

CONTRIBUTED. MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS. NO. II. THE DESTRUCTION OF FAITH AND ITS RESULTS. BY W. H.

The intellectual activity and restlessness of the present day is a fact illustrated and confirmed in the most varied and emphatic manner, no matter where we look. Among the many distinguishing characteristics of the age which command attention, one of the most striking is an attempt, on the part of some, to shake off from the mind and affection of this generation the faiths and beliefs which in the past have brought such grand and beneficent results; and to substitute in their place a system of unbelief, which in its free and unfettered operation would result in a moral ruin and desolation which no language can fully describe. So bold and daring is the spirit which is abroad, that no domain of human thought or feeling remains unvisited, and doctrines of a religious character, which for centuries have been regarded as sacred, and worthy of the faith and affections of the noblest souls, are to-day being handled in such a manner as to unsettle the faith of some, and to widen the existing breach between believing and unbelieving men.

When we speak of the destruction of faith, we do not refer to that natural and common principle which is in constant operation in all the great departments of secular life, but to the faith which embraces the facts and doctrines included in the Christian revelation, which is at once the foundation and stability of the Christian Church, and the source and spring of the world's best hope. And in connection with this faith it is well for us to remember, notwithstanding all that may be said to the contrary, that a religious system around which the best confidence and hope of nineteen hundred years have gathered, and which have known no disappointment, should utterly refuse to be shuffled carelessly aside, or to be dismissed from its place by a wave of the hand no matter how famous and influential these hands may be. Do those who, perhaps, in a somewhat unthinking manner, accept the poisonous teaching of a materialistic philosophy, properly anticipate and consider the ultimate ruinous results, which the wide adoption of these irreligious principles would most assuredly secure? Perhaps if they considered well the issue which the abandonment of their early faith necessarily involved they would pause before they plunged themselves into the vast, cold vacancy of a sinless and Godless world. The object of the present paper is to indicate some of the results which must undoubtedly follow the relinquishment of the Christian faith, and the adoption of the teachings of unchristian and unbelieving men.

The effect which the practical recognition of a godless philosophy would have on human life and character, could not but be of the most humiliating and degrading kind. The high priests of modern unbelief do not hesitate to tear into shreds the robe of man's dignity; to snatch from his brow the crown of immortality, and substitute for this precious diadem the poor mockery of a brief animalism, or of which the authors for ever lie unconscious and unaccounted. If man is only the "apex of a pyramid," whose base is a worm? If he is but the outcome and result of blind mechanical forces, and the victim of a cruel, iron necessity, from which he cannot possibly free himself, then does he sink to a level with the animal creation around him, and such a thing as a noble and glorious freedom becomes an impossibility, and the fact that he may be called a splendid animal, "the glorification of the brute," or the "apocalypse of the beast," would be poor consolation indeed! If according to this "gospel of dirt," man finds his origin in the primal slime; if his nature is nothing more than the result and production of the material world around him, his outlook into the future as viewed from the standpoint of modern unbelief, cannot be of a very encouraging or consoling kind.

His future is a thing of sadness and gloom, the true centre of man's gravity is no longer the nobler and better world beyond, but the physical and bodily gratifications which the present scene may possibly supply: around his life is thrown the "crape of a lifeless gloom," and around his grave the darkness of a sad despair, with no promise that the eastern sky will ever redden with the fair promise of a resurrection morn. If, as these apostles of modern uncertainty teach, man is organized merely for the enjoyment of this earthly scene, and if with these physical and fleeting satisfactions, the utmost possibility of his existence is reached, then all hope of a glorious, conscious immortality is laid low, and his most cherished anticipations of a better state only remain to be struck down by death into all the ruin and desolation of an endless night. And the important matter of human responsibility fares no better under such teachings as these. The solemn facts of man's moral freedom and accountability, are practically ignored, for he is declared to be the slave and victim of his surroundings, and the great distinctions between right and wrong are unexcitingly set aside. No higher law than a mere human expediency is recognized, and all the sanctions and authorities by which he is to be moved are confined to the arena of time in which, for awhile, he is found.

