

romancers, not on the ground of evangelical faith, repentance and good works, but on ethical grounds pure and simple. Full of belief in man's innate goodness, and relying for acceptance with God on the plea of their virtues, the heroes of these religious novels adopt in substance the proud language of Mr Mill, "If, from this position of integrity and morality we are to be sent to hell, to hell we will go." With such writers the favourite portion of Scripture is the Sermon on the Mount, as being "a very lovely song to the sinful soul of man," forgetting that its blessing on obedience implies a curse on disobedience, and that it deals not only with outward conduct but with inward motives, with such intense spirituality as once caused a good man, who knew his own heart to exclaim—"God save me from the Sermon on the Mount when I am judged in the last day."

Very decided also do we find the hostility of these serial stories to *definite doctrinal beliefs*. The head and the heart, the intellect and the feelings are very often, in these stories, brought into antagonism, as if the intellect which deals with dogmas must be seized and imprisoned before the heart can find room to grow and "beat time to the music of the spheres." There is no end to the insinuations that all written creeds and confessions are evil, and only evil continually, cramping, contracting, and hardening the heart, arresting all free inquiry, and withering the spiritual life, as if God should grant men a revelation of truth and yet leave them to believe as much or as little of it as they chose; or as if men like Paul, and John, and Peter, and Augustine, and Luther and Calvin, and Wesley, and Whitefield, and Edwards, and Chalmers were not men of decided doctrine and definite beliefs; or as if their trees of righteousness were bound to be covered with blossoms, and in their season with richest fruit, and yet have no such unsightly and unnecessary things as crooked dismal roots below ground, or have them, if necessary, like orchids in the air.

If the inspiration of the Scriptures, if the demerit of sin, if the atoning work of Christ, and other kindred doctrines are old, out of