convinced Unitarian, and a convinced Unitarian he remained till the end of his days. But in Dublin he had deliberately made his Uni-

<sup>1</sup> The chief instance of their survival was seen in the Provincial Assembly of Lancashire and Cheshire, formed in 1765 by the union of two older county associations of the previous century.

tarianism the basis of church-life. This view he was soon to abandon. The process of theological change (already partly described) was slow and gradual: not less so was the philosophical reconstruction which accompanied it, and was in fact another aspect of the same movement of his thought. But his conversion to a new conception of religious fellowship was swift, almost immediate. Where his spiritual affections were concerned, he clung to old ideals with unrelaxing tenacity: let intellect, however, be once convinced, and the inevitable consequences were accepted with the smallest possible delay.

## I.

The ecclesiastical situation of the Unitarians in 1832, when James Martineau settled in Liverpool, was full of uneasy disquiet. The greater number of their chapels had been built in the previous century when the profession of Unitarian belief was illegal; many of the meeting-houses had been erected by Presbyterians whose ministers had no theological objection to signing the doctrinal articles of the English Church.<sup>1</sup> But these same teachers, following the great lead of Richard Baxter, had persistently pleaded that the Scripture, and the Scripture only, was their rule of faith. With creeds of human imposition they would have nothing to

<sup>1</sup> As required by the Act of Toleration, 1689. In practice, however, this had been evaded from a very early date. The clause imposing subscription was omitted from the Irish Toleration Act, 1719. The Act of 1779 abolished the demand.

do ; and on this basis they stood in Baxter's words 'for catholicism against all parties.' They were persuaded, with Robinson, that there was yet more light to break out of God's holy Word ; and they reserved to themselves 'liberty to reform according to Scripture rule in doctrine, discipline, and worship.'<sup>1</sup> To George I. they pleaded 'Our principles are as we hope the most friendly to mankind, amounting to no more than those of a general toleration to all peaceable subjects, universal love and charity for all Christians, and to act always in matters of religion as God shall give us light in his will about them.'<sup>2</sup> In dedicating their chapels 'for the worship of God by Protestant Dissenters,' who were sometimes specified as Presbyterians, sometimes as Independents, sometimes as both together, they deliberately rejected all limiting doctrinal names. Baxter had long before related how 'we would have had the brethren to have offered to Parliament the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Decalogue, as essentials or fundamentals which at least contain all that is necessary to salvation ; . . . and whereas it is said "A Socinian or a Papist will subscribe all this," I answered, "so much the better, and so much the fitter it is to be matter of our concord."<sup>3</sup> The Trinitarian controversy which arose in the last decade of the seventeenth century, at the time when the Presbyterians were at their

<sup>1</sup> Timothy Jollie, of Sheffield, 1703, in his funeral sermon for his father.

<sup>2</sup> Peirce, *Dissenters' Reason for not writing on behalf of Persecution*, 1718, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> *Life*, part ii. p. 198.

greatest activity,<sup>1</sup> threw no shadow of suspicion or alarm upon this attitude. At the opening of the new Meeting-house at Shrewsbury in 1691 Francis Tallents 'caused it to be written upon the walls that it was built not for a faction or party, but for the promotion of repentance and faith in communion with all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.'<sup>2</sup>

To this principle they remained loyal when the anti-Trinitarian heresy broke out among the 'Three Denominations' in the person of James Peirce of Exeter, 1718. Peirce was a Congregational, and justified himself to the satisfaction of his own people. But the representatives of the Exeter churches opened a correspondence with the London ministers, and the question was referred to a meeting summoned at the Presbyterian head-quarters at Salters' Hall, February 19, 1719. Calamy, Watts, and Neal, all leading Presbyterians, refused to go, doubting their competency as Dissenters to form a court of adjudication, and unwilling to intensify divisions. Thomas Bradbury, pastor of the church in Fetter Lane, proposed on behalf of the Congregationalists that every minister then present should subscribe in witness to his faith the first article of the Established Church on the doctrine of the Trinity, and the answers to the fifth and sixth questions of the Westminster Catechism. The motion was resisted by the Presbyterians as involv-

<sup>1</sup> According to a Parliamentary return, the Dissenters took out 2,418 licenses for places of worship between 1688 and 1700. Skeats, *Free Churches*, p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> *Nonconformists' Memorial* ii. 334.

ing the imposition of a creed, which was inconsistent with the principles of Protestant Dissent. When the division took place, those who were for subscription were directed to repair to the gallery. As Bradbury's person appeared, a hiss arose from below. 'It is the serpent's voice,' cried the indignant pastor, 'and it may be expected against zeal for him who is the woman's seed.' The motion was rejected by 73 votes to 69. In the language ascribed to Sir Joseph Jekyll (afterwards Master of the Rolls) 'the Bible carried it by four.' The minority included nearly all the Congregationalists and nine Baptists; ten of the latter, more true to their heroic traditions of freedom, voting with the Presbyterians. Each party drew up 'Advices for Peace'; and on March 10 the Non-subscribers wrote to Exeter allowing that there were errors of doctrine sufficiently important to warrant a congregation from withdrawing from a minister; but they added that the people are the sole judges as to what these errors are; that the Bible is the sole rule of faith; that no man should be condemned because he would not consent to human creeds; and finally (a salutary rule in all controversies) that no man should be charged with holding the consequences of his opinions, if he disclaimed those consequences.<sup>1</sup>

The way was thus open to the slow influences

<sup>1</sup> The sequel was not without interest. The Trustees locked Peirce out of the Chapel. He remonstrated that the people ought to decide. They replied that as there might be a majority in his favour, the congregation would not be consulted; he might preach elsewhere. Three hundred followed him, and another meeting-house was built. To this case Mr. Gladstone referred in the House of Commons. *Dissenters' Chapels Bill Debates*, p. 182.



of theological change.<sup>1</sup> Many of the meeting-houses remained in possession of the Congregationalists. But in others a gradual modification of the old Calvinistic Trinitarianism set in. Ministers and people gently moved together, often hardly conscious on what path they were treading. In some cases the adoption of definite Unitarian theology was more rapid owing to the vigorous and decided teaching of the followers of Priestley; in others, the catholic conception, expounded (for example) by Dr. John Taylor of Norwich, still retained its hold on congregational usage and affection. No public attention, however, was called to the process, until a dispute arose at Wolverhampton in 1817.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> That this was deliberately intended, after 1719, may be fairly asserted. Thus in the will of Nathaniel Carter, formerly of Great Yarmouth, dated 1722, by which the residue of his property was bequeathed for the benefit of two congregations of Protestant Dissenters at Filby and Great Yarmouth (both of which became Unitarian), the testator expressly provided: 'And because no person, who designs the glory of God, the prosperity of his Church, and the support of his interest in the world in ages after his decease, can foresee the changes and revolutions that may arrive, and which might oblige him to alter and change the particular method by which he proposeth such ends should be promoted; my great and general instruction to these my Trustees is this: that the purposes of sincere Piety and Charity, according to the best light of their consciences, and agreeable to the directions of the Word of God, may be industriously and faithfully served to the utmost of their ability by this entrustment, leaving with them this short and serious memento, GOD SEES.' *Christian Reformer*, 1836, p. 883.

<sup>2</sup> The circumstances were curious (*Memoirs of R. Aspland*, p. 378). The chapel was erected about 1701 by a congregation of English Presbyterians, 'for the worship and service of God.' About 1770 the minister was an Arian, and he was succeeded by an avowed Unitarian, when a secession of Calvinistic members took place. In 1813 Mr. Steward, then professing Unitarian opinions, was appointed minister for three years. At the end of that time he announced Trinitarian convictions, and the congregation declined to renew the appointment, but allowed

Slow were the stages of a Chancery suit in those days; and the controversy dragged its obscure way through the courts, when the accident of a rousing speech at a Manchester dinner suddenly lifted the question into prominence. The language of the Rev. George Harris, at the presentation of a silver tea service to the Rev. John Grundy,<sup>1</sup> aroused an angry criticism, which took the form of an enquiry into the tenure by which the Unitarians held the majority of their chapels, and administered endowments such as Lady Hewley's charity in York, and Dr. Williams's Trust in London.<sup>2</sup> Lady Hewley's Trustees were finally selected for legal attack. Lady Hewley, wife of Sir John Hewley, who represented York in the House of Commons in the reign of Charles II., had been a warm supporter of the

him three months' residence to enable him to find another pulpit. When this period of grace had expired, Mr. Steward declined to leave. One of the Trinitarian seceders of 1780 returned to support him, and a suit was instituted to prevent the congregation from ejecting Mr. Steward. Interesting legal issues at once arose: though the personal profession of Unitarianism had ceased to be penal, under Mr. Smith's Act, it was argued that Unitarianism was still an offence against the Common Law, and a Unitarian congregation could not lawfully hold property. This was of course irrespective of the further question of the views of the founders.

<sup>1</sup>At a tavern appropriately called the 'Spread Eagle.' 'Orthodoxy is bound up in creeds and confessions, with inky blots and rotten parchment bonds:—but Unitarianism, like the word of the ever-living Jehovah, is not and cannot be bound. Orthodoxy is gloom and darkness and desolation; Unitarianism is light, and liberty, and joy.' Mr. Grundy was leaving Cross St., Manchester, for Paradise St., Liverpool.

<sup>2</sup>'In Great Britain the Unitarians possess 223 places, of which 178, i.e., four-fifths of the whole, were originally orthodox. In England alone they have 206 chapels, of which 36, or little more than one-sixth part of the whole number, were built by Unitarians.' Waddington, *Congregational History*, iv. 312.

Presbyterians. She had founded a charity for ministers in 1704, 'poor and godly ministers for the time being of Christ's holy Gospel': in 1707 she had added almshouses. One of her trustees was the minister of St. Saviourgate chapel, York, where she habitually attended. This gentleman, Mr. Hotham, was followed by the Rev. Newcome Cappe.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Cappe was succeeded by Mr. Wellbeloved, and Mr. Wellbeloved was also Principal of Manchester College. The Attorney General, Sir James Scarlett, was requested to institute proceedings against the Trustees, but he refused. A royal commission, however, proceeded to investigate their position; their report was circulated by some of the Independents who had first raised a counter-claim; and in 1830 a suit was begun. On Dec. 23, 1833, judgment was given against the Trustees by the Vice-Chancellor, who, however, ordered the costs to be paid out of the funds of the Trust. It was at once seen that the whole tenure of the chapels was imperilled. Notice was given of appeal to a higher court; and an English Presbyterian Association was formed, early in 1834,<sup>2</sup> for purposes of defence.

## II.

The congregation in Paradise St., Liverpool, could trace its existence to about the year 1700. What was the view of its pastors at this crisis?

<sup>1</sup> John Hotham, assistant 1698-1731, minister 1731-1756; Newcome Cappe, 1755-1800; Charles Wellbeloved, assistant 1792-1800; minister, 1801-1858. Three pastors covered 160 years.

<sup>2</sup> Largely by the efforts of the Rev. R. Aspland, *Memoirs*, p. 534

A year of anxious study of the legal pleadings and the long historical process just summarised, had an immediate and decisive effect upon James Martineau. At the Priestley Centenary in March, 1833, he had gone to Birmingham as a kind of Unitarian Mecca. That was the scene of his hero's severest conflict; it was also a rallying-place for denominational energies. He had long looked to Birmingham, he said, 'as the very citadel and stronghold of Dissent; and he had witnessed with no small satisfaction the determined efforts which had been made to get rid of the unjust method of supporting the teachers of one religious sect at the expense of those who conscientiously differed from them in opinion.'<sup>1</sup> Now, however, the situation was changed for him. Opportunity of utterance was soon found. The decision in the Lady Hewley Case awakened discussion in various parts of the country, and the *Liverpool Standard* distinguished itself by the bitterness of its attack. Mr. Martineau undertook to reply, and the *Liverpool Mercury* published two powerful letters introduced by the following appeal.

To the Editor of the *Liverpool Mercury*.

Sir,—You have not, perhaps, been wholly inattentive to the series of amiable delineations which the *Liverpool Standard* has recently presented of the Unitarians. Fearing that the Editor would not gain from his exertions the credit which his inventive faculty deserved, I drew up the following vindication of his originality, clearly showing that his merits are of a very different and far more ideal order than those of the mere observer and copyist of actual realities. He has modestly declined the com-

<sup>1</sup> In reply to the toast 'The Rev. James Martineau, who even at an early period of his public life, avouched his attachment to the great principles of Protestant Dissent by his refusal of the *Regium Donum* in Ireland.' *Christian Reformer*, 1833, p. 184.

munication; not, indeed, because he conceives the letter to exaggerate his fertility of fiction, for he himself, in his refusal pushes his own claims further; he proclaims himself destitute of all human means of ascertaining the things whereof he affirms. He has, indeed, quoted from divers trust-deeds; but he says the Unitarians possess all these documents, and will not let him see them! His philippics, then, are, as I suspected, things of inspiration! The editor is on the tripod!

Your known love of fair-play, Sir, persuades me that, by giving place to this letter in your journal, you will help the public to a just estimate of the merits of the *Standard*, as displayed in this transaction; and that you will not complain of the 'extreme length' of two or three columns in defence of character, where ten have been employed to blacken it.

Mount St., Feb. 5, 1834.

Yours, etc., JAMES MARTINEAU.

The letters<sup>1</sup> were chiefly occupied with detailed refutation of the assertions of the *Standard*; one interesting case may serve to point the moral of the whole, the allegation and the truth being presented by Mr. Martineau in parallel columns.

*Statements of the Liverpool Standard.*

*Wigan.*—One of the enumerated Unitarian chapels; built by the orthodox, and endowed.

*Actual Facts.*

*Wigan.*—The Chapel was built by Unitarians, and vested in Unitarian Trustees. The minister and the majority of the congregation, however, became Trinitarians, on which the sole Unitarian trustee very properly filled up the trust with orthodox names, and made over the whole property for the use of the orthodox majority. It is now, as it should be, in the hands of the orthodox.

More significant still was his emphasis on Baxter's Catholicity, and his affirmation that instead of the system of discipline which it primarily denoted, Presbyterianism had, at the origin of the existing

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted in the *Unitarian Magazine and Chronicle*, 1834, pp. 73, 122; and the *English Presbyterian*, 1834, pp. 7, 13.

foundations, passed into a name for the great principles of free worship and free inquiry. These principles might operate in either direction, and guide the way from Trinitarianism to Unitarianism, *or the reverse* : he was equally prepared for both. But this led straight to a clear and definite result. The heirs of the Presbyterians had no right to label their churches by doctrinal names, which would impose any limits on the freedom of their religious fellowship. To this position he definitely committed himself ere many months went by.<sup>1</sup> On June 19th he preached in the centre of Lancashire Presbyterianism at Cross Street, Manchester, to the Provincial Meeting of the Presbyterian and Unitarian ministers of Lancashire and Cheshire. At the dinner which followed, under his presidency, his speech excited unusual interest. He denounced the position of Unitarians as too sectarian. It did not allow sufficient latitude of theological sentiment ; and virtually proclaimed over any regular worshipper in one of their chapels what was only a denominational name. What a contrast was seen in the spirit of the best days of English Presbyterianism, which bound to no particular religious belief, and was thus calculated to realise the idea of Christians meeting as men anxious to have their moral wants supplied, rather than as sectarians desirous of having their theological

<sup>1</sup> On Feb. 27 Mrs. Martineau reported to her sister that her husband had been preaching to an immense congregation on the recent attempts of the orthodox dissenters to deprive Unitarians of their endowments. The request for publication was declined, and no traces of the sermon survive.

opinions supported!<sup>1</sup> For more than fifty years he was to cherish this ideal, and at length formally—but fruitlessly—to propose the definite adoption of the English Presbyterian name.<sup>2</sup>

### III.

Events, in the meantime, were driving the Unitarians into a position of isolation which no individual exertions could avert. The bitterness aroused by the rival claims to the Presbyterian endowments rendered co-operation increasingly difficult. Friction among the representatives of the Three Denominations was inevitable. For more than seventy years the contributions of the joint bodies had maintained an Orphan Working School; and the ministers had in turn conducted the devotions in its chapel. It was now discovered that the services of the Unitarians were 'destructive to salvation'; and though the guineas of their laymen might be accepted as issued from the mint and not from the pit, the worship of their ministers must be dismissed to its own place. New arrangements were made accordingly. The respected Presbyterian secretary, Dr. Thomas Rees, after six annual re-appointments, was set aside upon religious grounds. The Presbyterian ministers, assembled at Dr. Williams's Library, on March 4, 1836, regretfully resolved to 'withdraw

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Reformer*, 1834, p. 568. His speech called forth an animated vindication of the propriety of attaching the Unitarian name to organised religious bodies as well as to individuals, from his old York fellow-student, Mr. J. R. Beard: 'the theological world would not admit of nondescripts.'

<sup>2</sup> See *infra*, chap. XV. § i.

from a union the compact of which had been violated, and in which we can see no prospect of equal and peaceful co-operation, or of real and effective service to the interests of religious liberty.’<sup>1</sup> Only a few weeks before, the Wolverhampton case had been argued for four days at Westminster Hall, before the Lord Chancellor, who had reserved his decision till the issue of the appeal of the Hewley Trustees. On Feb. 5, Lord Lyndhurst had given a second judgment against the Hewley Trustees; but there remained an appeal to the House of Lords. The Unitarians were still languid, and realised neither their ecclesiastical dangers, nor what the younger and keener-sighted among them thought much graver, their religious deficiencies. The English Presbyterian Association might seek to enlarge itself,<sup>2</sup> and invite representatives of any congregation of Presbyterian or other Protestant Dissenters, willing to accept its fundamental principle. This was formulated as ‘the right of free and unlimited exercise of private judgment in matters of religion, and of full Christian communion, on the great principle of the divine mission of our Lord, without any other doctrinal test whatever.’ Such a condition was really a departure from original Presbyterian usage, due to imperfect comprehension, like the pseudo-Gothic of contemporary church architecture. ‘The divine mission of our Lord’ was as much a human imposition, i.e., an interpretation of Scripture demands, as the first

<sup>1</sup> Aspland’s *Memoirs*, p. 530; *Christian Reformer*, 1836, p. 276.

<sup>2</sup> See the rules attached to the *Christian Reformer*, 1836.



article of the English Establishment. It won little support, and the Association languished in impotence. The field was thus left clear to the Unitarians of the British and Foreign Association. Conscious of serious issues, they called an Aggregate Meeting in Essex St. Chapel, where Lindsey and Belsham had ministered, on June 19th, 1838, nine days before the coronation of the young Queen Victoria, to 'take into consideration the present state of the denomination.' To this meeting Mr. Martineau went up from Liverpool.<sup>1</sup>

Ministers and laymen were present from all parts of the country, and a number of letters had been received, among which one from the Rev. John James Tayler, of Manchester, sounded the theme to which Mr. Martineau was to give a vigorous development. 'The true change, I have long been persuaded,' wrote Mr. Tayler, 'must come from *within*, for the awakening of a deeper and more earnest spirit of Religion in the heart of each separate congregation.' It was not till the second day that Mr. Martineau arose to deliver his soul. He stood, a young man, in the midst of the fathers and brethren of the faith. Laymen and pastors were among them, tried champions of religious liberty; men of recognised learning and capacity in affairs. There was

<sup>1</sup> The meeting was spread over two days, June 19 and 22. A full report was published in the *Christian Reformer*, 1838, pp. 553 and 629. The week following Mr. Martineau witnessed the Coronation in the Abbey. A year before he had been in the deputation of Presbyterian ministers, and kissed hands on the Queen's accession (letter to Rev. R. L. Carpenter, May 25, 1887). For his attendance at the Jubilee in 1887, and his share in the Address of 1897, see chap. XV.

Mr. Madge, the teacher of his boyhood ; Dr. Carpenter, the regenerator of his youth ; Mr. Turner, whom he could not see without tender recollections alike of Newcastle and Nottingham ; Edward Tagart, now the husband of his beloved sister-in-law, Mrs. Thomas Martineau ; while Dr. Ezra Stiles Gannett, of Boston, at all times himself worthy of honour, seemed to bring a benediction from his colleague, the saintly Channing. These were the men whom he would warn and exhort ! Their Association he was ready to defend from unjust attacks ; but its very constitution, he declared, was entirely sectarian, and it could never kindle the life of their churches, or realise the desires of union under which the meeting had been convened. Some passages of the speech that followed supply so many clues to his later thought and action that they are here subjoined. Few can realise now the effort which they must have cost him.

Some preceding speaker has professed his undoubting belief that our existing Unitarianism is destined to be the world's universal and eternal faith. Happy and complacent belief ! held and disappointed by every sect in turn, with respect to its own creed, yet living and fervent still ! needful perhaps to maintain the zeal of successive generations, yet surely maintaining it on delusion ! Among ourselves little has been done since the time of Priestley : yet it cannot be supposed that we are always to live on the discoveries and glories of the past. I too doubt not that either our present Unitarianism, *or something far better*, will be the ultimate faith of men ; but I conceive that we are obviously in a state of transition, that every mark which history ever affords of such a state is to be found among us—in one

direction a great ferment of new ideas ; in another a determined stand upon old ones ; and everywhere a consciousness of religious defect exciting earnest but vague aspirations after improvement. Why, then, should we not confess that we are on our way to better things instead of attempting to consolidate and perpetuate our present modes of thought ? Why drop our anchor here, in seas from which we must be driven, instead of looking out for bright land ahead and seeking still a better country, even a heavenly ? . . . .

Many of us conceive that little practical importance is to be attached to the numerical distribution of the Godhead in the conceptions of men ; and that while the moral and personal qualities which they venerate and trust and aspire to imitate, are truly august and divine, it is of small moment by what name or names they may be called. I cordially subscribe to a sentiment in a sermon preached before the Association on Wednesday, viz., that our Trinitarian brethren in their devotions, bow, like ourselves, before the mental image of an infinite perfection. If so, and if the real object of every man's worship be the conception of Deity in his own mind, then must two persons, standing before the same vision of perfection, both exercise the same devotion, both revere the Holy and Divine, whatever name they may pronounce, and whatever number they may annex. Admit the idea within to be the same, and the whole question becomes one of mere names. We, who have our descent from forefathers of Calvinistic belief—who pride ourselves on their heroism and their faith—who, confessing that they had not the nobility of rank, boast of their better nobility of conscience, should be the last to deny the tendency of the system from which we are now estranged, to produce great and most excellent minds. And to admit this is to damp all the fuel of sectarian zeal. . . . .

I confess that I cannot attribute our want of progress, as a sect, to defective ecclesiastical arrangements, so

much as to the spirit of our religious system, and to the state of mind in which that system has its origin and support. The one great function of a religious body is, I apprehend, to generate *faith*—an absolute reliance that is upon *internal* convictions and truths of religion and morals, in opposition to *external* expediencies,—an undoubting self-abandonment, in action and affection, to some great idea worth living or dying for. Every sect has prospered, and deserved to prosper, in proportion as it has produced this disposition; it has failed and deserved to fail, in proportion as it has produced the opposite, and excited the critical, sceptical, disorganizing temper. Moral power appears to me to develop itself in the transition from unbelief to belief, and to disappear in the change from belief to unbelief; depending much less than we are apt to suppose on the absolute truth and logical consistency of the opinions embraced. To this fact, all the great moral revolutions in the history of civilization seem to bear witness. . . .

With these views of the true office of a body of religious reformers (continued the speaker, amid a gathering storm of disapprobation), I cannot but lament that Unitarianism had a sceptical origin: that it began with dissuasives from belief, removing successively objects of human veneration and reliance; and, on the whole, characterized in the eyes of others by its success in proving how few things need be regarded as wonderful and divine. To this spirit, impressed upon our system at first, we are indebted for such accessions of adherents as it receives. The doubters and unbelievers of other and less reasonable churches constitute the new forces of our own: we grow by men's lapses from their previous convictions; and thus a critical, cold, and untrusting temper becomes silently diffused, unfavourable to high enterprise and deep affections. Moreover, when at length this spirit vanishes, and the genuine sentiments of personal religion acquire power, their effect upon our consolidation, as a sect, is the very reverse of their action

in orthodox churches. With those who esteem error to be no less fatal than sin, the growth of piety inflames sectarian zeal; with us, who attach no terrors to the involuntary mistakes of the sincere, it is otherwise: the pure perceptions and natural instincts of the pious heart detect and love the good and great in the spirit of other churches; becoming more devout in mind, we feel ourselves not *more*, but far *less* discriminated from the true Christian of every faith; and our sectarian zeal undergoes inevitable decline. And, thus as a mere theological denomination, we profit by the scepticism of other sects, and lose by the piety of our own. Conceiving, then, that the causes of our defective social influence lie thus deep, I have no sanguine expectations from any principle of sectarian union or schemes of mechanical organization. The proper use of organization, surely, is to direct into proper channels and reduce to a steady and calculable power, an exuberant energy and wild force already existing. But it can create nothing; the symmetrical aggregation of dead atoms can kindle no life; and the spontaneous vigour of our separate churches must, I apprehend, be much increased before they have a superfluity of power to shed upon the weak and the depressed. . . .

We should turn our attention, I respectfully suggest, not to orthodoxy, which has a faith and is satisfied with it, but to indifference, and unbelief and sin, which have it not and are satisfied without it. On these we should make aggression, in the power of our positive religion, bearing down upon them with the persuasion of the Divine Paternity, and Human Brotherhood, under the sense of the sanctity of duty and the grandeur of immortality. We should deal with them with singleness of aim, as if left alone with them in God's world to cure them,—as if unconscious of the presence of other sects. Permitting an activity thus to flow, not from our perception of the false, but from our persuasion of the true, our own spirit of disinterestedness would grow;

we should acquire more noble faith ourselves, and thus win the only title God bestows to meddle with the faith of others. The sole case in which, I conceive, the employment of proselytizing missionaries is desirable, is when the popular systems of Christianity have produced an uneasy, sceptical, and irreligious state of mind, and we can therefore go forth to construct, not to destroy, to reassure and not to unsettle, to replace the barrenness of doubt and aversion by the divine fertility of love and trust.

The speech was a challenge, not so much of a particular theology as of a temper, which to an ardent and aspiring mind seemed indescribably narrow and impotent. Great changes of thought were already on the way: the fathers of an elder day had thrown down all barriers and let in the light: what should hinder their successors from doing the same? The time was not yet come when such issues could be fully faced.<sup>1</sup>

#### IV.

Further insight into Mr. Martineau's views at this epoch is afforded by letters two years later,

<sup>1</sup> At the end of his speech Mr. Martineau moved 'That this meeting, in professing its attachment to Unitarian Christianity as at once Scriptural and Rational, and conducive to the true Glory of God, and Wellbeing of Men, and in avowing its veneration for the early British Expositors and Confessors of this Faith,—at the same time recognises the essential worth of that principle of free inquiry to which we are indebted for our own form of Christianity, and of that Spirit of deep and vital Religion which may exist under various forms of theological sentiment, and which gave to our forefathers their implicit faith in Truth, their love of God, and their reliance, for the improvement of mankind, on the influences of the Gospel.' This was seconded by the Rev. J. J. Tayler, and carried. Mr. Martineau then voted for a resolution proposed by the Rev. George Harris, in aid of the work of the Association.

copied by Mrs. Martineau into her diary. The first deals with a difficulty raised by a phrase in the speech just quoted.

To the REV. S. T. PORTER, Darwen, near Blackburn.

Liverpool, July 18th, 1840.

. . . . You appear to suspect some hidden meaning in my statement that the 'real object of every man's worship is the conception of Deity in his own mind.'<sup>1</sup> I do by no means intend to imply that in the act of adoration the worshipper feels his veneration to be directed to any 'idea' or 'conception,' or other part or state of himself. He necessarily and truly considers the object of his devotion to be a reality external to his own personality, and independent of his state of mind, living and acting when no conception of him is in the human heart. The purport of my words will perhaps be evident by adverting to the general topic which led me to use them. I was speaking of the practical and spiritual operation of different modes of worship, and maintaining that this operation is the same wherever two worshippers have the same mental conception of Deity, however different the phraseology by which they may denote this conception. And *relatively to me* the maxim is evidently true, 'de non apparentibus et de non existentibus eadem est ratio.' It is my own representation of God to myself that determines the character and effect of my worship: and whatever else he may be in himself, the qualities and lineaments of his nature which are absent from my thoughts, are inoperative upon those thoughts. *To me* God is that which he *appears* to be; and the divine image which arises before the soul in prayer, and which is perceived not by the senses given us for the ascertainment of outward things, but by thought that takes cognizance of internal and spiritual things—this image alone decides the character of a man's

<sup>1</sup> *Ante*, p. 219.

piety. Whatever is falsely omitted from it, not being there, fails to operate; whatever is falsely included in it, operates as if it were a copy of the truth. This is all that I meant.

You appear to object to my account of faith as 'an absolute reliance upon internal convictions and truths of religion and morals'; and you seem to have drawn from these words the inference that 'the thing believed' is, in my estimation, 'of no consequence in itself, provided it has effected faith.' Now, I do not see that there is much the matter with my definition,—and as for the inference from it, I cannot see how it follows, and am quite prepared to disclaim it. I think that wherever there is the absolute reliance of which I speak, whether on *real* or on only *supposed* truths, there is *faith*; but I by no means think all sorts of faith equally excellent, irrespective of their success in approximating to the truth. Nevertheless, I do think the distinction between *faith* and *no-faith* incomparably more important than that between one kind of faith and another; and in the gradation of excellence should arrange them thus—1st, true faith; 2nd, false faith; 3rd, no faith at all; regarding the second not so much in the light of a palliative evil, as in that of a limited good. In order to explain this, I would distinguish between physical or scientific truth, and religious or mysterious truth. The former of these being necessarily finite and calculable, is appreciable by human faculties, and the mind may have a precise representation within itself of the reality, and the conception of any scientific fact that is *not true*, is inevitably false, so that the understanding would be in a better state without such conception. But religious truth, having reference solely to things infinite, is surely inappreciable by our minds. It belongs to deeps beyond our experience. And neither nature nor revelation can enable us to think correctly of that which transcends the limits of the very souls they condescend to teach. Our truest faiths, then, are in—not the truth, but our most



happy modes of representing the still absent truth to ourselves ; modes either self-acquired, or imparted by revelation. All these modes are but symbols of the great reality ; more or less noble, solemn, sublime ; and in this respect only, more or less true. For all are but substitutes or approximations replacing in our finite minds the infinitude that cannot enter them. Hence it appears to me that neither absolute truth, nor absolute falsehood, but only comparative excellence, can be predicated of any form of religious belief prevalent among us ; and while we all of us *misconceive* the reality, they only *contradict* it who have *no faith*. Others may form but poor and unworthy ideas of things infinite, but these alone say 'there is no infinite,'—a notion which, amid all the creeds which miss the truth, can alone be called the belief of a lie,—of the most gigantic of lies. The least approach or tendency to this condition of mind, the least check to the feelings of trust and worship, the lapse towards a state of negation in religion, I regard as a profounder error than can take place within the limits of any Christian form of faith. Hence my aversion to proselytising. It is impossible to carry on this work without disorganising a man's present faith ; and it is so much more certain that you will produce disbelief of what he has venerated, than belief of anything more worthy of reverence, that if I saw his faith quietly sanctifying his heart and life, I would let it alone, though it differed from that I loved myself ; not, you observe, because I think error will do as well as truth, but because I suspect that his present state of mind, with all its errors, may yet be truer than any which I can substitute by a process involving the perils of a disintegrated faith.

Experience, moreover, appears to me to teach that there is a relation which it is very dangerous to disturb, between the general condition of a man's mind and character, and the particular form of faith which he adopts ; and that his belief spontaneously adjusts itself

to his moral and spiritual wants. On religious subjects the vital truth or falsehood of a faith seems to me to depend upon this relation, rather than to be a thing extrinsic to it and absolute; so that if we could look at another's creed not with our eyes, but with his, we should see it *true*, not *false*. And conversely, if we were to turn out his creed, and put in our own instead,—not being able to give him our mental eye—the coloured glass of our thought and affection,—through which to view it, we might present him with that which, by the very attempt at transference, passed from truth into error. For myself, the more I study the beliefs of those from whom I differ, not in the spirit of controversy but of sympathy, the more I endeavour to seize the point of view and feeling of those who hold them, the more do I see of essential sanctifying heart-truth in them, though the form into which they are thrown is one to which neither my reason nor my interpretation of Scripture can yield assent. I rejoice with thanksgiving that they can do for others what they cannot do for me. With this conception, that all Christian faiths are but symbols of unapproachable realities, I do not expect that there will be any ultimate and universal agreement in one form of doctrine. There seem to me to be foundations in the very constitution of our minds for different modes of thinking on the same great subjects. For example, the doctrine of Free-will, and that of Necessity, are as old as human speculation, and have made no approach to any settlement. They represent, and surely will always maintain, two schools of religious sentiment, each fulfilling an important function, and finding congenial minds. Indeed, to every object of mystic contemplation there are an infinite number of sides, and it is much if our poor minds can even fix a full gaze on *one*. How, then, should there not be many views? God grant us all some true glimpse, to guide us through a world which else has little light!

I hope I have rightly apprehended, and intelligibly

answered, the question which you favoured me by proposing. The only remark which I would add is this, that while I frankly acknowledge that other men's faith may to them be as good as my own, and feel, therefore, little call of *benevolence* to make proselytes, I look with horror upon all disingenuousness or even indifference about the free expression and fearless maintenance of one's personal convictions. No man can have a deep persuasion without loving it; and he is neither true to himself nor trustful in God, if he does not avow it with simplicity, defend it with earnestness, and see that it has its place in the mighty competition for human souls. Forgive the length of this letter, which my earnest interest in the subject has tempted me to extend too far. Wherever I am wrong, I shall at all times, I trust, be grateful for correction.

Believe me, my dear sir,

Yours very faithfully,

JAMES MARTINEAU.

To the REV. ARCHIBALD MACDONALD, Royston, Herts.

Liverpool, 1840.

I fear that you must have expected to receive, ere this, my thanks, long and largely due, for your very interesting letter to my friend Thom and myself. His worthier as well as prompter answer is already, I doubt not, in your hands; and should so rare a fortune as a few leisure hours fall to me within any reasonable time, I may perhaps send you something more suitable to your subject and your letter, than the few hurried thoughts which I now cast forth from the press of a most busy life . . .

I heartily concur in your estimate of the spirit and tendencies of the prevailing Unitarianism; of the small benefit to be looked for from its textual controversies; of the ruinous evils to be apprehended from its conceit and exclusiveness. Nor would I ever give my voice

for closing any subject on which speculation, without or within the limits of Christianity, may be disposed to enter. But I am not sure that I share your sanguine hopes of good from the fresh and unrestricted prosecution of moral and theological enquiry, conceiving this to be the condition of progress, rather than the progress itself ; without which we must die as a religious body, but with which it is quite possible we may not live. Conjointly with an improved theology (or, were it possible, *previous* to it) we want, I cannot but think, a better psychological philosophy ; or, what would do quite as well, a return to nature, without any systematic philosophy at all, for the stiff framework of mere logical metaphysics. In Germany you may do what you please with theology, and very little injury will accrue to religion, the sentiments of which are there supposed (as I believe most truly) to lie deeper than the understanding, and to survive its changes. But, mentally descended as we are in this country from John Locke, we have brought the understanding to do all our work for us from the baking of bread to the worship of God ; which latter task it very ill and grudgingly performs, and perpetually threatens to throw up altogether. The Intellect being made the sole basis of our religion, its heavings and rackings cause Trust and Piety to reel ; and thus it is a much more serious thing to disturb the old foundations here than in Germany. There, the strangest free thinking [speaks]<sup>1</sup> in tones of reverence, and almost of prayer ; and appears merely as the form in which, with active minds, the religious sentiment preserves its freshness and sincerity. With our people, on the other hand, the moral feelings are strong, but the devotional singularly weak and hesitating. They are children of Law, not of Love, very obedient, preceptually, but not affectionate, spiritually. This seems to me to be the change primarily needed ; and only to be brought

<sup>1</sup> The diarist appears to have omitted a verb.

about by a more penetrating and natural, a less scholastic and traditional, style of preaching and thinking. Till this is done, our religion, made up of all sorts of antiquarian and literary and logical assents, about authenticity and credibility and miracles, is a mere structure of glass, and will not bear pelting.

Another reason why I do not desire to see an exclusive reliance for our progress on freer speculation, is suggested by your own remark that there are the elements of possible discord among us Unitarians, an old school and a new. Now it so happens that just now the old school is arriving, historically, and from mere conservatism, at the same love of free enquiry which the other section entertains from theory and readiness for innovation. Our position in relation to the courts of law, in our disputed claim to certain ancient property, has recently occasioned, on the part of the people most hostile to the movement, a constant appeal to 'our Presbyterian forefathers,' as the enemies of tests and the avowed recognisers of progressiveness in theological opinion. It is impossible that this example can be held up to admiration, without at length producing something like imitation; and if the principle of open questions really constitutes the very tenure of our endowments, self-interest itself will forbid its invasion, and make friends to it among those who would otherwise set up an orthodox standard of Unitarianism. Hence it appears to me possible with a little patience and forbearance, to maintain our union unbroken. A change is going on, remedial of the bigotry which exists among us, if we do not heedlessly provoke it into vehement action; and in a few years I expect to see the *Rationalist* section of the Unitarians in the ascendant, and the *Orthodox* portion quietly, and with harmless reluctance, bringing up the rear of the movement. The *Christian Reformer* must shortly fall into new hands; and if the best materials of the *Christian Teacher* could be thrown into it, and *one* effective periodical could be made

representative of the views of both sections of our body, the spectacle of fair and fearless research and speculation might again become a conspicuous feature in our denomination. I am very anxious to preserve our external union; and should regret any organisation of the movement section, visibly apart from the other, and in apparent defiance of it. At the same time, I need not say to you that I advocate no suppression of truth which seems important, or investigation which appears well-matured, to any competent inquirer. Let us study without hindrance, believe and disbelieve without fear, and publish without stint, simply avoiding any aggression on the more timid brethren, and betraying no doubt of their approval, or at least acquiescence. Men who are assumed to be courageous, do not like to show themselves cowards. Though I have thought much about the practicability of some such union as you suggest, I do not see the materials for it. Spontaneous communication among like-minded men, and publication of any new speculations, specially in our periodicals, appear to me the only methods of fastening such union, which is not the *less real* for being *invisible and without form*.

A friend of mine, whose name may not be strange to you, Dr. Nichol, of Glasgow (astronomer), has written to me proposing an association for publishing translations of the most remarkable German works on theology and philosophy, beginning with Strauss and a few of the answers to the *Leben Jesu*; and so many other persons have mentioned the same idea, that I incline to think that the plan might succeed, though not in a pecuniary way. I have sounded Mr. J. M. (*Lond. and West. Rev.*)<sup>1</sup> on the matter; and his opinion is favourable. The practical difficulty is to find people who have time to do the work, most of those who would take an interest in it and would be willing to toil without reward, being deeply engaged in other pursuits. For myself, I have

<sup>1</sup> Mr. John Mill, of the London and Westminster Review.

never been able to contribute anything to my friend Thom's *Christian Teacher* : and though I have Strauss, and read him, it would be quite impossible for me to undertake to review him as you suggest. However, I expect soon to have some change of occupation which may limit my attention for the rest of my life to Intellectual and Moral Science, and the History of Opinion, and more may perhaps be in my power then. . . . The fault of the *Leben Jesu* seems to me to lie in the completeness and unnatural uniformity with which the author has applied his mythological principle of explanation. There are large portions of the Gospels to which, as appears to me, it cannot be applied, and from which it is impossible to strike out the elements of historical reality ; and in the parts where the mythical interpretation is most successful, Strauss has hardly much claim to originality—indeed, he founds his own claim exclusively on the systematic way in which he has *carried his theory through*, admitting that in scattered instances he has been anticipated. Though the direct and main object of the book does not seem to me to be attained, the incidental benefits arising from it will be great. I was delighted to find in it many positions, either assumed as undeniable, or established by strong evidence, and then used as fundamental certainties throughout the book, of which I had long convinced myself, and (in some instances) others also, but which Orthodox Unitarianism regards with exceeding horror, such as the fragmentary and various structure of the three first Gospels, perplexing the whole question of authenticity—the production of the fourth Gospel from a different school of Jewish theology (probably of Alexandrine affinity), so that the whole conception of the Messiah is different in it from the form in which it appears in the other gospels—and specially the notion of his pre-existence, is manifestly entertained by the author, and ascribed to Christ ; the belief expressed in the language of Christ (especially, perhaps exclusively, in the three first Gospels) of a

personal return to earth to reign, and the habitual inculcation of it by the apostles ; and many other points to which I cannot advert now.

Let me, before I conclude, recall the opinion to which you allude as expressed in the preface to the *Rationale*, that the name Christian is improperly given to those who exclude the preternatural from Christianity. Though I have personally the same strong conviction which I then had, that miracles in general are perfectly and rationally credible, and that it is impossible to explain away the Christian miracles in particular, yet I can no longer deny the name Christian to those who differ from me on either or both of these points, provided on any other grounds they attain to *discipleship to Christ*, and the recognition of the *divine and authoritative in him*. Sometime or other I will publicly state and argue this point.

I am not at all surprised at your disappointment in my first lectures in the controversy. Indeed, I am only amazed that you are not disappointed (as I am) in them all. Had I been writing irrespectively of the attack upon us, I should have taken up a much bolder position, as I habitually do with my own people. But I thought it sufficient, while saying nothing which I do not hold to be strictly true, to drop a few hints and principles which might *suggest* remoter truth, and to reserve the fuller exposition of such truth for a time when the exigencies of a special controversial argument imposed no restraints. I am the more pleased to hear of your approval of the Lecture on Moral Evil, because from all quarters it has encountered nothing but dissent and dislike.

P.S.—Since I signed my name, I have received from Dr. Channing a very interesting criticism on the lecture respecting Moral Evil, which appears to have surprised him as coming from an *English* Unitarian.<sup>1</sup> He is

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, p. 183



delighted at the onslaught upon Priestleyism, as a symptom of a change in our modes of thought; but thinks that I have not touched the root of the matter as to the place of the *prudential* feelings in religion, saying that I have pointed out the *false* but not reached the true. I hope he will sometime supply this defect, and give us the thoughts of so great a mind on so great a matter.

## V.

With such incisive criticism, public and private, of the sectarian tendencies around him, did James Martineau pursue his way. It made him an object of fear rather than love; there was something incalculable about him which the elder forces could not subdue to their own ends; he was in the uncomfortable position of one who moved about in worlds not realised; those who believed that they knew where they were—at the centre of truth—failed to understand him, and saw without regret that he sought no further share in denominational affairs.

Meantime, the long expected crisis arrived at last. Judgment was delivered by the Law Lords in the Hewley case on August 5, 1842; the previous decisions were upheld; and the Unitarian Trustees were finally set aside.<sup>1</sup> The Wolverhampton case was suddenly resuscitated; and the suspended issue was promptly settled against the Unitarian claim to ownership. All over the country the property which Unitarians had possessed for generations, was endangered. The chapels which their

<sup>1</sup> The costs to the Charity amounted to over £12,600; and the Trustees had further to pay £5,700 out of their own pockets.

forefathers had built on the site of yet older Presbyterian foundations, the endowments of pious benefactors who denied the doctrine of the Trinity before 1813, the pulpits and monuments of their ministers, the graves of their lay-folk, the schools in which they were helping to educate the people, might all be wrested from them. The peril was imminent; 'I know,' said the Lord Chancellor in 1844, 'that two or three hundred suits are already talked of as likely to be instituted for the purpose of ousting the present possessors.' Measures for protection were urgently needed. Yet how could the Unitarian Association present a plea for buildings established on a principle exactly the opposite of its own? If it claimed them as Unitarian, it brought them within a limited dogmatic range, and wrote over them a warning that the Catholic communion, for which they had been erected, could only be maintained with the few who accepted the uni-personality of God. This involved an incongruity too gross. The vigilant pastor of the Gravel Pit Chapel, Hackney, so long the devoted secretary of the Association, perceived the difficulty.<sup>1</sup> With a vigorous effort he formed a new English Presbyterian Union, to which the defence of the Chapels was committed.<sup>2</sup> Negotiations were at once opened with the Govern-

<sup>1</sup> The *Christian Reformer* stated this frankly, 1842, p. 596: 'None of the Societies already formed seem to be equal to the emergency. Some are doctrinal, *which the contemplated Association must evidently not be.*'

<sup>2</sup> Letter of Jan. 12, 1843, *Memoirs of R. Aspland*, p. 576. The earlier Presbyterian Association had held an annual meeting on May 19th, but had done nothing. It was now merged in a more active successor.

ment. The Attorney General, Sir Frederick Pollock, promised that he would neither himself institute, nor allow others to institute in his name, any further legal proceedings, until the case for legislative relief had been fully considered. Difficulties arose in 1843 in consequence of Irish complications.<sup>1</sup> More than one bill was drafted, considered, and withdrawn. Happily the learned Lords, the Chancellor and ex-Chancellors, and those who had successively sat in judgment, or been engaged in pleading, on the Hewley case, were in complete concurrence, and this unanimity secured final success. Petitions were sent up from 76 chapels, the Liverpool group contributing four. The Paradise St. congregation pointed to the unbroken continuance of their constituent families, as appeared from their baptismal records extant since 1707, and affirmed that it was impossible to reach by evidence a time when Anti-Trinitarian doctrines did not prevail among them. From the Ancient Chapel of Toxteth Sarah Mather proved that her forefathers had worshipped there for at least 194 years, her pew door bearing the legend 'D 1650 M', i.e., which, being interpreted, meant 'Daniel Mather, 1650.' She had herself attended the ministry of six pastors; and another petitioner remembered a seventh, his own grandfather, Richard Harding, who was buried in the churchyard in 1770, after a ministry of about fifty years.<sup>1</sup> In these petitions Mr. Martineau, no doubt,

<sup>1</sup> The various Presbyterian bodies, orthodox and remonstrant, took different views, and sent over opposite deputations. Suits had been begun for the recovery of the Dublin chapels in Eustace St. and Strand St., out of Unitarian hands.

took a keen interest : and similar statements were forwarded from the places which had been the scenes of his earlier life and work, Norwich, Derby, Nottingham, York, and Bristol, and the two Dublin congregations.

The government measure was introduced into the House of Lords by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Lyndhurst, on March 7, 1844 ; petitions on both sides flowed in during the next few weeks ; the second reading was moved on May 3 ; the third reading was carried on May 9 by 44 to 9 ; and the bill was sent down to the Commons. It bore the title of an ' Act for the regulation of Suits relating to Meeting-Houses and other Property held for Religious purposes by Persons dissenting from the Church of England.' Neither Presbyterians nor Unitarians were named ; but Mr. Smith's Act of 1813<sup>1</sup> was made retrospective in its operation by the first clause, so as to legalise all foundations by persons who would have benefited by it, had it been then in force. The second clause was of more dubious import. As originally drafted it declared that where no particular religious doctrines were enforced by the trust-deeds, the usage of so many years (the number was left to be fixed by Parliament) should be taken as conclusive evidence of the doctrines for the promotion of which the meeting-houses were founded. The effect would have been to fasten on the chapels in perpetuity the specific Unitarian teaching of the previous five-and-twenty years :<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, chap. IV. p. 87.

<sup>2</sup> This figure was adopted by the Lords.

and the whole principle for which Mr. Martineau had already so earnestly contended would have been lost.<sup>1</sup>

'The debate on the second reading [in the Commons] had but one fault,' observed the *Christian Teacher*,<sup>2</sup> 'the absence of any respectable speech on the wrong side; <sup>3</sup> a circumstance which might have been employed as an excuse for giving a tame support to the measure, and for treating the unpopular persons who are the first to benefit by it with epithets of cautious repudiation and cold disdain. But instead of this, the leading men of every class seemed emulous to yield it the aid of their advocacy; the lawyer<sup>4</sup> to attest its accordance with statutory analogy; the Jurist<sup>5</sup> its agreement with the experience of nations and the philosophy of law; the Man of Letters,<sup>6</sup> its consistency with the modern theory of Christianity; the admirer of "Church principles" and student of Church antiquity,<sup>7</sup> the sound basis of its historical assumptions; the once oppressed Catholic,<sup>8</sup> its claims on a country which was retracing its persecuting steps; the statesman of enlarged expediency,<sup>9</sup> its propriety as a measure of peace; and the constitutional Whig,<sup>10</sup> its manifest necessity as an appendix to former and imperfect charters of religious liberty.'

Among these speakers Mr. Gladstone penetrated the deepest into the real meaning of the whole case.

'I went into the subject laboriously,' he says,<sup>11</sup> 'and satisfied myself that this was not to be viewed as a mere quieting of titles based on lapse of time, but that the Unitarians were the true lawful holders, because though they did not agree with the Puritan opinions they adhered firmly to the Puritan principle, which was that Scripture was the rule without any binding interpretation, and that each man, or body, or generation must interpret for himself.'

Of this principle Mr. Gladstone gave a remarkable

<sup>1</sup> It would also have prevented the reversion of chapels held by Unitarians to the orthodox, as at Wigan (*ante*, p. 213.)

<sup>2</sup> Then edited by the Rev. J. H. Thom; vol. vi., 1844, p. 318.

<sup>3</sup> The opposition was led by the senior member for the University of Oxford, Sir R. Inglis.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Wm. W. Follett, Attorney General. <sup>5</sup> Mr. Macaulay.

<sup>6</sup> Mr. Monckton Milnes. <sup>7</sup> Mr. Gladstone. <sup>8</sup> Mr. Sheil.

<sup>9</sup> The Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel. <sup>10</sup> Lord John Russell.

<sup>11</sup> Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, i. p. 322.

exposition to the House of Commons, the severity of a theological lecture being mitigated by the orator's art. The 'idea of Christianity as a shifting, changing, and advancing subject,' which he found in Baxter and his contemporaries, was the exact opposite of his own, but he bore emphatic testimony to their conscientiousness. Quoting from the address of John Robinson as early as 1620 to the first planters of New England,<sup>1</sup> bewailing the stereotyped condition of the Reformed Churches—'I beseech you to remember it: it is an article of your Church-covenant that you will be ready to receive whatever truth shall be made known unto you from the written word of God'—'There,' said the Anglican statesman, 'you have the seed of all those progressive changes, of the effects of which you are now considering the course.' Continuity of religious life amid 'progressive changes' of doctrine was the conception which James Martineau had already formed ten years before.<sup>2</sup> The Bill, however, threatened to arrest that advance, as Lord Sandon pointed out in a few words before the second reading.<sup>3</sup> The difficulty was raised again in Committee by Mr. J. Stuart Wortley and Mr. Cardwell,<sup>4</sup> and was removed on the report stage by amendments intro-

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gladstone cited it from Cotton Mather; on its authenticity in that form, see Rev. Alx. Gordon's remarks, *Dict. Nat. Biography*, vol. xlix. p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Compare his paper on 'The Living Church through Changing Creeds' in the *Theological Review*, 1866, p. 296.

<sup>3</sup> This was carried by 309 to 119.

<sup>4</sup> It was also urged in the *Christian Teacher*, 1844, p. 336, where it was pointed out that the clause as then drafted created a creed of usage, in default of a creed of trust.

duced by the Solicitor-General, to secure 'the more ample recognition of the power of such Dissenting congregations as had no tests or creeds to change their opinions as they saw fit, in the lapse of time.'<sup>1</sup> Thus amended the Bill went back to the Upper House, where a great rally of peers took place. At the final division, July 15, it was adopted by a majority of 161,<sup>2</sup> and four days later it received the royal assent.

The principle of English Presbyterianism was now legally established. What use would the Unitarians make of it? In James Martineau's view a great opportunity had been offered them. They stood at the parting of the ways. Would they go boldly forwards in reliance on their fundamental religious affections, striving after the ideal of their forefathers, or would they relapse into theological sectarianism? The answer in London was unhappily prompt and decisive. The very day

<sup>1</sup> Lord Sandon expressed his satisfaction. 'He would deem it a very great hardship indeed, if usage or any other thing should be taken as imposing a test, where there was no test of any kind originally imposed, or that opinions should thus be *crystallized* at any one particular period of thought.' This change was eagerly promoted by Mr. Martineau. He had at once perceived that the Bill as presented to the Upper House made the usage of the previous twenty-five years binding. This was so objectionable that, as he afterwards related, he 'implored the solicitors who were watching the measure to get it altered. The legal men, however, were afraid of touching a word in a Bill that had obtained the Lord Chancellor's approval. The Members of Parliament were freer to move; and the Bill received the required amendment from Lord Sandon in the Lower House.' — 'Church-Life or Sect-Life,' 1859; *Essays*, ii. 414.

<sup>2</sup> For, 202 (102 proxies); against, 41 (14 proxies). On the second reading it had been opposed by the Bishop of Exeter; in the concluding debate the Bishop of London opposed, and the Bishop of Norwich supported it.

after the Lords had agreed to the Commons' amendments, the English Presbyterian Union was dissolved and the Unitarian Association remained in possession. This immediate despatch of the organ from which he had hoped so much, when it had no longer a Parliamentary use, seemed to James Martineau positively indecent. Even in his latest years he could not speak of it without indignation and grief. It was an emphatic warning that with the official Unitarianism of the day he could have no sympathy.<sup>1</sup> Not till its spirit was transformed would effective co-operation with it be possible for him. To bring about that change was to be part of his work in the coming years.

<sup>1</sup> The vitriolic articles of Mr. Lloyd on the *Endeavours* were at this time appearing month by month in the *Christian Reformer* See chap. VIII.



## CHAPTER VIII.

PREACHER AND TEACHER, 1840-1848.

THE Liverpool Controversy brought Mr. Martineau into a prominence which he had not sought, and forced upon him a kind of labour for which he had a peculiar distaste. To disturb the beliefs of others without at the same time kindling in their souls a higher faith, seemed to him like a crime against the Spirit. The more conscious he was himself of slowly passing through great changes, which involved a complete reconstruction of his theology, the less was he willing to expose others to danger. His task was to conduct those to whom he ministered along a 'path of life,' to show them how to find new grounds of trust in the very constitution of their conscience and affections, and to present these as historically realised in the person of the founder of Christianity. To this the next years of his ministry were dedicated. Traces of revolt against his Unitarian environment will be noticed from time to time in his letters, but a fresh and most congenial field of work was opened to him in 1840, by his appointment to the lectureship in philosophy in Manchester New College, which returned from York in that year to the place of its first activity. Here he was thrown into more regular intercourse with

his friend the Rev. J. J. Tayler, and a new and treasured intimacy was formed with Francis William Newman. The story of his philosophical labours will perhaps be best understood when the leading features of his Liverpool activity have been described.

## I.

The desire to enrich the devotional services of his congregation had swiftly led in Dublin to the production of a new hymn-book. A similar aim had long engaged him in Liverpool, and was realised in 1840 by the publication of *Hymns for the Christian Church and Home*. Fatigues of travel, and the 'high pressure whirl of his life' connected with the opening of his College teaching in October, filled his wife's heart with forebodings, but when November 1 arrived—All Saints' Day—and the new hymn-book was first used, its introduction was signalised by the noble sermon on 'the Communion of Saints.'<sup>1</sup> 'Worship,' said the Editor, in the first sentence of his preface, 'is an attitude which our nature assumes, not *for a purpose*, but *from an emotion*,' and to quicken this emotion, in contrast with critical rationalism, was the object of the book. Truly did it illustrate the Communion of Saints. Hymns from the Roman Breviary and the German Moravians stood side by side with others by the Anglicans Heber, Milman, and Keble, or the Nonconformists, Watts, Doddridge, Montgomery, and Mrs. Barbauld. Since the Dublin days the Wesley hymns had been discovered; while another

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards published in the *Endeavours*, vol. i.

note in the great chorus sounded from Madame Guion.<sup>1</sup> The music was not forgotten: to each hymn was attached a reference to tunes suitable for congregational and home singing. These were selected by the Editor himself, with the help of his eldest boy Russell, who played the tunes, 'he himself singing the hymns, and deciding on their suitability. We used all to enjoy these evenings,' continues the reminiscence of one of his elder daughters, 'and when the book came out, my brother then being only about nine years old, we had a sort of feeling of partnership in the work which was very delightful to us.'

The literary labour involved had been considerable, for with two or three exceptions all the hymns were traced back to their original sources. Of this exactness, the following note to Mrs. Gaskell may serve as an example.

Liverpool, Dec. 3, 1852.

That graceful piece of Phineas Fletcher's [hymn 415] will be found not in his 'Piscatory Eclogues' but in his 'Miscellanies,'

<sup>1</sup> The new hymnal contained 650 pieces (Dublin, 273). A note-book gives a list of 132 books employed in the compilation. The general arrangement is the same, though the sections are much enlarged, and the phrasing of their titles is characteristically elaborated. Specially noteworthy is the considerable number dealing with death, resurrection, and judgment. Jesus is of course exhibited as the Messiah. In several hymns Jesus was made the object of poetical address; and on two occasions these gave rise to considerable controversy. The question was raised by the Rev. E. Kell in the *Inquirer*, Dec. 4, 1852, and by the Rev. Dr. Beard in the *Christian Reformer*, 1861, p. 135. The hymns were defended by the Editor on the grounds (1) that in a book for public use there must be room for varieties of devotional expression; (2) that there is a wide difference between prayer and apostrophe, between immediate and mediate devotion; and (3) that the hymns in question were 'indispensable to veracious and adequate utterance of Christian feeling.' A noteworthy difference will be observable in the third hymn-book of 1874: *infra*, chap. XII. § vi.

the fifth poem from the end. It is a detached hymn without context or known occasion. The 'Miscellanies' originally appeared in one quarto volume with the 'Purple Island' and 'Piscatory Eclogues' in 1633; but were not reprinted with these, and did not appear again, I believe, till the publication of Dr. Anderson's *Works of the British Poets* in 1795; in the fourth volume of which you will find the hymn in question.<sup>1</sup>

To Mary Carpenter, who had protested against the alteration of a verse in a hymn by her Aunt Bache, he thus defended himself:—

Liverpool, April 30, 1846.

Since Philip called my attention to this I have so far distrusted myself, as to try the experiment of presenting to persons of fine taste and good ear the two forms of the first verse, without remark:<sup>2</sup> and I have never found any one to whom the hymn was new, hesitate for an instant in his preference of the alteration. I often endeavour to correct my judgment in this way: so sure am I that we Unitarians are an utterly unpoetical race of people; and that my education and life among this same people are likely to spoil the judgments which nature, under more genial influences, might have had the insight to pronounce. The devotional feeling expressed in many of the Unitarian hymns, and to which they may correspond in the reader's mind, is genuine and heartfelt: but this alone, without the rich expression of a true musical soul, does nothing to make them proper *hymns*: and I continually ask 'Why was this, which would make excellent prose, if it stood as a prayer or meditation, forced into verse?' I am really disinterested in this remark: which applies quite as strongly to things written by my sister, and others which I am ashamed to have written myself, as to anything else.<sup>3</sup> Depend upon it, my dear Mary, we Unitarians *cannot write* poetry for a generation or two yet: at present it requires some effort in us even to *bear* it. . . . Now if you don't scold me

<sup>1</sup> The very interesting pedigree of No. 394, 'Jerusalem, my happy home,' is traced by the Editor through a long series of phases, in the *Inquirer*, Oct. 24, 1868.

<sup>2</sup> The altered form was due to William Roscoe.

<sup>3</sup> This judgment on his own hymns 'Thy way is in the deep, O Lord,' and 'A voice upon the midnight air,' has not been ratified by subsequent usage. The anonymity of the first hymn was thus explained to Dr. Garrett Horder forty years after: 'When I wrote that hymn, forty years ago, I think I had some German one running in my head, and so did not like to claim it as mine.'—*Independent*, Jan. 18, 1900.

heartily for my apostacy of taste from the true faith, you will have more forbearance than any zealous lady I know. But *do* scold me, whenever you are inclined: it will bring me your handwriting again.

Meanwhile the pulpit and the class-room claimed the preacher's service. A new series of sermons was begun in November, 1841, under the title 'What is Christianity?' The critic might detect the dreaded German influence in the distribution of the subjects under (i) Form and (ii) Spirit;<sup>1</sup> and there was no doubt that Mr. Martineau's style of preaching was widely different both in subject and method from that of the older Unitarianism. The revered friend who had already warned him, on his settlement in Liverpool, was apparently concerned at the absence of Scripture illustration in a sermon which he happened to hear, as well as at the current reports of his ministerial proceedings generally; and to him in 1838 the Pastor of Paradise St. again defended himself.

TO DR. LANT CARPENTER.

Liverpool, April 16th.

Your impression that my mind is not imbued with the documents of Scripture I know not how to notice or reply to. I can only say that they are and always have been my constant study, and that my perpetual aim is to lay myself open to their impression as if they were fresh, and had never led me before to form an opinion. Doubtless you have by age, as well as perhaps assiduity of investigation, the advantage of me in familiarity with the New Testament; but it is not in my power to read *now* with the eyes with which you *think I shall read* at fifty. I cannot preach views which I do not entertain, or withhold those which, after the use of all available means and the confirmation of repeated reinvestigation, approve themselves to my judgment and affections. You may be assured that of all novelties put forth to startle and shock, of all assertions of peculiar opinion

<sup>1</sup> The third title in the first series was destined for use half a century later, 'The True Seat of Authority in Religion.'

made dogmatically and apart from<sup>1</sup> the trains of thought and evidence which prepare the way for the admission of their truth and the perception of moral and religious value, no one entertains a more grave disapprobation than I do. But I cannot speak but from my own inner self.<sup>2</sup>

It was certainly hard that so devoted a student of the Christian records should be reproached for indifference to them.<sup>3</sup> But the fact was that Mr. Martineau was engaged in effecting the great transition from an external base of authority to one within. His critical studies<sup>4</sup> had carried him away from the old view of revelation; and his philosophical reflection had given him a new view of man. This led inevitably to exalted appeals to the human spirit as itself an organ of divine truth, which were heard

<sup>1</sup> The shorthand original reads 'with.' Frequent *incuriæ* in Mr. Martineau's letters show that they must have been written rapidly, and his thought often outstripped his pen.

<sup>2</sup> The impression produced on the minds of the thoughtful young people round him may be gathered from a few sentences drawn from a letter (written in 1844) in which a member of one of his Sunday classes describes her view of the aim of his teaching to a girl friend, and vindicates him from the criticisms of the undiscerning. 'I can quite agree with Mrs. Y— that harm may be done to Mr. Martineau's congregation by his preaching, but it is only to those who take up wrong ideas for themselves. Every one who runs off with half an idea, and takes it for granted that he knows the whole, must derive injury from it. Whoever wishes to know Mr. Martineau's opinions, must not take them from what he gives out in one or two sermons, but must combine all that he can hear, in any circumstances, fall from his lips. . . . I think this is Mr. Martineau's highest ambition; not to *give* them the truth, or to present his views of it as infallible, but to lead each mind earnestly to *seek* it, and when they think they have found it, not to be ashamed of it, but to go on, still seeking more, and thus to raise them by their own exertions to be all that they ought to be.'

<sup>3</sup> The course of his thought on the Gospels and on the Apostle Paul may be followed with the help of the valuable abstracts of lectures in the *Life*, i. pp. 163 and 142.

<sup>4</sup> He had used Paulus, and read Strauss; he was probably also familiar with Schleiermacher.

with trembling by ears trained to an older religious idiom. With the excesses of New England Transcendentalism Mr. Martineau did not sympathise; its methods were too little systematic for his resolutely trained thought. But he kept himself well informed about its course.<sup>1</sup> And no part of his teaching aroused greater difficulties than the new doctrine of human nature which had many affinities with Transatlantic idealism, and was occasionally even presented with something of its oracular style. In a paper contributed to the *Christian Teacher* in 1841, on the *Five Points of Christian Faith*, the writer not only laid stress on faith in the moral perceptions of man, but further demanded faith in 'the strictly Divine and Inspired Character of our own highest Desires and best Affections.' No student of Mr. Martineau's works needs to be reminded of his personal humility. The modesty of his self-estimates is sometimes a bewilderment, and sometimes a rebuke. But this was not inconsistent with very exalted views of humanity, as the seat and organ of superhuman influences. In his Priestleyan modes of thought, he had been willing to merge everything in the divine. When the whole field of volitional control was reserved strictly for man, the question arose, what remained for God? The answer was given to the same correspondent who had already asked and received solutions of other difficulties.

<sup>1</sup> In his copy of *The Dial* (now in the Library of Manchester College, Oxford) he carefully entered the name of each contributor—secrets which he must have obtained from an American correspondent.

## TO MARY CARPENTER.

Liverpool, November 3, 1845.

As to *prayer*, I would say that the question 'What we *get* by it?' appears to me so much a suggestion of religious Utilitarianism, that I always feel some repugnance to entertaining it at all. Be the answer to it what it may, it would make no difference to me; and I should '*ask*,' though I did *not* '*receive*.' But are we sure that we can draw the distinction with any exactitude, between our own minds and the divine Spirit, so as to say what phenomena are due to their several activities, and to *deny* to the Holy Spirit any share in the states of affection consequent on prayer? Does the fact that a moral condition of the mind belongs to our Reason and Conscience, exclude it from the Divine Agency? or are there faculties in us which ascend into the Divine nature, and (if for shortness I may use the expression) *entangle* our nature with his? But here we approach the great Free-will question, into which, in fact, this other runs. For my own part, in spite of the charge of mysticism, I believe that there is a properly *supernatural* element in man, by which he stands *above* nature in the very same sense, though in a lower degree of course, in which God is above nature. If we apply *natural*, i.e.. *Cause and Effect*, reasonings to that which concerns this element, we get all wrong; and hence, I think, the difficulties about prayer.

The sermons issued in 1843 under the title *Endeavours after the Christian Life*, breathe throughout this atmosphere of life 'in spirit.' Here the divine and human are presented in constant union within the scene of our moral and religious experience. The prophet from his mount of vision discerns God for ever mingling with man, and the philosopher does not attempt to part them. The second discourse on 'the Besetting God' still frankly surrenders the whole of Nature into the Divine hands as fully as the college student had done twenty years before<sup>1</sup>; but no longer is the sum of our activities absorbed into his; we are *persons*, in relation to him intimate and sacred indeed, yet nevertheless capable of resisting his claim and refusing to surrender to

<sup>1</sup> See the Essays of 1824, *ante*, pp. 49-52.



his appeals. A note of what may be called Christian Stoicism sounds again and again through the insistence on the sovereignty of duty, and the lordship of self-control. Never was the ethical demand enforced more fervently, or presented with austerer dignity. Those who had only known the writer by his intrepid polemics, found here an unexpected practical wisdom, and a tender and supporting sympathy. The preacher, as we know, had long learned that he must prepare himself for such utterances alone. Only in solitude, he will tell us hereafter,<sup>1</sup> can he pass into that inner colloquy with God in which he can pour forth his soul to the Most High: 'preaching is essentially a lyric expression of the soul.' Its actual form, therefore, is half poetical; it clothes itself in a vesture of imagination; it presents the unseen with the aid of symbols touched with 'the light that never was on sea or land.' This is the secret of the constant use of metaphor; this is the ground of the charges of mysticism and obscurity which these discourses immediately provoked.<sup>2</sup> Precisely similar criticisms, from a much wider range of readers, but a corresponding order of minds, assailed *In Memoriam*, with whose

<sup>1</sup> Preface to vol. ii., 1847. This volume was dedicated to Mr. Thom. In conveying a copy to him, he wrote: 'Thoughts of you are entwined, in various indirect ways, with several of its portions; and there are probably few of its discourses that would not have been different, had I never known you.' *Life*, i. 180.

<sup>2</sup> The Editor of the *Christian Reformer* permitted a contributor to devote six monthly articles to the dissection of the preacher's imagery, and similar agreeable exercises. After the second article a series of counter 'strictures' began. It is difficult to tell whether the critic or the champion gave the author the greater discomfort. Even Mr. Tayler (*Christian Teacher*) found the style too uniformly high-coloured and brilliant, and the figures occasionally hard.

spirit these sermons show so marked an affinity. Martineau is, in fact, the Tennyson of preachers. There is the same fastidiousness of form, the same concentrated phraseology, the same lyric intensity, the same ascent into a realm where thought and emotion are transfused into each other, and both are recognised as giving the soul immediate access to a divine life that at once pervades and transcends them.

Such preaching, it was plain, could never be popular. No one could have expected Tennyson to shout his cantos in the market-place, and Martineau would have felt utterance equally impossible in the face of a listening crowd. There was inevitable effort in its production, and it demanded corresponding effort in the listener. To his friend Thom, in 1840, he had written (à propos of a marriage gift of a clock), 'I love the thought of that fraternal tick on your study mantel-piece ; and on many a Saturday shall seek an inspiration in the idea of the fair pure thoughts it is measuring out, with pain indeed, like my own, but a glorious and sanctifying pain.' Just as the speaker in Paradise Street had been obliged to educate his hearers, so the wider appeal through the press did not at first win general response. But here and there it fell upon ears attuned to its penetrating tones. Mr. Richard Hutton afterwards ascribed to it the real 'beginning of his life.'<sup>1</sup> In the seclusion of an Irish estate, wrestling alone with her life-problems, Frances Power Cobbe<sup>2</sup> learned from one who could interpret

<sup>1</sup> *Retirement Proceedings*, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> *Contemporary Review*, 1900, p. 175.

to her ' the Strength of the Lonely.' The Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, found here something more than correction of his faulty logic.<sup>1</sup> A little later Thomas Henry Huxley carried a volume with him to the Southern Seas. And Frederick William Robertson fed his spirit on the energies of a kindred soul; and became himself a channel by which Martineau's thoughts could be interpreted to thousands more.<sup>2</sup> Long since have the *Endeavours* taken their place among the choicest utterances of English religion in the nineteenth century.

## II.

Preaching and teaching did not exhaust Mr. Martineau's conceptions of ministerial duty. From pastoral visiting, as it had been practised by an elder race, he constitutionally shrank, and he bore (not always without inner struggle) the inevitable criticisms upon this failure to satisfy traditional demands. To Mary Carpenter, who had sent him a scheme of a Congregational Visiting Society, established at Lewin's Mead, Bristol, he explained his difficulties in February, 1841.

I have often wished that, in the constitution of our congregations, there was some provision for apprising the Minister of the cases of illness or distress in which his prompt attention would be acceptable. I do not think the habits and feelings of the present day are favourable to the systematic plans of pastoral calling which prevailed two generations ago, and enabled

<sup>1</sup> See *infra*, chap. IX, § ii.

<sup>2</sup> In the *Expositor*, Sept., 1903, the Rev. John Hoatson has strikingly illustrated this effect of Martineau on Robertson. He estimates that at least 62 out of 125 sermons by Robertson show traces of the influence of 37 out of 43 sermons in the two volumes of the *Endeavours* (1843 and 1847).

a Minister to discover at once the vicissitudes of every family : nor can I ever persuade myself that this occupation of time is other than idle and unprofitable, except in the case of the Minister's possessing a rare aptitude for conversational influence. But in the absence of such a system of indiscriminate visiting, some method is much wanted of making prompt *selection* of cases which open an opportunity of good. As to the whole *eleemosynary question* which your Society opens again to one's consideration, it is the most perplexing and anxious subject to which I ever turn my thoughts; on which I can discover no satisfactory guiding principle to determine the conflict between a Christian *compassion* and a Christian *economy*; so that I never give and never withhold without compunction. I fear it is quite impossible to disentangle the mischief of charity from its good. However, evil is not to be let alone; and we must grapple with it with such forces as God gives, and, if we cannot do much, must be content to do well.

Accordingly any case of personal need that rightly fell within his range—a dying sexton,—provision for some poor pensioner,—received prompt sympathy and punctual aid. In the management of the schools maintained by the congregation he took an active share; he held a Bible class in each school (Boys and Girls) once (and sometimes twice) a week; he was steadfast as visitor and minister, and assiduous in every administrative duty; the staff of teachers found in him a generous and sympathetic helper; while changes among them often involved copious correspondence and patient judgment. On the smaller congregations of Lancashire he kept a watchful eye; and though unable to visit them frequently, he was occasionally heard in their pulpits. Of such an excursion he wrote to his friend Thom, July 20, 1841, 'I was so delighted with the strong-headed and true-hearted Christianity of these village churches, that I almost ventured to promise for you.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It may have been of such hearers that Dr. Sadler long after told the following anecdote. 'My recollections of him lead me back a long way—longer than he may, perhaps, himself suppose—

Such outside duties added to the causes which kept Mr. Martineau from the homes of his people. But however they might long for more intimate intercourse, they knew that the conditions of his ministry rendered it impossible; he gave them his best and never spared himself, and with such service they learned to be content. An incident of the summer of 1841 called forth a significant indication of their affection.

The action of a broker whom he had trusted, involved a sudden loss of £1,100. Mrs. Martineau's diary gives us a glimpse of the mingled feelings which the catastrophe involved:—"I need only say that James bears it like his noblest self, and having no cause to reproach himself with even a want of business knowledge, he feels that he can only bow to a higher will than his own. I own I don't know what to say on this head, for I believe that such

beginning with the Aggregate Meeting which I think he will recollect, in Essex Street, in 1838, when he made a speech which produced a great impression, but which was not listened to without a good deal of interruption. When I think of what I used to hear then of his views and tendencies, I cannot but contrast it with the confidence with which he is looked up to now, and with the universality of the reverence in which he is held. It seems strange that he should have caused so much apprehension, considering that he was represented as preaching above people's heads. An old friend of mine, a descendant of Dr. Priestley, told me that she once had a significant rebuke for acting on this assumption. Dr. Martineau had preached two school sermons, which were delightful to the more cultivated members of the congregation, but, as they thought, out of the reach of ordinary hearers. My friend, happening to meet an old woman of the working class, asked "How did you like the sermons on Sunday?" The reply was, "I liked them very much indeed." My friend said, "But could you understand them?" The old woman answered, "Oh yes, I could understand them; I suppose they were too clever for you." Speech at the retirement of Dr. Martineau, *Proceedings*, 1885, p. 33.

a transaction must be alike hateful to God and man.' It became known that the event swept away not only 'every farthing of his fifteen years' hard savings,' but a small portion of family property besides, held in trust for others. Within a few weeks the journal again records—'We hear that the noble deed has been done towards us of which Mr. B. gave notice before we left home. Upwards of £1000 will soon be in the bank for us, so we are free again however the lawsuit ends.<sup>1</sup> It would be difficult to say whether my husband loses his property or accepts such a gift most nobly. Wholly independent yet sensitive to the last degree, he is not weighed down by it in the least, yet feels it as much more than money's worth.'

Many were the interests of the ensuing years. The agitation about the Corn Laws was rising, and the same letter to Mr. Thom which thanks him for his sympathy in the recent loss, discusses the problem of ministerial duty in relation to political action. The difficulty was not, apparently, the introduction of the question into the pulpit; but the propriety of the participation of ministers in a great social controversy. 'We ought to stand aloof from all controversies,' is his conclusion, 'of which the *essence and subject matter* do not lie within the province of religion and morals.'<sup>2</sup> The application of the test led to the result that—'If I were in America, I could not be silent about *slavery*; and that, being in England, it isn't right

<sup>1</sup> The suit was instituted under the advice of friends. The lawyers employed refused to take any fees.

