

the dead calm of ignorance and faith ! Banish me from Eden when you will ; but first let me eat of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge !

Some nations have borrowed their gods. Of this number, we are compelled to say, is our own. The Jews having ceased to exist as a nation, and having no further use for a god, our ancestors appropriated him, and adopted their devil at the same time. This borrowed god is still an object of some adoration, and this adopted devil still excites the apprehensions of our people. He is still supposed to be setting his traps and snares for the purpose of catching our unwary souls, and is still, with reasonable success, waging the old war against our god.

To me, it seems easy to account for these ideas concerning gods and devils. They are a perfectly natural production. Man has created them all, and under the same circumstances would create them again. Man has not only created all these gods, but he has created them out of the materials by which he has been surrounded. Generally he has modelled them after himself, and has given them hands, heads, feet, eyes, ears, and organs of speech. Each nation not only made its gods and devils speak its own language, but put into their mouths the same mistakes in history, geography, astronomy, and in all matters of fact, generally made by the people. No god was ever in advance of the nation that created him. The negroes represented their deities with black skins and curly hair. The Mongolian gave to his a yellow complexion and dark almond-shaped eyes. The Jews were not allowed to paint theirs, or we should have seen Jehovah with a full beard, an oval face, and an aquiline nose. Zeus was a perfect Greek, and Jove looked as though a member of the Roman Senate. The gods of Egypt had the patient face and placid look of the loving people who made them. The gods of northern countries were represented warmly clad in robes of fur ; those of the tropics were naked. The gods of India were often mounted upon elephants ; those of some islanders were great swimmers ; and the deities of the Arctic zone were passionately fond of whale's blubber. Nearly all people have carved or painted representations of their gods, and these representations were, by the lower classes, generally treated as the real gods, and to these images and idols they addressed prayers and offered sacrifice.

"In some countries, even at this day, if the people after long praying do not obtain their desires, they turn their images off as impotent gods, or upbraid them in a most reproachful manner, loading them with blows and curses. 'How now, dog of a spirit,' they say, 'we give you lodging in a magnificent temple, we gild you with gold, feed you with the choicest food, and offer incense to you ; yet, after all this care, you are so ungrateful as to refuse us what we ask.' Hereupon they will pull the god down and drag him through the filth of the street. If, in the meantime, it happens that they obtain their request, then, with a great deal of ceremony, they wash him clean, carry him back, and place him in his temple again, where they fall down and make excuses for what they have done. Of a truth," they say, "we were a little too hasty, and you were a little