

# THE UNKNOWN GOD

AND

## OTHER ORTHODOX ESSAYS

BY

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## DEDICATORY.

To Dr. Charles P. Emerson, Teacher of the Men's Bible Class of the First Presbyterian church, Indianapolis, who, while in nowise responsible for the positions taken herein, has, by his Bible teaching, led me to views of the scriptures that were to me in many respects novel, this little book is gratefully dedicated.





## THE UNKNOWN GOD.

The sermon of Paul on Mars' Hill has long held a place in the front ranks of examples of forensic oratory; and properly no oratory holds such rank that is not effective, for the object of oratory is to convince, and that which lacks convincing power lacks the essential feature of true oratory. There have been many comments on this effort of Paul, many reflections on its ingenious method, many on its immediate effects, many on its permanent argumentative force. And yet, when considered in the setting of its known surroundings, it seems singularly inadequate to the results attained.

Paul had just arrived at Athens from

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Note: (The unknown God.)

This essay was originally published in the *Biblical World* of Dec. 13, 1913. When it was written, I supposed that my main thesis, that the Athenian altar to "The Unknown God" was erected to the Supreme First Cause, was absolutely novel in modern literature. Since writing it, my attention has been called to a recent publication, "Agnostos Theos" (Press of B. G. Teubner, Leipzig-Berlin, 1913), by Eduard Norden. In this erudite volume of 400 pages, the author, from historical and philological premises, reaches the same

Berea. His preaching in Macedonia up to this point had not produced like results. On the contrary, it had evoked persecution, and he had been obliged to flee from Philippi, from Thessalonica, and from Berea. While he waited here for Silas and Timothy, his spirit was stirred by the idolatry of the city, and he began disputing in the synagogue and in the market place. Soon he attracted the attention of the philosophers, Epicureans and Stoics, men who devoted their entire time to the hearing and discussion of new things, and especially to religious matters. These people took him to the Areopagus—possibly, but not probably, before the council which held sessions there—which was the most prominent place of public discussion; and said to him, with at least an appearance of toleration and respect: “May we know

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conclusion—that this altar was erected to the Supreme First Cause. His process of reasoning, however, and his other deductions, are entirely different from my own. He devotes much space to the origin of this idea of deity, holding that it is not of Grecian but Oriental origin. This is quite possible. St. Justin maintained that Plato derived his ideas from Moses. However that may have been, it is not material here, for Plato’s philosophy had been taught in Greece for four centuries before Paul’s time and was then the prevailing religious belief.

what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know what these things mean."

And now Paul stood up in the most notably intellectual city in the world, before an audience that probably could not have been excelled at that time in cultivation. It was not an address to the masses. He was talking to the intellect of the age. He was alone. There was not even a sprinkling of party allies in the crowd to applaud a telling hit, or to second his effort in any way. His words stood absolutely on their own merit. And these are his words, as given in our authorized version:

Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.

For as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD." Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

And hath made of one blood all nations of

men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he be not far from every one of us;

For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring;

Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now he commandeth all men everywhere to repent;

Because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance to all men in that he hath raised him from the dead.

To this version modern criticism has offered little addition or change, the only material suggestions being as to the phrases "too superstitious" and "to the unknown God." It is generally conceded that the words rendered "too superstitious" may be properly rendered "very religious", "very devout", "truly god-fearing", or like terms having none of the offensive meaning that

necessarily attaches to "too superstitious". As to the other, it was suggested by some of the early church fathers that the inscription was probably in the plural—"to unknown gods"; and conjecture has been made that this implied gods of foreign nations, whom the Athenians fancied to have brought ills to them, or who might do so. Modern critics usually accept the singular form, but as there is no article used in the Greek, the ordinary translation would be "to an unknown god". This, however, is not obligatory, and the translation "to the unknown god" is generally admitted as proper. It would be more impressive to render it, as could properly be done, just as it stands in the original: "To Unknown God."

No critic rejects the account as above given, or the description of the events following, which is as follows:

And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked; and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.

So Paul departed from among them.

Howbeit certain men clave unto him and believed; among which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

Taking the entire account as it stands, two things seem obvious on its face. First, the address as recorded must be a mere summary of the actual discourse, for it would require less than two minutes for delivery. It is too brief for Paul's known sermonizing ability; too brief for the occasion, with the special trip to the Areopagus; too brief for the distinguished audience. Second, nothing in the speech aroused criticism or dissent till he spoke of the resurrection; and this point is important because it implies assent to all that precedes that. The common form of all such discourses in Athens was disputation or discussion. Paul himself was "disputing" in the synagogue and the market place when the philosophers were attracted to him. It was a form of discussion in which anyone was free to join, and it was a matter of give and take for all. The Greek philosophers were skilled debaters, trained particularly in this form of discussion, and would quickly have interposed if they had any objection. But they did not, and this is vastly significant. For example, the fact that Paul directly attacked idolatry and image-worship, in a city that was given over to

it, and where it was established by law, but without interruption, demonstrates what we know also from profane history, that at this time the educated Greeks did not believe in idols, and made no pretense of believing in them, even though they joined in the statutory rites.

With these two deductions in mind, let us look at the speech again. It has often been suggested that Paul was too prudent, and too skilled an orator to call his audience "too superstitious", in an offensive way, at the outset. That is a valid deduction, but we can add to it the certainty that his hearers did not take offense at his words; and also that he did not intend them in an offensive or critical sense, because to have done so would have been to overthrow his own argument. How could he consistently urge that the Athenians were unduly superstitious for believing in an unknown god, and in the next breath assure them that this god was the only true god, whom they ought to worship? Obviously the words rendered "too superstitious" were intended and accepted as commendatory.

In like manner, as to the inscription on

the Athenian altar, we can be sure that it was in harmony with the interpretation given to it by Paul. If the inscription had been "to unknown gods," in a plural and indefinite form, or if it had been, as St. Jerome conjectured, "To the unknown gods of Asia, and Europe, and Africa; to foreign and unknown gods," and Paul had proceeded to state that it was an altar to the one god "that made the world and all things therein," he would have been interrupted and mocked at once. Some philosopher would have said: "Thou art indeed a babbler, and ignorant, for this altar is not to one god, but to all unknown gods." The assent of his audience can be explained only on the basis that this altar was erected to an unknown god "that made the world and all things therein."

But further, what is meant by "the unknown god?" What could these words possibly mean to the Greeks? The word "unknown" is universally the antithesis of "known;" and the phrase could not possibly mean anything to the Greeks, or to anyone else, but "the unknown god" as distinguished from their known gods. And how



did they know any god? Not by personal acquaintance. No one pretended to that. They knew their gods by their names and their images. Zeus, Hera, Pallas Athene, and all the rest, were familiar to the Athenians by their names and their images, just as Cupid, and Liberty, and Santa Claus are to Americans, but this altar was to a god who had no name and no image.

The necessary inference is that this god of the Greeks was one for whom they had no name, of whom they had no image, and yet whom they believed to have "made the world and all things therein,"—a god who could plausibly be compared to Jehovah. But did the Greeks recognize any such god? Was there any deity in their pantheistic circle that would answer to these requirements? Unquestionably there was; and he was the supreme divinity of their most prominent religious sect—the Platonists. Plato had been dead for four centuries, but his philosophy had lived; and though it had ramified into almost as many sectarian forms as the teaching of Jesus Christ has since, this central feature of one supreme, unknown god was preserved in all of them, as it is in all

Christian beliefs. Moreover, it had tintured all other philosophies. The Stoics believed in a supreme first cause, though they located it in matter, as our materialists do. The Epicureans conceded the possibility of such a being, but held that if he existed he dwelt apart, and took no heed of the affairs of men. And this was not wholly repugnant to the Platonian theory, for it held that the Supreme Being created Jove, and all the other known gods, and left to them the minor creations, and the supervision of mankind, while he returned to a state of eternal repose.

Of all the gods of the Greeks, this one alone had no name. Plato refers to him simply as "God," "the Deity," "the Supreme First Existence;" and he never received any name. When Cicero had occasion to consider him, he referred to him as "the god of Plato." Neither was any image ever made of him by the Greeks or by the Romans, any more than by the Jews. He was always and everywhere "the Unknown God" until He revealed Himself. But there was no reason why the Platonists should not have erected an altar to him; and from the known cus-

toms of the ancients there was every reason to expect them to do so. And we know from profane writers that altars to unknown gods were not peculiar to Athens. Pausanias, Philostratus and Lucian mention their existence at other places. The hypothesis that this altar was a Platonian altar to the Supreme First Cause is the only one on which the known historical facts and this account of Paul's sermon can be reconciled.

Furthermore, we know that this pagan conception of God was commonly referred to as "the unknown God" in the early church literature. The Gnostic heretics all held to this conception in some form, some even maintaining that the Supreme Being was unknown to the inferior supernaturals whom he created. This heresy was vigorously denounced by the orthodox Christians, who maintained that God was known throughout the spirit world, not only by the angels who are his servants, but by Satan who was driven from his presence, by evil spirits who declared their knowledge when cast out, and by the spirits of the dead, for Christ said of little children, "In heaven their angels do always behold the face of

my Father which is in heaven." More than this, He was now known to men, both through Christ and through the Holy Spirit, whom Christ had promised as a Comforter that should teach them all things—not fully, of course, but as "seen through a glass darkly," and so far as within finite comprehension.

Thus, Ignatius, in his epistle to the Trallians, recites, among other heresies of the Gnostics, that, "They introduce God as a Being unknown." Irenaeus, who wrote the first formal work against heresy that is preserved to us, speaks of the Gnostic deity as "the unknown God" (*Ante-Nicene Christian Library*, Vol. 5, p. 79), "the unknown Father" (*Ib.*, pp. 171, 288), "the Father unknown to all" (*Ib.*, pp. 80, 89), and "the Unnameable," and "the Unspeakable" (*Ib.*, p. 171). He also refers to him as "the unoriginated, inconceivable Father" and the "Father who cannot be named" (*Ib.*, pp. 56, 101); and calls these heretics "those who know not God" (*Ib.*, p. 122); while he urges at great length that God is known to Christian believers (*Ib.*, pp. 179, 239, 291, 315, 370, 390).

Consider the sermon in this light. The writings of Plato were known to all the learned world at that time, and doubtless were known to Paul, for he quotes from the Greek poets in this same sermon, and was able to talk Greek to a Greek audience. The God of the Hebrews was known to his audience. The Jews had a synagogue in Athens in which disputations were held, as well as in the Athenian schools and in the market place; and these philosophers who made haste to inquire into all new things, especially in connection with religion, did not overlook the Hebrew teachings. The controversial writings of the ancients demonstrate clearly that the Hebrew theology was very fairly understood.

What Paul undertook was to maintain two theses in the Areopagus. The first was that the God of Plato and the God of Moses were in fact one God; and this the Greeks heard with interest. The second was that God had revealed Himself in Jesus Christ, and had proven his personality by the resurrection; and from this a part of his audience at once dissented. As to the first of these, the inadequacy of the recorded argu-

ment is at once apparent to anyone who has given any attention to Socratic discussion. With one exception the recorded sermon is pure assertion, and that exception is the quotation from the Greek poets, "For we are also his offspring." There is no other proof offered, and to us this is small proof; but not so to the Greeks or their Roman successors. We must remember that their conceptions of God were derived wholly from the light of reason, and a statement like this from the poets was evidence of a common belief. It did not mean that it was conclusive evidence of the fact stated, but that it was the basis of a tenable hypothesis, and this was as high as the light of reason could reach. Thus, in Cicero's great argument on the immortality of the soul, which is probably as high a reach toward certainty as pure reason ever attained, after reviewing the statements of the poets and philosophers, he avows that he believes the soul immortal chiefly because all men believe it. And from the standpoint of nature and reason this is the strongest argument that can be made for anything supernatural. For all men conceive God to be just, and he has not im-

planted in us any desire or aspiration as to known things which is not capable of attainment. This is the argument to which Tennyson, with all his enlightenment, turns back at last—

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:

Thou madest man, he knows not why;

He thinks he was not made to die;

And Thou hast made him; Thou art just.

It being evident that the record of Paul's sermon is the briefest summary, we may reasonably infer that the omitted portions were such as would probably have been considered satisfactory evidence by the Greeks, though of no eternal weight to the world at large; and there are points where the coherence of the argument seems to call specially for such matter. For example, the words "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you," are followed by what is apparently a conclusion of an argument or exposition—"God that made the world and all things therein."

These gaps might have been filled by direct quotations from the Hebrew scriptures and from Plato. As is commonly known, Plato's chief presentation of his ideas of the

Supreme Being is in his book entitled "Timaeus," in which the astronomer Timaeus presents to Socrates and his disciples the conclusions as to the divine nature and the creation of the universe which he had deduced from astronomy and mathematics. This book was universally known and quoted, and might naturally have been quoted by Paul on this occasion. Under these circumstances it will not be irreverent to conjecture what Paul might have said in this line; and the desire to present my thought more clearly may excuse the audacity of suggesting the following reconstruction of Paul's sermon as a possibility:

Ye men of Athens I perceive that ye are indeed devoted to the worship of the Deity, for as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found among others an altar with this inscription, TO UNKNOWN GOD. Him therefore, whom ye worship without knowing, proclaim I unto you. For this altar, as is known to all, is erected to the Supreme Being who created the universe, and whose existence is declared by the philosopher Plato to have been discovered to the astronomer Timaeus through observation and contemplation of the heavenly bodies and of the laws of nature.

Now Timaeus, as ye know, distinguished first between the eternal spirit existences and earthly



things, or as he saith, "between that which is ever-existent, and has no generation or creation, and that which is in a state of generation, or coming into existence, but never really is. \* \* \*

And whatever is generated is necessarily generated from a certain cause; for it is wholly impossible that anything should be generated without a cause. \* \* \*

Let this universe then be called heaven, or the world, or by any other name that it usually receives, \* \* \* (and we know) that it is generated;—for this universe is palpable, and has a body; and all such things are perceptible (i. e., are to be apprehended by the senses); and things perceptible, being apprehended by reason in conjunction with perception, appear to be in a state of generation. And again, with reference to what exists, it must necessarily have arisen from some cause."

So likewise the sacred writings of whose truth I bear witness declare that God is a spirit, and that "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." And again, the prophet Jeremiah saith: "He hath made the earth by His power; He hath established the world by His wisdom; and by His understanding hath He stretched out the heavens."

And Timaeus further testifies of the Creator. "He was good, and in the good envy is never engendered about anything whatever; hence, being free from envy, He desired that all things should as much as possible resemble Himself. \* \* \*

For as the Deity desired, as far as possible, that

all things should be good, and nothing evil, he accordingly took everything that was visible and not in a state of rest, but in excessive agitation and disorder, and then reduced it from disorder into order, conceiving the latter to be far better than the former."

So, again, our sacred writings declare that when God created the earth it was without form and empty, but He proceeded to bring the seas into their places and also the land, and to make the land for man's welfare by adding plants and animals for man's use. And as each separate work was finished He contemplated it, and pronounced it good; and when all was finished He pronounced it very good.

But before proceeding with these works, there was another creation, for as Timaeus saith: "Whatever has been generated must necessarily have bodily shape, and be visible as well as tangible. But nothing can be visible without the aid of fire," which is to say, light. Wherefore after first making the heavens and the earth God created light, that all His works might be seen and known. And, furthermore, being Himself eternal, and not created, it was His will that man, who is created and not eternal, should be given a way to judge of eternal things. Wherefore, as Timaeus further saith: "God resolved to form a certain moveable image of eternity, and thus, while He was disposing the parts of the universe, He, out of that eternity which rests in unity, formed an eternal image on the principle

of numbers;—and to this we give the appellation of Time. But besides this he contrived the days and nights, months and years, which had no existence prior to the universe, but rose into being contemporaneously with its formation. All these are but the parts of time; and the terms ‘it was’ and ‘it will be’ are varying and evanescent forms of time, which we have wrongly and unawares transferred to an eternal essence. For we say that an (eternal) thing was, is and will be; while according to truth the term ‘it is’ is alone suitable, ‘was’ and ‘will be’ being expressions suitable only to created things, which move through time.

\* \* \* With this design then, and after much reflection on the generation of time, the Deity, in order that it might be produced in full operation, created the sun, moon, and five other stars, which are denominated planets, to distinguish and guard over the numbers of time.”

And thus declare our sacred books: “And God said let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to divide the day from the night and let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth, and it was so. And God made the two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; He made the stars also.”

But while He gave this image of eternity, God did not confuse language by using the same terms for eternal and temporal beings, as Timaeus truly

states that men do. For when He gave His commands to Moses, and Moses asked Him who he should say to the Jews had given these commands, He answered, "Tell them I AM hath sent thee." For this was The Eternal One, who existed before time began, and before "was" and "will be" arose as expressions of time. As David also says of Him:

Before the mountains were brought forth,  
Or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the  
world,  
Even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art  
God.

Being persuaded then that God is eternal and not created, but that He created all things, ye know that He should be worshipped as an eternal spirit. For that God that made the world and all things therein, He, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is He served by men's hands as though He needed anything; seeing He Himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and He made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation; and hath willed that they should seek after God, if perchance they should reach out to Him and find Him. And it is His will that men should see His greatness in His works, as Timaeus hath done; for as David testifieth:

The heavens declare the glory of God;  
Th firmament showeth His handiwork.  
Day unto day uttereth speech,  
And night unto night showeth knowledge.  
There is no speech nor language  
Where their voice is not heard.  
Their line is gone out through all the earth  
And their words to the end of the world.