<sup>2</sup> *Life*, i. 179.

to join in a *Sacred War* against *Sir Robert Peel and the Corn Laws*.<sup>1</sup> On the slavery question he felt strongly and pleaded earnestly in letters to his friend Dewey.<sup>2</sup> To Mr. Thom he wrote with indignation of the tone of some of the American notices which followed Dr. Channing's death in 1842, veiling the significance of his great protest against a wrong involving the whole nation in responsibility. But with characteristic detachment from sectarian agitation, he refused to join in an address from Unitarian ministers in England to their brethren in America, on the ground that as the right to rebuke did not exist, its effect would be sure to be simple resistance.<sup>3</sup> The concluding words deserve atten-

<sup>1</sup> This was in July, 1841. Experience and reflection modified his view. On February 24, 1843, he spoke at a great meeting of the inhabitants of Liverpool in the Music Hall, summoned to petition Parliament for the total and immediate repeal of the bread and provision taxes. Even the *Inquirer* (March 18) reported that 'the manner in which he overwhelmed by a quotation from Plato's Commonwealth an unfortunate writer in the *Agricultural Advocate*, who treats the modern political economists as altogether worthless, and wishes to appeal from them for the principles of society to Plato and Aristotle, elicited great applause.' His appearances on the platform were rare: but on April 10, in the same place, surrounded by Congregationalists, Methodists, and Catholics, he denounced the provisions of Sir James Graham's Factory Education Bill. 'I hope we have put the extinguisher upon Sir J. Graham's Factory Scheme,' he wrote to a correspondent at Padiham, April 27. 'Never was a more insidious Bill brought into the House within my recollection.' The Education clauses of this Bill were strongly condemned in the House of Commons by Lord John Russell and others for placing the educational provision 'too much, if not entirely, under the control of the clergy.' Meetings were held all over the country, and the measure was ultimately withdrawn.

<sup>2</sup> *Life*, i. 173-4.

<sup>3</sup> Letter to the Rev. W. James, Bristol, Sept. 21, 1843. The address, with 190 signatures, was published in the *Inquirer*, Dec. 9. A similar difficulty arose in 1847: and to the same correspondent Mr. Martineau pleaded that there might be slave-

tion: 'Finally, let me own to a personal consciousness of imperfectly discharged duty so deep and abiding, that I find enough to do at home: and till a better and higher order of conscience is established there, till fear and negligence and forgetfulness of those who have none to help, are put under the foot of a Christian devotedness, I cannot bear down with rebuke on others, without hearing the whisper, "let him that is without sin cast the first stone."' Dr. Channing's penetrating remarks on the wretched condition of the English labouring population had deeply moved him. His economic studies begot distrust of large legislative schemes; and his strong grasp of moral principles as the true forces of social order, made him look rather to the elevation of character than to the improvement of external conditions.<sup>1</sup> On the alert against any oppression of the weak, he demanded faithfulness from the workman with the same unflinching insistence with which he enforced responsibility on the employer or the landowner.<sup>2</sup> With the irresponsible ardours of the socialism of the day

holders who retained their slaves on grounds of thoughtful conscientiousness (if he had an estate with fifty slaves suddenly left him, he might regard immediate manumission as a criminal evasion of responsibility). As slavery was the crime of the State and not the individual, effort should be directed not to censuring the whole class of slaveholders, some of whom might (in Channing's phrase) 'deserve great praise,' but to securing such reform in state laws of property as would make slavery impossible.

<sup>1</sup> See the two sermons on 'the Kingdom of God within us,' *Endeavours*, vol. i.

<sup>2</sup> The great sermon on the Irish Famine in 1847, *Essays*, iv. 409, enabled him to combine personal knowledge with social theory and stern denunciation of neglected duty. Nowhere is the doctrine that property is a trust more strenuously enforced.



he had no sympathy : of a candidate for ministerial employment he thus wrote to his friend Wicksteed, July 28, 1845 :—

My general impression from all these things, and from his Tracts, is, that he is a man full of vehement discontent, half noble, half personal, who will preach of Love with a tongue of scorn ; clear about the nonsense and wrong there is in the world, but in the dark about the faith and good which should take their place : in fact, a frock-coated, bare-necked, long-haired Regenerator, of the Fox and Linwood School ;—a cross-breed between the Robert Owen and the Thomas Carlyle species. With these impressions, and no means of adequately correcting them if they be erroneous, I should not like to be responsible for his entrance into our ministry.

With Robert Owen he had had some acquaintance,<sup>1</sup> as is implied in the following letter, copied in Mrs. Martineau's journal, 1843, under the severe heading 'in answer to an unknown and meddling socialist.'

Sir,—I have received from you a letter of remonstrance against certain expressions reported to have been applied by me to the Socialists, in some sermon preached nine or ten months ago. As you are unable to quote the expressions with sufficient accuracy to bring them to my recollection, it is as impossible for me to defend them as for you to assail them with effect. I can only say that poor as my opinion is of the pretensions of the Socialists' system to the attention of thoughtful and right-minded men, I have never deemed it necessary to speak of it in language half as vehement as that which your own letter applies to its opponents. Whatever disapprobation of your principles I may have expressed, has been accompanied by a statement of reasons for my estimate. It appears that as usual in such cases, the disapproval was remembered, and the argument forgotten ; or, it may be, was not even recognised as argument at all by some hearer accustomed to miss this element altogether in everything which does not repeat his own processes and conclusions.

And, as I have not spoken of Owenism with unreflecting anger, neither have I spoken of it with imperfect knowledge. A personal acquaintance with the founder of the system, and a familiarity with its favourite writings, justifies me in the attempt to *form* a judgment of its merits, as well as in the resolution to *express* it.

Not being called upon in reparation of any inadvertence or

<sup>1</sup> In later life he often spoke of him with great respect.

injustice to enter into any further exposition of my views, I must beg to decline all controversy on this subject, as a hopeless waste of that time for whose use I hold myself responsible. In morbid conditions of society, a class of men always has been and always will be found, to whom the characteristic principles of the Socialist theory will be acceptable, and will appear true. I certainly regret the existence, and think unfavourably of the influence of this class. But after such observation and reflection as I can direct on the state of mind which constitutes its peculiarity, I am persuaded that its conversion must be wrought, not by logical discussions, but by the severer tuition of events.<sup>1</sup>

Other movements, such as those for Temperance and Peace, in due course demanded his attention. His more ardent friends saw with regret that his attitude did not always fulfil their hopes. He adopted, indeed, in 1844 a habit of resolute total abstinence, and in 1845 delivered a strong speech in its favour at Patricroft.<sup>2</sup> Students at Manchester New College some thirty years later noted with amusement the unconscious simplicity of his avowal (in a College debate) that he had two or three times taken the pledge (in connexion with various Bands of Hope), and *had never had any difficulty in keeping it*.<sup>3</sup> But he could not bring himself to use the language of extremer advocates against the unhappy object of reproof, the 'moderate drinker'; and preferred to concentrate his attack upon the moral weakness (as he deemed it) which led to habits of excess. Writing to Mary Carpenter in September, 1845, concerning the engagements of an approaching

<sup>1</sup> In later days he used to look more genially on the Socialist tendencies of some of his students. It was a kind of fever which it was well for them to have had.

<sup>2</sup> On Sept. 1st. The speech was reported in the *Inquirer*, Sept. 6, 1845, and reprinted in the same journal, 1895.

<sup>3</sup> His experience is recorded in a letter, Dec. 1, 1882, in a volume entitled *Study and Stimulants*.

visit to Bristol, he hopes to find time for 'convincing Russell that I neither fight nor drink, though not quite up to the mark of his praiseworthy zeal against war and alcohol.'

With the Peace movement,<sup>1</sup> indeed, he was far less in sympathy. In days before the treaties of International Arbitration it was not difficult to see extravagances and exaggerations in its advocates. For Mr. Martineau, the ethical implications of any given constitutional order were so numerous and imperative, the duties and obligations of the State towards its citizens were so clear, that he looked with impatience on vast and inflated ideas which soared above existing conditions, and made short work of national responsibilities.<sup>2</sup> To this feeling emphatic expression is given in a letter to Mr. Wicksteed concerning an article by Mr. F. W. Newman for the *Prospective Review*.<sup>3</sup>

Liverpool, July 13, 1846.

My dear Friend,—The check which Newman gives to the absurdities of the Peace movement, is, I confess, so acceptable to me, that I am not impressed by the deficiencies which you observe in the Article.<sup>4</sup> Convinced as I am that the abstract treatment of the subject, as one on which Christian principle must decide with definite Yes or No, cannot advance us a single step, I am pleased to see a claim made for a re-hearing of the whole case in the old Court of Appeal, to which our best writers resort ;

<sup>1</sup> This had been started a few years before, but became very active in 1846. On April 14, Mr. Richard Rathbone delivered an Address as President of the Liverpool Peace Society.

<sup>2</sup> The Sermons on *National Duties* contain an impressive vindication of the 'right of war.'

<sup>3</sup> This was founded in 1845. As it served for some years as the chief organ of Mr. Martineau's philosophical writing, the story of it is reserved for the next chapter.

<sup>4</sup> 'The True Grandeur of Nations,' *Prospective*, 1846, p. 355. Reprinted in Newman's *Miscellanies*, vol. ii., 1881, p. 11.

where historical data are given in evidence, and presented by Moral Philosophy on the Bench, to a Jury of Common Sense and Common Justice. The moral tone of the article seems to me severe and high; so that it reads, not as a plea of Necessity against Right, but as a protest of enlightened Conscience against a sincere but effeminate humanity.

How Mr. Martineau appeared about this time to an outsider, of pitiless judgment and incomparable gifts of epistolary satire, may be seen in the correspondence of Mrs. Carlyle.<sup>1</sup>

TO THOMAS CARLYLE.

[Liverpool] July 17, 1844.

Most of the company were Unitarians; the men with faces like a meat-axe; the women most palpably without bustles,—a more unlovable set of human beings I never looked on. However, I had a long, rather agreeable talk with James Martineau, the only 'Ba-ing I could love' of the whole nightmare looking fraternity. He is a man with a 'subdued temper,' or I am greatly mistaken; but he is singularly *in earnest* for a Unitarian. Bold enough to utter any truth *that he has*, in season and out of season, and as affectionate-hearted as a woman (I use the common form of expression without recognising the justice of it).

July 22, 1844.

I am rather knocked up to-day; my stewing in that Church yesterday morning, and my visit to the Martineaus at night, were too much for one day:—not that the visit bored me like the sermon; on the contrary it was far too entertaining. I found there the clergyman who had preached to me in the morning and three other men. And there was a great deal of really clever speech transacted,—which was the more exciting that one is not in the habit of it here. If you had heard me 'putting down virtue and all that sort of thing,' in opposition to the sermon I had been forced to listen to in the morning, you would have wondered where I had found the impudence. As for the arguments, I got them, of course, all out of you. But the best of all was to hear James Martineau taking me out in all that,—almost as emphatically as yourself could have done. In taking me down to supper, he said with a heavy sigh that 'it was to be hoped the world would soon have heard the last of all that botheration of *virtue* and *happiness*.' He is anything but happy, I am sure; a more concentrated expression of melancholy I never saw in a

<sup>1</sup> *New Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle*, 1903, vol. i. p. 150.

human face. I fancy him to be the *victim* of conscience, which is the next thing to being the victim of green tea! His heart and intellect both protest against this bondage; and so he is a man divided against himself. I should like to convert him—*moi!* If he could be reduced into a wholesome state of spontaneous blackguardism for six months, he would 'come out very strong.' But he feels that there is no credit in being (spiritually) jolly in his present immaculate condition. And so he is as sad as any sinner of us all.

Next year the report of the patient is much the same. On Aug. 10, 1845, Mrs. Carlyle writes, 'J. M. seems to be still fighting it out with his conscience, abating no jot of heart or hope.' He argued with Miss Jewsbury about 'the softening tendencies of our age,' 'the sympathy for knaves and criminals,' and the 'stupidity of expecting to be happy through doing good.' Apropos of Cromwell's doings in Ireland he remarked to Mrs. Carlyle that 'people make a great deal more outcry over massacres than there is any occasion for: one does not understand that exorbitant respect for human life, in overlooking or violating everything that makes it of any value.' But when the lady 'told him quite frankly that he had better cut Unitarianism and come over to us,' 'he sighed and shook his head; and said something about being bound to remain in the sphere appointed to him, till he was fairly drawn out of it by his conscience.'<sup>1</sup>

There were, however, limits to Mrs. Carlyle's penetration; the implied charge of even unconscious insincerity after another twelvemonth will not seem just to any reader who has patiently followed the foregoing attempt to display the process of his thought.

<sup>1</sup> *Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle*, 1883, vol. 1, pp. 322, 330.

TO THOMAS CARLYLE.

Liverpool, August 31, 1846.

I went to hear James Martineau yesterday morning, as a compromise betwixt going to Family Church and causing a Family disturbance by staying at home. The sermon was 'no-go.' The poor man had got something to say which he did not believe, and he did not conceal the difficulty he found in *conforming*. Flowers of rhetoric without end, to cover over the barrenness of the soil. I felt quite *wae* for him; he looked such a picture of conscientious anguish while he was overlaying his Christ with similes and metaphors, that people might not see what a wooden puppet he had made of him to himself—in great need of getting *flung overboard* after the virgin Mary, 'Madame sa Mère.'

Against this portrait by a critic let us set a sketch from within by the preacher himself.

TO MR. PIPER.

Liverpool, March 17, 1845.

Come and see us, and we will discuss together our theology, and you shall put your demand to me, *δὸς πῶν στῶ*. Meanwhile, is it consistent with firm standing on the faith we have, to speak of 'policy' and 'rashness' in the maintenance or enunciation of religious doctrine? Nothing is so disheartening to me in these days, as to look about in vain for anyone who advocates and professes his alleged belief from the simple consideration of *true and false*.<sup>1</sup> With nothing else can we have anything to do; and precisely in proportion as other considerations are admitted, we abandon ourselves to a genuine 'infidelity.' Neither 'to find,' as you say, 'the *ne plus ultra* of a Christian faith,' nor to effect anything else, is the 'endeavour' of any of us. We *have no object* but to live truthfully, and pretend to nothing that is not really in us; to affect no novelties, but to dress up no questionable things, and be afraid of no realities. For my own part I war against no man's honest and earnest convictions. But by a thousand symptoms of natural language, I see in our

<sup>1</sup> Of this temper he had sufficient illustration in the autumn after the publication of his sermon on 'the Bible and the Child,' July, 1845, *Essays*, iv. 389. A Norwich correspondent, for instance, resisted with mild protests, 'resolved finally into regret at the too great insistency with which I express what is in itself true, but need not be so plainly stated!' Lady Byron, on the other hand, moved by the same sermon, 'tells how in her schools she has tried to minimise if she does not wholly exclude, the use of the Old Testament in teaching the children.'

body as in others, an abominable and rotten expediency creeping into the Church, utterly destructive of the very spirit of religion, and leaving our Christianity an empty idol. And this canker of conservative insincerity I would cut out, if I could, at any cost. We are getting a *Creed*, while we are losing a Faith. But as for the ridiculous suspicion of unbelief thrown out against some of us, I can only say that the whole course of my own belief for many years past, nay through my entire ministerial life, has been towards a higher and higher estimate of the divine and supernatural character of Christianity. The *grounds* of this conviction have undergone modification, but the conviction itself none, except an ever deepening intensity. Forgive this tediousness, but you rather put me on my self-defence.<sup>1</sup>

### III.

In August, 1844, soon after he had entertained Mrs. Carlyle at supper, Mr. Martineau moved into a house in Prince's Park, to which he gave the name of Park Nook. With the heart of a mystic, he had also an inborn love of construction. This house he had planned himself, and as the irregularities of the ground involved certain difficulties of adjustment, his faculty of design secured unusual occupation. Here family assemblies took place; while the study was the scene of many a happy meeting of the editorial quartet which guided the fortunes of the *Prospective*. Here brother ministers were welcomed, and English and foreign guests entertained. The poet Bryant had passed through Liverpool a few months before the change; but Theodore Parker came just at the settling-in; then it was George Dawson, and after him (in 1847) Emerson, who went to hear the preacher in Paradise Street, and was sent on to London with the promise

<sup>1</sup> In this year a third edition of the *Rationale* appeared with a preface in which he gave effect to the promise in his letter to Mr. Macdonald, 1840: see *ante*, chap. VII. p. 232.

to F. W. Newman, 'He will not offend you as Carlyle did.'<sup>1</sup> Here, as Mr. Martineau wrote to the Rev. G. Crabbe (1847) he hoped to end his days, 'for when a man reaches the age of forty-two, removals cease to be desirable.' Much personal labour was spent upon the house, and its maintenance and beautification were a source of interest and recreation to him. In these matters he submitted to no conventions. Now he was to be seen astride upon the ridge of the roof, regulating the action of a sort of small windmill of his own design, which pumped up the water for domestic use. Or, with a paper cap upon his head, and clad in an old evening coat from which the tails had been removed, he stood on the pathway painting his gate. One day, he related with great amusement many years later, to a friend who was curious as to the sources of his practical knowledge about the repairs needful for a great pile of school buildings, Mrs. ——— drove up. Not recognising the painter, she put her head out of the window and called 'Hi! my good man! Why don't you open the gate?' He opened the gate, took off his cap, and made a low bow as the carriage swept up the drive, and the astonished

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Newman had then left Manchester, and accepted the chair of Latin in University College. The reference is probably to an incident at the house of Mr. A. J. Scott (formerly assistant to Edward Irving, and afterwards first Principal of the Owens College, Manchester). Dr. W. B. Carpenter used to relate an encounter which took place that night between Carlyle and the new Latin Professor, in which Carlyle denounced toleration, and growlingly defended Calvin for burning Servetus. When he had gone, Mr. Newman held up his hands in amazement, and with the sweet simplicity and unworldliness which endeared him to those who had the honour of his friendship, asked 'Does Mr. Carlyle always talk like that?'



occupant discovered whom she had so impatiently addressed.

The change was refreshing from the close hot streets of the town. The look of unhappiness which Mrs. Carlyle noted, was doubtless partly due to the fatigue of a severe day's work, and the continuous pressure of many years of unceasing labour. Mrs. Martineau noted the signs of overstrain: 'Sometimes I am dazzled myself so by his brightness that I will not believe he is burning out inevitably, and will have no old age; and in an agony I think how often our friends tell me how ill he looks': or a few weeks later,—'He lives but in aspiration; and as his poor mother said to me to-day, "He lays not his account for long life," or rather as I replied to her, "He does but his present duty yearningly and faithfully, and calculates not whither it may be carrying him."'

He himself had by no means lost the youthful attitude of reverence for his seniors even at forty: and when he was requested to give the address at the quinquennial meeting of York students, he wrote to his old College friend Franklin Howorth in the following terms:—

Liverpool, May 30, 1845.

My dear Howorth,—When I was at Manchester on Wednesday, Mr. Wallace conveyed to me the request of the Quinquennial Committee, that I would deliver an address at the ensuing meeting of York and Manchester *alumni*. To have been ranked by the Committee among those who are fitted for such a task is an honour of which I am very sensible. And usually I think it is right to make the duties of such Committees as easy as possible by freely placing oneself at disposal for any work which their judgment may assign. But in this case I find it impossible to adhere to this doctrine of passive obedience. Without at all pretending to claim the exemptions of youth, I yet cannot assume the prerogative of age; and when I think of addressing such men

as Messrs. Hutton, Robberds, Madge, Wallace, Tayler, with others, both lay and divine to whom I have been accustomed to look up from boyhood, I feel as though I should sink into the earth. And at the very place where those men are most brought to mind as honoured predecessors, and the old reverential feeling is sure to come back with all its force,—I really could not do it. To qualify me would require two or three quinquennial growths of confidence and wisdom. In fact, I have made up my mind to go to this meeting irresponsible and free, or not at all.<sup>1</sup> The whole charm of the thing will be to revert to the *undress* of twenty years ago, and live as a student among students again: and I for my part will commit myself to nothing but rowing, bathing, laughing, crying, and other more serious humanity, of which nothing need be said. Ever affectionately yours,

JAMES MARTINEAU.

Meantime a grave anxiety had entered the new home. Early in 1845, Herbert Martineau, then nine years old, became seriously ill. The disease was mysterious, and its long course was marked by fitfulness of improvement and decline, which alternately raised the hopes, and deepened the fears, of the anxious parents. Autumn passed into winter, and the inevitable close drew near. Only the exquisite serenity of the boy himself, his tender consideration for those around him, his sweetness of trust as he listened to music, arranged the shells which his friend the Rev. Philip P. Carpenter had given him, gazed at the drawings and sacred pictures with which friends surrounded his couch, or repeated the familiar hymns which his mother had taught him to love—sustained the spirits of those who foresaw the end. March arrived, and on the 8th Mrs. Martineau made the pathetic record:—

These Sundays are almost more than his poor father can bear.

<sup>1</sup> He was in fact prevented from being present. 'It was impossible,' he wrote to Mr. Wicksteed afterwards, 'to explain the reason of my absence. Friends should be willing, now and then, to take one's conduct on trust in matters morally indifferent.'

I hardly knew till last night how much he had suffered last Sunday when he revealed to me that he had well nigh sunk : but it was the Lord's Supper service which almost broke him down, and to-day I trust there may be nothing so touching to him. But to have all upon him just as usual, and the feeling that his duties should go on just the same, yet with this long and hopeless sorrow spending him, and paralysing his writing powers ! He says he feels that he has grown twenty years older in these three sad months.'

Before the dawn of March 28th, 1846, Herbert passed away. The stricken father wrote to his friend Thom, ' At present my desire is to render him back to God by my own act ; both because he who has held the gift is fittest to resign it, and because I dread the too touching voice of such a friend as you. We are well and tranquil.' On April 1, after a solemn service of consecration in the study, in which the whole family united, the mortal frame of the boy was laid in the grave-yard of the Ancient Chapel, Toxteth Park. Ere the day ran out, the father poured out his sorrow to his son's friend, Philip Carpenter.

Liverpool, April 1, 1846. )

My dearest Philip,—Your precious lines of sympathy present themselves most suitably on the morning when we have taken our leave of what once was Herbert. I have longed to write to you ; but while the lingering appeal to his patience and ours continued, I could only say ' We wait, and bear him in our hands before God, to see whether the lot of heaven or earth is to fall on him.' Yet I ought to have thanked you for your many priceless letters to him. They were his pride and delight, and no name more often came out in his sweet dying tones than yours. I did not choose to urge upon him the idea of death : if nature does not suggest it, I do not think that we should. It is the proper work of our faith to sustain and tranquilise under the expectation of death when it comes ; but as there is *no duty* beyond the quiet reception of each moment and stage of decline as it is sent, there seems no wisdom in artificially offering the image which does not spontaneously unveil itself. So we concealed no truth ; and we anticipated none. And there was an *unconscious religion* in that dear boy which met every emergency in the purest spirit, and disinclined me to make his state the

subject of conscious talk. The question of his recovery, he said in his cheerful placid way, he would leave entirely to God: and though he sometimes prayed to be restored, his only *constant* prayer was that his mother might not be worn down by attending upon him. . . . However, it is over now; and he is gone to a shelter and a training more worthy of him than any we could give. I trust he will draw our hearts upwards; and as we follow the vestiges which he has everywhere left on this place, and all its employments, we shall know better what we are living for. Your love for him affects me very much, and makes me venture to confess my estimate of the boy, and to dwell on the particulars of his decline.

Think of us as well and cheerful. Mrs. Martineau is sustained in a way which surprises me; for with her, the *sole object* of care, for the days and nights of twelve weeks, is withdrawn. Yet her calmness often rebukes my agitation. The children, all, as our best hearts could desire. With love to S., whose sympathies I know have been with us, ever dearest Philip,

Your truly affectionate

JAMES MARTINEAU.

As the evening fell, the father read aloud to his wife and elder children passages from Miss Barrett's *Drama of Exile*. Did they hear afar off how 'through the doors of opal' the boy angel's voice

'Floated on a minor fine  
Into the full chant divine'?

Could they listen through their tears,

'While the human in the minor  
Made the harmony diviner'?

The author of the solemn hymn 'A voice upon the midnight air' might well find strength in the promise,—

'Look on me!

As I shall be uplifted on a cross  
In darkness of eclipse and anguish dread,  
So shall I lift up in my pierced hands  
Not into dark but light—not unto death  
But life,—beyond the reach of guilt and grief,  
The whole creation.'

And the Christian Stoic would gladly respond to the strenuous exhortation,—

'Thence with constant prayers  
Fasten your souls so high, that constantly

The smile of your heroic cheer may float  
Above all floods of earthly agony,  
Purification being the joy of pain.'

Next Sunday the preacher was in his pulpit as usual. When the news of Dr. Carpenter's death in the Mediterranean had reached Bristol, five years before, he had written approvingly of the decision not to dismiss the pupils from the family school: 'A Christian's grief esteems it no luxury to abdicate duties to indulge in tears.' In that spirit he maintained his work.

Some time later the following lines were placed upon the stone which marked the grave:

'O life, too fair! Upon thy brow  
We saw the light—where thou art now.  
O death, too sad! in thy deep shade  
All but our sorrow seem'd to fade:  
O Heaven, too rich! not long detain  
Thine exiles from the sight again.'

#### IV.

The burden of grief was heavy;<sup>1</sup> there were family difficulties such as will arise in a varied circle of powerful individualities; and the minister could not escape the periods of depression which beset every faithful spirit who undertakes, however humbly, the prophetic office. He longed for more response to his high demands for congregational service; and even thought it might be his duty to make way for a successor who should win his people

<sup>1</sup> Readers of the *Endeavours*, vol. ii., 1847, will notice several noble passages dealing with the sanctities of the home; especially in 'The Shadow of Death,' 'The Family in Heaven and Earth,' and 'Great Hopes for Great Souls.' In the latter, the poignant cry 'Oh God! it is terrible to think what may be lost in one human life,' probably issues out of this great sorrow.

to more effective labour. By and by the note changes; and in October, when the autumn work is fully organised, and to the home-teaching, to lectures and classes (Sunday and week-day), is added the composition of an important article for the *Prospective*, he has gathered his powers together, and his 'buoyancy' fills the companion of his life with 'wonder and thankfulness.' A new prospect has sprung up: 'the chapel question,' reported Mrs. Martineau, 'is settled in the affirmative, and I think James has hopes therefrom for himself and his people, though there is much to intervene that may be difficult.' The 'chapel question' was no other than the removal of the congregation to some more convenient religious home.<sup>1</sup> Such plans always bring rude shocks to conservative affections; and of these the members of Paradise Street had a large share. Illness fell on the preacher ere another month was out; he dreaded lest he should be foiled in his working plans, and the expensive scheme for the education of his eldest son abroad should be frustrated; he was moved for change into the large spare-room, and as he sat in the very chair and place that his lost darling had so lately occupied, the bereaved father's heart gave way. But in three weeks a fresh crisis arrives, and is met with a stern promptitude. He

<sup>1</sup> It had been broached in April, and the Hope St. site had been provisionally purchased by the Committee on their own personal responsibility. This was adopted by the congregation, *Inquirer*, Oct. 17, when Mr. Bolton, a warm personal friend of Mr. Martineau, expressed the hope that 'the removal might be the means of bringing into greater light the talents of that already celebrated gentleman.'

has been told that the project of a new church has been attributed to his instigation, and springs from his ambition. Immediately a letter flies to the President of the congregation, bearing his resignation. 'It is my purpose to retire from my office, and probably from the ministry, at Midsummer next.'

Meanwhile the teacher's work went steadily on. Young men still came to early lectures on Mental Philosophy before breakfast, and wrote out afterwards the notes which they were not permitted to take during the hour. Some of the elder children joined the classes in the school of Miss Rachel Martineau where her brother's instruction covered a wide range of subjects, including Latin, Mathematics, History, and Botany, as well as the New Testament.<sup>1</sup> Shy and busy, without any particular taste for the society of young people, he sometimes seemed reserved and formidable. Yet even the girls fresh from home felt his kindness and patience; they tried to write recollections of his sermons; and soon came to regard him as the embodiment of everything both intellectual and holy. The witness of grief upon his face awoke their sympathy; beneath his quiet self-control they learned to discern a sensitive and vulnerable nature; while the new ideas which he opened to them roused their imaginations. Now it was the difference between induction and deduction; now a discussion of compositions on the propriety of mathematical

<sup>1</sup> Miss Julia Wedgwood here kindly permits me to use her recollections of 1846.

studies for women; now a problem of conduct arising out of the Marian persecutions; now, the significance of a law of nature. Anything of the nature of confession was promptly discouraged; yet the interests which he quickened were so vivid, that even his apparent coldness was no bar to eager admiration and enthusiastic confidence. In the following passage the niece of Darwin links one of his lessons to her later thought.<sup>1</sup>

He referred to the sometimes slight differences which constituted species; setting the primrose and the cowslip side by side, and forcibly suggesting the apparently natural origin of the peculiarities of each, and went on to ask how we were to account for affinities which bore the aspect of something that human intellect might account for. 'To that question,' he concluded, 'we can give no answer except the will of the Creator.' Those words are the only ones perfectly distinct to me, but he said much more, and to my recollection it is as if he had added—'This is in fact little more than a confession that our present science stops here. It is a provisional state of mind, merely reasserting the conviction that the universe owes its origin to Divine will, and coupling it with the indication of a boundary line where second causes seem to fail us.' Of course he did not say exactly this to a class of school-girls; perhaps he would not have said it if the audience and the subject had been suitable, but that is the description, as nearly as I can give it, of the effect on my mind of the few words I am sure of. Almost always when I think of the 'Origin of Species' I remember the very pattern of the oil-cloth at the long table and him at its head, leaning forward with the earnest gaze that might have been bent on a set of learned and mature men instead of a few school-girls, and I hear the deep, rather hollow voice that seemed, though perfectly distinct, not to bring all its sound from the lips, but as it were to express a thought as much as an utterance, and once more I catch the nuance of a latent surprise—so it seems to me—in the voice I still hear as of a speaker only just silent.

In the autumn of 1846 a class of ladies was formed in Manchester for the study of logic, under the same teacher's guidance; the class-work including essays which he himself would read aloud with corrections.

<sup>1</sup> *Expositor*, 6th ser., vol. vii, 1903, p. 28.



It was the pioneer of later methods of University Extension teaching. Among the members were two sisters, afterwards distinguished, Susanna and Catherine Winkworth. From their family records comes the following extract, by Susanna's pen<sup>1</sup> :—

This course of lessons was not merely to us the most interesting and delightful of our occupations at the time, but formed a very important and beneficial era in the development of our intellectual and spiritual life. This was especially the case with Catherine. . . . Her early beliefs had been rudely shattered [through various influences to which she had been subjected at Dresden], and she was at this time much inclined to replace them by the worship of art and culture. Goethe was her chief instructor and guide, and her philosophy was a chaos. Many times in later years she told me that it was to Mr. Martineau she owed her deliverance from this state of mind with all its dangers. His teaching laid down for her once for all the landmarks of mental and moral philosophy, which proved her guide through all the varied schools of speculation with which she came in contact in after life ; and she always revered him as the master and helper to whom she owed more perhaps than to any other human being ; since his teaching had fixed for her the foundations of faith.

To public questions of national duty, especially those which, like education, bore any relation to religion,—Mr. Martineau was never indifferent. The Parliamentary session of 1847 was signalled by government proposals for extended aid to elementary schools which at once roused discussion throughout the country. Mr. Martineau immediately wrote to Mr. Thom, pointing out that the scheme 'practically excludes all our schools and all Catholic schools.'<sup>2</sup> In April he spoke at a large and in-

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Catherine Winkworth*, privately printed, 1883, vol. i., p. 120.

<sup>2</sup> A deputation of Unitarian ministers and laymen, headed by the Rev. J. J. Tayler, had an interview with Lord Lansdown, and it was understood that the Unitarian schools would be recognised. The Liverpool congregations subsequently held a

fluent meeting of ministers and laymen from the Province of Lancashire and Cheshire held in Cross St. Chapel, Manchester. His position is not without significance even now. He would himself apparently have preferred a simply secular system of instruction. But when he put himself in the position of the Roman Catholic, the Anglican, or the Calvinist, he did not wonder that a scheme of this comprehensive nature was impracticable. In the system proposed by the Government he saw one great advantage. Finding themselves precluded from erecting a purely secular system, they resolved to combine the best secular instruction with the prevailing systems of theology. The effect was to place existing theology in the same room with secular knowledge and truth ; and with the curious inability to understand the British genius for conservative compromise which sometimes marred his schemes, Mr. Martineau anticipated that theology would be compelled to awake from her slumbers, and the creeds of the Church, instead of dying of contempt, would exalt and purify themselves. Strongly averse from the Evangelical orthodoxy which marked the great Nonconformist bodies, he declared that though no friend to exclusive religious establishments, he would rather choose to increase the influence of a Church which was under the wholesome control of the State, and felt the restraining influence of the good sense of the country,

meeting at Paradise St., and adopted a petition to the House of Lords for the admission of Roman Catholics to a participation in the education grant. Such was Mr. Martineau's loyalty to his 'first and last true love of religious liberty.'

than he would heighten the power of men who, with the profession of religious liberty constantly on their lips, did not understand its elementary principles.<sup>1</sup>

The resignation of December, 1846, had been of course withdrawn; and in September, 1847, Mr. Martineau applied to his chapel committee for a year's leave of absence during the building of the new Hope Street Church. After the heavy labours of the last fifteen years he needed a period of withdrawal from the pulpit, which he proposed to devote especially to philosophical study.<sup>2</sup> 'I cannot be content,' he wrote to Newman, 'till I have made an effort on the spot to fathom the foreign philosophies, or obtain the means of doing so.' The plans and arrangements for this German residence, undertaken with the sanction of the College as well as of his congregation, filled the family with happy expectation.<sup>3</sup> At one time his New Testament interests promised to determine his place of sojourn.

<sup>1</sup> The reference was to a recent letter in the *Daily News* from Dr. Vaughan, with whom, some years later, he was engaged in controversy. *Christian Reformer*, 1847, p. 293 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> The second volume of the *Endeavours* had recently appeared. In forwarding a copy to Theodore Parker, he said: 'I cannot pay in kind my thanks for the great things you have sent me; but such as I have I give thee. The volume will teach you nothing except what I am myself at heart, and that is not a lesson worth learning.' After apologising for reviewing him and Strauss in a single article (in the *Westminster*)—'as well put the Mississippi and the Nile into a quart bottle'—he adds, 'I find traces everywhere of the widening influence of your book, which penetrates into strange quarters, and breaks through the most rigorous cordon of sect.' Cp. *below*, chap. IX.

<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Martineau gave up attending her husband's lectures to ladies on Moral Philosophy, to take German lessons and write exercises.

By the year 1845 he had abandoned the apostolic authorship of the Fourth Gospel: to Mr. F. W. Newman, in an interesting exchange of letters over the second volume of the *Endeavours*, he had already expressed the doubts,<sup>1</sup> which more than forty years later grew into emphatic conviction, that Jesus never claimed the Messianic character. The leader in these Gospel studies was Ferdinand Christian Baur, of Tübingen, where Strauss also lectured; and there, at one time, Mr. Martineau thought of settling. Finally, however, the scheme of a preliminary stay at Dresden was adopted with a move in the autumn to Berlin. Of this, two of the Winkworth sisters (Selina and Emily) give a pleasant glimpse, March 8, 1848, as Selina describes a call at Park Nook. The family were just sitting down to dinner (the teacher's engagements often attached the mid-day meal to unusual hours).

So in we went; Mr. Martineau was fetched, and we all sat down. We felt quite at our ease, Mr. Martineau talked politics, then about Dresden, and we made him laugh with telling him funny stories about it. After dinner Mrs. Martineau proposed to take us a walk, but before then we saw all over the house, which is delightfully contrived in every way, as well as very pretty—all Mr. Martineau's doing. He seems to have as great a genius for architecture and carpentering—what a bathos—as for metaphysics!<sup>2</sup>

Politics, in fact, were of great concern just then; the spectre of Revolution had arisen, and threatened to bar the way even to the harmless student of philosophy. A fortnight later, Mr. Martineau wrote to the Rev. G. Crabbe:—

What astounding events have been crowded into the last month

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, i. 140.

<sup>2</sup> March 8, 1848: *Life of Catherine Winkworth*, vol. i. p. 141.

—a century compressed into each week. I feel my German plan stagger; yet I think we shall keep it on its feet. I have great confidence in the good sense and stability of the German reconstructions; and rather expect a year of glorious interest. Poor France, meanwhile, will have to work out, I suppose, by the *reductio ad miserum*, the dreadful problems of communism and ochlocracy. Will our own dear little island have the wisdom to look on and learn?

To Mr. Newman he communicated his fears that England was 'running full tilt into democracy,' but he added, May 19, 'We still mean to go to Germany, unless something more alarming happens.'

On May 9 the foundation-stone of the new church in Hope Street was laid. At the outset of his memorable address the preacher adverted to the parallel between the immediate outlook, and the period when the chapel in Paradise Street was begun. Quoting Coleridge's description of Priestley, who was to have opened the chapel in September, 1791,<sup>1</sup> he added, 'I see near me some venerable men, whose memory bears witness of that time.' These had seen many a change, beneath the law of Providence, in the forms under which the same indestructible ideas operate in our nature. 'It is time,' said the speaker emphatically, 'that this should be openly recognised as fact, and allowed for in our provisions for the future.' This was the first opportunity which had fallen in Mr. Martineau's way of giving effect to the principles which he had derived from his study of the Presbyterianism of Baxter and his successors; his declarations of personal conviction and of the unsectarian character of true Church-life defined the position which he

<sup>1</sup> The Birmingham riots of the preceding July led him to shape his course differently.

was to maintain, amid much misunderstanding and criticism, till he had educated a generation of co-believers :—<sup>1</sup>

As we possess not our own acquisitions only, but a heritage from predecessors ; as we build not for ourselves alone, but for our descendants ; as our Society runs through generations, constant indeed in their religion, but variable (may I say *progressive* ?) in their theology ; we presume not to impress our own peculiarities on this Church. We own the partnership of other ages in the baptism and character of this place, and will not forfeit our affinity with the ancient and the unborn to gratify the egotism of a sect. Let it not be said that we want a refuge for vagueness of conviction, an excuse for cowardice of profession. We *know* what we believe ; we *love* what we believe ; we plainly *tell* what we believe. I am a Unitarian ; you, who will meet here from week to week, are doubtless Unitarian too ; but the society of worshippers, of which we are only the living members, and the Church erected here, of which we shall be but *transient* tenants, these are *not* to be defined as Unitarian. To stamp them with such doctrinal name, would be to perform an act of posthumous expulsion against many noble dead whom it is an honour to revere ; and perhaps to provoke against ourselves, from a future age, the retribution of a like excommunication.

The weeks ere his departure ran out quickly ; and his mood was naturally one of self-criticism as he reviewed the changes and tendencies of sixteen years. To his brethren at the Provincial Assembly on June 22 he expressed his fears : he saw religion becoming too exclusively a matter of interest to the middle classes ; there was some defect in their ministrations ; were their old institutions and modes of usefulness suited to the times ? he reproached none, but wished to impress a deeper sense of duty on himself.<sup>2</sup> At length the hour of leave-taking arrived. He had let his house to the Commander of the district, Sir William Warre, and ventured to ‘rejoice at it, in spite of the grave

<sup>1</sup> *Essays*, iv. 439.

<sup>2</sup> *Christian Reformer*, 1848, p. 445.

looks of some of our ultra-peace-loving friends.'<sup>1</sup> On July 16 he preached his last sermon in Paradise Street, 'Pause and Retrospect.'<sup>2</sup> At the close of what was really the formative period of his whole ministry, his thoughts flowed into different moulds from those of his Ordination utterance in 1828, or even his early service in Liverpool. 'The voice of young experience which then addressed you, has learned, not without the discipline of sorrow and humiliation, to tell something of the tale of our humanity.'

It was, in truth, a changed view of Man that he recorded; man in whose inner nature slumbered the testimony to God, Perfection, Immortality, which it was the preacher's task to wake to life. Here was the ultimate source and abode of religion. For there are infinities of beauty and sanctity as well as of space and time; 'the Universe which is everywhere and always, has infinity of one kind; the free human soul, which may be fair and good, has infinity of the other.' This was the secret of his fresh estimate of Christianity. The records might be less perfect than he once supposed, and various elements of Hellenistic theory and Jewish misconception larger than he thought; but the harmony between the teachings of Christ and the moral intuitions of the mind made it apparent that in all human history he stood at the unapproached summit, the mingling point of the real and the ideal.<sup>3</sup> Here, then, was a religion of

<sup>1</sup> Letter to the Rev. C. Wicksteed, June 10, 1848.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays*, iv. 426.

<sup>3</sup> In sending the sermon to the Rev. George Crabbe, he briefly adverted to a difficulty which he was frequently to encounter,

conscience, looking to God as the All-Holy, contrasted with his earlier conception of God as universal Cause. One other note sounds for a brief moment, to enter hereafter into his teaching with richer harmonies:<sup>1</sup>—All minds are ‘of one race, variously partakers of one inspiration, melting at their upper margin—beyond the centre of their will,—into the all-comprehending Spirit, that holds them “as the sea her waves.”’

The last farewells were said;<sup>2</sup> as he made his adieux to Newman by letter, he shook off entangling cares—‘I had no idea how complicated one’s life becomes after forty, till I had to wind up all its affairs for a year’s absence.’ On July 31st Emily Winkworth wrote gaily to Susanna: ‘The Martineaus sail from Hull to-day, carrying heaps of introductions to all the towns in Germany. He has a year’s leave of absence, and is going to study all the philosophies at all the universities.’ The ‘Annus Mirabilis’ had begun.

‘When you say that “if Christ was not infallible, Christianity itself is false,” I am unable to perceive the legitimacy of the inference. As I do not conceive of Christianity as the disclosure of new objective truths to the understanding, I do not regard intellectual misapprehension in its author as any disqualification for his divine office.’ The question is argued at greater length in a letter to Mr. F. W. Newman after the publication of the second volume of the *Endeavours*. See the *Life*, i. 139.

<sup>1</sup> Compare the letter to Mary Carpenter already cited, p. 248.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Children who have been the saintly lustre of our homes,’ were not forgotten in the preacher’s parting words.



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE FOUNDATIONS OF PHILOSOPHY, 1840-1849.

IN 1840 Manchester College was removed from York, and re-established in the city of its original foundation. The immediate occasion of the change was the announcement, in April, 1838, that failing eyesight would prevent the distinguished scholar who presided over its classical studies, from continuing his work. The resignation of Mr. Kenrick precipitated a crisis which had for some time been foreseen. Mr. Martineau was placed on a sub-Committee for considering what course should be pursued. After more than a year's discussion, the Trustees resolved to bring back the College to Manchester, and replace it amid an important group of Congregations founded on its principles, and served by many of its own former students. A new Academic status was secured for it by connexion with the University of London, effected by Royal Warrant in February, 1840. At the same time the teaching staff was greatly enlarged. The Rev. J. J. Tayler, who had been one of the Secretaries of the College, was appointed Professor of Ecclesiastical History: the Greek, Latin, and English studies were placed in the charge of Mr. Francis

William Newman: and Mr. Martineau, who had been the colleague of Mr. Tayler in the secretarial work of 1839-40, became lecturer in Mental and Moral Philosophy, with the additional subject of Political Economy. It was the day of small things. The College sought, as before, to provide the means of university learning in the midst of a great industrial community.<sup>1</sup> It stood for an ideal which, after sixty years, has been nobly realised by the expansion of Owens College into the Victoria University with a free faculty of Theology.

## I.

The actual amount of teaching exacted of the lecturer on philosophy was at first not large: one afternoon a week sufficed. But he could take no new duty easily, and at once planned out wide schemes. In his inaugural lecture<sup>2</sup> he announced a two years' course of study in 'Mental Philosophy, whose office it is to note and register, according to some natural order, all the phenomena of the mind; to detect the occasions of their first appearance; to analyse their composition; to determine the laws of their succession; to estimate the value and proper direction of the several faculties, as instruments for the discovery of truth, the invention of beauty,

<sup>1</sup> 'When first I became a Professor in this College,' said Dr. Martineau at the Centenary in 1886, 'I was but one out of nine at the monthly meetings of our Academic Board. "University learning" ought certainly not to be unattainable there; but whether our work was *nine-fold better done* than that of our solitary fore-runner, Frankland of Rathmell, I greatly doubt.'

<sup>2</sup> October, 1840; *Essays* iv. 3.

and the increase of happiness.' To this would in due course succeed Moral Philosophy, involving the development of the conception of duty, the delineation of the ideal of human character: Political Philosophy, dealing with the rights and duties of society; and Political Economy which was concerned with the production and distribution of wealth. It was Mr. Martineau's habit to conceive his subjects on a vast scale, and he required an ample field for their treatment. Designs so extensive could only be executed by degrees: and his great courses passed in successive years through various stages of growth, while earlier labours were wholly superseded by the richer discussions of a later day. Save in his classes on logic, where he employed text-books, and broke again and again into conversational discourse, he never availed himself of his felicitous power of oral exposition. Each subject must be treated with the utmost care, and presented with all the elaboration of his most finished style. The labours of preparation were severe, but they were undertaken with a certain buoyancy: in the College, he felt, his true life-work had begun.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A notebook of this period, which contains a quantity of New Testament investigation into the narratives of the resurrection, the composition of the Fourth Gospel, etc., opens with a list of 'Memoranda for reading during the vacation, 1841.' The works cited (by chapter or section) are grouped according to the divisions of a syllabus. Among the English authors are Bacon, Cudworth, Locke, and Berkeley, down to Bentham, James Mill, Whewell, and De Morgan. Scotland is represented by Hume, Reid, Stewart and Brown. The French names are Cousin and Prevost: the German, Kant and Hegel. The number of pages for each group is carefully estimated, including 960 in Greek from Aristotle. The total stands at the astounding figure of 8,620! How much of such a colossal programme could even his strenuous industry accomplish? Certainly

The philosophical positions, defined in these early courses, were presented in successive articles in the *Prospective Review*, to be described immediately. One or two backward glances at the abandoned systems of necessity and materialism may be offered here. In the centre of his new interpretation of the moral consciousness lay the doctrine of the Freedom of the Will. The 'reserves and misgivings' of his College days were justified at last; and he felt that he had emerged into the light. It was doubtless with a recollection of his early discussions with his sister Harriet that he said in his inaugural lecture, 1840 :

A deep curiosity respecting the great problem of Free-will is usually, I believe, the first symptom of speculative activity of intellect; a confident solution of it, the first triumphant enterprise; a relapse into the consciousness of its mystery, the first sign of a more comprehensive wisdom. . . . It is probable, that, in the secret history of every noble and inquisitive mind, there is a passage darkened by this conception of Necessity; and it is certain, that, in the open conflict of debate, there is no question that has so long served to train and sharpen the weapons of dialectic skill.

it could not be conducted on the method suggested to a student at the College, the beloved Travers Madge, in a letter written in July of the same vacation. 'You have found, I doubt not, by experience already, that much less is gained by *mere reading* of large extent, than by *stern study* of a moderate portion of any subject. Let me recommend a careful written analysis of everything you may read, not made from the book at the time, but produced out of your own mind afterwards; and an exact comparison, by a subsequent review, of the different opinions of your authors on subjects that present a variance. This seems to me the true discipline of forming a vigorous intellect, though the time it takes necessarily limits the quantity of reading that can be achieved. But in modern study a vast deal of lazy reading might be well exchanged for a little active reflection and true mental labour. The neglect of this, or the incapacity for it, appears to me to be the chief cause of the confusion and perplexity of which men complain in relation to metaphysical studies.'

The contrast between the old faith and the new lies in the background of the following letter to the Rev. George Crabbe, who had apparently submitted to him a manuscript delineating a Theism based on a kind of religious materialism, where the Divine Mind was presented as an eternal function of an eternal matter.

Liverpool, Dec. 27.<sup>1</sup>

. . . . . I doubt not you will anticipate my hearty concurrence in your reliance on the Moral Evidences in preference to the simply natural or metaphysical. And of those moral evidences I prize the indications in our *individual Mental Constitution*, the promissory intimations of Reason and Conscience and Aspiration, far more than the hints which may be drawn from the imperfect structure of our *Social Humanity*. That our very *highest faculties* should play us false, and carry in their essence deceptive postulates, is indeed (as you most justly insist) entirely incredible. Here I think is the stronghold of your argument, from which neither force nor subtlety of reason can dislodge you.

Even if in our own persons we had no deep religious wants and instincts, still we could not fail to be struck by the fact that all the noblest men in history, the men who have endeared themselves to human reverence by moral greatness and self-sacrifice, have been possessed by intense religious Faith. And for my own part, I so far retain a docility to authority above me, that this evident dependence of the higher minds upon a Highest of all would suffice to lay all doubts to rest, and make me willing to believe with the wise, and trust the ground which alone has ever sustained the good.

On the external phenomena of the world it is perhaps more difficult to rest a satisfactory argument. The mixed appearances which indicate to us an imperfect and inchoate moral government awaiting future completion may evidently be read both ways—as signs of moral order or of moral confusion—according as you take the occasional occurrence of Retribution, or its occasional failure, to be the essence of the system.

Were it not for the interpreting spirit of our own inner moral nature, helping us to read the phenomena aright, I do not think that a mere inductive process, intellectually applied to the outer facts, would enable us to establish satisfactorily the *ascendency* (and yet the imperfection) of a moral Rule over human affairs. *Once sure* of a Moral Government, you may obtain, in

<sup>1</sup> The year is not given.

the instances of its failure here, indications of a sequel in the hereafter. But unless you are first sure, the examples of failure are as likely to throw you back into doubts about Theism, as forward into belief of a Future Life.

This assurance is given, I think, by way of *self-knowledge*, and is included in the contents of our moral consciousness. This therefore I feel constrained to put in the *prior place* to all external evidence.

Is there not a question whether your Axiom that 'the cause of Mind must be Mind' is reconcilable with your position that Mind is the result of Organisation, and the mere function of Matter in the organised state? a position which you consistently allow to stand in the case of God himself. Must not Organ be prior to Function, and Matter to its own organisation? Either Mind is the product and last refinement of Material Forces, or Material forces are the expression of Rational Mind. Between these two modes of conception and orders of derivation there can be (as it seems to me) no third doctrine, unless indeed you stop your materialism short of the Divine Mind, and split the difference with the Immaterialist; allowing his doctrine to hold with respect to God, and your own to be limited to Man. And this sort of compromise is logically unsatisfactory; because if you once allow the possibility and the fact of a First Mind (Spirit), causally prior to all material organism, the conception will be pressed upon you in proof that there, at least, may be secondary minds of similar type: and all the arguments which the Materialist draws from the inconceivability of Mind without Matter fall to the ground. I think it is no accident or prejudice, but an inherent logical necessity, which connects together Materialism and Atheism; though in many minds they never find each other out; and pious men, like Dr. Priestley, live and die Materialists and Christians too.

Here, then, my dear sir, you see our *chief* point of divergence from each other. You have put clearly and forcibly the facts, as to the connexion of body and mind, on which the Materialist rests his conclusion. But connexion, however invariable, between two things, proves nothing as to the *causal priority* of the one to the other; and if anyone chose to maintain that Matter is wielded by Spirit, instead of organising itself into Spirit, the facts will read off just as well.

The only other point on which I will trouble you with my queries is—Whether it is necessary for the Theist's purpose to prove a Beginning of things. For my own part, I do not think we *can* do it, and I do not think we *need* do it. All phenomena require a cause, and we know, and can at bottom conceive, no causality but Mind. This seems to me the natural process of our thought, bearing the most rigid philosophical scrutiny; and the perpetual stream of phenomena, without beginning or end of the series, affords no embarrassment to this simple reasoning.

The subjects assigned to Mr. Martineau in the distribution of the College work included Political Economy. The brother of Harriet Martineau had been introduced to this study in his youth. Political Philosophy and Social Economy had formed part of his course at York; his residence in Dublin had brought various social problems before him in their most concrete form; Adam Smith was among the writers whom he had early mastered, and for whom he felt great admiration. His arrangement followed the customary heads of Production, Exchange, and Partition; and, with Ricardo as his guide, he treated the subject by the deductive method. That his grasp of the principles of his science, as then understood, was thorough, and his exposition clear, no reader of his philosophical works will doubt. The course was felt to be so valuable that it was given by request to a more general audience in the large room at Cross Street Chapel, and this repetition extended Mr. Martineau's influence over an important group of young men. Of his combination of economic rules with wider principles of political justice, a noble instance was presented in his sermon on the Irish Famine, January 31, 1847, where personal knowledge of the conditions added force to his statement.<sup>1</sup> Deep was his wrath against English misgovernment; which had left the landlord to rule under semblance of law, instead of serving the realities of justice. His views on the ultimate basis of the system of private property in land appear in the following passage.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The collection amounted to £505 (Mrs. Martineau to her sister, Mrs. Bache, Feb. 6, 1847).

<sup>2</sup> *Essays*, iv. 416.

A more conspicuous, but not more real, cause of the permanent social condition of the sister island, is to be found in the criminal neglect of their obligations by the proprietors of the soil:—a neglect so serious in its aggregate results, that, were it not for the long indifference and connivance allowed to it by the government, it might be held sufficient to weaken all further title to forbearance. It is a principle of natural justice, and of English constitutional usage, that there can be no absolute private property in land: that the State simply administers its possessions by the hands of private individuals, conceding to them privileges of use, alienation and bequest on condition of certain services rendered back;—establishing them in specified rights over it, as against others, but never as against itself. Chattel property and mere money in the purse have been considered as the characteristic of the Jew and the Alien, about the management of which no public question need be asked; while real estate is the citizen's trust, over which his country keeps a watch, and justice herself stands ready with the voice of approbation or of anger. Its owners are virtually officers of the Commonwealth, entrusted with the gravest elements of its well being, and expected to perform certain social obligations inseparable from their position. They are in fact the natural lords and rulers of their neighbourhood, morally responsible for its good order, its wise economy, and the essential equity of prevalent relations among its people. It is only on these understood conditions, that society can undertake to protect hereditary estate; and of all these conditions the very first in order undoubtedly is, that the land *shall support its people*; that the cultivator shall live, before the owner may gather; that no rent can be touched, till labour has been fed.<sup>1</sup>

By temperament and sympathy Mr. Martineau was an aristocrat of the Platonic type, though birth and education had made him a Whig. Reverence for the best was the only air in which he could breathe. A constant student of the Dialogues<sup>2</sup>—a study which he maintained to the end of his life, keeping a second copy in his Scotch home<sup>3</sup>—he conceived the State

<sup>1</sup> These positions were denounced by a correspondent of the *Inquirer* as 'dubious, fallacious, and anarchical,' March 6, 1847.

<sup>2</sup> A notebook contains a number of translations and abstracts.

<sup>3</sup> The writer once had occasion to call upon him on a Sunday morning after his retirement from the ministry. He was preparing himself for participation in public worship by communion with his favourite author.



as an organised expression of Justice, and dreaded the approaches of democracy. Neither the early enthusiasms of 'Locksley Hall' nor the pessimism of its sequel 'Sixty Years after,' commended themselves to him. Always a close observer of contemporary politics, he dreaded the rise of Chartism, from which he apprehended great dangers to the national Finance. As he watched the movements of continental revolution in the spring of 1848, he tried to work out a scheme of franchise for home use, and proposed to Prof. Newman to 'give every man a vote as a man,' with additional votes and additional taxation for 'every proprietary man.' It was a definite indication of a growing conservatism which his friends did not always know how to interpret. The element of the unexpected in his judgments often took them by surprise.

## II.

Four years' labour at Manchester New College gave the lecturer on philosophy a large command of fresh materials, and the strain of constant preparation was partially relaxed. The sense of rapidly growing power demanded a wider scope; and it thus became possible for Mr. Martineau to join in a literary enterprise which sprang out of the periodical edited by Mr. Thom. The *Christian Teacher* was expanded into the *Prospective Review*, under the joint editorship of four friends, Mr. Thom, Mr. Martineau, Mr. Tayler, and Mr. Wicksteed, and the first number appeared in February, 1845. Its name,

which drew down some criticism,<sup>1</sup> was explained by its motto, from St. Bernard, 'Respice, Aspice, Prospice'; and its avowed object was to provide an organ for progressive interpretations of Christianity, and save them from being stifled by the sectarianism of a past generation. To this Review Mr. Martineau contributed some of the most brilliant of his essays, beginning with one on Dr. Arnold in the opening number: and here the main lines of his philosophy were definitely laid down. His range was wide, embracing both philosophy and theology, and covering also questions of the practical application of politics and religion, as in the article on 'Church and State' in May, 1845.<sup>2</sup> But his method of production was slow. The labour of composition

<sup>1</sup>The *Inquirer* denounced it as 'Hibernian,' and frequently giped at the articles. The criticism to which Mr. Martineau was subjected by those who could neither understand his philosophy, nor realise his spiritual greatness, is a painful chapter in denominational history. A reviewer of an English translation of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* in the *Inquirer* for Feb. 22, 1845, avowed his total incapacity to comprehend it, and confidently asked 'What light has any German writer thrown upon the Analysis of the Human Mind?' The answer must be, None.' It is hardly necessary to add that Kant was set aside in favour of Hartley and James Mill. The philosophy of the *Prospective*, therefore, belonged to 'the exploded errors of darker times,' and the disciples of Priestley and Belsham were summoned 'to exert themselves in exposing prevalent delusions,' May 10. A few months later the author of the sermon on *The Bible and the Child* 'holds some opinions which are extremely repulsive (!) to the members of the denomination with which he is connected.' To the charge of 'false philosophy' was added that of 'robbing Christ of his authority,' by the Rev. George Armstrong, in a sermon on 'Right Opinion the Foundation of Right Action,' April, 1846. This drew a brief reply from Mr. Martineau himself in No. vii. of the *Prospective* for the same year, p. 440.

<sup>2</sup>It was of course an additional offence against the prevalent type of Unitarian Nonconformity, that in this article he declared that he had no theoretical objection to an Established Church.

was always painful, for the close-knit thoughts were the fruit of long concentration; when once the imagination was kindled, metaphor and epigram flowed rapidly enough: the balanced phrase, the ornate style, belonged to the simplest note: but though his intellect moved swiftly, his love of artistic order demanded time for arrangement and careful articulation; and the essay involved a strain hardly less severe, and much more prolonged, than the sermon. To F. W. Newman he remarked—'Your promptitude in these matters astonishes me. How you could throw off a paper so clear and able on the most perplexing of subjects in a time so short, I cannot imagine.' Of his own difficulty in writing on a limited scale, he makes confession in a note to Mr. Wicksteed, July 17, 1845.

I am delighted that you review Miss Barrett,—the truest poet of the advancing age; only, as may always be expected of a genuine woman, not dramatic: so much the more wisely has she given a half Grecian form to her dramatic attempts, allowing everywhere the influence and even predominance of the lyric spirit.<sup>1</sup>

I am revelling in the thought of sitting this time in my critic's chair, and reviewing my co-reviewers, without a particle of personal shame in taking up the Number. By my abstinence, you will be able to reduce the Printer's bill within reasonable limits: and in truth, whenever you want to economise, you must send me notice of silence. I cannot work by halves, or observe the Aristotelian rule of *μηδὲν ἄγαν*.

A little later, to the same correspondent, July 13, 1846:

For myself, having had no repose and refreshment I am without spirit for anything: and the prospect of having to lift the lumbering Master of Trinity over all the gaps in his logic fills me with

<sup>1</sup> His interest in Miss Barrett's work may be inferred from the use which he made of her *Drama of Exile*, published a few months after the above criticism was written. See chap. VIII. p. 268.

unutterable despair. It is impossible to leap under such a load, to crawl upon all fours is as much as I can hope.

Early in 1845 Dr. Whewell had published a comprehensive work, entitled *The Elements of Morality, including Polity*. The criticism of this treatise in the *Prospective* for November, in the same year, enabled Mr. Martineau to expound for the first time in public his views of the action of conscience, and the nature of right and wrong. In a series of *Lectures on Systematic Morality*, delivered in Lent term, 1846, the Master of Trinity endeavoured to combat his reviewer's objections; and this volume called forth a second article in the *Prospective* for August, to which Mr. Martineau referred, in the letter just quoted.<sup>1</sup> These articles, with the essay on Channing two years later,<sup>2</sup> enable us to sketch the form which his ethical teaching had then assumed. It was from this basis that the whole fabric of his thought was reconstructed; here were involved the fundamental conceptions which supported his Theistic faith; and any attempt to expound, however briefly, the main ideas of his philosophy, must start from the moral experience in which they were so deeply rooted.

It was characteristic of Mr. Martineau's mind to hold any conviction with a kind of impassioned energy. This did not prevent him from changing his convictions; but it gave extraordinary force to the reaction against discarded views. Once persuaded that the function of Christ was not that

<sup>1</sup> *Essays*, iii. 337 and 377.

<sup>2</sup> *Prospective*, August, 1848, and *Westminster*, January, 1849; *Essays*, i. 81.

of a heaven-accredited messenger of truth, but of a personal revealer of the Divine character, he is willing to see the Sermon on the Mount sink into oblivion with the conversations of Socrates.<sup>1</sup> And in the same way, once assured of the independence of his own personality, and he is ready, alone, to confront the world and God. For beauties of order, harmonies of arrangement, evidences of design, in the external scene, he will care no more: the sublime fact of his freedom, controlled by yet another and sublimer, obligation, fills for him the central place in thought. These were ultimate realities to be recognised in consciousness, and then to be pondered till they disclosed all the manifold secrets locked within them. Between the successions and laws of the outward world, and the swift courses of ideas and emotions in the spirit within, he admitted no true parallel. They could not be reduced beneath a common government, or brought under any uniformity of causation. The sentiment of duty was irresolvable into relative measures of pleasure or pain; it admitted of no derivation from intellectual or legal, from sympathetic or æsthetic, values. With him, as with Channing, 'that man is endowed with knowledge of the right, and with power to realise it, was the fundamental axiom in his Science of human nature.'<sup>2</sup>

As this knowledge and power are the inmost treasures of our personality, their existence cannot be proved by anything more certain. They are intuitively discerned; they cannot be scientifically

<sup>1</sup> *Ante*, p. 181.

<sup>2</sup> 'Memoir of Channing,' *Essays*, i. 111.

demonstrated. Proof of them, if proof is demanded, must be found in the inadequacy of any other explanation. On this proof Mr. Martineau was, at a later day, to bestow much thought and care. At this stage he is content to reiterate the essential facts, and invest them with that rich poetic glow, which constituted, for a mind like his, the true medium of vision. Here are mysteries to which the language and law of all ages bear testimony; they cannot be exhibited to sense; they can only be represented to the imagination. But they bear in their midst sublime consequences. For the soul that has once recognised its true character, knows that it is entrusted with responsible power. It is itself an agent; it can produce events by its own decisions; it is a fountain of energy; there dwells in it the independence of an originating cause. To awaken this consciousness is the function of the teacher; to exhibit all its contents, and trace their far-reaching issues, is the work of philosophy. The right interpretation of Man carries with it the right understanding of the world and God.

What, then, is the scope of this sovereignty of the human spirit? Upon what does the mind exercise its power? The answer is immediate,—on the whole range of its propensities, desires, affections, within. Among these sits conscience enthroned; and her task is to judge their claims and decide their merits, to pronounce some better, and others worse. The mode in which Mr. Martineau conceived this process, formed perhaps his most original contribution at this stage to ethical doctrine.

The phenomena which we call moral, must all

exhibit some essential characteristic. That they are voluntary, and are thus distinguished from all acts done under constraint, is universally admitted. The movement of the piston-rod in a steam-engine is mechanical, not moral. But though this character suffices to separate them from the *unmoral*, it does not mark them off from the *immoral*. Will you place this in man's susceptibility to happiness? He shares that with the brutes; the dog enjoys or suffers; he obeys the master who wields the pleasures of hope or the terrors of fear; futile is the effort to account for what is special to man by a little extra manipulation of what he shares with the ape.<sup>1</sup> Do you, with Jouffroy, fix on the 'idea of order'? You doubtless bring moral phenomena within the scope of events according to some law: but order also rules within the hive: and law wings the flight of the migratory bird. If, with Price, you assimilate the knowledge of right and wrong to that of number, you give it the character of intellectual intuition, and bring it into the field of truth; if, with Shaftesbury, you dwell on the nobility of a fine character, you convert it into an æsthetic perception. Or if, with Butler, you suppose that the moral sense belongs to the active principles of human nature, and has goodness for its appropriate object, as hunger demands food, or admiration calls for beauty, you isolate moral good as a specific quality inherent in actions, as whiteness in snow, or sweetness in fruit: and its presence or absence would be separ-

<sup>1</sup> The sharp line between animals and man, so characteristic of Dr. Martineau's later philosophy, is already drawn. *Essays*, iii. 345.

ately discerned in each important operation of the will. Why, in this case, should men's judgments differ through so wide a range? <sup>1</sup> Butler was right in insisting on the *preferential* character of all moral judgments, but wrong in his explanation of its nature. Its essence does not lie in a choice which elevates a uniform moral good over many and various kinds of natural good. Virtue is not preferred to resentment or ambition, as though it were an independent object of pursuit. Thirst, anger, pity, love, have each their own objects: and Butler placed conscience above all, with righteousness as its appropriate aim. But Mr. Martineau declared that after the most diligent search he could not find within himself this autocratic faculty, having its own private and paramount end. He was never conscious of acting save from some 'particular desire.' Try as he might, he could not sweep these from his mind, for conscience to enter with its plea for 'the good.'

But we remember a boy who once went on a day's excursion among the lakes and hills, provided with an excellent luncheon, calculated for a mountain appetite. He had gone an hour or two beyond a reasonable time, and just unpacked his store beside a stream, when a little girl approached, half-leading, half-dragging an old man evidently collapsing from exhaustion. They had attempted a short cut over the ridge the day before, lost their way, and spent the night and noon without food or shelter on the hills. The boy divided the contents of his basket between them; the 'particular passion,' pity, getting the better of the 'particular appetite,' hunger, and making itself felt as the higher claim.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This difficulty was stated in the early 'Outline of Lectures on Moral Philosophy' cited in chap. VI. p. 169, and was regarded as a conclusive argument against Butler's interpretation.

<sup>2</sup> 'Whewell's Elements of Morality,' *Essays*, iii. 349.



In such reminiscence did the ethical philosopher discover the clue he sought. The nature of preferential judgment was revealed. It did not consist in the erection of an abstract right over the natural desire for food; its secret was unveiled in the perception that the exercise of pity was intrinsically worthier than the gratification of boyish appetite. Set the two side by side, and the recognition of the nobler is immediate. In every ethical judgment such a preference is implied. There is always an alternative within the mind; and it is on the terms of this alternative that conscience makes its award. It does not call up the springs of action separately before its tribunal, to dismiss them with the labels 'this is right' and 'that is wrong.' It secretly enquires what is the competing principle, and its decision is always relative, 'this is better,' 'that is worse.' In other words, the impulses within us are not all of the same dignity. They vary in moral value, and conscience is the power that distinguishes these values, and assigns to them their respective claims. For Butler's scheme of man's moral constitution, presented under the image of an absolute monarchy over equal subjects, Martineau proposed to substitute 'a natural aristocracy or complete system of ranks, among our principles of conduct, on observance of which depends the worth and order of our life.'<sup>1</sup> And the definition of moral good followed in these terms: 'Every action is *right*, which, in the presence of a lower principle, follows a higher; every action is

<sup>1</sup> *Essays*, iii. 350.

*wrong* which, in the presence of a higher principle, follows a lower.<sup>1</sup>

Here was a new and fruitful conception. To trace its full issues was to be the work of many years:<sup>2</sup> to guard it against assault from opposite philosophies, and above all from being overwhelmed by the doctrines of heredity and evolution, which the next generation was to lift into new authority, became one of the main objects of the teacher's life. Two or three of its immediate consequences may be here briefly set forth.

The conception of human nature thus presented, was formed in the face of the prevailing Evangelical dogma of total depravity. In vigorous opposition to this wholesale condemnation of every energy, as already enfeebled and worthless, Mr. Martineau affirmed that to every spring of action, having its own place in the scale, corresponded some object which was *naturally* good. This was only another way of saying that the several elements and powers within have no intrinsic moral quality of their own.

<sup>1</sup> *Essays*, iii. 352. A hint is here added, to be elaborated in subsequent years: what if the same principle can be carried out in different ways? Shall a millionaire devote his fortune, with the desire of contributing to the public good, by endowing almshouses, founding free libraries, or creating a vast trust for imperial ends? The question must be decided not on ethical grounds, but on prudential. Expenditure is determined into the channel where the donor sees most clear advantage. Beside the canon of motives place is thus found for a canon of consequences.

<sup>2</sup> On Feb. 3, 1847, one of his students, Richard Holt Hutton, wrote to him from Heidelberg, appealing to him to draw up a graduated table of the springs of action. This was at last added to the ethical course: and in a much expanded form occupies an important part of vol. ii. of the *Types of Ethical Theory*. Mr. Hutton became one of Dr. Martineau's most valued friends.

Ethical values only come on the scene when two springs of action can be compared. In differences of original endowment there might be grounds for pity or admiration; but the nature which was fitted with a stock of violent passions, did not deserve moral blame because of the warring impulses within, any more than a tiger because it was blood-thirsty. Guilt enters only where the will fails to restrain, and suffers the pent-up forces to burst forth on an unrestricted way. Many and severe were the criticisms passed by the theologian on the Evangelical scheme: and they all had their root in revulsion against its misinterpretation of the prime facts of human character. The exhibition of man as helpless and impotent wounded him to the core; not only did it reject all discrimination of excellence; it denied what he regarded as the most essential fact, the presence within man of an element of personal revelation through the presence of the Most High. The Catholic psychology, on the other hand, with its recognition of the reality of the conscience and the will, engaged at once his interest and sympathy.

Once more, the nature of the judgments of conscience on the alternatives submitted to it, was irresolvable into any other quality. Differences of worth were ultimate. They constitute what we mean by good and evil, and cannot be traced back to any other source. They were not due to the reason, for they had not the character of truth: they did not issue out of feeling, for they were not founded on experience of pleasure and pain: they followed another order than that of proportion

and beauty, for while these perceptions kindled our admiration, the recognition of duty at once involved a claim to our obedience. These deliverances belonged, in consequence, to an element within the soul that might be called into action by the operations of our social life, but was no product of outward circumstance. It was *in* man, yet not *of* him. In yielding allegiance to it, he recognises it as transcending the scale of his own being. It is universal, and all language attests its validity. It has authority over him ; and only that can demand his reverence which speaks to him from above. Here, then, is a sanctuary in every mind, where the Infinite Spirit condescends to dwell. Conscience is his revealer ; through its activity do we know the Only Holy, who for ever makes the good the sole object of his choice and love. On man God has conferred the august privilege of sharing in this choice. Within the limitations of our humanity, he opens to us access to the infinite and eternal. He has so framed our nature that it can respond to his call. Existence is so organised that it presents us perpetual opportunities for exercising the spiritual perceptions through which he offers us the fellowship of a diviner life : and *we* are so organised that we have the power to realise or to neglect the suggestions which the heavenly Teacher is ever whispering.<sup>1</sup> On this side the philosophic theologian moved away from his Catholic friends, whose theories of sacramental grace affronted his spirituality. Like his colleague, Francis W. Newman, he was essentially Evangelical

<sup>1</sup> 'Memoir of Channing,' *Essays*, i. 112.

at heart. In his doctrine of the communion of spirit between God and man, he could admit no other medium than that of Mind acting directly upon mind. The relation between them was immediate.

In this view, finally, the legal conception of morality, as dependent on the divine will, could have no place.<sup>1</sup> To the jurist, obligation begins and ends with positive law: 'nothing is right, until it can get enacted.' Against this revival of the doctrine of 'sovereignty,' the lecturer on ethics entered an emphatic protest. It made right subordinate to force; and would justify men in serving Satan, were he only strong enough to substantiate his rule. To affirm that moral distinctions have their origin in a revealed law, which might, had God so chosen, have assumed quite different forms, is to make them only the births of time, and strip them of their eternal dignity. They are no better than the by-laws of a club, worthy of social respect, but destitute of intrinsic authority. If they only represent the *fiat* of God, they may be products of his volition, but they are not inherent in his being. 'Say that he caused them, and you deny that he followed them. Deduce justice from his will, and his will ceases to be just.' Vast and difficult are the problems thus indicated; not yet was the teacher prepared with a metaphysic which could satisfactorily grapple with them. If God must be presented to faith, not as originating, but as recognising (and in some sense obeying), the moral distinctions which are the basis of our love and

<sup>1</sup> 'Whewell's Elements of Morality,' *Essays*, iii. 366.

worship, are there not 'ideas' (to use the Platonic term) of the good and pure which are in some way independent even of him? They are involved in his nature, was the answer, but do not control his choice, and the seeming strange result is implied that God could have been the devil, had he willed. On these deep ontological themes, after his German residence, he will speak with clearer tones.

### III.

In drawing a contrast between Channing and Priestley,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Martineau remarked that neither succeeded in bridging over the chasm between the Causal and the Moral God. Priestley, indeed, preserved the semblance of consistency by merging human nature altogether in the divine, and reducing the infinite play of our thought and feeling into a form of the heavenly will, as direct as the volition which keeps the planets spinning round the sun. Channing did not resolve one class of phenomena into another wholly unlike them; but his excursions into the scenes of the physical world only supplied him with occasions for devout sentiment, instead of harmonising the philosophy of nature with that of man. To effect this was the aim of another American writer, Theodore Parker, whose *Discourse of Religion* secured Mr. Martineau's ardent though not indiscriminating admiration,<sup>2</sup> and formed the

<sup>1</sup> *Essays*, i. 119.

<sup>2</sup> To this he adverted a few years later in a letter to F. W. Newman, when he is about to read his friend's book on *The Soul* (Sept. 24, 1849). 'I suppose it agrees with the experience of every teachable man, that during his life some three or four

subject of a remarkable article in the *Prospective* for February, 1846. From that essay, and another in November of the same year on Morell's *History of Modern Philosophy*, the principal elements of his theistic philosophy, prior to his residence in Germany, may be gathered.

For the dialectic methods of the Continental thinkers Mr. Martineau had not then overcome a certain mistrust and dislike. 'The Ontological scheme of thought,' he declared,<sup>1</sup> 'is so remote from all our intellectual habits, that no re-casting which may be given to it for purposes of exposition, can adapt it to our psychological methods of reflection; that nothing short of a long-continued discipline, as severe as that by which a peasant boy might be brought to read La Place, would suffice to open, for the educated Englishman, an access to the schools of Königsberg and Berlin.' He makes no attempt, therefore, to guard his doctrine by any preliminary discussion of the scope and limits of human knowledge, such as will afterwards call forth a criticism of Kant in the opening of his *Study of Religion*; Kant, Hegel, Fichte, are for most of his readers only names; he is content to adhere to the process of enquiry which he has already followed in the field of Ethics, and ask what is the testimony of experience?

books appear, so impressive and speaking in reference to his peculiar affections and wants, as to constitute one of the great powers of his being, and visibly to make him what he becomes before he dies. When I was young, Channing worked upon me thus; more recently, Parker; and I know, from the whole character of your mind, that you will now take the ascendant place.'

<sup>1</sup> *Prospective Review*. 1846, p. 583.