This utter debasement of humanity, and this squandering of the 'crown rights of mankind,' is well illustrated by the story which one of the historians tells of a tame eagle he saw in a butcher's shop. The royal bird, he says, "had forgotten the plains of heaven, the glories of sun and sea, and sky and storm; its plumes dragged in the ashes, and its eyes twinkled in the kitchen fire." Such is the humiliation to which men of high sounding names would lead us, but among others we refuse to follow in a course so degrading and embroting as this. (To be continued)

ON THE NECESSITY OF HOLINESS.

MR. EDITOR.—As a believer in holiness, enjoying in some measure its blessed personal experience, I feel moved to endeavor to awaken in others an interest in the subject, but having been for many months confined to my habitation by the infirmities of age, and unable to go in and out among my fellow Christians as I have been wont to do in the past; I must try and write my thoughts as the only way open to me.

That was certainly a wise thought of some members of the last Nova Scotia Conference, who resolved that one of their number should prepare each week an article on the subject of Holiness for the WESLEYAN. The articles on the subject, since published, have been read with deep interest; they seem to impart new vigor to the good old WESLEYAN. As no member of the N. B. and P. E. I. Conference is found among your contributors on that subject, will you accept a few "barley loaves" from a layman of New Brunswick, which may possibly be relished by some of the thousands of your readers, who can relish plain fare; and it may be looking and inquiring for something special on the subject.

One of your contributors made the remark that "no subject could be more worthy of a prominent place in a religious paper, than that of Scriptural Holiness." Holiness is indeed a Scriptural doctrine. Moses, the great lawgiver of God's chosen people, commanded, "Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy." And the great apostle declares to the Hebrews, "With-out holiness no man shall see the Lord." That covers the whole ground of universal application. When a man is made holy, he is saved—not before. Thus, it becomes the duty of the day that the doctrine be kept prominently before the people by the press, as well as by the pulpit—and that warm and fresh from the heart—in order that members of the Church may be well instructed in this great truth of the gospel; and may know what is their duty, and also their responsibility in reference thereto.

Mr. Wesley declares that the mission of Methodism was to spread Scriptural holiness throughout the world. But has not Methodism quite forgotten her high mission, and wellnigh lost the experience, if not the doctrine also. Surely, there is a loud call to every one to "awake out of sleep," and "repeat and do our first works." And especially so, as all the orthodox denunciations of Christians are—more or less—awakening to an earnest inquiry for a richer and higher experience in the divine life. It is estimated that at no time since the great Reformation has there been as during the last eight or ten years, so generally and uniformly the inquiry, "What is the Scriptural teaching about the experience of holiness?" or "The Higher Christian Life."

Some remarks by Richard Watson are to the point. A little before his death he said, "If the doctrine of Christian perfection, as taught by Mr. Wesley and Mr. Fletcher, be true, as we all believe it is, I fear we do not give that prominence to it in our preaching which we ought to do; and that some of us do not seek to realize it in our own experience, as it is our privilege and duty." And further on, "I should like to see the doctrine clearly and fully stated, on the authority of Scripture, and without any reference to controversy."

Just that seems to be needed to-day. "To have the doctrine clearly and fully stated," and earnestly pressed on our attention from week to week; for we are so dull of hearing that we need a line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little." Otherwise we are in danger of forgetting our privilege and duty and so coming short at last of eternal life. ROBERT BOWSER. Sackville, N. B.

MISCELLANEOUS. CHURCH DEBTS.

Many pastors pursue a ruinous policy. They think that all contributions for benevolent work at home, or the spread of the gospel abroad, should be merged into the fund for local support. The heathen must care for themselves, and every noble charity must be forsaken to make provision for current expenses, and to "get ready to pay the debt." It is a great mistake! You might as well stop the throbbing of the heart in order to increase the strength of the physical man. In stopping the benevolent contributions and work of the Church, you will be killing every generous impulse, and destroying the very motives which should only be quickened and strengthened if the debt is ever to be paid at all.