And indeed God is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move, and have our being: as certain of your own poets have said:

For we are also His offspring.

Being, then, the offspring of God, and knowing His eternal nature, we ought not to think that the Deity is like unto gold, or silver, or stone graven by art and device of man. Neither do ye believe this, but think that the worship of such image is fitting only for those who have not by contemplation and reason attained a knowledge of the Eternal Spirit and First Cause of all things, which indeed it is not possible for all men to do. For Timaeus himself saith: "To discover then the Creator and Father of this universe, as well as His work, is indeed difficult; and when discovered it is impossible to reveal Him to mankind at large."

But as God is good, He desires that all men shall know the goodness that is in Him, and not only those who have the good fortune to meet with competent teachers, or to be able themselves to understand the teachings of His works.

Nor, being good, is it His desire that men should deceive themselves, and worship images of their own creation, which as ye know they do in ignorance of the Deity Himself. Wherefore He hath prepared a more certain testimony to all men; and though in time of men's ignorance He overlooked this false worship, He now commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent; inasmuch as He hath appointed a day which He will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, both the learned and the ignorant, in that He hath raised him from the dead.

Certainly Paul must have followed some such line of argument as this, or he would not have been able to hold the quiet attention of his hearers. Nor is it strange that he should make such an appeal on this occasion to the learned men of his day, whom he knew to believe in an eternal and supreme Deity. It had the appearance of a promising field. If they had so much of the light, why should they not be prepared for more light? But Paul never tried the experiment again. He learned at Athens the lesson of the futility of the appeal to mere worldly wisdom, which he used so effectively thereafter. How forcibly he puts it in his epistle to the Corinthians:

For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel; not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God.

For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom.

But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.

But unto them which are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called:

But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen

the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty ;

And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea and things which are not to bring to naught things that are :

That no flesh should glory in His presence.

But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption :

That, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

And I, brethren, when I came to you came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power :

That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

What a contrast to the sermon at Athens is presented by this preaching at Corinth ; and remember that Paul went directly from Athens to Corinth, and was found there by Silas and Timothy. His changed attitude was apparently fully understood by the brethren, for Luke says : "But when Silas



and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was constrained by the Word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ." And this change was justified by the results, for "many of the Corinthians hearing believed;" and he continued to preach there for eighteen months.

But the lesson of this experience continued to grow in Paul's mind, and he saw that worldly wisdom was an obstacle to salvation. Hence when he wrote to the Romans after saying that he is "debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish," he urges the superiority of faith over worldly wisdom, saying:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

For therein is revealed a righteousness of God from faith unto faith as it is written, But the righteous shall live by faith.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hinder the truth in unrighteousness;

Because that which is known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested it unto them.

For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His ever-

lasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse:

Because that, knowing God, they glorified Him not as God, neither gave thanks; but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened.

Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

And changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

Wherefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonored among themselves.

For that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever.

Quite possibly the statement that these passages refer to the Platonists will be met by the objection that if Paul had referred to the god of Plato in his sermon on Mars' Hill, there would have been more explicit record of it. Is it credible that his treatment of Platonism there, and in his subsequent writings to the Corinthians and the Romans, would have been left in so obscure a condition that they escaped notice in later times? Did not the principal faith of the Greeks,

and the one that has most profoundly affected the world since their day, call for something clearer?

This objection has force at first blush; but consider the alternative. If these passages do not refer to Platonism there is no reference whatever in the New Testament to Platonism. Yet it was the chief faith of intellectual Greece, and the apostles were preaching throughout Greece and the Grecian colonies. Is this possible? Can you conceive of a new religion which should spring up in America, and whose history should make no mention of Christianity? Can you believe that the apostles did not meet and combat the highest form of religious error of their day?

Surely not. The record is too plain that Paul thus became the leader in the long fight which the church maintained against the votaries of "the unknown God," who carried their trust in the wisdom of men, and their idea of permissible indulgence in sensual sin, even after professed conversion to Christianity, in many cases. Their generation is not wholly passed, and the record still remains with its lesson that when the appeal

of the gospel is made to the wisdom of this world, it receives assent only so far as it coincides with the preconceived opinions of the hearer. And when conviction of part of the truth comes from the wisdom of the world, it never rises higher. It is faith that stands in the wisdom of men and not in the power of God.

And Paul's words were perfectly intelligible to his hearers, who were meeting these same teachings of Greek philosophy daily. To us, who look back over the ages, Platonism seems something wonderful and admirable, but it is only by contrast with other forms of heathenism. To the primitive church it was merely one form of error, worse, indeed, than the rest, "because that knowing God, they glorified Him not as God." It was not a thing to be magnified or extolled. Hence Paul's statements become clear and rational when we apply the simple historical rule of interpreting words in terms of the period and conditions of their use.

## THE FIRST HERESIES.

In approaching a historical consideration of early heresies, it should be borne in mind that the word "heresy" has had a somewhat shifting meaning during the Christian era. In modern thought it is commonly linked closely with two things, persecution and creed. The feature of persecution is now more a matter of history than of experience, for the world has grown to a point where most men hold to the belief that,

He is the heretic who lights the fire,  
Not he who burns in it.

Hence the present association of persecution with heresy dwarfs in comparison with that of creed. Of course some people feel that they are persecuted if they are expelled from a church organization for heresy, but in fact this is no worse than being read out of a secret society or a political party, when your views are in conflict with those of the other members. It is the right, as well as the nature of birds of a feather to flock together, and the intrusion of an outsider is a disturbing factor, whether it be the

impertinence of the cuckoo, or the misfortune of the duckling that is hatched among a brood of chickens.

In our day creeds have come to be regarded lightly by many persons, and the dissenter often accepts the name of heretic with an air of gayety, or even pride. Perhaps Mr. Chesterton is theoretically right in holding that the dissenter, if serious in his dissent, ought to hurl back the epithet, and maintain that he himself is orthodox. But he overlooks the fact that, in such a case, the dissenter accepts the name in a purely sarcastic way, and really implies all that he could be asked to maintain as to the rectitude of his own position. In apostolic times no creed had been formulated—not even the Apostles' Creed—and the punishment of heresy was mild enough to satisfy any modern liberal. The rule was, as laid down by Paul, "A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted and sinneth, being condemned of himself." As this plainly implies, a heretic was a member of the church, or one who had been a member, who proclaimed views contrary to the common

faith. The outsider, whatever his faith, was not a heretic, but merely an unbeliever. Paul evidently used "heretic" in its ordinary Greek sense of one who set up his own views as against those of his cult. Indeed, he uses the same word concerning himself when he told Agrippa that "after the straitest haeresis, or sect, of our religion I lived a Pharisee."

But there was a difference in the application. Though Paul used this word as one that Agrippa could understand, he did not mean that the Pharisees were wrong as compared with the Saducees. And though the word is here used in a sense that is not bad, it is never so used as to differences of doctrine among Christians. As Greek philosophy was based on reason, the Greek was not only at liberty to go where reason led him, but was fairly bound to do so; whereas, Christianity being based on revelation, the Christian was bound to hold to that which had been revealed. And so while Paul in writing to the Galatians includes heresies among the works of the flesh, he does not treat them as ordinary sins of weakness. For example, he speaks to the Corinthians of be-

ing carnal-minded, and quarreling about baptism, as pardonable sins for which they should repent, but he does not class these with heresies, for he says: "There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." Peter refers to "damnable" or "destructive" heresies; and the other New Testament writers do not use the word in reference to false teachings, for the apparent reason that the word was not strong enough to express their disapproval of such teachings. It is perfectly plain to any fair-minded person that the apostles did their utmost to hold the church to the ideal of "one God, one faith, one baptism."

It was only natural that false teachings should increase as the church grew, and some persons were attracted to it for other reasons than a desire for eternal salvation. It is quite possible that others than Ananias and Sapphira were drawn by prospects of gain through the communal system which first existed. It is quite possible that others than Simon the Samaritan were attracted by a belief that the apostles had introduced a new system of sorcery that put the magic of



the rest of the sorcerers out of business. At any rate it is certain that in the writings of John, the last of the New Testament writers, there are more, and more specific references to heresies than in all the rest. He is the only one who mentions any heretical sect by name, referring in Revelations to "the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate." His reference to the doctrine of Balaam is, of course, to the Old Testament heresy, which he defines as a teaching "to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication." It is obvious that one must seek outside of the New Testament for exact information as to what the heresies of that period were. Or at least it is impossible to grasp fully the meaning of the New Testament writers in their references to heresies without some light from the outside.

In a search for information of this kind, the most reliable source of instruction is the writings of the early fathers of the church. Of these there were five who were contemporary to some extent with the apostles, and who are accepted by Protestants and Catholics alike as reliable witnesses in their statements of fact. Of these five, the one who

makes the most specific statements as to heresies, is Ignatius, who says in his epistle to the Trallians, i. e., the Christians of the city of Tralles, in Asia Minor :

For there are some vain talkers and deceivers, not Christians but Christ-betrayers, bearing about the name of Christ, in deceit, and corrupting the word of the gospel. \* \* \* For they alienate Christ from the Father, and the law from Christ. They also calumniate his being born of the Virgin ; they are ashamed of his cross ; they deny his passion ; and they do not believe his resurrection. They introduce God as a being unknown ; they suppose Christ to be unbegotten ; and as to the Spirit they do not admit that he exists. Some of them say that the Son is a mere man, and that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are but the same person ; and that the creation is the work of God, not by Christ, but by some other strange power.

These were doctrines of the Gnostics, who were not a compact sect, but included all those who professed a knowledge of divine things outside of Christian revelation, and whose views covered every phase of what we now call New Thought. It will be noted that the central points of attack were the three doctrines known to us as the Virgin Birth, the Incarnation and the Holy Trinity.

The assault on the dual nature of Jesus took two forms; one that he was only a man; the other that he was only divine, and that his appearance as a man was phantasmal, and not real.

Ignatius comes back to this last doctrine again, in this same epistle, as follows: "Stop your ears therefore, when anyone speaks to you at variance with Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was descended from David, and was also of Mary; who was truly begotten of God and of the Virgin, but not after the same manner. For, indeed, God and man are not the same. He truly assumed a body; for 'the Word was made flesh,' and lived upon earth without sin. \* \* \* He did in reality both eat and drink. \* \* \* He really, and not merely in appearance, was crucified and died." He reverts to this again in his epistle to the Smyrneans, where, speaking of Christ, he says: "He suffered all these things for us, and he suffered them really, and not in appearance only, even as also He truly rose again. But not as some unbelievers, who are ashamed of the formation of man, and the cross, and death itself, affirm, that in appearance only, and not in

truth, he took a body of the Virgin, and suffered only in appearance."

Ignatius makes what is probably a full summary of all the heresies up to his time in his epistle to the Philadelphians, as follows: "If anyone confesses Christ Jesus the Lord, but denies the God of the law and of the prophets, saying that the Father of Christ is not the Maker of heaven and earth, he has not continued in the truth any more than his father the devil, and is a disciple of Simon Magus, not of the Holy Spirit. If anyone says there is one God, and also confesses Christ Jesus, but thinks the Lord to be a mere man, and not the only-begotten God, and Wisdom, and the Word of God, and deems Him to consist merely of a soul and body, such an one is a serpent, that preaches deceit and error for the destruction of men. And such a man is poor in understanding, even as by name he is an Ebionite. \* \* \* If anyone confesses the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost and praises the creation, but calls the incarnation merely an appearance, and is ashamed of the passion, such an one has denied the faith not less than the Jews who killed Christ. If anyone

confesses these things, and that God the Word did dwell in a human body, \* \* \* but affirms that unlawful unions are a good thing, and places the highest happiness in pleasure, as does the man who is falsely called a Nicolaitan, this person can neither be a lover of God, nor a lover of Christ, but is a corrupter of his own flesh."

It is in the light of these heretical doctrines that we must interpret the Apostles' Creed, which was the church's answer to heresy, as well as its fortification against heresy. It means that Christ was really begotten, conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; that he actually suffered—felt pain—under Pontius Pilate; was actually crucified, dead and buried; that there was nothing phantasmal or allegorical about it. And further, it must be remembered that every statement of this creed is an article of faith, based on revelation. There is not a statement in it that could be ascertained by reason, or by any earthly means. It is the credo.

Ignatius furnishes the names of some heresiarchs in his epistle to the Trallians: "Do ye also avoid those wicked offshoots of his

(Satan's), Simon his firstborn son, and Menander, and Basilides, and all his wicked mob of followers—the worshippers of a man, whom also the prophet Jeremiah pronounces accursed. Flee also the impure Nicolaitans, falsely so-called, who are lovers of pleasure, and given to calumnious speeches.” This Father wrote somewhere about the year A. D. 100, and Basilides reached the climax of his fame a few years later than that, but had probably taught earlier. He is said to have been a Simonian, and Hippolytus, one of the earliest writers against heresies, says Basilides claimed that Matthew, the Evangelist, revealed to him “certain secret doctrines which had been specially communicated to himself by Christ.” Hippolytus also says of the Simonians: “They do whatever they please, affirming that they are redeemed by his (Simon's) grace. For nothing is the cause of damnation, supposing a man to act wickedly, for evil is evil not through the nature of things, but by convention.” Justin Martyr, who wrote some fifty years later than Ignatius, adds the names of Saturninus, Valentine,

and Marcion, who, he says, is still living at that time.

For yet more specific information we must drop still farther down in the second century to Irenaeus, who was presumably a native of Asia Minor, though his writings were made while he was Bishop of Lyons, France. He states that he was a contemporary and personal acquaintance of Polycarp, the apostolic father, who was a disciple of St. John the Evangelist. It is to his work, commonly known by the title "Against Heresies," that we are indebted for much of our detailed knowledge of the earliest heresies, and, incidentally, for much information as to the customs and faith of the church in apostolic times. But this book was not given this title by Irenaeus. He called it "A Refutation and Subversion of Knowledge, Falsely So Called;" and there is a manifest significance in the similarity of this title to "the oppositions of science falsely so called," which Paul warned Timothy to avoid.

This book covers all phases of Gnosticism, which was the professed knowledge of its adherents; and which was in fact a most

heterogeneous and shifting mixture of religion, philosophy and magic. It covers the religious deductions of "the wisdom of the Greeks," which Paul pronounced "foolishness," and which is now commonly known to be foolishness from a scientific point of view. The argument of Plato's *Timaeus* is based on astronomy that treated the sun and planets as revolving about the earth, on mathematics founded on mystical numbers and letters, on physics that held the so-called elements, earth, air, fire and water, to be convertible forms of a single unknown essence. And yet from these premises were deduced complete systems of all existences, spiritual as well as material, and of the creation and regulation of the universe. It was against these theories, so far as they were in opposition to the revelation of Jesus Christ, in addition to other errors, that the early church contended. That is why Paul wrote to the Colossians: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." That is why he wrote to the Romans: "I would have you wise unto that



which is good, and simple unto that which is evil."

And there is something in this defiance of the science of their day, by the apostles, that challenges attention; for as we look back over the ages, we realize that the science of today has been the foolishness of tomorrow, even to men of science. And furthermore we know that with all its mighty achievements in ascertaining the processes of nature, science stands absolutely without the threshold as to their primary causes, even in the most common things. Consider a commonplace mystery. Every man knows that in the spring the cherry tree puts forth its leaves, and later its blossoms, and still later it produces its fruit. But if I ask how the cherry tree reaches its nerve fingers down into the great storehouse of nature, and selects the emerald for its leaves, the alabaster for its bloom, and the ruby for its fruit? the wizard Burbank stands as dumb as the most ignorant child. Much more as to spiritual things. When Zophar asked Job: "Canst thou by searching find out God?" Job answered: "Ask now the beasts and they shall

teach thee; and the fowls of the air and they shall tell thee.

“Or speak to the earth and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.

“Who knoweth not in all these things that the hand of the Lord hath brought this?”

But when the voice from the whirlwind asked: “Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?” Job answered: “Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful, which I knew not.”

But to resume, Irenaeus says that the first notable teacher of heresies was Simon the Samaritan, who, after his unsuccessful effort to purchase the power of conferring the Holy Spirit, returned to the former sorceries, with which he had “bewitched the people of Samaria,” but with startling additions from his Christian experience. Irenaeus says: “This man then, was glorified by many as if he were a god; and he taught that it was himself who appeared among the Jews as the Son, but descended in Samaria as the

Father, while he came to other nations in the character of the Holy Spirit." The successor of Simon was Menander, who likewise claimed that he, himself, was the one sent by the Supreme Being for the salvation of the world. After him came Saturninus, who "laid it down as a truth, that the Savior was without birth, without body, without figure, but was by supposition a visible man." This genius also taught that two kinds of men had been created, one wicked and one good—that the wicked were assisted by demons, and the good by the Savior. While Saturninus taught his faith in Syria, Basilides was spreading a somewhat similar doctrine at Alexandria, of the phantasmal manifestation of Christ. He taught that Christ transfigured himself and others at will; and that, "he did not himself suffer death, but Simon, a certain man of Cyrene, being compelled, bore the cross in his stead; so that this latter being transfigured by him, that he might be thought to be Jesus, was crucified, through ignorance and error, while Jesus himself received the form of Simon, and standing by, laughed at them."