The questions which philosophy undertakes to answer with respect to Nature, are of this kind: What do we know of the outward world, and how do we know it? The answer was direct and emphatic—'The act of Perception gives us simultaneous knowledge of a subject and an object, with perfect equipoise of reason for affirming the reality of the one and of the other.'<sup>1</sup> For such an act, however, the proper conditions must be present. The oyster, lying beneath the Indian wave, may be susceptible of feeling changes of temperature, or the stimulus of food. It may receive sensations; it cannot be supposed to *perceive* the difference between itself and its environment. Perception is not the same as reception: it involves something more than passive consciousness. But once more, imagine a being free to move in all directions and at any speed, encountering no obstruction in the encompassing void, and this spontaneous activity will no more beget perception than the oyster's rest on the seabed. Not till some obstacle opposes, will the needful concurrence of active and passive consciousness arise. Once let resistance be offered, and effort evoked to overcome it, and the act of perception takes place. In this collision two pairs of opposites are at once revealed. The *I* and the *not I*, subject and object, fall into *space*-relations, as *here* and *there*, and into *cause*-relations, producing the distinction of personal causation and extra-personal causation. In immediate knowledge, therefore, two great ideas are at once given, space, and cause:

<sup>1</sup> 'Morell's History of Modern Philosophy,' *Prospective* 1846, p. 562.



not, indeed, historically; to the baby 'new to earth and sky,' but in the order of reflection, when the significance of the mental act is scrutinised.

In metaphysical terminology, this mode of thought is described as Dualism. It declares that two terms, subject and object, the self and the scene around, are known together, and at the same time discriminated. It affirms the reality of this external world, not as something constituted by the mind's own act, but as something apprehended by it which actually is.<sup>1</sup> It was marked off, on the one hand, from Idealism, where the thinker refers everything to the laws of his personal causality, and treats the ideas of an outward universe, and of infinite existence, as mere forms of thought, which cannot guarantee that things *are* as they *seem*. And it was marked off, on the other hand, from the exaggeration of the second term in the great antithesis till it absorbed the first. Dwell on the infinitude of the world and God, till the solitary Self is merged in the vast unity around, and you will march straight into Pantheism. Or, deny to the Self any more unity than that of a succession of impressions; refuse to it any true causal power; interpret it as nothing more than a series of conscious states emerging at the top of a physiological process; and an atheistic Materialism will result.<sup>2</sup> Against

<sup>1</sup> Martineau has here moved a long way from his College devotion to Berkeley; cp. *ante*, chap. II. p 37<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> This was, in fact, the doctrine of the *Analysis* of James Mill, which Martineau had been able to conciliate with religion by means of his prior conception of Revelation: it was also the doctrine of Comte's *Philosophie Positive*, with which he had made early acquaintance.

both these dangers Mr. Martineau entrenched himself strongly in the strenuous conviction of personality, which he derived from his ethical experience. His scheme of moral psychology was planted firmly on a practice of self-control, which admitted no doubt of the power of the will. He was himself a cause : and what he had learned in the sphere within, as he brought the elements of his own being into ordered harmony beneath the rule of conscience, he carried with him to the interpretation of the world without.

Under what aspect, then, did non-personal causation present itself? Could we conceive a statue, incapable of motion, suddenly made conscious of the first antithesis involved in perception, and able to distinguish itself locally from the scene around, it would behold the successive changes of day and night pass by it, the corn bend beneath the passing wind, the waves break on the shore, the clouds piled into towers and palaces and then dissolved. It might even learn to note time-sequences, and expect the sunset and the dawn. But it would have no idea of power ; and could never link events in any relation of cause and effect. That has its seat in our own energy : ' the conscious rising of effort against resistance is the real source of the idea.'<sup>1</sup> In other words, in the physical world no less than in the moral, Cause is interpreted by Will.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ' Parker's Discourse of Religion,' *Essays*, i. 173.

<sup>2</sup> How far this doctrine, which played so prominent a part in Mr. Martineau's philosophy, was derived from his own self reflection, or how far it was consciously formed on the suggestion of others, cannot be definitely stated. Herschel, with whose

Again and again, therefore, in his later essays, would the teacher repeat, with every variety of expository eloquence, the fundamental principle that 'the experience of Causation in ourselves is the birthplace of all our knowledge and thought upon this matter.' Only as it keeps close to it, has our language any meaning. Does the child ask who bends the rainbow or hangs up the moon, he only follows a primitive insight, which time may indeed dull, but can never correct. That 'every phenomenon must have a cause,' is an immediate intuition,<sup>1</sup> given by the mind, and deserving of implicit trust, for otherwise the world would be a chaos, and knowledge impossible. The necessity of this confidence is emphasised with unfailing stress. Admit that we are deceived when thought tells us that we are planted amid infinitudes of space, through whose every realm the same truths of geometry are invariably stable and sure; grant that we err when we conceive that there are immensities behind us and before, through which for ever flows the stream of time, incapable of being absorbed by the ocean of the eternal,—and the whole foundations of knowledge are shaken. As the con-

writings he was familiar, had long before drawn attention to the significance of the sense of effort in originating our ideas of causation. Mr. Upton, *Life*, ii. 279, has noted that a similar identification of Cause with Will was made by Maine de Biran, the teacher of Cousin. Of Cousin's writings Mr. Martineau had been a careful student; and Cousin also laid stress on the experience of effort and resistance in giving us the knowledge of our own causality: but he stopped short of the doctrine held by Mr. Martineau that we could have no other idea of causality, i.e., that all causation in nature must be referred to a self-conscious Will.

<sup>1</sup> The maxim was afterwards defended in the form 'every phenomenon is the expression of power.'

ditions of all our experience, space and time must assuredly *be*; they provide the scene on which we appear and act; and only because they first *are*, is it possible for us to bring the events around us into intelligible connexion. To no attempt, therefore, to resolve space and time into forms imposed by us on the world without, requisite for its interpretation, yet destitute of reality, would Mr. Martineau concede the smallest measure of success.<sup>1</sup> Inasmuch as they were not the products of experience, manufactured out of sensation, but were shown by reflection to be its universal and necessary antecedents in thought, he called them, with Kant, *a priori* ideas. Experience was not their source, though it was the occasion of their discovery: the historical and the rational orders of our knowledge must not be confused. But while he admitted that these ideas were given in the very constitution of our minds, he would never allow that this origin involved them in uncertainty, or disqualified them as witnesses to external reality. The ideas are inherent in our thought, because the actualities exist outside. Truth is the correspondence between the mind within and the fact without. There can be no higher authentication for anything, than that we are obliged to think it so. If this testimony is set aside, there is no other court of appeal. The only refuge from

<sup>1</sup> In his inaugural lecture in 1840 Mr. Martineau expressed a sense of shock that Whewell should have endeavoured to write the 'Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences' (then but a few weeks old) 'on the doctrine, long universal in Germany, that space and time have no absolute existence external to the mind, but are internal forms of thought; mere relative conditions which our constitution imposes upon all our conceptions.' *Essays*, iv. 7.

utter scepticism is the trust that our self-knowledge is rightly mated with what *is*.

On these bases was reared the fabric of a philosophical Theism. Common alike to the ethical regulation of the springs of action within, and to the metaphysical interpretation of the world without, is the causal Will. *There* is the term which provides the ground of harmony between the religion of the conscience, and the religion of nature. By Will Mr. Martineau understood activity consciously directed to an end. It implied a purpose, it expressed a personality. Will, other than conscious and personal, the teacher could not conceive. A blind unthinking Will was for him an express contradiction. The antithesis between causal power within and causal power without, therefore, took the form of an antithesis between two persons, the perceiving Self, and the not-Self *interpreted personally*, a Will not limited like ours by a bodily organisation, but operating everywhere and always, on the scale of the universe; a Will not finite but infinite, in other words, the Will of God. The central fact derived from perception and the scheme of the not-Self, was the presence, universal and continuous, of this living Will. The scene for its exercise was provided by the unbounded space; the occasions, by unending time. These were the eternal conditions of the divine activity; self-existent, like God himself; awful shapes, flanking his throne, which even his sovereignty could not transcend. They constitute the frame-work for all the 'happenings' of the world, which Science observes and compares, till it has sorted them into groups, and drawn from them

those summaries of uniform occurrences which we designate as 'Laws.' To these no causality attaches. They are only short statements of the changes which have been noted under recurring sets of conditions. They embody no power: they cannot constrain: they are in no sense 'forces.' 'Force' is, indeed, only a part of the idea of Will. Abstract from this the element of purpose, and there remains only unthinking might, which can cause nothing, because it knows not what it would be at. Force, as defined by Martineau, 'Will minus purpose,' can neither exist nor act; it is only a creation of the mind, convenient for scientific calculation, but in no way representing the total reality. Science, therefore, had no business to treat the terms which express the phases of power under various combinations of circumstance, as separate agents, and speak of gravity, or chemical attraction, or electricity, as *causes*. This is but a form of atheistic Fetichism:<sup>1</sup> and the seer discerned 'no meaner superstition than its dynamic worship.' Better the savage, who erred, not in setting a background of living Will behind the objects and appearances of nature, but only in peopling the world with many such independent persons. 'The idolatry of science has retained the multitude, and taken away the living Will. The simplicity of Monotheism cancels the pretended host, and takes the collective universe as the symbol of the Omnipresent and the Omniactive Mind.'

The positions thus summarised are far removed

<sup>1</sup> This rebuke, it must be remembered, was directed to the language of sixty years ago. 'Parker's Discourse of Religion,' *Essays*, i. 174.

from the views expressed to a correspondent in 1842, when he laid the whole stress of his thought upon the 'communicated' character of religion,<sup>1</sup> and discouraged the methods of Paley and the Bridgewater Treatises. Compared with the elaborate rehabilitation of the argument from design in the *Study of Religion*,<sup>2</sup> this intermediate stage still shows a singular indifference to conceptions on which he had previously dwelt with such calm reliance. Of the 'unity of counsel' for which Paley had pleaded, there is here no trace. The 'not-self' disclosed in perception is at once treated as an infinite unit;<sup>3</sup> and the power pervading it is assumed to be everywhere the same. But if there is a plurality of human selves, why may there not be also a plurality of divine not-selves? Why must the living Will which opposes ours be always and throughout identical? Is there not something to be said for the savage, before he is dismissed that the monotheist may enter in? Doubtless, the teacher's mind is imbued with scientific conceptions of the order and coherence of the universe, with which his readers also were familiar. But the fact is that these are nowhere cited, and do not really constitute the suppressed term of thought. Once more, the answer is to be sought elsewhere. The intellectual construction of the world is, after all, secondary, in Martineau's early scheme, to the moral. The God revealed to the philosopher as the eternal Object, towards which we stand as subject, had first been

<sup>1</sup> See chap. VI. p. 199.

<sup>2</sup> See chap. XVI.

<sup>3</sup> By a 'synthesis' in the not-self of the ideas of space and Will; *Prospective*, 1846, p. 564.

recognised by the prophet as the Lord of conscience and the Sovereign of souls. Known in the secret chamber of the heart as the All-holy, revered as the divine goal of aspiration and endeavour, the Infinite Spirit admitted of no partition ; the functions of moral causation, with its recurring drama of fall, judgment, and restoration, could be distributed among no diversity of powers ; and the unity of the divine energy in physical nature was secured by the unity of its relation to human nature. When the conception thus formed coalesced with that yielded by the analysis of the act of perception, the gap between the Many and the One was immediately bridged ; and God was presented to the believer's thought as the 'author and finisher' of both conscience and the world. The universe supplied the scale of his being ; the conscience declared that being moral ; and, to complete the faith, historical religion discerned in Christ the noblest image of his character, the Word made flesh in our humanity.

If, from the centre of our personality, we could conceive our will withdrawn, while intellect and affection remained active, but removed from our volitional control, what account should we give of the source of these energies ? They would fall at once into the sphere of Nature, and in that realm would be due to the ever-operating Will of God. In our ordinary consciousness, therefore, there is a meeting place of God with man : but its processes belong, as much as those of the physical organism, to that sphere of God's habitual action which we designate as the realm of law.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Parker's Discourse of Religion,' *Essays*, i. 180.



They are impersonal to man ; they are not strictly personal to God. For though they are the product of his activity, they only follow the pledged order of his energy, just as in Nature. They are not the immediate utterance of his Spirit, the free communications of his grace. But among the sentiments and affections at the upper end of our being, amid our reverences for the beautiful and good, are gifts which are not the product of our will, 'which have been neither learned nor earned ; which, without the touch of any voluntary process, appear in mysterious spontaneity' ; this is the sphere of communion, or, in theological language, 'inspiration.' In words akin to those of New England Transcendentalism,<sup>1</sup> the teacher affirms that 'thoughts of God, purposes of constraining pity, sanctities of duty, rising above the level horizon of the mind, silent, self-evidencing, holy, clearing themselves, like the pure stars, as they ascend, of the low mists of doubt and fear,—these will ever be deemed true heaven-lights kindled from the eternal fires.'<sup>2</sup> This is but a re-statement of the faith, announced five years before,<sup>3</sup> in 'the strictly divine and inspired character of our own highest desires and best affections.' In moments of severer dialectic energy, the thinker might feel

<sup>1</sup> They were quoted, alas, in mockery, alike in America and at home.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays*, i. 181. Compare the defence of the Logos-doctrine, p. 184, where Revelation is described as 'an appearance, to beings who have something of a divine spirit within them, of a yet diviner without them [for Christians, viz., Christ], leading them to the Divinest of all, that embraces them both.'

<sup>3</sup> *Christian Teacher*, 1841, 'Five Points of Christian Faith.' See *ante*, chap. VIII. p. 247.

the danger of surrendering too much of the human personality to God. He could never forget that he had once lived in a scheme which gave God *all*, and merged each individual's control in one vast network of necessarian pantheism. In formal doctrine, therefore, he may find it necessary to rebuke a thinker who, like Parker, 'when sent by Spinoza into his field of speculation, might say; "I go not," but afterwards *went*.' Yet he himself, also, when he speaks the language of religion; released from the restraints of technical philosophy, conceives the highest life of souls as 'melting into the all-comprehending Spirit, that holds them "as the sea her waves."' <sup>1</sup> It is the language of the mystic, before whose vision limitations drop away, and man and God are in essence one.<sup>2</sup>

#### IV.

The residence of Mr. Martineau and his family in Germany was marked, as he had foreseen, by some anxieties arising out of political agitation; nor did its earlier months lack unexpected incidents which laid a severe strain on his affections. First his

<sup>1</sup> 'Pause and Retrospect,' 1848: *Essays*, iv. 429.

<sup>2</sup> A difficult and delicate question is here involved, and I perceive that in the foregoing sketch I have placed the emphasis somewhat differently compared with Mr. Upton, *Life* ii. 302-308. I cannot, however, persuade myself that the passage cited by him (p. 306) from the review of Morell (*Prospective*, Nov. 1846, p. 561), is really intended to qualify the position defended in the *Christian Teacher*, and certainly reaffirmed in the essay on Parker as quoted above (*Prospective*, Feb. 1846). Students of Dr. Martineau's writings, however, well know that in the force with which he seized a particular idea at a given moment, other considerations were sometimes ignored.

mother, then his aunt Mary Rankin, whose image was bound up with his childhood's memories, passed away. The family group was hardly established in Berlin for the winter semester at the University, when the eldest daughter was seized with a nervous fever, and hovered for weeks between life and death. The father had left Liverpool jaded and weary: slow was the recovery amid these cares. Once able, however, to resume with free mind the studies to which he had resolved to devote himself, he regained his powers, and felt that the stimulus he received constituted a veritable 'new intellectual birth.'<sup>1</sup>

He at first settled at Dresden, where picture Gallery and Theatre provided abundant diversion amid the occupations which engaged the whole circle no less strenuously abroad than at home.<sup>2</sup> In Saxon Switzerland he found satisfaction for his love of mountain wandering, which he extended to the range separating Prussian Silesia from Bohemia. An ascent of the Schneekoppe, 'the highest point between the Tyrol and Norway,' brought with it impressions of forest solemnity which he afterwards reported to Mr. Thom.

Besides the invariable grandeurs of all mountain scenery and the interest of drinking at their fountains the waters of the

<sup>1</sup> Preface to *Types of Ethical Theory*, 1885, vol. i. p. xii. The special significance of this period lay (as will be seen) in a new grasp of ontological conceptions: 'I thus came into the same plight, in respect to the cognitive and æsthetic side of life, that had already befallen me in regard to the moral.'

<sup>2</sup> The entertainments included a Ball and Supper at the Tercentenary of the Dresden Kapelle, which kept Mr. Martineau amused till three a.m., Wagner being one of the heroes of the occasion, and the great actress, Mme. Schröder-Devrient, being forced by the public enthusiasm to mount upon the table.

Iser and the Elbe,—the peculiar features of *forest scenery* which were quite new to me, gave a special charm to the journey; I never knew before the *solitude*,—enough to take away one's breath,—in which upland wood and water sighing and singing in the winds could place one. The solemn mystic spirit of the Teutonic mythology needs no other commentator than the voice of the pine mountain.<sup>1</sup>

Politics rather than scenery, however, soon became the chief interest outside the family circle and its various pursuits, in language, philosophy, literature, and art. On this head Prof. F. W. Newman was the chief recipient of the traveller's impressions. Abroad, as at home, he was a diligent student of the newspapers; he found time also for active social intercourse; and with quick observation, and rapid powers of generalising, he was soon familiar with the chief features of the new scenes.

The first incidents of his Berlin stay, including his daughter's illness, are thus described.

Berlin, January 27, 1849.

My dear Newman,—

The sight of your handwriting, even when it reproaches my own neglects, is ever delightful to me. The long silence I have allowed myself to keep, has been due, this time, to a protracted state of anxiety, now, I am thankful to say, brought to a close.

We had no sooner effected our removal hither at the end of October, than our eldest daughter, Isabella, was taken ill; and yesterday I took my first walk out with

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, i. 190. This excursion was not without a small adventure which Dr. Martineau recalled thirty years after. Heavy rain on the ascent drenched the climbers to the skin. 'Stopping midway, at a little hospice in the mountains, we were persuaded to strip and hang up our clothes by the stoves to dry. The difficulty was, how meanwhile to dispose of our own persons, especially as we were ravenous, and had no idea of going to bed. But with a blanket and skewer apiece we got under cover, and sat, like a party of wild Indians, doing eager justice to the best of Weinsuppe and Forellen.' *Life* i. 183.

her since that time. The complaint has been the terrible nervous fever so prevalent in all the large continental towns, and so fatal to young persons especially. For a fortnight she was in a state of extreme danger, and for nearly a week almost the last hope was gone. But she is with us still ; and though her recovery from so low a point has been (as her physician says) a new birth and growth, requiring many weeks to achieve, her restoration is perfect, and the joy of its progress has been unspeakable. Of all that has been comprised within this three months, of anguish, submission, hope, and gratitude, I can say nothing now : it seems like a sorrowful dream dissipated at length by the opening light. The constant sweetness and transparent goodness of the dear patient herself, have passed, however, through the whole, one invariable thread of saintly beauty and sad delight. In addition to other things we had the vulgar misery of being in lodgings, where the people behaved infamously ; taking every advantage of our distress for purposes of extortion, and obliging us to buy off all sorts of brutality and insult. We are much better off now, though the Berlin lodgings are not to be praised, being, as compared with other places, dirty, incommodious, and inordinately dear.

The improved look of political affairs about the middle of October, and the report of Ewald's removal from Tübingen, determined as to venture hither. The first fortnight of November was a period of intense anxiety, and half induced me to repent. Every day seemed to render a conflict between the citizens and the troops more inevitable. The mob round the Schauspielhaus (where the Assembly met) presented a living commentary on the scenes of the old French Revolution. The Assembly debated with its doors *nailed up* by the people outside : and halters were exhibited in the streets for the necks of the refractory members. Had not the prorogation and removal of the Assembly—the entrance of the troops—the disarming of the *Bürgerwehr*—the

enforcement of the *Belagerungszustand*—the dissolution of the Assembly—and the proclamation of the new Constitution, been all effected with singular promptitude and decision *in re*, and great moderation *in modo*, results the most appalling would probably have accrued. Within the last few days, a plot of the Democratic party, intended to come off on the 12th November, is said to have been discovered: the soldiers were to have been brought into conflict with the *Bürgerwehr*—the workmen and the forces of the democratic clubs being held in reserve till the Bourgeoisie were sufficiently weakened and cut down to give up the game to the *Arbeiter*, whose victory was to be facilitated by a firing of the city in several parts simultaneously. A proscription list of persons to be massacred, with others whose case was to be reconsidered, has been published by the Patriotic Association, who have got on the traces of this conspiracy. The several club-committees, with all the names, dates, and places of meeting—responsible for these proscription lists—have been disclosed. I have seen the lists for some of the principal streets: and almost every other house had its victim, no professional person or higher tradesman, at all known to be a pronounced anti-republican, being allowed to escape. I observed the names of Professors Gabler and Rudolf among the number. My first impulse was to disbelieve all this, and attribute the report to the credulity of political passion and fear. But the most sensible and best-informed persons of my acquaintance here assure me that the evidence, both personal and documentary, is complete; that many arrests have taken place already on the strength of it; and that the trials will remove all doubt from the minds of the sceptical. The scheme, I suppose, was baffled by the suddenness and rapidity with which the troops were marched into the city on the 12th November. . . .

For myself, I restrict my attention entirely to my own subjects, and attend but two courses by Professor

Trendelenburg; one, on Logic and Metaphysics, the other on the History of Philosophy. I tried some of the other Lecture-rooms in which the *Hegelianer* hold forth. But all these men displeased me; and two out of the three seemed little better than declamatory impostors quite of the old *Sophist* class: and I left them with something like disgust, and determined to study Hegel by and for myself. I find Trendelenburg's lectures on Aristotle and Plato of great value: very thorough, careful, and sound; and there is in the man a direct and unperverted *truthfulness*, and a noble moral tone, which is in delightful contrast with everything I elsewhere observe in the philosophical school of Berlin. Without thinking very highly of him as an original thinker, I have found no one who, as a guide and critic in reference to the systems of other men, renders such reliable and agreeable service. Here I am at the end of my paper, and I deliver you from my clatter.

By such aid was it that 'the metaphysic of the world' came home to him.<sup>1</sup> A further glimpse of his philosophical interests is afforded by a letter to the Rev. Joseph Henry Hutton,<sup>2</sup> then occupying his pulpit at Liverpool, after the Christmas doings—including the 'annual tree' with all its 'fruitful mysteries'—are safely over. Mr. Richard Holt Hutton was at Berlin studying, with his old teacher.

Berlin, December 31, 1848.

He and I have at length begun some of our reading together; and his companionship will vastly relieve the dry and weary study of Hegel, into whose mysteries we are determined to force an initiation.<sup>3</sup> I confess that till I came here I had no just apprehension of the extent

<sup>1</sup> Preface to *Types of Ethical Theory*, 1885, vol. i. p. xiii.

<sup>2</sup> Brother of Mr. R. H. Hutton.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Hutton, in recalling these days, when Dr. Martineau resigned the Principalship of Manchester New College, dwelt

to which the German sphere of speculative thought differs from ours; and of the impossibility of passing from one to the other and back again at particular points of apparent relation. Both, I perceive, must be separately and pretty completely occupied, and their distinct methods of formation—the one by evolution from the centre to the superficies—the other by involution from superficies to centre—conscientiously followed out, before they can be compared, and their relations to the truth of things determined. Slowly but sensibly the contents of this new world open themselves to me. Already one thing strikes me forcibly: the great affinity between the Greek and the German philosophical ideas, and the strong light which each throws upon the other. The very languages seem to have such a relation, that passages from Plato which seem ridiculous in French or English, assume the aspect of sense and thought when presented by a professor in a German translation. There is something in this which at present I can only imperfectly understand. A philosopher of the John Bull species—like our friend the reviewer of Morell—would say that the German average of common sense in philosophy being so low, it was an agreeable surprise to find any meaning at all in a Teutonic speculative utterance; so that when Plato talks German, one is delighted at so great an improvement upon the native speech, but that when he talks English, one finds out that he disappoints the standard of London as much as he exceeds that of Berlin. This theory will not do, however, and I am persuaded that the complexion of the antagonistic languages differs, from their embodying

on this common study with grateful remembrance. 'The thermometer was not much above Zero, and we were not only padded up to the chin, but our feet enclosed in what we used to call the *höhere Einheit* of a fur shoe. It was there that my mind was subjected to that strenuous influence, and that he illustrated to his pupils, one or two of them, the same earnestness in undertaking the severe and less agreeable forms of study which he impressed upon us last night.' *Rétirement Proceedings.*



different, but equally real, elements of human consciousness, and taking up the constituents common to both in an inverse order of relations. The absence or complete subordination—at least since the time of Kant—of the *moral* element in the German philosophy is very striking. So far as I know, Moral Philosophy has scarcely an existence in the literature, and it has *no* place in the University instruction, of this country; and the notions relating to its topics which present themselves in books and lectures on kindred subjects, are of the crudest and strangest kind. It is a curious and expressive fact that the whole idea and development of Ethical Science in modern Europe has been almost exclusively *British*. Yet the Germans have a fixed idea that in the phrase 'English philosopher' there lies an inherent contradiction, like that which would be involved in the notion of a *Tartar poet* or an *Esquimaux gentleman*.

For once I believe I have said nothing of politics; the best assurance that all anxiety is for the present over. There is in truth a complete lull just now; all eagerness and passion being *distributed* over the country in detailed and inconspicuous preparation for the elections, instead of concentrated in Berlin in expectation of insurrection. I think even my democratic friends at home will admit that the course of events has thus far rather justified than discredited the opinions which made them complain of my conservatism. The interest of Prussian politics is now adjourned to February—a month upon whose issues the peace of the country and the security of the crown are staked. The admirable conduct of soldiers here, their discipline, sobriety, and kindly courtesy—a conduct felt by all classes, for they come in contact with all—has insensibly, but most materially, altered the temper of Berlin, and allayed its disaffection towards the Government. Now must I say the last word. With our united love and true wishes, for the coming and for all years.

Ever your affectionate,

JAMES MARTINEAU.

The winter months passed quickly amid philosophical studies, political interests, and the social activities of the University circles into which Mr. Martineau was introduced.<sup>1</sup> When the spring came, he prepared to break up his five-months' encampment, and move southward. As he bids farewell to the companion of his studies, R. H. Hutton, a note introducing him to Prof. Newman contains the following passage :—

Berlin, March 28, 1849.

I look with the profoundest interest to the appearance of your book,<sup>2</sup> which, however small, cannot fail to be (according to *our* measure of magnitude) the great work of your life. The more I see of the state of religion among intellectual men here, the more do I distrust the new sceptical direction taken in England by Froude, and, I suppose, many other admirers of Spinoza : and you are the only living man, loose from historical Christianity, from whom I could expect the exhibition of a positive faith in harmony with the higher Reason, without abatement of trust in the oracles of Conscience. It fills me with amazement that Froude, or any other man whom you can admire, should speak with eulogy (such as I see quoted from his *Nemesis of Faith*) of the development of Spinozism in Germany. I cannot but suspect that it is an illusion arising from very partial knowledge.

At the beginning of April Mr. Martineau took his family into Bavaria. When the melting snows opened the seclusion of the mountains, they passed to Berchtesgaden, and the Königsee, of which he used to speak fondly as the most beautiful spot he had ever visited. They were at Vienna 'in the most fearful hour of the Hungarian struggle,' but the courage with which he made his venture was justified by the result ; his plans triumphed over all emergencies ; he could recall nearly thirty years later

<sup>1</sup> He heard Neander lecture, though he did not meet him in private. Of the historian's platform-methods the philosopher sent a wonderfully vivid description to his friend Mr. Thom, *Life*, i. 191.

<sup>2</sup> The promised volume on *The Soul*.

that his programme of travel had been completely fulfilled. In the Austrian capital (as doubtless at other places on their route), they successfully spent the allotted number of days, and saw all they had proposed to see. The last weeks were passed at Heidelberg, and through Bonn and Antwerp the family returned to Hull,<sup>1</sup> reaching Liverpool soon after the middle of September.

The *Annus Mirabilis* was over. The preacher returned to 'the work of reorganising a large congregation in adaptation to the altered wants of the present time.' The philosophical lecturer had begun to entertain plans pressed upon him by his younger comrade in study, R. H. Hutton; 'Greatly do I lay to heart what you say about the need of a new work on the foundations of Morals.'<sup>2</sup> But in the few days' pause ere he resumed his Liverpool duties, the old burdens of responsibility and care loomed painfully before him. Pathetically modest is his estimate of his gain, to F. W. Newman (Sept. 24): 'I shall always be thankful for this year of absence. It has at least assured me that I am not too old to learn, and somewhat relieved the depressing self-distrust which was weighing me down in spite of every effort of will and faith.'

<sup>1</sup> The voyage was perilous. The regular steamer being disabled, Mr. Martineau arranged with the captain of a small fruit boat to take his party on board. There was no passenger accommodation, and the stormy voyage lasted three nights and two days. Driven out of his course, the captain knew not where he was, when Mr. Martineau recognised a triangular arrangement of lights upon the Norfolk coast. His local knowledge saved them.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Warmbrunn, Aug. 11; *Life*, ii. 337.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE LATER LIVERPOOL MINISTRY, 1849-1857.

FROM Germany Mr. Martineau returned to England to resume his pastorate at Liverpool in the beautiful new Church in Hope Street. For the next eight years—just half the period of his previous ministry—this was the chief scene of his labours. The foundations of his theology and philosophy had been securely laid ; he never again needed to change his general interpretation of human experience. The verdicts of criticism might be revised ; discarded arguments might be shaped anew ; against novel attacks fresh defences might be required. But for half a century he would live in the faith which he had found deep-seated in his soul ; he would express it in the same forms of thought ; he would sustain it by the same appeals to the witness of the conscience, and the veracity of the intellect. Through the prodigious literary activity of these next strenuous years there breathes a certain noble confidence, as of one who had striven and had attained ; yet deeper still the quick ear can detect the sigh of a pathetic loneliness ; for amid rapidly growing recognition he was exposed also to his severest personal trials.

## I.

Surrounded by both Protestant and Catholic types of religious organisation during his continental sojourn, Mr. Martineau had meditated continually on the functions of a Church, and his first care on his return was to prepare the way for more faithful and effective work alike for the worshippers within the congregation to which he ministered, and the community without. The direction which these efforts were to take, is indicated in the following letter addressed to the Rev. J. H. Hutton.<sup>1</sup>

Berchtesgaden, Bavaria.

Here we are established in probably our last resting-place before we turn our faces homewards ; and as our *Annus Mirabilis* draws to its completion, and I gratefully see its fruits of benefit in our young people, I often ask in heart the question you press upon me, whether it has brought me the new life I needed for the duties that lie before me. The answer perhaps can only be given by experience. The utterly jaded feeling with which I left England, I have certainly lost : and though by natural constitution of mind I have been denied the enjoyment of strong hope, I am not without a chastened expectation of doing better justice to the claims upon me than in previous years. With the good help of God I mean to *try*. Every human aid and resource has been allowed me ; and if now I fail, it can only be from the loss either of faculty or of fidelity. The year has afforded, notwithstanding interruptions, better opportunities of study and reflection than I have had since my college days.

I think often and anxiously, I wish I could say, hopefully, about a scheme of congregational co-operation ; without which, I do not hesitate to say, the very idea

<sup>1</sup> The contemporary copy accidentally omits the date.

and possibility of a Christian society is lost, and the venerable phrases by which we describe our congregations are a mockery. Then why not devise at once a remedy for such an evil? you may reasonably say. There is perhaps no great difficulty in drawing out a paper program, embodying the theory of a far better system of things than the present. Nor are our members slow to join in our complaints of the evil, and *wish* to see it abated. But when it came to the *practical administration* of a plan of mutual help in the Christian life, I doubt whether it would not meet with an overpowering resistance from the habits and notions of modern society. I feel the greatest repugnance to the mere *form and profession* of co-operation and union, without the reality; periodical meetings without substantive object, tea-drinkings for mere speechifying, praying classes for emotional emulation—are all hollow affairs, radically morbid, and tending to detach Christianity more and more from life. Unless, therefore, we can find materials of positive duty for joint performance, the attempt at union seems hopeless; and there lies the difficulty which oppresses me. It will not do to *invent* duties which people will not *feel to be such*, in order to get up church mechanism; the Church exists for the sake of individual goodness, not individuals for the sake of the Church.

Yet I do not altogether despair of finding some points in the personal conscience, waiting, as it were, to be brought to life by such agency as a congregational fraternity may apply. Everyone recognises the duty of charity and help to the weak: yet the performance of this duty has become so embarrassed and difficult in private life, that few, I suppose, are satisfied with the way in which they meet its claims. To make the Church the centre of this set of obligations; to watch first over the poor or reduced who may belong to us; next over those who are within easy reach through the schools; and to refer to the associated body of deacons (or what-

ever we might call them) cases lying still further, but appearing to demand attention—might bring into order a class of desires and duties now in sad confusion, and that, *not* by handing them over (as in the Domestic Mission plan) to a delegate, but by taking a share in combined and organised labour.

[The writer then proceeded to develop his favourite plans for the instruction of the young, through several years, leading up to a 'kind of confirmation service suitable to a crisis which surrenders them from the avowed guidance of another to their own undivided responsibility.' This would be the natural period for first joining the communion service and becoming eligible for posts of trust and service in the fraternity of charity and the service of the Church.]

The new Church was opened on Thursday, October 18, the pastor himself conducting the service of dedication, and the sermon being preached by the teacher of his own boyhood, the Rev. Thomas Madge.<sup>1</sup> At the soirée in the evening he was welcomed back by a large assemblage in the newly erected Philharmonic Hall. With characteristic reserve he would give no pledges,—'Whatever resolves are formed upon the growth and rise of future opportunities, are better hidden deep in the heart, and breathed only to him who can give them the strength and fervour of devotion'—but he declared emphatically that the influence of Christianity on the political future and social condition of Germany was extinct, and he warned his hearers that mighty political and religious changes would take place in England, in the coming years, which

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Martineau's contributions to the Church were twofold ; on the one hand, some reproductions of the works of Thorwaldsen, with which he had become acquainted in Germany ; on the other, a 'most perfect system of ventilation,' devised in conjunction with his brother-in-law, Mr. Alfred Higginson.

the old influences would do little to control or direct. Over against the gospel of the economists, 'help yourself,' stood the ancient Gospel of the Christian Church, 'help one another'; and they would not fulfil their duties unless they sustained a Christian life, and spread it by a kind of missionary action in the circle around.<sup>1</sup> With the same insistence did he proclaim the following Sunday, as he described the 'Angel of Service,' that 'in every Church the only classification known should be of character and age; and in using these as grounds of mutual service, provision should be made for teaching the child, for lifting the suffering, for confirming the weak, and for supplying duties proportioned to the strength of the strong.'<sup>2</sup>

For these ends, the classes for religious instruction were carefully reorganised, and maintained with unwearying faithfulness. The preacher would often gladly have given place to another voice; but the continuity of teaching must not be thus casually interrupted, and to what visitor could he delegate this sacred task? So he bore his responsibilities alone, and only rarely took part in courses of evening lectures elsewhere, in places accessible by late afternoon trains.<sup>3</sup> To the Communion Service he devoted great attention. Among his brethren at the Pro-

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Reformer*, 1849, p. 754.

<sup>2</sup> Of this sermon, 'The Watch-night Lamps,' *Essays*, iv. 447. it was observed at the time that it bore 'signs of more than ordinary labour,' *Christian Reformer*, 1850, p. 38. The biographer of a later day receives a similar impression, and feels the splendour of language and imagery 'betray more than usual the labour of composition,' *Life*, i. 199.

<sup>3</sup> A note of apology on this head is sounded at the opening of the Birkenhead Church, *Inquirer*, Sept. 6, 1851.



vincial Assembly, he once confessed that there had been times in his own life when he had felt the ceremonial parts of it an obstruction, and doubted whether he could continue to use the elements of bread and wine. It was no looseness of conviction, or scepticism as to the origin of the rite, that deterred him. His difficulty sprang 'from a fear of profaning religion by connecting it with an external act of manipulation, a bodily ceremonial.'<sup>1</sup> It left him with a great respect for the scruples of a sensitive religious mind. Partly to allay them, he devoted nine months (in 1855) to a course of weekly lectures on the history of the Eucharist; the issue divided his hearers into two classes, 'those who shrunk from a usage so rarely clear of superstition, and those who were drawn to the commemoration by its inherent beauty and significance.' To these latter he delivered a special 'Confirmation Address,' on the first Sunday in the New Year, before the service in which many joined for the first time.<sup>2</sup>

Outside the Church lay the vast and multifarious crowds of a great city. To 'the dull old scenes and neighbourhood of this town and port,' the heart of the absent preacher had again and again gone forth in the midst of 'ten thousand glories of God in the face of creation.'<sup>3</sup> The work that went deepest, and was most fruitful of future good,

<sup>1</sup> Speech at Manchester, June 23, 1853. *Christian Reformer*, 1853, p. 517.

<sup>2</sup> *Hours of Thought*, vol. ii., preface. The address will be found in the same volume, p. 361. together with two other Communion Addresses.

<sup>3</sup> Speech at the opening of Hope St., *Christian Reformer*, 1849, p. 754.

was the work of education. In two years after the completion of the Church, new day and Sunday schools were built, with provision for 420 scholars.<sup>1</sup> There he himself held Bible classes, in which children of all denominations were assembled, every week. A careful scheme of visiting was devised, which carried refined women into many a poor home, Catholic and Protestant, Anglican or Dissenter, and, through the natural ties established by participation in a common effort for the children, extended the helpfulness of the Church, without infringing on the obligations, or wounding the self-respect, of the parents. With the teachers of the Sunday Schools Mr. Martineau maintained the closest relations, presiding at their monthly meetings (with the inevitable tea), planning the work of the classes, and listening to the visitors' reports. Further down in the city was the Domestic Mission, on which he kept an ever-watchful eye. For these institutions he pleaded in London,<sup>2</sup> in Manchester, in Norwich, with a growing and even passionate interest in the immense social problems of the age. Concerning external remedies for the evils which weighed upon his heart, his judgment moved curiously to and fro: but to the moral and religious methods of the Missions he remained ever constant.

<sup>1</sup> They were opened on Dec. 29, 1851.

<sup>2</sup> On April 17, 1853, at Little Portland Street Chapel; his first appearance (I believe) since the Aggregate Meeting of 1838, described in chap. VII. The *Inquirer*, April 23, noted the presence of 'members of the legislature, metropolitan magistrates, clergymen and laymen of several denominations, and many men of literary repute,' not a few being compelled to stand throughout the service. Manchester, Oct. 28, 1854. Norwich, May 12, 1856.

## II.

The chief element in the religion which animated this activity, was an unwearied and persistent *endeavour*. That was the first angel whose light the preacher's eye had discerned among the 'Watch-night Lamps.' Many were the adverse influences with which he felt called to contend. The rising claims of science, especially when interpreted by the Logic of John Stuart Mill, threatened the whole fabric of Theism; and in the person of Auguste Comte had long boasted the victory of the 'positive' spirit. The spectacle of Germany proved only too clearly what dangers lay in a withered orthodoxy on the one hand, and a 'purely intellectual and critical theology' on the other. In his own country the preacher saw the impressions of previous years confirmed; nowhere was the alienation of the higher and professional classes from all religious faith so widespread and complete;<sup>1</sup> while the estrangement of the labouring masses filled the towns with disbelief.<sup>2</sup> Only in the middle classes did religion hold its own;<sup>3</sup> and with neither of its great mediatorial types, sacerdotal or evangelical, could he place himself in sympathy. In 1849 Trinitarianism was in the ascendant at home; a pantheistic socialism was rampant abroad; and in his first sermon in the

<sup>1</sup> 'The Restoration of Belief,' *Westminster*, July, 1852; *Studies of Christianity*, p. 356.

<sup>2</sup> Speech at Norwich, *Inquirer*, 1856, p. 332; where he quotes a curious investigation of Priestley's, to the effect that one-third of the inhabitants of large towns were never brought within the influence of a Christian society.

<sup>3</sup> Speech at the Hope Street soirée, *Christian Reformer*, 1849, p. 752.

new Church he thus described the hosts mustering for battle :—

On the one hand the venerable Genius of a *Divine Past* goes round with cowl and crozier ; and from the Halls of Oxford and the Cathedrals of Europe, gathers, by the aspect of ancient sanctity and the music of a sweet eloquence and the praises of consecrated Art, a vast multitude of devoted crusaders to fight with him for the ashes of the Fathers and the sepulchres of the first centuries. On the other, the young Genius of a *Godless Future*, with the serene intensity of metaphysic enthusiasm on his brow, and the burning songs of liberty upon his lips, wanders through the great cities of our world, and in toiling workshops and restless colleges preaches the promise of a golden age, when priests and kings shall be hurled from their oppressive seat, and freed humanity, relieved from the incubus of worship, shall start itself to the proportions of a God. Who shall abide in peace the crash and conflict of this war ? He only, I believe, whose allegiance is neither to the antiquated Past, nor to the speculative Future ; but to the imperishable, the ever-present Soul of man as it is ; who keeps close, amid every change, to the reality of human nature which changes not ; and who, following chiefly the revelations of the Divine Will to the open and conscious mind, and reading Scripture history, and life, by their interpreting light, feels the serenity and rests on the stability of God.

The religion that lay enshrined in the ‘ever-present soul of man,’ was necessarily a religion of individualism ; and the stress laid on ‘endeavour’ indicated its *ethical* character. It dwelt in the solitude of each responsible agent’;<sup>1</sup> it was involved in the recognition of obligations which could not be transferred from one person to another, and forbade all attempts at extension or identification of spiritual states between the believer and Christ. Regarding Jesus simply as an historical individual, ‘with the chasm of an incommunicable personality between him and us,’ the preacher found no ‘other bridge of mediation than the suasion of natural

<sup>1</sup> ‘Mediatorial Religion,’ *National Review*, April, 1856 ; *Studies of Christianity*, p. 171.

reverence, by which his image passes into the heart of faith.' The element of gratitude to a Deliverer, which filled the devout heart of Evangelical piety with lowly thankfulness, was therefore wanting to him. Nor did he ever freely surrender himself to the mere gladness of living, or to the delight in natural beauty. He never preached, as Theodore Parker did, on 'Conscious Religion as a source of joy.' He was, indeed, profoundly susceptible to beauty and love. In the midst of his family his cheerfulness, his hearty laugh, his enjoyment of fun, his brightness and geniality, all seemed to his children not only absolutely consistent with his religion, but its direct outcome. Yet he spoke of himself once as having 'a mind with more care of conscience than full joy of faith.'<sup>1</sup> This 'care of conscience' never left him. For him religion was, primarily, 'a sentiment of Reverence for a Higher than ourselves.'<sup>2</sup> Again and again is this aspect of it emphasised: 'we are capable only of a religion of *Reverence*, which bows before the *authority of Goodness*.'<sup>3</sup> The fundamental idea of Christendom is accordingly defined as 'the ascent through conscience into communion with God.'<sup>4</sup> In this process, faith may soar towards the goal, and rise into the life of the spirit, full of love, joy, peace. But experience is only too conscious of the hindrances

<sup>1</sup> To Mr. Thom, 1857. *Life*, i. 321.

<sup>2</sup> 'The Restoration of Belief,' *Studies*, p. 368.

<sup>3</sup> 'The God of Revelation his own Interpreter,' 1851. *Essays*, iv. 480. On the significance of this sermon see chap. XI.

<sup>4</sup> 'The Ethics of Christendom,' *Westminster*, January, 1852 *Studies*, p. 306.

upon the way. James Martineau realised the failure, rather than the rapture, of endeavour. Christianity was to him 'an unutterable sigh after an ideal perfection,' and its devotion one long-drawn 'wail of penitence.'<sup>1</sup> Fearless as he seemed in the field of intellect, he owned himself in the realm of conscience to belong to the order of 'dependent minds.'<sup>2</sup> He saw his friend Newman stand undismayed before the Infinite, without the need of any mediating object of reverence. He was even willing to acknowledge in this characteristic 'a perfection of mind,' and to confess his own 'clinging to images of extreme admiration' to be a weakness. But it was a weakness, he added, in which he found it 'indispensable to live.'<sup>3</sup> Some highest in man he must have visibly before him, to assure him of its infinite counterpart in God. This spiritual need it was which led him to defend with such energy the conception of the moral perfectness of Christ; and in proportion to the earnestness of his conviction was his pain at his exile from the sympathies of traditional faith, his distress at the horror and scorn with which others regarded his humanitarian interpretation of Christianity.<sup>4</sup>

That the Gospel of conscience was not complete, in whichever type it presented itself,—the Ethical or the Passionate<sup>5</sup>—he was well aware. Theism

<sup>1</sup> See the testimony of Miss Catherine Winkworth to his sense of sin, *infra*, chap. XI. p. 396.

<sup>2</sup> 'Phases of Faith,' *Prospective Review*, 1850. *Essays*, iii. 36.

<sup>3</sup> Letter to R. H. Hutton, 1850; *Life*, i. 339.

<sup>4</sup> Letter to R. H. Hutton, 1852; *Life*, i. 341.

<sup>5</sup> 'One Gospel in many Dialects,' 1856; *Studies*, p. 403.

was, indeed, 'the indispensable postulate of conscience,—its objective counterpart and justification, without which its inspirations would be illusions, and its veracities themselves a lie.'<sup>1</sup> But after all, it left deep longings of the spirit unsatisfied. It emphasized the idea of Law: beneath sovereignty and judgment the sense of communion, the sympathy of an indwelling Presence, was obscured. No more than Tauler could Martineau live in the moralism of Kant.<sup>2</sup> If, on the one side, he felt a deep appreciation for Jacobi, on the other he was drawn towards Schleiermacher, for had not he, too, learned of their common teacher, Plato?<sup>3</sup> Around the solemn

<sup>1</sup> 'Distinctive Types of Christianity,' 1854; *Studies*, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* *Studies*, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> On these writers Miss Susanna Winkworth records some interesting judgments. At the house of Mr. Tayler in Manchester, March 16, 1852, Mr. Martineau expressed a strong distrust of German pantheism; but when the conversation turned on a recently published life of Perthes, and Miss Winkworth spoke of his friendship with Jacobi, Mr. Martineau eagerly asked for further explanations about the latter, professed his admiration for him, and declared that he had never been properly appreciated in Germany. Two months later, at Park Nook, Mr. Martineau affirmed that Schleiermacher produced a temporary reaction in favour of religion at the cost of lasting mischief. In a later communication, Mr. Martineau, referring to this, said: 'In his construction of a theology he started from a principle—the consciousness of Dependence—and worked upon a method—of analysis of feelings—from which he could gain and did gain no faith in either a Personal God or the immortality of the soul; and to me a religion which is destitute of these beliefs has no moral or spiritual worth. So far, therefore, as Schleiermacher led the generation which he influenced to be content with an intellectual and æsthetic mysticism, and mistake it for a religion—nay, to identify it with the essence of Christianity,—I cannot but regard his teaching as unsound, and leading inevitably to the later disintegration which had its chief representative in Strauss; or, I should rather say, failing inevitably to arrest it; for Strauss was the product of Hegel rather than Schleiermacher. . . . Yet in spite of my judgment, I have always had

sanctuary of the Infinite Holiness was a boundless atmosphere of thought and affection. Here was the home of all beauty, and those ever-varying spontaneities of creative gladness which constituted God, in Browning's vivid phrase, the 'perfect Poet, who alone perfectly lived out his own creations.' This element also demanded recognition: it spoke in meditative and perceptive minds; it breathed through Novalis in a tender mysticism; found in Emerson its purest example; and supplied the essence of Carlyle's gospel in *Sartor*, 'before the divine thirst had advanced so much into a human rabies.'<sup>1</sup> To blend these two tendencies was the preacher's constant aim: and their spheres were defined in the maxim 'Let Theism keep Morals, and Pantheism may have Nature.'

This was not, however, an entirely exhaustive delimitation. Nature is usually, for Martineau, the realm in which God has pledged himself to those fixed ways which we sum up under the term Law. In the mechanism of the human frame he acts, as he acts in the scene around, along preordained lines of invariable constancy. Not such are his dealings with human souls. *There* is a scene where Living Mind can speak with living minds, in tones of encouragement or of rebuke, of kindling suggestion or supporting love. At times, indeed, this is confined to the moral life, where 'in the inmost

a strong affection towards Schleiermacher's personality, and an admiration for his leading disciples, De Wette, Lücke, Rothe, Dorner; all of whom have had distinguished merits, little affected by the philosophy of their master.' *Life of Catherine Winkworth*, vol. i. pp. 334, 344.

<sup>1</sup> 'Distinctive Types of Christianity.' *Studies*, p. 22.



room of conscience, God seeks you all the while.<sup>1</sup> At others, however, it is extended over a wider range. It vouchsafes visions of new truth ; it opens before us glimpses of diviner beauty ; it calls reverence higher and higher along the upward way ; and feeds the heart that is athirst for the Eternal. Describe it as a doctrine of the Spirit, and you may throw it into theologic form by saying that the indwelling God, who in Christ was the Word, is in us the Comforter. In this realm of mystery, God is for ever free ; and inasmuch as it transcends the customary Order of his acts, it may be called strictly supernatural. Possible in all men, however dim and intermittent, was this higher life. Constant was it in Jesus, whose spirit, through no better medium than the institutions of the Church and even the word upon the printed page, can yet reach ours, and bear it into the presence of the Father. In his whole conception, therefore, of religion, James Martineau soared beyond the range of Law, and earnestly repelled the charge of antisupernaturalism.

The wide range of the preacher's studies placed him in sympathy with many a lofty spirit, and enabled him to interpret the religion of Augustine and Luther, Pascal and Wesley. But this did not lighten the severe toils of preparation ; weariness sometimes wrung from him a cry for freedom to concentrate his powers on the philosophical field where he believed his true work lay. To Theodore Parker he makes his apology for having produced nothing more substantial.

<sup>1</sup> 'One Gospel in many Dialects': *Studies*, p. 408.

Liverpool, April 27, 1852.

I must take this occasion to thank you heartily for your two awakening volumes, and to tell you how greedy I am for more. Your project of a history of Religion within the limits of the Caucasian race is grand and impressive; and the distribution of it in your scheme appears to me to be everything that can be desired. There is no illusion in your impression, that throughout the West of Europe an atheistic mode of thought is becoming prevalent, and exercising a most disorganising influence:—I do not mean *politically*, for it rather favours than otherwise the establishment of military despotisms, having faith only in force;—but *morally*, in every department of life where only Conscience can rule. Bunsen, I understand, avows his impression that never, since the break-up of Paganism in Rome under the Empire, has there been anything like the utter alienation from all moral as well as religious faith now prevalent in the upper walks of English society. From all that I have observed or can learn, I should say the same of the Continent,—only substituting the *intellectual* aristocracy there for the *social* in England. You cannot render a greater service to our old world,—which abuses you often but loves you dearly,—than by elaborating with all your strength and resource the *positive* part of your work.

Would that I had anything to send you that could establish a reciprocity between us; or even any considerable scheme to announce. But my scrupulous slowness, added to the practical pressures of earnest life, detains me among the small things of periodical literature; and I have no worthy proof to send you that I am alive on the field. God bless you, dear friend, and send us many a blessing through you.

Already in 1852 the possibility was in sight that Manchester New College might be removed to London.<sup>1</sup> He himself strongly supported the proposal;<sup>2</sup> but it threw his whole future connexion with the College into uncertainty. More than a year passed in anxious expectation, as one plan after another was produced, and failed.<sup>3</sup> Mr.

<sup>1</sup> The foundation of Owens College rendered its Arts provision superfluous: while there were obvious advantages in some form of amalgamation with the recently established University Hall, and the neighbourhood of University College.

<sup>2</sup> It was finally adopted on Dec. 8, 1852.

<sup>3</sup> Miss Susanna Winkworth, visiting at Park Nook in May, 1852, heard of a 'project for a College Chapel in London, extremely

Tayler would go with the College to London ; Mr. Thom was withdrawing for a time from the ministry ; and he felt an inexpressible loneliness. Perhaps America might provide some sphere of Academic work ; ' God's time will clear many things now dark ; but at present I seem to see but a terrible and agitating future.'<sup>1</sup> Finally, a special Committee

private' : and the prospect of his retirement from preaching after some years was also mentioned.

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Mr. Thom, Jan. 13, 1852, *Life*, i. 251. To Mr. Newman he wrote on Aug. 13 : ' Your impressions gathered from a recent visit to Plas Gwynant interest me deeply. If Froude recovers from Spinoza, he will show a true greatness. No common mind could be seized with that infection ; and only a very uncommon one can recover from it. I should much like to know him. I often long, before I get too rusty with years, to be nearer the sphere of a few persons dear to me from intellectual as well as social sympathy, and able to animate and help me by thought and knowledge so much beyond my own as yours and his. Were I not poor, I should try to correct my stupidity by removing to London. But this is idle dreaming.' To the same friend, on Oct. 27 : ' My own wish now is decidedly for the amalgamation of our College and University Hall ; the requisite theological department being added. . . . Anyhow, I imagine, my occupation will be gone ; and with it any faint dreams I may have indulged of more systematic study, and more exclusively professorial duties, as life advanced.' To the Rev. J. J. Tayler, Nov. 20 : ' I think I discern traces in your letter of a misconception of my own *personal* relations to this whole matter. You quite mistake me, dear Friend, if you suppose me to nourish any ambition to be " placed at the head of an institution like University Hall, and combine with this office professorial and ministerial functions." One or two young friends,—whose affection does not blind my own self-knowledge,—have, I believe, dreamt of such a voracious combination for me : but in wishing for amalgamation with the Hall, I have always contemplated the preservation of a Lay Principal, nor would I on any account undertake his duties if they were offered me. So with respect to ministerial functions : I am sufficiently aware of the feeling of our London congregations to avoid preaching there even occasionally, and were I residing in London I should unconditionally decline all solicitations to appear in their pulpits. The only office for which I *do* think I have attained some qualification not contingent on the latitude of Lancashire or Middlesex,

recommended the addition in London of a Professorship of Mental and Moral Philosophy and Political Economy to the theological chairs, which were to be occupied by the Rev. J. J. Tayler (as Principal), and the Rev. G. Vance Smith. It was known that this scheme would involve considerable increase in the College expenditure; and at a meeting of the Trustees on May 25, 1853, it was resolved to adopt a less costly arrangement which would dispense with Mr. Martineau's services altogether.<sup>1</sup> His connexion with the College thus came to an abrupt close at the end of the College academic year, in the following June. Mr. Martineau divined the inner significance of the defeat of the larger plan. 'Concerned as I am,' he wrote to Mr. Thom, June 26, 1853, 'to think of all the vain burthen you have

is that of Teacher in Philosophy. And I will not deny that the loss of this function, after the love of it has become confirmed, and some ripeness for it has been laboriously reached, has much bitterness of disappointment in it: all the more, because I know that I do not deserve the distrust with which, even in this relation, religious prejudice and timidity visit me. But I see that my career in this direction is at an end: and my consolation is that, so long as *you* exercise a paramount influence over our young ministers and laymen at the most susceptible period of their lives, they will catch the very spirit and learn to love the great truths, which it seems to me of the deepest moment to impart.' The grounds for the 'distrust' here indicated are explained below, chap. XI.—Two years before he had thought of offering himself for the chair of Philosophy in the newly founded Owens College: and wrote to a friend (April 24, 1850), 'It has always been my desire to devote the freshness of life to the ministry, and its ripeness to philosophy. I fancy that the maximum might be got out of me in this way. But the absence of opportunity is the veto of Providence: so I am content to work on according to my means.'

<sup>1</sup> The resolution was moved by the Rev. R. B. Aspland, then one of the College secretaries, and seconded by the Rev. E. Higginson. They had other reasons for disapproving the larger scheme, as the sequel showed, beside that of finance. See chap. XI

borne, and of the doubtful promise of the future for our College, I believe it to be best that the real sympathies of our body should manifest themselves and have their way. For myself, I throw the whole matter off my mind, and turn back with an accepting heart to the sphere of duty which God determines to be best.'

Others, however, were unwilling to see the College transferred to London without its most brilliant teacher. On July 9 the *Inquirer* called loudly (was it the voice of Mr. R. H. Hutton?) for Mr. Martineau.<sup>1</sup> Warning its readers that this was 'not a theological question, or the mention of that name might, perhaps, be expected to rouse a divided feeling in our denomination,' it boldly affirmed that his devout philosophy had no more bearing on the historical verdicts dividing critical theologians than it had on the movements of the English and French fleets; and declared that a greater mis-

<sup>1</sup> For this Mr. Martineau was wholly unprepared. In a letter to his sister, Mrs. Higginson, from Pendyffryn, July 15, he wrote: 'When the Trustees adopted the smaller plan . . . . I immediately set myself to think how I could revise and improve my congregational work in Liverpool, and divide my new leisure between local duties and the gradual preparation of a book or two which I hope to get ready before I die. The reopening of the matter in the *Inquirer* has taken me altogether by surprise. . . . I cannot expect that many of my friends will think me right in treating this question as entertainable at all: so much is there to bind me to Liverpool. Whatever be the issue, I lay my account for harsh judgments, and shall not complain of them. But I am constrained to look beyond the local horizon, and keep before my eye the elements of a wider view. I can truly say that neither interest nor ambition have the faintest voice with me in this matter; so that, whatever the issue be, I am ready and content to set heart and hand on the labour, changed or unchanged, that may be given me to do. My decided expectation is of continuance at my present post.'

fortune could scarcely be conceived than the loss of the services of one 'who, in the opinion of many competent thinkers, has made a greater step in the theory of ethics than anyone since the time of Bishop Butler.'<sup>1</sup> The victory was soon won. Mr. Hutton and Mr. J. H. Tayler (son of the Rev. J. J. Tayler) invited subscriptions to a special fund. Ere the year closed, on Dec. 29, a deputation from the College Committee waited on Mr. Martineau at Park Nook with the request that he would give a course on Ethics during the next six months in London, and on February 7, 1854, he delivered his inaugural lecture in University Hall.<sup>2</sup>

### III.

Meanwhile, the home-interests called forth manifold activities. In educating his children himself,<sup>3</sup> Mr. Martineau carried out a conception to which he more than once referred in his speeches, that the family life is, as it were, the unit of the moral as of the social order, providing in miniature just those

<sup>1</sup> This was the judgment of the *Spectator* also, after the publication of the *Types of Ethical Theory*.

<sup>2</sup> Instead of the weekly visit to Manchester he paid a fortnightly visit to London. His arrangements finally included six lectures in two days, together with the journeys to and fro, which, fifty years ago, were not accomplished with the comfort and speed of the present day.—Anxiety about the conflicting claims of the College and his Church led him, in 1856, to give notice of resignation of his pastorate for the following year. In view of the evils of prolonging the same influence on the same spot, he had early prescribed to himself such a step. Under the urgency of his friends, the resignation was withdrawn. The correspondence is printed in the *Life*, i. 279–284.

<sup>3</sup> Sometimes one or two friends pleaded that their daughters should share so exceptional a privilege.

relations of inequality, of strength and weakness, age and youth, knowledge and ignorance, out of which all duties rise. The constant delegation of parental responsibility to others, in the formation of character and the training of mind and will, seemed to him little short of criminal: and while he recognised it with pain as a necessity for the working classes, no claims upon him in other directions could induce him to practise it himself.<sup>1</sup>

Beside the daily lessons he found time also to share the recreations of his family. Here is a picture from the artist hand of Miss Gertrude Martineau.

When we were children and young folks, at Park Nook, he used to read Scott's novels and poems aloud to us at tea, and

<sup>1</sup> On this subject he thus expressed himself to Mr. Newman, June 4, 1851: 'I do not at all understand what, practically, are the proposals of the Maurice and Kingsley set of men. The great danger of our present tendencies appears to me to be, lest, in quest of other and more economical classifications, the *family group* should be destroyed, as the unit of Society; and not the family only, but all those *mixed* assortments of human beings that are the true nurseries of excellence. The parents, instead of educating their children, send them to school,—all the boys to one place, all the girls to another; and, when we have a National system of schools, will be released even from the obligation of *paying* for the education, and will have the whole thing done *for* them. The rich have their *houses* away from the poor; and the poor themselves, I fear, are in some danger of being drawn into Club-life by the model lodging-houses. The hospitals relieve the healthy of the charge of the sick. And I observe that there are springing up separate organisations (benefit-clubs and Lyceums and schools for the different *trades*,—e.g., Schools for Joiners' children, for Porters', etc.). I do not like any direction of effort, which widens the interval between different classes, ranks, and ages, or which despairs of old-fashioned feeling of Parental responsibility. I am not blind to the immense difficulty of attacking the evils of our large towns by a method of moral detail, rather than by the accumulated power of a mechanical organisation. But still the principle seems to me sound: and the reform which should set *all things right with one person* would surely be better than a reform which should set *one thing right with a hundred persons*.'

in that way he read us nearly all. He used to *eat* very little, but drink a great deal of tea. and whilst we satisfied our young appetites fully, he read aloud to us, sipping his tea meantime; and we all lingered a long time round our tea-table, getting our work and drawing after we had done, and delighted in those evenings. When the tales were *very* exciting, he would look on to see how long the next chapter was, to see if he could spare time to read another, and would say, 'Oh well, we'll have one more'; though as we grew older, we sometimes had a wistful suspicion that he would sit up the longer into the night in consequence. How well I can see the long table still, as we all sat round it, and Mother at the end, with the hospitable tray and large brown urn in front,—and Father just round the corner of the table, on her right; his book neatly poised against the sugar basin, at a good angle for reading without holding! and how the scenes of those novels are interwoven with the scene in the room! He also read to us in the same way almost all Dickens's books as they came out in parts. But I think Scott carried off the palm for interest and delight.

Visitors came and went, for the host was 'given to hospitality'; now it was his former student, R. H. Hutton; or again one or more of the Winkworth sisters; or the artist Carl Rundt from Berlin; or, in memorable days at Grange, in Borrowdale, his late colleague F. W. Newman. 'I enjoyed an excellent home,' wrote the Swedish novelist, Miss Frederika Bremer, referring to September, 1851, 'in the house of the noble and popular preacher, James Martineau. With him and his wife,—one of those beautiful motherly natures who, through a peculiar geniality of heart, is able to accomplish so much, and to render herself and everything that is good two-fold in quite another manner to that of the multiplication table which merely makes two and two into four,—with them and their family I spent some beautiful days amid conversation and music.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Inquirer*, May 1, 1852, from the New York *Christian Inquirer*. Mr. Martineau so admired Miss Bremer, that he began to learn Swedish to read **her** books in their original language.



Miss Bremer had been powerfully moved by *Alton Locke*; and Mr. Martineau undertook to open her way to acquaintance with Kingsley, if she would first take counsel with Prof. Newman. In the letter which introduced her to his friend, he declared his concurrence with 'a moral resistance to the full swing of economic laws.'

Gravely was he concerned over the wretchedness revealed in the great cities. It was the outcome, he declared,<sup>1</sup> of the modern doctrine of leaving everything to individual interest and self-will; and he was ashamed that the National Church should waste large sums of money in fees to distinguished lawyers for discussing questions about the Fathers, which would be much better employed in building bath-houses and erecting schools. The next year he demanded compulsory education, and the prohibition of the sale of drink to children:<sup>2</sup> and in the *Prospective* for February, 1851, he wrote: 'We fully believe that the theory of individual independence has been carried to a vicious extreme, and that the authority of the State must be extended over a wider range than the severity of economic doctrine has been willing to allow, concerning itself again with the houses, the hours, the education, the amusements, of the people.'<sup>3</sup> It was in this

<sup>1</sup> At the Domestic Mission. *Inquirer*, January 19, 1850.

<sup>2</sup> At the Domestic Mission. *Inquirer*, February 1, 1851.

<sup>3</sup> 'Europe since the Reformation': *Essays*, ii. 281. In the matter of education his views had changed since 1847, when he had been prepared for a secular system (*ante*, chap. VIII. p. 274). Writing to the Rev. R. L. Carpenter, Feb. 25, 1851, he commends the effort of a Manchester Clergyman, Mr. Richson, to secure the recognition of all forms of religion: 'This scheme has had the

spirit that he called for the entire repeal of the beer-house legislation, and even invoked the example of antiquity (in face of the remnants of the Puritan spirit) to justify his advocacy of the erection of theatres at the public cost in every large town, where the best dramas of England could be represented.<sup>1</sup> It was his time of revolt against theoretic economy. 'The very science,' (he wrote to Newman, March 15, 1851), 'which, in one breath, professes its abstract distance from personal realities, in another claims the direction of law and administration; and then its intellectual pride becomes political cruelty.' Beneath his usual calm and self-control, lay deeps of unsuspected passion; and he could even imagine himself breaking the windows of the conductors of unhallowed trade.

To Mr. R. H. HURTON.

Liverpool, Sept. 18, 1851.

My dear Richard,

Your letter has come as if in answer to the longing of my heart. Had it not appeared, I should still have written to you,

effect of uniting all parties in Manchester in a most unexpected manner. Mr. Stowell, the great Evangelical demagogue, proposes the allowance of the Douay Version to the Catholics: Independent ministers, hitherto uncompromising "voluntaries," act on the Committee: the High Church party move the exclusion of all catechisms and confessions from the teaching in new schools, and from the instruction of dissentient parents' children in the old ones.' On the same day, it happened, he wrote to Mary Carpenter at Bristol with warm sympathy for her Reformatory work, and lamented that the 'selfish stupidity' of the local representatives of the Corporation thwarted the efforts of the excellent Liverpool stipendiary magistrate to create a similar school there. At the upper end of the educational scale he was much interested in movements within the University of London (with which Manchester New College was then affiliated) for securing a representation of Professors as well as Graduates in its governing body.

<sup>1</sup> At the Domestic Mission. *Inquirer*, March 20, 1852.

probably by this very post, to enclose for your reading Mr. Newman's criticism on your last article. . . . I do not think that the moral limits to the application of economic doctrine could be more skilfully and clearly drawn : and Mr. Newman's reply does not in the least abate my horror of the people who can bring themselves to pay wages below the physical minimum. If a London mob were to attack Moses and his establishment, I fear my fingers would itch to be at the work as irresistibly as Mr. Solly's at sight of a Berlin Barricade. No doubt the exclusion, by moral rule, of starvation wages, would involve great changes in the management of the whole pauper question ; changes, however, in the right direction, tending to create a sharper division between the pauper and the class of dependent labourers than even the new Poor Law aimed to produce. But I believe that if this division could be made so marked as almost to constitute a separate caste, great social benefit would in the end arise. I fear Mr. Newman is right in what he says about the *moral* causes of suffering among the working classes ; and I do not wonder at his grave disapproval of Kingsley's blind humanity, so far as it tends to withdraw attention from the prolific root of almost all the ill.

The annual round followed from year to year its steady course. ' We go on without events,' he once wrote to his friend Newman, ' working, fearing, hoping, using up the present and trusting for the future.' The death of one sister, the alienation of another,<sup>1</sup> the departure of the eldest son, the illness or the marriage of a daughter,—these made up the family chronicle. Sensitive and finely strung was the father upon whom all leaned. His natural impetuosity was not always under perfect control ; and if he wounded a friend's affection, his grief was deep, and his acknowledgment prompt. Swift in decision, he sometimes saw the advantages of a single course so clearly as to make it the price of his co-operation. Yet a certain shy habit of mind clung to him through life ; by temperament he knew

<sup>1</sup> To the discriminating account of the famous *Prospective* article entitled ' Mesmeric Atheism,' May, 1851, given by Dr. Drummond, *Life*, i. pp. 220-229, nothing can be added.

himself deficient in hopefulness; and though in moments of difficulty he never lacked courage, and surprised his friends by the boldness of his proposals, he still lived, even in these years of growing reputation, in a certain shadow of despondency. In spite alike of this personal shyness and intellectual self-confidence, he had a craving for sympathy, which was denied to him—from causes already partly indicated, and hereafter to be more fully explained—just where he most desired it, among his brother ministers, and the religious community to which he belonged. The variety of his enterprises brought him into numerous relations with others which sometimes produced heartburnings and disputes. ‘I have not been accustomed to think myself a quarrelsome man,’ he wrote to Newman (Nov. 25, 1854), ‘or to feel that my temptations lay much on that side: yet somehow find myself entangled in more than one very painful personal controversy. It seems not likely that this should be, without serious fault of my own; yet, often searching, I cannot honestly say that I am able to perceive it. I find it impossible to express to you the admiration and affection which your faithfulness towards C—— in this whole matter excites in me: what is he made of not to be guided by such tender consideration yet clear-sighted justice at his side?’

#### IV.

This ethical demand breathed through all his judgments alike of persons and affairs. To divergencies of moral sentiment or lack of moral strength

he was acutely sensitive. Of Arthur Hugh Clough he wrote to Newman (Jan. 3, 1851), 'Much as I admire him, he disappoints me by his apparent want of earnestness and a certain air of sceptical indifferentism.' 'I find it possible to sympathise more or less with almost *any* faith; but I cannot sympathise with *no*-faith; and the intellect and culture that may coexist with such negation affect me like fine mirrors and chimney-piece ornaments in a house unfurnished and untenanted.'<sup>1</sup> From his early friend, John Stuart Mill, he had travelled far: 'I have read nothing yet but Mill's article,' he says to the editor of the *Westminster* (from Dunoon, July 4, 1851), 'which, like everything he writes, is clever and masterly. Yet somehow I must confess that I like him better upon all other subjects than upon moral questions; in his management of which there is something which, in a way that I cannot explain, repels the confidence of his readers, and disappoints his philosophical acuteness of its proper result. . . . The real grounds of dissent from him lie, in truth, deeper than any part of the question selected by him for discussion.'

It was, again, on moral rather than theologic grounds that he condemned the existing condition of the Anglican Church.<sup>1</sup> That Tractarians and Evangelicals should profess adherence to the same

<sup>1</sup> Yet of Clough's poetry he expressed in later life sincere admiration. See chap. XV.

<sup>1</sup> Three brilliant articles were devoted in 1850 and 1851 to this and the Catholic question; 'The Church of England,' *Westminster*, 1850; 'Europe since the Reformation,' *Prospective*, Feb. 1851; 'The Battle of the Churches,' *Westminster*, 1851. The three are all reprinted in *Essays*, ii.

formularies was a scandal to him ; and not less so was the departure in other directions of minds already susceptible to changes of intellectual climate since the fourth or the sixteenth century. The protest against the casuistry of subscription which he had already made in the case of Arnold, was renewed in vigorous terms. But he was prepared to recommend now a definite practical measure. The principle was exceedingly simple. The charter of the State Church was the Act of Uniformity of 1662. Were that once abolished, the way would be open for a truly national religious Establishment. All sects would be justified as partial expressions of the national faith. Parish congregations should have a voice in the selection of their ministers, under due safeguards of intellectual and moral qualifications ; and the High Churchman might then practise his Catholic ritual within a scheme of comprehension which would find place also for the Methodist or the Unitarian.<sup>1</sup> To these proposals he was to return in later years

<sup>1</sup> About the remoteness of this prospect he was under no illusions. To the Rev. Dr. Armstrong, of Bristol, he wrote on Jan. 22, 1851 : ' Your picture of a comprehensive national Church represents very nearly the state of things which, in my opinion, reforming Englishmen should aim at realising. In aspiring towards it we have at least the satisfaction of conscious disinterestedness : for no possible comprehension, I imagine, could include *us*. . . . Beset with difficulties as both the Church and the Education questions are, I incline to think that the greatest difficulty in the way of their practical advance is the *mediocrity* of all our public men. *One* considerable statesman, *one* bishop with a spirit like Arnold's, might now find materials in English sentiment for effecting an ecclesiastical revolution, and a school reform, of the most beneficent kind. But neither layman nor divine will be found equal to the task. And the fear is, that we shall go on, till a Chartist era gives us a *Secular-school* and a *No-church* system.'

(see chap. XV.). As an immediate corollary he joined actively in the demand for University Reform in 1854, and, in conjunction with Mr. Thom, spoke at a meeting in Liverpool on its behalf.<sup>1</sup>

In the same spirit did he view the establishment of the Catholic hierarchy in this country. The fathers who had toiled for Catholic emancipation knew perfectly well that Roman Catholicism was not only a religion but a polity: and to protest against the appointment of bishops was to ignore the legitimate and necessary consequences of the nation's own act. The glamour which still surrounds the memory of John Henry Newman, will give interest to the following passage from a letter to Francis (Liverpool, Jan. 3, 1851).

How curious that our own national affairs should hinge again on the old Papal question! and how strangely must your brother feel himself one of the great agencies of Europe! His position, on looking back over the last twenty years, may well fill a mind like his with an overpowering enthusiasm. I heard him preach when I was at Birmingham in the summer. As in reading his writings, I was struck with the interfusion of a certain *cold splendour* with a course of thought chiefly marked by dialectic subtlety: and in asking myself the question, which occurs to every one, about his sincerity, I became more convinced than ever that sincerity is quite a different thing in different minds, varying especially with the sort of reliance they have on objective truth as attainable by man, and their mode of representing to themselves the nature of truth itself. I fully believe your brother to be as sincere as he can be, and to feel himself in possession of the truest that can be had. Yet when I watch the sophistical play of an intellect so clear and rich, and observe the constant tendency of logical ingenuity to exclude veracious directness of thought, I cannot get rid of the impression that philosophical scepticism underlies his religious faith: and that the demand of his mind is satisfied by the internal consistency of a system without much anxiety about its ultimate foundations and the reality of its supports. His Anglican lectures,—in spite of the

<sup>1</sup> April 25: Speech in *Inquirer*, April 29. Subsequent research has not justified all its historical pleadings.

evasiveness of the latter half of the volume,—fill me with admiration of his genius. Had I been at Oxford with him, I am convinced I should have gone into captivity to him ;—unless, indeed, *you* had come to the rescue.

Severely as he condemned its sacerdotalism, reprobated the moral danger of its confessional, and contrasted the standard of English character with that of Rome or Naples, he nevertheless assigned to Catholicism a very high value, as enabling Christianity to coexist within natural ethics. There he found a religion which instead of superseding and cancelling, rather supplemented and guided the native energies of the soul. There, faith adopted morals and purified them, and for a law of compulsion below substitutes a love of God above.<sup>1</sup> An Anglican visitor found this admiration result in unexpected consequences. Writing from Park Nook, Jan. 16, 1857, Miss Catherine Winkworth reported her perplexity.

