

he depicts the "memorable conclusion" of his course of lectures as the opening of a new era, and shows how the great thinkers who had preceded him in history were precursors of himself.

In his later phase, having become a St. Paul, he proceeded to found a new religion, which is simply an insane parody of the Roman Catholicism before his eyes, set a mystic morality above science, and turned the "Positive Philosophy" upside-down. All honour to Comte, however, for this—that he was not a mere reckless assailant of the convictions by which the world around him lived. He produced, at the cost, no doubt, of much conscientious labour and earnest thought, what he believed to be a new faith, and tendered it to mankind as a substitute for that which he took away. That the view of humanity which he adopted was ignoble and absurd was his misfortune, as the victim of unhappy influences, far more than his fault. If it were not so clear that he was deranged at the time when he invented his new religion, he might well be said to have done Christendom a great service by trying, with decisive result, the experiment of satisfying man's religious instincts by a Creed and Church other than the Christian.

In England, Comte has drawn his most distinguished disciples from the University of Oxford. When the University awoke from the long torpor of the last century, a violent ecclesiastical movement set in, which naturally took a High Church direction, and, as every one knows, threw many of its best and most gifted members into the Church of Rome. The recoil after that movement staggered most of us, and flung some out of religion altogether. These men fell in several cases sheer down into Comtism, and it seemed that the University of Laud had still a fair chance of furnishing leaders to that persuasion. . . .

Generations at Oxford pass quickly. Within the brief space of twenty years I have seen the wheel come full circle. When I was an undergraduate, theology was "the queen (and tyrant) of the sciences." In those days, scientific experience was set at nought, and we were told that though in science the earth might go round the sun, in theology the sun went round the earth. Later, moral experience was set at nought, and we were told that, morally, we may know action to be free, but that science pronounces it to be bound by the law of causation. The sneers which are at present directed against free-will are the exact counterpart and the just retribution of the sneers which were formerly directed against induction. We trampled on the lower truth, and we paid the heavy penalty of producing enemies to the highest. . . .

Such a question as that of the free personality of man is likely