

passions of the heart—what St. Augustin called the “love of self unto the contempt of God.” The ancients worshipped all the corrupt passions of the heart in idols of their imagination and handiwork ; modern paganism, more subtle and refined, dispenses with the block of wood and stone, and worships self without intermediary in Nature. Naturalism is the religion of the day. Nature and more particularly human nature, is the idol—not human nature elevated and deified by grace and sanctity, not an ideal nature purified by imagination and sentiment from all that is gross and vile, but a realistic nature in which every passion wears a crown, every instinct has its right of play, every emotion its expression and liberty of action. This is the only god recognized by the philosophy and the science of the age in its pet theory of evolution ; this is the god which gives inspiration to the literature and the art, and is exhibited on the stage of the French School, from which the world takes its fashions. Its object is to portray and idolize in realistic colors what the modern French man with cynical frankness calls “the human beast.”

This religion of naturalism has also its church and hierarchy and organization in the Lodge. Free Masonry, adapting itself to the ideas and prejudices of nations, is presented to the eyes of England and English-speaking countries as an institution of benevolence and fraternization ; but in the Catholic countries of Europe and South America, where it has succeeded in enslaving the masses, it shows itself in true colors, in literature and art, in the press, on the stage, in legislation, all animated with one purpose, rallying to a single cry, carrying out vigorously a simple plan : Destroy the Church of Jesus Christ by corrupting the hearts of her children. First dispose the heart of youth for corruption by imparting to it a mere pagan education without faith or religion, and then subject it to all the influence of an impure press.

It were, however, an illusion to suppose that this naturalism is confined to a few nations. The world's atmosphere is infected with it. It is taught from Sunday pulpits, in books of science, dealt out from railway stalls, placarded on the street walls