After supper we got into a talk that startled me very much, for he was defending the Romanist doctrine of good works. Presently I said humbly, 'I suppose I never understood it: I fancied it meant that we could do things of ourselves which really did lay God, so to speak, under an obligation to us, which is so utterly false.' 'Well,' he said, 'that is what I do mean,' whereat I started. 'That is,' he continued, 'God has laid himself under the obligation by attaching certain consequences to the fulfilment of his law.' 'Yes, the perfect fulfilment, but even the best saints must be forgiven.' 'If you suppose the law of God requires absolute holiness.' 'Yes, I never thought of believing anything else.' Then he went on that we Protestants did not honour the saints enough: and Susie said, 'But the theory of merit would certainly never spring from what the saints themselves said of their works.' 'No, of course not,' he said, 'because of their humility.' 'Well,' I ventured to say, 'I always

<sup>1</sup> 'The Ethics of Christendom,' *Studies*, p. 347. The whole argument with its interpretation of Arnold's doctrine of the Church as covering all human relations, and its vindication of the use of force, deserves careful study.



thought the saints knew best about that'; whereat Mr. Martineau burst into a fit of laughter. . . . So then Mr. Martineau went on declaring that the Romish morality was so much higher than the Protestant on this very ground; and Susie stood up for the Protestants; but I presently thought that Mr. Martineau didn't want to 'argufy,' but to be pleasant and uncontradicted, so I was silent, and Susie said afterwards I was recreant, but I can't argue, especially if I fancy that it jars on anyone. But I do wish I could see what Mr. Martineau meant.<sup>1</sup>

Most strenuous of all was his persistent application of moral principles to politics. Profound as were his speculative and religious interests, he never detached himself from the life around him, to wrap himself in them alone. As he prepares to bid adieu to the fells round Skelwith Bridge, he writes to Newman, 'These mountains after all shut one up too much from the great world beyond, and its murmur of struggling humanity; and bring on at last an impatience for return to the battlefield of truth and right. Where news moves sluggishly, and arrives after date, somehow its force is spent, and the proper moment of our sympathy is gone when it arrives: and for myself I want to be where life is quicker, and men help each other to interpret the meaning of events as they arise.' It was late in the summer of 1854, and the English and French troops were on the way to the Crimea. When the day of humiliation had been appointed in the spring (April 25), Mr. Martineau's loyalty had been severely strained. 'The terms of the Queen's proclamation,' he wrote to Mr. Thom (April 20), 'have fairly brought me round to your view about the Fast-day. When that young lady threatens me with "the

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Catherine Winkworth*, vol. ii. p. 95.—See *infra*, chap. XII. p. 414, for an account of his devotional services, and for his personal sense of the evil of sin, p. 395, note <sup>1</sup>.

wrath and indignation of Almighty God" in case of non-observance, I can no longer repress my spirit of disobedience. If the Government is to call for a national religious act, the appeal must be made to a really national feeling, and not to such miserable and grovelling superstition.' But there was no stronger advocate than he of the English cause. He once excused himself to Newman for being 'a wretched politician,' on the ground of want of historical knowledge; and even declared that he would be thankful to have no political franchise, and to leave the disposal of affairs to wiser heads. 'The extreme difficulty I find in forming a decided opinion on subjects whose bearings are so intricate, and the scruples that visit me after I have fancied myself clear, frighten me at the responsibility of being a citizen at all.'<sup>1</sup>

There were no such misgivings now. He had seen Poland finally declared a Russian province in 1832; through his mother and his sister Harriet he had been personally interested in some of the exiles; and Russia had been ever since for him the impersonation of bad faith. In a striking series of sermons on 'National Duties,' delivered in the autumn and winter of 1854-55, he expounded the principles which, in his view, ought to govern the moral action of states. They had a personality of their own, with real duties to discharge, and trusts to protect; and in the moral order of God's providence were exposed to the solemn law of retribution. In a series of letters to Newman, and in

<sup>1</sup> To F. W. Newman, Jan. 3, 1851.

two articles in the *National Review*,<sup>1</sup> he made their concrete application to British policy. No reader of these two papers can fail to note the strength of his impeachment of Russia. He is no advocate of the Turk (not yet denounced as 'the unspeakable'); but he dreads the advance of Muscovite aggression, and demands the restoration of Poland as a bulwark of European civilisation.<sup>2</sup> Like many noble natures, Mr. Martineau believed that a just war carried with it an immense moral appeal, and lifted the nation which waged it into a more strenuous and lofty life. The note struck in his speech at the Provincial Assembly, Liverpool, June 22, 1855, was repeated more than once.

The moment that appeal is made to the common sense of justice to vindicate the rights of an injured nation, and to stand up against the hypocrisy and arrogance for what we believed to be the rights of law and of God, we become once more a united nation; we become conscious of that which we had almost forgotten, that we have the pulsation of a common heart; we feel a sentiment before which the petty intrigues and egotism of political sections disappear. Moreover, we are drawn at the same time into an alliance with a nation towards whom we have enter-

<sup>1</sup> This was established in July, 1855, as the successor to the *Prospective*. Mr. Martineau was not its editor, but he was its principal founder, and was chiefly instrumental in securing the pecuniary support with which it was started, and the remarkable group of writers, including afterwards Froude, W. R. Greg, Walter Bagehot, Matthew Arnold, R. H. Hutton, and others, who contributed to it. In the first number he published an article on 'International Duties and the Present Crisis,' which was followed next January by a second on 'Foreign Policy in 1856.' The reproduction of these articles in *Essays* i. implies that after the retrospect of a generation the author remained unconverted to the view of his leader, Lord Salisbury, that in supporting Turkey England put her money on the wrong horse.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Newman was, as usual, the recipient of his political confidences. The correspondence showed how two observers, equally anxious to apply moral principles to political action, might reach different results.

tained the bitterest prejudices. We find good in that nation ; we find ourselves more closely drawn together in one interest ; and gradually it dawns upon us that it is committed to us as a duty to defend the advancing and progressive liberties of western civilisation against the torpid, barbaric, and crushing despotism which would encroach upon us from Asia.<sup>1</sup>

One other question had long occupied his thoughts. On Vienna violence or a Parisian *coup d'état* he had cast a passing glance : American slavery had been a permanent pain. With his friend Dewey he had earnestly remonstrated in earlier years, though he had refused to join his brother-ministers in a general address of rebuke.<sup>2</sup> After the passing of the Fugitive Slave Law a similar difficulty arose. The Provincial Assembly was to meet at Altrincham, and his old friend Franklin Howorth sought, through his daughter, to obtain his support to another protest. To Miss Howorth, excusing himself from being present on the ground of London engagements, he sent the following reply.

Liverpool, May 27, 1851.

Perhaps if circumstances allowed me to take part in the contemplated proceedings, the reflection needful to a deliberate and conscientious judgment might convince me that we ought to proclaim our opinion respecting the Fugitive Slave Law. But I cannot honestly conceal my present impression, that such an expression of opinion upon a Law of the United States Congress by the Lancashire and Cheshire Provincial Meeting of Presbyterian Ministers, would be unadvisable. About the nature of the Law in question, there would be no difference of opinion amongst us ; and probably none as to the obligation of resistance to it on all good citizens of the Free States. But there are natural limits to the Provincials' right of supervision over the moral and spiritual affairs of the world : the mere fact that we have strong private sentiments as to the legislative proceedings of foreign nations, does not seem to me sufficient to justify the wisdom of our corporate interposition. The effect of mere admonition, from bodies of men not holding the monitor's natural position, appears to me usually mischievous upon grown men.

<sup>1</sup> *Inquirer*, June 30, 1855

<sup>2</sup> *Ante*, chap. VIII. p. 255.

I say this, with every feeling unreservedly and enthusiastically on the side of the resistance party in Boston. But I have observed that the members of this party themselves do not relish English interposition on their behalf.

With kindest remembrances to Mr. and Mrs. Howorth,

Ever, dear Sarah,

Yours very affectionately,

JAMES MARTINEAU.

In spite of the sarcasm which he permitted himself in this letter, he felt towards slavery the gravest moral reprobation. When *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was entrusted to the hands of the Rev. Charles Beard for review in the *Prospective*, in September, 1852, Mr. Martineau wrote privately to his co-editor, Mr. Thom, 'If you think him in danger of falling short of due sympathy with the active enemies of Slavery in America, you will perhaps administer a little spur to his zeal.' The election of President Buchanan in the autumn of 1856 filled him with the gravest forebodings. To the Rev. J. H. Allen, of Bangor, Maine, he expressed his anxiety in the most emphatic terms (Dec. 30, 1856): 'Never, I suppose, did the Providence of God commit to human hands a greater trust than is now vested in the citizens of your Northern States. For once, even local and party excitement can scarcely exaggerate the importance of the contest; to the calmest and remotest observer, no less than to the actor on the spot, it appears to involve,—with the destinies of your Continent,—the whole Future of Humanity.'<sup>1</sup> The January *National* (1857) contained an article from the same pen on 'the Slave

<sup>1</sup> *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, vol. vi., 1903. Other extracts from these letters are derived from the same source.

Empire of the West,' written, perhaps, with a more sustained moral passion than any of his essays. He might blame himself for want of historical knowledge; there is no lack of it here, in the masterly sketch of the changes of American slavery since the War of Independence. He might mistrust his judgment: he made a prophecy which was fulfilled in the spirit, if not in the letter.

The Southern temper is impetuous and arrogant, and can neither observe a reticence nor respect a limit. Two years ago, the boast escaped from Senator Toombs (of Georgia) that 'soon the master with his slaves will sit down at the foot of Bunker Hill Monument.' The Governor of South Carolina propounds, in his recent official message, the doctrine that all labour must again return into the hands of the slaves. The abettors of the Kansas iniquity make no secret of their resolve,—now that the spell of the Missouri line is broken,—of overrunning the whole North with slaves and turning the federated continent into a vast house of bondage. There is a Nemesis for all this insolence: and if it be infatuated enough to belie its own predictions, and attempt their realisation, the Free States will be driven to separate, and the splendid visions of the rest will vanish in the double retribution of civil and of servile war.

This was the author's last literary venture in the field of political ethics. When the crisis at length arrived, and civil war actually broke out, what were the influences which enlisted the seer in the cause of the South? Among the paradoxes of opinion with which he was sometimes charged, none was stranger than this.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY IN THE NEW UNITARIANISM : 1849-1857.

ON the morning of June 15, 1851, Dr. Vaughan, the Editor of the *British Quarterly Review*, was present at the service in Hope Street Church. His impressions of the minister's discourse were reproduced in an article in his review next August. The preacher was identified without difficulty ; and the *Christian Reformer*, in noticing the incident, though not disclosing his name, denounced, without further enquiry, ' this foolish sermon.'<sup>1</sup> Mr. Martineau was driven in self-defence to send it to the press, and it was issued under the title ' The God of Revelation his own Interpreter.'<sup>2</sup> Judged by a casual stranger, unfamiliar with the habitual conceptions of the speaker, and ignorant of the Biblical and philosophical studies that lay beneath them, it might appear one-sided and even extravagant. From one of his own brethren in the ministry Mr. Martineau expected a different treatment, and the eagerness of his condemnation unheard wounded him deeply. His remonstrance with the Editor for not having first frankly asked him ' Did you preach this thing ? '

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Reformer*, 1851, p. 563.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays*, iv. 473.

drew forth a sincere expression of admiration for the 'gentleness and good-temper' manifested 'under strong provocation to feelings and conduct of a different kind.'<sup>1</sup> But the correspondence revealed a chasm between the traditional Unitarianism of an elder day, and the new form which it was assuming at the hands of the Liverpool teacher. Old Biblical conceptions were frankly set aside, and their place was supplied by a philosophy which, in one aspect, came dangerously near to sympathy with orthodoxy. For many years the 'Vaughan' sermon continued to be a rock of offence. An important series of Essays belongs to the same period, and from these the following type of doctrine emerges.

## I.

The apologetics of the eighteenth century had striven to confirm the traditional ascriptions of the books of the New Testament to the writers of the apostolic age: and Unitarian teaching, while repudiating the narratives of the miraculous conception, had accepted the Gospels as the faithful record of eye-witnesses of the ministry of Jesus, and their disciples. By slow and laborious investigations had Mr. Martineau been compelled to abandon that position; and the old authority which he once attached to the Biblical record had disappeared. The researches of the famous Tübingen critics—to Miss Susanna Winkworth he spoke in warm praise of Baur, Zeller, and Schweigler<sup>2</sup>—had made a deep

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, i. 236.

<sup>2</sup> May, 1852: *Life of Catherine Winkworth*, vol. i. p. 344.



impression on him; and in an article on 'the Creed and Heresies of early Christianity' (published in the *Westminster* in 1853) he expressed an almost unreserved adhesion to their general results.<sup>1</sup>

The fundamental conception of the school is well known. The key to the development of the Church lay in the conflict aroused by the plea of the Apostle Paul for the admission of the Gentiles to the privileges of the Gospel, without undertaking the obligations of the Law. Two parties confronted each other, the Jewish Christians attaching themselves to Peter, and the Greeks to Paul; and the strife was prolonged far beyond the life-time of the Apostles into the second century. On this basis the whole of the New Testament literature was rearranged. The ecclesiastical limits of the Canon were frankly broken down; and the books which bore sacred names, were set side by side with the Clementine Homilies, or the letters of Polycarp and Ignatius. The place of each fresh product of Christian thought was determined by its 'tendency.' Did it favour the legal and limited view of the new religion; did it boldly adopt the universal conceptions of the great missionary to the Gentiles; or, finally, did it exhibit the two principles in a harmony indicating that the conflict was over? In this scheme, the First Three Gospels became anonymous documents—founded, no doubt, on earlier materials—the oldest of which, Matthew, did not receive its present shape till after 135 A.D.; while the Fourth Gospel, admittedly the last of all, was not known to have existed till con-

<sup>1</sup> *Studies of Christianity*, p. 249.

siderably later. Each book was tested by its relation to the parties in the great contest, until at last the opposition died away, and lost itself, in the reconciling conception of the Catholic Church.

This bold reconstruction, the symmetry of which enlisted Mr. Martineau's architectonic sympathies, led to two important consequences. In the first place, the Protestant doctrine of the unity and consistency of the New Testament was shattered. It was no longer possible to maintain that the presentment of Christ by the apostle Paul was the same as that of Matthew: nor could the Hellenism of the Fourth Gospel be harmonised with the Jewish elements in the preceding Three. Within the limits of the Canon distinctive types of Christian teaching, therefore, must be recognised: and the denominational formula 'Unitarianism the doctrine of the Gospel' was deprived of its foundation. To which of the three typical forms did it refer? And secondly, the new view of the origin of the Evangelic narratives, the surrender of much of the record as unhistorical, the recognition of all kinds of distorting influences reshaping the witness of tradition, destroyed the older defences of the authority of Christ.

But the avowed heresy of Mr. Martineau went much further. The central conception of the primitive church was that Jesus was the Christ or Messiah. In criticising the *Phases of Faith* of his friend Newman,<sup>1</sup> the reviewer incidentally remarked: 'It is needless to say that this term denotes no real

<sup>1</sup> *Prospective*, 1850; *Essays*, iii. 26.

object *in rerum natura*, but a wholly ideal personage, the arbitrary product of Jewish imagination.' The teaching of the 'Vaughan' sermon therefore was not new, though its statement was trenchant. The Messianic idea 'was in its very essence the fabric of a dream; a landscape traced upon the clouds by the creative eye of faith and disappointment.' Nay, the preacher added that 'to discuss whether Jesus was the Messiah, is even more unmeaning than the question whether John the Baptist were Elijah; for Elijah was at least a person, but Messiah was only a conception.'<sup>1</sup> The notion that Jesus is the Messiah resulted from our search for Christianity in the wrong place, the literal creed of the first age, instead of the spirit of the whole generations since; 'The chief Judaic error' had been set up 'as the chief Christian verity.' The matured character of Christendom was the true witness to Jesus: he could not be judged by the measure of men who were convinced that the end of the world was at hand. The effect of this expectation on early Christian life, and its impress on early Christian literature, supplied the essayist with materials for many a page: he reprobated a 'kind of interpretation which is the opprobrium of English theology,' and ridiculed the 'exegetical sleight of hand' which would save Apostolic and other infallibility.<sup>2</sup> The limitations which this faith imposed on early Christian ethics, often rendered the primitive Gospel inadequate

<sup>1</sup> *Essays*, iv. 477.

<sup>2</sup> 'Ethics of Christendom,' *Westminster*, 1852: *Studies of Christianity*, p. 325. To this he noted a most honourable exception in Jowett's well-known volumes, 'St. Paul and his Modern Students,' *National*, Oct. 1855: *Studies of Christianity*, p. 445.

to modern needs. It reasoned from principles which we do not own, and was tinged with feelings which we cannot share. The merchant, the scholar, the statesman, the head of a family, the owner of an estate, were called to face anxieties and to solve problems which Evangelists and Apostles did not approach.<sup>1</sup> Vainly, therefore, did the *Christian Reformer* appeal from the 'Vaughan' sermon to the authority of Locke. 'By reasonings which have never been confuted and by Scriptures of unmistakable clearness, that great philosopher has proved that it is the primary article of Christianity that Jesus is the Messiah; that this title is synonymous with 'Son of God'; that it was affirmed not only by Christ's direct words, but confirmed by miracles.'<sup>2</sup> The attempt to confute the theologians of Tübingen out of the *Reasonableness of Christianity*, seemed to Mr. Martineau a childish anachronism. On the one hand, his critics saw in him the destroyer of revealed religion; on the other, he felt himself entangled in a 'sect enslaved to the letter of Scripture and tradition.' When the 'Westminster articles' were condemned, he lamented his judges' ignorance of German, contrasted the shifty partizanship and the intellectual timidity which he saw around him with the direct and fearless penetration of Priestley to the core of every subject, and deplored their distance from the example of a pure, ingenuous, and earnest mind.<sup>3</sup>

What, then, did Mr. Martineau propose to sub-

<sup>1</sup> 'The Creed of Christendom,' *Westminster*, July, 1851. *Studies of Christianity*, p. 291.

<sup>2</sup> 1851, p. 615.

<sup>3</sup> *Life*, i. 232, 239, 320.

stitute for the conceptions of Christianity which he had discarded as no longer tenable? Two elements are clearly distinguishable in his writings of this date. To the first, the interpretation of the person of Jesus as itself a revelation, in place of a body of divinely attested truth, he had already long attained.<sup>1</sup> But his studies in Greek and German philosophy had given him a firmer grasp of the Hellenistic mode of thought; and while he rejected the Fourth Gospel as history, he welcomed it the more ardently as a philosophy of religion. He only denied that Jesus was Messiah, to affirm that he was something more. If there was a natural Providence, speaking through the world-order which the scientific intellect interpreted, there was also a preternatural Providence through which God appealed to our perceptions of the inwardly good and beautiful, no less than of the outwardly true. It was to this sphere of creative art that the character of Jesus belonged.<sup>2</sup> In the realm of spirit God transcended the limitations he had imposed on his own action in the world of space; there was the scene of his free spontaneity, where his purpose worked through human souls; in the mind of Christ he presented within the limits of *our* moral nature a complete expression of *his own*.<sup>3</sup> If, therefore, with unshrinking logic, the theologian admitted that he knew no general proposition which he would accept *merely* on the word of Jesus,<sup>4</sup> he restored the authority which was disowned for his communicated truth, by pointing to the significance of his person

<sup>1</sup> *Ante*, chap. VI. p. 176.      <sup>2</sup> 'Phases of Faith,' *Essays*, iii. 24.

<sup>3</sup> 'Vaughan' Sermon: *Essays*, iv. 482.

<sup>4</sup> 'Phases of Faith,' *Essays*, iii. 40.

as the earthly type of the divine. Not only was the thought of God for our humanity made flesh in him : —so also was his thought for horse or tree embodied in the sphere of sense—but that thought was the actual counterpart of God's own nature, and Jesus stood forth as the moral image of the Everlasting Mind.<sup>1</sup> To the Platonic realism of Mr. Martineau it seemed incredible that a wonder-working Messiah could be preferred to this august object of faith and reverence. The critical judgments which set Lardner and Paley above Baur might be uninformed, and those who 'had read nothing for thirty years' might still retrieve lost time ; but the eye which rested on the product of Jewish imagination, and could not see the revelation of the Eternal, appeared stricken with incurable blindness.

But, secondly, the divergence of view within the New Testament itself threw a wholly new light on the phenomena of Christian history. There was something in Christianity more than any single disciple could grasp or reproduce. As it alighted on different minds in the first age, it was apprehended through different media of temperament, education, race : and what was clear among the Apostles and their successors was no less clear in the Church at large. The courses of Christian thought and life, displayed in successive centuries, were not so many 'corruptions'<sup>2</sup> of a primitive truth : they were the continuous unfolding of the type originally presented

<sup>1</sup> Once more, be it repeated, as man : 'That no higher being can ever appear on earth, we would not venture to affirm' : 'New "Phases,"' *Prospective*, 1853 ; *Essays*, iii. 60.

<sup>2</sup> Priestley's well-known term. Cp. 'The Christian Student,' 1856, *Essays*, iv. 51.

by the founder, and ever realised afresh amid diversities of gifts and variations of character and circumstance. Mr. Martineau denied, therefore, that the religion was to be most clearly discerned at its commencement.<sup>1</sup> It needed the whole field of history on which to display itself. Why should it be assumed that a faith is purest in its infancy? Then, no less than at other periods, is it surrounded by human conditions, and transmitted through human faculties; and time is needed to disengage it from the accidents of locality or nation. Show it, however, presiding over the vast and multitudinous interests of men, watching by the cradle of art, directing the awakening of thought, shaping new growths of law, and determining the destinies of peoples, and you transform the earthly throne of Christ into a heavenly image ruling the conscience and winning the heart. This was the mode in which he presented the doctrine of development.<sup>2</sup> On this ground did he call for an escape from partial views and limited sympathies, confessing that for the first twenty years of his ministry he himself had looked on the members of other denominations as aliens.<sup>3</sup> But the declaration that the doctrine of the Incarnation had a profound religious value, for it had guarded the Church from the delusion that to be divine a nature must not feel,<sup>4</sup> and had

<sup>1</sup> 'Creed of Christendom,' *Studies of Christianity*, p. 289.

<sup>2</sup> 'We admit and maintain that to the Person of Christ Christendom supplies an indispensable commentary': 'New Phases,' *Essays*, iii. 61.

<sup>3</sup> Speech at Huddersfield Dec. 21. 1854: *Inquirer*, Jan. 6.

<sup>4</sup> 'Alexandria and her Schools,' *Prospective*, 1854: *Essays*, ii. 328.

kept the idea of the living union of God with humanity at the heart of Christian faith,—only begot a kind of wonder what strange thing he would say next, which culminated in reports that he was verging towards the Maurician teachings of the Trinity and the Atonement.<sup>1</sup> When he pleaded at Norwich, on the Centenary of the foundation of the Octagon Chapel, May 12, 1856, for a recognition of ‘One Gospel in many Dialects,’<sup>2</sup> justified the divisions of Christendom, and declared that we should cease to wish for them to disappear, he flung himself right athwart one of his hearers’ most cherished convictions. For what did this demand imply? That while God is one, and Truth is one, no finite mind can take in the whole. No one, therefore, might identify his own with the absolute truth. Denominational zeal suffered a grievous shock. The philosopher applied the doctrine of the relativity of human knowledge to the interpretation of the Gospel, and the creeds of the Church. The result was stated with his usual directness. Even Unitarianism was only ‘one of the dialects, and nothing more.’ It was not surprising that the descendants

<sup>1</sup> Letter from F. W. Newman, *infra*, p. 394. To the Rev. J. H. Allen he wrote, July 15, 1853, ‘The blending of the Hebrew and Hellenic streams of thought and faith always appears to me the most solemn and sublime phenomenon in Divine and Human history. The Unitarianism which will not let them blend but insists on isolating the Judaic element; the Trinitarianism which, sprung from their combination, forgets and disowns its Grecian source, and pretends a pure Evangelic origin; affect me painfully as a denial of the greatest and most manifest of Providences, and a mere vain breath of egotism and ignorance against the largest of realised facts. This, however, may perhaps be a sentiment little shared on your side the water: as here it is regarded with disapprobation and alarm.’

<sup>2</sup> *Studies of Christianity*, p. 402.



of pious forefathers, trained in devout acceptance of Unitarianism as 'the doctrine of the Gospel,' were puzzled and alarmed.

## II.

In spite of the disclaimer of the *Inquirer* that there was no connexion between devout philosophy and the rejection of the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel,<sup>1</sup> the view of Christianity which Mr. Martineau now presented, did substantially rest on his critical judgments on the one part, and his conception of Theism on the other. The bases of that Theism have been already indicated, and it may be desirable now to sketch the form which the great argument received at his hands during these years. The main principles were laid down in an essay on Oersted, 'The Unity of Mind in Nature,'<sup>2</sup> and another on 'Sir W. Hamilton's Philosophy'<sup>3</sup>; their development followed in essays on Mansel and John Stuart Mill (1859), and the well-known articles 'Nature and God' (1860), and 'Science, Nescience and Faith' (1862),<sup>4</sup> in which latter the author entered the lists against Herbert Spencer. The chief theme of this whole group is the nature and limits of human knowledge, and the defence of the validity of our deepest ontological conceptions. With ethical theory

<sup>1</sup> *Ante*, chap. X. p. 341.

<sup>2</sup> *Prospective*, 1852; *Essays*, iii. 83.

<sup>3</sup> *Prospective*, 1853; *Essays*, iii. 439. Of this article George Eliot wrote, 'James Martineau transcends himself in beauty of imagery in the Article on Sir William Hamilton,' Aug. 18, 1853, *George Eliot's Life*, i. 310.

<sup>4</sup> All reproduced in *Essays*, iii.

the theologian was not here concerned : its practical applications are again and again illustrated in his essays on Christianity, its teachings and history : he was slowly elaborating his scheme of the springs of action arranged in order of rank, which he had added to his College lectures : but while he contemplated the ultimate production of a book on the Theory of Morals his published discussions during this period were engaged with problems of psychology and metaphysics.<sup>1</sup> The reason was twofold. The general course of English philosophy had given especial prominence to inductive enquiry ; and the rapid development of the physical sciences had fixed attention rather upon the processes of Nature and her groups of inter-related events, than upon the processes of thought within the mind and their testimony to unseen, but not, therefore, unknown, realities, beyond the sphere of sensible experience. In France Auguste Comte, in England John Stuart Mill, had worked out a logic of scientific investigation which dispensed altogether with the metaphysical conceptions of substance or cause. A British philosopher, concerned with the foundations of religion, could not ignore this tendency. But Mr. Martineau had further been led, by his personal studies, into close contact with different phases of German pantheism. No thinker constructs a philosophical system in a vacuum. His thought is shaped in view of opposing forces ; and the plan of its fabric

<sup>1</sup> In a letter to Mr. J. H. Tayler (son of the Rev. J. J. Tayler) dated May 9, 1851, he defended the attempt which he was then making in his lectures to draw up a table of the springs of action according to their natural rank of worth and authority. See *Types of Ethical Theory*, vol. ii., and chap. XVI. § ii.

is arranged to guard it most effectively from direct attack, or protect it from the no less dangerous seductions of delusive error. The two schemes against which the mind of Martineau reacted, were the home-grown empiricism of his early years, which, from Locke to James Mill, had undertaken to explain all knowledge out of sensation, and the foreign systems of monism, which, starting from some ultimate principle, endeavoured to deduce the universe by a method of thought.

Of Locke and his successors he could, indeed, never speak without respect : and in his inaugural lecture, on appointment to the chair of philosophy in Manchester New College, London, he did due reverence to the traditions of his youth, thirty years before :—

I meet here those with whom a respect for philosophy is an inheritance and a necessity ; who cannot but honour a study conquered for them by the sagacious genius and illustrated by the noble truthfulness of Locke ; whose earnest meditations both of thought and piety have been in the companionship of the pure-minded Hartley ; who are not less conscious than I am myself of unspeakable obligations to the versatile, comprehensive, and guileless Priestley ; and on whose shelves you rarely miss the acute and thoughtful volumes of Dr. Price. When I remember how largely the divinity of Dr. John Taylor, of Norwich, was affected by the studies which belonged to him as Ethical Tutor at Warrington, and how closely the name of Enfield is preserved in conjunction with that of Brucker, and, in general, how much our freer theology owes to the just balance of critical research and speculative reflection, I feel that there are pledges in the past for a worthy appreciation here of philosophical pursuits, and am resolved not to endanger that wholesome predisposition by immoderate and untenable claims. At the same time there is danger as well as honour in belonging to a class rich in noble antecedents ; danger of mistaking the heritage committed to our trust :—of cherishing with faithful pride the particular judgments delivered to us from the past, and letting slip the habits of severe activity, the fresh hopes of truth, the resolve to take a master's measure of the time, which saved our predecessors from merely repeating the symbols of an earlier age.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Feb., 1854. *Essays*, iv. 20.

As he set out 'to take a master's measure of the time,' the first question that arose concerned the sources of knowledge and the method of study. On that head he was as sound as the severest critic of 'German mysticism' could desire; 'it is with deliberate conviction that I profess adherence to the English psychological method, and build all my hope for philosophy on accurate self-knowledge.'<sup>1</sup> It has been already shown that his answer to the initial problem of philosophy, 'What do I know?' turned on the distinction between sensation and perception, between having a feeling and knowing that you have it.<sup>2</sup> Amid the long series of theories reviewed by Hamilton, he ranged himself with the brilliant teacher at Edinburgh, and declared himself a 'Natural Dualist.'<sup>3</sup> He, too, maintained that in the act of perception the mind has immediate knowledge of itself within as subject, and the world without as object. He would listen to no pleas for destroying this opposition. He would not, with the pantheist—Hegel or Spinoza—derive both from some higher term, and reduce the antithesis to an illusion by declaring them only phases of an ulterior reality. Nor would he admit some interposing medium, capable of bridging the gap by mutual relation with each side—whether the Platonic *εἶδη* from the realm of thought, or the mesmeric fluid in the physical sphere—so as to destroy the fundamental opposition. When the metaphysician declared 'like only can know like,' and proceeded

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* *Essays*, iv. 30.

<sup>2</sup> *Ante*, chap. IX. p. 304.

<sup>3</sup> 'Hamilton's *Philosophy*,' 1853; *Essays*, iii. 462.

to limit all knowledge to states of consciousness, the psychologist met him with a strenuous denial; the self *can* know the not-self; the world is neither, with the subjective idealist, to be constituted out of the mind, nor is the mind, with the empirical idealist, to be evolved out of the world. The first affirmation of the *ego* within is that it is different from the scene around. If this affirmation be not trustworthy, truth is out of reach altogether. Imagination may prefer to view life as a dream, and suppose reality to be something quite other than we know; but if so, the illusion is coherent and systematic. The veracity of our faculties is the primary assumption of Martineau's philosophy. He was fond of Hegel's parody of Kant, 'It cannot be true because *we* have to believe it';<sup>1</sup> and had no sympathy with philosophic doubt.

But at this point he parted company with the Scotch professor. For Hamilton went on to argue that while perception truly reported the existence of an outer world, thought could, after all, know nothing of it as it really was. At every step the mind attempts to transcend its own limitations. It is itself in communication by means of sight and touch with the scene around. But this is finite, yet it insists on demolishing all bounds, and declaring space to be infinite. It knows events in succession, and reckons up its days and years; but it can endure neither beginning nor end, and asserts time to be everlasting. These, and other great ontological conceptions, were after all only negative; they

<sup>1</sup> 'Hamilton,' *Essays*, iii. 483; 'Mansel,' *ibid.* 134.

corresponded to nothing objectively real; they resulted from the fact that we can only interpret our experience as it affects ourselves. In other words, our knowledge is relative to our own faculties; the unrelated, the Absolute, we can never know. We can only think by setting ourselves over against these supposed realities, space, time, substance, cause. But it does not follow that they are actually there. They are *conditioned* by our thought. The *unconditioned* is beyond our reach.

Against the inferences drawn from this 'law of the conditioned' Mr. Martineau opposed a vigorous resistance. The legitimacy of this reduction of the ultimate objects of our knowledge into a mere series of pictures on the walls of our 'chambers of imagery,' he would never admit. The 'relativity of human knowledge' he indeed frankly conceded. For what is knowledge? It implies a relation between knower and known. To treat this relation as a disqualification for reaching positive results is suicidal. It must affect *all* knowledge, and does not attach only to that of man. It is a part of its inherent character, inseparable from it in the highest as in the lowest mind. To desire a knowledge of 'things in themselves,' that is, apart from all relations, is to desire something which is not knowledge at all. The mind is not to be declared impotent because it cannot compass the impossible. 'To know two things (for example, matter and mind) only in their relation ought to be treated as tantamount, not to an ignorance of both, but to a knowledge of both; if we are unacquainted with them *out of relation*, we are ignorant of them only where there is nothing

to be known.<sup>1</sup> True, these great realities cannot be presented to the imagination in pictorial shape. We can form no *representation* of the Infinite, whether of Space or Time, or other mode of Being.<sup>2</sup> But because imagination is baffled, thought is not necessarily void. The Infinite may be a clear and definite conception for reasoning as mathematics proved, though it cannot be exhibited to the 'mind's eye.' Nor did it deserve the opprobrious epithet of 'negative,' with its implication of 'non-existent.' Positive and negative are no doubt opposites, but why should they not change places? If the infinite is the negative of the finite, the finite may with just as good reason be designated the negative of the infinite. The true negative of the finite is the indefinite, to which we know no end. It is the character of the infinite, on the other hand, that it can have no end.<sup>3</sup> The objects of our knowledge, therefore, are not reduced to appearances, merely because we know them; nor is God lowered to the rank of 'phenomenon' because we recognise him as differenced from ourselves. In one sense, the whole of our interpretation of existence rests upon a primal act of *faith*,—our trust in the veracity of our faculties, our acceptance of what is given to us in thought as real and true. In another sense, the fabric of the world, as we conceive it alike in time and space, is an object of knowledge, which reaches from the conscious self to the ultimate source of both world and self, viz., God. The proposed

<sup>1</sup> 'Hamilton,' *Essays*, iii. 481.

<sup>2</sup> 'Mansel,' *Essays*, iii. 137.

<sup>3</sup> 'Hamilton,' *Essays*, iii. 482; 'Mansel,' *ibid.* 137.

delimitation of science as the realm of knowledge, and religion as the sphere of faith, the teacher who had studied the presuppositions of both, would not allow.<sup>1</sup> Geometry and Physics depend on assumptions supplied by our psychological constitution no less than ethics. Not more surely do we know the place of the North from the pointing of the needle, than we know that in morals extreme temptation mitigates guilt, and that in religion God is best revealed to the pure in heart.

### III.

By such arguments did Martineau endeavour to guard his doctrine of the scope and validity of our faculties.<sup>2</sup> To the advancing march of science he was never indifferent. He took in it the keenest interest, and his note-books show that astronomical and other studies still occasionally occupied him. He was ready, therefore, to appreciate to the full two ideas presented from the scientific side, the 'Unity of Mind in Nature,' elaborated by the Danish Oersted, and the 'Correlation of Physical Forces' worked out by Mr. Grove. The former he welcomed as the first careful and systematic treatment of the conception that the whole Universe forms a single intellectual realm, and he followed the passage of the scientific observer, as he 'visited his relations,' in planet and star, with eager sympathy. He might dispute Oersted's view that the

<sup>1</sup> 'Nature and God,' *Essays*, iii. 153.

<sup>2</sup> The doctrine of the nature and limits of knowledge is often designated in modern treatises by the term 'epistemology.'



world had been all deduced from some primary idea. He rejected the Platonic maxim 'God geometrises,' if it was taken to mean that the heavens and the earth were only the result of a necessary process of thought. God was something more than 'universal science in a state of self-consciousness,'<sup>1</sup> an eternal reason for ever thinking aloud deductively. This was to ignore the true conception of Causality. Just as in the interpretation of ethical experience the judgment of conscience implied the recognition of an alternative,—Why this spring of action and not another?—so in the relation of cause and effect the true question was—Why did this happen and not something else?<sup>2</sup> In the last resort, Causality is comparative or preferential. Its real notion is that of 'a power necessitating but not necessitated.' What is it that determines the one actual event out of a plurality of indeterminate possibilities? Not a mere law of thought like that involved in the proposition that the square on the base of a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares on the sides. Trace it back far enough, and it must be interpreted in Nature as it is interpreted in ourselves. In the exercise of our own will we are conscious of this power; and this supplies the universal rule which makes all real causation free. The alternatives offered by Trendelenburg<sup>3</sup>—'In the beginning was Force' and 'In the beginning was Thought'—were alike inadequate. The first led

<sup>1</sup> 'Oersted, *Essays*, iii. 114.      <sup>2</sup> 'Hamilton,' *Essays*, iii. 478.

<sup>3</sup> In an Essay then just published (1855) 'Ueber den letzten Unterschied der philosophischen Systeme.'

straight to atheism, and the second to pantheism.<sup>1</sup> The true middle point is seen in Will, which is kindred with thought on one side and force on the other, and is the proper prefix to all phenomena. From Oersted Martineau undoubtedly derived a clearer and richer conception of the manifestation of Mind in nature. But he recoiled from a universe in which the human personality was only a phase in the endless process of the infinite thought. He knew, indeed, that this view had attractions for many noble minds, and had again and again allied itself with religion. For Augustine, Humanity had ethically no standing before God; for Malebranche, it had intellectually no light but his; for Tauler, spiritually, its only strength was to pass, exposed and weak, into his hand; for Spinoza, substantively, it vanishes into a mode of his reality. 'Transiently, every religious man, it is probable, touches one or other of these dizzy verges of thought, where the spirit trembles between the supreme height and nothingness.'<sup>2</sup> But the sense of duty returns; the will is called anew into action; for counsel in the daily walk of life the world turns to Pelagius; and the latent assurance of personal faculty, and real freedom to use it, breaks forth again into the light. In some intelligible sense ethical religion demands that the human personality shall be regarded as objective to God.

Pantheism, Martineau had said, might have nature, provided Theism kept morals.<sup>3</sup> But how was this

<sup>1</sup> 'Oersted,' *Essays*, iii. 114.

<sup>2</sup> 'Nature and God,' *Essays*, iii. 172.    <sup>3</sup> *Ante*, chap. X. p. 336.

relation between nature and God to be conceived? From this problem, too, he did not shrink. His dualism forbade him to treat matter merely as a mode of the divine thinking. His training in physics had early familiarised him with realities of attraction and repulsion (for example), which could not be resolved into ideas with only a logical and not a dynamical operation. But now the new doctrine of the correlation of these forces came to his aid. No sooner were they expended in one form than they reappeared in another,—Oersted and Faraday compelled electricity and magnetism to exchange effects,—they were convertible *inter se*, not many but one. Dr. W. B. Carpenter carried this argument to a higher point, and showed that the law extended to the vital forces;<sup>1</sup> while in his *Human Physiology* he conducted it to its climax in the Mental. The physiologist found in the 'sense of effort' the ground of all our causal thought, and declared Will to be the 'form of Force which might be taken as the type of all the rest.' By its distinguished exponents, then, nineteenth-century science seemed to add outward confirmation to the inward identification of all force with will in the reasonings of the metaphysician. The plea for unity involved in the *ethical* recognition of a Will transcending ours<sup>2</sup> fell into the background; and physical experiment conducted to the same result previously reached through moral experience. The

<sup>1</sup> 'The Mutual Relations of the Vital and Physical Forces,' *Philosophical Transactions*, 1850. Dr. Carpenter used to cite the difficulty which he had in getting this paper accepted (on the ground of its speculative character) as an instance of the backwardness and timidity of contemporary English scientific thought.

<sup>2</sup> *Ante*, chap. IX. p. 311.

plurality of forces—gravitation, heat, chemical attraction, electricity—was harmonised in unity; a single form embraced them all; they were phases of universal Mind.<sup>1</sup>

There, in eternal union, dwelt those august elements of character which formed the spiritual background of the divine volition, reason, benevolence, and holiness. These belonged to the very essence of God's own Self; they were no products of his determination; he did not create them; they were beyond even his power to destroy.<sup>2</sup> Martineau never fully faced the metaphysical problem suggested by his interpretation of our ethical experience. Goodness in us arises through the constitution of our nature out of a group of springs of action of varying moral values. Righteousness consists in preferring the higher to the lower. How can such distinctions be carried up into the divine nature? And if they cannot, in what sense can it be affirmed that God is good? Here his Platonic realism assisted him. These attributes possessed some kind of *being*, and were inherent in his infinity. The problem receives but a passing glance, as he hastens on the bold venture of explaining how we are to represent the action of the creative Will. 'In the supernatural sphere, indeed,—the communion of Spirit with Spirit,—the Divine with the Human,—this Personal conception of power meets every exigency; because here the relation all depends on the free play of affection and character.

<sup>1</sup> 'Nature and God,' *Essays*, iii. 159; cp. 115, 478.

<sup>2</sup> 'Nature and God,' *Essays*, iii. 171.

But the governance of *Nature* by Personal Volition is less easy to conceive, the more we are impressed by the inflexibility, the neutrality, the universal sweep of her great laws.<sup>1</sup> If Jesus said 'He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust,' are we to imagine God as perpetually willing the motion of the earth, and personally guiding each raindrop of the shower? What is the 'unit of volition'? Does God create a primeval nebula, and does that act carry with it all the vast issues of spinning planets round a central sun, each with its own life-history determined step after step by the long series of antecedents along an inevitable intellectual order impressed on it from the beginning? or is he for ever issuing fresh volitions, so that each separate atom vibrates in his consciousness, and is provided just then and there with its particular power to attract or repel? The question has innumerable forms, reaching out along every mode of energy into the infinite. At this stage, Martineau's answer took the following shape.

If Nature and Man are to be regarded as in any sense 'other' than God, the universe cannot have been evolved 'out of himself.' He would be then both its substance and its phenomena; the world would not indeed use up all his Deity, for the infinite realm of Spirit would still transcend it. But it would not be different from him; it would be included in him; and philosophical Theism, as Martineau then interpreted it, demanded something

<sup>1</sup> 'Nature and God,' *Essays*, iii. 163.

objective to God, or it would be dissolved in one or other of the monistic systems of Greece and Germany. 'Our age professes itself weary of the old mechanical Deism, and cries out for the Immanent and Living God. It is well: but even for Immanency itself, there must be something wherein to dwell; and for Life, something whereon to act.'<sup>1</sup> The first necessity is supplied by *Space*. The philosopher conceives it as co-existing and co-eternal with God, yet independent of him; and it carries all the properties of geometry within it, which the divine Reason will for ever unfold. Such thought must be conceived in *Time*, and out of Time springs *Number*. But the stock of ontological realities is not yet complete. There is *Substance*, with its correlate *Attribute*, and *Cause* with its attendant *Effect*, and these lead us out of a world of mere thought and quantity; they involve material physical elements; and the imperious call for something objective to God is not satisfied without the admission, in some form, of 'the coeval existence of matter as the condition and medium of the Divine agency and manifestation.'<sup>2</sup>

This primeval matter, however, was something very different from the matter which we know. There are qualities involved in the very idea of Body, which cannot have been conferred upon it by Creative Power. They are known as Primary, and include such attributes as triple dimension, divisibility, incompressibility, etc. There are others which cannot be thus logically deduced; which might have been different had God so willed, such as smell or

<sup>1</sup> 'Nature and God,' *Essays*, ii. 173.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* *Essays*, iii. 176.

colour ;<sup>1</sup> to them is given the designation Secondary. Here was the field for the Divine artist, on which he painted the landscape of nature, and reared the architecture of the skies. Yet even he could only embody truths of geometry which he did not ordain ; the builder of the universe himself, 'in realising the Cosmical conception, in shaping the orbits out of immensity and determining seasons out of eternity, could but follow the laws of measure, curvature, and proportion.'<sup>2</sup>

Thus, greatly daring, did Martineau translate the Hebrew saying 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.' How, then, in such a world, in part conditioned by eternal necessities of thought, in part only the product of divine design, was the exercise of God's will to be presented? Does each 'general law' correspond to a 'volition'? Then God may be 'careful of the type,' while actual things and persons must take their chance in the mighty web of intricate relations, crossing and recrossing in a thousand harmonies of skill, but indifferent to the individual who comes in their way. Against this, however, the moral elements of religion protest. If the production of character is the supreme end of creation, the physical order

<sup>1</sup> The former student of the *Principia* included gravitation among these, *Essays*, iii. 177. Oersted and Kant had argued that the law of attraction, diminishing inversely as the square of the distance, was susceptible of a *a priori* demonstration. Martineau regarded it as the invention of God, to which, with all its rational consequences, he was for ever faithful throughout the universe. Yet immediately after, he declares that there is only one scheme of pure physics, as there is only one geometry, for all worlds, independent of the Divine will.

<sup>2</sup> 'Nature and God,' *Essays*, iii. 178.

must be subordinate to the ethical ; ' general laws are for the sake of particular beings ' ; they are not, indeed, withdrawn from God and turned into mere deputies ; they are still linked with his Person, though secondary in his Thought. Yet after all, a huge rent is made in this metaphysic tissue. For ' *living* beings can hardly be conceived as simply the *nidus* of power not their own.' The teacher refuses to treat animals as mere automata. ' Their whole distinctive significance lies in their being separate centres of at least incipient individuality ; and to represent them as only media of a Divine incarnation is offensive alike to science and to religion.'<sup>1</sup> In them is implanted some delegated energy ; here is a group of natures, confined, no doubt, within limited range of possibilities, but dependent not on God's immediate will, but on gifts and endowments planted in a determinate constitution, and capable of working out their own destiny. It is with relief that some readers find the problem suddenly abandoned. ' We have no experience enabling us to interpret generic acts of Will inclusive of complexity of relations, and a persistence in time.' It would seem then that the ' veracity of our faculties ' may mislead us. ' The difference is, perhaps, incident only to our point of view, and would disappear could we contemplate the world " under the form of eternity." ' Space, Matter, Force, Life, Will, Spirit, these are the ascending terms of existence, but in the successions of our experience they are not, after all, truly known. The world, that is, bears

<sup>1</sup> ' Nature and God,' *Essays*, iii. 81.



another aspect to God *sub specie eternitatis*, and his knowledge is not only infinitely vaster in quantity than ours, but different in kind. The reality, that is, is not accessible to us. At this moment, as the theologian is in danger of wrecking his whole system by withdrawing its fundamental assumption, he passes from the philosopher's chair into the 'cathedral of immensity'; and thought melts into devotion. 'Inasmuch as Deductive Science represents the Order of God's intellect, Inductive Science the methods of his agency, Moral Science the purpose of his Will, the blending of their voices in one glorious hymn is as certain as the Oneness of his nature and the symmetry of his Universe: and it must be a very poor Science and a very poor Religion that delay by discord the approach of that great harmony.'<sup>1</sup>

#### IV.

The foregoing exposition sufficiently explains the singular position in which Mr. Martineau found himself in 1857. Changes were again imminent in the distribution of the College work. When the first plans for removal to London were under discus-

<sup>1</sup> 'Nature and God,' *Essays*, iii. 183. The argument condensed above in this last section, is throughout directed against the rising claims of science in the spirit of the Positive Philosophy. It will reappear, with some qualifications, and much enrichment, in the *Study of Religion*. The intervening decades will then have brought a new problem on the scene in the form of evolution, in which the incompatibility of suffering with the benevolence of God will receive an emphasis before unrealised. It is significant of the changes of mood in successive generations that up to this time Martineau's writings are in no way concerned with this theme. But it is of course prominent in *In Memoriam*.

sion in the autumn of 1852, he had written to Mr. Tayler concerning himself (Nov. 20)<sup>1</sup> :—

As it is,—curiously enough,—the fears of which I am the object will apparently have the effect of preserving to our churches, by limiting me to the ministry, whatever is thought dangerous and mischievous in me, and giving intensity and prominence to my *theological* tendencies ; while my philosophy, which is throughout safe, conservative, common-place, engaged from beginning to end in protecting the catholic principles of Morals and Faith against the dangers of Materialistic, Idealist, and Sceptical aberration, is superseded. Thus all that I contain of risk is preserved, and whatever of safety is thrown aside : and the cautious arrangement of functions I had prescribed to myself, is reversed by the will of others.

The writer curiously forgot that it was his ever-active pen that did the mischief. Already in 1850 Dr. Sadler had replied to the singular proposal of the venerated Prof. Andrews Norton, of Harvard University, who advocated the abandonment of the Unitarian name because it brought them ‘into strange connexion with such men as Martineau and Fox in England.’<sup>2</sup> Vainly did the Rev. Samuel Bache emphasize the Messianic function of Jesus ;<sup>3</sup> or the Rev. Edward Tagart strive to vindicate Locke from the charge of contributing to the scepticism of

<sup>1</sup> *Ante*, chap. X. p. 339<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> *Inquirer*, Feb. 9, 1850. The writings of Mr. Martineau were in some respects better known in New England than in this country. It was an American minister, the Rev. Thomas Starr King, who made the first collection of his essays, under the title *Miscellanies*, 1852. In the *Christian Examiner* for July, 1857, Mr. King published a glowing eulogium, beginning with emphatic reference to the struggle now to be described. In 1858 another American friend, the Rev. W. R. Alger, issued a second volume, *Studies of Christianity*, which contained the ‘Westminster articles’ already expounded.

<sup>3</sup> *Lectures in Exposition of Unitarian Views of Christianity*, 1855 ; Lect. iii.

Hume.<sup>1</sup> The champions of the traditional Unitarian criticism and philosophy made no impression on the preacher of the 'Vaughan' sermon, or the essayist of the *Westminster* and the *Prospective*. Meantime the leaven of fresh thought was beginning to work. An anonymous writer in the *Inquirer*, whose papers were honoured with its largest type, and headed 'communicated,' urged his co-religionists to escape from the trammels of the faith of their forefathers. Mr. Martineau took incidental occasion to rebuke this 'communicated scorn for eighteenth century Unitarianism':<sup>2</sup> but in his general estimate of the currents around him he could not conceal his want of sympathy with the contemporary retention of opinions from which he had escaped. To the Rev. J. H. Allen he thus expressed his dependency.<sup>3</sup>

Liverpool, Dec. 30, 1856.

I am afraid my friend and neighbour, W. H. Channing, will give you, on his return, but a very poor account of our Unitarian ecclesiastical affairs; and, what is worse, the account will be true. I think I can perceive that he is thoroughly disappointed with us and hopeless about us: perhaps, hardly allowing enough for the pressure of an Established Church in England, or suffi-

<sup>1</sup> *Locke's Writings and Philosophy, Historically considered*, 1855. 'Brought up in a school in which Locke was the object of traditional veneration,—a veneration heightened and justified by reading, reflection, and experience,—I have seen with mingled astonishment and pain the attempts recently made to depose the master from his seat of honour, among those from whom better things were to be expected.' The writers criticised were Cousin, Morell, etc.; but it is probable that Morell's reviewer in the *Prospective*, who had shared the same Collegiate training of admiration for Locke, was included in the number of those 'from whom better things were to be expected.'

<sup>2</sup> *Inquirer*, March 8, 1856.

<sup>3</sup> Compare a previous letter to the same correspondent, 1853. *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, vol. vi.

ciently aware of the extent and depth of silent and inconspicuous influence exerted by our theology and our social existence, even on a small scale. Still his impression is essentially just. If you should happen to see a pamphlet called *Old School and New*,<sup>1</sup> just published, you will see that we are crippled in our activity by foolish distrusts and jealousies;—far more deeply seated than your Boston divisions, because involving the whole difference between the Priestley and the Channing religious philosophy, —i.e., I should say, the greatest difference to be found within the limits of the Christian faith at all. However, a crisis is at hand; and the younger, more living and progressive element will either carry the mass of our churches and institutions with them, or will find media of action and expression of their own, rendering them independent of the dead conservatism which is rotting us all away. New sympathies, not following the old lines of sect, have arisen, and must re-arrange the grouping of our ecclesiastical world; without necessarily doing violence to the older combinations, but tending gradually to supersede them.

Events had in fact occurred, which were to bring the tendencies here indicated into open struggle. The conflict arose on occasion of a rearrangement

<sup>1</sup> The pamphlet was occasioned by the crisis at Manchester New College, described below. The anonymous author justified his title by declaring that as the differences existed, denials of the fact were useless: 'We try to keep the phrases out of our public organs; but in our private talk we speak freely of Old and New Schools.' There were even distinct climates of thought corresponding with the latitudes of London and Lancashire. The writer's aim was to mediate between them, and persuade the champions of the Old that the theological results of the New were substantially the same, though reached by a different method. On the other hand, he was no devoted disciple of any particular teacher: 'There may well be extravagances of speculation, subtleties of moral judgment, overstrained antitheses, epigrammatic conceits, in the words of deep-thinking, outspoken men, which none but themselves are concerned to defend to the letter.' The conclusion pointed in a direction which Mr. Martineau's thought was ultimately to follow: 'It may be that after all, we are mistaken in our prophecy of coming success; and that God will choose to lead the Protestantism of England towards a more reasonable and Scriptural simplicity of faith, by other hands than ours. To us it will matter nothing, if we but know that we have never distrusted an ardent love of theological truth, that we have never discouraged a genuine manifestation of religious life, because they are other forms of truth and light than those preserved in the traditions of the Fathers.'

of the work of the College consequent on the resignation of the Rev. G. Vance Smith. At the annual meeting of the Trustees held on January 22, 1857, it was left with the Committee then elected for the ensuing year to make what appointment they thought fit. On Jan. 30 they requested Mr. Tayler and Mr. Martineau to undertake the whole of the instruction in theology and philosophy, with a supplemental provision for the teaching of Hebrew. To this invitation the two colleagues responded: Mr. Martineau convinced (as in 1853) that 'the service of a whole denomination of Churches is a higher claim than the service of any one society.'<sup>1</sup> resigned his pastorate at Hope Street; and his resignation was sorrowfully accepted.<sup>2</sup> On March 12 a revised scheme of studies was approved by the Committee,<sup>3</sup> and a special report of the new plans was afterwards circulated among the Trustees.

In the meantime other steps had been taken. The Rev. R. Brook Aspland, one of the Secretaries of the College, disapproving of the proposed arrangements, had resigned,<sup>4</sup> the Rev. Charles Beard being appointed in his place. After the meeting on March 12, Mr. Martineau learned to his consternation that a protest against his appointment, signed by seventy Trustees, had been received by the Committee, and ordered to be entered on its Minutes. This seemed to him to stamp it with some kind of official sanction. He felt it impossible to enter on

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Mrs. Higginson, July 15, 1853, cp. *ante*, p. 341<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> *Inquirer*, Feb. 28. See the letters in the *Inquirer*, April 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Inquirer*, March 14.

<sup>4</sup> *Christian Reformer*, 1857, p. 190; *Inquirer*, March 7.

his work in London under any slur of suspicion or mistrust. An agitated correspondence ensued,<sup>1</sup> and against the advice of more cautious friends he demanded a general meeting of the Trustees, to vindicate or to reject him.<sup>2</sup> His private letters show him in another light than that of the philosophic theologian. Here are unexampled skill in stating his case; clearness in disentangling alternative possibilities; force for meeting objections; prevision against difficulties, and outlook over expected attack; fertility in suggestion; courage in firmly advocating a bold policy. The moral strength of his appeal for support prevailed. On April 16 the decisive meeting was held. A larger number of Trustees than had ever before assembled, was gathered within the noble old centre of Lancashire Presbyterianism, Cross Street Chapel, Manchester. By a majority of 113 to 17 the proceedings of the Committee were upheld.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> At first, what he called 'the Septuagint version of the transaction' drew from him a proposal of immediate retirement: letter to Mr. Thom, March 17.

<sup>2</sup> His letter to the Chairman of the Committee, the Rev. W. Gaskell, was published in the *Inquirer*, April 11.

<sup>3</sup> 141 Trustees were present at some part of the proceedings, which occupied several hours. The objections to the appointments were in part directed against the fact that both the Professors belonged to the same school of thought—their style was mystical and obscure—they disparaged historical evidences and relied on the inward light—there was a danger of overweighting the curriculum with metaphysics: and in part against Mr. Martineau, on the ground that his cast of mind was that of the advocate rather than the judge, and his changes of opinion sprang from an inherent intellectual love of novelty. The 'Vaughan' sermon was not forgotten, *Christian Reformer*, p. 381. Much weight was deservedly attached to the speeches of the Rev. J. H. Thom, and of Mr. Edwin Field, the eminent solicitor, who had guided the English Presbyterian Union through the

Twenty years afterwards the struggle was thus described in the peaceful light of memory :—

Without stirring the embers of extinct or dying controversial fires, I may mention, as an expressive characteristic of the time, that this larger trust was not committed to me without strenuous resistance. The appointment rested with the College Committee. After it had been quietly completed, and I had resigned my congregational charge, and sold my house in the Prince's Park, I was served with a formidable Protest against the appointment, signed by a large number of respected and more or less influential persons. The plea which they urged was mainly theological ; —that Mr. Tayler and I both belonged to the same modern school of religious thought and historical criticism ; and that, in deference to the opinions of many of the Trustees, one chair should have been reserved for a representative of the older theology. Among the signatories of this document were many of my expected neighbours and oldest friends in London ; so that it opened to me the painful prospect of planting my home where I was unwelcome, and of doing my work under the eye of a censorship far from impartial. Deeming it essential to test the real strength of the opposition, I begged the Committee to convene a Special Meeting of the Trustees and take the sense of the Constituency on the recent proceedings. The appeal resulting in a resolution of approval, carried by a majority of about 7 to 1, I was enabled to dismiss the fear that I was entering on a false position, and to trust to time to wear away the misgivings of the Protesters. Their confidence and goodwill gradually returned : and even their extreme representative who, in the heat of discussion, had been betrayed into personal accusations of selfish intrigue, lived to retract them, and to resume the friendly relations of earlier years. Some colour was given to unfavourable suspicions by the simultaneous engagement of my son with myself : and cynical observers could not be expected to believe that the two appointments were independent of each other. Yet so it was. I had strongly recommended another scholar for the Hebrew Lecture-ship. And it was Professor Ewald who, when consulted by Mr. Tayler, spontaneously mentioned Russell as at once the fittest

difficulties of the Dissenters' Chapels Act. Mr. Field avowed himself a Priestleyan, but warmly supported the Committee — Mr. Martineau's mood may be gathered from a few words in a letter of February to the Rev. T. E. Poynting : ' As to critics and opponents, they sometimes sadden but never provoke or much disturb me. They say what seems to them true, and I look upon them as honest, though uncongenial, natural facts. Indeed I feel that there is but too much truth in some of their reproaches, and cannot wonder at their utterance.'

and most accessible person he could suggest. It would have been a contemptible slavery to appearances, had I interposed to prevent this commendation from producing its legitimate effect. The new arrangements, once left to the test of experience, worked in a most satisfactory way: nor in the history of the College can I think of any period, marked by more harmonious and effective industry, or animated by a higher spirit, than the remaining years of Mr. Tayler's life.

Among the letters which reached Mr. Martineau after the critical meeting, none moved him more than an address from old students, ministers and laymen alike, prepared and signed before the actual debate. In his reply (April 24) Mr. Martineau expressed his new hopes.<sup>1</sup>

Time alone can show whether I delude myself with the hope of better realising my own conception under the new conditions of daily devotion to my academic work, and the constant counsel and sympathy of my accomplished senior colleague. But thus far, the only credit I can take to myself as a Teacher is, for an honest desire to be always just to the sentiments of others, and ingenuous in the statement of my own; to respect the independent working of the student's mind, and never transgress the limit that separates guidance from dictation; to conceal no difficulty, to shelter no fiction, but encourage a simple reverential trust in whatever God has made real or has set forth as true and good.

Hitherto it has not devolved upon me to conduct any portion of the special studies for the Christian ministry. Henceforth it will be otherwise. And no change could be more congenial to my deepest faith and affection, than that which enables me to enter the sacred circle of Christian doctrine, and to share more directly in sending forth faithful men, well furnished as preachers of Christ's holy Gospel, and pioneers of his heavenly kingdom.

From another side came criticism of a different kind from that to which its subject had been recently exposed. The friendship between James Martineau and F. W. Newman begot the following letters.

<sup>1</sup> In publishing it, the *Christian Reformer* added, p. 387, 'Few will be more rejoiced than ourselves if his Professorial career henceforth fulfils his present purposes.'



F. W. NEWMAN to JAMES MARTINEAU.

7, Park Village East [London],

May 30, 1857.

My dear Martineau,—

Perhaps you are already pulling up your peg-tents ; rather a heart-breaking work, especially to those who so love beauty and have surrounded themselves within doors with so much. You *need*, dear friend, a broad and fruitful field in London to recompense you for the great, the very great sacrifices you must make in parting from all that you have loved in Liverpool. I have felt this so deeply, that I have never known exactly how to *wish* that you might come to London : and indeed this place, so emphatically *dissipated* (that is, *mente dissipata, distracta*), does not prize its great minds so much as smaller places would. I have lately heard of Mr. Tagart's retirement, and cannot help auguring that this will shortly lead to new demands upon your energies.

Beloved friend, you *know* that great expectations are formed of you. It is hard, most hard, not to let this draw you into great intellectual effort, from which I fear much. For your literary lecturing of course I have no word of dissuasion. But let me assure you that in your preaching there is superfluous intellectual effort. It would be spiritually more effective if there were far less perfection of literary beauty and less condensation of refined thought and imaginative metaphor. I hear again and again from *intellectual* persons the complaint, that the effort to follow your meaning is too great, and impairs both the pleasure and profit of listening to you. I myself am conscious that wonder and admiration of your talent is apt to absorb and stifle the properly spiritual influence : and when I read your sermons, I often pause so long on single sentences, as to be fully aware that I could have got little good from *hearing* them. I know that no two men's nature is the same,

and habit is a second nature. Do not imagine that I wish you not to be *yourself*. (There is no danger of that). But I am sure that by cultivating more of what the French call 'abandon'—by preparing with less *intellectual* effort for each separate sermon—though of course not with less devotional purpose—and by letting your immediate impulse have a large play, in comparison with your previous study, there will be less danger of overworking your mind, and fuller effect on those who are to benefit.

I hear strange reports, which move me alternately with contempt and mysterious fear, that you are closely approximating to Maurice, both as to the Divinity of Christ and as to the Atonement. The persons who say it, agree on the whole nearer with me than with any one else I can name to you, and have certainly no theological enmity to you. This makes me say: how *obscure* Martineau must be, if such persons can so mistake! Of one thing I am certain, that your heart and soul are *so* given to God, and so enlightened as to what is true goodness, that (whatever theories most commend themselves to you) nothing will make me trust and love you less, nothing will make you cease to bear tenderly and kindly with my scepticisms. But I confess, I am made anxious as to the results on the minds of *others* which all confusion of thought produces; and I think there must be somewhere great confusion, when *you* are thought to be preparing pupils for a renewed Trinitarianism and Atonement. . . .

I want to cultivate, if I knew how, rather more free spiritual communication with those who supremely love God as the Good One, and who will bear with me. I much need this, if I could get it. But however shut up I may seem, believe that a fire of love for you burns in my heart. With warm regards to Mrs. Martineau,

Your affectionate Friend,

F. W. NEWMAN.

JAMES MARTINEAU to F. W. NEWMAN.

Liverpool, June 15, 1857.

My dear Newman,—

Ever since the receipt of your delightful letter, its words have been with me to assuage a spirit often faint. But I have been so knocked about, in Somersetshire, London, and Yorkshire, that I could only muse on it amid railway noise, and wait for this first leisure moment to reply. . . .

Frighten me not, dear friend, by assuring me that some great thing is expected of me in London; even though the hint supplies an occasion for your wise and loving counsels. I look on my removal rather as a contraction than as an expansion of my sphere. I come to realise Plato's picture of the lover of wisdom, and 'teach a few boys in a corner,' with only the additional hope of quietly maturing a volume or two that may survive me. No more public function is in contemplation for me, least of all in connexion with any regular London congregation of Unitarians. Between them and me—partly, no doubt, from the faults you so truly indicate—there is little sympathy; I could never supply their wants: and they would never yield me that response without which the teacher's heart and hope must die. But, be assured, my want of accord with them is spiritual, not doctrinal; and the story of my leanings to Trinitarianism and the Atonement is a fiction of theological gossips. It can be founded on nothing but that *National* article respecting 'Newman, Coleridge, and Carlyle'; for nowhere else have I touched upon these subjects for many a year.<sup>1</sup> The only change of which I am con-

<sup>1</sup> The article on 'Mediatorial Religion,' *National*, 1856, was apparently forgotten. A reader, unaccustomed to Mr. Martineau's language, might easily misunderstand the declaration that 'mediatorial religion is imperishable, and imperishably identified with Christianity,' *Studies of Christianity*, p. 176. The estimate of his former pupil, Miss Catherine Winkworth an earnest Anglican, is not here inapposite. To Mr. Edward

scious as in progress within me, is an increasing tendency towards the Hellenic *Realism*—a tendency fostered by the study of Plato and St. Paul. Doubtless this philosophic change enables one to interpret with a more apprehensive sympathy the types and development of doctrine in the Christian Church. They are no longer to me the mere nonsense, absurdity, and contradiction they once appeared. But this equally holds of Buddhism, Spinozism, and some half-dozen foreign systems, which have come to speak *intelligibly*, but still not *truthfully*, to me. I fear this very change, which opens the way into other ages, hinders access to our own. At least in England a Platonic or a Pauline dialect seems doomed to remain an unknown tongue. To this, much more than to any excess of thought in what I preach, do I attribute the complaint of obscurity; for I find on the one hand very intellectual people whom I annoy and puzzle, and very simple people who follow me without strain. But I know not how it is: my *will* seems to have no voice or power in regard to what I prepare for preaching. I *wish* always precisely what you wish for me. But without a movement of the spirit I cannot write at all; and when the movement is there, it seems to exclude all alternative, and to produce just what

Herford she wrote (Nov. 5, 1856): 'What I admire in him is his religious philosophy, as far as I understand it, his absolute fearless truth, his singular power of appreciating other people's stand-point, and his deep conviction of the evil of sin. This last, especially, is utterly unlike anything I have ever seen in other Unitarians, whose easy way of getting over the difficulty in general by a few moments of not over-sharp repentance, and a forgiveness that really deserves no better name than good-nature, is to me one of the worst parts of their system. In this, as in many other points of his philosophy, I always feel as though Mr. Martineau were wholly out of his place among them.' A few days later the same writer declared him 'far nearer in faith and experience to the Church. He seems to have so deep a longing for Church-communion, too, that I fancy he always feels rather exiled in his present position. But then comes in his great unbelief about the Scriptures to prevent him from changing.' *Life of Catherine Winkworth*, vol. ii. pp. 82, 84.

actually comes. It is otherwise with mere literary lecturing ; but in regard to preaching, this fatality seems beyond control. Sometimes I indulge the hope of being yet shaken out of my cloud by the intercourses of a London life, and chiefly with you, dear friend, so near to me in religious sympathy, so generous and quickening with your intellectual wealth. Here I have lived virtually alone ; and have doubtless contracted morbid and metaphysic ways. . . . With our united warmest regards, ever, dear friend,

Affectionately yours,

JAMES MARTINEAU.

In February Mr. Martineau had written to his congregation announcing his acceptance of the London chair.

*Gain* does not tempt me, for I go to a poorer life ; or *Ambition*, for I retire to a less conspicuous ; or *Ease*, for I commit myself to unsparing labour. And of the unbounded freedom and confidence so nobly vouchsafed to me here, it is no secret that I must expect less, even though I should deserve it more. But none of these things move me from the feeling that the work proposed to me is, of all the offices of life, that which I can best fulfil ; and that in being humanly offered, it is also Providentially assigned.

At length the hour of farewell arrived. Mr. Thom was absent from Liverpool, and the two friends interchanged confidences by letter.<sup>1</sup> From the congregation came one of Roskell's best watches, and a purse of seven hundred guineas. Private letters and affecting addresses flowed in ;<sup>2</sup> they could not stay the approach of the 2nd of August, the day fixed for the 'Parting Words.' For the

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, i. 330, 331.

<sup>2</sup> One came from the Renshaw Street Chapel, with which Mr. Martineau had many ties of personal friendship and public work. Speaking of the two religious societies, he once said, 'They are one congregation, which, for purposes of convenience, meets in two places.'

last time did the pastor of Hope Street Church speak to the worshippers, some of whom still remembered the opening of his ministry a quarter of a century before. They understood him without misgiving when he once more expounded the secret of his toil and trust, 'the Living Union of God with our Humanity.' They knew what he meant when he dwelt on the urgency with which he had aspired to rise with them out of a religion of *obedience* into a religion of *communion*. They had learned with him to dismiss all fear respecting the issues of enlarging knowledge, scientific or historical. They could interpret his explanation of 'an estimate perhaps too low of all disciplinarian methods for the administration of Churches, for the propagation of personal influence, and the voluntary management of Christian men.' They comprehended his recital of the blessings from which nothing but an importunate summons of duty could have called him away. If any had ever doubted it before, this time they knew that they listened to utterance wrung from his inmost soul.

And now, dear friends, the last word must come. It is human to wish not to be forgot. Yet believe me, to be lost from your memory and die away by the dawn of what is higher, is my inmost desire. Could I fear indeed that, hereafter, heedless change and fading reverence might betray you into lower mood; that instead of taking up the beauty of this place and the affluence of your opportunities as the simple organ of expression for your own piety, you might degrade them into a mechanism for 'attraction,' the rhetoric of a sect canvassing the world;—that not real inner worship for yourselves, but side persuasion to others, might here give the tone to the hours,—then it would indeed be bitter to be *thus* forgot. But for the rest, the sooner and further a greater and holier spirit snatches you away, and leaves these years enshadowed and traceless in the past, the intenser will be my joy that my work has reached its end, that I am poured out and lost on the offering of your faith, and that the sacrifice is accepted and complete. And so may the Lord perfect you in his Grace and glory!

## CHAPTER XII.

LIFE AND MINISTRY IN LONDON: 1857-1872.

THE London life upon which Mr. Martineau now entered, was no less strenuous than that to which he had said farewell. He made his home near the College to which he had given himself, and exchanged the verdure and breezes of Prince's Park for the 'unlovely street.'<sup>1</sup> A small study lined with stately bookcases was the scene of his own work, where his favourite authors, clad in morocco and gold, looked out upon him from behind their glass doors. To this house he welcomed many a country friend, with affectionate hospitality. He loved the social interests which, as he said to Mr. Gaskell, 'warm up the reputed coldness of this great metropolis.' Yet the baffling distances often curtailed his opportunities: 'I am always deploring this diameter of London,' he wrote to Miss Cobbe (1868), 'which keeps Brompton and Bloomsbury in a state of such unnatural estrangement. I think of nothing worthy of much care without wishing I could know your thoughts upon it, and yet, from the very crowd in which I am, I have to live alone.'

<sup>1</sup> Gordon Street. The College was housed in University Hall, Gordon Square.

## I.

To the spiritual influences around him he was acutely sensitive. It was inevitable that the change which had transferred him from the pulpit to the pew, should leave some longings unsatisfied, in cutting off the means of self-expression afforded him by the conduct of public worship. To Mr. Thom he told the secret of his heart, as he thanked him for the gift of three sermons.

London, Dec. 5, 1857.

If, on turning from your ideal of a Church to the image of our actual congregations and the type of person prevailingly composing them, a chill of fear and unbelief comes over me, I rebuke it with the thought that in all of us the outer life, which alone we see in each other, *looks* out of keeping with the inner that turns to God; yet often only *hides* without *excluding* it. And so far as there may really be a secular or mere ethical blindness on the eye of our people, only the Christ-like word of faith can ever avail to make the scales drop off, and permit God's light to enter. But it *is* sometimes difficult in our chapels to realise any supporting consciousness of sympathy and to find the aspiring flame with which one's own spirit springs to mingle. As preacher I used to feel this not a little; and now, as hearer in the midst of others (whose aspect and natural language cannot but press upon one's heart) I feel it still more: and often fear that the spirit of true Christian worship and communion has yet to be created among us.

This difficulty was least felt under the ministry of Dr. Sadler at Rosslyn Hill Chapel, Hampstead. Thither, Sunday by Sunday, the family repaired, blythely traversing in all weathers more than three miles of London street and road on foot: there he enjoyed the privilege 'of total change of place and of posture of mind in the services of religion'; and there, as he said afterwards,<sup>1</sup> 'his conception of what Christian worship ought to be

<sup>1</sup> Speech at the opening of the new chapel, June, 1862.



was more nearly realised than in any other place which it had been his happiness to attend.'

In his College work (the distinctive features of which will be described hereafter) he felt that the long-desired opportunity was come.<sup>1</sup> To the Principal, the Rev. J. J. Tayler, ever since his entry into the circle of Lancashire ministers, he had been bound by close ties of affection and reverence; and these had been enriched by many years of partnership in teaching. Summer after summer the two friends exchanged a long letter of College confidences, or genial comments on affairs.<sup>2</sup> The three months' academic vacation doubled the welcome period of annual flight to the mountains or the sea. Cornwall, Wales,<sup>3</sup> Ireland, Scotland, must each have their turn, though North Britain finally drew him year by year. In Arran, epitome of so many interests for the disciple of nature, he resumed in 1860 his studies in field geology.<sup>4</sup> The gift of a fishing-rod led him to try the angler's craft; but he looked with jealousy on its vacant hours, laughingly demanded

<sup>1</sup> An important series of articles on Comte, Mill, Bain, Plato, and Schleiermacher, appeared in the *National* in 1858-60.

<sup>2</sup> See the letters of Mr. Tayler, edited by Mr. Thom, and Dr. Martineau's *Life*, i.

<sup>3</sup> At Penmaenmawr he met Mr. Gladstone. A volume of Newman's *University Sermons* was lying on his table when the statesman happened to call. The conversation which arose out of it convinced him that on this side Mr. Gladstone was past hope. 'Yet at that time,' he said more than thirty years later (1896), 'I looked up to him so much as to make me eager to yield assent to his deliberate judgments.' But he used to relate the epigram ascribed in Liverpool to his father, 'There is no doubt as to his ability. I wish I could be as sure of his stability.' Compare the estimate in the *Life*, i. 437.

<sup>4</sup> Occasionally he attended the annual Parliament of science held by the British Association.

'an appointment with the fish' as a condition of the sport, and at length (as he wrote to his friend Gaskell in 1873) 'to avoid the shame of further failures,' he left his fishing-rod in London. One memorable visit was paid to Switzerland (1866). After several weeks' stay at the 'Eagle's Nest,'<sup>1</sup> he set out with his wife and two daughters on what turned (for Mrs. Martineau's convenience) into a walking tour: 'by arranging moderate stages and proper pauses,' he wrote to Mr. Newman, 'we found it practicable to do everything (except on the high roads) in this way: we seldom slept at a lower level than 5,000 feet, and at times were nearly double that height. . . . I was astonished to find myself so accurately reinstated in the impressions of more than forty years ago, as if there were but a day between.'

## II.

The members of the 'household of faith' in London received the Liverpool teacher with a warmth and goodwill which surprised him. When he revisited his old friends, he dwelt gratefully on the 'unqualified kindness' which he had experienced from every one.<sup>2</sup> In May, 1858, he conducted the service at the Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Association, and began a long series of punctual attendances at anniversaries which he regarded as a kind of painful necessity.<sup>3</sup> His fidelity of

<sup>1</sup> A chalet above Sixt, placed at his disposal by Mr. Wills.

<sup>2</sup> Speech at Hope St. soirée, Dec. 31, 1858; *Inquirer*, Jan. 8.

<sup>3</sup> The least approach to the spirit of self-glorification filled him with shame. The meetings of the Domestic Mission and the Sunday School Association, which were unencumbered by

personal testimony never wavered ; and the rising liberal movement in the Church of England, which was to become articulate in *Essays and Reviews* in 1860, suggested many a pungent criticism. Speaking at Hope St., on his first visit after his resignation, Dec. 31, 1858, he thus described the situation<sup>1</sup> :—

The difficulties which we have to encounter now are very greatly changed from what they were forty, fifty, or sixty years ago. Then Unitarians stood absolutely and hopelessly alone, objects of general abhorrence and antipathy. Now the difficulty appears to be to find any person who really differs with us. Go into private society, travel in a railway carriage or in an omnibus, and when the conversation turns upon subjects of morality and religion, you will generally meet with a concurrence and a sympathy which are most unexpected, and which, too, are most provoking. Yet nevertheless, after all this agreement, when the company has dissolved, and each one disperses to his own place, no effect whatever is visible. The old arrangements, the old divisions of class, remain and rule exactly as before, and despite the agreement of everybody, you seem not the less to be left alone. It is sometimes said that our work is superseded, that we have nothing more to do, that others have come up with us, and that they are taking the functions which we were performing out of our hands. We find within the limits of the Established Church itself everyone of the favourite truths upon which we dwelt so many years ago, put forth with not less emphasis than they were in our own places of worship. . . . Well, then, are these persons really doing our work ? If I thought they were, and that they did it more powerfully than we could do it, for my own part I would bid them God-speed, and would take up the words of the Apostle Paul and say,—‘ Some preach Christ of contention, some, indeed, preach Christ even of envy and strife, and some also of goodwill ; but notwithstanding every way Christ is preached, and I therein do rejoice, and will rejoice.’ So far as we are sectarians, I am quite willing to resign the duty into hands able to perform it with more real success. But is this really preaching Christ ? For my own part, I cannot acknowledge it. . . . If men are to be at liberty to bind themselves to one church, while they preach the doctrines of another, to what is it to lead ?<sup>2</sup>

dogmatic ties, were more congenial to him, and drew from him some of his most interesting speeches.