Carpocrates, the next mentioned by Iren-

aeus, appears to have been an original Unitarian. He held "that Jesus was the son of Joseph, and was just like other men, with the exception that he differed from them in this respect, that inasmuch as his soul was steadfast and pure, he perfectly remembered those things which he had witnessed within the sphere of the unbegotten God." But he emphasized the Simonian encroachment on modern thought. Like all the other Gnostic teachers, Carpocrates taught his followers that they were free to commit sensual sins, but his basis for this doctrine was "that things are evil or good, simply in virtue of human opinion."

Cerinthus, the next heresiarch, had views similar to those of Carpocrates in part. "He represented Jesus as having not been born of a virgin, but as being the son of Joseph and Mary according to the ordinary course of human generation, while he nevertheless was more righteous, prudent and wise than other men." The Ebionites also held that Jesus was only a man. They used only the gospel of Matthew, and repudiated the Apostle Paul entirely. The Nicolaitans were alleged followers of Nicolas, who was one

of the first seven deacons ordained by the apostles. Irenaeus says of them: "They lead lives of unrestrained indulgence. The character of these men is very plainly pointed out in the Apocalypse of John, as teaching that it is a matter of indifference to practice adultery, and to eat things sacrificed to idols. Wherefore the Word has also spoken of them thus: 'But this thou hast that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.' "

While these heretics differed in many particulars, there was, in addition to their common doctrine of license to sin, another common characteristic of their teachings. They all attacked the dual nature of Jesus Christ. Irenaeus, in summing up their teachings, says that some of them, "will have it that the Word and Christ never came into this world; that the Savior, too, never became incarnate, nor suffered, but that he descended like a dove upon the dispensational Jesus; and that as soon as he had declared the unknown Father, he did again ascend into the pleroma. Some, however, make the assertion that this dispensational Jesus did become incarnate, and suffered, whom they

represent as having passed through Mary just as water through a tube; but others allege him to be the son of the demiurge, upon whom the dispensational Jesus descended; while others, again, say that Jesus was born from Joseph and Mary, and that the Christ from above descended upon him, being without flesh, and impassible. But according to the opinion of no one of the heretics was the Word of God made flesh. For if anyone carefully examines the systems of them all, he will find that the Word of God is brought in by all of them as not having become incarnate and impassible, as is also the Christ from above. Others consider him to have been manifested as a transfigured man; but they maintain him to have been neither born nor to have become incarnate; while others hold that he did not assume human form at all, but that, as a dove, he did descend upon that Jesus who was born from Mary. Therefore, the Lord's disciple pointing them all out as false witnesses, says: 'And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.' "

In explanation of the terms used in this passage, it should be remembered that all

of these Gnostic theories were by-products of Platonism; and all of them had the feature of an unknown Supreme First Cause, who is here referred to as "the unknown Father." This supreme being was said to have created or begotten subordinate deities, one of whom was the demiurge, or creator of the earth. The assembly, or whole body of these deities, or demons as they are called in the New Testament, was called the "pleroma."

The heresiarchs above named are the only ones specified by Irenaeus as contemporary with the apostles. He mentions that Cerinthus was especially obnoxious to St. John, and gives a statement of Polycarp that on one occasion John, when going to bathe, at Ephesus, saw Cerinthus in the bathhouse, and at once ran out, exclaiming: "Let us fly, lest even the bathhouse fall down, because Cerinthus, the enemy of truth, is within." It is very evident that they, or others who held similar doctrines, had very quickly invaded the churches, from references to these characteristic doctrines. Thus Jude says: "For there are certain men crept in privily, even they who were of old written

of beforehand unto this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. \* \* \* Woe unto them! for they went in the way of Cain, and ran riotously in the error of Balaam for hire, and perished in the gainsaying of Korah. These are they who are hidden rocks in your love-feasts when they feast with you." Indeed, Jude indicates that these dangerous characters were Gnostics in his statement that "these rail at whatsoever things they know not; and what they understand naturally, like the creatures without reason, in these things they are destroyed."

So Peter also says: "Among you also there shall be false teachers, who shall privily bring in destructive heresies, denying even the Master that bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their lascivious doings. \* \* \* forsaking the right way, they went astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the hire of wrong-doing." These heretics were quick to take advantage of Paul's distinction between living under the law and living under grace



without sin; wherefore Paul complains to the Romans that "we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say; let us do evil that good may come,—whose condemnation is just."

It is manifest that in the epistles the apostles were not preaching abstractions; that they were fighting "not as one beating the air;" but were striking at present sin, and notably at these two Gnostic teachings. And nowhere is this more manifest than in the writings of St. John, for as Matthew Arnold notes: "The two great points of that close cousin of the Fourth Gospel, that document which we call First Epistle of St. John, are these: Jesus Christ come in the flesh! and: He that doeth righteousness is righteous." But Matthew Arnold, in applying the latter exclusively to his doctrine of "sweet reasonableness," overlooks its direct application to the heresies of the day, of which the denial of the dual nature of Christ and the affirmance of freedom to sin were the twin characteristics. And this is true as to many of his citations in the same line from the Old Testament, as well as the New; for the Hebrews were always in contact with idolaters

who, like the Midianites, held to this oriental idea of sensual indulgence as a religious thing; and the preaching against it was necessarily constant and vigorous.

A consideration of the passages quoted above, and others of similar import in the epistles, will prepare one for acceptance of the testimony of Irenaeus as to the special purpose of the fourth gospel, which is as follows:

John, the disciple of the Lord, preaches this faith, and seeks, by the proclamation of the gospel, to remove that error which by Cerinthus had been disseminated among men, and a long time previously by those termed Nicolaitans, who are an off-shoot of that "knowledge" falsely so called, that he might confound them, and persuade them that there is but one God, who made all things by His Word; and not as they allege, that the Creator was one, but the Father of the Lord another; and that the Son of the Creator was, forsooth, one, but the Christ from above another, who also continued impassible, descending upon Jesus, the Son of the Creator, and flew back again into His Pleroma; and that Monogenes was the beginning, but Logos was the true son of Monogenes; and that the creation to which we belong was not made by the primary God, but by some power lying far below Him, and shut off from

communion with the things invisible and ineffable.

The disciple of the Lord therefore, desiring to put an end to all such doctrines, and to establish the rule of truth in the church that there is one Almighty God, who made all things by His Word, both visible and invisible; showing at the same time, that by the Word, through whom God made the creation, He also bestowed salvation on the men included in the creation; thus commenced his teaching in the gospel: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made. What was made was life in Him, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not."

But the ingenious Gnostics of later date took even these words and quoted them in support of their heresy, saying that the "all the things" made by God meant "all things in the Pleroma," and not in the world. Irenaeus, however, shows that this interpretation is futile, saying: "John, however, does himself put this matter beyond all controversy on our part, when he says: 'He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. 'He came unto his own, and his own received him not.' \* \* \* While the gospel affirms plain-

ly that by the Word, which was in the beginning with God, all things were made, which Word, he says, 'was made flesh, and dwelt among us.' "

This statement of the purpose of the Fourth Gospel is confirmed in other ways. For example, Luke and John, who were the latest evangelists, are the only ones who make mention of Christ's eating after his resurrection, and of his flesh being felt by his disciples, John's gospel being especially full on these points. Presumably when the earlier gospels were written, the importance of noting these facts had not been shown by the heretical teaching that the resurrected Christ was phantasmal, or in appearance only. But John makes an express declaration of purpose, immediately after his account of the doubt of Thomas, in these words: "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." The only objection that has been offered to the statement of Irenaeus that the opening words of the gospel of John were intended to "put an end" to these heresies, is that the gospel is

“not polemical.” Certainly it is not polemical in form, and it would have been a breach of literary propriety to make it so. It is simply a statement of facts, as facts, which of themselves refute the heresies. But if anyone desires a polemic by St. John against the two heresies that Christ was not God manifest in the flesh, and that Christians were licensed to sin, he has only to turn to his first epistle, and read:

That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declared unto you the life, the eternal life, which was with the Father); that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us. \* \* \*

If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us. My little children, these things write I unto you that ye may not sin.

\* \* \* Beloved, no new commandment write I

unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. \* \* \* Little children, it is the last hour; and as ye heard that antichrist cometh, even now have there arisen many antichrists, whereby ye know it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they all are not of us. And ye have an anointing from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not written to you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and because no lie is of the truth.

Who is the liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ. This is the antichrist, even he that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son the same hath not the Father; he that confesseth the Son hath the Father also. As for you, let that abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye heard from the beginning abide in you, ye also shall abide in the Son, and in the Father. \* \* \* Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not; whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither knoweth Him. My little children, let no man lead you astray; he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous; he that doeth sin is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning. To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. \* \* \* Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many

false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God; and this is the spirit of the antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it cometh; and now it is in the world already. \* \* \* Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God. \* \* \* And who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? \* \* \* If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for the witness of God is this, that He hath borne witness concerning his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in him; he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he hath not believed in the witness that God hath borne concerning His Son. And the witness is this, that God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life. \* \* \* And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

Plain and explicit as these words are, it seems certain that John himself lived to hear them perverted by ingenious heretics, who maintained that Jesus Christ was not God

manifest in the flesh. If so, it must have been trying even to the aged saint on Patmos, whose gospel had been the gospel of love, and whose life had been the life of love, and who now had come to the time when,

The soul's dark cabin, battered and decayed,  
Lets in new light through chinks that time has  
made.

Possibly such perversion of his teaching was the cause of his writing these impressive words, so in contrast with his nature: "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto them God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book."

But his warning was ineffectual, for truth is no more eternal than error, and does not spring up again more certainly when "crushed to earth." If a divine messenger should appear on earth today, and make a revelation, and print it, and copyright it,



somebody would attempt to improve on it before the copyright had expired. This has been the fate of every religion that has been promulgated in the world, and it is not surprising that heresies were rife in an age when the world was saturated with "philosophy," and when everybody dabbled in it. Surely, John had occasion to write: "Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book."

And in this connection it may be noted that Irenaeus has some cause for complaint of misrepresentation, though in his case it was probably a mere misunderstanding. In his answer to these heresies he points to the unity of doctrine in the church throughout the world, beginning with these words: "The church, though dispersed throughout the whole world, even to the ends of the earth, has received from the apostles, and their disciples this faith: (She believes) in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them; and in one Christ Jesus, who became incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, who proclaimed through the prophets the dispensations of

God, and the advents, and the birth from a virgin, and the passion, and the resurrection from dead, and the ascension into heaven in the flesh of the beloved Christ Jesus our Lord," etc. It has been assumed from this that the Apostles Creed, or something very similar to it, had been formulated prior to this time and was used in the church; but this is not a tenable historical proposition. If there had been any set formula, Irenaeus would have known it, and would have used it as a direct authoritative answer to these heresies. But he refers to these quoted words only as "this teaching," "this faith," "this tradition." Moreover, the existence of any set formula would have destroyed the force of his argument in presenting this faith, for he presents its unity as in contrast with the divergent and conflicting features of the heresies. He says he has "judged it well to point out, first of all, in what respects the very fathers of this fable (i. e., the heresies) differ among themselves, as if they were inspired by different spirits of error. For this fact forms an a priori proof that the truth proclaimed by the church is im-

movable, and that the theories of these men are but a tissue of falsehoods."

If there had been a fixed creed there would have been no force in the fact that the church was immovable. But there is a logical force in his declaration that, "the church, having received this preaching and this faith, although scattered throughout the whole world, yet, as if occupying but one house, carefully preserves it. She also believes these points of doctrine just as if she had but one soul, and one and the same heart, and she proclaims them, and teaches them, and hands them down, with perfect harmony, as if she possessed only one mouth. For although the languages of the world are dissimilar, yet the import of the tradition is one and the same." Obviously if there had been any formula, it must have been in some one language, and in other languages there would have been simply a translation, which is a very different thing from "the import of a tradition." And this is a difference which neither Irenaeus nor his opponents could have overlooked. The purity of the Christian doctrine at this time was due to the constant and vigorous opposition of the apos-

tles and their disciples to anything inconsistent with the revelation they had received. The church never attempted a creed or fixed formula, until it was driven to it by heresy; but after it started in creed-making it certainly produced some things that, like Paul's epistles, are "hard to be understood." And in my opinion, Athanasius made a notable start in trouble when he undertook to define the Trinity, and asserted that anyone who did not accept his definition could not be saved.

And it may well be questioned whether any of the additions that have ever been made to what we know as the Apostles Creed have done more good than harm; for the additions are practically all efforts to circumscribe and limit the infinite, which by their very incomprehensibility have led many men to reject the simple faith of apostolic times, which of itself should mark the boundaries of orthodoxy. I take it that the real problems of Christianity today are much the same that they were in the time of the first heresies. The really dangerous assaults are not on any of the features that distinguish our modern sects, but on the Apostles Creed

itself. But if you are inclined to the orthodoxy of that creed, you need not be discouraged. You are fighting the same battle that was fought by Irenaeus, and Polycarp, and Paul, and John. And you have no more reason to be ashamed of it than they had. The simple faith is still "foolishness" to the Greeks; but science and philosophy are making no stronger bluff today than they did eighteen centuries ago. The simple faith is still greater than the wisdom of men. It may be more attractive to the rich and the great, but it is still the gospel of the poor. It is not a prize for study or learning, but is still equally accessible to all men. It is in sum and substance the simple, yet infinite belief that,

So the Word had breath, and wrought  
· With human hands the creed of creeds,  
In loveliness of perfect deeds,  
More strong than all poetic thought;

Which he may read that binds the sheaf,  
Or builds the house, or digs the grave,  
And those wild eyes that watch the wave  
In roarings round the coral reef.

## THE VIRGIN BIRTH.

There is no doctrine of the Christian church that has been assailed, from the beginning, more aggressively and persistently than that of the Virgin birth of Jesus Christ. And it is entirely natural that it should have been questioned. When it was announced to Mary, her answering question indicated her belief in its impossibility. Joseph did not believe it until its truth was especially revealed to him. What wonder then that outsiders questioned it; and that this and its twin doctrine of the Incarnation were the storm centers of the heresies in the church before the New Testament was written? It was this fact that caused them to be immovably fixed in the Apostles Creed, or the baptismal formula that preceded it. Today they are doctrines of the Catholic church, the Greek church, and of all Protestant churches that accept the Apostles Creed.

The real wonder is not that it was questioned, but from what source it could have originated if it were an invention of man; for the idea was absolutely novel at the time of its origin. And this fact must be kept in mind in the consideration of the scrip-

tural basis of the doctrine, for it is not possible to comprehend language except in the light of the conditions of its use, and the state of knowledge at the time of its use. At this period neither the Jews nor any other people had any idea of reproduction except through the cohabitation of a male and a female. In Jewish thought all life was created by male and female, and all life was so preserved in Noah's ark. This idea was universal for centuries, and it is only in comparatively recent times that science has made us acquainted with the myriad forms of asexual and bisexual life that have existed all the time. To the older atheists and skeptics reproduction without the connection of male and female was contrary to the laws of nature. To the modern materialist and evolutionist sex is merely a matter of development, subject to remarkable variations, which are manifest in many common forms.

The most commonly understood instance is that of the honey bee. With this insect the queen, or one perfect female in the hive, has connection with males, but the seminal fluid is deposited in a sac in her body,

and is applied at her will to such eggs as she chooses. The eggs that are not fructified hatch male bees, or drones, only. The fructified eggs hatch imperfect females, or workers. If a queen is kept from her hymeneal flight by clipping her wings, her eggs hatch males only. If she makes her flight with males of a different variety, the workers hatched are hybrids, but the drones are pure-blooded. If it becomes desirable to have an additional queen, the workers secure this result by enlarging a cell in which one of the fructified eggs has been deposited, and feeding the larva with a special kind of food, whereupon it develops into a perfect female. Occasionally a worker, whose organs do not permit connection with a male, will lay eggs, and such eggs always hatch males.

But in the case of the bee there are males present, and fructification may be imagined to occur in some unknown way. A still more conclusive example of the "miracle" of virgin birth may be seen by anyone, in the late spring or early summer, by stepping unto a garden and observing a colony of plant lice, which, unhappily, may be found in almost



any garden. At that season these insects are all wingless, and all females. The eggs are fructified in the female by some process of her own, and the young are hatched within her, and brought forth alive. As their reproduction is very rapid, several individuals may be seen in the act of giving birth at almost any time. But stranger still, later in the season the winged plant lice appear among them, and these are both male and female, which cohabit as other insects; and the females lay eggs that remain inactive during the winter, and hatch new broods of wingless females in the spring. The appearance of the winged insects is apparently due to a change of temperature, for if the colony is in a greenhouse or other warm location, they do not appear. By keeping them in such surroundings, a colony has been kept for four years, in a state of continued reproduction, without any males among them, and presumably, this might be continued for an indefinite period.

So contrary was this to the universal opinion of the time, that when Bonnet announced, in 1745, the discovery of the successive generation of virgin plant lice, it was utterly

discredited; and nearly a century passed before the fact was fully confirmed and recognized by scientists as to these and other forms of life. At the present time, not only is parthenogenesis a well-known phase of nature, but in some of the lower organisms fructification has been accomplished artificially, by scientists, through physical and chemical agencies. In view of these unquestionable truths, seventeen centuries of revilings of the Virgin Birth as contrary to the laws of nature may forthwith be consigned to the waste-paper basket.

