

to be solved by each of us for himself, and by mankind collectively, on practical rather than philosophical grounds. Probably no man, when engaged in high and inspiring action, ever for a moment doubted his moral freedom, or imagined himself to be the mere organ of a "sociological" law. And the world is now once more entering upon a course of action of a high and inspiring kind. A greater object of endeavour than any mere political emancipation or improvement begins to present itself to our view. The political supports of the Papacy having been cut away by the fall or desperate weakness of the old Catholic monarchies, on which, since the Reformation, it has rested, and the power of the Popes having long ceased to be a spiritual power, the great pillars of irrational dogma and the chief source of schismatical division among the Christian Churches are in a fair way of being removed; and the re-union of Christendom, which for three centuries has been an empty and hopeless prayer, is likely at last to become a practicable aim. Probably it would be a greater service to humanity, on philosophical as well as on religious grounds, to contribute the smallest mite towards this consummation, than to construct the most perfect demonstration of the free personality of man. As things are, rationalistic and fatalistic reveries may be laboriously confuted; but amidst the energies and aspirations of a regenerated Christendom, they would spontaneously pass away.

The rational object of discussion in this as in other departments is to produce practical conviction. Names and theoretical statements may take care of themselves. The *Westminster Review* says:—"Anything which tends to deny to man the fullest power to develop his own faculties, to control his own life, and form his future, we are ready to condemn." If it will adhere to this declaration in the natural sense of the words, there is nothing more to be said, except that if comets "formed their own future" they would be rather embarrassing subjects of "science."

A student and teacher of History, however, is compelled to deal with a theory which, if true, would deeply affect the treatment of his special subject.

We are in effect told with great vehemence of language, rising, when objections are offered, to a highly objurgatory key, that the free personality of man is an illusion; for that, free as we may, our actions, both individual and collective, are determined by a law, or a set of laws, as fixed as those which determine the phenomena of physical agents, and of which what we call our free-will is only the manifestation.