<sup>1</sup> The passage is condensed.

<sup>2</sup> From a different point of view he said, on a similar occasion, Dec. 28, 1860, à propos of the *Essayists and Reviewers*, ‘ I cannot

Yet while Mr. Martineau frankly held his place among the Unitarians, he was conscious of a divergence of spirit from many of his London friends, whose interpretation of Christianity seemed to him to lack spiritual depth. He longed for a general recognition of the profound truth which, alike in philosophy and religion, he had striven to bring into prominence, that 'the Incarnation is true, not of Christ exclusively, but of Man universally and God everlastingly. He bends into the human to dwell there, and humanity is the susceptible organ of the divine.'<sup>1</sup> This was the trust which he recognised in Francis Newman and Miss Cobbe, and urged again and again as the power of worship and the source of life on his own people.<sup>2</sup> When Mr. Newman issued his *Theism* in 1858, Mr. Martineau welcomed the precious gift with joy:—

How rich it is in such wisdom as only a faithful and loving and variously experienced mind can attain, I see already; and from the rare power which your words always have upon me,—as

withhold a heartfelt honour from these men, because I see that they are the only men at once able and willing to convert a stationary church into a progressive church. . . . I honour them in spite of their retaining a position in the Church, which I do not profess satisfactorily to understand.' *Inquirer*, Jan. 12, 1861.

<sup>1</sup> 'Tracts for Priests and People,' 1861; *Essays*, iii. 443.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, the sermons at the opening of Rosslyn Hill Chapel, 1862, and Oakfield Road Church, Clifton, 1865; and the third of the 'Three Stages of Unitarian Theology,' 1869: all in *Essays*, iv.—The Clifton sermon arrested the attention of a schoolboy who strayed by accident into the 'Church,' and in 1896 (as a country rector) thus recalled the incident. 'The quiet, the novelty, the simplicity of the service, took hold upon me so that I stayed to the close. The sermon aroused my attention, so fresh, so deep, so utterly unlike anything I had been accustomed to. . . . Eagerly I sought for the local print of that sermon. I committed it to memory. For years I valued it as having stirred my mind and soul to higher realms.' *Inquirer*, May 23, 1896.

among the few *living* utterances on spiritual things left to us in these days,—I know what is in store for my quiet hours in what remains at present unread. To some of the pieces a sympathetic feeling made me fly at once; and in the lines on 'God in Conscience' I find one of the most powerful statements imaginable of an argument destined, I am convinced, to carry with it ere long every noble-minded and thoughtful doubter. There is no greater work to be done in this age, I do believe, than that in which you and Miss Cobbe are rendering foremost service;—the carrying home of the simplest and highest faiths into their last seats in human nature, and fetching out at once their justification and their meaning thence.

On the other hand he retained towards Jesus a lowly reverence which these friends could no longer share; and this placed him in personal (though not intellectual) sympathy with many of the followers of Mr. Maurice. Of this view a glimpse is given by Miss Susanna Winkworth, in a report of a long conversation, dated Jan. 31, 1859, to her sister Catherine.

Of course the view that he took was not that of denying, as many Unitarians would, the facts of human experience and psychology on the basis of which I argued, and agreeing quite with me in referring to the direct and personal action of God all that was good in us, but contending that Unitarianism, i.e., a view according to which Christ was the highest possible type of humanity,—a man who was made a 'partaker of the divine nature' in the sense of the *Theologia [Germanica]*—answered at once to the outward facts of the life of the historical Christ, and to the aspirations of our nature towards a perfect humanity, a sympathising and self-sacrificing Deity, and a ground of human brotherhood. He said he believed in the union of God and man in Christ, the complete absorption of the human will in the divine will, so that it was ever God who spoke and acted through him; but it was in the sense that the *Theologia* regarded this as possible. That in the ordinary orthodox mode of regarding the Incarnation, you fell into Ditheism, if not Tritheism; the Evangelicals did the latter, Mr. Maurice the former. That the absolute sympathy of the Father with Christ answered every moral purpose that the hypothesis of a Second Person of the Trinity descending into human form would do, without the difficulty that pressed upon every modification of that scheme from the impossibility of a divine self-consciousness residing in a human being without so overshadowing the human consciousness as to make temptation

and pain a mockery ; then also alleging the difficulties arising from many express declarations of the New Testament, as well as from its general tone. Altogether it came to this, that if, as he believed, the hypothesis of a divinely inspired and sinless human being fulfilled all the demands of history, reason, and human nature, we had no right to resort to so stupendous a hypothesis as that of orthodoxy, and to do so opened a door to no end of superstition.<sup>1</sup>

To this conception of the communion of the spirit of God with man he bore constant witness, even though it led him into dangerous paths. When a burst of enthusiasm produced a great series of Revival meetings in Belfast, he defended the possibility of such 'awakening of the religious life' on the express ground of 'faith in the action of the spirit of God upon humanity.'<sup>2</sup> This was the faith that lay behind one after another of his College addresses ;<sup>3</sup> this supplied his estimate of the worth of every denominational effort, for only in proportion to its strength could missionary endeavour rise above sectarianism ;<sup>4</sup> and this again and again thrilled through the memorable words of counsel and exhortation which he addressed to his former students, as they invoked his guidance at the outset of their ministerial career.<sup>5</sup> Yet it was not maintained without effort. If, on the one hand,

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Catherine Winkworth*, vol. ii. p. 254.

<sup>2</sup> At a discussion at the London District Unitarian Society. At the same time he carefully guarded himself from pronouncing any judgment on the Irish movement so far as it had then advanced. *Inquirer*, Nov. 26, 1859. The Rev. R. Brook Aspland who followed, expressed his distrust of such abstract principles.

<sup>3</sup> For example, 'The Transient and the Permanent in Theology,' 1862, *Essays*, iv. 97.

<sup>4</sup> Speech at Liverpool, Dec. 28, 1860 : *Inquirer*, Jan. 12, 1861.

<sup>5</sup> Thus, Rev. J. D. H. Smyth, Norwich, 1862 ; Rev. Alex. Gordon, Liverpool, 1863 ; Rev. J. E. Carpenter, Clifton, 1866.

it set him in harmony with the great historic voices of Christendom, on the other he was sometimes painfully conscious that it made a jarring note in the rising chorus of the champions of 'positive' thought. His passionate loyalty to advancing knowledge filled him with respect for the leaders who were daily extending its bounds, and framing vast new hypotheses to connect its widely scattered groups of fact, and when they were indifferent to the beliefs that he held dearest, he was conscious that he shivered and grew chill. In such a mood he once wrote to Miss Cobbe :—

London, Nov. 18, 1868.

You know by large experience that there can be no purer satisfaction for one who struggles towards the light than to find that the direction in which he looks sends gleams also to the companions of his search. You will not be surprised, therefore, that I am grateful for your words of sympathy, and strengthened by them. And, to own the truth, it is a strengthening which, from some defect of faith or hopefulness, I am apt to need. A tendency to excessive reverence for men of science, and indeed for every mind which is above me in any direction, often subdues me, and, when I find myself unsustained in my inmost convictions, depresses and afflicts me : and though I come to myself again, and indeed never feel tempted to surrender what I know to be true, whether I can justify it or not, yet the loneliness and separation from the people I most admire are sometimes hard to bear.

### III.

On October 12, 1858, the Rev. Edward Tagart, Minister of Little Portland St. Chapel, died at Brussels on returning from a visit to the Unitarians of Transylvania. The bereaved congregation turned for aid to the two friends engaged in partnership of teaching in Manchester New College. On Sunday, February 13, 1859, Mr. Tayler and Mr. Martineau were present at a congregational meeting, and

intimated their acceptance of the duties of the pastorate. They both laid stress on the conceptions of the ministry which they had been led to form in the active communities of the North; both emphasized with a common purpose their sense of the need of effort for the instruction of the young, and the more effectual support of schools already commenced for the poor. Mr. Martineau spoke at once with sadness and with hope; with sadness, because he felt himself standing in the place of an old friend and College companion; with hope, because he regarded the ministry as the highest work in which a man could engage, and the feelings of ardour and enthusiasm with which he entered on it in youth, had been in no degree chilled or diminished by the experience of thirty years.<sup>1</sup> The joint ministry, however, was not of long continuance. In the summer vacation of 1860 Mr. Tayler's health seemed threatened, and he retired from the preacher's duty. Mr. Martineau, who relinquished a long-cherished plan of visiting America rather than quit his friend's side at a crisis, assumed the sole charge (the evening service being suspended), and held it for twelve years coincidentally with the College session. Always tenderly mindful of the feelings of others, he once wrote to Mrs. Tagart—now a second time a widow<sup>2</sup>—‘Your words of Sunday sympathy are more to me, be assured,

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Reformer*, 1859, p. 184. The speakers had previously carefully ascertained that the pulpit was subject to no doctrinal trusts.

<sup>2</sup> She had been first married to Mr. Martineau's eldest brother, Thomas: *ante*, pp. 42, 45.



than anything which had a louder tone of approbation. In my strange and unsought position, it would have been the one thing hardest to bear, had I felt that for you and yours I had broken, instead of continuing, the sacred links which hang upon the past.'

The congregation at Little Portland Street Chapel was never large. Drawn from all parts of London, by interest in the preacher, came men of law and letters, of science and affairs, members of Parliament (during the session), women strong in heart and head; nor were visitors from the country or from the United States lacking, in addition to the elder members for whom the quiet sanctuary had been for many years a tranquil home of devotion and faith. The circumstances of the metropolis were less favourable even than those of Liverpool to the traditional ideal of a pastorate, but the relation in which Mr. Martineau stood to those who had habitually worshipped with him, may be gathered from his letters to them when they passed through the shadows of suffering or sorrow.<sup>1</sup> It was not long before a desire was actively expressed for a building which should be more in harmony with the lofty teachings of the preacher, and a friend placed the sum of £1,000 in his hands to be employed as he might think fit for purposes of congregational welfare or duty. He appropriated it to the erection of schools, and continued Sunday by Sunday to ascend the tall pulpit, reared on Ionic columns,

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, the letters to Mrs. S. and to Sir Charles Lyell published by Miss Cobbe in the *Contemporary Review*, February, 1900, pp. 180, 184.

from which he could survey the congregation alike on the floor and in the three galleries around.

Many and diverse were the impressions recorded by his hearers. To some, the mere sense of his presence as he sat, rapt in meditation, before he rose in the reading-desk to utter the opening sentences of devotion, was a sufficient benediction on days of struggle or care. Had he said nothing, they would still have been knit with him in prayer. But others sometimes found a chill in a liturgical service to which they were unused, or stumbled over phrases that seemed to them out-worn. The sympathetic noted in the face the strange union of sweetness and austerity; they saw there 'the visible expression of a life which had got every poor ambition under foot';<sup>1</sup> it seemed as if pure thought, floating through the air, had gained its incarnation in that head and form. But it was not only thought that dwelt there; a certain saintly repose seemed to guard him against the storms of life, and ward off the advance of age. The lines might grow from year to year a little deeper, the mouth more delicate, the brow more weighty, as the soul within grew riper and tenderer; but the figure was still erect, the head nobly poised, the whole man full of power disciplined and reserved. The critical found his style too cold and statuesque; they declared him less kindling than they expected.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Moncure D. Conway, in the *Index*, quoted in the *Inquirer*, March 9, 1872.

<sup>2</sup> The outward control misled them. 'Preaching at Hope St. so convulses me with agitation,' he wrote to Mr. Wicksteed, Sept. 9, 1867, 'that I do not recover from it for weeks.' In his Induction Charge to Mr. Gordon, 1863, he said, 'The place where

Others, already won by his quiet force and dignity in devotion, and an utterance 'marked by a scrupulousness that yet was always on the right side of refinement,' felt the eye light up, the voice grow in volume, and the very stature dilate, as the preacher unfolded his theme. Here was indeed no challenge against false doctrine; and those who had made their way with difficulty out of past oppressions, were at first disappointed. No particular error of the old creed was exposed or extinguished; no definite article of the new was raised aloft like a banner. 'I should have liked my spiritual captain,' wrote Miss Cobbe, recalling this mood, 'to have entered the field, and at once planted a standard beneath which I could take up a position.'<sup>1</sup> But Mr. Martineau never wished to use the hour of worship for a challenge against the distinctive religious beliefs of others. It was his constant aim to reach to springs of life beneath them, to rise to heights of trust above them, where differences disappeared in a communion of affection and endeavour. To 'preach Christ,' as he understood the great word of Paul, was not to challenge the Athanasian doctrine of the Homo-ousion, but 'to take the veil from what is divine in man's experience and bring him to the consciousness of real and living relations with the holiest of all.'<sup>2</sup>

I stand is perhaps the spot of all the world where I have most lived, most hoped, most loved, most suffered.' The difficulties of his former flock in finding a successor, after the return of the Rev. W. H. Channing to America at the outbreak of the great war, led him seriously to ask himself 'Ought I to go back?' Letter to Mr. Thom. Nov. 13, 1862.—Cp. the letter to Mr. Newman, after his resignation, *infra*, p. 439.

<sup>1</sup> *Inquirer*, Memorial number.

<sup>2</sup> 'Induction Charge,' 1863; *Essays*, iv. 544.

Wide was the range of experience to which appeal was thus made. The young were exhilarated by vast panoramas of thought unrolled before them as from some mountain height; and the splendour of metaphor which others deemed too exuberant, only roused their imaginations to keener activity.<sup>1</sup> The elder found their problems understood, their difficulties divined if not always surmounted, and their cares assuaged with a rich human sympathy. The preacher of Little Portland Street was no recluse, sunk in a closet-piety. He was, indeed, a metaphysician, but the technicalities of philosophy were kept in reserve, while his insight into character, his own rich experience, and his sympathy with the manifold vicissitudes of human effort and weakness, pain and grief, gave a poignant intensity to his words, which those who once entered into fellowship of spirit with him could never forget. The strenuous ethical note was never wanting. London, no less than Liverpool, required that its religious teachers should 'have eye and heart for all its moral relations,—industrial, municipal, and

<sup>1</sup> To this Mr. R. H. Hutton bore striking testimony at Dr. Martineau's retirement. 'The imaginative charm to which Dr. Sadler referred, did at once take hold even of boys of seventeen; and I remember that many of the passages in that book [*the Endeavours*] inspired me with a kind of exaltation which made me walk the streets hardly conscious that I was myself,' *Proceedings*, p. 37. At about the same age the Rev. H. E. Dowson first heard him preach at Norwich the much debated sermon 'One Gospel in many Dialects' (1856), and the image—'When God's truth, refracted on its entrance into our nature, shall emerge into the white light again, not one of these tinted beams can be spared'—seized his attention, sank into memory, and opened afterwards new vistas of ideas. The impression of an Anglican lad at Clifton has been already cited, *ante*, p. 404<sup>2</sup>.

national';<sup>1</sup> to enforce social trusts and maintain public righteousness was his duty here as well as there. But there was something beyond this. To those who listened to him steadily, he disclosed a path of endeavour and of trust by which they, too, might climb the 'upward way,' and look with unclouded eyes on realities which at first they could not discern. Instead of a dogmatist enforcing the articles of a creed, or a pedagogue prescribing rules of discipline, they found 'a companion like Great Heart, with whose mind it was a joy and a benediction to come even for an hour into contact. Once more was proved the truth that to *be* is more than to *do* or to *speak*. . . . It was not till those never to be forgotten sermons came to a sudden ending that we knew how much they had counted for in our inner lives. A window in our chamber was for ever closed, and like the one in the House called Beautiful, it "looked toward the sunrising."'<sup>2</sup>

To the theory of congregational devotion Mr. Martineau had long given much attention. The

<sup>1</sup> *Essays*, iv. 546.

<sup>2</sup> Miss Cobbe, *Inquirer*, Memorial number. His personal humility seemed sometimes in strange contrast with his intellectual confidence, and made him peculiarly sensitive to sympathy or its absence. 'Few things,' he once wrote to Miss Cobbe (1865), 'could so relieve my self-distrusts as such concurrence and approval as yours: and I thank you warmly for the new strength your words give.' Miss Cobbe used to relate the amusement with which she once listened at Lady Louisa Egerton's to a series of after-dinner imitations by Mr. Gladstone (then in his first premiership) of distinguished preachers (over thirty, she thought). 'But Mr. Gladstone,' said she, when he concluded, 'you have said nothing of *my* pastor.' 'And who is that?' 'The Rev. James Martineau.' Mr. Gladstone was silent for a moment, and then said deliberately, 'There is no doubt that Mr. Martineau is the greatest of living thinkers.'

bald and rationalistic simplicity which sometimes wounded him by its prosaic coldness, had after all an ethical value: it was connected (as he once said), with a certain lofty virtue,—‘a profound veracity and reality of religion, which will never profess anything but what is rather within than beyond the truth distinctly apprehended.’<sup>1</sup> A desire for a larger range of liturgical use than could be secured by any modification of the morning and evening ritual in the Anglican Prayerbook, now led to the preparation by Dr. Sadler of a series of services, published in 1862 under the title *Common Prayer for Christian Worship*. In this work Mr. Martineau took the keenest interest. With the sacerdotal religion of the English prayerbook he had no sympathy;<sup>2</sup> its opening confessions appeared to him exaggerated—‘Surely we none of us believe, and Christ did not mean to teach, that human persons in general, and his disciples everywhere and always, are in the case of the prodigal son’; the repeated appeals to God to remember his ‘promises’ implied that when due service had been rendered to him, he was pledged to confer benefits in return. This conception stood in sharp contrast with the Puritan type, which placed the essence of devotion in the free outpouring of affection, begotten by realising the relations in which he has deigned to draw us to himself. Doubtless, the essential idea of Christ-

<sup>1</sup> Letter to the Rev. R. R. Suffield, July 13, 1870: *Life of R. R. Suffield*, p. 111.

<sup>2</sup> See the powerful criticism in a letter of Nov. 26, 1860, *Life*, i. 381-384. Cp. a letter to Father Suffield, July 17, 1870; *Life of R. R. Suffield*, p. 117.

ianity lay in 'the human consciousness of sinful need and the sigh for holy life' on the one hand, to which came 'the divine Response for forgiveness, rescue, and communion' on the other.<sup>1</sup> But the note of penitence must not be struck too soon. And when it is sounded, it must be above all sincere. The poignance of exceptional remorse must not be imposed with perpetual demand on all; repentance must blend with the chorus of praise, and be free from all 'taint of servile interest.' Out of these convictions grew two services, contributed to the volume as the Ninth and Tenth. By nothing perhaps did Mr. Martineau render more potent aid to the devotional culture of his household of faith. These services could not have been written save by one who was steeped in the language of the Bible; yet they met the modern demand of veracity for minds from which the whole mediatorial scheme of Christianity had passed away.<sup>2</sup> They were wholly independent of the phraseology of the Church; but their central canticles rested on a profound sense of 'the order and progress of Divine Revelation in human history and life.' Voices of the Old Testament and of the New blend in the praise of 'the Only Holy, the First and the Last.' A rich glow of hallowed gladness shines in these songs; the *Endeavours* are never wholly free from the secret consciousness of failure; in *Hours of Thought* the intellect is sometimes laboriously

<sup>1</sup> 'Nature and God,' 1860; *Essays*, iii. 147.

<sup>2</sup> The terms Mediator, Redeemer, Saviour, in relation to Christ, as well as prayer through him, were frankly discarded. See the defence of this attitude in the *Life*, i. 386, in a letter of 1861.

occupied; but a generation of worshippers who have breathed out their spirit in these psalms, have found them grow into permanent symbols of spiritual joy. In the same passionate purity did Fra Angelico paint his angels of adoration, and portray the rhythmic dance of the blest.

Worship was the primary object, in Mr. Martineau's view, of congregational assembly; instruction was secondary; the sermon occasionally promoted both. Sometimes the preacher's teaching was conveyed in a series of discourses, as in a notable sequence on the Apostle Paul;<sup>1</sup> or, at a later date, an exposition of the essential grounds and contents of religion. Sometimes a week-night gathering provided the necessary opportunity:<sup>2</sup> and in five successive winters, from 1867 to 1871, the unwearied teacher devoted five months (November to March) to weekly historical and expository lectures on the New Testament, the antecedents of its doctrines, and the subsequent phases of Christian thought. In the closing years of the *National* he had published the first serious study, in this country, of the 'Early History of Messianic Ideas.' There, too, he reviewed Renan's *Vie de Jésus*, and declared it doubtful whether Jesus ever gave himself out as Messiah.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The writer well remembers after forty years the vividness of the description of Stephen's appearance before the Sanhedrin, and the concentrated attention of the hearers as the narrative advanced to the catastrophe, when a hush of reverence fell on the whole auditory. The habitual stillness of the congregation made this all the more impressive.

<sup>2</sup> A short course in which Mr. Taylor, Mr. Martineau, and others took part was delivered in this way at University Hall, in 1865, Mr. Martineau contributing four.

<sup>3</sup> *Essays*, iii. 323. The second *Life* issued by Strauss in 1864



The suspension of the *National* in the autumn of 1864 released him from the necessity of frequent occasional production, and he turned with eagerness to the studies which had so long engaged his highest interest. Their fruits began to appear in an American periodical entitled *Old and New*, under the persuasion of his friend Dr. Bellows, of New York.<sup>1</sup> But this venture also was cut untimely short; and the full exposition of his views on these themes was only completed in his last great treatise, *The Seat of Authority in Religion*, 1890.

No congregation could discharge its duty, in Mr. Martineau's view, without making some systematic provision of helpfulness for the neighbourhood around it. While he often protested against denominational organisation of general philanthropy,<sup>2</sup> to such social service he gave long and anxious thought. An opportunity lay close at hand. His former pupil and friend, Miss Anna Swanwick, had for some years past promoted classes of girls, which she first assembled in her mother's house

was noticed in the article 'The Crisis of Faith' (*Essays*, iii.) in what proved to be the final number of the *National*, November, 1864. To Mr. B. B. Wiley (Chicago) he explained in a letter of Sept. 29, 1862, the reasons which had led him to abandon the idea of himself producing a volume on the ministry of Christ. 'It gleams on our purified vision in hints and streaks of beauty; and though these flow together into fragments of form not only distinct but unique, yet every attempt to complete them disappoints one and produces a whole quite inadequate to the glory of its elements. So I begin to suppose that his personality is better left as one of those divine and holy mysteries that have power over us just because they represent, with the sweetest harmony of our life, also the infinite silence in it that cannot be broken.' *Atlantic Monthly*, Oct., 1900, p. 489.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Bellows visited England in 1868.

<sup>2</sup> He disliked a *Unitarian* Temperance Society, for instance

in Woburn Square.<sup>1</sup> After a temporary sojourn in the Colnade ('a quaint old-world place long since demolished'), they found a home in Newman Street, not far from Little Portland Street Chapel, where the Rev. J. J. Tayler and other friends became interested in them. The movement grew, until finally large Day and Sunday schools were established in Little Titchfield Street (Great Portland Street), where a fine building was reared to house them.<sup>2</sup> On these schools for many years their nourisher and guardian bestowed untiring care. In the Day schools he was constantly to be found as visitor; his sympathy and support were always ready for the teachers; by his scrupulous order, in the office of Secretary, the necessary correspondence with the Education Department was performed with unfailing accuracy.

But his share in the Sunday schools was yet larger.<sup>3</sup> To enlist the help of as many teachers as possible, he himself undertook the afternoon superintendence. Sunday by Sunday, after an exhausting morning service, he was to be found at the desk; the whole order of the School, which numbered between 300 and 400 scholars, revolved

<sup>1</sup> *Anna Swanwick*, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> Opened June 29, 1866. Mr. Martineau devoted to this enterprise the £1,000 already named. On everything concerning the fabric he was thoroughly well-informed: his practical sagacity was a constant surprise to those who only thought of him as a philosopher. The architectonic faculty in his mind required for its exercise complete mastery of detail.

<sup>3</sup> To this cause he was always faithful. It must suffice to mention here his regular attendance at the anniversaries of the Sunday School Association in Whit-week, and the many counsels (sometimes, it must be admitted, 'of perfection') contained in his speeches.

round him ; he was ' the very pulse of the machine.' But, as the College students who responded to his appeal,<sup>1</sup> observed with admiration, no constraint was ever laid upon their ways. He was no autocrat, imposing his authority upon subordinates ; he was a fellow-worker, always full of respect and sympathy for the awkward efforts of an untried beginner. Periodic meetings of the teachers were held at his house ; he was an ideal chairman, for he could draw up resolutions at a moment's notice in a buzz of talk, giving immediate expression to some dimly formed idea ; and he knew the business of each class, and was frequently acquainted with the individual scholars.<sup>2</sup> Differences of opinion were sometimes inevitable. An outbreak of disorder at one of the summer excursions<sup>3</sup> seemed to call for disciplinary arrangements the following year. Mr. Martineau was on the side of the discipline. But an opposition appeared under the ægis of a devoted teacher, who had been one of his workers in Liverpool ;<sup>4</sup> and with the help of some of his

<sup>1</sup> This often reached them, in highly characteristic notes, before their arrival in London.

<sup>2</sup> This arose partly from his intimacy with the day schools, and partly from his watchfulness for occasions of personal intercourse after school-hours, when the man who had suffered from shyness all his life would gently rebuke some refractory boy, or advise some applicant to the school-library about the choice of books.

<sup>3</sup> In these Mr. Martineau took part with his customary energy. When he could not give the morning, he would come out in the afternoon. Till sixty, certainly, he played cricket with the elder lads.

<sup>4</sup> A wise and witty woman, whose kindness to the College students at Dr. Martineau's monthly ' At Homes,' as well as in school, endeared her greatly to the men of successive years. Of the active, not the contemplative type, she once observed on coming out of chapel, à propos of the preacher's habit of

College students she carried the day for more lenient measures. The Superintendent accepted the decision against him with perfect grace and good humour; and perhaps even, so some suspected, with a secret satisfaction that severity was overruled. But only those in the home-secrets knew what these labours cost. The precious hours that might have been devoted to rest or family intercourse or favourite studies on Sunday evenings, were consumed by half-mechanical toils which he would not delegate. He could not endure any slovenliness in official duty. Books must be examined, attendances verified, class-lists compared with the register at the desk; the inadvertences in carrying out a rather complicated system of conduct-marks must be corrected; all elements of possible friction must be removed, so that everything should be in working order for next week. To postpone the discharge of such tasks was intolerable; but many a teacher remembered in quiet hours on Sunday nights that the Superintendent, then already venerable, was spending his strength on labours which others, had they trained themselves to the same business exactitude, might have performed as well. Truly might his successor in the pastorate at Little Portland Street apply to him Wordsworth's great lines to Milton:<sup>1</sup>

'Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart;  
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea;

occasional repetition of a discourse (this time on 'the Better Part,' *Hours of Thought*, vol. i.), 'I always feel so sorry for Martha when we have that sermon.'

<sup>1</sup> Rev. P. H. Wicksteed at the Memorial Service at Little Portland St. Chapel, Jan. 16, 1900.

Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,  
So didst thou travel on life's common way,  
In cheerful godliness ; and yet thy heart  
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.'

#### IV.

The social conceptions that lay behind this service were of the aristocratic type into which Mr. Martineau had definitely settled in his later Liverpool years. The discussions on Parliamentary Reform did not rouse his enthusiasm, for he was always more concerned for the performance of duties than for the establishment of rights. But he consistently advocated the extension of the franchise. When he addressed a large gathering of parents and friends at the opening of the Portland British Schools (June 29, 1866), 'By all means,' he said, 'have household suffrage': only, 'let the working men show themselves qualified for it by properly fulfilling their responsibilities as householders, and not allow private benevolence to defray by far the largest portion of the cost of educating their children.'<sup>1</sup> The inequalities of social condition, however, no remedial schemes could remove. When the Rev. Brooke Herford, preaching on behalf of the Domestic Missions, drew a picture of rich and poor meeting for worship on a pewless floor, Mr. Martineau (undeterred by memories of Continental devotion) demurred: that would be merely

<sup>1</sup> To this he attached great importance: in 1869 he declared himself not averse to the idea of a national system, but it must be administered so as to put upon the parents the duty of paying their fair share of the expense, at the same time that they secured their proper part in the control of the schools. *Inquirer*, May 22.

to lay a mask in their chapels on the facts outside, which would reappear the moment the doors were closed, and some went away in their carriages and some in their rags: let them honestly recognise their differences of position, and study how to fulfil their mutual duties.<sup>1</sup> In a human society which rested on the acknowledgment of such reciprocal obligations, the abatement of grave and serious reverence filled him with alarm. He noted even in cultivated minds a grievous cowardice in the exercise of authority. This tendency infected popular literature, encouraged the prevalence of slang in language, and produced the alternate vacillation and temerity which characterised public men: nor was it less evident in domestic life, in the increasing dominance of the children over the elders, and the difficulty of inducing parents to insist on obedience from the young.<sup>2</sup> It was the first note of old age: not often did he assume the part of *laudator temporis acti*. His comments called forth the criticisms of a friendly 'Artisan,' to whom he thus explained his social ideal.

The world is not made upon the theory of what is called self-government, i.e., that everyone shall manage himself, and nobody govern anyone else: no, like the family, it is made up not of equals but of unequals, and is a united organism merely on that account. There are but two other governments of men possible; the rule of the Higher, and the rule of the Stronger. And if they lose all sight of anything above themselves, and are swayed by no sense of any solemn and divine claim upon their heart and will, and cannot get out of the free and easy style of knocking through life and death, the rule of the Stronger will assuredly close around them, and bring their 'new ideas'

<sup>1</sup> *Inquirer*, June 4, 1859.

<sup>2</sup> Speech at the Annual Meeting of the London Domestic Mission Society, *Inquirer*, May 25, 1867.

to a dismal end. The man who lives under no ideal sense of authority, is, so far, unfit for social existence; and is without the cement which saves him from isolation. And an age which, instead of letting its veneration shift to higher objects as they appear, rudely abates and abolishes it, loosens its whole structure and becomes dangerous.<sup>1</sup>

Sometimes, with a note of more buoyant hopefulness, he would contrast the great cities of antiquity with the triumphs of Christianity; yet the rising anxiety for the discharge of social duties begot new dangers; in haste to enact the part of good Samaritans, the claimants were sometimes afraid lest the sufferer's wounds should be soothed with unconsecrated oil, or disputed on what beast he should be carried to the inn.<sup>2</sup> Against the tendency to rely on institutional work, which always becomes more or less languid, and needs the perpetual refreshing of a new spirit, he placed his faith in 'direct and personal contact between the poor and the rich': the ranks of society were part of the Providential order of the world, and to destroy them was an impossibility.<sup>3</sup> In one sense Christian civilisation, he argued, had created its own difficulties; the ravages of misery were no longer permitted to clear from the field the idiot, the half-capable, the maimed. The modern demand was for preservation at all costs, and deliverance if possible. By this new responsibility the moral order of the world, and the unity of the human family, were assuredly strengthened; though economic and administrative energies were exposed to severer strain. The current despair was really

<sup>1</sup> *Inquirer*, June 8, 1867.

<sup>2</sup> *Inquirer*, May 30, 1868.

<sup>3</sup> *Inquirer*, May 15, 1869.

an augury of promise; the amount of physical and moral evil was probably less now than at any period known to history; the change was not in the darker sight we see, but the humaner eye that looks. And so the very despondency in the literature of doubt justified the summons to brighter faith.<sup>1</sup>

The student of political philosophy found foreign affairs no less interesting than in former years. Warned privately by Mr. Ernest de Bunsen in the spring of 1858, he was prepared to confirm Mazzini's belief that there would be war between France and Austria early in 1859, when Francis Newman was still sceptical.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Newman's intimacy with Kossuth led Mr. Martineau to write to him (Sept. 9, 1860): 'I see you still have a little of the Hungarian leaning towards Louis Nap. No doubt, he might have done worse, and so far deserves credit for his abstinence. The test of his honest purpose towards Italy will be, his course when Garibaldi approaches Rome. I am puzzled to think what solution there can be for that part of the grand problem.' In the Italian movement he saw 'nothing else than an insurrection by the noblest elements of Italian society—its science, its literature, its highest character and aspirations,—against a corrupt and hopeless mockery of civilisation, that has evidently reached its hour for final retirement from the world.'<sup>3</sup> As the year ran out, and he sur-

<sup>1</sup> *Inquirer*, May 25, 1872.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Catherine Winkworth*, ii. p. 248.

<sup>3</sup> Speech at Hope St., Dec. 28, 1860: *Inquirer*, Jan. 12, 1861.



veyed the changes of thought in England, Holland, Germany, on the one hand, and France and Italy on the other, he declared that ages had passed since a period so momentous had presented itself in the history of Christianity : while the Christian world was full of elements which would flow together towards an ultimate faith, the forms of creed into which it would shape itself would of necessity change from age to age : and till that was recognised, progress could not be secure.

Rapidly did the scene of interest shift across the Atlantic : and Europe listened with breathless expectation while Fort Sumter was bombarded (April, 1861). Recalling the incident at a later stage of the war, Mr. Martineau thus justified his condemnation of the policy of the government at Washington.

To the Rev. J. H. ALLEN.

Penmaenmawr, North Wales, July 8, 1863.

I have always held that the attack on Fort Sumter put your government in the right, and compelled the resort to force in reply. The obligation to maintain the constitution was an obligation to use the forces of the State against Secession. The title of a government to vindicate its authority and property is unimpeachable ; and, accordingly, at the outset, all European spectators condemned the connivance of Buchanan and approved of the honest efforts of his successor. But the duty of using a formal right, and the extent to which it should be enforced, must always be limited by the range of possible success. It cannot be a duty,—on the contrary, it is the gravest of political crimes,—to pledge the resources of a state against all odds. No sooner, therefore, did the scale and the resoluteness of the Secession become evident, than the European feeling as to the original right became qualified by the spectacle of overwhelming facts : the problem undertaken by your government was deemed unmanageable : and the war was deplored as likely only to embitter an inevitable separation. Its continued prosecution seemed to imply a presumptuous overestimate of what human will and force can accomplish, and a rejection, too prolonged, of the obvious arbitrament of nature and Providence.

Other letters to the same correspondent throw light on the growth of this view.<sup>1</sup> The following acknowledges the gift of Mr. Allen's sketch of Old Testament history entitled *Hebrew Men and Times*, a book which encountered some hostile criticism from conservative Unitarian theologians, but would now be regarded as conceding too much to tradition.

London, Nov. 29, 1861.

My dear Mr. Allen,

If you knew me as well as my old friends here know me, you would be surprised at my epistolary dumbness, however unaccountable to more fluent and demonstrative men. As a school-boy, my mother had to scold me for not writing home : and ever since, I have gone on in the same unprincipled way,<sup>2</sup> and, I fear, have grown worse from having a wife who writes such capital letters, and in such copiousness, as to do duty for both of us. I have no adequate excuse for my dilatoriness toward you. True, I received your book after considerable delay. But receive it I did ; was delighted with it ; and ought to have thanked you for it long ago. Deduct three months from the time (when, being in Scotland, I did not get the book), and a month for booksellers' delays : and charge the residue to my sins. Only, forgive me at last, and do not cut me off for my infirmity.

Our theological critics scent something amiss,—something German and suspicious,—in your book. They do not like the idea of letting the names in the Scripture Lessons stand for proper,—still less for improper,—men and women ; and of opening the natural lines between Hebrew and other history. The best class of readers, however, will thank you for humanizing what had ceased to win them by pretensions exclusively divine ; and for letting the consecration spread over the wider field of history. The quiet, lucid style of the book is most agreeable to my taste ; and the compression of the matter is admirable.

I fear that the terrible national crisis must for a long time stay the hand of every literary man amongst you ; and draw off all interest into one channel. And now, alas ! arises the

<sup>1</sup> They may be read in the *Publications* of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts.

<sup>2</sup> To a correspondent in 1850, at the time of the Gorham controversy, he once wrote : ' To hinder the hereditary descent of this incurable taint I have some thoughts of solemnly baptizing my children with ink, in hopes of a special prevenient grace. For myself there is no prospect, but that I shall die in hardness of heart.'

new and dreadful apprehension of war between our two countries ! But surely, this cannot be permitted : there must be a body of reasonable public opinion in New England, which may be brought to bear on the government at Washington, and may induce it to restrain the over-zeal of its officers. Through all the excitement produced here by the Trent affair, there is everywhere a disposition to abide by the acknowledged rules of international law, and to insist on nothing which it is consistent with honour and duty to concede. The right of search, which we once claimed against you, we shall be content to suffer from you. All contraband of war is at the disposal of your Prize Courts,—though not of your naval officers without a Court. But Civil Persons, passengers on board our Steamers, between one neutral port and another, cannot in honour be given up,—and *that* without the trial and award of a tribunal. The impression at your embassy here seems to be, that the San Jacinto people have exceeded their instructions ; just as our officers did in the Chesapeake case. God grant that the cloud may blow over !

To the same correspondent he wrote on April 14, 1863 :—

Of two things materially affecting the international feeling, I wish I could give you the assurance which I profoundly have myself : that there is here no issue desired for your struggle except such as may be most conducive to the well-being and greatness of your Commonwealth,—be it singular or plural : and that there is no change whatever in the English estimate of slavery. We simply do not believe in either the restoration of the Union, or the extinction of Slavery, much less in joint accomplishment of both objects, by process of Civil War. And though this purely practical judgment may seem to occupy a humbler level than one which looks exclusively to the ideas said to be represented in the *write*, yet it goes to the very essence of right and wrong in the case : for a War which aims at impossible objects,—be they ever so intrinsically good,—is self-condemned. We believe Slavery to be truly, as you say, the *cause* of the struggle : we do not believe it to be the *stake* at issue. On the contrary, we regard the division between North and South as the one gleam of hope that has opened on the sad history of the coloured race in America. The Free States, discharged from their slave-responsibilities, would spring at once to the head of the great league of nations against the oppression of an inferior race. But the Free States, reunited with the South, must either pledge themselves again to uphold and sanction the hateful institution, or end it by a conquest and confiscation of magnitude so frightful and uncontrollable as to outbid slavery itself in crime and misery.

On this great issue the Principal and the Professor

of philosophy in Manchester New College were by no means agreed. Till the departure of the College for Oxford a quarter of a century later there lingered in University Hall a tradition of a Students' Debate, which related how Mr. Tayler, carried out of his usual calm, declared that there never was any great conflict in which he could say more emphatically 'This is the side of God and that is the side of the Devil': whereupon Mr. Martineau arose and retorted that he had never found himself more utterly unable to ascribe the motives of the one side to a divine and those of the other to a diabolic agency. But a year or two later the two friends were again of one accord. After the assassination of Lincoln, at the following Whitsuntide, Mr. Martineau moved a vote of sympathy upon his death and an address of condolence to the American Unitarian Association. The logic of events had convinced him. The objects which he had declared 'impossible' were accomplished: and the 'second inaugural' struck him as 'one of the noblest utterances of a great and pure-minded statesman.' The murdered President was described as 'a man who had found his way through an unexampled crisis by the light of a rare truthfulness, simplicity, and political integrity.' 'The difficulties of his earlier career,' said the speaker, 'were enormous, and it was no wonder that it was marked by some vacillation and ambiguities: but at the commencement of his second Presidency he had won the reward of faithfulness and calmness of mind, and his life was never so valuable as it was at this crisis.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Inquirer*, June 10, 1865.

Ever since his residence in Germany during the *annus mirabilis*, Mr. Martineau had followed its political development with the keenest interest. After the 'Seven Weeks' War' in 1866 he wrote to Newman :—

The Prussian expansion is so full of wonder, interest, and promise, that I am half ashamed of not being able to bring my judgment and my feeling into completer accord about it. But I cannot help wishing that results so great could have been wrought out by an instrumentality that commanded more sympathy. In spite of all his ability and success, I feel the intensest dislike to Bismark, and only a cold rational satisfaction in his outwitting Louis Napoleon, and carrying despair to Vienna. But when the drama is contemplated, and the actors forgotten, the play of the piece is grand : and makes one breathless for the next act.

When the final catastrophe arrived, in 1870, he feared the political sequel of the war more than its actual calamities. The desolating incidents of the Commune in the spring of 1871 suggested a text for one of his finest speeches at the Whitsuntide anniversary,<sup>1</sup> when he compared the fruits of a 'grand national moral idea inspiring the German nation' with the disorganisation of the French, 'not through a fault of their own but through the wretched political experience which they have suffered for the last twenty years.' The theme was developed into a contrast between the two great rival influences which had been struggling in France for the command of popular education. On the one side were the priests : on the other the *philosophes*. True the recent results of sacerdotal education could be satisfactory to none :—

These very priests who have demanded this homage to their power, have been the very first victims of popular indignation.

<sup>1</sup> *Inquirer*, June 3, 1871.

The very first sufferer has been the Archbishop of Paris ; the very first act has been the desecration of the altars ; the very first theft has been of the sacred plate out of the churches ; the very first institutions which have been closed have been these churches themselves ; and the people who have been their pupils have treated with the utmost scorn and contempt the faith and worship in which they have been trained.

Neither party, he concluded, had succeeded in really educating the people ; but in comparing the two he ranged himself unhesitatingly on the side of the priests. Doubtless the religion which had been taught, was a religion which the intellects of the people had completely outgrown : but there was an unuttered aspiration for some form of religion not yet disclosed to them to take the place of that which had passed away, and fulfil the highest purposes of education.

This conviction animated his support of Mr. Forster's Education Act, and led to the following defence of it, Whitsuntide, 1872, against a resolution offered by the Rev. Dr. Crosskey<sup>1</sup> :—

After quoting the two determining clauses (the 14th and 25th), Mr. Martineau argued that no favour was shown to one religious body more than to another, and asked : What was the particular magic about local taxation that conscience should object to allowing any portion of it to be devoted to the teaching of any religion other than one's own, while Queen's taxes had been paid year after year, out of which grants had been made to the various schools without a voice being raised against it ? This scruple was an afterthought, an everlasting principle picked up since yesterday. In pressing the Education Act the government did wisely in not looking upon England as a desert land, in which the whole work had to be begun at first, but in considering how they could incorporate existing institutions with their national system. The fact that upwards of 20,000 clergymen had gone heart and soul into the work of education, was one which the Government would have been infatuated to have overlooked. He felt the greatest repugnance to interfere with the Act until it had been

<sup>1</sup> To the effect that the Education Act of 1870 violated the principles of religious equality. *Inquirer*, May 25, 1872.

well tried. If religion was separated entirely from the ordinary education, it would be flung into the hands of the priests and parsons : while, if the general elements of religion were permitted to remain in daily contact with the ordinary education, the religious teaching would continually improve, and by degrees a common basis would be found for the worship and conscience of the people.<sup>1</sup>

To one more topic of this period he thus adverts in a letter to Mr. Newman, Jan. 5, 1871 :—

Your thoughts on men and things always touch and move me, like a prophet's words ; all the more wholesomely, because, instead of simply reflecting my own level convictions, they stir up inward controversies of conscience which leave me in the end on higher ground. Your faith and hope in regard to the public action of women I honour and love, and wish that I could share : for the future apparently is yours. But it is not without considerable qualification that I can approve of the new theory of women's life : and though I am for giving them free scope to enter into any profession or field of activity deemed honourable for men, so that their place should be found for them by natural aptitude and not by restrictive law or untested prejudice, yet I believe that experience will work out in the future adjustments not strongly contrasted with the past. I cannot so despair of household unity, and of the old doctrine that the State is an aggregate of families, as to wish for *married* women's suffrage. Even if I were to waive all scruples about it, I could not feel your trust in it as a means of getting rid of such odious legislation as the C.D.A. . . . I own that I cannot overcome my repugnance to the discussion of this subject,—especially the public agitation of it in mixed assemblies,—by women : and the profuse circulation, among our wives and daughters, of the literature of the two sides, seems to me a disaster scarcely less than the laws themselves. An active Committee of high-minded married ladies, like Mrs. Butler, with a similar organisation of resolute men, would have worked, I think, better than the more comprehensive societies which have taken the matter in hand. I do not much like the look of the Royal Commission, perhaps, however, from my ignorance of the names in many instances. The Home Secretary urged me to accept a seat on the Commission : and, under a strong conviction of duty, I consented, till I found that the enquiries would be largely conducted in towns where the C.D.A. have been in operation. As I cannot leave London, I was obliged to withdraw.

Called upon unexpectedly, at a meeting on this subject, Mr. Martineau condensed his objection

<sup>1</sup> Compare his attitude in 1847, *ante*, chap. VIII. p. 274.

to the Acts into a single sentence : ' Christ dismissed the guilty woman with the words, *Go and sin no more.* These Acts say, *Go and prepare to sin again.*'

## V.

In June, 1866, the Rev. Prof. Hoppus resigned the chair of philosophy in University College. In response to the urgency of some of his friends, who thought Mr. Martineau peculiarly qualified for this post, he allowed himself to become a candidate. He himself felt that its tenure would be an incentive to a proper completion of his work as teacher.<sup>1</sup> The *Spectator* strongly urged his election, and when it was recommended by the Senate, his friends supposed that it was secure. At the Council Meeting, however, on August 4, there was an unexpected opposition, and by the casting vote of Lord Belper, who was in the chair, the resolution for his appointment was lost. The situation was described by the Candidate, in a letter to Prof. Newman thanking him for his 'most effective testimony':—

It gave me, I am convinced, my most powerful support, and only frightened me by promising what I fear it is rather in my wish than in my power to perform. The election is not yet decided, but stands over for the November meeting of Council. Mr. Grote's motion was not carried but *rejected*.<sup>2</sup> and so was the proposal to appoint his candidate, Mr. Robertson. But on the motion to adopt the Senate's recommendation of me, the votes were equal; and the Chairman, Lord Belper, gave the casting vote in the negative, avowedly on the principle of Mr. Grote's rejected motion. So there was a dead-lock; and the whole

<sup>1</sup> Letter to the Rev. W. H. Channing, *Life*, i. 414.

<sup>2</sup> This declared it inconsistent with the religious neutrality of the College to appoint a candidate eminent as minister of one of the various sects dividing the religious world.



affair comes on *de novo* next month. In a curious letter to me J. S. Mill avows that his preference for Mr. Robertson arises from his desire to plant a thorough-going disciple in a seat of influence, and not from any consideration of superior personal qualifications. He excuses this sort of philosophical sectarianism by saying that it is a necessary retaliation on the exclusion of his opinions from places of authoritative instruction. There can be no doubt, I think, after this, that your interpretation of the opposition is correct. From the *principle* thus dragged in I have come to feel more interest in the election than on any personal grounds. The negative men are the aristocracy of the Council: and they are active and resolute: so that they may perhaps draw waverers to them, and establish a small majority at last. But some of my friends hope otherwise.

The hope was defeated. Mr. Robertson was appointed in December, and though Mr. R. H. Hutton, with persistent faithfulness, carried the matter before a special General Meeting of the Proprietors of the College,<sup>1</sup> it was naturally difficult to cancel an election which had been already made. The proceedings aroused a good deal of attention in the press, and brought Mr. Martineau's name prominently before the public. As was to be expected, he bore his rejection like a philosopher, and its only significant personal result to himself was that it enabled him to include Prof. Robertson in the circle of his friends.

The meetings of the Metaphysical Society, which was formed in the spring of 1869, greatly enlarged the range of Mr. Martineau's personal acquaintance with the most eminent students of philosophy and science then living.<sup>2</sup> The support of such new

<sup>1</sup> The requisition was signed by fourteen Fellows of the College, and six other Proprietors.

<sup>2</sup> As his share in its proceedings belongs rather to his work as a teacher of philosophy, its record is reserved for chapter XIV. It must suffice here to name his Catholic friends, Archbishop Manning, Father Dalgairns, and Dr. Ward.

interests was welcome to his sensitive and sympathetic nature, for the summer brought with it a heavy personal sorrow. After a short illness, the Rev. John James Tayler, whose strength had been somewhat severely strained by a journey to Hungary in 1868, died on May 28, in his seventy-second year. For a whole generation the two friends had been knit in partnership of thought and action. 'He was a true saint of the Unitarian type,' wrote Miss Catherine Winkworth (June 8): 'a man of the most deeply devotional spirit, whose whole life was pervaded by piety; and for humility, charity, and candour, I never knew any one like him except Mr. Maurice. No one ever thought of being worldly or cynical or intolerant, while conversing with him.'<sup>1</sup> To Mr. Martineau the loss was irreparable. The serenity and hopefulness of Mr. Tayler had again and again relieved his own self-distrusts; as he counted himself among 'dependent minds,' the mingled reverence and sympathy which bound him to his friend, exactly satisfied his need of some one to whom he could still look up and be enlightened. The main burden of the work of the College now fell upon him.<sup>2</sup> But the image of Mr. Tayler, the friend of his full age, never ceased to live before him among the dearest and most sacred figures alike of his past and of his future.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Catherine Winkworth*, vol. ii. p. 514.

<sup>2</sup> To one who saw him at College prayers the first morning after the bereavement, he seemed 'like a crushed man.' He was immediately appointed Principal. See chap. XIV.

<sup>3</sup> 'Loss and Gain in Recent Theology,' 1881; *Essays*, iv. 334. A sketch of Mr. Tayler will be found in *Essays*, i. 381. In less than a month after he had said the farewell words over Mr.

Many and various were the personalities with whom events brought him into contact. Towards the end of May, 1870, he received a letter from a distinguished Dominican priest, who sought his help in the most delicate problems of faith and conscience. At Father Suffield's request, Mr. Martineau paid him a visit at Bosworth, and an active correspondence followed. On Father Suffield's resolve to lay his perplexities before Dr. Newman, Mr. Martineau wrote: 'Your confidence could not be given to anyone more worthy to receive it, and more skilful to help in moral difficulties than the venerable and noble-souled Newman. Only there are crises in life when one has to rise into a truth higher than the human.'<sup>1</sup> The point of view from which his own counsel was given, may be inferred from the following letters:—

London, June 17th, 1870.

Almost hour by hour my thoughts have been with you, since the last kindly grasp of your hand at the railway station. As far as the different habits of my mind permit, I try to think myself into your position, and though I dare not even fancy my sympathy with its difficulties complete, I see too clearly the loneliness, the wounds of affection, the tremblings of conscience which it involves, not to long and pray for the power and privilege of rendering such help in the crisis as brotherly appreciation may make possible. The one difference between the Catholic

Taylor's grave, Mr. Martineau was called on to render the like service for his old fellow-student—also his frequent critic and opponent—the Rev. R. Brook Aspland. Magnanimous was his tribute to the deceased pastor's 'rare and happy social tact, his genuine loyalty to conviction, and his balanced reverence for liberty and truth,' June 26: *Inquirer*, July 3.

<sup>1</sup> *Life of R. R. Suffield*, p. 157. A little later, 'I am glad you are going to Birmingham to confer with Dr. Newman,—of all living religious writers the man I perhaps love and honour most, though the more I study him, the more do I wonder at the submission of such a mind to the Roman Catholic theology': *ibid.* p. 121.

and the Protestant estimate of duty which your letters bring home to me, and which I find it most difficult to conciliate, has reference to the supposed conflict of claims between the intellect and the conscience. The proposition, 'The best and most complete Religion must be the true,' I can only read conversely,—'The true Religion must be the best and most complete,' nor, apart from its truth, could I venture to measure the goodness of a faith. So little can I escape from my Protestant reverence for veracity as the primary and paramount condition of any possible personal religion, and for any reality inwardly given me as against the fairest fictions recommended to me from without, that I cannot understand the possibility of invoking the Will against honest doubt and dawning light, without the keenest remorse as for heinous sin. I can enter into any degree of self-distrust: personally, I feel it profoundly, in the face of the collective judgment against me of the Church, or even of any one or two men whom I love and venerate. But this would only drive me to a sorrowful silence in following the little light I have; and could never justify me in pretending to have theirs.

Killin, N.B., Aug. 15, 1870.

The insight which I have gained through your recent experience into the working of the Catholic system, deepens my impression of the essential childishness of mind, and untrusting narrowness of piety, which deform the highest graces nurtured by it. To believe that the All-holy God will treat a soul as lost, which in obedience to him (or, at all events, what *means* to be such) performs an act of heroic self-sacrifice, what is this but a debasing superstition, applying the power of religion to the corruption of the moral sense? It is in the highest degree considerate and delicate in you to speak so tenderly as you do of the spirit of the associates you leave. But I must confess that with my view of their narrowness of mind, compared with your own large comprehension of things, I cannot but feel your tone of humility excessive. It would not be *self-assertion*, but only homage to the Divine truth which has alighted on you as its organ, to hold your head a little higher. . . . I know you will forgive me for saying this: it is perhaps due to my own defective meekness.

The confidence with which Mr. Martineau urged his correspondent to rely on the deepest convictions of his spirit, was reinforced by his contemporary intercourse with another eminent religious teacher, Keshub Chunder Sen. A few weeks before Mr. Martineau went to Bosworth, he opened his pulpit to the Hindu prophet, whom he afterwards described

as 'a soul most congenial to the soul of Jesus, a kind of second John.'<sup>1</sup> At a great meeting where Dean Stanley and Lord Lawrence took part in welcoming him to England, Mr. Martineau, who had long sympathised with 'the tendency of modern thought to consecrate the whole history of humanity,'<sup>2</sup> thus described the lesson of his visit<sup>3</sup> :—

There were times when it was necessary to begin afresh, and see what could be done with the native resources of humanity communing with God through nature and through its own faculties. Their great reformer with his people had ventured upon that step, and had shown what truth could be won by a human soul standing in its loneliness and isolation, how far it was possible for it to hold communion with God, and to sanctify life and the creation into which it was born. The result had been what he believed it ever would be, that God and the human soul had found each other out; and after all the storms of doubt and difficulty, the foot was found upon the eternal rock, against which the tempest would beat in vain, and overhead was a canopy of eternal love from which every cloud would sweep away. The noble lesson read to them by this Indian reformer was destined to react upon themselves. The European mind had a certain hardness in it, so that it was never able to make any large progress in knowledge without at the same time losing apparently its spiritual depth. He believed that the Indian intellect would appropriate all their modern science, without sacrificing the divine interpretation of the universe. In one of the Indian dramas it was said that the external creation and God had been separated from one another in the human mind by the action of the demon Illusion; and when that demon was destroyed, they would again re-unite. So perhaps it would be now: and if their friends of the East could restore to them in the West something of the tender mind and the sweet humanity of which they had an example present in their guest, they would give them the best forgiveness for the past offences of a Clive and a Hastings, and the truest gratitude for the benevolent justice of a Bentinck and a Lawrence.

Yet one more of his contemporaries was to pass from his view, ere he laid down the preacher's task.

<sup>1</sup> Speech at Hope St., Liverpool, Sept. 25, 1871.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to Rev. R. L. Carpenter, Feb. 5, 1862.

<sup>3</sup> *Inquirer*, April 16, 1870, condensed.

‘No prophet for fifteen hundred years,’ he declared in April, 1872, ‘not even Tauler himself, has borne such witness to the divine root and ground of our humanity, as Frederick Denison Maurice.’<sup>1</sup> He might be negligent of logical architecture; and quite above the ambition of the intellect: but ‘for largeness of thought which set him in sympathy with the various wisdom of the past; for keenness of spiritual insight which seemed to make him confessor to the ultimate secrets of humanity; for a love of God which in effect was identical with the sweetest and the brightest charity; for power to turn religion from a mechanical form or a solemn tradition into a reality and joy; no leader of our time, scarcely any past teacher of righteousness, can be compared with that servant of God who has just been taken from us, and whose mantle has not yet dropped upon the earth.’<sup>2</sup> And this was the man who was once condemned for ‘the arrogance and offensiveness of his language as towards all from whom he differed.’<sup>3</sup>

## VI.

The summer vacation of 1872 was passed in Nant Gwynant, beneath the peak of Snowdon, and on the beautiful estuary, between Barmouth

<sup>1</sup> Born Aug. 29, 1805; died April 1, 1872. As the coffin was lowered into the grave at the Highgate Cemetery, beneath the spring sunshine, Mr. Martineau, whose control over his feelings was usually complete, was seen ‘weeping like a child.’ *Christian World Magazine*, quoted in the *Inquirer*, Feb. 7, 1874.

<sup>2</sup> *Inquirer*, April 13, 1872.

<sup>3</sup> By a writer in the *British Quarterly Review*, quoted in the *Inquirer*, Oct. 8, 1859.

and Dolgelly, in North Wales. Before returning to London, Dr. Martineau<sup>1</sup> travelled with some of his family, towards the end of September, to Leeds, to visit his kindred there. Intimations of enfeebled health had already visited him, and an attack of giddiness on getting out of the railway carriage at Leeds aroused grave apprehensions. Under medical advice, he immediately resigned his pulpit. Only once did he ever occupy it again.<sup>2</sup> To Mr. Newman he thus told his tale.

London, Nov. 6, 1872.

An attack of vertigo at Leeds on my way home from Wales warned me that the strain upon me,—which had been unusually severe last session,—was more than I could bear: and reminded me that I had often of late instinctively put a voluntary check upon my eagerness in preaching from a feeling that else it would somehow consume me on the spot. Dr. Clark can find no trace of anything going wrong in either heart or brain, and believes that, with reduced work, the overplied functions will be all right again. But the sacrifice must be made of that part of my life-service which is most exciting. It is a painful wrench to tear myself away from duties that have had all my heart, and were to me more sacred at last than at first. But I am thankful that the season is chosen for me, and that I have simply to go where the way is shown. The illness has left no vestige: and I find my College and literary work no more fatiguing than before. If a few years more are allotted to me here, I shall try to use the time spared to me in bringing a little nearer to completion one or two of the unfinished projects which, in their present state, seem to reproach me with either presumption or inconstancy.

To the congregation and his fellow-workers in the Schools he bade separate farewells.<sup>3</sup> Many felt that something of the music of existence ceased for them when his voice was no more heard. But

<sup>1</sup> The degree of LL.D. had been conferred upon him *in absentia* by Harvard University in the preceding June.

<sup>2</sup> In June, 1881, for the delivery of the Address on 'Loss and Gain in Recent Theology.' See chap. XIV.

<sup>3</sup> See the letters and resolution, *Life*, ii. 12-16. The congregation made a parting gift of £3,500.

for him, too, there was a chapter closed. 'I met him shortly after,' related Miss Cobbe in 1900,<sup>1</sup> 'and walked a little way beside him, murmuring a few words of grief that I should no longer listen to his preaching. His head drooped; and he replied with infinite sadness in a low voice: "It has been my life."'

Some fruits of his ministry were yet to be gathered. Under the title *Hours of Thought on Sacred Things* two volumes of sermons were issued in 1876 and 1879. The new hymnbook on which he had been long engaged was published in 1874, with the name *Hymns of Praise and Prayer*.<sup>2</sup> A few years later, 1879, under the urgent request of his successor, the Rev. P. H. Wicksteed, and some of the congregation at Little Portland Street, he issued, with the consent of Dr. Sadler, a revised edition of the *Ten Services in Common Prayer for Christian Worship*,<sup>3</sup> his own compositions naturally remaining unchanged. His general feeling was indicated in a letter to the Rev. F. E. Millson, of Halifax, Sept 17, 1874.

I have a deep respect for both the variety of individual free prayer, and the sympathetic unison of a liturgy covering a

<sup>1</sup> *Contemporary Review*, p. 178.

<sup>2</sup> It contained 797 pieces. Many of the hymns to which objection had been taken, were now dropped. The Messianic element disappeared, and Christianity was identified with 'the religion of Christ in its pure and personal essence,' preface, p. ix.

<sup>3</sup> This was called *Ten Services of Public Prayer*. In this volume the occasional services and the collects for the Christian year, belonging to its predecessor, were not included.—The final changes were introduced in conference with Mr. Wicksteed, who noticed that though Dr. Martineau had only just arrived in London after a fatiguing night-journey from Scotland, phrase after phrase sprang instantly from his lips to meet the difficulties or embody the suggestions presented to him, with unflinching readiness. Only a mind to which the devotional habit was continuous, could have thus responded without obstacle or delay.



whole natural area of fellowship. But the intermediate condition, into which we are apparently passing, of neither personal freshness nor church unity, affects me with much sadness, as a natural sign of religious dissolution. I am not wedded to any particular liturgical book, though I happen to have contributed to one. I would use any on which we could agree: or, perhaps by preference, be free of all. But if there is to be *any*, I do think that some pains should be taken to secure its being *one*.

‘For the average or middle level of religious character,’ he once said,<sup>1</sup> common prayer was the best discipline for the spiritual life, though it would never satisfy the higher and devouter natures. But he doubted if there was any longer the unity of thought and feeling which alone could give dignity and power to a common form. ‘The failure is the more mortifying,’ he added, ‘because there seems reason to think that if we could go deep enough, and free ourselves adequately from lingering conventional phrases, there might be reached a common ground of piety on which we might rest without strain to the conscience of anyone who admitted of prayer at all.’ In prayer, then, as in every other function of the teacher of religion, the first requisite was veracity. Here was, in his own judgment, the whole secret of his own influence. ‘As to what I have done in a long career,’ he said at Liverpool in 1871,<sup>2</sup> ‘it has been the simplest thing in the world. It has been simply to say precisely and always that which I thought and believed and felt to be true: to hold back nothing, to profess nothing, to measure nothing by a standard other than was perfectly and absolutely sincere.’

<sup>1</sup> *Inquirer*, Oct 13, 1871.

<sup>2</sup> Speech at the opening of the Hamilton Road Church, *Inquirer*, Sept. 30.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### PRINCIPLES OF RELIGIOUS ASSOCIATION : 1859-1870.

IN spite of the extreme 'individualism' which his critics sometimes discovered in his modes of ethical and religious thought, Mr. Martineau's sympathies drew him strongly towards the associated life of endeavour and devotion. For many years he had been an unwilling Nonconformist : to Mr. Wicksteed, who had consulted him about points in the constitution of the Hope Street Church, he wrote in 1863, 'I greatly prefer the Church system, in spite of its obvious evils ; and I believe that the real future of English Christianity is entrusted to it. But whilst we remain outside it, we must accept and work out the consequences of our position.' When Dean Stanley delivered his address at Sion College, on 'Church and State,' and the Bishop of London (Dr. Tait) observed that he did not want England to become Unitarian, but he feared that result, or something analogous, if the connexion of Church and State were dissolved, Mr. Martineau replied that notwithstanding the bribe held out to him by the Lord Bishop, of the prevalence of his opinions if Church and State were severed, he was yet an Englishman, and preferred the welfare

of his country to the prevalence of any theological sect or opinions whatever.<sup>1</sup>

## I.

The true conditions of doctrinal and religious association had long engaged Mr. Martineau's careful, thought, and his London ministry presented opportunities for realising his ideas. The key-note of his action had been struck as early as 1854 in a letter to Prof. F. W. Newman, à propos of his proposals for *Catholic Union*.

I cannot conceive of a Church without the worship of a Living and Personal God. With *this*, I think, a Church must begin, not end: and short of this we can have,—as it seems to me,—only clubs or associations for particular objects, not any fusion into a common spiritual life. After all, perhaps, the divided state of sentiment, rendering union impossible, is not so great an evil as we are apt to suppose. It is a phenomenon chiefly found among the intellectual minority, whose function it is to modify the hereditary principles of churches around them, and who cannot well be at home in any. The great majority, meanwhile, of those who, in any Protestant period, have fallen under religious influence, are probably living in connexion with churches not unsuited to their stage of mind and character. Tried by an ideal standard, we are miserable enough, and have reason to bless those who can paint for us a 'church of the future.' But estimated by historical comparison, we may, I fancy, take heart a little, and doubt 'whether the former times were better than these.'

At the first anniversary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association after his settlement in London, Mr. Martineau, loyal to his opinions, warmly supported its cause as essential for the encouragement of individual fidelity in the avowal of unpopular convictions. But at the same time he declared his adhesion to the purpose and conception of the

<sup>1</sup> *Inquirer*, Feb. 15, 1868.

Presbyterian forefathers (slipping in the remark that the modern equivalent of their principle of the 'sufficiency of Scripture' was the 'right to free enquiry'), and called on the Association to divest itself of all congregational representation, and rely solely on its individual members.<sup>1</sup> To the London District Society he re-expounded next day his conception that worshipping assemblies should not be founded on a doctrinal basis with a view to the propagation of distinctive theological ideas, but organised to embrace the common purpose of Christian life, leaving an open theology that might change within these limits.<sup>2</sup> This thesis was enforced a year later in two powerful letters, addressed to the Rev. S. F. Macdonald, of Chester, entitled 'The Unitarian Position,'<sup>3</sup> and 'Church-Life? or Sect-Life?'<sup>4</sup> The denominational waters were stirred. There had not been such trouble since the Aggregate Meeting one and twenty years before.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps the passage that gave most offence was the declaration—often quoted since:—

I am conscious that my deepest obligations, as a learner from others, are in almost every department to writers not of my

<sup>1</sup> The number of congregations actually sending representatives was exceedingly small, but this did not affect the principle that congregations founded on 'open trusts,' should not commit themselves to an Association constituted for the promotion of a particular doctrine for Lancashire and Cheshire. On the other hand, at the meeting of the Provincial Assembly (the organisation of which was open, see chap. VII., *ante*, p. 204) in 1855 Mr. Martineau had proposed a system of congregational representation by lay delegates, which was adopted the next year.

<sup>2</sup> *Inquirer*, May 29, 1858.

<sup>3</sup> This was a private letter, but was deemed of such importance that Mr. Macdonald sent it to the papers.

<sup>4</sup> 1859; *Essays*, iii.

<sup>5</sup> *Ante*, chap. VII. p. 217.

own creed. In Philosophy I have had to unlearn most that I had imbibed from my early text-books, and the authors in chief favour with them. In Biblical interpretation, I derive from Calvin and Whitby the help that fails me in Crell and Belsham. In Devotional literature and religious thought, I find nothing of ours that does not fail before Augustine, Tauler, and Pascal. And in the poetry of the Church, it is the Latin or the German hymns, or the lines of Charles Wesley, or of Keble, that fasten on my memory and heart, and make all else seem poor and cold.<sup>1</sup>

Under the storm of criticism which these letters aroused, Mr. Martineau remained silent.<sup>2</sup> But to his friends at Hope Street on Jan. 6, 1860, he thus explained himself<sup>3</sup> :—

I know how difficult it is to bring minds of intense conviction without wide horizon to any trust in the broader and more generous method. 'Do not deceive yourself,' said a friend to me once, 'No man cares for more liberty than he wants for himself, or likes to see others out of his bounds.' I cannot accept this cynical sentiment, which is refuted by many a passage in our religious body. But now and then one meets with facts that give it too much plausibility. 'Why are you so anxious about free learning?' said one of our ministers not long ago: 'That was all very well so long as we were working clear of our errors, but now that we have got the truth, we have only to fix it and hand it down.' This ingenuous confession illustrates the tenacious hold which the idea of an ultimate 'orthodoxy' has upon otherwise liberal minds; and warns us lest we, too, have our best strength sapped by this pernicious parasite of the tree of life, and divert into it the fostering juices of our Christian growth. As a consequence of this same illusion, I notice in the religious

<sup>1</sup> 'The Unitarian Position,' *Essays*, iii. 375.

<sup>2</sup> They failed to convince the advocates of a 'Unitarian Church.' Already on Jan. 1, 1859, the *Inquirer* had uttered grave warning against the 'dangers of the mystical school,' in a review of the *Studies of Christianity*. 'We know of devout men and women leaving the faith of their childhood because they wished for a sheltering Church, a holy doctrine to which to cling, and for which to work, and their ministers have told them that no Unitarian Church exists, and that they must discover doctrines for themselves.'

<sup>3</sup> In defence of the principle of Manchester New College, *Inquirer*, Jan. 14. A rumour was at the time going the round of the papers in Manchester and London that an attempt would be made to eject him from his professorship at the approaching annual meeting of Trustees. It proved wholly groundless.

criticisms of the day a habit of driving every obnoxious opinion into some false dilemma furnished by old party names. Every modified belief is instantly met by the cry 'You cannot stand there, you must either go forward or come back.' Do you venture to hint that the Christianity of a rich-souled age, nurtured by deciduous sanctities of many seasons of Christendom, may be higher than that of a rudimentary time? That, you are told, is the doctrine of development, which you must either retract or become Catholic. Do you question the separate reality of physical forces, and see only divine causation through the organism of nature? That, you are told, is the road to pantheism, and thither you must go, if you do not recoil. Do you say that God's holy Spirit is no stranger to our humanity, but infuses an adequate grace for the guidance of each will? That is Quakerism, and you must assume the broad brim, or construe the spirit back into Nature. Do you sift the accounts and separate the elements of any recorded miracle? That is the way to anti-supernaturalism, and you must either desist from your criticism or betake yourself to Deism. Do you admire the clear intellect and exegetic skill of a Calvin? Depend upon it, then, your Unitarianism is shaky, and you will not stop short of the 'Five Points.' . . . Such dilemmas must always operate, not for conviction, but for pain and odium only. For myself I repudiate them all, and while more or less occupying every one of these 'untenable positions,' I am as much of a Unitarian as I ever was.

Meanwhile, opinion was slowly moving. On Jan. 30, 1861, the Rev. Henry Solly published a letter proposing to withdraw the name 'Unitarian' from the title of the 'Provincial Assembly of Presbyterian and Unitarian Ministers' for Lancashire and Cheshire. The field was small, but large issues were involved, and on them Mr. Martineau commented as follows<sup>1</sup> :—

I concur in his disapproval of theological tests. I think it a mistake to mix up doctrinal definitions or names with the trusts or constitution of a Christian congregation. When the question between an open and a closed theology as the basis of a Church is put to the vote, I go with Mr. Solly to the Presbyterian side of the house. But I do not on this account feel impelled to turn my dogmatic friends out of doors, and refuse to sit in the same assembly with them. It would be a peculiar Catholicity were I to urge my comprehensiveness of them to their exclusion.

<sup>1</sup> *Inquirer*, Feb. 2, 1861.

This is a practical question. I find myself in an ecclesiastical connexion, essentially one in its inherited associations and living convictions, yet divided between two tendencies, both of them justified by history and permanently natural to religious men ; on the one hand to Catholic feeling and a foreshadowing of future truth ; on the other to doctrinal zeal and unqualified confidence in present forms of conviction. Some of its congregations have an open constitution, some a close one. I am *toto animo* with the former, and shall never cease, as between the two, from warning against the extension of the other. But where both tendencies have settled into peaceful relations on common ground, where express provision is made for both, I lament the attempt of either to expel the other, and assert its own supremacy. The men on either side have after all a more natural alliance than any other that could be formed. I have always desired the freest scope for both within the limits of mutual recognition and respect, and am equally convinced that no exclusively Unitarian organisation, and no exclusively Presbyterian, can meet the conditions, and gather up the real power, of our present ecclesiastical existence.

To the Rev. R. L. CARPENTER.

London, Feb. 12, 1861.

Mr. Solly, I am happy to say, has come round to my view of the Provincial Assembly question, and means to avow his change of conviction in the next *Inquirer*. I have always been struck with his remarkable candour.

Whilst I recognise, I cannot but regret, the change in the character of the Assembly. Freedom of thought, it is true, was *not* the passport of admission : but the belonging to a certain Nonconformist body which deliberately refused (at the time when our chapels were founded) to bind up the freedom of thought *was* the passport for admission : and this alone has enabled us to become what we are. Within the period of our history the word 'Presbyterian' never meant anything else than this, together with the idea of a national Church on a representative instead of a hierarchical basis. The name therefore is oppressive to *no theology* which remains open-minded ; and would have needed neither addition nor change, but for the appearance amongst us of congregations with a shut-up theology. This I cannot but regard as a change for the worse : but so long as it leaves the old principle in peaceable existence along with it, I am for letting both 'grow together till the harvest.'

## II.

No further steps were taken to give shape to Mr. Martineau's ideas, until a movement in an opposite

direction evoked a counteracting effort. In the summer of 1865 the Rev. Samuel Bache, of Birmingham, appealed to the Committee of the Unitarian Association to 'remove all ambiguity as to the acceptance of the special and immediate divine origin and authority of the Christian revelation.'<sup>1</sup> Two months later he issued an address in which he pointed out that at the time of its formation the meaning of both the terms by which its objects were expressed—'the promotion of the principles of Unitarian Christianity at home and abroad'—was clear and undisputed. Christianity was universally maintained by Unitarians, equally with Trinitarians, as the distinctive designation of the belief in Jesus as the Christ, in his mission and inspiration and doctrine as immediately and specially divine, and as carrying with them a direct divine authority.<sup>2</sup> The challenge produced an active correspondence both in public and private, in the course of which the Rev. P. W. Clayden, of Nottingham, appealed to Mr. Martineau to come forward and lead.

As to the despondency (replied Mr. Martineau<sup>3</sup>), I am ready, if Mr. Clayden rightly interprets the feeling of our denomination, to throw it away. Let us but turn our face right for the future, and we may cease to regret the past. If, however, for this purpose we have to quit the track of the last two generations ; if Mr. Bache's proposal lies direct upon that track, and is supported by the habits and ideas of half a century ; if no warning or protest has hitherto availed to keep us from copying the dogmatic sects, and we have become more and more deeply committed to their language and methods, Mr. Clayden must admit some difficulty in recovering the lost path, and forgive the sigh of one who could never even persuade his companions that it had been lost at all.

A few days before, he had written to Mr. Tayler

<sup>1</sup> At the Whitsuntide meeting, June 7, *Inquirer*, June 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Inquirer*, August 12.

<sup>3</sup> *Inquirer*, Sept. 23.



(Sept. 12), 'For generations to come I see no ark of refuge, no retreat for the Christian spirit which is at once Catholic and intellectual, but our little Church; and we must keep, if we can, the balance true between the width of its thought and the depth of its devotion.'<sup>1</sup> At the end of the year he thus reviewed the situation in a letter to Mr. Thom:—

In the darkness some points emerge quite clear to me now, though these were not so when I wrote to the *Inquirer*. (1) The B. and F.U.A. cannot be widened, or turned to any account beyond the diffusion of Unitarianism. Both Mr. Field (its solicitor) and Mr. Cookson (our two best advisers) are quite positive about this. (2) The name 'Unitarian' is quite incompatible with any Catholic organization, and must be dropped as a *Church name*. Ennoble it as you will, *add* to it, as Channing has done, great faiths and the beauty of holy associations, you cannot *take away* from it its meaning of *belief in the unipersonality of God*: so that it must always act as a creed of exclusion against those who cling to the Incarnation or any form of Trinity. A once orthodox friend says: 'When we begin our approaches to you heretics, the first doctrine that loses hold on us is that of eternal punishment; then perhaps, original Depravity; next, the Atonement; and last of all, if at all, the Union with the Son of Man of the Eternal Son of God,—which represents to us the blending of Divine and Human in us all. But you, with singular perversity, thrust to the front, by your name *Unitarian*, the very distinction at which we arrive the last, and which many of us, else wholly yours, never quite reach at all.' Thus the first thing we require a man to surrender is the last he is willing to quit. And we see how many, with general sympathies running in the same channels with ours, are unable to

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, i. 417.

rest satisfied with the Absolute simplicity of the Divine Nature. Did we however do no practical violence in this way to the natural adjustments of religious sympathy, still the gross inconsistency of catholic professions under a doctrinal name must revolt every clear mind, and weaken even the half-sighted with an indistinct shame. And it is a deplorable pity that a name, excellent and indeed indispensable in the vocabulary of theological opinion, should thus, by abusive application to a *Church*, make us shy of it from the sense that while it tells the truth of us individually, it tells a lie about us ecclesiastically.