The Jews and other peoples of the time of Christ never dreamed of such things as these. The idea of a virgin birth was equally foreign to the Hebrew scriptures and the pagan mythologies. In the latter there are numerous cases of alleged divine fatherhood, but in all of them the divinity assumes so an earthly form, and has physical connection with the mother. The nearest approach to it in classic mythology is the birth of Perseus, in which case Jove fell as a shower of gold into the lap of Danae. The New Testament writers were dealing with a new proposition; and from the purely historical standpoint,

this ignorance of the existing wonders of nature in reproduction will explain why no one of them calls attention to the fulfillment of this prophecy of Jeremiah (xxxi, 22): "Turn again, O Virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities. How long wilt thou go about, O thou blacksliding daughter? for the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth. A woman shall compass a man." The word rendered "compass" means to "include." Critics have cudgeled their brains over this passage for years, but there has never been any plausible explanation found for it except the teaching of the Catholic church that it is a prophecy of the Virgin Birth—a woman shall include a man—the female shall give birth without any connection with a male.

It may be objected that such a lack of conception of a virgin birth is not consistent with Matthew's adoption of Isaiah's sign: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." It is hardly questionable that the Jews did not regard this as a Messianic prophecy; and it is certain that none of them understood it to mean that a virgin should conceive and bear

a son while she remained a virgin. They applied these words to the son of the prophetess described in the following chapter, though his name was not called Immanuel, or God With Us, either by his mother or by anyone else, but Maher-shalal-hash-baz, or Hastening to the Spoil. Moreover the prophecy continues, with an appearance of strange inconsistency, as to this Immanuel: "And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many shall stumble thereon, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken. Bind thou up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. And I will wait for Jehovah, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him. \* \* \* For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold

it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even forever. \* \* \* And it shall come to pass in that day, that the root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek."

What had the obscure and insignificant Maher-shalal-hash-baz to do with this eternal kingdom? If this prophecy was not fulfilled in Jesus Christ, it has never been fulfilled. And so of all the other prophecies. Of the dozens of professed Messiahs who have arisen during the ages, not one has fulfilled any Messianic prophecy. This is the consensus of the world. The Jew stands today still awaiting the Messiah, but in doubt whether the Messiah is to be a person or a time—a period of restoration.

In regard to the Hebrew word "almah" which is here rendered "virgin," no one can fairly dispute the Jewish contention that it commonly signifies only an unmarried young woman of marriageable age. The significant points in the controversy as to the word are these: Matthew took his statement of the text from the Septuagint, which presented the impartial judgment of seventy of the most distinguished Hebrew scholars

of the period immediately preceding its use, as to the meaning of the word in this connection. In the Septuagint are two places, and only two, where "almah" is translated "parthenos" or "virgin." One is in the case of Rebekah at the well (Gen. xxiv, 43) and the other this passage in Isaiah. In the passage in Proverbs, "the way of a man with a maid," which is often cited by Hebrew authorities against this use of the word, the Septuagint reads "bealmaiv," and translates, "the way of a man in his youth," which is much more consistent with the remainder of the passage. But the expression in Isaiah is "ha almah," or "the virgin," indicating a special significance; and as a "sign," the birth of a son to "a young woman" could not be a surprising thing to Ahaz, or to anyone else. Under these circumstances, the impartial judgment of the Seventy, before the present question arose, is certainly not an authority that is to be set aside lightly.

In the phases of the modern assault on the divinity of Jesus, the attack on the Virgin Birth has taken a new form, in the alleged "silence of the scriptures" on the subject, out-

side of the opening chapters of Matthew and Luke. This argument is stated by Dr. Orr (*The Virgin Birth of Christ*, p. 91) as follows: "Why, it is asked, if the miraculous birth is a fact pertaining to the essence of the Gospel, do we never hear any more about it? Matthew and Luke themselves are silent about it after the first chapters; the other Gospels, Mark's and John's, are devoid of all trace of it; there is no whisper of it in the Book of Acts; Paul and Peter, the epistle to the Hebrews, the Book of Revelation, all are silent about it."

The truth of these claims is a question of the meaning of language, and it is not essential to identity of thought that the same words should always be used. The doctrine of the Virgin Birth involves two essentials; the fatherhood of God, and the motherhood of a Virgin, the latter excluding the possibility of an ordinary earthly fatherhood. It is not questioned that Mary was Christ's mother; and she was the one member of His family who appears to have given full credit to His claims during His ministry. She was present at the crucifixion, and she was with the disciples on the day of Pentecost.

The real point of assault is the fatherhood of God; and in what respect are the Evangelists silent as to this? Without doubt their most important statements are their records of the statements of the Master, and as to these it is necessary to consider but one in this connection.

Why was Jesus crucified? Was it because He claimed to be the Son of God in the same sense as all other men? Was it because He claimed to be specially endowed by God, or inspired as the prophets had been? Unquestionably not. The one controlling question at His trial was that put by the High Priest: "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou art the Christ, the Son of God." The wording of the answer varies, but there is no variance in its import. The High Priest pronounced it blasphemy, and all present agreed with him. Jesus made no objection to their interpretation of His words. It so happens that the two Evangelists who are said to be silent as to the miraculous birth are the ones who are most explicit at this point. Mark puts the question and answer in these words: "Art thou the Christ, the



Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, "I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." John alone records the charge preferred by the Jews to Pilate: "We have a law, and by that law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God." What room for argument here? It was not blasphemy at the Jewish law to claim to be a specially endowed man. It was not blasphemy to claim to be a prophet. If his claim were no more than that, He was not only going to death unnecessarily; but He was deceiving His accusers, for they certainly understood Him to claim more. He could have stopped it all—saved His life, and prevented their crime—by a word. And He knew it. If He did not mean that He was the Son of God as no other man present, or in the world, was—if He did not mean to make a claim that was blasphemy under the Jewish law, if it were not true—what merit was there in thus accepting the truth of the charge, and submitting to death? What excuse was there for such a course?

It is noteworthy in this connection that

neither Mark nor John gives any account whatever of the childhood of Jesus, and neither gives his earthly genealogy. Matthew and Luke give genealogies which, on their face, are hopelessly in conflict. Matthew makes Joseph, the putative father of Jesus, the son of Jacob, and derives his descent from David through Solomon. Luke, in our version, appears to make Joseph the son of Heli, and derives his descent from David through Nathan. But neither states that Joseph "begat" Jesus, or was the father of Jesus; or that Jesus was the son of Joseph. Matthew says that: "Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." Luke says that Jesus, "when he began to teach, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli." It has naturally been inferred that what Luke gives is the genealogy of Mary, which would be indicated if the arbitrary punctuation were changed as follows: "was about thirty years of age, (being as was supposed the son of Joseph) the son of Heli," etc.

There is a singular misapprehension as

to this interpretation of this genealogy in Luke. Dr. Orr says: "the idea is a modern one." (*The Virgin Birth of Christ*, p. 75) Dr. Plummer more explicitly asserts: "It is probable that so obvious a solution, as that one was the pedigree of Joseph and the other the pedigree of Mary, would have been very soon advocated, if there had been any reason (except the difficulty) for adopting it. But this solution is not suggested by anyone until Anninus of Viterbo propounded it, about A. D. 1490." (*International Critical Commentary*, Luke, p. 103.) As a matter of fact, this interpretation was given at length in the second century by Irenaeus, in his work against heresies (Book 3, chaps. 21, 22), as if it were a matter of common understanding in the church at that time. He also gives a very sufficient reason for it by pointing out that the Messiah could not come through Joseph's line, as given by Matthew, because it came through Jechoniah and Joachim, who had been cursed, and whose descendants had been excluded from the succession. Irenaeus argues that as the promise to David was that the Messiah should be "of the fruit of his

body," 2 Sam. vii, 12; Ps. 132, 11, and not "of the fruit of his loins," descent through a female was indicated. He also gives the meaning of Paul's statement that Adam was "the figure of Him that was to come," to be that he was not begotten of man, but was made by the direct act of God. It is of interest to note in this connection that Jewish writers recognize two distinct genealogies as seeming to be given for Noah, in the fourth and fifth chapters of Genesis, one showing descent from Shem, and the other from Cain. The latter is explained by some Jewish authorities as being the genealogy of Naamah, the sister of Tubal Cain, who is said to have been Noah's wife. (Jewish Encyc. Titles, Genealogy and Noah.)

How do Mark and John dispose of genealogy? Mark sums it up in his opening words: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." John, likewise, refers only to the divine fatherhood: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. \* \* \* And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us." After their opening statements both pass at once to the baptism of

Jesus, which was the beginning of his gospel. There was nothing unnatural in this. The calling of the Apostles was to preach the gospel and it was unquestionably taught by word of mouth long before it was reduced to writing. The gospel of Mark was presumably the first written, and it purports to be the gospel only, in its opening words: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ." Matthew and Luke presumably added their opening chapters to explain how Jesus, who was taught by all to be the Son of God, came to be known as the son of Joseph. This having been fully done by them, there was no occasion for a repetition of it by John.

The mere fact that a historical writer deals only with a certain period raises no presumption as to his view of things in other periods, unless it be of assent to what is commonly accepted concerning them. If the fact that all of the Evangelists devote most of their attention to the teachings of Jesus, before and after his resurrection, reflects any discredit on the record of his birth, which is made by only two of them, what should be said of a History of England—that makes no mention of King Alfred the Great,

on one hand and King George the Third, on the other? That is the case as to Macaulay's History of England; but no sane person imagines that it implies any disbelief in, or ignorance of, those monarchs. To argue that the omission of Mark and John to record the birth of Jesus implies discredit of the records of Matthew and Luke is no more reasonable than to contend that it implies that he was not born of woman at all, as was claimed by some of the Gnostics.

But all of the Evangelists do speak of Mary as the mother of Jesus, and of God as his father, in the plainest terms, and these are the essential features of the divine birth. Mark records in his first chapter the witness of the voice from heaven at his baptism: "Thou art my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." Later in the same chapter is the testimony of the unclean spirit, "I know thee who thou art, the Holy one of God." In the second chapter he records Christ's declaration: "The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath." In the third chapter another unclean spirit testifies: "Thou art the Son of God." In the fifth chapter a third unclean spirit cries: "What

have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God?" In the ninth chapter is the account of the transfiguration, with the heavenly witness, "This is my beloved Son." And finally, when nature trembled at the death of the Lord, he records the confession of the centurion: "Truly this man was the Son of God."

As to the testimony of "unclean spirits," it is of course now the common belief that demoniacal possession was merely some form of mental or other derangement, and that these speeches were of the demoniacs, and not of evil spirits that possessed them. But this does not lessen the sincerity of the testimony of Mark, who apparently believed in evil spirits which took possession of men; and who regarded their recognition that Jesus was the Son of God as supernatural. It is notable that John's gospel makes no mention of casting out devils, though he records that the Jews said of Christ: "He hath a demon and is mad." It is also striking that Jesus, in his answer to the disciples of John the Baptist, makes no mention of casting out evil spirits, although he names specifically the other work per-

formed in their presence. What inference may be drawn from this as to the extent to which he accommodated himself to the manner of speech of the time, is a matter of speculation; but it cannot be fairly questioned that Mark held the common view, or that his record was intended to convey his faith in the divinity of Christ.

The language of John is even more explicit. In his opening words, he says: "And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." This expression, "the only begotten of the Father," or "the only begotten Son," is used repeatedly by John, and it is not capable of any rational interpretation but the fatherhood of God, limited exclusively to Jesus Christ. Throughout John's gospel are the strongest declarations of Jesus as to his relations to his Father in his teachings, as well as special express statements. To the Samaritan woman who said: "I know that Messiah cometh, he that is called Christ," Jesus answered: "I that speak unto thee am he." When the blind man asked who is the Son of God, he answered: "He it is that speak-



eth with thee." To the Jews who would have stoned him, he said: "Say ye of him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?"

It would indeed be strange if the book of The Acts were silent on this matter, for it was written by Luke, and addressed to the same person to whom his gospel was addressed. It opens with a reference to that gospel as a record of "all that Jesus began both to do and to teach." It follows the former communication naturally, beginning with the promise of "the Father," revealed by Jesus, that the Holy Spirit should descend on his disciples, and the fulfillment of that promise. Thereafter it is the record of men who, as he says, "hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." And this hazard was, as he records of Paul, that they "proclaim Jesus, that he is the Son of God."

Immediately following the day of Pentecost come the two sermons of Peter, another of those who are said to be "silent." In these he speaks of God's "Son," alternating this title with "the Holy and Righteous

One," "the Prince of Life," "the Prophet" foretold of prophets. And when Peter and John "came to their own company" they united with one accord in the prayer of thanks for "the Holy Child, Jesus." It is true that the revised version makes these words "Son" and "Child" read "Servant," but the alternative translation is only a question of context. Mary herself was with them there, and they were all "of one heart and soul." It was Luke who made the record, and in his gospel he was the one who spoke always of "the child," and recorded the prophecy: "Thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Most High." It was he who made the record: "the Holy Thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God." Does not the old version present the more rational choice of words?

Note here the reverence with which this conception is always spoken of, and its freedom from the grossness of all pagan ideas of divine fatherhood. Paul, who is also one of the "silent," writes to the Galatians: "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman."

In the common belief in the unity of the Holy Trinity, he varies this expression in his epistle to the Philippians, and says: "Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man."

And so he writes to the Romans of "his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." It is fully manifest that the primitive church held the same pure and sacred ideal of the conception and birth of Jesus that is expressed by Ignatius in his epistle to the Trallians: "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was descended from David, and was also of Mary; who was truly begotten of God and of the Virgin, but not after the same manner. For indeed God and man are not the same."

Among the New Testament epistles, that to the Hebrews stands apart in its unknown authorship and its special appeal to the Old Testament. It opens: "God, who at sundry

times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." Then come, a few verses later, these words: "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him." What is this if not a reference to the angel hymn of the nativity? Then he develops his argument that Moses was faithful as a servant, "but Christ as a Son;" and that "it behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest," of that unique priesthood of Melchizedek, "without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life but made like unto the Son of God."

But if these men believed that Jesus was the Son of God, why did they not put greater stress on the circumstances of his birth? In a historical investigation of any other

documents, one would naturally look for the answer to such a question in the purpose of the writings. Obviously the chief purpose of the New Testament scriptures, and of the preaching of the Apostles, was to convince men of the divine mission of Christ. And this was a vast undertaking. The whole scheme of Christianity as we understand it was absolutely novel and startling to Jewish thought. The doctrines of the Incarnation and the Holy Trinity were as foreign to the Jewish mind as the doctrine of the Virgin Birth. They did not look for Messiah as God manifest in the flesh, but as a specially endowed man who was to be the chosen representative of God. The idea of a reviled, abused, rejected and crucified Messiah was apparently as far from the thoughts of the disciples while Jesus was living as it was from the expectation of other Jews.

It was only after his death that they had any comprehension of his real mission, for as Cleopas said: "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." It was not until after the risen Christ had explained to them that "all things must

be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me," and after he had "opened their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures," that they began to see the application of the many predictions of the "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." And this understanding was further developed in accordance with the promise: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things." It is very clear that while the miracles and the teachings of Jesus convinced his disciples that he was the Messiah anticipated by the Jews, it was his resurrection and the visitation of the Holy Spirit, beginning on the day of Pentecost, that convinced them that he was the Messiah from the Christian point of view. In any effort to convince others, it is the natural course for men to rely on the arguments that convince themselves.

It is noteworthy that there is not a single instance where Christ himself referred to his birth as an evidence of his divinity. His claim was based on three grounds, the works he performed, his teaching, and the fulfill-

ment of prophecy. The multitudes at Lys-tra were ready to worship Paul and Barnabas after one miracle, but Jesus recognized the inefficiency of his works to overcome the prejudice of the Jews in his words: "If the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which were done in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes." To his evidence there were added in apostolic times his resurrection and the witness of the Holy Spirit, and these remain the effective arguments for Christianity to this day. It is doubtful that any person was ever converted by the story of the birth of Jesus.

But there are manifestly secondary purposes in the several books of the New Testament. On its face, Matthew's gospel was written with a special view of showing the fulfillment of prophecy. On its face John's gospel was written with a special view of meeting heresies that had arisen in the church. Luke expressly declares the special purpose of his gospel to Theophilus, "that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed." Theophilus was presumably a Greek con-

vert, who, perhaps with others, had need of a full statement of all the evidences of the faith from the beginning. Luke had been with Paul, and their instruction must have been the same. And there must have been much of that instruction that is merely referred to in Paul's epistles, for he exhorts the Colossians to be "stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught," and the Thessalonians to "hold the traditions ye have been taught," and indeed most of the epistles indicate the preference expressed by John to "speak face to face." It follows then that the gospel of Luke covers the things that were taught by Paul. And, likewise, Paul, if he believed that Jesus was the Son of God, as he repeatedly says he did, could not have said to the Jews of Antioch, concerning David, "Of this man's seed hath God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus," unless he believed with Luke that Mary was of the lineage of David.

As a matter of evidence, it is apparent that the record of the miraculous events attending the birth of Jesus rests primarily on the testimony of Mary, and secondarily on the testimony of Joseph. If the facts to



which they testified stood alone, their evidence, in all probability, would have received scant credence; because the story was so extraordinary, and was so easy of fabrication. There could be no testimony to the Virgin Birth but theirs. But as to the teachings and the works of Christ, the early church was "compassed about with a cloud of witnesses." And the Apostles regarded these evidences sufficient, as Christ himself did, or he said to John's disciples: "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see." So to the Jews: "The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me;" and again: "If I do not the works of my Father believe me not." And to Philip: "Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me, or else believe me for the very work's sake."

