

words, "predestined some to be saved, do all they will, and others to be lost, do all they can." Evangelicalism has never produced a poet. On Cowper's poetry its effect was purely negative, to check what was joyous in his temperament, to people the unseen world with horrible phantoms, to forbid the use of the good gifts of God, and to limit if not deny His mercy. With Cowper the hymns of Calvinism put themselves into such forms as these :

"When such a destined wretch as I
Washed headlong from aboard,
Of friends, of home, of all bereft,
His floating home for ever left."

Shelley's character was a bolder one—instead of accepting the view of religion that was put before him, and breaking his heart, or losing his sanity over it as poor timid Cowper had done, he rejected what was to him manifestly incompatible with the idea of a just and merciful Ruler of the Universe, and flung from him in scorn the religious system which was to him associated only with such doctrines. And he was not wisely or tenderly dealt with in his early doubtings. Indeed an anecdote told of the late Charles Wesley, has always seemed to us an excellent illustration of the temper in which Calvinists deal with those who differ from their opinions.

It befel that Charles Wesley was preaching in that chapel, to which the indifference of latitudinarian Bishops had driven one of the ablest and worthiest priests of the Church in England. Charles Wesley was preaching, as his wont was, against Calvinism, and in the course of his sermon remarked that he had never known a Calvinist to have a good temper. "You lie," was shouted in gruff tones from a corner of the Chapel. "Oh," said Charles Wesley, placidly, "have I drawn out Leviathan with a hook?"

Shelley avowed himself an infidel when an undergraduate at Oxford. He published a pamphlet full of the crude arguments that had been urged a hundred times before. But Oxford then was not the Oxford of Pusey and Keble, of Arnold and Whately; not the Oxford where the best and ablest give themselves to the work of guidance and comfort; neither was it the Oxford of to-day, which not only tolerates but pays as its Professor, an avowed sceptic. On the one hand, the university could not tolerate heresy; on the other there was no one in those days to interest himself in reclaiming the lost one, whose youth, and the very irrationality of whose disbelief might have well challenged pity.

Soon after this, and at the marvellously early age of eighteen, "Queen Mab" was written and published. It amounts to an impassioned protest against the doctrine that evil is of God, that human error, blindness and misery, are in any sense attributable to the Divine will. Strip the poem of a few petulant phrases of hostility to what Shelley imagined wrongly was the Christian religion, and this is in fact what remains, joined with an eloquent enumeration of the glories of departed empires, drawn very plainly from an equally eloquent passage in