(3) We greatly need a real and exhaustive representative organization for our congregations; an Association which shall bring our whole public religious life under review and into expression, with a view to mutual help and better building up, and infusing into the weaker members some of the resources and spirit of the stronger. I am not blind to the difficulties connected with the formation and working of such a body: but they are less serious, I think, than the defects under which we suffer till we have it. And I am sanguine enough to believe that we have amongst us experience and insight adequate to the construction of an organization which, while religiously respecting congregational independence, may make this very blessing greater by the vigour of some central sympathy.

Supposing the way clear for the establishing of such an Association (which would leave the B. and F.U.A. to its own work), the new and broader *name* might, in the first instance, be simply attached to *it*: and, if introduced with sufficient *impressment*, it would of itself, with suitable example and encouragement, spread to our congregations. What the name should be could only be determined by conference with each other. Provided it be comprehensive and Christian, I am ready to take or to suggest whatever title is most congenial to us on the whole. . . .

Mr. Clayden, meanwhile, had been gathering the opinions of brother ministers; and a Conference was ultimately held at Nottingham on the 13th and 14th of March, 1866, when it was decided to form a 'Free Christian Union.' Notice of the necessary steps to discharge the Association from its function of representing congregations was at once given: but it was ultimately withdrawn in favour of a proposal to appoint a Committee to consider how far the Association should be modified, or in what way two separate agencies could divide the work between them in friendly co-operation. At the Annual Meeting on May 23 the motion of Mr. Bache was lost by a very large majority, and the Committee was nominated.

### III.

In the meantime Mr. Martineau's active pen had sketched the whole position on which the historic congregations had been founded, in an article entitled 'The Living Church through Changing Creeds.'<sup>1</sup> It was a defence of the principle of openness to progressive change, which Mr. Gladstone had emphasized in the debate on the Dissenters' Chapels Bill.<sup>2</sup> It sought for a basis of Church union no narrower than Christianity itself; rejected all congregational fellowship on the basis of special theological names; and demanded for each religious assembly the right of continuous modification in doctrine, discipline, and worship. The publication of the resolution which it was proposed to move

<sup>1</sup> *Theological Review*, April, 1866.

<sup>2</sup> See *ante*, chap. VII. p. 238

at the Annual Meeting of the Association, supported by a strong list of distinguished names, both ministerial and lay (*Inquirer*, April 14), drew forth the next week an emphatic protest from 'H.A.B.,' the well-known initials of Mr. Henry Arthur Bright, of Liverpool. To this Mr. Martineau replied in the same columns, May 5; and as the letter is now less accessible than the essay just named, some passages from it are here reproduced.

The divergencies of 'Unitarian thought,' it is said, have reached their limit; and, as it is, are barely compatible with 'unity.' It is true, and will be ever truer. So it is time we should cease to expect union from 'Unitarian thought,' and should throw ourselves upon some principle of life which will blend, and not divide, which lies beneath our individualities and keeps its still depth under the play of fluctuating thought. If we cannot free ourselves from the haunting sensitiveness to differing beliefs, which is the disease of other communions and the sin of our own, if we can find no Christian life and faith other than opinion and its corollaries, if we cannot worship and work together till we have defined the intellectual assumptions on which we proceed, nothing but disintegration can take place. New questions arise every year; new heresies captivate the younger spirits, and irritate the elder; and as theology complicates its problems, and thought grows richer in variety, critical unity becomes more and more impossible. Shall we then break up, and have as many religions as we have schools? Or shall we quit the surface, cease to be angry with new books and words, and seek the common heart, where the Spirit of God resides, and that of Christ sets us at one with it, and thence work out as we can, not the verbal theory, but the living reality of the Christian life?

But, says 'H. A. B.,' no other people will ever join

the Unitarians. Is that any reason why the Unitarians should shut them out? Is it nothing that the responsibility for separation should rest in the right place? And are you willing to copy, and retaliate upon, all the exclusions against which you protest? No one expects that the old types of theology, born from antagonisms—Calvinist and Arminian, Athanasian and Unitarian—can ever gather themselves around the same sanctuary; and their forced union, in France and Geneva, and elsewhere, can produce only uneasy results. The reason is obvious, and removes these cases wholly from the present argument. In these opposing systems you have to do, not with intellectual differences merely, but with contradictory '*terms of salvation*,' and to unite them would be to frame a common liturgy for heaven and hell. Wherever the idea of 'orthodoxy' as a condition of divine acceptance is retained, heterodox people cannot be owned as of the same religion. But is that any reason why we, who have never groaned under that bondage, should not open our doors wide to the many who, all around us, are fast escaping it too? Is it not notorious that we have already lost, or are daily losing, a large class of singularly earnest and thoughtful Christians who, though one with us through the greater part of our faith, and vigorously applying it against the narrowness of the Church and the evils of the world, hold some doctrine about the Person of Christ which the Unitarian name excludes! And do we not see 'Free Christian Churches' springing up around us, living on the principle which we have dropped, and keeping aloof from us because they will not be doctrinally pledged? What should hinder the same sanctuary embracing all these and ourselves, had we not flung our catholicity away, and stereotyped ourselves into Unitarianism? If there is one persuasion that has sunk deeper than another into the heart of this age, it is that God and man find each other somewhere else than in theology, that the religion of opinion is superficial, and that to rise into unity of faith we must

transcend and forget the life of the creeds. This persuasion, now the living spring of all educated religion, we should never have quitted as our guide. But its flow was too irregular for us ; its leaps were too bold ; its wanderings too great ; so we cut our precise canal, and got the water of life between our own straight banks. We are, therefore, just like other sects, and have come to think it best to be so. There was a difference ; but now it is the same ; and those who still indulge the vision of a nobler life are rebuked in the shrill tones of old Mother Church for 'arrogating' to themselves more spiritual and more catholic aims, and 'only wounding and alienating those with whom they have long been connected.' What better illustration can I give of the temper which doctrinal zeal produces, and which catholic charity deplures ?

To this may be appended an extract from a letter to the *Patriot*, evoked by the comments of that journal on the new movement.<sup>1</sup>

On the mass of congregations where at present Unitarian opinion prevails, the effect intended would be to prevent that opinion fastening itself by the vote of a majority upon their ecclesiastical life, and to leave them as free to quit Unitarianism as they are to enter it. The constitution of these congregations, based simply upon the religion of Christ, does not include the determination of doctrine among the corporate functions of the society, but leaves the whole realm of special opinion to the individual conscience, and the play of individual sympathy. With this constitution (which is not an invention of ours but an inherited trust), we think it hardly consistent that the common fund and congregational name should be pledged to any dogmatic propagandism, Trinitarian or Unitarian. You say this movement proceeds from 'hatred of orthodoxy.' Among ourselves the objection is that it 'favours orthodoxy,' making provision for our congregations 'going back' as well as 'going forwards.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Inquirer*. May 5.

<sup>2</sup> This consequence Mr. Martineau was quite ready to face since he first examined the question raised by the Hewley case. See his letter to the *Liverpool Mercury*, 1834, *ante*, chap. VII. p. 213, where the transition of a chapel at Wigan from Unitarian founders to Trinitarian occupants was justified.

It expresses neither hatred nor favour towards any doctrinal scheme into which Christian conviction may throw itself, but simply absolute trust in the force of divine truth wherever it may lie, and belief in a permanent Christian life and faith through the intellectual changes of theology.

The result was reached a year later. At the Annual Meeting of the Association, June 12, 1867, the recommendations of the special Committee were adopted, and the principle of congregational representation was dropped. In supporting this step, Mr. Martineau repelled with some warmth the charge that the conception of religious fellowship on which it was founded, involved laxity in the declaration of personal belief.<sup>1</sup>

It has been supposed that this principle would lead to a certain degree of neutrality, coldness, and indifference, as to the propagation of doctrines. I boldly maintain that it is the only principle consistent with perfect outspokenness, definiteness, clearness, and zeal, in the propagation of particular doctrines. So long as I understand that when I am in the pulpit I commit nobody, that I speak for nobody but myself, that I am only explaining that which my own conscience obliges me to teach, so long I speak definitely and distinctly: I have no hesitation, I have nobody to consult but my own conscience. So long as I know that the members of my congregation are not committed or compromised by anything I say, I teach my Unitarianism, or whatever it may be, with perfect distinctness. But if I felt as a minister that I was the head of a society, if I supposed that I was actually conducting it, as it were, through a kind of theological history which I was fixing, and which I should be unable to reverse, I should feel a degree of scruple and hesitation, and should be disposed to stifle these distinctions of doctrine. It is well known to Mr. Aspland and the members of the Society that for years past I personally have been withheld from active co-operation in the Society precisely upon this scruple. I have always said in the strongest way, 'In doctrine I am entirely with you, I am a Unitarian, I think the principles of Unitarianism are of great importance.' I have again and again in private and in public advocated those principles, and it is a shame that those of us who hesitate to commit our congregations to them, should be exposed to the calumny of caring nothing for our theological opinions.

<sup>1</sup> *Inquirer*, June 15.

Two years later he fully justified this attitude by preaching before the Association the noble sermon on 'Three Stages of Unitarian Theology.'<sup>1</sup>

#### IV.

The issue of the movement just described did not, unhappily, fulfil its promoter's hopes. Two days after the British and Foreign Unitarian Association had yielded to his urgency, and surrendered all claims to congregational organisation, a meeting was held (June 14) in the library at Manchester New College at University Hall, 'to consider the means of forming a closer union among Liberal Christian Churches and persons for the promotion and application of Religion in Life, apart from doctrinal limitations in Thought.' An unfortunate difficulty arose at the outset. A resolution declaring it incumbent on all who comprehended the essence of religion in the two great affections of love to God and love to man to unite their scattered forces for closer communion in work and worship, was moved by Mr. Martineau, seconded by Mr. Herbert New, of Evesham, and supported by the Rev. W. Kirkus, a Congregational minister of Hackney. It did not contain the term Christian. Mr. Thom enquired whether it was desired to establish a Catholic *Christian* Church, or a Catholic human Church, affirming his own readiness to join either. Mr. Tayler, to whose co-operation Mr. Martineau attached the greatest weight, pleaded strongly for the dear and sacred name: 'if we look into the

<sup>1</sup> May 19, 1869: *Essays*, iv. 567.



essence of Christianity as taught and exemplified by Christ, its result is nothing more than the purest expression of the universal theism which the Almighty Father has breathed into the souls of us all.' They were not in quest of abstract systems of philosophy; they were attempting to draw together in bonds of universal communion all who felt that the life of Christ was the best expression of the moral perfections of the Father in heaven.<sup>1</sup> This friendly pressure, and the Chairman's remark that they were summoned to form a union of 'Liberal *Christian Churches*,' to which Mr. Martineau was too good a constitutionalist not to bow, led to the insertion of the name; and at a meeting at the Freemasons' Tavern, Great Queen Street, on Nov. 21, a definitive scheme was adopted. Its religious basis was thus expressed<sup>2</sup> :—

Whereas, for ages past, Christians have been taught that correct conceptions of Divine things are necessary to acceptance with God, and to religious relations with each other;

And, in vain pursuit of Orthodoxy, have parted into rival Churches, and lost the common bond of work and love;

And whereas, with the progressive changes of thought and feeling, uniformity in doctrinal opinion becomes ever more precarious, while moral and spiritual affinities grow and deepen;

And whereas the Divine Will is summed up by Jesus Christ himself in Love to God and Love to Man;

And the terms of pious union among men should be as broad as those of communion with God;

This Society, desiring a spiritual fellowship co-extensive with these terms, invites to common action all who deem men responsible, not for the attainment of divine truth, but only for the serious search for it; and who rely, for the religious improvement of human life, on filial Piety and brotherly Charity, with or without more particular agreement in matters of doctrinal theology. Its object is, by relieving the Christian life from reliance on theological articles or external rites, to save it from conflict with the knowledge and conscience of mankind, and bring it back to the essential conditions of harmony between God and Man.

<sup>1</sup> *Inquirer*, June 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays*, ii. 509.

By thus definitely adopting the Christian name, the new Union started under a limitation which not only deprived it of the co-operation of teachers with whom its founder was in deep personal sympathy, like Francis Newman and Miss Cobbe, but seemed in some eyes a violation of the broadest principles of religious fellowship as expressed by Jesus himself. To Mr. Newman he thus sought to justify the position.

London, Oct. 31, 1868.

I was particularly glad to see, in full and definite statement, your objection to the Free Christian Union and its name. If it were necessary to retain, in the word 'Christian' its Messianic meaning, or to abandon it to its orthodox abuse, as carrying a set of dogmatic and historical beliefs, I should go with you in almost everything you say. But 'Christ' has become to all intents and purposes a *personal* name, and is continually used as such by people who have no belief in a 'Messiah' at all. And I use the word 'Christian' to denote that the religion on which I rest is the residuary truth left me out of the piety and faith of Christendom, when purified from their errors and fables: and I prefer thus to own my spiritual inheritance, and to abjure the pretence, involved in abstract and doctrinal terms (like 'Theist'), of having philosophically worked out *ab initio* a religion for myself. I have not the faintest reluctance to own spiritual brotherhood with those who, with a different religious ancestry, or without any at all—genuine God-given *αὐτόχθονες*—meet upon the same strand of faith and love. And I am far from doubting that there are occasions when this drawing together of foreigners for a common spiritual sympathy and recognition is of great interest and moment: e.g., in India, and all our Indian relations. But, as a rule, it is, I think, practically wiser for each type to work upon its own line, and develop its own resources. The Indian Theist must appeal to a native literature, to native authorities and admirations, and must deal with evils on the spot;—all quite different from the influences, sentiments, and sins prevailing here. We have enough to do upon the field of the Christian Churches into which we were born: and did we plant ourselves outside of them, for the chance of occasional action on a Jew or a Mahomedan, we should sacrifice the nearer and larger duty for the more remote and hypothetical. The limits which, for the ends of practical convenience, we impose upon our working scheme, in no way involve any limitation of principle: nor is there anything to prevent half-a-dozen Unions

equally Catholic, from separately operating in as many fields similarly enclosed within some line of natural and effective sympathy. They would form so many independent elements of an ultimately federated Society.

'But how can you ignore the fact that some whom you would fain include will not call themselves Christians?' We do not ignore it; but, on the other side, we find that many more whom we would fain include, will not call themselves, or any religious union they join, anything else:—Mr. Tayler, e.g., who is bent on rescuing the word 'Christian' from Protestant bondage to the Scriptures and ecclesiastical associations with dogmatic schemes. Else, for myself, though in sympathy with this view, I would adopt any name which would draw you into our brotherhood: for you are about the best Christian I know.

Thanks for the Irish Church letter, which seems to me to state the case with absolute truth, and to put all the nonsense to shame.

Believe me ever, dear Newman,

Yours affectionately,

JAMES MARTINEAU.

These arguments were elaborated with other pleas in a pamphlet, published early in 1869, entitled 'The New Affinities of Faith.'<sup>1</sup> They failed, however, to awaken enthusiasm. A few University men of high distinction like Mr. Henry Sidgwick and Mr. Goldwin Smith, gave in their adhesion.<sup>2</sup> At an anniversary service on June 1, 1869, there was a large congregation drawn from the various sects, when the Rev. W. Miall (Baptist), of Queen's Road Chapel, Dalston, was associated with Mr. Martineau in the opening devotions, and sermons were preached by M. Athanase Coquerel, of the French Protestant Church, and the Rev. C. Kegan

<sup>1</sup> *Essays*, ii. 499.

<sup>2</sup> 'Mr. Froude writes to me that it is the one movement of the day which he regards with unqualified interest and sympathy, and from which he anticipates, not indeed large and early visible success, but a real and living action on religious reform and conservation' (letter to J. E. Carpenter, Nov. 5, 1868). A little later Mr. Martineau could say to the Rev. W. Knight (July 25, 1870) that 'representative men joined it from every British Church': *Inter Amicos*, p. 33.

Paul, Vicar of Sturminster Marshall, Dorset. But meanwhile a stream of acrid criticism was slowly poured on the new movement. The denominational journals were inevitably hostile, for it proposed to render their functions needless, or at least to transform their spirit. Only one or two scattered congregations sought to enter its fellowship.<sup>1</sup> It was accused of endeavouring to found a Universal Church on the aristocratic basis of an annual guinea payment; and when the force of this objection was admitted by a change of rule, it was easy to drive fresh wedges into a somewhat over-elaborated constitution. At the Great Queen Street Meeting it had been made clear that the Union involved a protest against the principle of doctrinal subscription; and the incisive language of the 'New Affinities' further alienated some of the Broad Churchmen from whom help was sought. When the writer, describing the changes of belief, declared that 'it is no longer an insult to a clergyman's honour, but rather a compliment to his intelligence, to suspect him of saying one thing and believing another,'<sup>2</sup> he forgot to ask himself whether the irony of his censure would promote the cause of 'union.' Its light of hope was darkened when Mr. Tayler died. Its Committee comprised faithful and devoted men, but they had neither the time nor the energy needful to guide the enterprise out of its obscurity into more effective action. They might exchange letters

<sup>1</sup> At Little Portland Street a Congregational Meeting was held on May 19, 1869, to consider the proposal. But the Pastor's eloquence did not overcome objections.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays*, ii. 501.

of sympathy with France and Holland, Germany and Switzerland: but this was too impalpable a nutriment for continued subsistence. The Union languished, for though it invited men to 'common action,' it could find nothing satisfactory to do: the day of international gatherings had not arrived. And the plea of the founder, that the Theists must work independently of the Christians, admitted that after all there were divergences of historic estimate which personal sympathies could not always overcome. Between the humanitarian and the Nicene views of the person of Jesus was a still wider gap. Who could wonder that it was not bridged at once? On Dec. 8, 1870, a special meeting was held, and the Free Christian Union was dissolved.

To Mr. Martineau this issue was a deep and lasting disappointment. But the objects of the Union had never really been put before the congregations for whose organisation he had been originally concerned. Twenty years later, with courage still unspent, he was to make a further effort. He would seek to group the Churches founded on open trusts in a general scheme of mutual co-operation and support; and he would, with yet more fertility of resource, propose to federate the historic bodies among which English Christianity was divided, into a National Church. After all, he could never be content with a simply personal religion. The passionate aspiration after fellowship, human and divine, only ceased with his last breath.

## CHAPTER XIV.

PRINCIPAL OF MANCHESTER NEW COLLEGE,  
1869-1885.

THE twelve years which followed Mr. Martineau's removal to London, 1857-1869, were occupied with twofold work as Lecturer on Philosophy, and (from 1859 onwards) as Minister of Little Portland Street Chapel.<sup>1</sup> This double duty so absorbed his time as to leave little margin for continuous writing. The stream of Essays which he contributed to the *National Review* came to an end in 1864; not because the writer was exhausted, but because the Review ceased to appear. Meanwhile he slowly added to his College courses, and continuously kept large designs before him. Already in 1861 he wrote:—

I have reached an age when many an unfinished scheme looks up at me with the appeal of warning as well as reproach; and if I am to gather up the results of study, and leave anything more respectable than a series of fragments and unfulfilled promises, I must call in my dispersed efforts, and limit myself to the completion of what I have begun.<sup>2</sup>

On the death of the Rev. J. J. Tayler in 1869 Mr. Martineau was appointed Principal of the College, and the Rev. James Drummond, B.A., in due course

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, chap. XII.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by 'A Humble Admirer,' *Scotsman*, Jan. 19, 1900.

accepted the vacant chair of New Testament History and criticism.

## I.

In the autumn of 1868 Mr. James Knowles happened to be entertaining Mr. Tennyson and the Rev. Charles Pritchard, Savilian Professor of Astronomy. Their talk ranged over speculative themes, and ended in a proposal to found a society for the discussion of questions of theology. Mr. Knowles consulted his friends from Dean Stanley to Archbishop Manning and Mr. Martineau. The latter was unwilling to join 'a society of gnostics to put down agnostics,'<sup>1</sup> and the scheme was enlarged till it included a comprehensive representation of all schools of thought, theological and scientific,<sup>2</sup> and took the name of the Metaphysical Society. At the meetings of this Society (the first was held on April 21, 1869) Mr. Martineau was a constant attendant. Here he stepped out of the atmosphere of a small religious fellowship, and moved among his peers in thought. Here he formed many a valued friendship, the most cherished of all, perhaps, being that with Father Dalgairns. Here he met the criticisms of the champions of science like Professors Huxley, Tyndall, and Clifford; and here again and again he produced a deep impression by his mastery of argument and his skill in debate.<sup>3</sup> His first contribution was read

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Tennyson's avowed purpose was to check the growth of Agnosticism.

<sup>2</sup> The list published by Mr. Knowles, *Nineteenth Century*, August, 1885, includes 59 members.

<sup>3</sup> 'The noble and steadfast, but somewhat melancholy faith,' wrote Mr. R. H. Hutton, 'which seemed to be sculptured on

on June 15, 1870, 'Is there any Axiom of Causality?'<sup>1</sup> It may have been evoked by a discussion a few months before, which he thus reported in a letter to an old student, the Rev. R. A. Armstrong, on March 13, 1870:—

In a kind of dialogue with Tyndall at the last meeting of the Metaphysical Society, I drew from him these acknowledgments.

(1) That the phenomenal doctrine of Antecedent and Consequent is inadequate for the Scientific man, and that the assumption of *force* is indispensable :

(2) That this, however, is an *assumption* furnished by necessity of reason, and not a physically observed fact :

(3) That however far physiological scrutiny might be pushed into the interior of the brain, it could never find a Sensation or a Thought, or make out why one cerebral change is attended with Vision, another with Sound ; so that there must for ever remain a world cognizable by Self-consciousness alone, and carrying its own axioms.

I thought these very remarkable concessions, from a man so dedicated to physical pursuits : though he does not himself see to what they lead.

The doctrine of Causation had, of course, long engaged his thought, since the early Liverpool days when he used to set his pupils to read the lectures of Dr. Thomas Brown. It had lain in the background of many an essay, notably those on Comte, Mill, and Bain. More than once he had discussed it with Dr. W. B. Carpenter, in connection with problems of physiological psychology, and to him he thus wrote on March 24, 1870 :

I distinguish between the muscular *sensations* (which occur during the execution of an act), and the muscular *nisus* (which sets the act on foot). The former alone would, in my opinion, no more give us the knowledge of *power*, than any other sensory impressions. The latter would give it, even if the sensory nerves were paralysed. Will effectuated and Will impeded, be the

Dr. Martineau's massive brow, shaded off into wistfulness in the glance of his eyes.' *Nineteenth Century*, August, 1885, p. 181.

<sup>1</sup> *Essays*, iii. 567. The share of Mr. Huxley in the discussion is described in a letter to the Rev. C. Wicksteed, *Life*, ii. 374.



intermediate instruments sentient or insentient, would suffice, I think, to occasion the dynamic antithesis of power within and power without. Take away the inward *nisus* of the Will; let the motory nerves be set in action by galvanism instead; and however perfectly the sensory nerves retain their function, I conceive that all dynamic ideas are out of reach.

In short, we exercise power within, and plant it out believingly in the world. We have no means, independent of this translation, of perceiving, observing, or inductively inferring it in the external scene. Mere motion would not help us, even though it hurt us or gratified us. The experiences to which you appeal are not mere sensory experiences; they are a counterplay against the muscular *nisus*.

On the other hand, we *have* the means of perceiving, observing, etc., form, etc., outside of us. Hence the cognition of form and the cognition of power appear to me not to stand on the same line.

To the same correspondent he further defined his position, in a criticism of the address which Dr. Carpenter had delivered as President of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, at Brighton, on 'Man the Interpreter of Nature.'<sup>1</sup>

Bont Ddu, Dolgelly, Sept. 8, 1872.

For Science, in its researches into Nature, I do not see how we can claim more than access to the Laws of phenomena, in their grouping and succession: nor can I hesitate to accept the Positivist dictum that *Causes* lie entirely beyond scientific cognizance. *Our own* Causality, as you justly say, we do directly know: but causality *other than our own* we do *not* know by either observation or consciousness: we observe only movements; we feel only certain *sensations* of our own; both of which are phenomena and not their causes: and our reference of such things to an *objective causality* which is not in our experience is, I take it, an *intuitive Intellectual act*, planting outside of us the counterpart and antithesis of the power which we put forth from within. If the authority of this intellectual act, as a prior condition of our thinking of phenomena at all, is denied, no ground whatever appears to me to remain for 'dynamical laws'; and either Mill or Büchner would easily throw back your second class into the first. They would ask what more you find in the 'conditions of the action of a force' than the concurrence or sequence of phenomena, i.e., than the 'laws of phenomena'; and would protest that the 'direct consciousness' to which you appeal is still nothing but an order of feelings, i.e., of internal 'phenomena': and on the ground of scientific experience and method,

<sup>1</sup> *Nature and Man*, Essays by W. B. Carpenter, 1888, p. 185.

I really do not see how an answer could be given to this. Besides Mill's reduction of all mathematical and physical axioms to inductions on observed uniformities, we have now Continental *physiciens* calling in question Newton's first law of motion; so that, among those who decline all obligations to metaphysical assumptions, the distinction which you would draw between Kepler's laws and Newton's is being broken down. As to *Büchner*, since he contends, as you do, for our scientific knowledge of 'Force' (as well as 'Matter'), and therefore does not stop short with your first class of 'Laws', but proceeds to the second, I do not see why he may not with you speak of such Laws as 'governing' or 'explaining' phenomena.

So much for my old client, Metaphysics v. Physics. He is always bothering you, if you try to dispense with him.

In the spring of 1872 Dr. Martineau published a lecture entitled *The Place of Mind in Nature and of Intuition in Man*,<sup>1</sup> which involved a criticism of current hypotheses of evolution. It attracted considerable attention, and Mr. Knowles remarked to Mr. Herbert Spencer in an after-dinner conversation at Prof. Huxley's, 'The general opinion is that you gentlemen are getting the worst of it.'<sup>2</sup> Mr. Spencer, accordingly, published a criticism in the *Contemporary*, June, 1872. It did not daunt the metaphysician. 'Herbert Spencer's paper in the last number,' he wrote to the Rev. Wm. Knight,<sup>3</sup> June 15, 'ought perhaps to have some reply; and I have pretty well made up my mind what to say. But I am too busy winding up the College Session to work out

<sup>1</sup> *Essays*, iv. 585.    <sup>2</sup> Spencer, *Autobiography*, vol. ii. p. 245.

<sup>3</sup> With Mr. Knight, then minister of St. Enoch's (Free Kirk), Dundee, Dr. Martineau had formed, towards the end of the 'sixties,' an intimate friendship. Mr. Knight had with great courage borne testimony to his personal reverence for Dr. Martineau, and his desire for a wider church fellowship, by preaching at Little Portland St. Chapel in May, 1872. The ecclesiastical consequences of this act were followed by Dr. Martineau in a copious correspondence of sympathy and counsel. Earlier letters will be found in the volume issued by Prof. Knight under the title *Inter Amicos*, 1901; others in Prof. Knight's *Retrospects*, vol. i., and in the *Life*, ii.

my defence for the July number: and I doubt whether I shall care enough about it to take it up later. Nothing that Spencer urges has the least effect upon me. Yet in general I am only too easily knocked down, and brought to believe myself demolished.'

As the College session reached its close in June, a great surprise awaited the Principal. Mr. W. J. Lamport, of Liverpool, with a few private words in the Library, conveyed to him the information that a number of his friends desired to repair the shortcomings of the past, and to express their feelings of gratitude and affection, respect and admiration, by a gift which should lighten the cares of his remaining years.<sup>1</sup> To this gift the following letters refer.

To the Rev. WM. KNIGHT.

Glangwynnant, near Beddgelert, July 6, 1872.

We arrived last evening, descending from the pass of Pen-y-Gwryd during the most gorgeous sunset sending its glories through

<sup>1</sup> The total sum ultimately exceeded £5,900, of which a small portion was appropriated to two pieces of silver plate. The letter of the donors (with a list of their names) and Dr. Martineau's reply were printed in a small pamphlet.—Just at the same time, on June 26, Harvard University conferred on him the honorary degree of LL.D. 'Two years later I was among the foreigners invested with the Degree of Doctor of Theology by the University of Leyden, on occasion of its Tercentenary celebration. Both these honours took me entirely by surprise, and compensated me in age for the Academic disabilities under which, as a Nonconformist, I had laboured in my youth. And the second was especially gratifying, as I was associated in it with so accomplished a scholar and divine as the Master of Balliol.' Other dignities followed; D.D., Edinburgh, 1884; D.C.L., Oxford, 1888; Litt.D., Dublin, 1892. (*Biographical Memoranda*). In taking leave of the College Trustees, June, 1885, Dr. Martineau said, 'I shall always regard the resolution you have now passed as the final diploma of my career—a diploma which adds no fresh letters to be appended to one's name, but which proceeds from a source, and expresses a sentiment, more precious to me than any honours received from more conspicuous but more distant witnesses of my life.'

the transverse valleys of Snowdon. Our little cottage, planted on a platform of rock which has furnished its material, and flanked by a wooded hillside, looks down over its garden lawn and shrubberies on the lake about fifty feet below, and on the river opening from it, which gleams at intervals through the trees, and makes its flow audible all night. It is a lovely spot, and seems to waken one into the real world and dismiss the London noise as a troubled dream. Yet I must not speak ungratefully of the agitating interests of my last week in town. For among them was one,—of which perhaps you will shortly see some notice in the public prints,—that could not fail to affect me with grateful surprise. A number of Friends, desiring to secure to me a period of unanxious life at the close, and to place something in my power for my children, have presented me with a purse of 5,000 guineas, and a piece of memorial plate; excusing their benevolence by the pretext that, had I been in one of the secular professions, I should have been in a position to make affluent provision for my family. . . . I shall have to consider how far this new trust,—for such it is,—may alter the duties of my remaining years.

About Herbert Spencer's paper I should have distrusted my own judgment, had it not been confirmed by yours. The very slight impression it produced on me made me feel that I could not have thoroughly understood it: for I cannot help looking up to him as a superior intelligence, whose apprehensions have always a presumption in their favour against my own. But on the other hand I see that he has been so full of his own last exposition of his doctrine, as to suppose himself the object of attack in my paper and to read between the lines criticisms which I had never thought of; and that this personal susceptibility has interfered with his grasp of the argument as a whole, and misled him into a set of irrelevant and not always candid strictures on collateral issues. I have not entirely abandoned the idea of some reply; and in a day or two, when I get my goods unpacked and in order, I hope to look the matter in the face, and, if it seems desirable, prepare a few pages for the next *Contemporary*.

To Mrs. HENRY TURNER, Nottingham.

Beddgelert, Aug. 14, 1872.

My dear Cousin,

The wonderful presentation which has surprised the evening of my life, and provided such repose as it may need, is more affecting to me than I can tell. But the tones of sympathy which belong to the voices of early years, and can come only from the one or two who have known my inward as well as outward history from the beginning, are precious and sacred as no others can be. Your affectionate words deeply touch us both. Yes, your memory is true: and you, and your pure-souled husband are intimately associated with the change of character which determined the

colour of my whole after-life. The fifty years which have since elapsed are crossed by many shadows of unrealized aspiration and humbling recollection : but a certain unity runs through them, as the fulfilment, however imperfect, of a congenial purpose early taken up and followed with unabated love to the present hour. This privilege, accorded by the Providence of my life,—of working in the field of my chief enthusiasm, is the source of the only service I could ever render to others.

An act of recognition, like the recent one, usually comes at the end of the drama, just before the curtain drops. So I have asked myself, 'Are the sands then run out? and ought I to regard my dismissal as come?' But after allowing for the common saying that 'Age has no eyes to see itself,' I cannot persuade myself that I ought to quit the field of active duty, while unable to plead exhaustion, and not conscious of standing in the way of younger efficiency. The later years are not less a *trust* for use, than the earlier : so, till the faculty of work declines, the obligation to work continues. Should time be granted, some of the faults and omissions of the past may yet be repaired. Otherwise I am ready to step aside, and await the end, out of sight and as one already removed from the present.

The reply which Dr. Martineau proposed to make to Mr. Spencer, was never written. Warnings of illness compelled him again and again during the vacation to abandon his desk, and seek relief on the mountains or the lake. The crisis arrived at the railway-station at Leeds, and its sequel—the abrupt cessation of his ministry—has been already related.<sup>1</sup> To his College labours the event made no difference. When the decision was once made, he was punctual in each duty as before. But on the lost opportunity of setting himself right against Mr. Spencer he looked back with regret ; for he wrote a year later, Oct. 12, 1873, to an old student,—'His paper, I know, produced a great impression upon some very competent readers. For my own part, I could not see how it touched the main argument at all : and that so able a man should say so much that

<sup>1</sup> *Ante*, chap. XII. p. 439.

has no relevance to my intended line of thought, I take as a humiliating proof of my unskillfulness in bringing out my meaning.'<sup>1</sup>

The next controversial episode, however, left no doubt that his powers were still unimpaired. At the opening of the College Session in October, 1874, he delivered an Address on *Religion as affected by Modern Materialism*.<sup>2</sup> It was suggested by the brilliant discourse of Prof. Tyndall to the British Association, and evoked from him a vigorous reply.<sup>3</sup> To this in due course came an elaborate rejoinder, under the title *Modern Materialism: its Attitude towards Theology*.<sup>4</sup> These articles made their writer better known than any previous essays. They were not buried in obscure quarterlies: philosophy had emerged from academic seclusion, and entered the arena of public debate. The eminence of Prof. Tyndall secured attention to his critic,<sup>5</sup> whose unexpected mastery of scientific detail, as well as of metaphysical reasoning, excited the surprise

<sup>1</sup> The disputants had met that summer at a friendly pic-nic on Lochan Eilan in the valley of the Spey, where Dr. Martineau, having another attack of 'Caledonian fever,' was staying near Aviemore, and Mr. Spencer was the guest of Mr. Robert Holt. *Autobiography*, vol. ii. p. 252.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays*, iv. 165.

<sup>3</sup> *Fortnightly Review*, November, 1875.

<sup>4</sup> *Essays*, iv. 197. First published in the *Contemporary Review*, and then issued separately, April, 1876.

<sup>5</sup> Mr. Spencer was not forgotten, *Essays*, iv. 216.—Writing to Mr. B. B. Wiley, Chicago, in June, 1875, he remarked: 'I am more and more struck with the fact, that it is not *new beliefs or unbeliefs* which a modern age advances into; but a *new generation of men* that is born into a recurring drift towards old beliefs or unbeliefs. There is, so far as I can see, *absolutely nothing* in our present scientific knowledge, which weakens or changes, unless for the better, the philosophical grounds of religion. To-day's fear will assuredly pass away.'

as well as the admiration of both friends and foes. Meanwhile, the veteran Teacher, at threescore years and ten, pursued his way, elaborating the materials for his systematic works on Ethics and Religion.<sup>1</sup>

Once only was he turned aside into an independent path, when his friend, Prof. Knight, induced him to undertake a volume on *Spinoza* for the series of 'Philosophical Classics.' The task proved longer and more laborious than he had foreseen. The preliminary biographical studies required considerable research; he could not be content without constructing for himself a complete background of contemporary history, for which he must master many a dull Dutch page. But he was not daunted by any toil that would render his work more thorough. In one respect, indeed, he failed. He could not condense it within the limits of the publishers' plans: and after various attempts at compromise the book was issued independently in 1882, under the title of *A Study of Spinoza*. The hand that had sketched the delightful portraits

<sup>1</sup> Two more College Addresses rose out of these preliminary labours: *Ideal Substitutes for God*, 1879; and *The Relation between Ethics and Religion*, 1881: *Essays*, iv.—In 1875 he had intended to retire; but arrangements were made by which the Rev. C. B. Upton, B.A., B.Sc., was associated with him in the earlier teaching of the students, leaving the courses on Ethics and the Philosophy of Religion still in his hands. He once quoted in a speech (Hope St., Dec. 18, 1868) a saying attributed to William the Conqueror, when his sons wanted him to retire from the throne and divide his prerogatives among them, that 'he was not going to undress until he went to bed.' 'And I think it is a good maxim for old men, so long as the work is in them, to keep in the field, and see if they cannot find some function fitted to their diminished powers. With that reserve, I say, let them be ready at any time to deliver over the standard to the grasp of the firmer and younger hand, and let the younger hand be ready to take it, and carry it on to fresh and nobler victories.'

of Lessing and Schleiermacher, had no difficulty in producing a narrative full of dramatic charm. When a second exposition of the philosophy followed in the *Types of Ethical Theory* (1885), its complete independence stamped it as a veritable *tour de force*; but its point of view remained the same. With a delicate appreciation of Spinoza's lofty character, and a sincere sympathy with 'those wonderful propositions in which the last book of Ethics emerges from "geometry" almost into rhapsody,' Dr. Martineau could not allow him the title either of Theist or Pantheist. He took his stand with Kant, and understood the conception of God to involve 'not merely a blindly-operating Nature as the eternal root of things, but a Supreme Being that shall be the Author of all things by free and understanding action.'<sup>1</sup> For him, as for the writer of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, no other conception had any interest; and to establish it on a secure basis of philosophy was to be the object of the treatises in which he would sum up the results of five and forty years of College teaching.<sup>2</sup>

## II.

'A nobler and more really fruitful work than the training of young men for the Christian ministry,' once wrote Dr. Martineau,<sup>3</sup> 'there can hardly be.

<sup>1</sup> *A Study of Spinoza*, p. 332. It must not be forgotten that Dr. Martineau had lived, in his youth, in the English pantheism of Priestley (*ante*, chaps. II. and IV.). From this he had been delivered by a new interpretation of his moral consciousness.

<sup>2</sup> See chapter XVI.

<sup>3</sup> To the Rev. Principal Witton Davies, Midland Baptist Coll., April 28, 1895.



All knowledge and lines of thought may be made tributary to it; yet none will be of much avail unless dominated by spiritual experience, and applied to the problems of life.'

The students who were brought into contact with Dr. Martineau for the first time, naturally approached him with a certain shyness and hesitation. His age, his fame, the habitual preoccupations of his thought, the nobility of his presence, the spiritual elevation of his character, all seemed to raise him so far above them as to make personal intercourse at first difficult. His own reserve gave them no help; and till they had entered into closer relations with him through some common work, their feeling was one in which awe mingled with admiration. Sometimes, indeed, his intellectual force captured their allegiance at once. An old student recalled in after years the profound impression which he received as an undergraduate, hearing his first lecture on Logic, when a whole new world was opened before him. 'I was so absorbed in the lecture that I could not take a note. I was all eyes and ears, and as I looked and listened, I knew what it was to think for the first time. I went out from the lecture-room with so clear an image of the thought of the lecturer, that I wrote it down without trouble.' Was it surprising that pupils in this mood should feel an almost passionate emotion of homage to the Teacher, in whom they saw an embodiment of mind such as they had never known in country homes, or even in the schools or colleges where their first youth was trained? Every shade of expression on his face, every tone of his

deep mellow voice, came to have for them an inexhaustible interest, for they were the signs of a kind of elemental force, firing the imagination, and stimulating the will. He did more than quicken his hearers' faculties, or rouse their emotions: he seemed to send some searching influence into the very roots of their being, and strengthen the secret energies of character. Dignity and lowliness were strangely blended; this life-long study, this vast range of knowledge, this profound insight into the inmost workings of mind and heart, were all for them. He placed his gifts freely at the disposal of each, and did not ask a more conspicuous scene.

Yet as a lecturer he followed a questionable method, inherited from an older day. His lectures were really books. They were slowly read from year to year, without any attempt to make divisions of time correspond to divisions of subject. There was no direct address; the diction was elaborately ornate; the slow regularity of delivery was never broken by a question; the intercourse of mind with mind did not enter into his plan; the hearer was left to find his way through his difficulties by himself.<sup>1</sup> But the great personality could not be hid. The punctuality of his arrival, the distinction of his manner,<sup>2</sup> the 'sumptuous simplicity' (as one of his old students called it) of his apparatus,—the

<sup>1</sup> This was the case even in the reading of his favourite Plato. With the utmost sense of grammatical nicety and fitness of rendering, he never turned aside to sum up an argument, or expound an idea.

<sup>2</sup> This was in the lecture-room. The pace at which he came from his house astonished observers, who called it 'trotting.' It was not hurry, but a steady purpose to get along.

morocco portfolio, the large written page unspoiled by correction or erasure, and (in cold weather) the ample robe of fur-lined cloth<sup>1</sup>—all these seemed but the external harmony of the inner nobleness which gesture and words alike conveyed. He made his hearers feel the dignity of his theme; he invited them to discern the beauty of truth and righteousness; he led them along laborious ways; but he inspired the conviction that the divine reality for which he pleaded was actually there, and could be known. The ivory paper-knife which he always held in his right hand, now followed the lines of his manuscript, now gently waved like the baton of a conductor, summoning the associations and feelings needed at the moment to take their place in the ‘great argument.’ ‘Martineau’s genius,’ once said his friend Mr. Thom, ‘is essentially rhythmic.’

Behind these outward traits, which were not casual habits, but were at once recognised as manifestations of the inward spirit, lay the profound moral force which pervaded his whole being. ‘Of my many teachers,’ writes Prof. T. Witton Davies, ‘Dillmann at Berlin and Martineau in London appear to me now the most deadly in earnest.’<sup>2</sup> As he unfolded the secrets of conscience, and carried its inspirations up to the sanctuary of the Most

<sup>1</sup> This was a carefully preserved relic of the Berlin days, which he was with difficulty persuaded to wear in this country, when such luxuries were more unusual than they are now.

<sup>2</sup> It was probably this earnestness, rather than his intellectual force, that made a lay undergraduate once remark, ‘Martineau is a very bad lecturer, for he makes you feel that he’s always right. Now it stands ‘o reason that he can’t be *always*!’

High, his voice gained a new poignancy, for it spoke with the authority of prophecy, 'Thus saith the Lord.' To this was joined a marvellous insight into character. With a penetration that was a constant surprise, he divined the ideas which young minds were labouring not so much to express as actually to form. Again and again as he summed up a College debate, he revealed the speakers to themselves as he presented their pleas with a clearness after which they had dimly groped. A mere hint sufficed to enable him to comprehend the finest subtleties of intellectual perplexity or moral scruple; and even perversity was treated with a tender respect so that instead of being suppressed by authority, it simply vanished in an ampler air. Of such consideration let the following instance suffice:—

I do not know whether I have been too patient and indulgent towards his state of mind. But his tendencies are so evidently religious, his wish for the ministry so strong, and his grasp of mind so considerable, that I cannot but hope that he will clear himself into the Divine light and love at last. He has suffered much from nervous weakness, attended by depression and sleeplessness, and a kind of *Coleridgean* fitfulness or failure of will: and the irregularities of attendance and work consequent on this have tried us greatly. Nevertheless, his strong clinging to us, and his compunction for his own unfulfilled purposes, have made me shrink from the responsibility of casting him off.

To such a mind order, neatness, regularity, attention to detail—even to the provision of stationery and a Bradshaw for the use of visitors at the annual June examinations—were a part of the continuous ethical control of life. On positive breaches of engagement, such as once or twice occurred, he could be severe; and those who had once seen his wrath, provoked it not again. But in difficulty

or illness his sympathy never failed. Those who sought his aid in crises of spiritual trial, could never forget the delicacy of his apprehension, the depth of his respect for their avowal of moral or religious perplexity, the tenderness of his guidance. It was the same with tribulations of another sort. He would sit by the bed-side of a sick student, laugh at his sallies, and confute his Hegelianism, and leave the memory of an exquisite graciousness to comfort the struggling heart. Among his various duties it fell to him to preside at the weekly sermon. When these primitive efforts were first read aloud, in the Council-room of University Hall, he sometimes permitted himself some epigrammatic comment, such as the summary of one discourse as 'The Whole Duty of Man in Twenty Minutes'; or the remark on another (which had dealt largely with Jewish Antiquities), 'Excellent, Mr. —, but I was waiting for the sermon'; or the comparison of another (with a long introduction) to an imposing portico hiding very modest premises, or a fourth to 'a diorama which moved very fast and had nobody to explain it.' He was delighted when the preacher for the day pictured the Prodigal amid his 'grunting charge.' When an Anglican graduate, preparing for Orders, characterised the Gospel according to Matthew as the gospel for the rich, Luke as the gospel for the poor, and Mark as the gospel *for the middle classes*, he could hardly conceal his amusement. But though his humour sometimes flashed out in somewhat grim criticisms—an orator on 'Oppressive Institutions' (the Established Church being among them) was told he might as well have discoursed

on 'All the Heroes with red hair,' or 'All the Virtues that begin with P'—his appreciation of sincerity of utterance was quick and deep. Any tendency to 'effectiveness' in delivery was discouraged; 'let the matter be better than the manner' was his rule. He took great pains, however, with the students' elocution, and sometimes employed not inconsiderable powers of mimicry with kindly discrimination. And when he gave back essay or sermon, though his words were few, they conveyed a depth of sympathy and encouragement inexpressibly touching to those through whose struggling utterance he divined the soul within. Out of his own life he quickened theirs, and they knew that they had received the greatest gift that knowledge and character could give to youth. To the mutual interchange in such an hour the following letter bears witness.

To the Rev. R. TRAVERS HERFORD, B.A.

The Polchar, Aug. 4, 1886.

You can easily imagine that to one who has no further future outlook in this world, the most grateful of all moments must be those which more or less redeem his past from the humiliating shadows of unrealised aspiration, and let in upon it some unsuspected gleam of good. The students with and for whom I have so long lived, can never know (for the things closest to my heart I have a natural shrinking from setting forth) how they have been, and are, the great objects of interest and affection to me in life. To know that I have helped them, and here and there let fall a seed of fertile thought which they can nurture into any grace or fruit for themselves or others, is the most welcome of all supports on the declining path. I do not remember the particular Sermon-incident to which you refer. But the occasion was of a kind to lead naturally to that free interchange of experiences belonging to different stages of life, which is our best way of helping one another.

From actual fellow-work with his students in the Portland Sunday Schools Dr. Martineau was

obliged to withdraw in the autumn of 1872. But he still continued to invite their aid ; he was especially interested in their temperance efforts in the Band of Hope ; and in planning their future settlements, in which he took a warm (and often an active) interest, he always laid special emphasis on the opportunities which they would find for effective social work. The student who shrank from intruding on his time or thought, and accepted a congregational invitation without consulting him, found too late that his teacher would gladly have welcomed his confidence, and counted that toil light which might have smoothed his way. To those who went abroad, he cheerfully gave advice about the choice of a university, or the planning of courses of reading and professional instruction ; and often added introductions which opened the way for the young theologian into the heart of new disciplines of thought and opportunities of valued intercourse. Writing to Mr. H. Gow (about to proceed to Berlin) in October, 1884, concerning Prof. Pfeiderer, he thus linked the practical and the academic together :—

His direction of philosophical speculation is too Hegelian for me to follow with entire sympathy. But in his case, as in that of the late Prof. T. H. Green at Oxford, I seem to discern an opening through and beyond the proper Hegelian formulas into a spiritual region nearly coalescing with the Theism in which, as far as I am true to myself and my Christian discipleship, I live and love and move. It has interested me much to see that Prof. Schaarschmidt, of Bonn (whom I knew in Berlin thirty-six years ago as a teacher to my children), has courageously come out in the *Philosophische Monatshefte* with a paper 'Für Widerlegung des Determinismus.' It will doubtless make him the butt of all the philosophical faculties, the more so as it is not without vulnerable points. But he is made of sturdy stuff, and will manfully hold his own. In the present state of European opinion, the phenomenon is not without significance.

Your experience at Bethnal Green will, I am sure, have been

of the greatest value to you ; for the contact into which it brought you with the sadder and more disheartening conditions of human life would never quench in you the faith, and, indeed, the discerning *sight*, of the divine possibilities still stirring in secret within all that unsightliness. On the maintenance of this faith (which is self-maintaining the moment we look below the surface), it depends whether the world is to be conquered by the spirit of Christ, or to be surrendered to a despairing pessimism.

As one group after another went forth from the little band, he breathed over them in the Farewell Service words that sprang from the very depths of his being, and left in their hearts a memory of communion of spirit which no vicissitudes of later years could ever dim. Again and again did these valedictory addresses<sup>1</sup> strengthen the purpose and lift up the soul of those who heard them. Occasionally, too, in devotional meetings within the College walls, he would speak, in the intimacies of student-life, of the realities of religious experience, with a directness and simplicity which more elaborate ministrations seemed sometimes to lack : his pupils knew then that he understood them, and had lived their life, and felt the stress of their difficulties. When they, too, passed into the great warfare, whose aid was given with so much considerateness as his ? He welcomed their sermons and their books with a generosity that was at once humbling and inspiring. To those who returned to teach by his side, he extended a supporting sympathy which made each meeting a delight. His own methods were fixed, but he watched each younger experiment with genial interest ; his was the skilled hand that drew up College memoranda, and indicated with

<sup>1</sup> Several are now published in the volume on *National Duties and other Sermons*.



delicate felicity the occasional presence of divergencies of view, or characterised with unerring insight the position of each student at the end of an academic year; and his was the heart that never failed to understand each personal trial, and show to sorrow the way of trust and peace.

### III.

The Principal's first College Address after his appointment, 'Why Dissent?' (1871), left no doubt about his sturdy nonconformity.<sup>1</sup> The next year, when illness was depressing him, and the grief of his surrendered ministry was still fresh, he was called into battle once again on behalf of his cherished principle of 'open trusts.' Under the energetic administration of the Rev. Robert Spears, the business of the Unitarian Association was greatly extended, and more convenient premises were urgently required. A generous supporter, Mr. Hopgood, offered £1,000 towards a new building, for which a sum of £20,000 was to be raised. The proposal to confer a large permanent endowment on the denominational organisation of a group of individual subscribers filled Mr. Martineau with dismay<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Essays*, iv. 147. He had dealt with a similar theme nine years earlier, in connexion with a scheme of lectures in 1862 commemorating the 'Ejected' of two centuries before. His subject was 'Nonconformity in its Relation to the Progressive Element in English Society.'

<sup>2</sup> Other difficulties had arisen a few months before, which had drawn out from him, while the wound of the failure of the Free Christian Union still galled him, a poignant utterance of distress: 'For my own part, I feel that I am not the proper

'Looking upon the Association itself,' he wrote (Nov. 9, 1872), 'as a temporary necessity, of recent origin, and of doubtful duration, I think it would be a serious mistake to provide for it as if destined to a perpetuity which certainly its founders never contemplated.' 'If a representative building is raised at all in London,' he urged, 'it ought, I conceive, to represent, not our Unitarianism, which is only the more recent phase of our theology, but that noble conception of a Catholic Christianity, with a progressive theology, which preceded and won our present opinions, and which we have no right to pronounce permanently identified with them. The great mass of our congregations are the offspring of this conception, and as its custodians are bound to keep it to the front, and hand it down from generation to generation: and everything which tempts them to put it aside in favour of an endowment of their own creed, offers however unintentionally, a direct inducement to unfaithfulness.'<sup>1</sup>

At the ensuing Annual Meeting, in June, 1873, when Mr. Hopgood brought forward his scheme with great courtesy and respect, Dr. Martineau moved an amendment. His speech was afterwards described by Dr. Bellows, assuredly no mean judge, as 'wonderfully clever, having all the merits of a carefully prepared argument, and all the freshness and playfulness of an extempore utterance.'<sup>2</sup> While earnestly desiring to see ample provision made for the wants of the Association, he added in a strain which would be sounded at intervals for yet a quarter of a century,—

I do not expect to see the views that I have advocated this day ultimately prevail in our body, and I shall take my leave of this subject on that account with somewhat of melancholy. I

person to play the part of censor towards the B. & F.U.A. It would at once be said that I had not forgotten my old quarrel with it. This is simply nonsense. But I cannot affect to have any sympathy with the Association. . . . and its annual meetings sink me into the profoundest depression, and make me feel—no, I will not say it: I have my post assigned, and mean to die at it.' (Letter to the Rev. R. A. Armstrong, May 18, 1872).

<sup>1</sup> *Inquirer*, Nov. 23, 1872.

<sup>2</sup> In the *Liberal Christian*, New York.

have a deep attachment to the old, large, Catholic principle ; and I believe that if we are faithful to it, the history of our Churches is not closed, that it has a future before it,—a future that will carry us far beyond the limits of our definitions of Unitarian Christianity. It has grown to that point in the past ; I believe it will grow to yet nobler and better positions in the future. I do not at all events expect to see it. I know that my hour is drawing nigh, and, if it be needful, I am ready to retire from the sectarian contentions that are becoming in our country the scorn of intellectual men, and the life-long affliction of the earnest and pious, to dream, for the rest of my time, of that Kingdom of God for which I have ever prayed, but which has ever seemed to recede from behind, and to lie only within the folds of the dark future.<sup>1</sup>

Three years later, when a controversy arose over proposals for the publication of Parker's works by the Association, Dr. Martineau wrote to the Rev. R. L. Carpenter, expressing his earnest desire for some other form of union for the work of their Churches.

London, April 6, 1876.

After all, this discussion brings it home to us, how very fine the distinction is becoming between the Theism that declines and the Theism that keeps the name of 'Christian' : and Parker seems to stand with a foot on each side of the line. To Voysey's Church I presume the B. & F. U. A. could not make a grant. Yet Voysey's theology is throughout identical with Parker's : the difference is not real, but simply nominal,—in the retention or foregoing of the word 'Christian.' It would appear therefore that the very same type of theology which is to-day disqualified for sharing in the funds of the Association, may to-morrow establish a claim upon them by simply calling itself 'Christian.' Such difficulties are inseparable, in the last resort, from the working of such organisations. I wish we were well rid of them ; and had some basis of union as broad as in our separate old congregations,—a union for Church business and work and counsel without reference to theology at all, except so far as it tacitly

<sup>1</sup> *Inquirer*, June 7, 1873. The amendment of Dr. Martineau was defeated by 61 to 55 ; but the Previous Question was afterwards carried by a large majority. At a subsequent date Lindsey's chapel in Essex Street was converted into Essex Hall, and conveyed to Trustees on a broad trust such as Dr. Martineau had indicated, with due provision for the accommodation of the Association.

entered into the general conditions of sympathy and possibilities of common action.

Profoundly as I am attached to the Christian inheritance, from personal feeling and social conviction of its vital importance, I do not find that *to individuals* it makes any serious difference in the religious life, whether they keep or whether they resign the name. Between Theodore Parker and Miss Cobbe my natural sympathies in religion draw no distinction; nor should I know, were I not told, which of them continued on the Christian line.

For this large Catholicity he pleaded in a letter published with Dean Stanley's address on Baxter, in *Macmillan's Magazine*, September, 1875, which drew forth a criticism from the venerable Samuel Sharpe, and a reply in turn once more distinguishing between the union of a Christian Church and the adoption of a doctrinal name.<sup>1</sup> This was again the theme of a significant letter on the limits of common worship,<sup>2</sup> in which he defined his attitude to Theism—'It is not that their religion is different, but that they assign it to a different source'—and again restated his position:—

In short, the choice has to be made. You may devote a Church to the enduring life of religion, which persists through changing theologies; or to a given theology, with such religion as in its day it can manage to hold. But you cannot combine both methods; since the trustful piety of the former consists in renouncing the comfortable securities of the latter. My own allegiance is unreservedly given to the former. With a 'Unitarian Church' I can have nothing to do, any more than with a Universalist Church or a Free-will Church, or a Church of the Spirit, or a Church of Immortality. In the doctrines denoted by these several phrases I profoundly believe. But to set up any or all of them as conditions of an organisation for worship and holy living would be only to narrow the kingdom of God by the by-laws of intellectual egotism.

But though he would join no 'Unitarian Church,' he abated not one jot of the persistence of his

<sup>1</sup> *Inquirer*, Sept. 11 and 18, 1875.

<sup>2</sup> *Christian Life*, Jan. 5, 1878.

Unitarian testimony ; while he reached out perpetually to a larger fellowship of faith beyond. As he reached threescore years and ten, his age and eminence brought him constant appeals for introductions, prefaces, obituary notices, and memorial inscriptions. They sometimes made large demands upon his time, but he never failed to respond with a singular generosity.<sup>1</sup> In the vacation of 1875, which was spent in Yorkshire, he devoted three weeks to the preparation of an introductory chapter to a reissue of the *Retrospect of the Religious Life of England* by his late friend, the Rev. J. J. Tayler. It involved a survey of the ecclesiastical movements and the theological tendencies of a quarter of a century ; but so rich were his resources of observation and memory that it was composed apart from books among the Yorkshire moors. Emerging from his retirement at the opening of the noble Church (April, 1876) reared at Nottingham on the old 'High Pavement' site, he recited the incident—the death of his friend, the young minister, Henry Turner,—which had sent him into the ministry,<sup>2</sup> and pleaded for the closest union between religion and liberal culture. His friendship with Dean Stanley, and his sense of the dignity of a great historic worship, drew him often to the Abbey on a Sunday afternoon. With the type of religious character and life fostered by Anglican devotion he had a

<sup>1</sup> In like manner his aid was invoked by the Hibbert Trustees to obtain the consent of Prof. Max Müller to deliver their first course of Hibbert Lectures. A copious correspondence led to pleasant friendship.

<sup>2</sup> See chap. I. p. 24.

profound sympathy in spite of his divergence from the creeds. He might criticise severely the attitude of personal humiliation and the theory of mediatorial approach to God, on which the liturgy of the Establishment is founded; yet he realised through the prayers and hymns of the Church a sympathy of aspiration which he sometimes missed elsewhere, and could assimilate through dogmatic forms wholly unreal to him. When the *Life* of his old friend Dr. P. P. Carpenter revealed to him a wide departure from the theology of their more intimate relations a generation before,<sup>1</sup> he uttered this feeling to the Rev. R. L. Carpenter, Jan. 9, 1880:—

I gather that latterly Philip's theology had verged a good deal towards the orthodox modes of conception,—at least so far as to justify to himself his strong sympathy with the characteristic expression, in religious literature, art, and life, of the devotion of Christendom. I have a deep fellow-feeling with him here. Though I cannot in the least appropriate the Church theory of Christianity, I feel sure that the affections which have taken shelter in it belong to the inmost essence of true religion, and require modes of thought which our Unitarianism does not supply. We have rightly revolted from the Past; but have not found the Faith of the Future.

It was not wonderful, then, that he should express to Miss Catherine Winkworth his admiration of Canon Liddon at St. Paul's; repeating emphatically, 'He is a *great* preacher, and I was surprised to find how much I agreed with him.'<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, he could in no way modify his condemnation of unveracious conformity. 'I fear the Broad Church scepticism goes much deeper than is commonly suspected,' he wrote to Miss Anna Swanwick, Oct.

<sup>1</sup> See chap. VIII, p. 267.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Catherine Winkworth*, ii. p. 620; Feb. 19, 1874.

3, 1880: 'Had the worship of God the reality belonging to speech with men, the tongue would cleave to the roof of the mouth before it could utter so many lies in it.'

#### IV.

Many were the friendships which gathered round him in these later days, partly through the Metaphysical Society, partly through the wider interests of literature, philosophy, and religion. With old intimates, like the Rev. W. H. Channing, Mr. R. H. Hutton, or Mr. W. R. Greg, Miss Anna Swanwick, the sisters Winkworth, or Miss Cobbe, the ties of interest, sympathy, and affection remained unbroken, and the experience of years only enriched them. In 1869 he paid his first visit to Tennyson; 'He struck us as having a wonderful and subtle mind,' noted Mrs. Tennyson in her journal,<sup>1</sup> 'he is mournful and tender-looking, "a noble gentleman."' His students remembered that one day a stranger, tall and bearded, clad in a long black cloak and large felt hat, actually ventured to interrupt a class, and carry off their Principal a quarter of an hour before the time was up. To Browning, too, he became much attached, though his fastidious sense of form found less satisfaction in his poetry than in the Laureate's. In the varied intercourse which was freely opened to him, he played his part always with dignity, sometimes also with amused enjoyment, yet with a certain solitariness of soul. Now, it was Mr. Goldwin Smith, who had been 'much

<sup>1</sup> Nov. 1: *Memoir*, vol. ii. p. 83.

struck, on returning to this country, with the enormous spread of absolute and aggressive Atheism among the educated English, as well as the general disintegration of religious belief throughout a still wider stratum of society less dogmatically disposed.' Next he reported a discussion at the Metaphysical, when Archbishop Manning had extemporised the very best imaginable account of Butler's great argument in the *Analogy*, 'the result, doubtless, of his Oxford training.' Or he had been walking with Carlyle, who vehemently denounced a joiner working in his house for 'breaking all the Ten Commandments at once with every stroke of his hammer.' At the annual inspection of the Portland British Schools there was always a colloquy with Mr. Matthew Arnold. 'They say I am conceited,' remarked the Inspector and Apostle of Culture on one occasion,—and the Secretary and Principal permitted himself a slight reproduction of his critic's drawl,—'did you ever hear anything so monstrously absurd and palpably ridiculous?' The walls of the Deanery at Westminster doubtless hold many interesting secrets; they did not echo anything which more tickled Dr. Martineau's sense of humour than the courageous Dean's lament over a brother dignitary, 'There is nothing more to be got from T—. He has given up the miracles, and there he sticks!'

The summer of 1875 found him in Yorkshire, drawn thither partly by personal memories, and partly by interest in scenery which had been dear to Mr. Tayler. To the Rev. D. Agate, with the delightful expansiveness which often marked his



letters to his old students, he wrote from the neighbourhood of Byland Abbey, near Helmsley, on Aug. 4, welcoming the report of his correspondent's settlement at Hunslet, Leeds, and recalling the impressions of half a century.

I do not know whether it is possible for the London College life to leave the deep and permanent impressions which some of us elders owe to the quieter and more monastic years of our training at York. This summer has brought me back among the old scenes, and made me once more intensely conscious of the influence concentrated in that section of my life. On my way hither, I indulged myself with playing guide to my party through the old city of York, and spent two or three hours with my dear and venerable Tutor and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Kenrick, now inhabiting the house where we received all our theological lectures. Never was there an old age more marked than theirs by unabated freshness of mind and heart. They must both be considerably above 80, and Mr. Kenrick not much under 90.<sup>1</sup> *This* neighbourhood (of Rievaulx) I visited just fifty years ago with my most intimate College friend, Francis Darbishire, when we were both of us out of health,—he alas! with the first symptoms of the consumption which in a few years carried him off. I seem to meet his image in every spot we admired together, and to hear his voice amid the old abbey ruins. We are about to take our leave, however, of this country: and after this week shall be at Greta Bridge Inn, Barnard Castle.

At Greta Bridge the great beeches of Rokeby Park overshadowed their rooms, and the gurgling of the stream was heard at their open windows. It was 'the very perfection of river scenery.' Memories of Mr. Tayler's admiration mingled with the murmuring waters; and Dr. Martineau wrote on Sept. 14, 'Yesterday we made a pilgrimage to Catterick, that we might not fail in our tribute of veneration to the founder of Essex Street Chapel.' But the 'annual Caledonian fever' returned next year, and they spent no more vacations south of the Tweed.

<sup>1</sup> He was 87. On his death two years later, May 7, 1877, Dr. Martineau paid a noble tribute to his old teacher, *Essays*, i. 397.

His family union had been Dr. Martineau's constant joy and support. But this autumn heard the first note of coming sorrow. With the departure from Liverpool in 1857, something passed out of Mrs. Martineau's life which was never regained. To the students of the sixties whom she welcomed to her house, she seemed the bright and gracious presence, radiant with intelligence and sympathy. Only those who had seen her in the brilliance of her early life, knew that she slowly drooped,—and that the London years brought with them a very gradual decline of power. To Mr. Thom, the beloved companion in so many vicissitudes, her husband told his secret, Nov. 25, 1875: 'she forgets nothing and no one she has ever loved: but new information is soon erased. . . . It would have made a great difference to her latter days, if she had had grandchildren. No life without its shadows. But there are many blessed lights between.'

The time was arriving when the Teacher, at three-score years and ten, was to see one after another of his friends and contemporaries summoned to the higher life. To each memory in turn some tender and truthful word was consecrated. Now it was the Senior Pastor of Lewin's Mead, Bristol; of whom he wrote to his junior colleague, the Rev. A. N. Blatchford, Jan. 17, 1876, 'I believe that few of his associates felt more than I have always felt, the winning power of Mr. James's affectionate, devout, and faithful character.' Next he was called to sympathise with the great bereavement of Francis William Newman: 'If ever the Heavenly Father received from this world a faithful soul,

wholly possessed by love of him, without any remains of self-reserve, it is in this translation of your dear wife. And never in my experience has the married life traced its way with diviner wisdom and affection, through those inner vicissitudes which are severer tests of character than any outward shocks of circumstance, than in your forty years of home companionship.' Ere the year ran out, his old fellow-student, Dr. J. R. Beard, finished the tale of his labours: 'Of all my former College companions, no one has less loitered on his way, or left behind him the witness of more completed work.' With January, 1877, came the death of the last surviving cousin resident in the city of his birth. 'To us elders, born on the spot,' he wrote to his sister, Mrs. Higginson, 'this cannot but seem the virtual extinction of the true family colony at Norwich.' Breaking through the rule he had imposed upon himself, he said the last words over her grave.

The summer of 1877 saw him established in the occupancy of the little estate which became his Scottish home for the rest of his life. On a plateau in the valley of the Spey, more than 700 feet above the sea, about two miles from Aviemore, stood a cottage, which admitted of enlargement for his modest wants, in the midst of some seven acres of ground. This was 'the Polchar,' of which he took possession with a full enjoyment of its domestic interests. 'You would be amused,' he reported to Miss Anna Swanwick, Aug. 15, 1877, 'to see how completely and naturally we have settled upon the level of the agricultural mind, and are transformed

into cow-keepers, gardeners, haymakers, drivers, grooms, and practise half the town-crafts besides; of carpenter, smith, painter, upholsterer, and plumber. By dint of combined industry we have brought our little cottage and half-a-dozen acres into something like order, and are not ashamed to ask a friend to come and look out of our windows on the Grampians.' Many, indeed, were to share this privilege, including his correspondent herself, in later years. But the opening joys of occupation, and of long mountain-walks, were abruptly cut short by the rapid failure of strength which made it urgent to carry Mrs. Martineau to London in the middle of September. Inexpressibly sorrowful were those autumn months. At first she could still enjoy the music and conversation of the family circle for two hours or more each evening. But the intervals of collectedness grew rarer; while the Teacher still sat in his study, thankful to concentrate his energies on a new course of lectures, punctually written week by week. On Nov. 9 his 'nearest and dearest of friends' passed from his side. She was seventy-three, and they had been married nearly nine-and-forty years.

Many were the letters, prompted by the love of friends, which brought comfort to the lonely thinker in the hour of his grief; and to each he did not fail to send reply.

To the Rev. S. A. STEINTHAL.

November 16, 1877.

Of no sympathy in this bereavement could we feel more assured than of yours and your dear wife's. Yet when your true words speak out so tenderly what we

already believed, they sink into our hearts, and constrain us to some grateful response. It is only the Lancashire friends of twenty years ago, that can fully apprehend what my dear wife was in her days of happiest energy—how large her heart, how simple her self-devotion, how full of sunshine her whole nature. Her faithful affections did not bear transplanting, and could not strike root twice; so that I have often feared it was a fatal mistake in me to make the remove to London. At least to that change I trace the first faint touch of the shadows which more and more gathered around her to the end. However, they have passed away, and she forgives me now; and those that descend upon me shall be only sacred, and not grievous, till they too are scattered by the dawn. I am thankful not to have been disappointed of the last privilege of love—that of bending over and soothing the sufferings of the spent and weary nature, and letting the dear one never be without the touch of the trusted hand. The lonely path is spared to her who was the less able to bear it.

To the Rev. T. E. POYNTING.

November 16.

. . . I thank you for an assurance of sympathy in which I should have trusted, though you had not spoken it. The rest and silence are indeed solemn, when the dear object of incessant thought and care asks nothing more, and sinks into the last peace. But, by the mercy of God, the same love which ceases to watch and soothe, begins to hope, and refuses to relinquish its continuity. The 'triple cord' is not broken, but only passes midway through the dark; and the end which remains in my hand will be my clue along the short path which I have to tread alone. Leaning on my children and my younger friends, I shall try to turn the days entrusted to me, be they more or fewer, to some account in the service for which we have both of us sought to live.

To the Rev. J. E. CARPENTER.

November 14th.

Till yesterday's sad offices were over, I could hardly trust myself to any expression of gratitude for your touching and sustaining words of sympathy. You stand at the blessed opening of a relation which, so far as it is within the reach of death, has just closed for me. And in reading over the letters of 1827-8 which passed between Bristol and Dublin on the one hand, and Derby on the other, and letting the colouring of the present hour fall upon them, I see how well the beginning and the end of a life-long companionship understand each other, and, in spite of all circumstantial contrasts, break into the same tones and are blended into the same story, by the pervading power of an imperishable love. May the dear God of our lives delay for you this experience of the unity of all our years as long as it has been delayed for me !

I willingly own that the surrender has not been asked of me too soon, and accept with patience the lonely survivorship which she is spared. It cannot be long ; and is cheered, while it lasts, by home affections, and sacred memories, and transcendent hopes. And the quiet duties that yet remain suffice to preserve still the interest and value of life, at least for my own conscience, and perhaps in some measure for others. It is, moreover, the privilege and comfort of my old age, to see the work to which I have been called already taken up by younger labourers who will carry it on in a like spirit, only with greater resource and a higher faithfulness. In this hour of sorrow I need to recall these things.

To the Rev. DENDY AGATE.

November 15.

. . . With the companionship of my children, and the friendship of my pupils. in whose career I live again, I should indeed be ungrateful if I gave way to repining sorrow, instead of patiently holding on through

the short remaining way. The Everlasting Love enfolds both worlds, and may unite the parted, there and here, in one spirit of duty and affection.

## V.

The bereaved Teacher resumed his work with unabated steadfastness. In his usual calm demeanour few could guess what deeps of sorrow lay beneath. College affairs engrossed much of his attention. Plans for removal to Oxford, which he could not approve, were under discussion. He thought of resigning, for his colleague, the Rev. C. B. Upton, who had already relieved him of part, was preparing to sustain the full burden, of his work. To Mr. Thom, whose advice he constantly sought, and who had already endured his own trial, he revealed the yearnings on which his lips were sealed (Nov. 24, 1877), ' Ah ! how vain is it to tell us that our affections are measured out to us upon the scale of this life, and have done their work when we have buried what we love. Are they not fresher in age and loneliness than ever before ? ' But the two great courses on Ethics and the Philosophy of Religion went on continuously ; the former destined to still further enrichment, the latter being entirely re-written on a new design and a far larger scale. Over the contemplated resignation a compromise was effected. The Principal took flight to his Scotch home early in May, returning for the annual week of examinations at the end of June ; and he did not resume his lectures till November. To this arrangement of his year he remained constant, and no persuasions could tempt him to further travel.

His early retreat from the fatigues of London set him face to face with new interests and beauties. 'I have brought some books with me,' he reports on June 1, 1878, to Prof. Knight, 'but at present the weeds in my garden and the sun-gleams on the woods and hills are too much for my studious resolves.' On June 12, 1879, he wrote to the Rev. C. J. Street, 'The weather is so delightful, and this country so magnificent, in its rare combination of winter on the snow-clad mountains, spring in the forest that climbs them, and summer in the strath and its woods below, that it will not be easy to tear one's self away. Yet it is in passing from the silence of nature to the stir of human life, that one learns the full significance of each.'

Meanwhile he prepared a second volume of *Hours of Thought*, which was issued towards the close of 1879. 'To friends of my own standing,' he wrote to the Rev. C. Wicksteed (Dec. 22, 1879), 'it may perhaps say something that they care for: to others it will at least record what the retiring generation deemed true and sacred. And that is perhaps the fitting witness for an old man to bear, ere his voice is finally silenced.'<sup>1</sup> Next year it is the Spinoza volume that occupies him: to Miss Anna Swanwick he light-heartedly describes himself (Oct. 3, 1880) as 'playing the fool all over the precipices of the Cairngorms, and scouring the forests like a Blackfoot Indian,' and adds: 'Some little work, however, connected with my Spinoza

<sup>1</sup> His voice was actually *heard* in St. James's Hall, when he delivered a brilliant address at the Channing Centenary, on April 7, 1880; printed in the *Reports of the Centenary Meetings*.



studies I have been able to get through; and though the final writing has yet to come, the man, the times, and the system, lie pretty clearly under my eye, so that I am ready to lift the veil and take the photograph. But I linger till I see what I have yet to learn from Frederick Pollock's important work.'<sup>1</sup>

In the summer of 1881 it happened that no student was leaving the College to whom words of valediction should be said. The occasion was seized by the old pupils of every age of service to invite an Address from their Teacher. It was a moving petition, and he assented with joyful alacrity; yet the effort brought its own pain. From the chapel, crowded in every part, where he once more stood in his old pulpit,<sup>2</sup> he turned, a few days later, in his Scotch seclusion, to his friend Thom: 'In my preparations for duties of this kind I deeply feel my loneliness; and sadly sigh for your companionship,—lost before the time,—and that of Tayler, withdrawn by the better Will to which it is more easy and tranquil to submit. I am happy in many young lives that are a joy to me. But the dear equals, who have made my life and still make it what it is, have left me; or, like W. Greg, are now but the wreck of what they were. However, it is but a little longer that we stand and wait.'

<sup>1</sup> When he returned to London, it was to a quieter and more spacious house, 35, Gordon Square.

<sup>2</sup> At the Valedictory Services his addresses were delivered from the more intimate proximity of the reading-desk below. The address this time was published immediately, in response to unanimous and prompt request, under the title 'Loss and Gain in Recent Theology,' *Essays*, iv. 317. Its positions were afterwards reproduced with ample argument in *The Seat of Authority*, see below, chap. XVI. p. 586.

The season brought its succession of happy visitors, among them, the Rev. O. B. Frothingham, of Boston. It was the habit of the host to advise his guests about their journey, inform them of the trains, and meet that which they selected with his phaeton. The American visitor was duly welcomed at Aviemore in the morning, and driven to the Polchar. After lunch, he related subsequently, Dr. Martineau proposed to walk or drive again. 'If we walk,' said his guest, 'where should we go to?' The veteran climber pointed to a height of some 2,000 feet commanding a noble view. 'I preferred the drive,' confessed Dr. Frothingham.<sup>1</sup> But sadness mingled with these pleasures. Dean Stanley passed away in July, and with him (wrote Dr. Martineau sorrowfully) 'the greatest personal power I have ever known.'<sup>2</sup> Mr. W. R. Greg was released in the autumn:<sup>3</sup> next spring English philosophy was the poorer by the death of Prof. T. H. Green; and American Unitarianism mourned for Bellows and Dewey; while the English-speaking world lamented Emerson. The friends of early and middle life were dropping fast. 'Green's death,' he wrote (to Prof. Knight. April 17, 1882) 'is a

<sup>1</sup> Next year the host urgently pressed the Rev. C. Wicksteed to come and meet Mr. Thom, and 're-enact the old *Prospective* meeting, before there is another vacant place in our quartet. . . Think whether we cannot repeat, before we are further separated, those *noctes ambrosianæ* of our youth.'