Paul was an eminently practical man, and as a logician who aimed at results he devoted himself to the effective arguments. It is evident that to him the strongest argument for the truth of Christianity was his own conversion, and he used this effectively, because his persecution of the Christians prior to his conversion was notorious. In-

deed to the present time, the personal experience of conversion, and the witness of the Holy Spirit, which make the convert able to say: "I know that my Redeemer liveth," are the most convincing evidences known; and anyone who is at all familiar with practical Christianity is familiar with this fact. In the writings of Paul and the other epistles, there is no occasion to expect anything in reference to the Virgin Birth, except the use of language that is in harmony with it; and that abounds.

But while it was of little force as evidence, the Virgin Birth was an important truth for the edification, confirmation, and comfort of those who had accepted the faith, and who desired to know more of the wonderful divine incarnation. In all the history of the church, it is doubtful if any other one thing has so impressed the humanity of Jesus on his followers as the story of the Christ child, or if any other one thing has made greater impress on the spirit of Christianity than the angel chorus of "Peace on earth, good will to men." And if these are taken away, how much goes with them! If Mary's story be not true, the one histor-

ical alternative is the ancient Jewish slander of an unchaste love, for the scripture record is plain that Joseph was not the father of Jesus. If she deceived her husband and her Son, and all his followers in this, all the rest of the story is equally false—the annunciation, the wise men, the shepherds, Elizabeth, Zacharias, Simeon, Anna, all must go. The Magnificat, the Nunc Dimittis, the Angel Song, are but the phantasies of a lying harlot. More than this, if Jesus Christ were not indeed the Son of God, he died to perpetuate the falsehood. And if his disciples were not convinced that he was the Son of God, they gave up lives of peaceful security, and accepted hardships and persecution, and death, to hand the falsehood down to the millions who have followed them. One can understand how an unbeliever can accept this alternative; but it is not easy to understand how any human mind can imagine it as presenting “a nobler ideal of the Christ.”

## THE PASSING OF DARWINISM.

Of all the tyrannies that oppress mankind,  
The worst are those that tyrannize the mind.

So wrote the poet. Whether he had in mind the tyranny of scientific theories, I cannot say; but he might well have had them in mind. Science, theoretically, is knowledge, and the science of each age is what passes for knowledge in that age. Heretofore a considerable part of the science of every age has been the exposed error of succeeding ages, and presumably this will continue to be the case for some ages to come. Of course the scientist is an extremely important factor in human progress, and unquestionably we are indebted to him for the larger part of the knowledge we possess; but he is not infallible. Losing sight of this, the great majority of mankind, in each age, accept the "teachings of science" without much question, for the simple reason that they know that the scientists know more than they do, and they accept these dicta with little thought or investigation of their own.

Most of the untruths thus accepted are theories, as distinguished from recorded observations, for your scientist usually gets the habit of asserting a theory that satisfies his mind with the same assurance that he states an observed fact. Still there are numerous instances of untruths advanced as observed facts, for there are always scientists who are credulous of untruth and incredulous of truth. As an amusing illustration of this, which came within my personal knowledge, Prof. Alexander Winchell, in his valuable work entitled "World Life" (pp. 14, 15), gives an account of a meteor falling through a house, and through the body of one Leonidas Grover, who was sleeping there. He says he took the story from the Indianapolis Journal; and the original account there states that the meteor was not found until the next day by people who slept in the house that night, that it was still hot when it was found, and that it still bore the blood-stains of Grover. As a matter of fact there was no such man, and no such event. The story was a newspaper hoax, which was fully exposed within a week of its publication. It was absurd on its face, for meteors do

not fall perpendicularly, and in passing through the atmosphere they become intensely heated, often being entirely consumed. That one should fall through inflammable material without setting fire to it, and should retain blood-stains, is so preposterous that it might well challenge the skepticism of any scientist. But it did not, and possibly Prof. Winchell's readers are still accepting it.

Practically, it matters little if people do believe such a thing as this, for they are quite as happy in their ignorance; but occasionally we find an accepted scientific theory which is false, and which is more serious in its effects on mankind. Of this class the most tremendous air-bubble of all the ages is what is commonly known as Darwinism. It began when Charles Darwin returned in H. M. S. Beagle, in 1836, with his "ship-load of knowledge," though it did not attract very general notice until he published his later works, chiefly devoted to the effects of domestication on animals; and its cloud still hangs over us. There are thousands of fairly intelligent people who still accept the Darwinian theories as established facts, and

doubtless there will be such for many years to come. These theories formed the basis of religious controversy for years. Atheists, skeptics and materialists hailed them as knocking the bible account of creation "higher than Beecher's Life of Christ." Alarmed and angry theologians hastened to assail them, but while these were strong in satire and ridicule they were hopelessly weak in scientific information, and in consequence they were visibly routed, until it occurred to some of the more thoughtful that there was not necessarily anything inconsistent with religion in the theory of evolution—that if the omnipotent desired to create a universe by evolutionary processes it was just as easy to do it in that way as by a direct fiat of creation; and this is the theory most generally accepted today. Indeed some theologians have reached the point where they champion evolution in everything as the only rational mode of divine procedure, and it would not be surprising to see it introduced as an article of faith in some new creed.

It is only fair to Darwin to say that he was not responsible for all of this. He of-

ferred no theory of the origin of life. He said he had "nothing to do with the origin of the soul, nor with that of life itself." His theories were concerned only with the modes of descent, or development, from primary forms. He says: "I imagine that probably all organic beings which ever lived on this earth descended from some primitive form which was first called into life by the creator." He also quotes with approval the letter of a divine who wrote that he had "gradually learned to see that it is just as noble a conception of the Deity to believe that he created a few original forms capable of self-development into other and needful forms, as to believe that he required a fresh act of creation to supply the voids caused by the action of his laws."

But this modest position was not satisfactory to many of Darwin's followers, and notably to Haeckel, who is perhaps more widely known than any of the others, and whose views probably more nearly represent the popular conception of Darwinism than those of Darwin himself. Haeckel was an avowed materialist. He rejected any supernatural influence in the development of



the world or of anything in it, from the period of nebulous gas to the present. To him, life was simply a matter of spontaneous generation. And he was gracious enough to reval to the world just how it was developed from the "urschleim," or protoplasm, which he calmly identifies with albumen—though there is no such thing known to science as albumen that is not the product of living organism. This is his method:

The most important process is the formation of a kernel or nucleus in the simple little lump of albumen. We can conceive this to take place in a purely physical manner by the condensation of the innermost central part of the albumen. The more solid central mass, which at first gradually shaded off into the peripheral plasma, became sharply separated from it, and thus forms an independent, round, albuminous corpuscle; and by this process the Moneron becomes a cell.

\* \* \* In the same way as the kernel of the organic cell arose in the interior or central mass of the originally homogeneous lump of plasma, by separation, so, too, the first cell membrane was formed on its surface. This simple, but most important process, as has already been remarked, can likewise be explained in a purely physical manner, either as a chemical deposit, or as a phys-

ical condensation in the uppermost stratum of the mass, or as a secretion. One of the first processes of adaptation effected by the Moneron, originating by spontaneous generation, must have been the condensation of an external crust, which as a protecting covering shut in the softer interior from the hostile influences of the outer world. As soon as by condensation of the homogeneous Moneron a cell-kernel arose in the interior, and a membrane arose on the surface, all the fundamental parts of the unit were furnished, out of which, by infinitely manifold repetition and combination, as attested by actual observation, the body of the higher organisms is constructed.

This is the great Haeckel's explanation of the origin of life—an explanation that has actually been accepted by people who think they are thinking beings—but if you will read it over carefully you will see that it does not mention the origin of life at all. It does not offer a suggestion of a suspicion of an explanation of the origin of life. It does nothing but state that a nodule may be formed of inorganic matter, with a harder crust about it, by chemical or physical processes; all of which is very true. But you are no nearer life with your nodule than you were before. You may pick up hundreds of such nodules of clay in the gravel of our streams; but

they are just as dead and just as inorganic as any other clay.

Moreover, other scientists have not been satisfied with a theory of spontaneous generation. They have tried to effect it in fact but every effort, from those of Huxley in the glacial regions to hundreds of others in the laboratories, has failed; and spontaneous generation is now abandoned, even by believers in the theory of descent, to the cemetery of "waiting for more light." The question of the origin of life is simply pushed to one side; and yet life is the great essential of the theory of descent itself. For the present, at least, science has to treat as a fact the proposition that inanimate matter does not progress or retrograde. So far as we have any evidence, it is the same yesterday, today and forever. It knows neither ascent nor descent. And so the materialist scientist, who rejects any consideration of supernatural interposition, stands, at the outset, baffled by the question of the cause of the process by which he avers creation to have been effected. Nobody knows what life is or whence it comes, or whither it goes, any more than he knows the nature of God.

But Haeckel took two other positions, and they are positions to which the materialist is irresistibly driven. The first is that there is no such thing as "life," other than as a property of all matter. He says: "We thus arrive at the extremely important conviction that all natural bodies which are known to us are equally animated, that the distinction which has been made between animate and inanimate bodies does not exist. When a stone is thrown into the air, and falls to earth according to definite laws, or when in a solution of salt a crystal is formed, the phenomenon is neither more nor less a mechanical manifestation of life than the growth and flowering of plants, than the propagation of animals or the activity of their senses, than the perception or the formation of thought in man. This final triumph of the monistic conception of nature constitutes the highest and most general merit of the Theory of Descent, as reformed by Darwin."

This thought, not of Darwin, but of the great Haeckel—the wonderful German philosopher, biologist, scientist—was fully adopted by the small boy who brought in a

dead cat, and exclaimed: "Mamma, here is a perfectly good cat that 'someone has left in our alley.'" "Right," says Haeckel, "every atom of matter is in it that was there before it died. Life is not gone. If you throw it up in the air it will fall just the same as a stone." This is "the final triumph of the monistic conception"—a dead cat is a live cat. But the genial materialist overlooks one point. If you threw that cat up in the air, when it was alive, it would light on its feet; but if you threw it up after death, it would light "any old way."

Second, Haeckel denies any purpose in nature,—says it "no more exists than the much-talked-of beneficence of the Creator;" that "if we contemplate the common life and the material relations between plants and animals (man included), we shall find everywhere, and at all times, the very opposite of that kindly and peaceful social life which the goodness of the Creator ought to have prepared for his creatures—we shall rather find everywhere a pitiless, most embittered struggle of All against All." Quite possibly Haeckel could have arranged the universe more satisfactorily; but no Dar-

winian really rejects purpose in nature, and Haeckel accepts it as fully as any, under the name of adaption. In the quotation above as to the development of the Moneron, he says that one of its "first processes" was the formation of an external crust or cell membrane. Why? He says "for a protective covering, to shut in the softer interior from the hostile influences of the outer world." That is the purpose of the cell membrane; and the whole theory of development is built on the purpose, or supposed purpose, of forms, organs and other characteristics. The real difference between the materialistic and deistic conceptions of nature is that the former holds these characteristics to have been developed unconsciously by the organism itself, to meet its needs—to serve these purposes; while the latter holds them to have been created by an intelligent power to serve the same purposes.

This is especially observable in Darwin, for his whole argument is that because certain changes have been produced by breeding in animals, and cultivation in plants, through the intelligence of man interposed for the purpose of producing these results,

similar results might have been attained by animal and plant organisms without any interposition. Haeckel makes the proper distinction that Darwin did not originate the theory of descent, but makes this claim for him: "He has established a new theory which reveals to us the natural causes of organic development, the acting, (efficient) causes of organic form production, and of the changes and transformations of animal and vegetable species. This is the Theory of Selection, or more accurately the Theory of Natural Selection, \* \* \* which shows us why this progressive transformation of organic forms took place, and what causes, acting mechanically, effected the uninterrupted production of new forms, and the ever increasing variety of animals and plants. Darwin's immortal merit cannot be justly estimated until a later period, when the Theory of Development, after overthrowing all other theories of creation, will be recognized as the supreme principle of explanation in anthropology, and consequently in all other science."

How cocksure is this foremost exponent of Darwinism! He leaves his avowed one

and only basis of scientific proof, and essays the role of a prophet. And yet, it is precisely this theory of development—this theory of natural selection—that has been assailed and torn to pieces; not by clergymen; not by popular orators; but by biologists, botanists, zoologists, paleontologists; and these largely German materialists. For it is the redeeming grace of science that it constantly seeks for evidence, and though it accepts a theory as plausible today, it abandons it as readily tomorrow if it fails to hinge with known facts.

In 1903, Dr. Dennert, of Stuttgart, collected the views of contemporary scientists, under the title, "Vom Sterbelager des Darwinismus;" and said: "What I seek to show in these statements is the fact that Darwinism now almost belongs to the past—to history—that we stand by its death-bed, and that even its friends are endeavoring to secure for it at least a decent burial." In 1907, Prof. Kellogg, of Leland Stanford University, in his book "Darwinism Today," protested against this as too sweeping, yet practically admitted its truth. He says: "It is precisely the German biologists who are



most active in this undermining of the Darwinian theories. But there are others with them; Holland, Russia, Italy, France, and our own country all contribute their quota of disturbing questions and declarations of protest and revolt. The English seem most inclined to uphold the glory of their illustrious countryman. But there are rebels even there. Altogether it may be stated with full regard to facts that a major part of the current published output of general biological discussions, theoretical treatises, addresses and brochures dealing with the great evolutionary problems, is distinctly anti-Darwinian in character. This major part of the status of evolution and its causes, its factors and mechanism, by working biologists and thinking natural philosophers, reveals a lack of belief in the effectiveness or capacity of the natural selection theory to serve as a sufficient causo-mechanical explanation of species-forming and evolution. \* \* \* The fair truth is that the Darwinian selection theories, considered with regard to their claimed capacity to be an independently sufficient mechanical explanation

of descent, stand today seriously discredited in the biological world."

The Darwinian theories proper may be summed up in two propositions: First, by artificial selection—breeding and cultivation—such changes have been produced in animals and plants that the resultant forms would be classed as new species, if the process and causes of change were not known. Second, the changes produced by artificial selection might be duplicated, equaled, or even exceeded by natural selection—chiefly through the influences of sexual selection, heredity, and survival of the fittest.

The first proposition looks almost axiomatic, but on scientific consideration it is found to have little basis except in minor and non-essential variants of form, color and the like, which naturally appeal to the senses. For example, would anyone, not knowing the facts, say that the Poodle and the Great Dane were of the same species or the Manx cat and the Angora, or the Bantam chicken and the Shanghai, or the draft horse and the Shetland pony, or the pound pippin and the wild crab-apple? Certainly not from appearance; but that is not the determinant of

species. The word "species" is somewhat indefinite in meaning and application; and in various cases some naturalists class certain animals and plants as different species when others make them only varieties. The old definition of "species" was a class of animals or plants that might reasonably be supposed to have descended from a common ancestor. The one now most generally accepted involves the same idea in another form—a class of animals that have the capacity for indefinite, fertile interbreeding. Thus the horse and the ass interbreed, but their progeny are not fertile; and consequently the horse is classed as *equus caballus*, and the ass as *equus asinus*.

On application of this test, no scientist would call the various breeds of domestic animals different species; for all of them, dogs, cats, horses, cattle, sheep, chickens, pigeons and rabbits, have the capacity for fertile interbreeding. Furthermore, all of these animals know their kind. Every dog recognizes any other dog as a dog, no matter what his race, color or previous condition of servitude. We can say, therefore, with assurance, that artificial selection,

through all the thousands of years of its known progress, has never produced a new species. And this is a vital point, for this was the boundary line that Darwin essayed to cross. The species line is the primary, the simplest point of division in animal and plant life. If that cannot be crossed—if the first step in the theory of development cannot be taken—the jump from protoplasm to man becomes an absurdity; and that first step has never been taken, either by nature or by the aid of man, so far as the world knows.

The results of artificial selection are not new species, but extreme variants; and these variants follow the same rule that natural variants follow, of reversion to the common or ancestral type. As soon as you stop what is called "pure breeding," and allow domesticated animals to mate by choice, interbreeding becomes common, and the progeny lose their varying features. Everybody has seen this in dogs and chickens. The same principle applies in the cultivation of plants. You can take the finest varieties of strawberries, and in a few years, without

proper cultivation, they will retrograde to the level of the common wild berry.

This principle of recurrence to the type is of great significance, for it is as fixed a rule of nature as variation, on which all breeding and cultivation is based. A certain, almost fixed, percentage of animals will vary from their parents in some respect. The study of these variations has established a new science, known as biometry. This word was originally applied to the measurement of duration of life, in compiling mortality tables, but now has a much broader application. This science has established the fact that, just as a practically fixed number of people, out of a thousand, will die in a given time, so, out of a thousand, a practically fixed number will vary from the medium, or type, in height, weight, and other characteristics. These tendencies to variation may be increased by changes of climate, soil, food, and other external conditions, but the inherent tendency, under the same conditions, is to recur to the type. These lines of investigation have been followed extensively in recent years in the systems of measurement in armies, in police records of criminals, and in

medical work, as to men. At the same time scientists have been examining and recording the details of variation in lower organisms with a patience and assiduity that are almost incredible. The result has been a general agreement in the regularity of the law of recurrence, as fully as in the law of variation; and that one about offsets the other.

