

weight, and were it not that other equally great thinkers are sincere Christians, it would be presumptuous in us to say that they are mistaken.

But we may perhaps see in Emerson the causes of the phenomenon. With some this revolt is due to literary arrogance—though this cannot be said of Emerson. The mere thinker and *litterateur* is too often an intellectual giant, who separates himself from the ordinary run of men; whereas Christianity insists on the equality of men as regards their helplessness before evil—the genius and the obtuse man are on the same footing.

Again, in many cases the true nature of Christianity is misunderstood, and instead of going to the fountain head and examining for themselves, the disciples of culture judge from the sorry specimens that abound everywhere.

The great reason however is because literary men are too apt to judge life from a merely æsthetic standpoint, and to neglect, often it would seem deliberately, to shut their eyes to the problems of moral evil. Many of our moral physicians make the irremediable error of a wrong diagnosis of the case: and thus misunderstanding the case it is not remarkable that the cure which was to the Jew a stumbling-block and to the Greek foolishness, should also be so now, when the condition of merely cultured men is the same as ever.

As Emerson's views on God dissolved more and more into a kind of pantheism, religion, as we understand it, was obliged to go also. "Virtue," he says, "is obedience to the dictate of the general mind, and religion is the accompanying emotion, the thrill at the presence of the universal soul,"—a definition almost identical with Matthew Arnold's "morality tinged with emotion." Hence the religious man is the loser in actual happiness, and his law of compensation works in well to suit his definition; "the reward of a thing well done is to have it done. The thief steals from himself, the swindler swindles himself; you must pay at last your own debt." This is an unworkable theory in the world as it is, where there are so few as spiritually endowed as Emerson, in a world where religion must supply some powerful motive for right action.

It is not to his religious opinions, I conceive, that the lasting worth of Emerson and the impression he made upon his time are