<sup>2</sup> To the Rev. J. H. Thom, *Life*, ii. 93. The last letter, found on the Dean's desk, written the day before his death, was addressed to him, and concerned a plan for mutual help to a common friend. Dr. Martineau was prevented by an attack of lumbago from going to the funeral. Letter to Prof. Knight, Aug. 10, 1881.

<sup>3</sup> In the *Nineteenth Century*, 1883, February, Dr. Martineau reviewed again his friend's earlier book, *The Creed of Christendom*.

grave sorrow to me. No philosophical thinker of our time seemed to me so thorough and so large, though I could never go with him into his Hegelian formulas. I always hoped that, working in the line of *Moral* philosophy, he would emerge from them, especially with the aid of his strong religious feeling.<sup>1</sup> But the unwearied Teacher still held on his way. He sent words of earnest greeting to the National Conference of Unitarian and other Non-subscribing Congregations, which held its first meeting in Liverpool, April 18-20, 1882.<sup>2</sup> Next year, his old friends of the Provincial Assembly of Lancashire and Cheshire despatched two of their number with an Address, signed by ninety-eight Ministers, and one hundred and forty-eight lay-members, to the Polchar, to beg him to preach to them in Cross Street Chapel, Manchester. He took them a walk towards the Grampians. They passed a gate, with a narrow turnstile at the side. 'I measure my friends here,' he said gaily: 'some can get through the stile, some want the gate opening.' The deputation passed the test, but they did not get through their business as easily. He listened gravely to their pleadings, but his answer was final. He had recently had to consult Sir Andrew Clark for weakness of the heart, and had been strictly ordered to avoid all emotional excitement, as any serious strain might prove fatal. 'I could not preach in Cross Street Chapel,' he said, 'without being deeply touched by old associations

<sup>1</sup> Prof. Knight's *Retrospects*, first series, p. 135.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Conference Report*, p. 81.

and old memories ; and though there is nothing I should like better than to die in the pulpit, I want to finish my books first. I am engaged on the revision of my two works, *Types of Ethical Theory*, and *A Study of Religion*, and I have instructed my daughters that if I die before it is completed, they are to burn every page.' There was nothing more to be said.<sup>1</sup>

In quiet ways, however, the philosopher continued his old interests in public affairs, and his mind played round many a theme of public concern. A few passages from his correspondence will tell their own tale.

To Em. Prof. F. W. NEWMAN.

London, April 15, 1882.

My dear Newman,

I concur entirely in all the general principles of your excellent tract on the Right and Duty of the State to enforce sobriety ; provided only that the 'Duty' be understood as conditional of the 'Possibility.' Whatever difficulties I feel, concentrate themselves on this last word. Total abstinence, however desirable as the best thing, cannot be instituted by law ; and if alcohol must be left, as you wisely advise, procurable at will by persons apparently unobjectionable, sobriety is left a matter of degree, the judgment of which is entrusted to a subordinate public officer. A Publican is required to refuse drink to a person who is evidently unfit to have more : this is a harmless authority, because the evidences of its right or wrong use are conspicuous to bystanders and can be matters of attestation. But if your 'Agent of Sales' is to refuse at discretion to sell, he will have to go behind the present moment and judge of the applicant's private allowance and use of drink and mode of life. This is to invest him with a dangerous and inquisitorial power.

Within the wide limits of moral gradation short of public crime, I am convinced that though much harm may be done by legal negligence, no positive good can be effected except by convincing and purifying the consciences of men, one by one ; and Law which goes materially beyond the requirements of the average conscience will prove inefficacious. Nor can I feel much

<sup>1</sup> Communicated by the Rev. H. E. Dowson. The formal correspondence was printed in the *Inquirer*, Oct. 13, 1883.

confidence in Elective Boards as interpreters of the general conscience, entitled by right of majority, to regulate the private life of the minority. Nothing can well be less satisfactory than the prevailing results of our rate-paying elections; and the multiplication of representative bodies is becoming an unmanageable nuisance. The sort of 'Public Opinion' which expresses itself in Elections does not impress me with much respect; and I should like to save a good deal of private life from its dictation. And if any prerogative at all is to be left to the individual will, it must include, I think, the determination of what he eats and drinks.

However, I am quite in favour of trying the effect of withdrawing alcoholic drinks from the sphere of competition, and committing their sale to public officers. And I am quite against the establishment of asylums for drunkards. The power of giving to wife or husband prohibition orders to the drink-shops would be subject I fear to serious abuse, unless the 'legal formalities' were such as to make it a judicial award instead of a personal act.

Long as I have been in thanking you for your note and pamphlet, it has not been through negligence. Till Easter brought me a few days' relief, I could not dismount from the tread-mill of my *Fach*, to indulge in a little English and Common Sense. In a day or two I return to the inexorable wheel.

Ever affectionately yours,

JAMES MARTINEAU.

35, Gordon Square, London, Nov. 27, 1882.

My dear Newman,

The St. Bartholomew Poem,—which I hope would safely reach you yesterday,—interested me intensely,—completing for me the paradoxical romance of your brother's life. How such a mind can relinquish the healthy national sympathies which inspired this poem, at the bidding of the petty scruples and ecclesiastical puzzles of which the *Apologia* tells the story, is to me utterly unintelligible. But as there is something in his writings that wins my total trust in his goodness, as well as admiration for his genius, I always suppose that there must be a missing half of me, the absence of which disqualifies me for a complete appreciation of his larger soul. Your account of your relation to him in 1824 agrees exactly with the interpretation which I had myself put upon Mozley's fancy sketch. I am gossip enough to find his 'Reminiscences' still interesting in the 2nd vol., though anything more pitifully chaotic than his own state of mind in relation to Religion, as depicted by himself, I certainly never encountered. I can well believe that his memory is not to be trusted: for whenever I can check it (the instances are but few), I find it inaccurate. The story, e.g., of the origin of the 'London Review,' with which I had personal connections from the first, is far from correct, attributing to the Oriel men an initiative and an influence which belonged wholly to J. S. Mill,

Sir W. Molesworth, and a few 'Philosophical Radicals' dissatisfied with the management of the 'Westminster' by Bowring. By Jeremy Bentham's death in 1832, it had passed into his hands: and two years' experience sufficed to show that the Head-Quarters' staff of the Utilitarian army could never work under orders from him.

You *did* remember me twice in the distribution of the 'Coming Revolution,'—giving me a good excuse for twice reading it. As always with what you write, it is full of interest for me,—in this case about equally divided between sympathy and dissent. I cannot think the time so much out of joint as you do; or admit the justice of your estimate of the proceedings at Alexandria. But nothing is more fruitless than controversy on matters of this kind, where there exists to begin with, a totally different conception in A. and B., of the fact on which judgment is to be passed. So I will refrain from justifying my contentment, on the whole, with the government action in Egyptian affairs.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Martineau was not now a supporter of Mr. Gladstone. In 1880 he voted for a Conservative. Meeting Mr. Gladstone one day soon after his return to power, he said to him, 'What an opportunity you have for the great work before you—the consolidation of the Empire.' Mr. Gladstone shrugged his shoulders and said, 'Oh, I don't know about that. The clerks in the Colonial Office have got too much to do already.' (Miss Cobbe, *Contemp. Rev.*, Feb., 1900, p. 177.) At the last College debate over which he presided, in the spring of 1885, he expressed most gloomy views of the advance of democracy (the franchise had recently been conferred on the agricultural labourer): his final words long haunted one of his hearers, 'to go to the bottom as we have recently done, seems to me little short of lunacy.' Later in the same year he wrote to a correspondent at Chicago, 'I have always been what is called a Liberal, but the measures contemplated by the party now bearing that name appear to me utterly at variance with the principles, social, constitutional, economical, international, which gave a rational cohesion to the reformers of an earlier generation. And the secret consciousness of this, suppressed by cowardice and partisan ambition, is eating like a canker into the sincerity of our public life, and lowering its temper and its standard of honour. The humiliating story of Gladstone's ministry will not prevent its return to power; and we shall have to suffer more from political incapacity and passion, before any repentant action sets in. Political ambition is vastly more diffused than hitherto: oratory has more influence than character and wisdom: and to promise the impossible is a surer game than to counsel the best practicable. Under these conditions parliamentary government is not hopeful. I wish this may be only the croaking of old age.' *Atlantic Monthly*, Oct., 1900, p. 496.

Do not despair of me, however. I shall always listen to what you have to say, as

Your affectionate,

JAMES MARTINEAU.

To Mrs. HENRY TURNER.

London, April 22, 1883.

My dear Catherine,

Many as were the affectionate greetings that brightened my birthday, it was your letter that made it a golden day. It is delightful to me to read in your hand-writing exactly the record of inward experience and the condensed lesson of so many years, which I also should register as the spiritual essence and issue of life. Many things have changed in us and around us since an early sorrow mingled something of a common sanctity with our lives. But one thing remains—Rest in the Love of God, and Trust of all our treasures and ourselves to Him for ever. This is the 'Light at eventide' that seems to bring back the very colours and sweetness of the dawn. In some respects I am conscious, with you, of being out of sympathy with the recent movements of thought and tendencies in society, and especially with the drift of our Church life; and I seriously believe that the future of English Religion must be looked for on other lines than ours. But the eternal deposit will not want for faithful hands, though it be taken up by those we know not. It is meanwhile very cheering to me to see so large a number of young men, far superior to the average, pressing forward into the ministry. Never, during my connection with it, has our College been in so satisfactory a state as it is now. It animates me to new efforts to complete, if life allows, some unfinished tasks of which I had almost despaired; and during the last two years, I have made more progress than I dared to hope. It is not in the study or the lecture-room that I am sensible of my advancing years, so much as in *society*. Yet I am going, with Edith, to pay a few days' visit to the Master of Balliol at the end of this week,—a daring venture is it not? But it is two years since I was there; and the days which he always lays out for me there always supply me with a store of memorable impressions of persons and things. It delights me that you find refreshment of spirit in the hymn-book. To me there is an untiring charm in a good hymn. I hardly know how it is that the freshness never fades.

Yours very affectionately,

JAMES MARTINEAU.

To the Rev. J. H. THOM.

London, May 20, 1883.

. . . . E. and I, during a few days at Balliol lately, met Prof. Sellar and his lively daughters, whom, I think, you know,—for they spoke most warmly of you. They are most agreeable people,

always ready with something fresh and bright on subjects grave or gay. With them was the new Greek Professor at Edinburgh, Butcher, and his wife,—a daughter of Archbishop Trench,—both of them accomplished and interesting persons, and the Professor marked out, if I mistake not, for eminence as a scholar and a thinker. I saw a good deal also of Canon Fremantle (whom I previously knew in town), and heard him deliver an admirable Bampton Lecture in St. Mary's, carrying out into concrete application a conception, like Arnold's, of the Church of Christ as co-extensive with the world, and embracing the ensemble of human relations; not in the sense of ecclesiastical claim over the secular, but in that of Divine acceptance, under whatever guise, of all faithful service and right affection. . . . His loss will be much felt in West London, where he had established a most effective organisation of his Church district, with lay supervision over every street.

To Mr. B. B. WILEY, Chicago.<sup>1</sup>

London, Jan. 31, 1884.

I felt sure from the first that Mr. Thom's volume, *The Laws of Life*, would find a just appreciation with the best part of your reading public; and the longer it is known, the higher will be its place. . . . It is curious to contrast the humble fate of such a book with the astounding circulation of Mr. George's *Progress and Poverty*; which, I am sorry to say, has dizzied the heads of not a few men here from whom more clearness and stability might have been expected. This is largely due to an excellent and hopeful characteristic of the time,—an intense compassion for the lot of the lowest class of our population,—the feeble in body and character who are beaten in the race of life, and drop by the wayside. The sense of something wrong in the sufferings and sins of this class is so deep and disturbing to many minds that they lose the power of calmly studying the real relations of cause and effect in the life of society, and are ready to fling themselves, like a patient tired out by a chronic malady, into the hands of any plausible quack who is loud enough in his confidence and large enough in promises for his panacea. Mr. George's personal presence, however, has apparently gone far to neutralise the influence of his book; and I think his day is nearly over here. The Socialistic tendency which has favoured him still remains, and fosters, I must think, very dangerous illusions, with which, unhappily, party leaders are willing to play for political ends.

To Em. Prof. F. W. NEWMAN.

The Polchar, July 27, 1884.

I am just as thankful to you for sending me your little book, as if it had promised support to my long-cherished convictions,

<sup>1</sup> *Atlantic Monthly*, Oct., 1900, p. 494



It will very likely be painful to me : but I am well aware that this is due to my weakness, and not to its fault ; and that I ought to acquiesce with untroubled mind in differences of judgment which leave absolutely unweakened all my trust and affection towards you. Nay, more : it is a good which I should be the last to underrate, to have a new shock delivered, by a hand so strong and true as yours, upon whatever may even seem unsound in one's belief and feeling. If it will not bear this test, it is time that it should go. I have no real sympathy with the quietists, who are for reticence on these tender topics ; but own the frank assertion of deliberate opinion to be just as binding upon you, as upon those whom you desire to correct. Far from assuming my interpretation of the character of Jesus ' as a religious axiom,' I at least take it to be legitimately drawn from critical study of the early history of Christianity : and probably a main source of the difference between your conception and mine may be, that you retain as historical a great deal more of the Synoptic Gospels than I do. If I felt myself bound by your critical premisses, I should be brought very near to your moral conclusion. But it appears to me more and more evident that the Messianic version of the ministry of Jesus, as presented in the Synoptics and Acts, is altogether a superinduced construction, giving just as much an invented edition of the original reality as the Nicene doctrine of a later century. Of course, this raises the question ' What then do we, or can we, know, about the Author in his true personality ? ' and I admit the difficulty of rendering an answer that can speak satisfactorily except to those who have some faith in processes of a somewhat refined internal criticism. Yet I believe that materials of comparison exist,—at present little worked out, which are capable of yielding, in unsuspected ways, clear and important results.

I shall hardly be able at present to turn to this class of studies ; being closely engaged with the bringing out (under Clarendon Press auspices) a book on ' Types of Ethical Theory ' : and have hard work to keep pace with the printers.

With our united kindest regards,

Ever affectionately yours,

JAMES MARTINEAU.

To Mrs. HENRY TURNER.

London, Jan. 7, 1885.

Your old lady friend, who discreetly made friends with the Devil, or, at least, offered to shake hands with him, before she died, is a most amusing personage. How curiously do the permanent human weaknesses and passions contrive to make room for themselves and reappear under all the changes of thought, which are expected to wear them out. Fifty or sixty years ago, it was the religious people who seemed to have the monopoly of orthodox exclusiveness and assurance : but now, I should say,

the palm of intolerance and dogmatism is carried off by the Agnostics. To join them is apparently to lose all capacity for *equal* affections except among themselves, and to have only pity and benevolence to spare for those who will accept the position of *inferiors*. The only exception that I have ever met with is in the instance of the late Prof. Clifford, who, in spite of an almost rampant atheism, had a heart of true love towards friends still steeped in faith and piety. But he was young, and fresh himself from devout experiences which he could neither forget nor despise. But in his nature there was a singular blending of sweetness and strength: and the religion from which he became alienated, and which to him practically stood for the whole, was a puerile High-Churchism, impossible to such a mind.

## VI.

On January 1, 1885, Dr. Martineau dated the Preface to his *Types of Ethical Theory*, and, shortly after, the two volumes were issued from the Clarendon Press, Oxford. When he completed his four-score years on April 21, he could survey a finished portion of his work. The birthday was always a festival in the home; gifts and flowers added their graces to the crowd of greetings by letter and telegram.<sup>1</sup> It was not surprising that varied tones should be heard in his replies.

<sup>1</sup> Among them was an Address from Liverpool friends, some of whom had been among his hearers at Paradise Street. The reply is printed in the *Life*, ii. 56. From the poet Thomas Hornblower Gill (at 67) he received a Latin verse:

‘Haud rapuit, mirande, tibi octogesimus annus  
Corporeas vires robur et ingenii:  
Ter felix! pede difficiles ascendere montes  
Qui posses, doctrinæ edita mente simul.’

The philosopher had enough Latin to respond:

‘Nec tibi restinxit, Vates, matura senectus  
Fervorem ingenii, Pieridumque faces:  
Parnassum superans, facilis tu victor abibis,  
Ales despiciens tædia longa pedis.’

TO MISS ANNA SWANWICK.

London, April 25, 1885.

Rich as my life has been in friendships, there now survive few indeed that I can assign to the first rank ; and of these yours is, with two exceptions, the oldest, and rests perhaps upon the largest base of sympathy, and has a record of memory absolutely unclouded. And so, I well know, it will be to what we wrongly call ' the end.' Even four-score years, however, do not give the discharge from all further service, which our easy-going grandparents used to assume when they subsided into the arm-chair by the chimney nook, to play the part of patriarchal autocrats, and distribute their duties to others. And it is surely one of the best consequences of the modern view of life, that it dispenses no one from any serviceable activity for which the adequate faculty still remains.

TO THE REV. R. L. CARPENTER.

April 25, 1885.

I am delighted to have the kind congratulations addressed to me by your brother, Dr. W. B. Carpenter, echoed by you. The early years of the four-score now complete are so clearly associated in their deepest interests, with your family, that I cannot be greeted by too many voices from that dear and sacred home. I thankfully lay to heart your friendly wishes, while hardly venturing to desire for myself so much as you would desire for me. The little remnant of life here is measured out by the Perfect Disposer of all : and to use it faithfully is my sole aspiration. . . . But it is evident to me that the future of English Religion is not with us. Whatever aspects of truth we may have saved from neglect, whatever spiritual resources we may have rendered more accessible, pass into other keeping and need another administration, before they lay hold of the minds and hearts of men. It is the power of Faith that shall prevail. We have it not, except as a feeble residuum from the power of criticism.

Wonderful was the activity of the weeks that followed. All weakness had vanished ; he was full of buoyant strength. Before his spring visit to the Polchar he found time to preside at the Jubilee Meeting of the London Domestic Mission on May 12.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> His speech, vivid in retrospect, and convinced in faith against the Pessimist, was printed with the sermon of the Rev. Charles Beard, under the title of *Fifty Years of Domestic Missions*. The speeches thus entrusted to the press were always written out with the most finished care.

At the beginning of the College examinations, on Monday, June 22, he was in his place again. It was the last time. His resignation had been communicated to the Trustees in January, and was now to take effect. On the evening of the 24th he met his old students at dinner, and with mingled vivacity, earnestness, and pathos, reviewed the changes which had taken place in the teaching of sixty years before, and the tone and temper of modern study. No one present could forget his warnings against the 'enervated mood' which is the 'canker of manly thought and action, of godly life and character'; or his exhortation to 'take up drudgery with a cheerful mind':<sup>1</sup> when the untired captain of the little band declared in tones that still rang clear, 'Life is a battle, and conquest will remain only with those who have the vigour for victory,' what heart but went back to inconspicuous labour with a new sense of the dignity of the fight! With words that awoke deep emotion among his hearers, he bade them accept him as their comrade.

I may be wrong; but whatever humbling decrepitude may be in reserve for me hereafter, at the present moment neither is my remembrance of you dull, nor my joy in you cold. As I pass my glance round these tables, the successive dates that

<sup>1</sup> He strenuously urged that additional effort should be devoted to the studies which were uncongenial. An American friend once watched him tie up a parcel with extreme exactness, and ventured to enquire the reason. 'Perhaps,' said the Principal, 'because I hate to do it.' 'I asked him,' continued the visitor, 'if he thought the doing of unpleasant things especially educational.' His answer was emphatic, 'Yes, I have done that all my life, and a great deal of our best discipline is in it. I, for instance, had an extreme distaste for mathematics. I have for that reason given special attention to those studies, going back to them from time to time as a means of mental and moral discipline.'

look silently from your features count my journey for me, as milestones on my way ; and the only sadness is, that here and there, a blank has been made by early death, and the mark is visible only to my thought. This living itinerary is as consolatory to me as it is encouraging to my colleagues who will continue it, perhaps upon new tracks and with better speed. The future, like the past, will show that, without ancient pedigree or splendid traditions, thorough academic work may yet be done. Our *Alma Mater* is certainly no queenly personage, whose sons are Princes and Judges of the earth. Still, though but a City Matron, she sends forth honest men, whom none can deny to be, in fair proportion, good citizens of the States of the Republic of letters, and of the Kingdom of God

The next morning he took his leave of the trustees.<sup>1</sup> In the evening he once more bade farewell in the Chapel to the students who passed out to active service. That night the tale of five-and-forty years of labour was concluded.

After exhausting days he might well have sought repose. But there were two venerable cousins in Clifton ; they had not met for many years ; they could not come to him ; and with the College echoes still murmuring round him, he went down to Bristol on Friday morning, lunched with his kinswomen, and returned in the afternoon. Each hour had its appropriate engagement till he paused at Keswick, the following Tuesday, with his eldest unmarried daughter, to stay with Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Carpenter in Borrowdale. Keen was his enjoyment as he revisited the scenes of a holiday, all but thirty years before, and noted the changes made in the landscape by the woodland growths. He wrote out speeches, insisted on climbing Scafell Pike (to an accompaniment of philosophical discussion), presided over the fire at a picnic on Derwentwater, where

<sup>1</sup> All the speeches were printed in the *Retirement Proceedings*.

the wasps (driven out of their nest below by the heat) took the place of the Scotch disputant, but could not disturb his serenity; and left among the younger guests gathered to meet him, ineffaceable memories of vigour and graciousness, humour, courtesy, and charm.<sup>1</sup> Alike in the intercourses of friendship as in his public service, he justified his own account of his career: 'On looking back over the remembered work of fourscore years, I find it all summed up in the simplest of acts—the unreserved expression of whatever took hold of me as most true and good.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An amusing incident showed him in characteristic light. On the first day's walk the party crossed from Watendlath to Rosthwaite, where a sheep dog attached himself to the rambles, who climbed to the mountain path behind Castle Crag, under Maiden Moor, and descended into Grange. There a carter, going to Rosthwaite, who knew the dog, agreed to take him back. In a few minutes, however, the dog bounded into the group again with manifest pleasure. Dr. Martineau was really shocked. 'The dog *ought* to go back,' he said, and took up stones to drive him homewards; the 'categorical imperative' was never more severely enforced on an unconscious subject.

<sup>2</sup> Reply to a Resolution of congratulation passed at the Triennial meeting of the National Conference, Birmingham, April. 1885.

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE WORK COMPLETED, 1885-1900.

'TIME,' said the former Pastor of Hope Street, on first meeting his old friends again,<sup>1</sup> 'is an artist whose work a Christian need never deplore. He may indeed pale the cheek, he may blanch the hair, he may print upon the countenance the trace of many a sorrowful experience. But this also is frequently done with so much deepening of the higher expression, that he seems rather to take away the veil, as it were, from the spirit, than to cover over the graces of the natural life.' Surely some such artistry was wrought upon the Teacher during the years of his retirement. It was happily long ere the first traces of infirmity appeared. The two great treatises, the *Types of Ethical Theory* (1885), and *A Study of Religion* (1888), were successfully completed. A third was issued in 1890, under the title *The Seat of Authority in Religion*, which crowned the exposition of his philosophical views with a delineation of what he regarded as the essence of Christianity.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dec. 31, 1858.

<sup>2</sup> These works are described in chap. XVI. As the Teacher's function practically ceased with these works, only a sketch of the activities of these last years is here offered.

It was a great achievement for a veteran in his eighty-fifth year.<sup>1</sup> The time of storm and stress had long since passed: he was rich in 'that which should accompany old age.' Of this a signal instance was afforded on his eighty-third birthday (April 21, 1888), three months after the *Study of Religion* had issued from the University Press at Oxford. His friend Prof. Knight had drawn up an address, which was re-cast by the Master of Balliol: its key-note was the sentence, 'You have taught your generation that both in politics and religion, there are truths above party, independent of contemporary opinion, and which cannot be overthrown, for their foundations are in the heart of man.' It was widely signed by representatives of literature and philosophy, art and science; Tennyson and Browning headed the list; Anglican appreciation gleamed through the Master of Balliol and the Dean of Westminster; Zeller vouched for German philosophy; Max Müller belonged to two nations; Renan symbolised the graces and penetration of French criticism; the American ambassador, Mr. Lowell, uniting politics and literature, never more truly spoke for the most thoughtful of his people. A crowd of eminent men and women, many belonging to the Universities and Colleges of Great Britain and Ireland, and others in Germany, Holland, Hungary, and the United

<sup>1</sup> The last pages, which show extraordinary force, were composed, as it were, in the face of death. It was the winter of the first serious epidemic of influenza (January, 1890), which had attacked his household. A visitor found him writing eagerly in his study, where Danger stood at the door. 'I notice,' he said, 'that it makes short work with the old. It is not that I am afraid to die, but *I do want to finish my book.*'



States, swelled the list to the number of six hundred and fifty. 'To such an escort down the declining path of life,' said the Teacher, 'what can an old man do but throw out a few faltering words of thanks, and love, and reverence?'<sup>1</sup>

## I.

After laying down his College work as Principal in 1885, Dr. Martineau was appointed President of its governing body of Trustees, and in this capacity continued his connexion with it for yet two more years. His tenure of office coincided with the centenary of its foundation in 1786, and in June, 1886, he delivered two brilliant speeches in exposition of its history and vindication of its principle.<sup>2</sup> The first of these, at a soirée held in Willis's Rooms, affirmed that throughout its hundred years of teaching 'the fundamental principle of Baxterian Catholicity has been maintained:—all knowledge good; all conscience free; no restrictions to be put on either under the plea of religion, or for the sake of a superfluous uniformity of theological conception. Of the sincerity and good faith with which this principle has been carried out, evidence is afforded by the repeated resort to our College for study in divinity of men preparing for Holy

<sup>1</sup> The text of the Address and the signatures, and Dr. Martineau's reply, was published by Prof. Knight in his volume *Inter Amicos*, 1901.—In June, 1888, Dr. Martineau received from the University of Oxford the honorary degree of D.C.L.

<sup>2</sup> On the same occasion he spoke once more in Little Portland St. Chapel, to the out-going students, no longer in tones of a College farewell, but with welcome into the ministry.

Orders in the Church of England.' The speaker ended with an emphatic protest against the restrictions on the theological faculties in the old Universities, and boldly declared that whenever they should be 'manned by Instructors and frequented by Learners unconditionally free to *see what is* and *create what ought to be,*' Manchester New College would welcome Death, for its death would be its Transfiguration and final passage into larger and higher life.

It was chiefly on this ground that, two years later, he resisted the proposal to remove the College to Oxford. The ex-Superintendent of a great Sunday School, the friend of Domestic Missions, saw grave practical loss in the settlement of students for the Ministry of Religion in a city which would offer no congenial field for such labours. But the champion of freedom in theological teaching was so confident of its swift adoption even by the ancient seats of Anglican learning, that he deprecated the expenditure of a large sum in the erection of costly buildings which the changes of ten years might render unnecessary: wait but a little, and the College might resolve itself into a board for sending its students to Oxford, Cambridge, Durham, or the centres of Scotch scholarship and philosophy.<sup>1</sup> This hopeful anticipation was not shared by the advocates of the change; his objections were overruled; he accepted the issue with unabated interest in the College; and attended the opening ceremonies at

<sup>1</sup> The expectation was all the more remarkable in the face of the difficulties attending his scheme of Church Reform (*infra*) and his indignation at ecclesiastical indifference.

Oxford in October, 1893. His visit had its sorrowful side, for, only five days before, a long procession had followed the remains of his friend, the Master of Balliol, to the grave. But he did not allow these memories to interfere with his serenity. At the Dedication Service in the Chapel he uttered the closing words of Benediction. There, the next morning, he delivered an address at the table of the Lord's Supper. He made an impromptu speech at lunch, suggested by a remark of 'the accomplished Warden of Merton,' in which he did not conceal the extent of his divergence from traditional Oxford theology; attended a crowded *Conversazione* in the evening; and gaily remarked to his host, Dr. Drummond, Principal of the College, when they reached home, 'Now we have nothing left to do but to dance.'<sup>1</sup>

The catholic principle which Dr. Martineau had adopted from his fore-runners among the English Presbyterians, and had found applied to theological education in Manchester New College, was a principle of comprehension. It was no less capable of application, in his view, to the organisation of religious worship. This was for some years a constant object of his thought, and engaged a large share of his activity and correspondence. Towards the close of 1885 a letter to Mr. Bosworth Smith was published, in which he expressed his homage to the Church, and his eager desire to see her wake up to the full range and grandeur of her mission. The common ecclesiastical Christianity filled him with a kind of

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, ii. 194.

despair; and he was painfully struck with the poverty of the schemes of reform which the serious-minded laity, with whom the primary responsibility rested, sometimes propounded. His complaint brought him into connexion with the promoters of the National Church Reform Union. He attended conferences of clergy and laity, and soon took pen in hand on behalf of 'the Expansion of the Church of England.'<sup>1</sup> He declared that theological doctrine was no proper subject for legislation at all; called (as he had done nearly forty years before<sup>2</sup>) for the abolition of the Act of Uniformity; demanded the incorporation of the Nonconformists, and laid down principles of financial reform. 'The difficulties are enormously great,' he wrote to Mr. Thom (April 9, 1886), 'especially from the astonishing apathy and obtuseness of the *Church* people, and the levity and unfaithfulness of the politicians. But one must not despair of the Commonwealth, so long as there is a last hour for repentance.'

Criticism called forth clearer definition of his proposals. With the relentless logic which was one of the characteristics of his French inheritance, he worked out a scheme for 'the National Church as a Federal Union,'<sup>3</sup> founded on the assumption that the different communions divided the truth among them, and none could profess to have the whole of it quite pure. He yearned, like Baxter and Dean Stanley, for a

<sup>1</sup> *Contemporary Review*, July, 1886. An article on the same theme had been published in the preceding number by the Rev. Sir George W. Cox with whom Dr. Martineau was acting.

<sup>2</sup> See *ante*, chap. X. p. 350.

<sup>3</sup> *Contemporary Review*, March, 1887.

Church to which Catholic and Unitarian—while retaining their separate forms of worship—might jointly belong: and he could not believe that the lessons of history could be so misread as to refuse the Christian name to any who claimed it. Possessed with this conviction, he failed to realise that while proposing to abolish the Act of Uniformity, he was enforcing as the basis of his scheme the principle of another, viz., the equal recognition of all Christian communions as members of the Universal Church. The plan was embodied, with the help of friends, in the form of a Bill which could be presented to Parliament. Its leading idea was thus explained.

To the Rev. J. E. CARPENTER.

London, February 8, 1887.

The essence of it is *Disestablishment without Disendowment*, so far as the present Church of England goes: i.e., all Ecclesiastical Law is flung out of the Statute-book, and the State relinquishes Church definition and control in favour of self-government in the Episcopal Church as complete as in the present Nonconformist denominations; stipulating, however, that the *lay* control hitherto secured by *Parliamentary* rule shall be preserved in the shape of a two-to-one preponderance in the autonomous constitution. The Episcopal Church, thus set free to develop and reform itself, takes its place side by side with the other denominations; keeping its own peculiar endowments since 1662, when for the first time it chose to separate itself by excommunicating all the other strugglers for the moulding of the One Church; but sharing with the no less legitimate Puritan factors of our English Christendom the earlier endowments given to the undivided whole. The Religious bodies thus co-ordinated are then linked together as Federal members of a United English Christian Church with loyalty towards each other under the common Head and for the vast mass of common work, without breach of the interior allegiance of each individual to the particular communion of his baptism or his voluntary naturalisation.

From the academic interest which this bold and close-knit scheme aroused, Dr. Martineau was called to the practical problems of his own household

of faith. Writing to the Rev. Lawrence Scott (June 8, 1887), he contrasted the evil effects of their 'disintegrated religious constitution' with the successful organisation of English Methodism and the Free Kirk of Scotland. The letter was read at the annual meeting of the Provincial Assembly of Lancashire and Cheshire,<sup>1</sup> and quickly brought an invitation from the Committee of the National Conference to contribute a paper at the next Triennial Meeting in Leeds, April, 1888. His consent was given readily, though it aroused a train of misgivings, and he confessed to his friend Thom that the doubt would force itself upon him 'whether we are worth organising.'<sup>2</sup> He had just passed his eighty-third birthday when the appointed date arrived. For an hour and fifty minutes he addressed a large audience in the great Victoria Hall in Leeds, with a physical vigour, a skill in the presentation of his case, a mastery of facts and figures, a close-linked chain of argument, a force of spiritual passion, which amazed his hearers, and evoked from the reporters the murmuring comment 'This is another Grand Old Man!'

The scheme was designed to meet the difficulties arising from the changes in population which had seriously affected the small country congregations. The remedy for the weakness of isolation lay in the strength of combination. The financial basis proposed for this combination was a 'Pastorate Fund,' conceived after the type of the Sustentation Fund

<sup>1</sup> *Inquirer*, June 25, 1887.

<sup>2</sup> Letter of Feb. 27, 1888; *Life*, ii. 137.

of the Free Kirk of Scotland. The result would be to secure to every minister alike a minimum Church stipend of £150 a year. This involved congregational contributions to the central fund ; methods of local co-operation ; adjustment with existing trusts ; provision for the qualification and choice of ministers ; and a whole series of arrangements designed to accommodate usages of congregational autonomy with still older traditions of Presbyterian government. It was a lucid and coherent scheme ; it was expounded with consummate skill. As the speaker drew to a close, he sought to define and denominate the characteristic of the Church whose constitution he had sketched. He pointed to the varied designations of the communities whose representatives were there convened,—‘ Unitarian, Liberal Christian, Free Christian, Presbyterian, Non-subscribing, and kindred congregations ’ : ‘ Entering this hall under six banners, can we hope,’ he asked, ‘ to march out under one ? ’ The question led direct to the conception which he had urged for more than half a century ; no doctrinal name could supply a basis of association for worshipping assemblies, for Christian fellowship was independent of theological concord. In memorable words he nailed his colours to the mast —

If any one, being a Unitarian, shrinks, on fitting occasion, from plainly calling himself so, he is a sneak and a coward. If, being of our catholic communion, he calls his chapel or its congregation Unitarian, he is a traitor to his spiritual ancestry, and a deserter to the camp of its persecutors.

It was a last vindication of the Catholic principle. The name which he proposed—‘ English Presbyterian ’—did not attract the Unitarian who desired a denominational flag, and it had the drawback

of being in part preoccupied by the Presbyterian Church organised in England on the basis of the Westminster Confession. The meeting listened with respect, but with divided assent. After earnest debate the next day, the inevitable Committee was appointed; the proposals were carefully circulated, and discussed by local associations and separate congregations. The sturdy individualism which the prevailing type of theological conviction had fostered, refused to give way: the dread of control by Presbyteries led to a more emphatic assertion of congregational independence. The ministers of other communions might see the merits of the scheme. Prof. Bonet-Maury might declare that it was precisely what the Liberal Protestants needed in France; an American journal might recommend its adoption in the United States;<sup>1</sup> there were ominous signs that it would not overcome difficulties in the scene of its birth.

The rejection of the proposals after nearly two years' consideration was a deep disappointment. The experiment, in Dr. Martineau's view, established two results:<sup>2</sup> '(1) that *Congregationalism*, with its antipathy to all *Church-order*, was irreversibly established among us, and (2) that the *doctrinal principle* of union among the members of each congregation had become completely predominant, the type of *orthodoxy* being simply changed from Trinitarian to Unitarian.' The estimate was severe; he could not be persuaded that it was overcharged;

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Mr. Thom, July 17.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to Mr. Thom, March 29, 1890.



and the conviction that for the Church of his fathers there was no share in the future of English Christendom, breathed sadly through many a later letter. He withdrew more and more from denominational activities, yet he attended some of the meetings of the Triennial Conference in London, in 1891;<sup>1</sup> and again and again emphatically asserted his personal Unitarianism. The very same letter in which he announced to Mr. Thom the failure of the scheme to win assent, asked his acceptance of a copy of *The Seat of Authority in Religion*, adding 'I take a thankful leave of my task, with a "Liberavi animam meam."'<sup>2</sup> But to the end of his life he maintained his refusal ever to join, as member or minister, a 'Unitarian Church.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He had already presided over a meeting for the establishment of a Provincial Assembly for London and the Southern Counties.

<sup>2</sup> See chap. XVI. p. 586.

<sup>3</sup> On this distinction which he had often to reiterate, see a letter in the *Modern Church*, dated Feb. 12, 1888; and another appended to the *Historical Sketch of the Unitarian Movement since the Reformation*, by his friend Dr. J. H. Allen (of Cambridge, Mass.), Jan. 13, 1894. From a somewhat different point of view he wrote on Feb. 24, 1893, to the Rev. Jenkin Lloyd Jones, of Chicago: 'I confess that, Unitarian as I am. I have always sympathised with Channing's aloofness from any organization of Unitarianism as either Church or Philosophical School. Its doctrine of the Divine nature, as opposed to the Trinitarian, appears to me wrongly chosen for the centre and designating term of an articulated system of faith and thought; being compatible and having historically been combined with materialism and spiritualism, with Necessity and Free-will, with Pessimism and Optimism, with the finality of death and with Immortality; all of them matters far more near to the human heart and operative in human character and life than the theory of distinctions or no distinctions within the Divine nature. It is the *Anthropology* of the orthodox, their doctrines of the *Fall*, and of the *nature of sin*, that demands their Trinitarian *theology* as a means of escape by redemption from the horrors they have pre-supposed. But a Trinitarian theory of God does not, in itself, imply or

His experience of theological assemblies had not been exhilarating. He was usually more conscious of the differences than of the union. So he looked at first on the 'Parliament of Religions,' 1893, summoned in connection with the great Chicago Exhibition, with a less sympathetic eye than might have been expected.<sup>1</sup> Had he been present at the impressive opening, where representatives of many faiths from Rome to Japan joined in a common act of worship, he might have seen realised on a still

suggest, inversely, any such doctrine of Man and his Sin. Again and again it has been held,—or, at least, its equivalent—by speculative ontologists, Platonic and Christian, in conjunction with ethical and eschatological interpretations of human life altogether at variance with the Church notions. Nothing, in this respect, hinges on the difference between Unity pure and simple, and Unity with a plural interior, so that from this point no coherent system of thought can be derived in regard to the moral and spiritual life of individuals and societies, and no beginning be made of permanent communion.'

<sup>1</sup> The Baroness Burdett-Coutts, as Commissioner for the British section in its department of philanthropic (and especially women's) work applied to him for information respecting English Unitarian institutions. To Mr. Wiley (Chicago) he explained why he could draw up no catalogue of sect-benevolences. 'The very inquiry is a satire upon our intensely sectarian life; assuming as it does that all our charities are done denominationally; and that to survey them all, without counting any twice over, you must find an enumerator for every Church, and add up all the lists delivered in. I could only reply that it was the inherited and the personal habit of our people to look on the social compassions and Christian sympathies which gave birth to hospitals, schools, reformatories, rescue missions, and every form of philanthropic effort, as of universal obligation, civic and human; we never thought of going apart and setting up for ourselves, as an exclusive theological party, spheres of action equally open and equally congenial to the conscience and affections of others. On the contrary, we worked with our fellow-citizens irrespective of creed, wherever we could, and did nothing alone, except where we must. . . . And so of *women's* work. With small exception, there is no difference between women and men in the incidence of charitable duty; and joint action in it is, in our opinion, essential to its best spirit and efficiency.'

larger scale that fellowship of which he had himself drawn an exalted picture in some great Cathedral solemnity of the federation of English churches.<sup>1</sup> But when he came to study the record of its proceedings in the admirable pages of Prof. Bonet Maury, he touched a profounder note.

We must not expect from such Congresses (he wrote, Dec. 8, 1895) anything like the unity of belief which was aimed at in the General Councils of the Church. The range of thought and feeling involved in Religion is so large, that it will never be possible to reach by discussion and isolate by definition its central and all-adequate common essence. Of its various elements and aspects minds differently constituted will always, I suppose, *accentuate* its components differently: the emphatic syllable for one being subordinate for another. But if we all learn that there is no harm in this, that it is a sign, not of defect but of affluence of truth, love will be deepened instead of alienated by our religious variations.

## II.

The years of retirement brought little change of pursuit to the veteran Teacher. He allowed himself more leisure in the evenings, occupying himself largely with history, or the memoirs of public men, whose careers in politics or literature had been coincident with his own.<sup>2</sup> Novels he rarely read; the strenuous habits of earlier years had laid too

<sup>1</sup> *Essays*, ii. 576.

<sup>2</sup> Even when he was ninety, the whole family used to meet from their different homes in London on Tuesday evenings, and read aloud Gibbon's immortal *Decline and Fall*. Of Mr. Bryce's treatise on the American commonwealth he wrote enthusiastically to a correspondent at Chicago, declaring him 'marked out for eminence within our small class of true statesmen.' But he added, 'Greatly as I personally like and admire him, he is too radical,—too much a *man of the future* perhaps—for me, an old lingerer from the past. I think him too good and wide in his essential self to be entangled as he is in Gladstone's train.' *Atlantic Monthly*, October, 1900, p. 497.

firm a hold upon him. He was a frequent attendant at the lectures at the Royal Institution, till advancing age made the seclusion of the study more congenial ; he did not forsake the periodic meetings of brother ministers in London, and was a welcome guest at Sion College ; he might be seen at the private views of picture galleries ; his figure was among the most notable at a soirée given by his nephew Walter Bache to Lizst ; he was regularly in his place at the Saturday concerts at St. James's Hall. He astonished an American visitor by running upstairs two steps at a time. Even at eighty-eight he could be seen threading his way rapidly among the vehicles of Piccadilly ; and not till after he was ninety could he be persuaded to refrain from jumping off omnibuses in motion. He paid occasional visits to Oxford, to the Master of Balliol, or to one or other of his former colleagues. One morning (May, 1890) he set out with his host to the neighbouring *scriptorium* of Dr. Murray. As they approached the house, strange sounds were heard through the dining-room window. Emeritus Prof. J. S. Blackie was shouting Gaelic songs, to a vigorous accompaniment of thumps from a massive stick upon the floor. The encounter recalled to Dr. Martineau an amusing memory. At a dinner-party one evening, when the gentlemen were left alone, Prof. Blackie suddenly rose from his seat, walked round the table to Dr. Martineau's chair, flung his arms around his neck, and kissed him. A shy man could hardly have been made the object of a more embarrassing demonstration. In 1892 he went through three fatiguing days at the Tercentenary of Trinity

College, Dublin, where the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters was conferred upon him. He attended the banquet; walked in the procession; witnessed a gala performance in the theatre; travelled eighty-eight miles and back (noting the evidences of improvement on the way) to visit Birr Castle, the residence of the Chancellor of the University, Lord Rosse, and inspect his great reflecting telescope.<sup>1</sup> And from these distractions he withdrew that he might stand with his eldest daughter beside the little grave in the old Huguenot cemetery where, more than sixty years before, his first-born was laid.

The birthday (like Christmas) was still a festival, and brought its varied greetings, to each of which a due reply was made.

To the Miss GASKELLS.

35, Gordon Square, London,

April 22, 1892.

Dear Friends,

Just when I think it is time for me to be forgotten, the most touching proofs of remembrance are showered upon me. And among the rest comes your beautiful bouquet, contributing its full share towards the conversion of my house yesterday into a flower-show. One thing only was wanting—that you should be here to see it, and to receive our thanks in person. As this could not be, I cannot spare you a written word of thanks, heartfelt and true, for your faithful memory and gracious wishes. You know, at least in part, how dear and sacred to me are the images of the past of which your home is the centre; but you cannot well know how, through them, I live on into the future for you and the younger generation who take up the duties of

<sup>1</sup> 'The moral interest of the place,' he wrote to Mr. Newman, 'is not inferior to the science:—to see, in the very heart of Ireland an estate and its dependent population, whether farmers or labourers, presenting every appearance of well organised relations and orderly content.' 'This was one of those rare days,' he wrote to an American friend, 'when one may honestly feel a little wiser in the evening than in the morning.' *Atlantic Monthly*, Oct., 1900, p. 499.

the elders as they pass away. I wish I could believe that the future of English Christendom lay in the line of their succession : but I fear that a wrong turn has been taken, and that the inheritance which might have been ours, is reserved for other hands.

To Mrs. HENRY TURNER, Nottingham.

London, April 22, 1893.

We stand together in our different stations, as sentinels on the boundary walls between the two provinces of life, and must answer as we can to each other or to the outside observer's appeal, ' Watchman, what of the night ? ' There is so much to interest one,—both anxiously and hopefully,—in the present, that it is not easy to look upon oneself as almost the last lingerer of a past generation.

. . . . Our family gathering yesterday was limited to the evening tea-table ; the earlier hours of the day having been preoccupied by an important School Meeting, and the arrival of an Ulster Delegate as our guest for the great Unionist Meeting to-day, to say nothing of the inpouring of fifty letters, telegrams, and floral gratulations, which have almost qualified our house to be a competitor with Kew.

To the Rev. A. CHALMERS.

London, April 22, 1893.

Accept my warmest thanks for your remembrance of me, and still more for recalling yourself to my remembrance. Not that I am in any danger of forgetting you ; but it is pleasant to be assured that you care to be remembered by me. As an old worn-out veteran who has dropped out of line with the double-quick march of the modern army of advance, I expect to be forgotten and lost, unless picked up by the chance compassions of the rear. . . .

I am thankful for the experience of old age. Though full of pathetic memories it is not really grievous or cheerless ; still less is it flat or dull. On the contrary, the interest of both worlds—past and future—deepens as one approaches the silent verge. Meanwhile, remnants of work never fail, for such measure of faculty as is still unspent.

At the Polchar, the seasonal changes brought him unfailing delight. Visitors came and went the summer through ; he seemed to the on-looker to hold a kind of little court. Scholars, ministers, and literary men, from Great Britain, India, and the United States, there was equal welcome to all. He regularly conducted his ' annual audit of meta-

physical accounts' with his former colleague, the Rev. C. B. Upton. But he did not confine himself to discussions of philosophy on the slopes of the Cairngorms. After attending the Jubilee Service at Westminster Abbey,—one of the very few who had been present there at the Coronation—and joining his brother ministers in a deputation to Windsor (when he read the congratulatory address, and was invited to write his name in the Queen's birthday-book), he told the story of the Queen's reign at a school festival near his Scotch home; and 'as he went on, the youngest children got more and more interested, until they fixed their eyes upon him with an eager attention we have scarcely ever seen.' He delighted in the young; he contrived little pleasures for them; sent them gifts with quaint verses (this had been a rare pastime for many years); 'I love to think of your little girl, and her joy in the bursting buds,' he wrote to an old student in the last days of his ninetieth year, 'give her a kiss for me.'

With his old friends he still maintained his correspondence, and to many an inquirer he wrote long letters on questions of philosophy and Biblical criticism. To Miss Anna Swanwick a little series was addressed in the summer of 1891, over successive instalments of an essay on the 'Poets as Interpreters of their Age,' on which she had invited his judgment.

July 15, 1891.

I promise that you shall have a true report of my impressions, whatever they are. But I really must caution you against attaching any serious value to them: the subject being '*alienum a Scævolaë studiis,*' and the Poets themselves, for the most part, practically

unknown to me. True, I have read the chief Greek and Latin poets, and a few of the English and German; but except Tasso, and some of Molière and Racine, none beyond; and from 50 to 60 years have elapsed since my last contact with any of these, with the reservation of a play or two of Aeschylus, and our own Wordsworth, Coleridge, Tennyson, and Browning. . . . I am just reading an Address, which would interest you by rather running counter to your view, by the distinguished Emil Du-Bois Reymond, entitled *Naturwissenschaft und Bildende Kunst*, insisting on *Science* as the *active* factor of civilisation, in the absence or suspense of which the æsthetic faculties are inoperative for progress.

October 14, 1891.

Through almost all the modern part of the book, I so truly sit at your feet as a learner, and learn from you so much and so pleasantly, that I am quite unfit to perform the office of Fadladeen. I can imagine that a susceptible Frenchman, measuring your notice of the dramatic classics of his country by the scale of the succeeding chapters on our home poets, might work himself into a fume and explode with a 'sacre!' and treat it [as] a national grievance that you had not expatiated more on his favourite models. The treatment *is* perhaps rather slight, though saying a great deal in a small compass. Of the other chapters I particularly enjoy those on Burns, Coleridge, and Shelley. I assent to all that you say of the rest, so far as my scanty knowledge warrants an opinion. In Wordsworth there is to be found enough to justify your highest estimate. But he provokes me by his *self-study* (even of his moods of self-forgetfulness), and his using the human affections and experiences that come under his notice merely or mainly as the materials for his poet's work. He never loses sight of his Art. Heaven and earth are there to serve it, and get worked up into it; and in this reflective elaboration he deceives himself about the relative size



of the things which stir his interest. He does not so much *utter* his spontaneities as *talk about them*: and then classify his poems by the faculty which he had set in action to produce them. He did not learn *this* from the *Heavenly Muse*.

October 24, 1891.

My feeling is in general accord with yours throughout [the concluding portion], where I have any right to one at all (of V. Hugo I have never read a word); the only difference being in the *relative* level of preference for the several authors. For instance, when carried away by Mrs. Browning's afflatus, I am apt to find myself suddenly dropped by something tumid and hysterical, which will not sustain my prosaic weight. Matthew Arnold's finished skill and artistic judgment deserve all that you say of them: yet it is rather the Poet that I admire than the Inspiration in which I lose myself. Arthur Clough, on the other hand, seems to me, in spite of some negligence of form, to breathe forth tones more truly *e profundis* than were within the range of his critical friend. But these shades of difference in the effect of poetry on the readers are matters of idiosyncrasy, and hardly belong to the sphere of objective exposition.

TO F. W. NEWMAN.

The Polchar, October 17, 1892.

I wrong myself in letting your precious letter of August 19th lie so long without a word of thanks, as if in forgetfulness of you. Yet not a day passes, not a question of right and wrong arises, without my turning in thought to you and wondering how you would look at what interests or puzzles me. But the sympathies which bind me to you are all *permanent*, the same to-morrow as to-day: while the shower of letters which the postman flings at me six times in the week, are full of evanescent affairs which thrust the pen into my hand with the demand, 'Now, or Never.' Had I but the energy and versatility of your friend Mr. B., I might meet the

claims of life in all dimensions at once, and, while managing my little six-acre farm with horse and cow and sheep and pig and poultry and kitchen and fruit-garden and flower-beds, still not lag too far behind in the studies of my *Fach*, or fail to observe the rule 'Nulla dies sine linea.' But it is rather my nature to be 'a whole man to one thing at a time'; and so for want of simultaneous self-division, to be for ever incurring and for ever conquering arrears. This, I know, is the *unconverted* state; and certainly is far below that of Paul, who never once has occasion to use the word 'repentance.'

My usual summer routine has been varied this year by two interesting visits; to Jowett's at Balliol, and to the Dublin University Tercentenary. The former was to meet the Bishop of London and Mrs. Temple, I had known all the other authors (except Goodwin) of the *Essays and Reviews*; and a couple of days with the two survivors who opened and closed the volume seemed a pleasant wind-up to a memorable piece of history. The Bishop's preaching (in Balliol chapel), though sensible and ethically earnest, did not lay hold of me—for want of progress in the thought, or depth in the feeling, and partly perhaps from a certain hardness in his voice. But he is heard at a disadvantage now from an affection of vision which obliges him to preach extempore and to have a guide in walking; though not preventing him from reading and writing under certain conditions of nearness to the eye. In private intercourse he is very agreeable; but not, I thought, easily drawn into graver subjects than the current topics of mixed society.

With his American friends he remained in relations of unbroken affection, but time was rapidly curtailing their number. To the Rev. J. E. Odgers he wrote on Nov. 30, 1888:—

I am delighted to hear that you have been able to bring back with you the venerable and winning images of Drs. Peabody

and Hedge. They have still two Seniors, from among the contemporaries of Channing, as ripe in dignity and loveliness of character as themselves,—Dr. Farley, from whom I had a long and vigorous letter this summer,—and Dr. Furness,—both of whom still occasionally preach.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Furness wrote to him seven years later, playfully reminding him that he knew he was one day older, but how many years he was not sure.<sup>2</sup> ‘I knew Samuel Longfellow personally,’ he told the Rev. V. D. Davis (1894), ‘and have always felt a great affection for him. All that I have seen of his, hymns, essays, letters, has given me an ever-growing appreciation of his wisdom and goodness.’ So it was to an American correspondent that he reported his feelings on entering his ninetieth year in joint outlook over the religious tendencies of England and the United States.

To Dr. J. H. ALLEN.

London, 1894.

On 364 days of the year I wonder at the old Hebrew yearning for length of life and glorification of old age. But the remaining day converts me for twenty-four hours by mere force of congratulation and the charm of the gracious and friendly letters that lie in heaps upon my table: so that I think nothing more delightful than the first step into my ninetieth year. You have a large share of my gratitude for this happy illusion, if illusion it be: for nothing is more welcome and cheering to me than the benediction which you waft to me over the Atlantic. For a little while the affectionate words of like-minded friends keep at bay the old man's disheartening feeling that he has outlived his time. But on slipping back into the current of prevailing experience, he feels how it is drifting away from his ideals, and even wandering into desert sands which it cannot fertilize.

<sup>1</sup> Earlier in the year he had written to a friend at Chicago, ‘I seem to be outliving most of the closer relations which once bound me to a host of American friends. Channing, the Wares, Colman, Pierpoint, Gilman, Follen, Dewey, Norton, Ripley, Gannett, Starr King, Parker, Dall, all are gone.’ Besides Dr. Furness and Dr. Farley, only Dr. James Freeman Clarke and Mr. W. R. Alger remained. *Atlantic Monthly*, Oct., 1900, p. 496.

<sup>2</sup> To the Rev. V. D. Davis, April 12, 1895.

I look with some anxiety on the tendencies of our religious body both here and in the United States ; every critical turn in our history rendering it more evident that, instead of developing the inspiration of our higher traditions, we are surrendering ourselves to the lower. The future, I believe, is not yet closed against us, if there were but a soul great enough to lead us. But it seems, alas ! as if ' the Sun had gone down upon the Prophets ! '

Many were the farewells which these years involved. The surviving sister passed ; then one after another in the still wide circle of cousins. His memory again and again went back to earlier days : and touched with discriminating care each salient feature of the vanished life. ' It is rare to find,' he wrote to a younger cousin (1887), ' such admirable good sense and discernment as in your dear mother, with no failure of humility, so quick a perception of character and enjoyment of humour, without a shade of unkindness. It was impossible not to trust one so transparently simple, direct, and truthful ; so susceptible to the appeal of all good ends, if only they were sought by no questionable means.' Anon, it was a poet's death that moved him. At Browning's funeral he was struck by the wide representation of the best elements of England's varied intellectual and artistic activity. For Tennyson he mourned in Scotland. ' How can I have finished,' he adds in postscript to Newman, Oct. 17, 1892, ' without a word about Tennyson ? Yet the event is more fitly met in silence than by words.' ' For me,' he said to Prof. Knight, Oct. 30, ' no lapsed life carries so large a portion of the retreating age away.' Yet one bereavement was to touch him more closely. On Sept. 2, 1894, the friend of his whole English ministerial career since 1832, to whom he was bound by a more than brotherly affec-

tion, John Hamilton Thom, died in his Liverpool home. To that dear memory in the following year, he paid fitting tribute in the preface contributed to a third volume of Mr. Thom's discourses, issued under the name of *A Spiritual Faith*. It was his last considerable piece of composition.

### III.

For the Teacher's work after the issue of his three great treatises, Dr. Martineau still occasionally found time and strength. *The Seat of Authority in Religion* was followed (in 1891) by a small volume of *Home Prayers*, sent forth in response to the entreaty of many friends. 'I have long been withheld,' he wrote to the Rev. R. L. Carpenter (Dec. 16, 1890), 'from preparing this volume by an aversion to the public production of personal prayers; but have at last been brought to own how little consistent is such a shrinking in one who is sensible of his own deep debt to the devotional literature of past times.' In four volumes of *Essays, Reviews, and Addresses*, he gathered a selection of his contributions to periodical literature, and detached publications (sermons, college discourses, etc.) long since out of print. They constitute in fact a sort of intellectual autobiography. In 1893 he published two articles on the Akhmim fragment of the 'Gospel according to Peter,'<sup>1</sup> and two years later, on the verge of completing his ninetieth year, he wrote a brilliant review of Mr. Balfour's *Foundations of Belief*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Nineteenth Century*, June and October.

<sup>2</sup> *Nineteenth Century*, April, 1895.

With unremitting zeal he continued his studies of early Christianity. Sympathising with the aim of Mrs. Humphry Ward to diffuse the historical view of the New Testament among those who had no access to the literature of modern criticism, he gave fourteen lectures on the Gospel according to Luke in University Hall on Sunday afternoons, in the earlier months of 1891; and there, too, he lectured in April, 1893, on the 'Peter' fragment. Much private work lay behind these addresses. The general point of view was naturally that of the closing books of *The Seat of Authority*: but he knew that it would take long to obtain for it any general support. 'I am aware,' he wrote to the Rev. J. E. Odgers (Nov. 4. 1890), 'that the excisions which I feel obliged to make in order to reach the historical nucleus of the Synoptical Gospels are more extensive than can at present meet with approval: and a few years ago I should myself have condemned them as too free.'<sup>1</sup>

Over many topics did his quick glance still range. He wrote long letters to the *Times* on the religious controversy in the London School Board.<sup>2</sup> On May 15, 1894, he presided at a meeting on behalf of classes for Biblical and Theological study among young people, at Essex Hall: and on his return from Scotland in November he attended a meeting of the Christian Conference, under the presidency of Lord Justice Stirling. The subject was 'Christian Definitions.' As he did not rise to take part in

<sup>1</sup> See below, chap. XVI.

<sup>2</sup> May 4, 1893; Nov. 14, 1894. *Life*, ii. 181-190.

the debate, the Chairman at length invited him to speak. An old student present noted that he 'spoke with (even for him) a singularly moving effect.'

The opening papers had rather taken the line of insisting on something 'higher' than the humanitarian doctrine as essential for Christian Fellowship. Dr. Martineau stated his position, and then declared that 'if the Christian Churches shut us out, we must find comfort in the society of Milton, Channing, and John James Tayler.' The meeting was touched; and the Chairman afterwards expressed the 'indignation' he felt at the way in which Dr. Martineau and his fellow-believers had been treated in recent discussions. It was interesting to contrast the warm-hearted way in which Dr. Martineau defended the Unitarian position before a company which was predominantly orthodox, with the manner in which he often addressed Unitarian meetings. Perhaps his dislike of self-complacency explains both.<sup>1</sup>

Orthodoxy, in fact, viewed as a creed, seemed to recede further and further from his sympathies year by year. When the valiant Archdeacon Denison threatened prosecution after the publication of *Lux Mundi*, Dr. Martineau wrote to Mr. Thom (May 28, 1890), 'In any case a split in the party seems inevitable, a disaster which onlookers may contemplate with great composure. The first Essay (which alone I know) has some telling features as a literary production, but seems to me a house of cards, with no foundations and no coherent strength.' The curious alliance of the younger High Church writers with the Hegelian philosophy excited in him something as near akin to intellectual scorn as he was capable of feeling. For some of their teachers he entertained enthusiastic admiration. He wrote of Prof. Edward Caird (1893) to an old

<sup>1</sup> Communicated by the Rev. James Harwood, B.A.

student as 'a real master in philosophical thought, and almost a Puritan in firmness and loftiness of character'; and to Prof. Knight later in the same year:—

Your benevolent desire to introduce me to Edward Caird has my warmest thanks,—the more cordial because I am well aware that the privilege and gain must be all upon my side. And though I do not think I am too old to learn, I am conscious of having no longer,—even if I ever had,—any return to make to a friend that has patience to bear with me and teach me. On this side alone have I any hesitation in giving an eager response to your suggestion: for I need not say to *you* that no philosophical difference can in the slightest degree chill my admiration for the nobleness and brilliance of Edward Caird's personality.

To the Rev. A. W. Jackson he warmly commended (1892) the 'book on Browning as a Philosophical Thinker, by Prof. Henry Jones. . . . It is a charming volume, transporting you into the very heart of that theory of life, where its light is most winning, yet without hiding the shades which it fails to dissipate.' Five years later Prof. Jones was his neighbour in the valley of the Spey. 'At present I have seen him only once, but I hope to turn my opportunity to good account. I feel strongly drawn to him, though quite unable to appropriate his Hegelian Logic, or to surrender Lotze to his criticism.'<sup>1</sup> On the other hand he read the essay on 'Freedom as Ethical Postulate' by Prof. James Seth 'with intense satisfaction': and after the publication of the same writer's *Study of Ethical Principles* he wrote—'It confirms all the hopes which I have for some time entertained, that it is reserved for you and your brother to present to the British schools a new phase of Metaphysical and

<sup>1</sup> To Prof. Wm. Knight, July 13, 1897.



Ethical thought, more akin to the older modes of philosophising and the permanent genius of our people, than the recent German importations.<sup>1</sup> Careful perusal of Pfeiderer's treatise on the *Development of Theology* in Germany and in England left him still puzzled. 'The one marvel which he does *not* clear up for me,' he reported to Mr. Thom (Nov. 9, 1890), 'is the ascendancy in the English and Scotch schools gained by Hegel's philosophy; repeated study of which brings me nearer and nearer to Schopenhauer's disparaging estimate of it as the *reductio ad absurdum* of metaphysical speculation.'

The world of affairs as well as of thought still claimed his interest. Dr. Martineau knew himself to be 'deficient in hopefulness': it was of his friend Mr. Tayler that Crabb Robinson noted in his Diary (Oct. 5, 1859), 'He is the man who always comforts.' So he was generally on his guard against his weak side. When he confessed to Mr. Odgers (1888) that the contrast between the highest type of New England Society and the spirit of political life as manifest in the newspaper press and the electoral and congressional struggles of the United States, was very disheartening, and filled him with unwelcome apprehensions for the future of our own country, he took care to add, 'But I check myself with the reflection that I have perhaps outlived the hopeful age, and the shadows are in myself, and not upon

<sup>1</sup> In 1887 he had remarked to Prof. G. Lyon Turner, 'It seems that the Hegelians are to have everything their own way at present with us, just as they are vanishing from Germany. And so the German saying is fulfilled: "The English are the politest of nations; they never take up a system till every body else has done with it."'

the world.'<sup>1</sup> In his last letter to his beloved cousin, Mrs. Turner (Nov. 18, 1893), he could write :

On the whole we shall leave the world variously better than we found it. But of late there has been, through emotional reaction from the prudential rationalism of the Paley period, so wild an outbreak of humane enthusiasms, with unconscious reproductions of exploded fallacies, attractive to the democratic understanding, that I fear there is trouble in store for the next generation before the path of secure advance is recovered.<sup>2</sup>

When the Liverpool Domestic Mission was moved into the admirable buildings erected for it in 1892, the benediction of one of its founders in 1836<sup>3</sup> was naturally invoked. He was not able to be present, but he conveyed to the Rev. L. P. Jacks the assurance of his unabated interest.

The times, I know, have changed : but in regard to the essence of Missionary work, I have not changed with them ;<sup>4</sup> and a renewed insistency on the moral and religious development of character through personal influence of the higher on the lower, is not likely to be acceptable in these days of almost exclusive

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes, indeed, he was roused to combativeness. Writing to Miss Cobbe, July 27, 1891, he thus referred to an incident arising out of her anti-vivisection work : ' I would not be ungrateful for the smallest mercies in the process of softening intolerance. But that Shaftesbury and Manning should discover the possibility of sitting at the same table with you in a council of humanity,—I cannot make any great triumph and joy out of it. The shame of the long delay of Justice, I cannot call it Charity, affects me far more ! The fellowship of sympathy has to wait, after all, for the vivisectionists' crimes and the intense appeal of tortured animal life, before it can so far countervail theological antipathy as even to begin. We have been so long accustomed to the spiritual vices involved in religious alienations, as to have become far too tolerant of intolerance.' For an account of Dr. Martineau's speech at Lord Shaftesbury's, see Miss Cobbe's memorial article, *Contemporary Review*, Feb., 1900, p. 179.

<sup>2</sup> The *Inquirer* of May 12, 1894, contains a tribute to Mrs. Turner from his pen.

<sup>3</sup> See chap. V. p. 156.

<sup>4</sup> In a letter on ' the Christian Administration of Poor Districts,' in the *Daily News*, Dec. 2, 1891, he had called attention to the methods of the London Domestic Mission.

trust in social reconstruction for the purification of human life. Not that I am blind to the need and possibility of several external reforms. But an illusory dependence is placed on even the least questionable of them: and the disposition to 'find salvation' in them as adequate leads to a host of ill-considered and mischievous proposals, the very discussion of which is a waste of opportunities.

From Bristol came an invitation to the centenary of the Lewin's Mead Meeting, in 1891. His memory of the chapel covered seventy-two out of its hundred years.<sup>1</sup> He could not be present: 'the time has come for me to accept the place of a quiet spectator of the scene I am so soon to quit.' But to the pastor, the Rev. A. N. Blatchford, he added:—

Meanwhile, it is delightful to me to live on into the opening of a future, so worthily and bravely entered by a vanguard containing no small number of my own former pupils and present friends. Did I count only my surviving companions of my own generation, I should often sink into the sad mood of a deserted lingerer and only long for the call to depart. But, having never quitted the troop of the fresh and young that take up the lagging world and push it on, I am caught up by the infection of their enthusiasm, and look for final good even from their seeming errors of honest zeal. The Kingdom of God does not look so far off as it did in my youth.

#### IV.

On April 21, 1895, Dr. Martineau kept his ninetieth birthday. It was a Sunday, and there were happy hours of calm in the midst of the stream of 'letters by the hundred and telegrams by the score,' which kept the household in agitated expectancy for two or three days. Greetings and addresses flowed in from near and far; Europe, India, the United States, were represented. The veteran leader who sometimes felt that his co-believers had left the

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, chap. I. p. 20.

way of his guidance and taken wrong paths, was nevertheless convinced of their personal affection, and accepted Unitarian reverence and gratitude with an exquisite mingling of dignity and the lowly mind.<sup>1</sup> To Prof. Knight he thus reviewed the past.

It would indeed be pleasant could I, on looking back over my long years of opportunity, appropriate even in small measure, your far too appreciative estimate. Rather must I side with the critics who tell me that, instead of guiding others, I have always been disturbing them. The mere record of my own personal changes of theological conviction, and the withdrawal by myself of certain early publications from reproduction, seem to make good the charge of instability. The only answer I can make itself includes an acknowledgment of the unpeachment: viz., that what has been relinquished is historical tradition which partially crumbles away under the skilled search for its foundation; while what has been retained is the living and present relation witnessed by consciousness itself, between the human spirit and the Divine, and when once known there, refound and recognised in its perfection under the unique personality of 'Christ our Head.' The substitution in short of Religion at *first-hand*, straight out of the immediate interaction between the Soul and God, for religion at *second-hand*, fetched, by copying, out of anonymous traditions of the Eastern Mediterranean eighteen centuries ago, has been the really directing, though hardly conscious aim, of my responsible years of life.

Dr. Martineau had grown old, in the practice of Solon's maxim, 'learning many things.' For nearly eight out of his ten decades, as he said a year later,<sup>2</sup> he had been as a teacher, continuously in contact with the young. He had thus been 'kept in sympathy with the developing thought and feeling of almost three generations'; he could there-

<sup>1</sup> An Address bearing more than 1,100 names was presented to him on the 22nd by a small Committee. A College deputation followed on the 23rd.

<sup>2</sup> To the same correspondent. He fully realised the pious wish expressed for him by a venerated kinswoman (which he once quoted with glee) that he might be as free from the infirmities of age as she was in her *ninetieth decade*.

fore write to the students of the Midland Baptist College, 'On taking leave of this ante-room of life, an old man can catch no last word more welcome to his ear than the blessing of the young to whom he delivers his work.' It was in this spirit that he joined the Synthetic Society, formed in 1896, and only withdrew (two years later) when increasing deafness rendered him unable to take part in its discussions. It was in the same spirit that he still guided his visitors on to the hills round his Scotch home, though the level of attainment was reduced to two thousand feet.

His range of interests was in no wise curtailed, but he began to read and write more slowly. The time of action was nearing its close: he lived more and more in 'the field of reflective memory.' Yet he still kept watch over contemporary thought and literature.<sup>1</sup> Into the controversy about Roman and Anglican Orders (1896) he would not be drawn: 'There is really nothing to review but whole regiments of fictions. They look foolish enough when marshalled on parade, and find their deserts soonest by mere self-exposure. At all events it afflicts me to come across good and great men to whose inner life and thought I am unable to address myself. Silence is my only resource.'<sup>2</sup> He turned with admiration to the *College Sermons* of the late Master of Balliol. 'The mingled frankness and delicacy with

<sup>1</sup> He once thought he found a wrong reference in the *Inquirer*, and pointed it out to the editor. It was he who was in error. 'You have fairly tripped me,' he wrote, 'and it is in a very dusty condition that I pick myself up.'

<sup>2</sup> To the Rev. W. Copeland Bowie, June 3, 1896.

which they indicate his own free handling of the Christian Scriptures, without a word that can hurt the indiscriminating reverence of others, is delightful; and the sympathetic wisdom with which he enters into the temptations and difficulties of his student audience is to me unspeakably winning.<sup>1</sup> He read with sympathy a little volume of hymns and canticles for the young from the pen of the Rev. A. N. Blatchford, but added a characteristic comment (Sept. 26, 1897): 'The outward world of stars and seas and flowers is invoked to do more than, I fear, they will accomplish, in opening the way for the average soul into the Heaven of *Holiness*. The sense of Beauty has wondrous powers; but with the key of the Temple of Worship I dare not trust it *till it has been baptized*.' In preparation for a future edition of his last great treatise, he devoted much time to the correspondence between Leibnitz and Dr. Samuel Clarke, in which he found the most careful discussion known to him concerning the method and limits of Revelation.

Practical matters were not forgotten. The inhabitants of the squares adjoining his London house were disquieted about the drainage of St. Pancras. A meeting was convened, which Dr. Martineau attended. He had mastered the existing system, pointed out the defects and the remedy, and the assembled householders had nothing to do but to assent to his proposals. On the diamond Jubilee of the Queen's accession in 1897, he was deputed to draw up the address to be presented by his brother

<sup>1</sup> To Miss Swanwick, April 2, 1897.

ministers of London and Westminster. It was of unusual length, and the deputation found it necessary to curtail it. Its notable feature was the triumphant stress laid on the 'impressive development of responsible citizenship at home,' and the 'expansion of the national life abroad from insular to imperial.' In contrast with the earlier theory of the Colonial Office, 'the skill of the political architect is now directed not so much to the parting-off of multiplied Republics, as to the consolidation of a Constitutional Empire.'<sup>1</sup>

For yet another year (1898) he revisited the mountains which he so much loved. He spoke for the last time in public at a meeting at Rothiemurchus in aid of a Young Men's Christian Association. But in the following winter his strength began to fail. The rich masses of dark hair, once so abundant, were thinned and grey, though they still lay plentifully over his brow like a silver halo. The erect figure stooped a little, but seemed to rise to its old height as he gave gracious greeting or farewell to a visitor.<sup>2</sup> Sorrow fell on him just before Christ-

<sup>1</sup> He was not able to attend when the address was presented. Ten years before he had taken great interest in recalling the experience of Dr. Abraham Rees, who had joined a similar deputation in 1760 to George III., and lived to read the address as acknowledged head of 'the Three Denominations,' to George IV., 1820; and he remembered having heard in Dresden, 'on occasion of a "Constitutionsfest" in 1848, a vigorous sermon from an old Court preacher (Ammon), aged 93.' Now, he wrote rather sadly, 'I am become the oldest person of my acquaintance.'

<sup>2</sup> One of these afterwards recalled that when his host was accompanying him to the door, he suddenly stopped, and said with a tone of deep feeling, 'I am greatly troubled with the state of things in this country.' 'I receive again and again from men in the Church up and down the land,' he went on, 'letters about

mas, in the death of his elder son, Mr. Russell Martineau, who had retired from his labours in the British Museum three years before. 'I murmur not,' said the father waiting his own summons, 'that my son is taken and I am left, but accept it in the full trust that he who is readiest for the higher lot is called first. If only lost opportunities may be overtaken and retrieved by a nonagenarian's repentance, the probationary term has been very mercifully prolonged for me, till I can look with peace and hope upon the change of worlds.'<sup>1</sup> The months ran on, and memory sometimes lapsed, though the graces of character shone clear as ever. But the end was at hand. In December, 1899, the incident of ten years before was repeated. The home was invaded by influenza. The eldest daughter, Mrs. Lewis (already herself widowed), had come up from her Kentish village to spend Christmas. She remained to nurse the sufferers, caught the infection, and went back to die. Her father, now confined to bed, was spared the knowledge that she had passed away. On Jan. 11, 1900, he followed her into the Unseen.

my writings, expressing agreement with my views, and yet they continue to say and do the old things; and not one of them will stir a finger to get them altered.' (Rev. W. G. Tarrant, in the *New Age*, Jan. 18, 1900.) At Sion College he had heard the clergyman's position in conducting the service compared to that of a town clerk reading a document.

<sup>1</sup> To the Rev. A. N. Blatchford, Dec. 18, 1898.



## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION.

THE work of a Teacher like James Martineau had many aspects. The number of those to whom his spoken words were addressed in the class-room, was small ; but the pulpit and the press had helped to spread his influence. This double function, however, of lecturer on philosophy and minister of religion, had made demands upon his time which not even his industry could wholly conquer ; and it drew him into another field of enquiry—that of the historical origins of Christianity—which is vast enough to claim an undivided energy. Ever since his residence in Germany he had planned a treatise on Ethics ; and by the side of this he laid down the outlines of a philosophy of Theism. But the constant preoccupations of his pastorate with its social duties, and the repeated demands upon him for leadership in the group of churches to which his services were given with life-long devotion, prevented the expansion and fulfilment of these designs. His students watched the delay with deepening regret. On the one hand, it enabled him to guard his expositions with defences against fresh attack, and adjustments to new modes of thought :

but on the other, it kept back the ripe product of his reflection till the aspects of the great problems had to some extent changed, and the intellectual environment was altered. Of this he was, indeed, sometimes painfully conscious. There was no one of equal rank as a thinker to stand by his side.

## I.

The place of James Martineau in the history of English philosophy must be left to the future to decide.<sup>1</sup> To some the formal scheme of his thought will appear of less value than its essential spirit; they will not attach so much importance to its particular elements of doctrine as to the lofty purpose which animates the whole. No one can fail to see that Martineau's interpretation of the world and life is the issue of exalted character. Whatever limitations may seem to lie around his speculative insight, or to contract the generous breadth of his sympathies, are born of his impassioned grasp of what he conceived to be the fundamental facts of moral experience. Both ethics and metaphysics rest for him on the incidents of his inner history, and this supplies the clue to the whole fabric of his thought. It is the basis of his criticism; it determined his opposition to what he regarded as false alike in philosophy and theology; and it preserved him in willing allegiance to the founder of Christianity, in whom he saw the loftiest

<sup>1</sup>To the 'appreciations' quoted by Mr. Upton in the final chapter of the *Life* others may be added, e.g. those by Principal Fairbairn in the *Contemp. Rev.*, January, 1903, and Dr. Watson and Prof. A. Seth Pringle-Pattison, *Hibbert Journal*, vol. i.

manifestation of personal holiness. It even supplied the characteristics of his style. The largeness of his view, the sense of coherence, the order of his advance, the structural quality of his completed presentation, his courage in attacking difficult problems, his conviction that truth is to be found, the ample resources of knowledge in history and science which he brings to the search,—all these features which lie on the surface of his work, issue from his untiring aspiration after perfection.