None of Darwin's theories met readier acceptance than that of sexual selection. It hinged so fully with common ideas. Everybody was familiar with the brighter colors of many male birds, and many were aware that these colors often took on more than common brightness in the mating season. As Tennyson puts it:

In the spring a fuller crimson comes upon the  
    robin's breast;  
In the spring the wanton lapwing gets himself  
    another crest;  
In the spring a livelier iris changes on the bur-  
    nished dove;  
In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns  
    to thoughts of love.

What is all of this for if not to attract the female? That seems an evident purpose of

nature. Darwin did not point it out. He merely adopted a belief that had continued for centuries. And yet no theory has been more completely dropped, even by those who at first gave it warm support. As a matter of scientific observation, the female, in the lower animals, does very little selection. This is easily noted in barnyard fowls, in which the ornamentation of the males is marked. If there is any rivalry of the males, it is settled by a fight, and the female accepts the victor without regard to looks. In all his experience Darwin recorded eight instances in which he thought the female made a selection, and since then not over half a dozen cases have been recorded; all doubtful. This as to birds—the highest class of animals showing this color feature. Its most notable occurrences elsewhere are in reptiles, insects and fishes. It is almost inconceivable that these lower forms of life should have aesthetic tastes as to color, and especially enough to cause through countless generations a development of the favorite colors in the males. We commonly fancy such tastes in birds, but on our poetic side we have developed an estimate of the intelli-

gence of birds that has no foundation in fact. It is only in nursery rhymes that Jenny Wren is attracted by the plumage of Cock Robin. In real life she pays no attention to him, but mates with her little Quaker as if he were the only bird on earth.

When you pass lower in the scale, what imaginable effect could bright colors have on the female fish, which sometimes does not even see the male that fertilizes the spawn which she has left? We have throughout temperate America a notable example of this characteristic in the rainbow darter. It is a small fish, three or four inches long, and ordinarily of plain brown and white color; but in the mating season the male takes on a complete suit of purple and orange that makes it a typical representative of this phase of nature. No tropical fish is more brilliantly colored than the male rainbow darter in the mating season; but to say that its colors are the result of countless ages of selection by the female is inconceivable rot. The experiments of Douglass and Duerigen with lizards demonstrated that alterations of color in the males had no effect at all on their acceptance by the females; nor did disfigure-



ment, for tailless males were as readily accepted as any.

But the most convincing experiments in this line were those of Mayer with the *Promethea* moth, and later those of Mayer and Soule. The *Promethea* is one of our rather common large moths, whose larvae feed on the leaves of the sassafras, and which was grouped by Linnaeus with the silkworm moth, the *Luna*, and our common *Cecropia*, in the genus *Attacus*. The wings of the female *Promethea* are reddish brown and those of the male are much darker, which, by the sexual selection theory, would be due to the preference of the female for that color. Mayer collected 450 *Promethea* cocoons, and took them to Loggerhead Key, one of the Dry Tortugas, which is far out of the habitat of this moth, and where there could be no outside interference.

The male of this species seeks out the female, and is able to find her at quite a distance. Mayer's first task was to learn by what sense this was done, and to locate the sense. When the females were put in transparent glass jars, covered so that no odor could escape, the males could not find them

at all. When the same jars were covered only with netting, the females were found readily; and the same was true when the females were put in boxes or wrappings where they were not visible, but from which odors could escape. When the wings of females were cut off and the wings of males glued in their places, the males went to them just the same. When the wings of males were cut off, and wings of females glued in their places, the other males paid no attention to them whatever. Finally, a number of females were cut in two, and the abdomens put in one place, and the heads, thoraxes and wings in another. The males then went to the abdomens, and never to the other parts. It was thus conclusively shown that the male found the female by smell and not by sight.

The sense of smell was rightly guessed to be located in the antennae, and this was proven by covering the antennae of various males with shellac, photographic paste, glue or paraffin, whereupon these males could not find the females at all. When the wings of the males were removed, and wings of females put in their places, the females accepted them quite as readily; and so they did

when the males were left wholly wingless, and the scales all brushed off their bodies. These very conclusive experiments convinced Mayer that "the coloration of the male has not been brought about through the agency of sexual selection on the part of the female."

Later, Mayer and Soule repeated the experiments on a larger scale, and with variations. They took 1,500 *Promethea* cocoons, and of the males that hatched, the wings of about one-half were painted with red and green ink. They were accepted by the females as readily as the normal males, and sexual selection received another black eye. Similar experiments were tried with the moth *Porthetria dispar*, the male of which is brown and the female white; and with the same results. In consequence the items of color and sight as factors in mating must be dropped as to these moths; and, indeed, they may be safely dropped as to all moths, among which the color variations are very frequent, for the simple reason that they are nocturnal. It would be a strange provision of nature, on any theory, if the mating of a nocturnal animal were made dependent on color and sight.

In brief, so far as the experiment and observation of the last quarter of a century go, sexual selection may be pronounced a delusion and a myth; and it may be eliminated or disregarded as a factor in the acceleration of natural selection.

Without it, natural selection by the mating of variants falls back to the law of chance, and here we get to a mathematical basis. For example, if one individual of a species in 100 had a notable variation of a certain kind, out of 20,000 individuals there would be 200 with this variation. In the matings of these 20,000 individuals, by the law of chance, there would be 9,801 pairings of individuals that did not have the variations; 198 pairings of variants with non-variants; and a single pairing of variants. In other words, 99½ per cent of the original variation would be wiped out by the dilution of blood in the second generation. This is one of the chief factors in the law of recurrence to the type; and another equally important one is the conflict of variations. Variations are not in one direction, but in all directions. A certain proportion of the progeny of any generation will be larger

than the average, but an equal proportion will be smaller, and the tendency of this in subsequent matings is to make an offset, or, in other words, a recurrence to the type. The law of nature is not the development of new types, but the preservation of existing ones.

Strangely enough the Darwinian hypothesis of "survival of the fittest" has also been badly damaged, for this seemed the strongest of all his hypotheses. As a matter of common sense, why should not the strongest and best equipped for defense have the best chance of survival in the struggle for life? And yet we all know there have been thousands of decrepit fathers mourning their robust Absaloms—"O Absalom, my son, my son Absalom, would God that I had died for thee." But, you say, that was war. Of course it was war; and the whole basis of the evolution theory is that animal life is an unending, bitter, pitiless war—a struggle to the death for the perpetuation of life. And it is not only man that sends the strongest and best equipped to the front. All animals that resist danger do the same. It is the leader of the herd that goes to meet threatened danger; the one who has whipped the other

bucks, and demonstrated his superiority. And when the fittest is not on hand, the next best goes to the front. When a hen and her chicks are threatened, it is the hen that gives battle. The records of sportsmen show many similar cases. Even so shy and timid a bird as a mother woodcock, when surprised with her brood by the hunter, will pretend to be wounded, and fall and flutter almost within the hunter's reach, while her chicks are seeking places of safety. The world is so full of such things that we might use in more than one sense the poet's words:

Is it true, O Christ in heaven, that the strongest  
suffer most?

That the wisest wander farthest, and most hope-  
lessly are lost?

That the mark of rank in nature is capacity for  
pain?

That the anguish of the singer marks the sweet-  
ness of the strain?

But this is an individual aspect of survival that does not meet the broader Darwinian proposition of survival in convulsions of nature, when "fitness" must necessarily lie in power of endurance. When at college, my daily walk from my lodging took me past a

depression in a bit of woods. Every spring this depression filled with water, in which the frogs and toads of the neighborhood deposited their spawn, which duly developed into tadpoles. As the season advanced, and the tadpoles grew, the pond shrank. Finally the day would come when only a gallon or two of water was left, and it was alive with squirming, suffering tadpoles. The next day nothing was to be seen but a black mass of shriveled remains. Where was the advantage of the fittest in that struggle? Possibly the strongest ones may have lived half an hour longer than the others, but of what avail? It might be imagined that during the half hour a rain came up, and gave the pond enough water to carry the fittest through to froghood; but you could hardly imagine such a chance year after year until a superior type of frogs was produced.

Now this annual tragedy was a miniature of the vast recurrent cataclysms to which the theory of the survival of the fittest must be applied. Not only at the end of the geologic ages, but also at the close of numerous epochs of those ages, mighty convulsions of nature occurred, in which hundreds of

species of animals and vegetables were totally extinguished; and in the next following epochs many new species came into existence. The Darwinian proposition is that these new species were developed from variants of the old species that were best fitted to endure the shock. There has been little opportunity for practical study of this hypothesis, on account of the lack of cataclysms in the historic period. It is quite possible that man was on earth in the Glacial Period, and there are very widespread traditions of a deluge; but within historic time there is only one recorded outbreak of nature that destroyed a species. A West Indian hurricane, in 1898, is believed to have totally exterminated one species of humming-bird peculiar to the island of St. Vincent; but it is believed that the great eruptions of Krakatoa, in 1883, and of Mont Pelée in 1902, did not exterminate a single species of animal or plant.

Still there have been some scientific observations that throw light on the question, and the trend of these observations is directly opposite to the Darwinian hypothesis, which locates the "fittest" among the variants from the type. Perhaps the most



notable illustration is that recorded by Bumpus, in his Biological Lectures at the Woods Holl Laboratory. He was making a study of the English sparrow in the United States, and after a severe storm, on February 1, 1898, he collected 136 of these birds that had been wounded. Of these 64 died, and 72 survived. A careful study of all of them, with measurements of their parts, convinced Bumpus that the ones that died "perished not through accident, but because they were physically disqualified;" and the physical disqualifications consisted of variations from the type. The extreme variants were the ones that perished; and Bumpus drew this conclusion: "The process of selective elimination is most severe with extremely variable individuals, no matter in what directions the variations may occur. It is quite as dangerous to be conspicuously above a certain standard of organic excellence as it is to be conspicuously below the standard. It is the type that nature favors."

The only conceivable explanation of this that a Darwinian could offer would be that the existing types have attained such fitness through ages of development, that natural

selection by destruction of the unfit has ceased to be a cause of progress and development of new species. But if that be true, why not equally true of the types of geologic time? They had gone through this same process of development and elimination, according to the Darwinian premises, and yet the types perished when the cataclysms came, and by the Darwinian conclusion, the variants lived and developed new species. On the other hand, there is at least a suggestion of an intelligent creator in the fact that existing types are better fitted to endure nature's hardships than any variants from them that we might suppose to be more "fit."

Of all the Darwinian hypotheses, the one least susceptible of proof, one way or another, is the theory of the development of organs to meet needs of animals. And it is here that adaptation comes most forcibly in conflict with design in nature. To illustrate the distinction, take the eye. No one questions that its purpose is sight. The believer in design in nature holds that it was made for that purpose by an intelligent creator. The Darwinian holds that it was developed

by animals to meet a need; developed through countless ages, by natural selection of advantageous variations. Nobody has ever suggested when, or by what animal organism, the eye was begun; but if evolution be true, there must have been a time when some sightless organism, by variation, began the development of an organ of sight. Now it is not hard to conceive of a rudimentary eye, for eyes exist in immense variety, and some are so rudimentary that they merely distinguish between light and darkness, as, for example, those that line the mantles of some of the mollusks. But can you conceive of the first start toward the development of a rudimentary eye; of what form it took; or of any imaginable advantage it gave its possessor in the struggle for existence that would cause it to be perpetuated and improved till, after some centuries, a rudimentary eye was developed? Perhaps you can imagine how rudimentary eyes, once developed, might multiply, and reach the stage of the composite eyes of insects, with a few independent single eyes scattered about in addition; but can you conceive of the leap from that to the vertebrate eye, with its pro-

tective socket and lid, its camera with self-adjusting focus, muscle and nerve attachments, and lacrimal apparatus?

Take another example. It is generally believed that the horns of animals are for defensive purposes, and this seems probable. The first step in their development, if they were developed, was presumably a slight increase in the thickness of the skull at the two points of attachment, symmetrically located, or some excrescence of the skin, for horns have indicia of skin developments if they be developments. In five hundred years of persistent selection, these might have developed half an inch in thickness. But during this period, of what imaginable use could they have been to their possessors as weapons, or for any other purpose, that would make it a factor in the survival of the fittest? And if horns were developed by nature for protection, by natural selection and survival of the fittest, how did the ruminants of the deer family ever happen to develop the unfortunate quality of shedding their antlers annually, and leaving themselves for several months without any weapons of defense? And if developed as weapons on the theory of

advantage, why was the process carried far beyond the point of advantage in the antlers of the elk, the moose, the big-horn, and the reindeer? It would be as absurd to arm an infantryman with a howitzer, instead of a musket, as to imagine that need or advantage in defense caused the development of such antlers.

But what is the purpose of these eccentricities of development on the theory of design? I do not know. I disclaim any power to fathom the infinite. That is the province of the evolutionist. In fact, one of the evidences of divine guardianship is the fact that nobody is under any obligation to accept the revelations of purpose in nature offered by various discerning minds. A few years ago a popular divine in London, England, delivered a sermon on special providences, in which he gave as an example the flattened antlers of the reindeer, with which it could scrape away the snow from the mosses and lichens on which it feeds. Moncure D. Conway, the well-known newspaper correspondent, happened to be in London at the time, and made the comment that, unfortunately for the illustration, every Laplander knew

that the reindeer sheds its antlers in the fall, and its new ones are not grown till the following spring. If the divine had been posted, he might have replied that while this was true in general, there was a notable exception to it in the fact that the female reindeer, if with young, does not shed her antlers, but carries them through the winter, which looks still more like a special providence. In reality, however, the reindeer does not use its antlers to scrape snow, but does what snow-shoveling it has to do with its hoofs, so that purpose may safely be dropped.

It must be a heavy strain on vital resources to reproduce the heavy antlers of the reindeer and other kindred animals, and this exemption of the female, when her strength is needed for something more important in nature, would probably be recognized by physicians as one of nature's provisions to protect the mother, for the benefit of the offspring. This provision has often been noted, as, for example, in the fact that ordinarily the female will not conceive not only when pregnant, but also when nursing new-born offspring. It is difficult to conceive how an intermittent quality or characteristic of that

sort could be developed by the animal itself; and the vast importance of it in the function of reproduction, which is manifestly nature's greatest care, makes it a strong evidence of intelligent design.

There are still more remarkable facts in this connection. In most species of deer the females normally have no antlers; but when they cease to be fertile, especially in case of atrophy or degeneration of the ovaries, rudimentary antlers appear, and these are never shed. This has been observed authentically in the roedeer, the Virginia deer, the moose, and the red deer; and is presumably true in less known species. So in birds, females that have ceased to breed have in numerous cases been known to assume male plumage, though not so pronounced as in the average male. This has been observed in pheasants of various kinds, chickens, peafowls, wild and domestic ducks, partridges, bustards, the American pelican, chaffinches, buntings, etc. These facts indicate more probably that Wallace is right in his idea that female plumage represents a "degenerate" condition of the female than that Darwin and his followers are correct in their theory that male

plumage is a development of the male. But if that be true, how did the normal plumage of both originate? And are not the facts again suggestive of an intelligent purpose to save the strength of the female for her offspring, instead of dissipating it in ornamentation?

Another weak point in the theory of adaptation that has attracted attention is the difficulty of applying it to correlations in nature, of things that are claimed to be the result of development. For example, we have the honey-bee and the honey-producing plant. Darwinism asserts that both are developments, and it is fairly bound to assert that one developed on account of the other, or that both developed contemporaneously, as a matter of correlation. In the case of the eye, it were of no use that the lens developed unless there also developed the nerve that gives preception of sight. In the horns of animals, no use would be served without the muscles and sinews, and also the bone developments to which these are attached, to support the added weight on the head, and make the practical use of the horns possible. There are some of these correlations in nature as to



which it seems equally difficult to conceive of either development preceding the other, or of the two developing simultaneously from any need of the animal.

This is illustrated by the honey-bee. In each hive or colony of these insects there is but one perfect female permanently. If another perfect female develops, she has to be concealed from the queen regnant by the workers, until she leads a new swarm or community from the hive, or the old queen will sting her to death. The queen bee is fertilized but once, after which the drones, or male bees are killed by the workers. The seminal fluid received by the queen is not deposited at once on the eggs, but is retained in a sac in her body, from which it is ejected on such eggs as she chooses. The unfertilized eggs hatch drones. The fertilized eggs hatch workers, or, more properly, undeveloped females. This provision of only one perfect female may seem a strange exception to nature's usual profuse sexual provision for the preservation of the type; but the removal of any additional female from the hive with a new swarm is an adequate and striking mode of attaining the same end;

and still more remarkable is the fact that if the queen bee should die, the workers will take a worker pupa, and by enlarging its cell, and modifying and increasing its food, cause it to become a fully developed female.

This system of reproduction is peculiarly fitted to the community life of bees, and to nothing else. If anyone can imagine the possibility of its development from the needs or adaptations of the moneron, or any of the later-ons, such person should enlighten the world by suggesting the need from which the development proceeded. A single female is no essential of community life; there are numerous insect and other communities in which females are abundant. The control of fertilization, the modified development of fertilized eggs, the emergency development of sex after an egg has hatched, are things that would naturally be pronounced contrary to nature, if we did not know the facts. What need of nature caused the development of this unique social system, and the extraordinary modification of reproduction that so peculiarly fits it?

