

tendencies" furiously denounced. No quarter was to be given to it, for if tolerated for a moment it would utterly destroy every vestige, not only of religion, but of the religious spirit; and yet I venture to herald it to-day as the long-missing "Fifth Evangel," "The Gospel according to Darwin." Instead of destroying the religious spirit, it reanimates it, and places it upon a stronger foundation than ever before.

This may seem an extravagant and extraordinary statement, but it can be shown to be far from unfounded. In the first place, it restores the grand unity of the universe, and proves the fundamental harmony of its conflicting forces. There is no hanging in the balance between the forces of good and evil, no perilous and often doubtful conflict between a beneficent World Spirit and a malevolent one: no such thing as abstract and essential "evil": nothing but a magnificent scheme of glorious progress through conflict. Storm and darkness, hunger and cold, war and wanderings, nay, even pestilence and famine, are seen to be spurs to progress, mothers of invention, and the stern nurses of all the virtues. Never has the doctrine of the Old Gospel—that "all things work together for good to them that love the Good"—received such tremendous indorsement. Instead of gazing upon a world of blind, remorseless chance or inevitable fate, so full of cruelty, injustice, and needless suffering as to absolutely require the conception or invention of "another world," to even partially remedy its inequalities, the Darwinist sees all forces moving steadily forward in one grand and gloriously beneficent scheme of advancement. Nature's only and unvarying war-cry is "Excelsior!"

The old Evangelists did at times catch glimpses of this truth from the mountain-peaks of their loftiest spiritual raptures, but it was soon lost sight of in the mist of the valley and the fog of the fen, into which the churches were plunged in that palsied time which heralded the death of the great Roman Empire.

None of them, however, even dreamed of a light which should reveal a harmony and an order in that far more bitter, more hopeless and more perplexing conflict which is incessantly present in the soul of man itself. Even to Paul's magnificent intellect, the only possible result is, that one of the conflicting forces *must* and inevitably will destroy the other. "The carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither, indeed, can it be. . . . To be carnally minded is death." In the mild radiance of the Fifth Gospel even this struggle, like every other, is seen to surely and inevitably result in progress, to which both forces are absolutely necessary. The "enmity" between them is merely that between the steam-chest and the driving-wheel in the great engine, or, more accurately, between the panting young giant in the cylinder and the piston-rod, each fiercely asserting itself against the other, and between them driving the great wheel. Browning has caught the same ray of dawn when he cries:

"As the bird wings and sings,
Let us cry, 'All good things

Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps soul.'"

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