Two elements in Martineau's education helped to shape all his future thought. In the first place, he had a mechanical training ; he was familiarised with conceptions of matter and motion ; he learned to take a scientific view of the world, and to explain its elementary relations mathematically as a part of necessary truth. To this habit of mind he remained faithful to his latest years. In the second place, he was taught to live under a persistently high moral tension. The significance of this was at first disguised from him by a philosophy which concealed it. But his homage to the quasi-materialistic pantheism of Priestley did not interfere with his personal practice. On the other hand, it only ennobled it as the very action of the Deity within. Where God was present as sole cause, there nothing slovenly or impure could be endured ; when all impulses, wishes, and desires, were his, the control of self became all the more strenuous, though still unacknowledged, for the temple of the Spirit must be kept swept and garnished. The empirical psychology which Martineau derived from Hartley and James Mill, was conciliated with the

religion which Mill had discarded, by a doctrine of Revelation, interpreted as communicated truth. But the questions of his pupils forced him to deeper self-examination ; the vicissitudes of personal experience drove him to new interpretations ; his constant study of the New Testament revealed deeps hitherto unsuspected in the inner history of the Apostle Paul ; the appeals of Channing, which he had set aside in devotion to Belsham, awoke responsive echoes in his soul ; and the process which had set in at thirty, was completed four years later.<sup>1</sup>

The emancipation from the curious alliance of necessarian Pantheism with empirical psychology compelled him to reconstruct his whole scheme of thought ; and the process was conducted, as was inevitable, under a reaction from the conceptions which he had abandoned. Against Pantheism he never ceased to protest on behalf of individual liberty ; and against empiricism, whether starting from the side of mind, like that of the Mills, or of society and history, like that of Comte, he waged unceasing war on behalf of the permanent realities which underlie all appearances, and supply the imperishable ideas of space and time, of substance and cause, the soul and God. In this great combat he was engaged at first almost alone. For twenty years, in the *Prospective* and the *National Reviews* (1845-1864), he carried it on practically unaided. The contrast between the philosophical barrenness of this country during his middle life, and its abundance during his old age, is indeed

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, chap. VI.

striking. The preoccupations of traditional theology and ecclesiastical debate, to which philosophy was indifferent, while the specialists engaged in advancing physical science were too busy in enlarging its boundaries to ask what it all meant, help to explain the intellectual indifference of the time.

Martineau, meanwhile, went on his way. He had from early years been a student of Plato; he now discerned profounder meanings in him as well as in St. Paul. From the philosophers of Edinburgh and Paris he drew new conceptions of the nature and limits of human knowledge, and in due time found his way to Kant. Hegel had died while he was still the apologist of Priestley: had he become acquainted in that mood with the philosophy of the Absolute, he might have run a very different course. In Kant, however, he found an ethical genius kindred with his own; but he could not accept his doctrine that in the interpretation of the external world space and time were only forms contributed by the mind as the moulds of its thought. The same consciousness which affirmed the obligation of the 'moral imperative,' bore testimony also to the existence of the scene around; whatever impugned the one, endangered the other; he could see no reason for rejecting on the field of the 'Pure Reason' the evidence which was admitted in the sphere of the 'Practical Reason'; and he remained, therefore, to the end of his life a 'Natural Realist.' To the general conception of Evolution he was perfectly ready to give a welcome, on the strictly scientific side. But he never thoroughly accommodated its application to the powers of the

mind among his modes of moral or religious thought ; the use made of it by some of its early advocates threw him into an attitude of hostility towards it which did not wholly represent his inmost feeling ; so that where others received the enormous stimulus of a new and fertile idea, he felt bound to remain jealously upon his guard. And when English philosophy at length opened itself to the witcheries of the Hegelian idealism, he could see no fresh truth in the system which he had studied, and rejected, a generation before.<sup>1</sup>

The three treatises, therefore, which summed up his thought on the problems of morals and religion, though issued between 1885 and 1890, really worked out the conceptions of much earlier years. It must be remembered moreover, that they represent but a portion of the field which his teaching had covered. The results of his studies in logic and psychology are taken for granted.<sup>2</sup> The questions of philosophy are, in truth, of such a nature that whoever asks but one, implicitly raises all the rest ; and a single complete answer practically involves the whole. There is no need, therefore, to try to go behind his published work, except to remind the reader that it comprises only a part of his total product. With this caution, a sketch of his final

<sup>1</sup> He had not begun to read Hegel until after the change registered in the Liverpool controversy : cp. chap. VI., p. 181, and chap. IX., p. 283<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> In replying to the College deputation on occasion of his ninetieth birthday, he dwelt on the importance of 'clearing the way by careful logical discipline,' and warmly commended a *Manual of Logic*, written by Prof. Prasanna Roy, of the Calcutta University, after attending his lectures in London.

views may be fitly introduced with one of the genial letters in which he indicates his position to a teacher, who, though his junior, was himself offering the ripe fruits of study to the world.

To the Rev. J. H. ALLEN, Cambridge, Mass.

35, Gordon Square, London,

January 29th, 1884.

I know you will indulgently remember, in excuse for my delayed acknowledgment of your most welcome letter and volume, that 'the steps of an old man are slow.' Of your instructive and interesting sketches of Christian History I have long ago read the substance (forgive the 'metaphysical fiction') of both volumes. . . . To me they are in a high degree fascinating; none the less—indeed, rather the more—that with their underlying philosophical conceptions, as brought out in the chapter entitled 'Passage from Dogma to Pure Reason,' I do not find my usual ways of thinking quite in accord. If I interpret you aright, in your appeal to 'fact,' as ultimate verifier, your criticism proceeds upon the Positivist theory of what knowledge is, viz., that we only know phenomena and their laws of grouping and succession. Now I admit this to be an adequate account of the business of *Science* and of the conditions of *prevision*. But I must add that *Phenomena* cannot be known without *Noumena*. The word is one term of a Relation, and has no meaning without the other: a phenomenon is a phenomenon of *something*; it is *somewhere* and *some when*; it cannot be thought, but as from a *cause*: and involves, as correlates, the Noumena Substance, Space, Time, Cause—all of them, if you please, supplied purely by the Intellect (or Perceptive Power, as Kant would say, of two of them) itself; but not on that account less inherent in the act of knowing and essential factors of it, than the matter of sensation as felt. Why we should consider the phenomenal, i.e., the *sensible*, side of this relative act, *real* and *trust-*

worthy, and the *intellectual* a *fiction* and *phantom*, I cannot see. I therefore hold, with Descartes, that, in these last resorts, 'the thought of the mind represents the truth of fact'; and further, that 'observed fact' has and can have no better guarantee than such 'meta-physical fictions.' 'Fact' is ascertained by Perception: and Perception carries in it the 'Thought of the mind,' without which it does not become predication at all; and any distrust felt towards the 'Thought' equally affects the 'Fact.' To impugn the Noumena is to be left without the Phenomena.

You will see, from this confession, why I do not feel the 'despairs of Metaphysics,' or the disaffection towards the schools of speculative philosophy, which the modern preoccupation with the Inductive Sciences has for a while rendered prevalent. So long as knowledge is a relation, and an antithetic relation, between knower and known, it cannot dispense with equal faith in both; and what the Subject, *quâ* apprehensive, necessarily thinks, enters into the Real no less than what Object universally gives. Philosophy as I understand it, takes charge of the former, i.e., of the *constants* of knowledge; Science of the latter—i.e., of its *variables*. If either pursuit ever dreamt of doing the work of the other, i.e., if it set up for a knowledge of 'the Absolute' (which appears to me an unfounded charge), such an illusion merits exposure. But such a mistake is no more implied in the mediæval exaggeration of the Deductive method, than it is in the present overestimate of the Inductive. The error, in both instances, seems to me a mere attempt to cover the defect of the age by overstraining the resources of its strength.

You will set me down, I fear, as a hopeless subject, when I own to feeling still some 'difficulty' in saying that 'Matter thinks.' My reason is simply, that 'matter' is a word meaning exclusively what is or may be an *object* of perception; while 'thinks' is predicable exclusively of a *subject* of the perceiving act;



and as these exist only in and by antithesis, to unify them is to cancel them. The appreciation of this unconquerable antithesis is gradually gaining ground, I am happy to see, among the living or recent representatives of the 'empirical school,' whose first leanings were towards materialism, and who still linger on its precincts. There is a marked tendency among them towards a Leibnizian form of conception,—providing, under the name of 'Mind-stuff,' or some equivalent, a separate germ, in the primordial data, for the future developments of consciousness, concurrent with the initiation and development of the material system. Croom Robertson seems to lean in this direction,—as Clifford evidently did; and hints to the same effect drop out pretty frequently in the newer literature;—partly, no doubt, influenced by Lotze. I welcome this change, not as introducing a satisfactory hypothesis, but as acknowledging a limit to the resources of evolution, and a returning suspicion of the intractable character of absolute monism.

With regard to Kant, I am quite at one with your appreciation of his stand made upon 'the solid ground of ethics.' But what constitutes its *solidity* seems to me simply this: that in the Practical Reason he *accepts and affirms* the implicit postulates of the faculty which he is expounding; while, in the Pure Reason, he *challenges and denies* their validity. For this difference I see no shadow of justification. The *subjective* character of the assumptions,—which is all that he proves in the Pure Reason, is there used as a plea for discrediting them: in the Ethical book, it is used as the adequate ground for faith in them. But, in this last sound step, he does not pass into any new field of empirical logic; he only repents him of his sins, and makes the *amende honorable* to his maltreated intuitive forms of thought: he takes back into trust his discarded old tutor,—Metaphysics,—this and nothing else. So that I cannot agree with the view, that the first book abolished the

metaphysical régime, and the second inaugurated the inductive.

If we were face to face, I should like to have exchanged ideas with you on other topics, e.g., Justification by Faith. But such subjects are too large for these days of hurried correspondence. I see that much of the difference in our modes of viewing religious problems is due to my old-fashioned habits of mind, less imbued than your younger thought with the rationalizing *Zeitgeist*. The world is with you. And though I mean to leave a little testimony to the faiths which have been the light of my life, I fully expect that, if listened to at all, it will be soon forgot, lost in the countless waves from which at last some better truth will dawn.

## II.

If Ethics be defined as the 'science of human character,' two questions immediately demand an answer. In the first place, what is the nature of our moral judgments? in what do our notions of right and wrong ultimately consist? how can we define the element which gives them their ethical value? And secondly, what is the source of our moral ideas? Can we distinguish the historical process of their development from their ultimate ground in reality? To the first of these enquiries Dr. Martineau offered a full answer in the *Types of Ethical Theory*: but the complete reply to the second was only delivered in *A Study of Religion*.<sup>1</sup> At the very outset, however, two paths of investigation are traced. Will you view man, primarily, in relation to the scene around, to God or nature?

<sup>1</sup> This was the reason why the Ethical treatise was published first.

Then you will derive your ethical interpretation from some ulterior conceptions, which may be metaphysical, as with Plato or Spinoza,<sup>1</sup> or physical, as with Comte. To these varieties the first volume is accordingly devoted. Or will you start from the analysis of the moral facts themselves, as the scrutiny of our own experience reveals them? Then your method will be properly psychological; you will assume nothing but the existence of the experience itself; you will resort to it with the desire to learn its own testimony and let it tell its own tale. That tale Dr. Martineau interpreted in the same terms in which he had first deciphered it forty years before.<sup>2</sup>

In any given action three stages are needed to make it complete. It issues from some impulse, spring, or motive. It is realised by certain muscular movements. It results in certain effects. To which of these elements of its history does our moral judgment apply? Doubtless, to the first; the real object of our approval or condemnation is the virtuous or guilty motive. Yet this is never appraised by itself; it is valued as better or worse in view of some other motive which might have been allowed to occupy its place. In other words all moral judgment is preferential, and implies a choice. On what ground, then, does the superiority rest? It was the peculiarity of Dr. Martineau's

<sup>1</sup> The choice of Spinoza, rather than Hegel, was probably due to the fact that when the lectures on Ethics were first planned, Spinoza was the more powerful influence on English thought. See *ante*, chap. IX. p. 322.

<sup>2</sup> See *ante*, chap. IX. § ii.

scheme that he would not resolve this element of betterness into quality of reason, assimilating it to truth, or of taste, assigning to it an æsthetic character.<sup>1</sup> The relative value is an ultimate fact, defying further analysis ; it is intuitively discerned, and on the mind engaged in this discernment the title 'conscience' is bestowed. The fact that is apprehended is that one spring of action has more worth than another ; it is of a higher moral quality ; and in this loftier nobleness lie the secret of obligation and the authority of right.

The first announcement of this key to the essence of our moral experience had led Mr. R. H. Hutton to ask his teacher to arrange the possible motives in their proper scale. To this task Dr. Martineau now advanced. It involved delicate problems of moral psychology ; in its accomplishment he showed his wide familiarity with varied phases of character, and his subtle powers of discrimination and analysis. That an elaborate attempt to display human nature in the form of a hierarchy of springs of action should escape criticism, was not to be expected. The substantial value of the effort lies rather in the idea than in the details. Its principle had so far influenced John Stuart Mill that he had admitted gradations of rank into the pleasures at which all action aims ; and it has gained general recognition as an element requiring the consideration even of those who do not concede the full theoretic consequences deduced by its first propounder.

<sup>1</sup> The 'dianoetic' ethics of Cudworth, Clarke, and Price, and the 'æsthetic' ethics of Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, are criticised in the concluding chapters, *Types*, vol. ii.

In spite of the care with which this interpretation of our moral experience was guarded, Dr. Martineau had been sometimes understood to recognise in conscience a power of immediate and oracular judgment on any single spring of action ; and his critics consequently supposed that his fabric was overthrown when they pointed to the diversities of moral estimate in different societies, or even in the same society at different times. He pleaded in reply that as the judgments were always comparative, variations in the term with which the comparison was secretly made, would inevitably produce diversities in the verdict. For this explanation an abundant store of apt historical illustration was readily at command. The Roman magistrate dismissed a Christian ‘to the lions,’ because his refusal to pay homage to the head of the state appeared only an assertion of obstinate egotism against the reverence due to imperial sanctities of law and order ; the church honoured the martyr who surrendered himself in testimony to the truth that he had learned of Christ. The same act was judged in relations wholly opposite ; and when these were differently conceived, the resultant verdicts necessarily differed too. Where only a part of the inward scale is visible at once, and that part is not the same for different minds, the estimates based on its indications will inevitably vary. But it is the function of the higher natures to bring fresh springs of action into view at the upper end ; that which we are not ourselves yet prepared to originate, we can recognise when it is presented to us in nobler characters than our own ;

and by this process the moral standard is susceptible of gradual elevation, as fresh and higher springs of action are successively discerned.

From another point of view, however, it was urged that in our ordinary experience the cases in which we are conscious to ourselves of such options between the higher and the lower, are after all but few. Most people are not concerned with their own motives in daily conduct, and rarely bring them up to view for judgment, before the event. In critical moments action must be rapid, and speech may be swifter still. It is only in retrospect that we realise our unfaithfulness or insincerity; we charge ourselves with thoughtless disregard of others when we should have been considerately alert; intent on our own ends, we overlooked the claims by our side. The evil seems to lie not in the deliberate preference of a lower motive for the higher, but in our failure to recognise the higher and bring it into due prominence. Such a condition of blindness belongs to the self-centred heart; which does not, indeed, intend to commit sin; but discovers when it is too late, its sinfulness.<sup>1</sup> Nor can the question of magnitude or intensity be ignored in the problems which are based upon this moral scale. The volume of the lower spring of action may be large; the energy

<sup>1</sup> This was not ignored (see the letter quoted on p. 561), but important religious consequences followed from the definiteness and precision of Dr. Martineau's conception. The teaching of the sermon 'Sin, what it is and what it is not,' in the *Studies of Christianity*, and in such discourses as 'Divine Justice and Pardon Reconciled,' 'Forgiveness to Love,' 'The limits of Divine and Human Forgiveness,' in *Hours of Thought*, appeared to some of his critics too rigid.

of the higher only faint; or, again, the range or scope of the action may involve considerations which modify abstract elements of worth: how far, for instance, is the father of a family justified in exposing himself to personal risks which a single man may fairly face? The aspect of quality cannot be abstracted from the various elements of the case, and made the sole basis of judgment, apart from other features of quantity or force.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>To such criticisms the following letter addressed in 1851 to Mr. J. H. Tayler (son of the Rev. J. J. Tayler) indicates the line of Dr. Martineau's reply.

'You have certainly struck upon the weak point of every subjective scheme of Morals, when you demand a system of rules, which may be generally recognised as applicable to the adjudication of conflicting ethical claims. And if no better reason could be given for approving a given act, than that it was in accordance with the agent's feeling of right, it must be admitted that no means would exist of reconciling diversities of judgment, and a Science of Morals would be impossible. This however supposes that the quality constitutive of rectitude is not simply a *subjective*, but a mere *individual* sentiment,—an idiosyncrasy—having no wider seat in nature than the exceptional constitution of this man's eye or that man's ear. If, instead of this, there is a perfectly uniform moral constitution for all men:—if there be as truly a common Conscience as there is, in relation to matters not moral, a common Reason:—then do all the conditions exist for a Science of Ethics, not less than for a Science of Logic. Both would be intrinsically *subjective*,—an analysis of the processes of thought according to which the respective faculties work in dealing with their objects,—and a deduction of certain rules of art available for the criticism of new cases occurring in the gross and unanalysed form. Yet this subjective character would be no hindrance to the utmost precision and certainty in the use of the rules.

'Thus everything hinges on the question, Whether there is an invariable moral nature given to all men. In spite of all their apparent discrepancies of judgment, I should unhesitatingly answer in the affirmative. The form under which this common nature presents itself before the eye of our self-knowledge, appears to me to explain the semblance, without implying the reality, of contradictory decisions among men on the ethical problems submitted to them. If our mind be the seat of a whole series

Further difficulty arose over the nature of the choice. No theme roused Dr. Martineau to more prophetic earnestness than the defence of our moral freedom. To this he recurs again and again with impassioned power as a fundamental ethical fact; and with his view of the psychological reality of an actual option one of his leading critics, Prof.

of springs of action (appetites, passions, affections, etc.); if each one of these, existing alone, would operate as a blind propulsion, but, when entering the field in company with a competitor, instantly reveals to us its comparative worth and authority; and if the *wrongness* of conduct always consists in following the lower principle in presence of a higher;—then does this *preferential* character of all moral judgment both account for seeming discrepancies in ethical opinion and provide for their ultimate conciliation and removal. The same spring of action which would be condemned when viewed along with a *higher* possibility, would be approved if thought of as replacing a *lower*: and in all moral controversy, it is the silent difference in this *suppressed* term of comparison which seems to me to occasion the difficulty. The disputants, having the same middle term, but different extremes, are unconsciously occupied with different problems. How then are they to proceed in hope of better agreement? By carrying the action back to the principle which issued it; and defining the competing principles for which the conditions of the case left room. It will then be seen whether it is the mental conception or the moral admiration that is really different. If it should still seem to be the latter, the incompatible moral *preferences* can only be discussed by a deliberate survey of the springs of human action, and an attempt to agree upon a *Table of them*, arranged according to their natural rank of worth and authority. If no such Table can be drawn up,—if, as we recede towards it, the differences of opinion do not diminish, and, as we reach it, finally disappear,—then I allow that a Science of Ethics, on a subjective basis, must be given up as impossible. But if otherwise, the mode in which the Table may be made to perform the functions of a code is obvious. Each action brought up for judgment must be referred, according to its source, to its particular place in the scale; it must then be considered what other impelling principle *might*, under the conditions, have found scope of activity; and the relative rank of the actual and possible springs decides the *absolute* morality of the case. The *relative* morality is decided by comparing the actual spring with that which, *in the mind of the agent*, was put aside in its



Sidgwick, guardedly concurred.<sup>1</sup> But the mode in which this freedom is exercised, may be conceived in various ways ; and the language of Dr. Martineau seemed sometimes dangerously near the scientific conceptions which he was combating. In his anxiety to meet opponents on their own ground, he adopted their metaphors, and gave to his state-

favour ; and which (from the limited range of his ill-developed moral consciousness) may be quite different from that which you perceive to have been admissible. The question of the agent's personal responsibility,—*as before God*,—is again of larger range than that of the relative morality of the act. For it may be his own fault,—the consequence of certain allowed and realized habits of mind,—that the problem presented itself to him for decision in the imperfect way it did ; and while he may have merit for solving it right, there may be guilt involved in his conceiving it wrong. In this way, as it seems to me, provision is made (1) for universal judgments of right and wrong, irrespective of the specialities of individual minds ; (2) for moral verdicts on particular persons in reference to their isolated acts ; (3) for a Doctrine of Divine retribution referring to the entire history of the soul.

'It would be unreasonable however to deny all place to the consideration of *consequences*, in our estimate of conduct. But I do not think it can properly enter, till the trial is over respecting the *spring of action*. Given a spring of action as the best, it may direct itself through various forms and combinations of external conduct, as the choice among these can only be made by a computation of consequences. Strictly speaking this is rather a *rational*, than a *moral* act ; but it becomes moral at second hand, because reason itself cannot exist without responsibility in a nature entrusted with itself.

'Many complications of the problem will doubtless suggest themselves to you. But if the first lines of a scheme be correctly traced, the composite forms will not be irresolvable. I am fully sensible of the difficulty attending the actual construction of the table of principles to which I refer, having often tried my hand at it with results far from satisfactory to myself. Still, the experiment, in its very failures, convinces me of the essential soundness of its basis. Nor are its immediate difficulties greater than are found in *every* attempt to construct a scientific groundwork of moral legislation.'

<sup>1</sup> *Methods of Ethics*<sup>3</sup>, p. 64 ; *Ethics of Green, Spencer, and Martineau*, pp. 336, 337.

ments a kind of mechanical precision which others could not recognise as valid. Sympathising profoundly with the experiences of moral struggle, he represented the competing impulses under dynamic figures, as though they resembled physical forces one or other of which the will called into action, as a gun is discharged by the pulling of a trigger. 'Will is, with me,' he wrote to Prof. G. Lyon Turner, May 14, 1888, 'simply the interposition of the determining (i.e., choosing) Ego between incompatible solicitations (i.e., tensions of inclination): and when the *arbitrium* has passed, the executive "force" or "energy" is that of the preferred inclination. That, at least, is my account of any *single volition*: in the absence of which the *intenser* of the competing inclinations would have its way.' Such language appeared to present the springs of action as independent powers amid which the self sat pondering and choosing. The imagery was that of the external world, and the experimental mechanician.<sup>1</sup> Vainly did the Teacher plead with his critics that the 'Ego' is a whole, that it cannot be parcelled out into faculties, imagination, intellect, conscience, will, but must be conceived as all acting

<sup>1</sup> Of this, indeed, he was fully aware. Writing to the Rev. R. A. Armstrong, March 2, 1888, he demurred to the application of 'dynamic predicates.' 'The predicates "weak" and "strong" apply only to *forces*, which are physical, not to *thought*, which is *intellectual* or *moral*; therefore never to *Will*, which is *choice*, or the preferential determination of an alternative. How this moral initiative starts the motory machinery whereby it gets itself accomplished, I cannot tell. But the *Force* which it thus commands is not in the *causation*, but in the *execution*, of the determined alternative.' Subsequent psychology has emphasized inner volition, or attention, as the field in which, if anywhere, the justification of freedom must be sought.

together. Even those who were most anxious to vindicate the fact of liberty, were sometimes unable to accept the dynamic form in which it was presented.

Yet one more criticism must be briefly noted. Is it true, after all, that our moral judgments are passed exclusively upon competing motives? Is it not reasonable also to take into account the ends to which action is directed? On the one hand Dr. Martineau represents the agent as choosing among particular impulses and propensions: on the other hand Prof. Sidgwick urges that the real choice generally lies among different sets of foreseen effects. In his original enunciation of his doctrine Dr. Martineau had distinguished between the Canon of Principles and the Canon of Consequences;<sup>1</sup> the one belonged to the *moral*, the other to the *prudential* order; in the exercise of benevolence the means for giving it effect are selected by a calculation of the probable results. The adaptation may be skilful or unskilful, and in our estimate of *conduct* this element cannot be ignored, though it does not properly belong to *character*. But further reflection brought Dr. Martineau nearer his critic. 'In proportion as the springs of action are self-conscious,' he wrote,<sup>2</sup> 'they contemplate their own effects, and judgment upon them is included in our judgment on the disposition.' 'Consequences once foreseen and contemplated,' he explained to Prof. Lyon Turner, Feb. 27, 1886,

<sup>1</sup> See *ame*, chap. IX. p. 298.

<sup>2</sup> *Types of Ethical Theory*, ii. p. 255.

'become *intentions*, and are transposed into the *springs*: for, being consequences to *some one* for "better or worse," they touch the affections, which insist on being heard and having their voice in the decision of the Will.' The difference between Dr. Martineau and the reconciler of the intuitive and utilitarian ethics was reduced by such interpretations. The philosopher of conscience might have his own way of explaining it, but he was really recognising an element of value in the object as affecting the springs of action. How far that was reconcilable with the purely subjective character of his exposition, he did not enquire: it was left for others to infer that Conscience does not merely judge the relative worth of two springs of action, it also compares their issue with what is conceived as the ultimate end or 'supreme ideal of life as a whole.'<sup>1</sup>

From the discussion of the criterion of moral value Dr. Martineau advanced to that of the origin of moral ideas.<sup>2</sup> A trenchant criticism on the Utilitarianism of Bentham and the two Mills led the way to the consideration of the changes introduced into the older type of 'hedonism' by the acceptance of the principle of evolution. Declaring that nothing could be more chimerical than pre-historic psychology, he made fun of the attempt to get the moral out of the unmoral by hiding

<sup>1</sup> Cp. the views of Mr. Upton and Dr. Mellone, *Life*, ii. 397.

<sup>2</sup> As has been already indicated, the full answer to this question was reserved for the succeeding treatise, *A Study of Religion*. In the *Types* it was sufficient to disprove attempts to resolve them into products of other kinds of experience.

the process where nothing could be seen in the dim stretches of antiquity. There might be a hierarchy of organisms, traceable through the rocks, but there was no fossil record of consciousness; and no number of generations would avail to convert 'experiences of utility' into moral intuitions disclosing differences of worth. There was, of course, an essential divergence in the point of view. Where is the true organ of knowledge concerning our inner life? In the examination of its contents in their ripest form, or in the invention of a hypothetical biography? Dr. Martineau had no hesitation in declaring that the phenomena of moral experience must be first examined and tested in their maturest phases. The resultant fact of the constitution of our conscience could not be resolved into feelings of any other kind. It was impossible to imagine that mere lapse of time could convert experiences of personal or social welfare into differences of quality which bore no resemblance to them; and just as the appearance of feeling or consciousness could not be explained without the entry of some fresh element into the evolutionary process, so the moral life also implied a new departure which demanded a cause of its own. The brilliant section entitled 'Hitches in the Evolutionary Deduction' rests on the vigorous dualism through which Dr. Martineau interpreted the external world. He consoles himself for parting company with Tyndall and Haeckel by the fellowship of Du Bois-Reymond, 'perhaps the most philosophical of living interpreters of nature'; while he freely admitted that 'in point of historic fact, Life first appeared in plant-

form on this globe, and was followed by sentient types, passing by innumerable gradations from the most simple in organism and function to the present nature of man,' he saw the process broken into three parts by two great transitions; feeling was added to the organic life of the plant; and over the instinctive life of the animal rose the self-judging soul of man.<sup>1</sup>

It may be true that Dr. Martineau did not fully realise how modern conceptions of heredity point in the direction of a revision of the older and more mechanical conceptions of matter. Speculations about potentiality could not be brought within the mathematical formulæ of his youth. Against the scientific materialists who treated thought as a function of the brain, he had won a victory admittedly complete; but with the later forms of idealism which seemed more capable of harmonising the evolutionary conception, he had no sympathy; and this was the cause of the charge, pressed by some of his critics with surely exaggerated insistence, of excessive individualism. It is apparent that he argued with great earnestness that we come to judge others by having first judged ourselves.<sup>2</sup> In what school, he asked, do the moral sentiments learn their earliest lesson, reflection or observation? If 'earliest' means (as it seems to do) earliest in

<sup>1</sup> It was remarkable that he was willing to concede that organic life from the seaweed to the forest might be explained out of matter and motion, with their presuppositions of space, time, and force. Other evolutionists, like Dr. Wallace, have demanded here, also, the introduction of a new and higher causality. See the passage quoted by Mr. Upton, *Life*, ii. 406.

<sup>2</sup> *Types*, ii. 25.

time, and not in order of moral logic, the real answer surely is 'in neither,' but in the process of education. The adult man who carries forth into the world a method of moral valuation which he has already begun to practise on himself, is a pure abstraction. We are, however, warned against this very error; the presence of others is indispensable to the development of this part of our nature;<sup>1</sup> no solitary human being could feel its problems, or deliver its verdicts. In this respect there is an analogy between the development of the conscience in the gradual progress of the race, and its training under wise parents in the growing child. On the actual facts of moral evolution Dr. Martineau never dwelt. His enquiry sought to define what the moral sentiments *are*, in their ripest form, without investigating how they *came to be*. But the brief section entitled 'Conscience Developed into Social Consensus and Religion'<sup>2</sup> is full of pregnant hints. The growing complexity of our moral life, we are told, 'so implicates together the agent and his fellows, that we can scarce divide the causal factors into individual and social, inner and outer.' In the union of groups into a social order, accordingly, he recognised something much more than combinations for specific purposes. They were pervaded by an actual concrete life which all the constituent members shared; apart from that life they would be stunted and maimed; only through it could they realise them-

<sup>1</sup> Observe the passage, *Types*, ii. 30, 'The "individual" is, in fact, the later product. . . . *Humanity* first, as a plural organism. and then, *personality*, in its singular force.'

<sup>2</sup> *Types*, ii. p. 372.

selves as living wholes. In this 'incorporated life of many wills' lie the roots of the laws of conduct; nor does the process stop till a 'kingdom of God' rises before the higher vision, and the ideals of moral perfection are disclosed as the revelations of a Divine life inspiring and harmonising the endeavours of man. By this path the conscience travels from Ethics to Religion.

### III.

The treatise which followed the *Types of Ethical Theory* in 1888, was entitled *A Study of Religion, its Sources and Contents*. Like its predecessor it embodied the ripe thought of many years. But its lines had been laid down more recently. Much of it was written after he was seventy, and was subjected even then to repeated revision. The literature of his great theme was constantly receiving fresh and notable accessions, and to these, such as the *Natural Religion* of Prof. Seeley, or the idealistic construction of Prof. Royce in *The Religious Aspect of Philosophy*, due heed must be given, while their most important criticisms must be met. Wide was the equipment of the Teacher who thus undertook a new Theodicy, in face of the clamant voices which had loudly announced the overthrow of the whole fabric of theology. The masters of Greek thought, and the subtle reasoners of mediæval scholasticism, supplied him with many an effective phrase. He had learned of Descartes and Spinoza, of Locke and Berkeley, of Hume and Kant; he was equally at home with Schopenhauer or Comte.



And in the field of concrete science he was no more a stranger than among the events of history. The whole of this range of knowledge was infused with a profound ethical passion. As a daring thinker he might take delight in scaling the loftiest speculative heights ; but these activities were all directed to one end, the philosophical vindication of the simple trusts of the child's heart. Truly was he described as 'an ideal champion of the spiritual view of the world in a time of transition and intellectual insecurity.'<sup>1</sup>

The first words of the Introduction defined Religion 'in the sense which it invariably bore half a century ago.' It was interpreted as 'belief in an Ever-living God, that is, of a Divine Mind and Will ruling the Universe and holding Moral relations with mankind.' The definition at once indicated the two main lines of argument on which the exposition was constructed. The author sought to show that the world is the scene of omnipresent Power directed by intelligent Will ; and that in the human conscience that Will is disclosed as the source of Moral Right. The contents of the Treatise were arranged in this order. In the first book the limits of human intelligence were investigated, and the character of knowledge was defined. This involved a theory of our perception of the external world, a reply to the doctrine of empirical science that we know nothing but phenomena, and a refutation of the agnosticism of Mr. Herbert Spencer. The result was to win back, on the ground of meta-

<sup>1</sup> Prof. A. Seth Pringle-Pattison, in the *Hibbert Journal*, vol. i. p. 444.

physics, 'the very position which common sense had assumed at first.'<sup>1</sup> The way was then open for the interpretation of the world as the product of intelligent Will; and the second book laid the foundations of Theism on two mighty pillars, the conception of God as Cause, and the conception of God as Perfection. The first chapter unfolded a theory of causality, which knit the world into one intellectual whole as the expression of conscious purpose; and this was supported by a searching demonstration of the presence of rational ends in the vast process of evolution. The second chapter assumed the results of the treatise on Ethical Theory; and argued that the recognition of the authority of the higher over the lower among our springs of action implied the presence within us of a moral order which at once revealed God as transcendently holy. A third chapter exhibited the identity of the intelligent and the righteous Will, and sought to harmonise the admitted facts of suffering and sin with Creative goodness. The truths thus secured were defended in the third book against the invasion of Pantheism and the denial of Free Will; and the treatise concluded with a fourth book on 'the Life to come.'

That the arguments which he had guarded with such care, would be assailed with criticism from opposite sides, Dr. Martineau well knew; and a note of pathos sounded through the final words of the preface. The work was reviewed by Mr. W. L. Courtney in the *Edinburgh* (July, 1888);

<sup>1</sup> Preface, vol. i., p. viii.

and the author wrote to his critic, from his Scotch home, before the article reached him :—

The matters on which you dissent from my positions I can in some measure foresee : and as I do not find in old age any hindrance to the correction of opinion, I expect to gain as much new light from your disapproval, as support from your concurrence. It is plain that the ultimate problems of Ethics and Metaphysics cannot remain in the condition to which T. H. Green and the Cairds have brought them ; and one cannot but eagerly watch the next move which is to be taken upon that line of thought. For my own part, I have fastened my hope on your *Constructive Ethics*, as the 'promise of its appearing.' Had I been likely to witness the fulfilment, I should not have put forth a mere 'Study' which it may very probably supersede.

The preliminary justification of the validity of our knowledge of the outward world followed the lines of his earlier expositions, though with the addition of much penetrating criticism upon Kant and various later writers. Once more he vindicated the two-fold discovery involved in the act of perception,<sup>1</sup> a subject *here*, an object *there*, involving the reality of space ; and a causality within met by a causality without interpreted in terms of power and will. He laughed at the idealists for wanting to accommodate Space and Time, with all their infinitude, as lodgers within us ; or, as he phrased it elsewhere, trying to 'take the sea on board the boat.' One construction of our experience after another was examined and dismissed with some rent in its fabric so that it could no longer hold together ; and each discarded system was made to support the fundamental trust on which he staked the whole of philosophy.<sup>2</sup> 'That our cognitive

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, chap. IX. p. 304

<sup>2</sup> Even a friendly critic regarded this method as an unwitting demonstration of the uselessness of philosophy (Prof. A. Seth

faculties should be constituted in accordance with *things as they are*, is no more surprising than that the instinct of animals should adapt their actions to *things as they are to be*; and much less surprising than would be a constitution of them conformable to *things as they are not*.<sup>1</sup> Space and Time then remained for him at the last, as they had been forty years before, the eternal conditions of the Divine activity.

Thus far the position of Dr. Martineau was identical with that of his earlier Essays. He made no approaches to the Berkeleyanism of his youth. Into the argument founded on causality, however, he introduced some modifications. He had broadly identified Cause with Will. and under Will he had included Power. He had described Will as activity directed towards an end; he had defined Force as 'Will *minus* purpose.'<sup>1</sup> Further analysis, however, had led to greater precision. The 'dynamic antithesis' was still presented as begotten in the experience of resistance, when Cause within first encountered Cause without. But this experience now yielded two distinct elements. We put forth an energy, or we exert a power; and we exercise a will determining along what line the energy shall act, into what channel the power shall flow. That

Pringle-Pattison, *Hibbert Journal*, vol. i. p. 449). In one passage (it will be noticed with regret) the Theist's antipathy to idealism led to a direct charge not only of 'intellectual error' but even of 'moral wrong,' vol. i. p. 80. The words may, however, mean no more than the injustice of not giving sufficient credit to simple feeling.

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, chap. IX. § ii. That involved the explanation of Will as Force *plus* purpose.

every change around us is the expression of power, Dr. Martineau affirmed to be a primary intuition ;<sup>1</sup> it is involved in our earliest consciousness ; it is given to us immediately as part of our experience, and as such becomes the basis of our whole conception of reality. But though the element of power is essential to our idea of cause, it does not constitute it. That ultimate factor lies in the will, which settles where and for what end the power shall work. The real cause of any change (or phenomenon) is that which fixes why it shall be *thus* and not *otherwise*.<sup>2</sup> This involves a preference or selection. From the conception of Will, therefore, the element of Force was now discharged ; there was left only 'the choice between two alternative directions of activity.'<sup>3</sup> This choice belongs to the Ego within : but by what means the volition of the willing Ego directs or sustains the energy lodged in the physical organisation, remains a mystery to which there is no clue.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See the essay entitled 'Is there any axiom of Causality?' (1870): *Essays*, iii. 567.

<sup>2</sup> 'The only power required for a Cause is the power of "making a difference"': *A Study of Religion*, i. 241.

<sup>3</sup> Schopenhauer is criticised for identifying 'Will with the wrong element, viz., with the permanent quantity *Force*, instead of with the phenomenal act, *Cause*, which gives direction to a portion of the store': *ibid.* i. 211.

<sup>4</sup> The briefest summary of his view is perhaps to be found at the close of his discussion of the idealism of Prof. Royce. 'We rest on the position that power is known to us exclusively by our own exercise of it, not in the mere muscular delivery of an act, but in the internal initiation or direction of it ; that in our intuitive belief of causality we mean, that all phenomena, as such, issue from power which is not phenomenal : that each phenomenon is determined to be *this* and not *that*, by an act of will. immediate or mediate : and that, in thinking of causation

The intuitive explanation of all the changes around us as the expression of Power seems to demand some further treatment of that conception. On the metaphysical side, it is left like Being, in a certain ontological gloom. But in the field of scientific observation its manifestations can be tabulated and compared. There, the work of fifty years showed a rapid reduction of differences ;<sup>1</sup> the goal was already in sight where all forces can be fused into one homogeneous power, and physics and psychology are brought into at least numerical conformity. In this scene, how is it that a single cause can produce such diversified effects : or, in other words, what is the relation of power, will, and intelligence in God ? This question he had already essayed to answer,<sup>2</sup> but he handles it now more confidently. The general ground of his treatment was indicated in a letter to the Rev. R. A. Armstrong, ere his work had assumed its final form, Aug. 3, 1884.

In referring events in the unmoral world to the Will of God, the question arises, how much you will include in what you call a single event ? Is the drop of rain, or the shower, or the tissue of relations, cloud, air, earth, and their magnetism, the individual object to which we must appropriate a separate Divine volition ? Or are we to pulverise the conception still further, and reserve a distinct thought for every molecule of the drop, and for each atom of its hydrogen and its oxygen, etc. ? No doubt it is quite

we are absolutely limited to the one type known to us : and so, behind every event, whatever its seat and whatever its form, must post, near or far, the same idea, taken from our own voluntary activity. This, it is plain, is tantamount to saying that all which happens in nature has One kind of cause, and that cause a Will like ours ; and that the universe of originated things is the product of a supreme Mind.' *Ibid.* i. 229-230.

<sup>1</sup> Compare the essay on Oersted, 1852, *ante*, chap. XI. § ii.

<sup>2</sup> In 'Nature and God,' 1860 ; see *ante*, chap. XI. § iii.

possible to treat all classification, and gathering up of phenomena under laws, as a mere device for supplying crutches for our lame faculties, and as having nothing answering to it in the make and meaning of the universe. In that case we should see the whole contents of Space and Time, could we but take the Divine view, break up into unlimited multitudinousness, with no Kinds, and no Rules, giving centres of unity for things and acts. To me this seems to correspond with the mere childishness or incipency of Intellect. The whole process of Thought or Mind is one of Generalisation, giving command over many things in one Idea ; the conception of each Law carrying a sweep of insight or foresight over all the phenomena which it embraces. As these laws themselves gradually cease to be isolated, and merge in some higher, a perpetual approach is made towards a formula of unification, within the meaning of which the cosmical history would be contained. As this is our process of ascent into the knowledge of the Universe, I cannot but accept the sublime Greek conception that it represents in regress the very steps of progress by which the Divine Thought works out its pre-conceptions into individualisation. Of course the comprehensive pre-conception embraces all possible cases of its application, just as much as if each was seen in itself alone. And if the question be raised whether the unification which attaches to the *intellectual* order can be carried also into the executive act of the realising Will, I find a sufficient answer in your own comparison of Natural Laws to Habits of the Divine Mind, for Habit is precisely that mode of living and mental action which, once adopted, supersedes the necessity of separate volition in each applied instance. And I see nothing to forbid our ascription to a Perfect Mind of a power of Generic Volition, comprehending all instances at once that lie within a determinate intention.

The conclusion reached along these lines was that the Laws of Nature are willed as *methods*, and the groups or kinds of sentient beings are willed as *ends*. The inter-connections are, indeed, too intimate to allow us to 'insulate the units of volition.' But the action of God in the world is deliberately likened to that of our volitional causality effected through co-ordinated movements of our physical frame. The difference is that the power which our wills set in motion through our limbs is not our own ; it is a part of the infinite causality of the universe. 'So far as we are children of Nature,' admitted

Dr. Martineau to Mr. Armstrong (March 2, 1888), 'God lives in us :<sup>1</sup> so far as we are above Nature, we live in him. The *human* psychological fact is all that I know, viz., that what I will is often an effect several steps off; and that, while I am intent on this alone, the intermediate links instrumental to the result somehow supply themselves without me. And all that is not our causality is God's.'

If Will consists in choice between alternative possibilities, its exercise implies intention in the mind that wills. What, then, are the marks of such intention? They are defined as selection, combination, and gradation. Where these are discerned, intelligence or mind is present. The intuitive interpretation of the world as the product of Will suggests the question whether its actual constitution displays these required marks. In an argument of extreme acuteness, enriched with a wide variety of zoological illustrations, Dr. Martineau examines the evolutionary process as presented by its advocates, and produces overwhelming evidence that it has not been conducted without a Mind. The metaphysical difficulties involved in all teleological conception are one by one discussed and disallowed; the objections from the alleged blemishes in Nature are chased vivaciously through many a striking detail; for Death a place is impressively vindicated in the economy of the world of life; and the chapter on 'God as Cause' concludes with an exposition of his implicit attributes, universal

<sup>1</sup> Contrast the language of 'Nature and God,' *ante*, p. 384.



power, unity, and thought ;<sup>1</sup> leading to the grand result—‘ There is One universal Cause, the infinite and eternal seat of all power, an omniscient Mind, ordering all things for ends selected with perfect wisdom.’

From the outer world Dr. Martineau turns to the inner to seek the character of the Cause thus recognised as universal, wise, supreme. The Dualism of Perception is matched by a Dualism of Conscience. Just as the conflict of causalities reveals the presence of a Will that meets our own, so does the graduated worth among our springs of action disclose a Will which by its moral authority claims our own. It is not something simply *other* than ourselves ; it is something *higher* ; the sense of Duty relates us at once to Him to whom our allegiance is due. Vainly has it been endeavoured to constitute this moral sentiment out of the collective judgment of society : what is thus evolved is not conscience at all ; the interested preferences of men can never

<sup>1</sup> Space, as has been said, is the eternal condition requisite for his causality. Is Matter also eternally coincident with him ? He appears at one time to incline to that view (vol. i. p. 237) with Plato ; it relieves the difficulty of providing a genesis for ‘ the whole volume of Force ’ ; but on the other hand ‘ relinquishes the problem of causation instead of solving it.’ He inclines finally to the hypothesis of Boscovich (vol. i. p. 407), an interesting recurrence to the teaching of Priestley (*ante*, p. 122) just as his revival of the argument from design was a sort of rehabilitation of Paley. The doctrine of the reality of Space carried with it the admission that ‘ the intelligibility of the cosmos is no proof of its being a *product* of intelligence. Space is intelligible, furnishing propositions indubitably certain, and, with Time, the whole system of mathematical laws (including those of number). Yet neither of these are products of God : and all inorganic material, whether proceeding from him or not, has to be conformed to these laws. *Will* can as little create these laws as annihilate them.’ (To Prof. G. Lyon Turner, May 14, 1888.)

be transmuted into the summons of the Everlasting Right. As apprehended by the conscience, God realises on an infinite scale the qualities which we conceive to belong to Perfection of character, benevolence towards all sentient, justice towards all moral beings, and amity towards all like minds. After the analogy of Nature which constitutes one intellectual organism, humanity may be regarded as one moral organism. Reason for ever tends towards some single formula that should comprehend the several groups of derivative sciences; and conscience in like manner prophesies of one triumphant Divine Law which shall at last blend our poor efforts in some perfect work.

The demonstration of the unity of God as Cause and God as Perfection at once encounters the difficulties arising from the presence of suffering and of sin. The Christian Stoic does not flinch from the frankest recognition of appalling facts: but he will have no lyric exaggeration, nor describe the animated world as engaged in universal war. He warns us against illusions of imagination, and points out that the infliction of pain is never an end in itself: he boldly pleads that in the cosmic order God has limited his own freedom, and the objections founded on his power to bar out imperfections have no place in a system of definite relations and predetermined action, unless it can be shown that a different scheme would have brought better possibilities; he displays suffering as the 'postulate of our moral nature' and the discipline of its elevation. When he passes to the dire aggregate of human sin it is again with the same reserve.

and control. New argument indeed there is none. Not for the first time do we learn that 'a universe which no sin could invade neither could any character inhabit'; that to 'set up an absolute barrier against the admission of wrong is to arrest the system of things at the mere natural order and detain life at the stage of a human menagerie.' Yet no earnest mind can read this chapter without quickened sympathy, a sense of moral exhilaration in the presence of a lofty spirit that surveys vast prospects of humanity from a summit of untiring endeavour and achieved faith. In a strain of noble eloquence the seer unfolds the great panorama of history. What does he find there? A succession of the triumphs of brute force? a 'Martyrdom of Man'? By no means. It is the record of the constantly growing ascendancy of the higher powers within us; the Providence of God has not shown itself by excluding moral evil, and consequently dispensing with a moral world; but it so guides the vicissitudes of centuries and the conflicts of nations that the lower forces are gradually superseded by the rising sway of reason, right, and love.<sup>1</sup>

The vindication of Theism in contrast with a Pantheistic interpretation of the world, and a necessarian explanation of human nature, adds little to the main argument, but reinforces and heightens its ethical impressiveness. To the Edin-

<sup>1</sup> This construction of the Deity as one 'Person' rendered a philosophical Trinity (such as Coleridge had presented) unnecessary. In a paper entitled 'A Way out of the Trinitarian Controversy' (published in 1886), *Essays*, ii. he explained the underlying ideas of the orthodox worship of Christ (the Son) as really identical with the Unitarian conception of the Father.

burgh Reviewer, indeed, it appeared that the 'belief in an Everliving God' according to the author's opening confession of faith, was never really proved; it was assumed as one of his postulates, and he only unfolded its implicit contents.<sup>1</sup> The criticism drew from Dr. Martineau the following comments.

To Mr. W. L. COURTNEY.

The Polchar, Aug. 13, 1888.

It was a surprise to me to find that I had assumed as a first principle the existence of an 'everliving God, i.e., of a Divine Mind and Will ruling the universe and holding moral relations with mankind.' For this developed form of religious belief I set up no such claim; regarding it only as a product of legitimate reflection, under guidance of two distinct first principles, viz., Every actual phenomenon is determined from a plurality of possibles; and, The springs of voluntary action have a relative worth, inherently commending them to preference. The object of the book was to show *how* these two postulates, fairly treated, terminated in the beliefs with which you represent it as starting.

Sept. 3, 1888.

I see how nearly the extreme simplicity of logical structure in my book brings its Theism into a *postulate* rather than a *conclusion*. Nevertheless there is a process involved in blending its two principles into the idea of 'God,' viz., (i.) that a causal power must be Personal, but need not be Moral; (ii.) that a derivative Moral consciousness carries in it the implication of a Causal Moral Consciousness. As the non-Ego which we interpret by the former, and the Ego which we interpret by the latter, are inseparable parts of the same world, they have One Cause, in which their predicates are united. I quite admit that the conclusion is entirely dependent on the moral consciousness of the thinker himself; and that, as a mere intellectual observer of the outward course of nature, he could not construe it into a moral order; i.e., he could not be a Theist. But once being so, in virtue of his moral consciousness, he has to deal with the non-moral phenomena of the world as best he can; as difficulties, no doubt, unreduced as yet to the known underlying order, but not as competent witnesses against its reality. 'Immoral' features of the Universe I cannot admit to be observable at all, the relative τέλος contemplated being no object of outward perception.

<sup>1</sup> *Edinburgh Review*, vol. clxviii. p. 72.

The author and his critic in this friendly discussion still moved in the limits of logic. They were concerned with postulates, arguments, and conclusions. From this point of view Dr. Martineau used sometimes to say that there was exactly the same kind of evidence for the existence of God as for that of other human beings besides ourselves. This kind of knowledge is mediate: it is reached through something more certain. But in the field of religion the believer longs for an immediate vision; he desires to feel himself not only placed in a relation through which the Divine spirit may play upon his own, but actually conscious of this communion of the Infinite Thought, Holiness, and Love. Every reader of Dr. Martineau's sermons knows how constantly this was his theme, as he unfolded the secrets of the hidden life. Does he, then, allow it no place in his formal philosophy? When he has laid bare the final mystery of conscience, and identified it as the recognition of 'a Law which holds for all thinking and voluntary beings, universal and supreme,' he adds:—

I care not whether this be called an *immediate vision* of God in the experiences of conscience; or whether it be taken as an *inference* drawn from the data they supply. It is the truth contained in them: with one man it may be only implicitly felt in their solemn and mystic character; with another explicitly and immediately seen emerging from them as they come, and making him the Seer of God rather than the reasoner about him.<sup>1</sup>

The language of his last treatise, *The Seat of Authority in Religion*, is perhaps more definite. In a discussion on 'Natural and Revealed Religion'

<sup>1</sup> *A Study of Religion*, vol. i. p. 30.

conscience is regarded as the organ of revelation, where spirit is present with spirit, the disclosure is 'self-disclosure, the evidence self-evidence, the apprehension, as we say, intuitive.'<sup>1</sup> There are, indeed, variations of intensity in the Divine life in our humanity : here it is more, there less, clearly unveiled ; 'with some never passing beyond dim yearnings and impersonal ideal images of something right and noble that draws them on ; with others clearing itself into the personal presence and real communion of the supremely holy.' By designating God as 'personal' Dr. Martineau meant to describe him as thinking, willing, loving. The human person he conceived as at once separate from its Divine Author, in the sense that it was invested by a creative act with an independent will, yet as so linked with the infinite life which was its source that God was manifested in it, revealed within it the Law of his own Holiness, displayed the very processes of his Thought, and wakened a response to his Affection. This is surely the meaning of a phrase strongly condemned by Dr. Caldecott and Prof. Pringle-Pattison, which describes the Moral Law as 'imposed by an authority foreign to our personality.' Prof. Pringle-Pattison admits the 'objective nature' of the law : it is not invented by man for himself : he recognises it as there within him, though not *of* him (i.e., not constituted out of any process of experience, though at first realised in it). If a man has not hitched himself into his place in the universe, his moral like his mental

<sup>1</sup> Page 305.

equipment must be due to some personality other than his own.<sup>1</sup>

On such a person what is the effect of Death? The fourth and last book answers this question with the affirmation of a 'life to come.' Often had the preacher dealt with this theme, but never with the same completeness. He meets the physiologist who declares that organ and function are inseparably connected;—when the organ no longer exists, the function ceases too. The problem demands an enquiry whether body and soul are thus related; and when the assertion is disproved, the objection deduced from it has no more validity. But, asks one metaphysician, must not that which begins to be, at last come to an end? How can the finite person, enquires another, hold its ground against the infinite? The suggestions are born of false

<sup>1</sup> The somewhat grotesque presentment of Dr. Martineau's doctrine of God and man as 'two forces pushing against one another' (*Hibbert Journal*, vol. i. p. 462) must be modified before the view that man is not a 'force,' except in so far as he shares a physical organisation whose power belongs to nature, and is thus part of the life of God (*ante*, p. 576). Into the question how far the conception of history as a divinely guided advance towards some higher goal was compatible with his interpretation of free-will, Dr. Martineau did not explicitly enter. He probably conceived it as mediated by the appearance of higher minds from time to time, which drew the lower towards their own elevation.—The omission of all reference to the apprehension of Beauty was much criticised. Dr. Martineau was not unwilling to recognise it; for in a letter to Prof. Knight he wrote (July 11, 1871) of his Theism as 'the necessary interpretation of two or three confluent intuitions—of Causality, of Obligation, and of Beauty—of which it finds the unity and repose.' Cp. also Mr. Armstrong's reference to a conversation, in his analysis, *Martineau's 'Study of Religion,'* (1900), p. xiii. But he thought the sentiment of Beauty needed to be 'baptised' (*ante*, chap. XV. p. 542) before it could be employed in the service of Religion. Cp. the reference to Greece, in the speech at Nottingham, April 28, 1876.

ideas of personality, it is replied, as if it had a quantitative value, whereas its true significance lies in quality or intensity of being, to which the analogies of the physical world do not apply. The main stress of the argument, when the initial difficulties have been removed, falls on the indications that the powers lodged in our thought, our conscience, our affections, are on too vast a scale for our present life, and suggest infinite possibilities which only the future can fulfil. This incompleteness is especially obvious in the field of character, where the moral training which appears to be the Divine end of our creation is continually balked by death, and appeals for a continuance beyond. From this point of view he replied to a correspondent who had urged on him Dr. Westcott's remark that an argument founded on the conception of the soul as a simple 'essence' proves too much; it is as good for an existence before birth as after death.

TO MR. ARTHUR RICKETT.

The Polchar, Oct. 16, 1894.

Westcott finds some writers contending in controversy with the materialists, for the simple, uncompounded, and therefore indissoluble essence of the soul; and on this ground resting their claim of permanent existence for it. And he says, truly enough, that such *existence* must be read backward as well as forward into the future. And so it actually was by the Platonists; who looked upon the entities which became human as uncreated units, each an elementary atom of Divine being, susceptible of migratory entry as a nucleus into successive groups of living conditions of feeling and action. Let it be granted that this metaphysical notion has been worked up into *an* argument,—*one* and *only* one—for the 'soul's permanence hereafter.' That any second or ulterior argument can be pointed out that is 'based upon' it, I venture to question. To tie up 'every argument' in the same bundle with this cast-off bit of outworn metaphysic is too free and easy a method of being rid of the whole, in order to stake all on the *authoritative one*.



If the argument from the simplicity of immaterial 'essence' were good at all, it would be good in a universe without God (other than the uncreated souls as *little gods*) and without moral distinctions: for the 'simple entities' ask nothing from either; being there on their own account, and having begun to be. So far is this from being true of any modern theory of a life to come, that its invariable presuppositions are the *Theistic*,—of a Personal God, creative and all-ruling,—and *Ethical*,—of a Moral Law revealed in Conscience, as the Divine guide to all free beings. Apart from these two data, the present and the future are alike dark to us; nor is there anything worth a rational being's either seeing or foreseeing. It is not from the persistence in itself of a metaphysical essence, but from the movement of *spiritual growth*, and the experience of personal relations, characteristic of an expanding nature, that all religious insight comes. And the unquenchable thirst that sends men (and surely the Christlike most of all) age after age, to the Eternal Fountain for *more life* than can be found here, is due to their consciousness of capacities and affections that are an overmatch for the conditions and the limits of the mortal lot, and are plainly equal to claims of larger scope and love deeper in intensity and diviner in its aims. Who does not know that he is made for more than he now is and does, and has to *climb* so long as he has a footing on this world? and see the higher steps he might yet take beyond the last, had he but the grant of *time*? We live by aspiration, hope, and worship: and unless the ideals which transcend the present reveal the realities of the future, death falls as the lightning flash, and blights the promise of our being. How is it possible for one who is conscious of his relation to the 'Father of spirits' to believe himself thus flung off the ladder of ascent inviting him from earth to heaven?

Such considerations as these, drawn from our own moral and spiritual life, and from the related character and government of God, are *wholly prospective*, and have nothing to say against our beginning to be, when we are born into this world.

#### IV.

The completion of the *Study of Religion* opened the way for renewed concentration on the enquiries into the origins of Christianity, which had occupied the continuous thought of Dr. Martineau for more than fifty years. For this final effort he girded himself without delay. The nucleus of the new

book was found in a series of papers begun in 1872, under the urgency of his friend Dr. Bellows, and issued in an American Magazine, entitled *Old and New*. The cessation of the periodical suspended the completion of the author's design, which was now resumed with ampler resources, and on a larger scale. His purpose was thus expressed to his venerable cousin, Mrs. Turner, in a letter of the summer of 1889.

In the work which I am trying to complete, my aim has been to state *the whole case* of the religious interpretation of the world and life, as it stands in the existing state of knowledge, whether scientific or historical. The chief additional features unnoticed in the two previous books will therefore be the estimate of Christianity, and the criticism of its sources and early history; involving a rejection for our time—of the ecclesiastical Christianity, but a devoted adherence to the *Religion of Christ himself*, as the supreme realisation of the right relation between the human spirit and the divine.

The book was issued in the spring of 1890, under the title of *The Seat of Authority in Religion*.<sup>1</sup> In accordance with his explanation to Mrs. Turner, it included an exposition of the grounds of his Theistic interpretation of the universe and the conscience; an analysis and refutation of the claim to Authority embodied in the Roman Catholic Church; a criticism of the similar claim to discover infallible oracles of divine truth in the Bible;<sup>2</sup> an

<sup>1</sup> Cp. the similar title in a Scheme of Sermons (1841) *ante*, p. 245.

<sup>2</sup> This took the form of an exposition of the origins of the Four Gospels and the Book of Acts. It was severely condemned by many of his critics. The restrained force of Dr. Martineau's reply in the Preface to the third edition, 1891, was especially noteworthy. Grounds for legitimate differences of judgment are indicated by Dr. Drummond in the *Life*, ii. 155 ff., and in detail concerning the Fourth Gospel in his recent treatise, *The Character and Authorship of the Fourth Gospel*, 1903.

enquiry into the true character and organ of Revelation, which was transferred from the sphere of communicated truth addressed to the mind, and seated in the moral authority of conscience, so that instead of being an exceptional process recorded once for all in a book, it is provided by the structure of our nature, and is part of the Divine method of the education of the race. No reader familiar with his modes of thought could fall into the confusion of some of his critics, who charged him with eliminating the supernatural, which constituted for him the perpetual atmosphere of his trust and aspiration, his prayer and love.<sup>1</sup>

From the theory of religion Dr. Martineau turned to its historical exemplification in Christianity. The fourth book of the treatise was chiefly occupied with an examination of the different types of doctrine presented in the New Testament concerning the Person and Work of Jesus. It was a noteworthy sign of the progress of 'scientific' study, that no one thought of reproaching him for abandoning the traditional Unitarian explanations of his youth. As he expounded the conceptions of Paul or the Christology of the Fourth Gospel, he found himself again and again in close juxtaposition, if not in positive

<sup>1</sup> This part of the work, however, produced a deep impression. At a dinner at Mansfield College, Oxford, in the May term, 1890, a discussion arose over some of its positions, and a very eminent Scotch theologian of the Free Kirk summed it up by saying, 'The whole book comes to this, that the foundations of religion are in the reason, and the conscience, and the heart of man; and that proposition,' he added emphatically, 'no one can gainsay.' The same speaker expressed his surprise that in the critical part of his book Dr. Martineau made no reference to the researches and conclusions of his colleague, Dr. Drummond.

concurrence, with the interpretations of ecclesiastical theology. He could not, indeed, accept them as intrinsically valid, but he admitted them as the meaning of the texts. The argument which evoked the gravest disapproval, was that by which he sought to relieve Jesus of having ever claimed to be the Messiah. This he had suspected for more than forty years : he was certain of it now. It involved very free handling of the Synoptic narratives ; he boldly justified the excisions it required. He had flung aside the whole Messianic expectation as an Israelitish dream in the ' Vaughan ' sermon ;<sup>1</sup> and it seemed to wound his reverence for Jesus that he should have been entangled in a group of ideas which had so seriously misled the Church. They were incompatible with the essence of religion as he discerned it in the soul of Christ himself ;<sup>2</sup> they were not, therefore, part of his own teaching ; they were the reflection on to his own career of the faith of the first disciples. This veil of contemporary expectation the critic attempted to remove ; and when the process of elimination was complete, he presented in a final chapter of singular freshness and power a glowing picture of ' the Christian Religion personally realised,' where Jesus is delineated as ' Prince of Saints,' perfecting the conditions

<sup>1</sup> *Ante*, chap. XI. p. 359.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Martineau justified the use of ' Christ ' as a personal name, apart from its meaning as Messiah. On the other hand, he had long abandoned the use of the term ' Lord,' which appeared to him to imply an unqualified claim to obedience. ' If Jesus were here,' he said one day to a Junior Colleague, ' would you do straight off anything he told you ? '

of the pure religious life, and revealing the highest possibilities of the human soul.<sup>1</sup>

Such was his last great effort on behalf of the faiths for which he had laboured more than sixty years. Many had been his changes of opinion; his loyalty of service to truth had been constant. To the Rev. A. N. Blatchford he revealed the secret which had determined his purpose (July 30, 1890).

The insensible changes of thought induced by experience and reflection had so accumulated during a long life, that the growing total of my erroneous teachings in the past became a burden upon my conscience; and I have felt it a duty ere I leave those to whom my words were spoken, to correct whatever might mislead, and render a report as true as I can make it at the latest date. The revision necessarily brings me many reproaches; but they are more than countervailed by assurances like yours, of sympathetic response and accepted help. In our time no path is so lonely and hard to keep as the *Via Media* in Religion, exposed as it is to the contemptuous shafts of agnosticism on one side and the thunder of ecclesiastical artillery on the other.

To Francis W. Newman Dr. Martineau sought (for the last time) to justify his estimate of the founder of Christianity (Nov. 13, 1892). Very pathetic was the endeavour of the two venerable friends to come to a mutual understanding.

Whether the personality of Jesus, as historically accessible to us, warrants the appeal which I make to it as a standard of the spiritual life, is a fair question by no means easy to determine. I admit that his sinlessness was held by the early Church as a necessity of doctrine, and not as a biographical fact. I admit that no biography, however authentic, could strictly *prove* such a position. I admit, further, that our Gospels, if accepted *en masse* and indiscriminately, would oblige me to surrender it. But far from saying with you that 'nothing smaller than a

<sup>1</sup> See the conclusion, p. 652. The reader should remember the peril under which these concluding chapters were written, *ante*, p. 512<sup>1</sup>. For his admission that the excisions needful to sustain his thesis were more numerous than he would himself have thought legitimate some years before, see *ante*, p. 534.

total repudiation of the New Testament is worth attempting,' I am convinced that it is within the resources of critical analysis to sever the wheat from the chaff of early Christian tradition, and gain an insight, long deemed impossible, into the origin of the Apostolic and post-Apostolic Christendom, and the stadia of its growth. And the closer my study of the Synoptic Gospels, the stronger is my persuasion that the dividing line between the unauthentic and the authentic elements of the narrative rids us of the mass of questionable matter,—Messianic pretensions, Apocalyptic announcements, miraculous incidents, parables of Hell-judgment, and counsels of prudent wrong,—while saving for undying reverence words of spiritual depth and traits of tender beauty, and the movements of a life disposed of by pure faith and love. I own that measured by quantity alone, the residuary treasure of the Gospel thus 'expurgated' (as you say) does not bulk large: but what the gold is worth when the quartz is crushed out, and why it has a value so imperishable, I have tried to say in the last chapter of the *Seat of Authority*. Of 'man-worship' I am not afraid, where the very ground of the veneration for him is his own absolute self-surrender to the Father of spirits, and his invitation to us to be fellows with him in this Sonship. It is precisely this distinctively *human* attitude of uplooking trust which consecrates for us the personality of Jesus; and this necessarily holds him to the human level. Not till this is left, and more or less exchanged for *superhuman* attributes and functions, does Saint-worship, with its ecclesiastical mischiefs, arise. *All* moral reverence towards higher character is no doubt homogeneous with the religious feeling. But where pure Theism is already enthroned, there is no danger of the dependent ranks of the hierarchy encroaching on the province of the supreme. . . .

But this controversial tone towards you is distasteful to me; and I will say no more. May each of us be faithful to such light as he has! No difference in its measure or kind will make me less

Your affectionate friend,

JAMES MARTINEAU.

Another correspondent, Mr. Arthur Rickett, drew from the religious psychologist a justification of the 'subjective' method which some of his critics had censured.

The Polchar, May 30, 1893.

You are quite entitled, in strictness of logical criticism, to lay any stress it may seem to deserve on my inconsistent moods of mind towards the contents of the Fourth Gospel. It is very true that among elements of the narrative alike unaccredited by adequate external testimony, I do retain some and reject others on grounds of internal concordance or discordance with

the essence of the personality of Jesus, as already gathered from the really historical materials furnished by the other Gospels. My faith even in these earlier records rests much more on the unique portraiture they present of a human life perfected in its relations with the Divine Father, than on the security of their witness borne to particular facts and words. Traditions floating about in shreds of oral report for thirty or forty years before being precipitated into the *littera scripta* now in our hands, cannot but lose in the process much that they had, and pick up yet more that they had not: and no subsequent care in sifting them,—such as Luke, for example, claims to have bestowed on them,—can sever for us the pure history from its accretions. But tradition works up only the materials of the common-place imagination; it cannot invent,—it can only impair and spoil,—the personality of a Christ; crediting it with ever more startling marvels of physical power, while lowering its ideal grandeur and spiritual perfection. In reading the Synoptic reports of the life and words of Jesus, I cannot help recognising on certain passages of action or discourse the stamp of a Divine originality,—of an insight which, in its utterance, constitutes Revelation: that *here* I am in contact with him, I can never doubt: while, in sharpest contrast with these, are a few incidents and not a few utterances which no host of witnesses could induce me to ascribe to the author of the others. The internal evidence thus inevitably controls the external. It is then but a slight step further, if it is allowed to dispense with the external; and to carry its own weight when, in a later and less attested gospel, sayings flow from the lips of Jesus which are wholly in character with those which have already brought us to his feet. If he did not utter them, they are at all events the outcome of his spirit in its regenerating work upon the mind and imagination of the Church. On these grounds I think it quite permissible to let the Fourth Evangelist prolong for us into the second century the appeal of Jesus to his disciples, so far as it preserves its own tone; the more so as it is always possible that the writer may have fallen in with a vein of traditions not hitherto wrought into the evangelical narrative. . . . .

Your former remark on my self-variance with regard to the text 'Come unto me,' is perfectly just.<sup>1</sup> I used to read the text, as others still do, with merely the feeling that in Jesus rest was found for the weary and heavy-laden; and how beautifully such a thing was *said of him*. And no otherwise do I think now. Not till afterwards did I realise that beautiful it would *not be*, for him *to say it of himself*. One of the great sources of error in the accounts of him is that what disciples have truly *felt about him*, has been put back into his mouth, as spoken *beforehand* of himself.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *The Seat of Authority*, p. 582-3, a passage which excited wide-spread disapprobation.

At fourscore years and ten he is still ready with unabated energy to respond to a challenge, and sends across the Atlantic to the Rev. W. H. Fish a final confession of faith (June 5, 1895).

No doubt, the question about the relation in which, as moderns deriving our religion from the Jesus Christ of history, we stand to his Personality, is one of hardly less difficulty than importance. The difficulty, however, is artificial, existing only for minds preoccupied by untenable tests for knowing Divine agency from undivine, and by an unwarrantable assumption of a predestined order in every province,—moral as well as physical,—of the constituted universe. According to the first of these postulates, the Creator organised a set of Forces to which he committed the blind but sure evolution of all phenomena in their projected groups and sequences. His own agency expends itself in instituting this executive of delegates: and if it is ever to reappear, it must be in some change not provided for in this system of Nature, and irreducible to any of its 'laws.' Hence the idea that only in 'signs and wonders,' in miracles, is God evidenced, and the Divine must needs be identical with the anomalous.

As this first postulate is thus held with the plea for miracles, it implies that there is room for them, if required; i.e., that Divine Omnipotence has not been all used up in constructing the natural world, but that there is a reserve of possibilities on which the Revealing God may draw for startling media of self-manifestation. This reserve of anything possible beyond the actual the second postulate denies: the Divine Infinitude paying itself out fully in the Cosmos, and having no store-closet of unwrought contingent realisations besides. If this be true, there is one homogeneous predetermined necessity dominating the whole universe without distinction of Moral law from Physical law, or of Personal Will from animal impulse, or of either from mechanical force. The Universe, once set a-going, is a self-acting machine: and its moving figures, though seeming to take each its own way, are but puppets danced upon a stage by an invisible operator at the gathering up of the wires. Under a 'reign of law' thus absolutely universal (as mere Naturalism assumes), there can be no *Revelation* supplementing what may be inferred from its working about the attributes of its Author.

If, then, miracles, wrought by him or on him are indispensable credentials of 'Christ the Revealer,' we cannot wonder at the hesitation of our modern scholars about so describing him: for the historical criticism of the last half-century has certainly divested the Gospels of their character of personal testimony by known witnesses, and reduced them (at least the Synoptics) to a gathered record of popular tradition, with the usual mingling of genuine memory and imaginative interpretation, clustered



into earliest written form during forty years from the departure of Christ. How much we may legitimately receive on such hearsay and anonymous evidence (for the names were not attached to the Gospels till after the middle of the second century) must largely depend on the internal credibility of the contents. While it cannot accredit reports of raising the dead, and walking on the sea, it may place beyond doubt the unique and unimaginable personality of Jesus, and the spiritual truth of his teachings so far transcending the genius of his age.

Instead of treating the scheme of Natural Law as a delegation from God, leaving him, as it were, free for fresh agency from moment to moment, suppose it to be for ever *executed*, as well as at first *devised* by him. This persistent activity would constitute his 'Immanence in the world,' whose so-called forces would be varieties of his Will. So far as they were a legislation of fixed resolves, they would be equivalent to *habits* in us, to which we are pledged, and on which others depend. But when the 'Uniformity of Nature' is assumed universally, the word 'Nature' must not be taken as coextensive with all that exists, but be limited to that which is not *Mind* or *Spirit*. For, as Persons we are conscious of choosing, i.e., of determining an alternative one way when we might have determined it the other. This is the prerequisite condition of all moral life, and of a large portion of the Intellectual, whether on the human scale, or on a superhuman. To God, therefore, the Supreme Mind, we must attribute over and above the habitual energy of *Natural Law*, the *free volition* that meets the exigencies of dependent beings, *also free*. In the former field, he conducts the steadfast order of the heavens and the earth, brings the punctual seasons, peoples the elements with life, all under necessity of 'fulfilling his word.' In the latter he plants out self-conscious and self-directing minds, infinitesimal repetitions of himself with the Divine characteristics of spiritual being, the discernment of the better from the worse, and the optional creative power over either. For the training and discipline of agents thus endowed with elective will, an environment must be provided in which not every movement is fore-ordained, but an adequate store of alternative possibilities remains. Thus only can it be a suitable practising-ground for the probationary growth of a finite spirit from the carnal beginnings to the god-like crown of its experience.

Will he, then, who prepares this optional field and sends on to it responsible human souls, take no continuous interest in it, and absent himself from its awful experiments? Will he not rather commune with the children of his Spirit, to rebuke, to impel, to suggest, to encourage, to quicken, and inspire, according to their several needs? And, as nothing so draws the inferior grades of righteousness as the winning presence of a higher, will he not himself help this function of the faithful by a tender touch of sympathy and a flash of deeper insight? The intuitions of conscience declare themselves, under adequate inter-

pretation, to be genuine *inspirations* : and as they exist in various degrees of range and intensity up to a maximum in the pre-eminently holy, we cannot look upon a Christ but as the chief of God's appointed Revealers. In his life of communion with God, religious experience, as known to us, reaches its acme, and the ideal relation between the human spirit and the Divine is realised. If in any other instance the elevation has been reached, it has not been historically presented so as to single itself out as a revelation to us of what we are meant and called to be. If ever something higher is set before us, it will be time enough to quit the step on which we stand. But some objective personalisation of our spiritual sonship to God is essential to hold us in brotherly unity together and carry a religious inspiration into Morals.

Such was the faith which the Teacher had won from the manifold experience of a strenuous career. Among the English Theologians of the nineteenth century none had covered so wide a range ; none possessed so varied a knowledge ; none had more completely blended the highest efforts of speculation with graces of character or the trusts of a lowly heart. He was, it is true, identified with the defence of no specific doctrine of Christian theology, for the reason that his special concern was with the intellectual, moral, and spiritual truths on which any theology must hereafter be based. He lived in an age which has often been described as the 'New Reformation.' He made it the work of his life to understand the movements of thought around him, to trace their effects upon the ancient faith, and to restate the truths transmitted from the past in forms harmonious with the knowledge of his time.<sup>1</sup> He conducted his own people through a great religious change, and with ungrudging devotion placed at their service gifts whose influence

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, p. 540.

happily spread far beyond the limits of a small community. His whole being was a living protest against the spirit of sectarianism; so that the Anglican sighed, *Cum talis sis, utinam noster esses*, and the Presbyterian prayed, *Sit mea anima cum illo*. If it be true that religion will be more and more clearly divided in future between those who, accepting the principle of external authority, range themselves along the path that leads to Rome, and those who (with varying pace) follow the flag of freedom in the search for truth, the two great English representatives of these tendencies in the Nineteenth Century will be John Henry Newman and James Martineau. To Martineau this position came unsought, and in spite of many difficulties. For all his intellectual daring, he desired no leadership; he might accept it as inevitable and fulfil his trust without reserve; but he was too simple for ambition; there was no spur for him in Fame, when the way of Duty lay clear before him. That he had spoken the last word for philosophy to his age, he never dreamed. But whatever may become of his systematic works, his sermons will be always part of the best English libraries of devotion; and they will prove the truth of his life-long conviction that the trusts of religion which underlie its varying historic forms, can be stated in language which speaks to universal experience and reveals the thoughts of many hearts. On those who were brought into close relations with him, he left an incommunicable impression of greatness. He counted himself, indeed, in the order of 'dependent minds.' He could hardly believe that others could look to him and be enlight-

ened ; and the trembling expressions of reverence and sympathy which younger men sometimes ventured to offer, seemed to awake a gratitude which was almost more than they could bear. From him they had learned 'to live and act, and serve the future hour' ; his was the love, hope, faith, which taught them to 'feel that we are greater than we know.' 'Among the societies of men,' he once wrote,<sup>1</sup> 'it is ever the greater spirits that morally sustain the less ; and as the scale of realized excellence ascends, the conscience of us all is ashamed to linger, and eventually rises too. We are lifted by the souls of mightier wing, and are set where otherwise our feet would not have climbed.' Because James Martineau ran and was not weary, there are many who will 'walk and not faint.'

<sup>1</sup> *The Seat of Authority in Religion*, p. 73

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