A certain congregation in a small village had a debt of nearly \$25,000. The pastor advocated giving to every worthy object which appealed for aid. In three years \$19,000 of the great debt was cancelled, no worthy supplicant was turned away empty, the Church had risen in the amount of its contributions for missions, and the various agencies of the Church until it occupied the second place in the Synod with which it stood connected. The succeeding pastor, with a debt of \$7,000, pursued a policy directly the reverse, and at the end of the second year had the opportunity to stand upon the floors of the Synod, and offer as an excuse for not having raised a single dollar for missions, nor any of the agencies of the Church, "that he had told his people from the pulpit that they should contribute nothing for these objects, as they needed all their money at home to pay the debt." What was the result of such a policy? As might naturally be expected, the congregation had not paid current expenses, they had not paid a single dollar on the debt, nor had they even paid the interest of the debt.

POISONS IN USE.

Mr. George T. Angell, of Boston, to some startling facts on adulteration, adds these, no less startling, on a poison in common use:

The amount of arsenic imported into this country during the year ending June 20, 1875, was 2,326,742 pounds. Each pound contained a fatal dose for about 2,800 adult human beings. It is sold in our markets almost as freely as wood and coal, at a wholesale price of from a cent and a half to two cents a pound. What becomes of it? I answer, it is used with other poisons in wall papers, paper curtains, lamp shades, boxes, wrapping papers for confectionery, tickets, cards, children's kindergarten papers, artificial flowers, dried grasses, eye-shades, and numerous other articles. Among the articles frequently made dangerous by this or other poisons, may be named also ladies' dress goods, veils, sewing silks, threads, stockings, gentlemen's underclothing, socks, gloves, hair-linings, linings of boots and shoes, paper collars, babies' carriages, colored enameled clothes, children's toys, various fabrics of wool, silk, cotton and leather in various colors. One chemist finds eight grains of arsenic to each square foot of a dress; another ten grains of arsenic, in a single artificial flower. A child dies in convulsions by taking arsenic from a veil thrown over its crib to keep off flies. A Boston gentleman is so poisoned by a flesh-colored undershirt that for several days he could hardly see. Several cases of children poisoned by colored toys. A Boston girl not expected to live because she sucked a cheap colored balloon. A lady dangerously poisoned by wearing a blue veil. A Lyon girl so poisoned by wearing colored stockings that it was feared amputation would be necessary. A child nearly dying from wearing colored stockings. Poisoning by tartarum used to keep off flies. Several poisonings by colored gloves. Several poisonings by colored hat-linings.

A SURPRISE.

Among many amusing anecdotes of the Russian Imperial family related in the late Earl Bender's memoirs, is the following highly characteristic story of the eccentric Grand Duke Constantine, Czar Alexander's eldest uncle. While residing at Warsaw, Constantine gave a splendid banquet to a number of the great Polish nobles, to each of whom, at the conclusion of the feast, an ordinary tallow candle was served on a plate by the attendant lacquey. As soon as all his guests were supplied with these peculiarly unappetizing objects, the Grand Duke, who had given orders that an imitation candle, admirably executed in marzipane, should be placed upon his plate, rose from his seat and exclaimed: "Gentlemen, let us eat, to the honor of Russia, the favorite national comestible of my country. Look at me. This is the way to do it."

So saying, he threw back his head, opened his mouth wide, and inserted therein two inches or so of the dainty in question. As he closed his mouth, however, the expression of his countenance suffered an extraordinary change. One of the noblemen, sitting in his immediate vicinity, had contrived to substitute his own genuine tallow candle for the marzipane imitation set before the Grand Duke, who, not choosing to betray himself to his guests, found himself condemned to chew at least one copious mouthful of good Russian tallow as an example to all the victims of his detestable jest, none of whom of course dared to abstain from doing as the terrible Constantine did. It is needless to say that the dexterous appropriator of the marzipane candle,

while devouring that toothsome article with a joyful heart, baffled suspicion by the most hideous and convulsive expressive of loathing and nausea.

