

principles which are either wholly false, or partially false because they overlook other truths material to the subject. They make the limits of their own reason the bounds of the universe, and every individual man not only the measure but the sum of all things. The highest climax of positivism is the recognition and systematizing of its own ignorance. What has theology to gain from this philosophy which claims to lift us by the workings of reason into the enfranchisement of thought? Its last result is a pure negative, inconceivable and impossible, a hideous gulph of absurdity. What a result for a theory put forth with such an air of superior insight and ostentatious promise of freeing metaphysics and theology from the perplexities of previous speculations, and placing them on their own proper and immutable basis!

Can all that Sage, Saint, Sophist ever writ,
Rebuild this tower, this tenement reft!

2nd. We have another large class of men of a totally different stamp, whom it would be unjust to rank with those already described, but who are, perhaps without knowing it, playing into their hands, and who designate themselves as the school of Liberal Theologians. Writers of this school pervert and overstrain the contrast between letter and spirit, they maintain that the Bible is not as a whole a Revelation from God, but that it contains a Revelation; or they change the way of putting it and declare that individual passages of Scripture have no authority, we must take their whole spirit.

This theory admits of many different modifications. There is a large class of theologians who refer the contents of Scripture to the natural revelation—they are the embodiment of the religious consciousness of their various writers. The authors of the books of the Bible were in a certain sense inspired; but the inspiration which its writers possessed did not differ in principle from the inspiration of Homer or Dante or Shakespeare. The inspiration might differ in degree, and it did differ in that the writings themselves refer to a different class of subjects, but in principle it was the same as the inspiration of genius through which the loftier spirits of our race have in all ages thrown out great and noble ideas—sparks of heavenly