While such unsolved problems confront the Darwinian in the animal world, there are

still more serious ones in the vegetable world, for plants have no volition. We naturally entertain a lurking suspicion that the Ethiopian might in some way change his skin, or the leopard his spots; but you cannot so hospitably entertain the idea that the banana could change its skin, or the tiger-lily its spots; though in all probability one would be as easy as the other. For example, color in flowers cannot be attributed to sexual selection; and Darwin accounts for it thus: "Flowers rank amongst the most beautiful productions of nature; but they have been rendered conspicuous in contrast with the green leaves, and in consequence at the same time beautiful, so that they may be easily observed by insects." The stated object of this attraction is that the insects may carry pollen and fertilize the female flowers.

There is no question that insects have a large part in the fertilization of flowers in this way, but it is now conceded that they are guided in their movements almost wholly by smell, and not by sight. The experiments of Plateau, the Belgian naturalist, and others have shown that insects visit any nectar-bearing flower, no matter how colorless or

inconspicuous it may be; that the removal of the colored parts of the flower made no material difference in the visits; that they did not visit gayly colored flowers that were not nectar-bearing; but that they at once began visiting such flowers when nectar was placed in them. Moreover it has been shown that while some insects have a sense of color, most of them are near-sighted—the keenest sighted being the dragon flies, which are insectivorous, and do not visit flowers. Indeed, the evidence of guidance by smell has been seen by hundreds who were not experimenting, for if honey or sirup, or sugar be placed on a board, or on the ground, in the open, insects will come to it, although sight could give no possible association of color or memory in such a case.

Another group of inexplicables is found in the provisions of nature for the preservation of the type, through multiform arrangement for the protection and dissemination of seeds. Many persons who are not scientists have noticed that tall trees have provision for protecting their seeds in the fall to the ground; such as the seed-wings of the maple and ash, and the shells of nuts. In very tall trees this

is especially striking, as in the remarkable double coverings of the cocoanut and the Brazil nut. You cannot very well assume that a variation of increased height in the plant caused a thickening of the seed cover without some assumption of knowledge or volition in the plant. Neither can you assume as a law of nature that a variation of increased thickness in the seed cover caused the plant to grow higher. If that were true, the hazel would not have remained a bush, while the oak and the chestnut developed into monarchs of the forest. A more highly developed Darwin is needed for the explanation of the wonders of plant life.

Darwin disposed of the suggestion that the colors of flowers were for the pleasure and refinement of man, with the statement that such a supposition was "utterly subversive of his theory," which is apparently true. He says that "natural selection cannot possibly produce any modification in a species exclusively for the good of another species." If this be true of development, it can as well be assumed throughout nature; and Haeckel's conclusion that there is no purpose in nature becomes quite logical. We are then

reduced to the inevitable conclusion that nothing on earth exists for the benefit of any other existence. Of course we know that all living existences derive benefits from other things, but that is merely incidental. The beneficial results are no part of the cause of existence of the beneficial things. Thankfulness for the bounties of nature is a complete waste of time and effort.

This thought is clearly not conducive to the higher mental and moral development of man, if evolution has any part in those features of life. It is repulsive to reason when applied to thousands of things in the inorganic world that are of vast use to man and other living things, many of which are due to variations of general laws of nature. To take a simple illustration, the general rule of the action of heat on inorganic matter is that "heat expands and cold contracts;" but with antimony this rule is reversed, and it contracts with heat and expands with cold. This variation is of great value to man, because, on account of the general rule, it is impossible to make an exact mold of any of the common metals; but by mixing antimony with other metals we get a compound which

neither expands nor contracts with heat, and so we can produce the exact forms required for types and other things in which exactness is necessary.

This is a reminder of human limitations, for what we call "a law of nature" is merely a statement of what man thinks he knows about some process of nature; and when he learns that nature does not always proceed in that way, the "law" has to be changed. The most extraordinary variation of this rule occurs in one of the commonest forms of matter—water—which follows the general rule except that below four degrees centigrade it reverses, and contracts with heat and expands with cold. This eccentric variation is of tremendous importance. But for the fact that cooling water begins to expand above the freezing point, ice would form first at the bottom of lake and streams instead of at the top. In a very short period of freezing weather they would freeze up solidly, and so would the underground waters connecting with them. In summer, as the warmer water would remain at the surface, the thawing process would be very slow, indeed, nothing of any depth could

thaw out at all. Water animals and plants would be unable to exist. Land animals and plants would be deprived of water except in summer. Underground streams would not thaw out at all. The cold produced in summer by the continued thawing would materially reduce the temperature of the entire region subject to frost. The present Temperate Zone would be rendered desert and uninhabitable.

Darwinism does not attempt to account for the origin or properties of matter; neither does Evolution. The materialist says simply that matter and its properties are eternal—in other words incomprehensible; because the infinite is always incomprehensible. We say that space is infinite because we cannot comprehend any limit to it. Equally we cannot comprehend anything without a limit. This confession of the materialist that there is something that he does not understand would be cheering, but for the fact that he is just as sure that matter was not made, or is not controlled, by a superior being as he is of anything else. The deist has no advantage over him in knowledge on this point. It is a matter of opinion. But if a scientist



tells me that so remarkable a thing as this variation in the expansion of water, a variation so unique in nature, a variation in a substance so universal and so essential to every living thing, a variation occurring at just the point where it becomes of vital significance to all life, is a mere matter of chance—a thing of blind forces acting blindly, I can answer only that his superstition is greater than mine.

But, to return to Darwinism, let no one consider it vain and useless from the deistic standpoint. Holding it an exposed error, it was a magnificent error. It has turned human thought to great eternal problems, and has broadened it by bringing a clearer perception of the impossibility of finite comprehension of the infinite. Men are less prone to set bounds to Divine power, except in the scientific world, to which, most happily, a large part of the functions of dogma have been transferred from religion. Theologians even hesitate to specify the exact conditions under which the Omnipotent may be reconciled to erring humanity. The whole thinking world realizes more fully that there is a

great deal that it does not know—approaches more closely to the realization that,

Knowledge is from man to man,  
And not from man, O God, to Thee.

But Darwinism has also greatly stimulated scientific research, and modern science has strengthened the basis for belief in design in nature by revealing wonders in life that our fathers never dreamed of. Moreover, Darwinism has demonstrated and emphasized most impressively, the fact that the greatest changes known to mankind to have occurred in animal and vegetable forms—the nearest approaches to the origin of new species—have been the result of the interposition of man, applying and regulating the laws of nature, as he understands them. It is a perfectly safe proposition that if you take all the results of natural selection known to mankind, and put them together, they do not equal the transformations of living organisms accomplished by Luther Burbank alone. So far as human knowledge goes, the greatest agency in the mutation of animal and vegetable life has been the knowledge and power of man; and yet those changes are insignificant in comparison with what would

have been necessary to transform protoplasm, even if it had life, into the myriad forms we see about us. If we would explain those mighty changes, from the beginning of geologic time, we face the logical deduction of the interposition of some power and some knowledge far superior to man's—a power and a knowledge of which might appropriately be written:

O JEHOVAH, how manifold are thy works!  
In wisdom hast Thou made them all:  
The earth is full of Thy riches.  
Yonder is the sea, great and wide,  
Wherein are things creeping innumerable,  
Both small and great beasts.  
There go the ships;  
There is leviathan, whom Thou hast formed to  
play therein.  
These wait all for Thee,  
That Thou mayest give them their food in due  
season.  
Thou givest unto them, they gather;  
Thou openest Thy hand, they are satisfied with  
good.  
Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled;  
Thou takest away their breath, they die,  
And return to their dust.  
Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit, they are created;  
And Thou renewest the face of the ground.  
Let the glory of Jehovah endure forever.

## THE DEBT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE TO THE BIBLE.

When Rome was at the zenith of her luxury and splendor; when every known land was ransacked for all that was wonderful in nature to grace her festivities; when the gold, and silver, and precious stones of the world were lavished on the trappings of man and beast that made up the public pageants; there dwelt on a barren island of the Aegean Sea an aged man for whose eyes a spectacle was prepared grander than ever Roman Emperor looked upon. There was nothing in the place to suggest such an occurrence. The island was occupied by a Roman penal colony. Its rugged outline and scant soil proclaimed its volcanic origin. The old man dwelt in a little grotto among the jagged rocks on the southern coast, where the ceaseless beat of the sea upon the shore—the sea that formed his prison walls—was never out of his ears, but yet there came to his view scenes of such ravishing beauty, scenes of such grewsome horror, actors so colossal, and events so stupendous, that the boldest imagination has never produced their equals.

To those who seek to know the philosophy of English literature, nothing could be more significant than the portion of his vision which is described in these words:

And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God Himself shall be with them and be their God.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.

And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write—for these words are true and faithful.

Write! Write of the new heaven and the new earth! Write of the heaven and the earth which men never dreamed of before,

but which henceforth shall be their highest ideals. Write! for this inspiration comes not for thee alone; and we who stand here at the foot of nineteen centuries can look back over them and see that, to all who have written living words since then, has come this same vision, and for all the world to whom those words have reached there is now no heaven but that where tears are dried, and where there is no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain—the heaven of peace—the heaven of rest,—unending rest. Search English literature through and you find this the ever recurring ideal of heaven, whether the writer be believer or skeptic. There is no other conception of Heaven that can stand beside it, “for they are fled away and there is found no place for them.”

Turn if you please to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and read the descriptions of scenes in the heaven of the Greeks and Romans—the petty bickerings of the gods and goddesses, and the fierce threats of old Jove to castigate all of them if they did not behave better. How childish is this conception of a heaven of perpetual breach of the peace as compared with the heaven of rest. And

equally faulty is every other conception when put beside it. Not even the living death of Nirvana, the highest of them all, can find favor or approval when viewed in the light of the vision of Patmos. And this conception of a heaven of peace has so passed into the hearts of men—this longing for rest has so taken possession of them—that we adopt it in the purely material sense and seek for places of quiet and peace to lay away the bodies of our dead. Our Tennyson sings:

We have idle dreams—

This look of quiet flatters thus  
Our home-bred fancies—O to us,  
The fools of habit, sweeter seems

To rest beneath the clover sod,  
That takes the sunshine and the rains—  
Or where the kneeling hamlet drains  
The chalice of the grapes of God;

Than if with thee the roaring wells  
Should gulf him fathom-deep in brine;  
And hands so often clasp'd in mine,  
Should toss with tangle and with shells.

Yes and no. Not fools of habit. This is but the natural expression of the longing of the soul for the heaven of its highest dreams

—natural as the worship of the crucifix, or the feeling of awe in the sanctuary. The old heavens are gone and the new heaven has come.

And with the old heaven are gone the old gods. They fled so long ago that they are almost forgotten. Their names, their attributes, and the devoirs men paid to them are become the subject of study by the antiquarian.

Listen to the song of their flight and the triumphal approach of their successor:

The oracles are dumb,  
No voice or hideous hum

Runs through the arched roof in words de-  
ceiving.

Apollo from his shrine  
Can do more divine

With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leav-  
ing.

No nightly trance or breathed spell  
Inspires the pale ey'd priest from the prophetic  
cell.

Peor and Baalim  
Forsake their temples dim,

With that twice-batter'd God of Palestine;  
And mooned Ashtaroath,



Heav'n's queen and mother both,  
Now sits not girt with taper's holy shrine,  
The Lybic Hammon shrinks his horn,  
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Tham-  
muz mourn.

And sullen Moloch fled,  
Hath left in shadows dread  
His burning idol all of blackest hue;  
In vain with cymbal's ring  
They call the grisly King  
In dismal dance about the furnace blue;  
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,  
Isis and Orus, and the dog Anubis haste.

Nor is Osiris seen  
In Memphian grove or green  
Trampling the unshow'r'd grass with lowings  
loud;  
Nor can he be at rest  
Within his sacred chest;  
Naught but profoundest hell can be his  
shroud;  
In vain with timbrell'd anthems dark  
The sable-stoled sorcerers bear his worshipped  
ark.

He feels from Juda's land  
The dreaded Infant's hand  
The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn.  
Nor all the gods beside

Longer dare abide,

Not Typhon huge, ending in snaky twine;  
Our babe, to show his Godhead true,  
Can in his swaddling bands control the damned  
crew.

It may seem somewhat Milesian to prove that these ancient gods have vanished from English literature by quoting Milton's verse concerning them, but with him, as with all our writers, they have vanished *as gods*. There has, in their place, come into our literature the one supreme ruler, omniscient and omnipotent, and the effect of this change is to be seen throughout its farthest reaches. What greater change could come to a people than a change of the being it worships, and what greater change of such beings could there be than that brought by the Bible. A moment's reflection on its necessary relation to all that we hold most sacred, and the fact that the force of the change must be recognized whenever there is allusion in literature to *what* we hold sacred, will give some faint realization of the vast effect it has had in ennobling our literature. It is true that the ancient gods are occasionally used "to point a moral or adorn a tale," but even the popu-

larity of "classic allusion" is fast dying out, and what was considered "fine writing" a century ago, on this account, is now regarded as pedantic. The red, Cracker blood of America calls for something closer home, something more practical, something that hinges with the faiths of today, and our writers respond to the demand. Through music we have had some influx of the gods of the northern barbarians, but these, too, come not as gods, but as heroes or myths, who are gone forever, save as memories, and whose highest mission was to make room for something better. Their relation to our life and our literature is well presented in Longfellow's translation of Tegner's beautiful lines:

I heard a voice, that cried,  
"Balder, the Beautiful,  
Is dead, is dead."

And through the misty air  
Passed like the mournful cry  
Of sunward sailing cranes.

Balder, the Beautiful,  
God of the summer sun,  
Fairest of all the gods!

Light from his forehead beamed,  
Runes were upon his tongue,  
As on the warrior's sword.

They laid him in his ship,  
With horse and harness,  
As on a funeral pyre.  
Odin placed  
A ring upon his finger,  
And whispered in his ear.

They launched the burning ship:  
It floated far away  
Over the misty sea,  
Till like the sun it seemed.  
Sinking beneath the waves,  
Balder returned no more.

So perish the old Gods!  
But out of the sea of Time  
Rises a new land of song,  
Fairer than the old.  
Over its meadows green  
Walk the young bards and sing.

Build it again,  
O ye bards,  
Fairer than before;  
Ye fathers of a new race,  
Feed upon morning dew,  
Sing the new Song of Love.

The law of force is dead!  
The law of love prevails!  
Thor, the thunderer,  
Shall rule the earth no more.  
No more, with threats,  
Challenge the meek Christ.

Woe! indeed, to the gods whom the bards do not sing, for if their characters and attributes cannot possess and fill the souls that have caught the inspiration to sing the true and the beautiful, how may they hope to reach the hearts of the surging masses to whom sentiment is but an occasional visitor?

The old gods  
Are dead, poor sinners, all of them but Death,  
Who has laughed down Jove's broad ambrosian  
brow,  
Furrowed with earthquake frowns; and not a  
ghost  
Haunts the gods' town upon Olympus' peak.

The old gods are gone,—and with the old gods we may include the lesser spiritual, or at least supernatural, beings with which the world was peopled when it was young. Gone are the djins and the genii. Gone are the kobolds and the gnomes. Gone are the elves and the fairies. Gone are the naiads, the

nymphs, the "gorgons, hydras and chimeras dire." And in the place of these mischief-making and terrifying creatures we have the holy angels—the angels who watch over the sleep of innocent childhood—the angels whose soft pinions fan the fevered brow—the angels who whisper hope to the parting soul and bear it away to the new heaven. "Are they not all ministering spirits?"

How far this conception of supernatural beings who stand intermediate between us and divine perfection, loving, sympathetic, surpasses any that can be found in any other than the Hebrew mythology! What other form of spirit is there as to which there could be any feeling that kinship ennobled man? What other conception could sustain that exquisite touch of Poe's in the death of Annabel Lee—"So that her high-born kinsmen came and bore her away from me?"

What other conception could give inspiration for that description of Uncle Toby's oath—"The accusing spirit which flew up to heaven's chancery with the oath, blushed as he gave it in; and the recording angel, as he wrote it down, dropped a tear on the word and blotted it out forever?"

What other could carry the thoughts of aid, companionship and sustaining sympathy in Whittier's lines:

To weary hearts, to mourning homes,  
God's meekest Angel gently comes;  
No power has he to banish pain,  
Or give us back our lost again.

He mocks no grief with idle cheer,  
Nor wounds with words the mourner's ear;  
But ills and woes he may not cure  
He kindly trains us to endure.

Angel of Patience! sent to calm  
Our feverish brows with cooling palm;  
To lay the storms of hope and fear,  
And reconcile life's smile and tear.

O thou who mournest on thy way,  
With longings for the close of day;  
He walks with thee, that Angel kind,  
And gently whispers, "Be resigned:  
Bear up, bear on, the end shall tell  
The dear Lord ordereth all things well."

And with this conception of the angels and of their passage to and from the spirit world there comes of necessity the unique and satisfying thought of a passage way—a means

of transit. The old patriarchs saw it as a ladder over which they ascended and descended in their constant journeyings, but that is too material an image for so ethereal a pathway. Our American poet portrays its architecture with more artistic touch—

And as the moon from some dark gate of cloud  
Throws o'er the sea a floating bridge of light,  
Across whose trembling planks our fancies crowd  
Into the realm of mystery and night—  
So from the world of spirits there descends  
A bridge of light, connecting it with this,  
O'er whose unsteady floor, that sways and bends,  
Wander our thoughts above the dark abyss.