LITTLE THINGS.—More depends on little things than we think. It is said that Voltaire when five years old learned an infidel poem, and he was never able to free himself from its effects. Scott, the commentator, when despairing, read a hymn of Dr. Watts and was turned from a life of idleness and sin to one of usefulness. Cowper, about to drown himself, was carried the wrong way by his driver and went home to write: "God moves in a mysterious way." The rebuke of a teacher aroused Dr. Clarke to great action, who had up to that time been slow in acquiring knowledge. Ole Bull, the great violinist, rescued from suicide by drowning and taken to the near residence of a wealthy lady, became her protégé and soon acquired fame. Robert Moffat, the distinguished missionary, reading a placard announcing a missionary meeting, was led to devote himself to work for the heathen. One step downward often leads men into the greatest guilt. It is the little words and actions that make or mar our lives.—Congregationalist.

BREVITIES.

Ugliness of temper is frequently coupled with beauty of person.

Those who have light in themselves will not revolve as satellites.—Anon.

Flattery is like cologne water—to be smelled of, not swallowed.—Billings.

A man cannot give a better legacy to the world than a well-educated family.

Death comes to a good man to relieve him; it comes to a bad man to relieve society.

Why is the money you are in the habit of giving to the poor like a newly-born babe? Because it's precious little.

A newspaper claims that an alderman has been injured by the accidental discharge of his duty. These accidents are very rare.

The best thing to do with the balky worker in any department of Christian activity is to put a good substitute in his place—and the sooner the better.—Sunday School Times.

There are men in the world who wear a girdle of fret, as trying as any friar's to annoy themselves. They fancy that in such experience is to be found the highest fulfillment of religious duty and the truest expression of this world's probation.—Rev. Stephen H. Tyng.

Dr. Hastings, of Boston, in speaking of religious joy and of singing as being the natural expression of joy, remarked that some congregations had so little of it that they had to hire people to do their singing. "Why," says he, "I would as soon think of hiring a man to eat my breakfast."

A man being asked about the trustworthiness of a certain person who was in search of a situation said: "There are, doubtless, vocations in which he could be trusted. There's real estate, for example. If that was put in his care, I think the owner would find it where he left it. I shouldn't care to speak as to any other kind of property."

A New Hampshire farmer recently agreed to sell his farm for \$2,000, but when the day came he told the expectant purchaser that his wife was in hysterics about the trade, and he guessed he'd have to back out." The purchaser complained, and finally asked how much more would induce him to sell. "Well," replied the thrifty son of the Granite State, "give me \$250 more and we'll let her cry."

Rev. Robert Collyer, giving "a charge" to his old people, on their settlement of his successor, among other good things said:—"Seldom and faintly with your minister, but when you do, don't tell him on Monday, for then he feels blue. Don't tell him on Tuesday, for then he is just pulling out. Don't tell him on Wednesday, for then he is getting ready for his next sermon. Don't tell him on Thursday, for then he is writing it. Don't tell him on Friday for then he is finishing it. Don't tell him on Saturday, for then he is getting rested for Sunday. And if you don't tell him before Saturday night, you never will tell him."

It is a weakness of some people to dislike to be laughed at. They will shrink from what they know to be their duty, they will let opportunities for good pass by, they will miss the pleasure of being useful, for fear they may be laughed at. They are to be pitied! To think that they will let the laugh of some poor giggler, who aspires to nothing but making fun, rob them of happiness they might enjoy, only for fear of ridicule! How we long to give them stamina, to whisper in their ear that all good lives have, at some time in their lives, been laughed at, but by not heeding the laugh, and pushing on bravely, they have attained positions of usefulness and honor.

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