

Where waves of melody were swept
 Full tide from throats of birds who kept
 No reckoning of their song, nor slept,
 But made the day and happy night
 In perfect circles of delight,
How can I ever find again
 A pleasure in the desert wide
Where all the springs of life are dried.

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The return is, from the nature of things, impossible. The reason which is given us for the cessation of Langham's attentions is absurd. To suppose him to have been self-deceived is to confute all that has been previously told us of his character. But if he was not self-deceived the position is yet worse. If he was influenced in his action—or, shall we say inaction?—by principles of self-abnegation, he should have felt their force earlier. His withdrawal at this time seems like the act of a scoundrel. But further, we contend that it is absolutely impossible that such a man as Langham could have acknowledged the force of the self-abnegation argument. The whole latter part of his life, as the whole latter part of the work, is a huge mistake. However pretty such a conception may appear in poetry, it is just a trifle ridiculous in prose.

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As to the arguments which change the entire current of Elsmere's life, it is somewhat extraordinary that Oxford theologians were so remarkably conservative that he should never have heard from them anything of the views which the opponents of Christianity at that time held. As Mr. Cooke said in the *North American Review*, there is nothing new in them—they are third-hand. Mrs. Ward gets them from Mr. Arnold, Mr. Arnold from the Tubingen school. The Tubingen school has discarded them as untenable long since. In the face of all this there are few, we fancy, who will not with Mr. Gladstone wonder that this Oxford graduate could not find one word of defence for the faith which has charmed the world for eighteen centuries. Nobody, certainly, can object to Mrs. Ward writing a work on Polemic Theology. But to do so, looking solely at one side of the question and shutting one's eyes to all that may be said on the other, would simply bring down upon an author the contempt of fair-minded people. Nor can any one object to her writing a novel. But to use the name "novel" as an excuse for doing what she would not dare to do in a work professedly theological,—give a hearing to only one side of the case,—is not a course of conduct highly consistent with the purity of motive which should characterize a devotee of the Elsmere school.

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Putting, however, all other considerations out of the question. Saying nothing of the antiquated character of this new theology; of the failure of the novel as a work of art; of the many opportunities which the authoress

had of making it a great work and her inability so to do; of the inconsistency, amounting at times to absurdity, of some of her characters during the development of the plot, the volume contains in itself the best refutation of its theories. What is the impression left upon the reader as he, or she, closes the covers and lays the work aside? It is a feeling of utter wretchedness. Robert Elsmere is a Jeremiad without the old seer's Jehovah. It is an Iliad without an Olympus. It is the human with the elimination of the divine. It is a sermon from modern culture on the text *Vanitas Vanitatum*—and it is pregnant with warning and instruction. *Qui currit, leget!*

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In other sections of the Christian Church the work of the pulpit is largely supplemented, and at times supplanted even, by various other elements of religious worship and activity. Choirs, orchestras, experience meetings, guilds and particular forms of ritual and ceremonial have occupied the attention and aroused the enthusiasm of church members. But in Presbyterianism all the elements of church service are characterized by such a simplicity, we were about to say severity, of tone, that they have never served to distract the attention from, but rather to give emphasis to the great central point of public worship—the presentation of God's message to the church.

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We owe an apology to the *Varsity* for our delay in noticing its proposition for the establishment of an Inter-collegiate Press Association. Owing to circumstances over which we have had no control we could not refer to the matter before. Of course the *Varsity* enjoys exceptional advantages for performing its part of the duties of such an association from the fact that it is printed on its own presses, &c. Other college papers which have their work done outside would need, we fancy, to have their contributions sent in on manuscript. However, perhaps the difficulty might be obviated.

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The *Varsity*, in sending out its periodical News-Letter asking the other colleges to reciprocate, seems to us to be starting at the wrong end. If every Canadian college sends news-letters to Toronto, and all receive in return the same letter from Toronto, the affair would be too beautifully one-sided for anything.

The true plan seems to us to be that each Canadian college should appoint one of its staff to write a letter, say, once a month, and that a copy of this letter should be sent to every other college in the country. In this way each college paper would have as many letters as there are colleges, less one, and the process would be of equal advantage to each. We are prepared to support the *Varsity* in this proposition, and will within the next fortnight despatch such a letter to our contemporaries.