A new heaven and a new earth! Not a new earth in any physical sense. The mountain top was not to be lower, or the beetling cliff less difficult to scale. The snow was still to hurtle through the pine forest, and the dry simoon to drive the hot sand of the desert before it. The rivers were not to cease their flow to the sea, nor old ocean to cease his fierce beating against his bounds. Harvest was still to follow seed time, and winter summer, just as it all had been from the creation dawn. But it was to be new to man—new in its meaning—new in its inspi-



rations—new in all that pertains to the relation of man to man, and man to the infinite. And first and greatest of all is the view of life itself. What is the object or end of human life? Why are we here? I take it that the bible—more especially the New Testament—first gave mankind the clear teaching that life on earth was primarily a preparation for a future life—a life of infinite duration under new conditions, compared to which our present being is a thing of small importance. Perhaps the thought may be expressed as living chiefly with a view to death. I do not underrate the scriptural teachings as to the good that may be done in this world by right living. I do not desire to question the laudability of ambitions of various earthly kinds. My thought is that all this is made subordinate to the one central purpose of attaining blessedness in a world beyond. It cannot be more forcibly put than in those ominous words, “What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” And though this conception may at first seem repulsive, it is the conception that pervades our literature. Bryant puts it direct in his stately lines:

So live, that when thy summons comes to join  
The innumerable caravan that moves  
To the pale realms of shade, where each shall take  
His chamber in the silent halls of death,  
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night  
Scourged to his dungeon, but sustained and  
soothed  
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave.  
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch  
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

*So live* that you may die in the hope of a  
blessed immortality. Death is but the cur-  
tain that hangs between the two lives, and  
the life that lies beyond is so much grander  
than this little space that its contemplation  
robs death of its terrors—

I wage not any feud with Death  
For changes wrought on form and face;  
No lower life, that earth's embrace  
May breed with him, can fright my faith.

Eternal process, moving on,  
From state to state the spirit walks;  
And these are but the shattered stalks,  
Or ruined chrysalis of one.

Nor blame I Death, because she bare  
The use of virtue out of earth:  
I know transplanted human worth  
Will bloom to profit elsewhere.

For this alone on Death I wreak  
The wrath that garners in my heart;  
He put our lives so far apart  
We cannot hear each other speak.

You say this is somber. In one sense it is, and yet it is the least somber and most comforting idea of the purpose of life and the relations of life and death that was ever given by any religion. The fact is, in spite of all the lightness we may throw into it, that life is a serious matter and death is even more so. But neither can be escaped. They are the two great inevitables—the is and the must be. We fight off the contemplation of what must be—we strive to forget—but time and again we must remember, and when we must this bible idea comes as a consolation that surpasses any other, and which therefore has won the full assent of our thinkers—of our great poets. If there be a time when the awfulness of it all can be contemplated with satisfaction, or even with perfect equanimity, I should think it would be when lost in the sonorous roll of the *Coplas de Manrique*—

Our lives are rivers gliding free  
To that unfathomed, boundless sea,  
The silent grave!  
Thither all earthly pomp and boast  
Roll to be swallowed up and lost  
In one dark wave.

Thither the mighty torrents stray,  
Thither the brook pursues its way,  
And tinkling rill—  
There all are equal; side by side  
The poor man and the son of pride  
Lie calm and still.

This world is but the rugged road  
Which leads us to the bright abode  
Of peace above;  
So let us choose that narrow way,  
Which leads no traveler's foot astray  
From realms of love.

Our cradle is the starting place,  
Life is the running of the race,  
We reach the goal  
When, in the mansions of the blest,  
Death leaves to its eternal rest  
The weary soul.

Did we but use it as we ought,  
The world would school each wandering thought  
To its high state.  
Faith wings the soul beyond the sky,  
Up to that better world on high,  
For which we wait.

There are many features of the Bible teaching whose adoption in the prevailing sentiment of English literature could not be shown in a single essay, although we may be justified in assuming that the Bible teaching controls them, even if it be not their original source. The common rules of morality, and the duties of the various social relations, are not sufficiently distinctive of the Christian religion to admit of an exclusive claim for it as their origin, without an investigation of comparative religions, and of historical influences that would be very extensive. The relations of parent and child, husband and wife, ruler and subject, master and slave, guardian and ward, judge and suitor, are regulated in all religions known to mankind, and there is such similarity in their regulation that it would be difficult, indeed, to lay claim to any particular teaching for one religion exclusively. And so with the more common moral offenses, as murder, theft, blasphemy, deceit, fraud, cruelty and the like. The more apparent influence will therefore be found in the doctrines concerning the relations of God to man, and of these there is none more peculiar to Christianity than

the doctrine of the mediation of love. There is nothing exclusive in the doctrine of mediation, and nothing exclusive in the Jewish idea that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." These are almost universal, and for centuries untold nations have groaned under the belief in angry deities who could be appeased only by the sacrifice of life or the offer of material gifts. If you turn to Homer you are wearied with the ever recurring statement of how someone poured libations, or

Laid

On the rich fat, raw portions from the limbs  
For sacrifice, and other parts he cast  
Sprinkled with flour of meal, into the flames.

And so the doctrine runs through all the old religions in some form, reaching its climax in the horrors perpetrated on the teocalis of Mexico. This idea of a divine being whose wrath can be appeased only by the blood of his creatures is so puerile, and so repugnant to common sense, that its general adoption can be explained only by the low conception of divinity. It is quite possible that it is to some extent still held among Christian nations on account of the promi-

nence of the figurative sacrificial idea in the Christian mediation, but the belief in blood atonement is so far dispelled that I presume I may refer to it here, without offense, as abandoned by the thinking world. The theory of the mediation of love, in its first stage, is set forth in the words

For God so **loved** the world, that **He** gave **His** only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Note the distinction. It is not a God of wrath, but a God of love; and the sacrifice is offered not by guilty men, but by a loving deity. But why the cruel death? It was the supreme test of love—

Greater love hath no man than this; that a man lay down his life for his friends.

For scarcely for a righteous man will one die.

Yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

We love him because he first loved us.

If a man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and make our abode with him.

These extracts cover the line of the doc-

trine of the mediation of love, which is a doctrine of the Bible alone. It places love above all else. It makes Christianity the religion of love; and love the drawing power of religion. This was Christ's teaching of his mission: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." And this is the mediation not only between God and man, but also between man and man. Again and again is the injunction made not merely to love among the brethren, but also for a reaching out of love to those who may be affected by it and so reclaimed; even as the love of God reached out in mediation. Consider this strange teaching:

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you:

That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.

For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.



Now this conception of love as a means of mediation—as a power to reconcile God to man and man to man—is absolutely unique with the religion of the Bible. It is the very central thought and essence of that religion, and it can be put no stronger than in the words of St. John:

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.

And I submit that this idea permeates English literature—not merely religious literature, but poetry and fiction and the drama. It is not only on the Angel's list that Abou Ben Adhem's name leads all the rest because he loves his fellow men. The novelist writes it there. The poet writes it there. The dramatist writes it there. It is an universal ideal. Literature dare not refuse it. It would sacrifice itself if it did not recognize that sentiment which but a few years ago made friend and foe stop in their heated contest and stand uncovered before the bier of Henry George, because he had proven his love for the human race, broadly and beyond dispute. I

believe that Holland does not at all exaggerate the effect of this sentiment in his lines, so far at least as the general tenor of English literature is concerned:

In all the crowded universe  
There is but one stupendous Word;  
And huge and rough, or trimmed and terse,  
Its fragments build and undergird  
The songs and stories we rehearse.

And this great word, all words above,  
Including, yet defying all—  
Soft as the crooning of the dove,  
And strong as the Archangel's call—  
Means only this—means only love!

The love of home and native land,  
The love that springs in son and sire,  
And that which welds the heart and hand  
Of man and maiden in its fire,  
Are signs, by which we understand,

The love whose passion shook the Cross;—  
And all those loves that, deep and broad,  
Make princely gain of piteous loss,  
Reveal the love that lives in God  
As in a blood-illuminated gloss.

It is hardly necessary to offer proof that we set as our very highest ideal the spirit of self-sacrifice and earnest effort for race, for

nation, for neighbors—the spirit that seeks especially to help the poor and friendless—the spirit of love to man. There is the whole of our Christmas literature, and a very large literature it has grown to be, which is based exclusively on this motive, and which could not exist without it. And who would wish to live without it—who—pagan, Jew, or infidel—would wish to have the world lose the beautiful Christmas spirit? It is the climax of religious aspirations known to man—

Peace beginning to be  
Deep as the sleep of the sea  
When the stars their faces glass  
In its blue tranquillity—  
Hearts of men upon earth  
Never once still from their birth,  
To rest as the wild waters rest  
With the colors of heaven on their breast.

Love, which is sunlight of peace,  
Age by age to increase  
Till anger and hatreds are dead,  
And sorrow and death shall cease—  
“Peace on earth and good-will!”  
Souls that are gentle and still  
Hear the first music of this  
Far off, infinite bliss.

I have now endeavored to demonstrate, or rather to illustrate, the fact that the really great debt of English literature to the Bible is a debt for ideas—for great thoughts which have given the best of our literature. The debt is of this character because the religion of the Bible is the religion of the English-speaking peoples, and all that is highest and best of any people is included in the religion of that people. But the illustrations I have given are the barest suggestion of the full truth, which is that the religion of the Bible permeates English literature. It cannot be separated out any more than the blood can be taken out of a man and leave him a living creature. This is particularly noticeable in Shakespeare, for it is clearly impossible that any man should have written Shakespeare's works, without being familiar with Bible thought—almost with Bible phrases. Note how closely they follow in common instances.\* The Bible phrase is: "A good name

\*Note—The quotations are from the King James' version, which Shakespeare did not know, but they do not differ materially from the same passages in the Bishops' Bible, which he did know.

is rather to be chosen than great riches.”  
Shakespeare’s words are:

Good name in man and woman, dear my lord,  
Is the immediate jewel of their souls.  
Who steals my purse steals trash, etc.

The Bible phrase is:

The merciful man doeth good to his own soul.

Shakespeare’s words are:

The quality of mercy is not strained.  
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
Upon the place beneath. It is twice bless’d,  
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes.

The Bible phrase is:

I have been young, and now am old, yet have I  
not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed  
begging bread.

Shakespeare’s words are:

Had I but served my God with half the zeal  
I served my king, he would not in mine age  
Have left me naked to mine enemies.

And so it is throughout English literature,  
in the poem, the novel, the essay, the drama.  
Whenever you pass out of the realm of com-  
mon things and approach the supernatural,  
or the higher levels of human life, you come  
to Bible suggestions. It is just as naturally  
and necessarily so as that you should come

on suggestions of Anglo-Saxon derivations. At least it seems natural to us who look on literature as not only the product of the thought of a nation, but also as the product of the demand of a nation. And yet it must have been that this was not so before the invention of printing had made literature accessible to the masses, and, indeed, long afterward, for books were luxuries long after printing was invented. And it is an historical truth that while books remained the luxuries of the learned few there was in them a vast surplusage of the mythologies of Greece and Rome in particular, and this continued even to the opening of the present century in what is called "a wealth of classic allusion."

And now that we have reached this conclusion as to the facts—now that we may say that the religion of the Bible has driven all other religions from English literature as potential factors—now that we recognize that our whole literature adopts its conceptions of heaven and earth, of the divine and the human, of good and bad, of the noble and the vile, what is the debt? How shall we itemize the statement of what is owing? Clearly the first and the plainest item is the superior

character of the ideas introduced, their loftier tone, their grander aspirations, their tendency to make mankind more lovable to mankind. This is a great debt. Its measure is the superiority of the Christian religion over other religions in its teachings of the relations of God to man, and man to man. The second, and in purely literary consideration, the greater item, is that it makes our literature comprehensible to the people. It is essential to the utility of a literature that it be understood. I am aware that there is a school of would-be literati who imagine that merit lies in concealment, who veil thought with meshed words, who study out symbols and signs to convey hidden meanings, whose aim is to mean what they do not say; and I am aware that the devotees of this vogue insist that our great English writers have all been similarly afflicted, and that they put in hours seeking for hidden meanings that the author never dreamed of, even going so far as to find cryptograms showing that he did not write what he wrote. But I avow that there was never a man wise enough to think a great thought who was not also wise enough to know that the masses would have

a hard enough time to understand it even when written large in plain English and with explanatory footnotes. The object of the great author is to convey thought—not to conceal it. And to this end the thorough adoption of the religion of the people into literature is of the utmost aid.

Possibly we can reach a clearer conception of what the Bible has done for literature in this respect by a consideration of what it has not done for something else. We divide the learning of men into science, literature and art. Has the Bible done anything for science? The controversy is a vast one. The enemies of religion urge that it has stood in the way of science. They point to the Christian world forced for years to use the Roman numerals instead of the Arabic on account of religious prejudice. They point to Galileo and the hindrance to astronomical study. They point to Columbus and the Spanish bishops declaring the impiety of the belief in a new world where the gospel could not have reached. They come down much later, in the controversy over geology, to the point where the Christian world sneered with Cowper at those who



Drill and bore

The solid earth, and from the strata there  
Extract a register, by which we learn  
That he who made it, and reveal'd its date  
To Moses, was mistaken in its age.

But looking back over all this from the vantage ground of today men on all sides concede that all this controversy resulted from a misconception of the religion of the Bible, and that the opposition to scientific progress was the product of human stupidity, not of divine wisdom. The consensus of modern thought leaves the relation of the Bible to science just where it stood on the creation morn, when the Lord said:

Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them; and whatsoever Adam called every living creature that was the name thereof.

In other words the religion of the Bible simply opens wide the door of nature and

says to man "enter and learn what you may." But it stops there. Its sturdiest champions cannot claim that the Bible was intended to teach science. There is no debt of science to the Bible as there is of literature to the Bible.

And how about art? Is it indebted to the Bible? Certainly not in ancient times. The Jews had no art. The stern command from Sinai—"Thou shalt not make unto thee any grave image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth"—was enforced in its literal significance. The art of Greece and Rome had fallen into decay before Christianity became associated with temporal power, and it continued little more than a memory throughout the centuries until the Dark ages gave way to the Revival of Learning. In its beginning modern art seems to have drawn its inspiration from the Bible. The painting of Raphael Da Vinci, Titian and Corregio, and the sculpture of Donatello, Michel Angelo, and Sansovino were largely of Bible subjects, but it must be remembered that the great patron of their art was the Church, and the demand controlled to a large extent

the nature of the supply. The old masters must have drawn their inspiration largely from what remained of ancient art, aided by classic literature; and certainly as art developed from its new birth the earlier Christian motives yielded to pagan subjects, and the trend has been so steadily in that direction since then that to know high art to-day you must know the mythologies. The renaissance of art followed the renaissance of literature, and the two are bound together by subtle ties. Art has two sources of inspiration—literature and nature. It cannot live and thrive in defiance of literature, and for that reason art, in its common acceptance, has been repressed among the English-speaking peoples by the influence of the Bible on English literature. The permeating influence of the Bible religion has destroyed the demand for classic subjects and the ability to comprehend them. You cannot force the pagan mythologies in that unfriendly climate. They are taught in vain in colleges and seminaries. The people will have none of them. In English and American homes—protestant homes at that—you will find a thousand Madonnas where you find one

Venus—a thousand Christs where you find one Apollo. The Englishman or American knows nothing of the mythologies unless specially taught, and cares nothing for them. The figure of a Greek god or goddess wakes no sentiment in his breast. If he knows who it is he knows it only as he knows that “lbs.” stands for pounds. To the Greeks it was different. These were the gods and goddesses they worshipped—to whom they prayed—to whom they poured libations—to whom they offered sacrifices.

They understood what these figures meant—not usually from the figure itself, which was that of a typically perfect human being, but from the dress or insignia. And so the statuary and the paintings of the ancients carried messages to the masses which were understood, and which wakened responsive chords in their breasts, because the highest feelings of every people are the religious feelings. We can never have a distinctively English or American art except it be one that explains itself to the people and is comprehended by them, and in its higher levels it must be founded in the religion of the Bible. And such an art will surely develop in

this country, for the Bible has driven out the possibility of any other art, and has held the ground fallow until the master minds shall arise who shall be able to express the ideals of that religion in the forms which nature has put about us here.

That work has already been done for literature; and what art will owe to the Bible when there shall arise in this land a new and unique art—grand in its conceptions—reverent in its teachings—elevating in its influences—speaking a language that the untutored can understand—unfettered by the superstitions and false traditions of other lands—that is what English literature now owes to the Bible. It is a great debt—one whose magnitude is so far beyond our grasp that we lose ourselves in the effort to comprehend it. We realize ourselves but pygmies on the sands of time gazing with curious eyes at the mighty surf beat of an ocean that mocks human power and submerges human endeavor. We build our puny dykes and dig our channels, but with the incoming tide they are lost forever, and the relentless sea goes on shaping the land ever to its will.

You may doubt; you may question; you may deny; but before you are spread the pages of history recording the continued movement of man in ways that were not his ways and to ends that were not his ends. and there stand the words—"Behold I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write!" Can you deny that the prophecy is fulfilled?

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