

religious one. Sad to say among many of the best singers of recent times, faith in Divine revelation has been partly lost and its place has been usurped by a new revelation—so named by its devotees--which was to proceed not from above, but from man's own yearning heart and teeming brain. Liberty and science were made gods, and with their triumph it was confidently hoped the millenium of a perfect human existence would be reached. Vain hope doomed to bitter dissatisfaction! Science instead of overpowering religion has been made the hand-maid thereof, by the genius of such men as Cuvier and Pasteur. Human liberty has triumphed wherever civilization reigns, but the world, except when looked upon by the light shed from Calvary's Hill is still a dreary, dismal place. And anything of value produced by the poets of this later school, is due not to the intrinsic worth of their principles but to the influence exercised over them by christianity. Those, who like Swinburne, persistently resist this influence and openly profess atheism, both in theory and practice, give utterance to nothing worthy of the name of poetry.

Mr. Swinburne's literary career, is perhaps the strongest argument that could be adduced in support of the proposition we are attempting to prove. His first drama, the "Atalanta," which appeared in 1865, won for him the approval and commendation of the most eminent critics of the day. The power of imagination therein displayed, surpassed that of any writer since the days of Shelley, and this, in addition to his skill in delineating human character bid fair to make of him one of the greatest poets in the whole history of English literature. Much was expected of him, but he has sadly disappointed his early admirers. He is not wanting in poetical power, but he lacks the inspiration that springs from

noble ideas. As his imagination cannot soar up the supernatural and the infinite, it is deprived of the grand imagery which their contemplation affords. His pictures of human life therefore, are wanting in breadth and depth and are bound up in the shallows of our natural existence, and the fact that they are garnished with virulent anti-christian inventions and base platitudes, to please certain palates, has estranged from him still more, the thoughtful portion of the English reading public. As a result of his shallow principles, Mr. Swinburne's later works are characterized by that wordiness and diffusiveness which is ever found when lofty, noble ideas are wanting. However he has lived long enough to learn that he who seeks pleasure solely as an end finds nought but bitterness and woe. This dearly bought knowledge has assigned to him a place by the side of Byron, De Musset and the other disciples of the "Poetry of Despair," who rail at the world, at life, at everything, the good and the bad alike. Mr. Swinburne has been logical in his writings and has followed out his principles to their sad consequences.

For the great poet then, the ideas of the true, the good and the beautiful, and their living synthesis the Divine, are not empty abstractions but take possession of his mind with an ever increasing fullness and engender a lofty elevation of his feelings. He realizes that the true, the good and the beautiful, are but revelations of the Divine. He contemplates the grand vistas of speculative and scientific truth, the lofty conquests of the human will, the heroic example of perfect lives, and such contemplation is the source of his inspiration.

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