

ness of every human being. In a question so vast, no individual is of any account. Your existence or mine is but a bubble on the ocean, a breath in the air. But the creature of a day may leave an influence that will not die with him:

"The evil that men do lives after them."

With my estimate of your power, I believe that your influence will live long. You are doing more than any other man in this country to unsettle the minds of the new generation in the faith of their fathers. In this you think you are rendering them a great service. You would be shocked to be told that you are doing them an unspeakable injury. But with all your foresight, you may not see clearly the full extent of your influence. Samson was blind when he pulled down the pillars of the temple and perished in its ruins. There are those who look upon you as the blind Samson of our day, who, with the strength of a giant, and maddened by rage, are causing a degree of moral ruin which you will never be able to repair.

In your attacks upon Religion you do violence to your own manliness. Knowing you as I do, I feel sure that you do not realize where your blows fall, or whom they wound, or you would not use your weapons so freely. The faiths of men are as sacred as the most delicate manly or womanly sentiments of love and honor. They are dear as the beloved faces that have passed from our sight. I should think myself wanting in respect to the memory of my father and mother if I could speak lightly of the faith in which they lived and died. Surely this must be mere thoughtlessness, for I cannot believe that you find pleasure in giving pain. I have not forgotten the gentle hand that was laid upon your shoulder, and the gentle voice which said, "Uncle Robert wouldn't hurt a fly." And yet you bruise the tenderest sensibilities, and trample down what is most cherished by millions of sisters and daughters and mothers, little heeding that you are sporting with "human creatures' lives."

Surely there is other work for a brave, true man to do in the world than this. All men who seek the good of their fellow-creatures have certain objects in common which should draw them together. Your first word to me was, "If we do not agree in our religious belief, we at least agree in the duty of kindness." Let us meet on

that ground. If you cannot accept Christianity, devote yourself to good works. Be the eloquent pleader for the unfortunate, the defender of the innocent, the helper of the helpless, the benefactor of the poor. You are full of enthusiasm for liberty; you wish all men to be free; that society may be reconstructed on the principles of absolute justice. This is an ambition worthy of any man, to bring in the reign of "purer manners, better laws," and thus to promote the happiness of mankind.

A HOPELESS WAR—CHRISTIANITY THE SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST.

At present you are waging a hopeless war—a war in which you are certain only of defeat. The Christian Religion began to be nearly two thousand years before you and I were born, and it will live two thousand years after we are dead. Why is it that it lives on and on, while nations and kingdoms perish? Is it not this "the survival of the fittest?" Contend against it with all your wit and eloquence, you will fail, as all have failed before you. You cannot fight against the instincts of humanity. It is as natural for men to look up to a Higher Power as it is to look up to the stars. Tell them that there is no God! You might as well tell them that there is no Sun in heaven, even while on that central light and heat all life on earth depends.

I do not presume to think that I have convinced you, or changed your opinion; but it is always right to appeal to a man's "sober second thought"—to that better judgment that comes with widening knowledge and advancing years; and you must allow me to hope that, after the violence of passion has abated, has rocked itself to rest, you will see things more clearly, and recognize the fatal error which vitiates all your reasoning, so that you do not distinguish Religion from Superstition:—two things as far apart as "the hither from the utmost pole." Superstition is the greatest enemy of Religion. It is the nightmare of the mind, filling it with all imaginable terrors—a black cloud which broods over half the world. Against this you may well invoke the light of science to scatter its darkness. Whoever helps to sweep it away, is a benefactor of his race. But when this is done, and the moral atmosphere is made pure and sweet, then you as well as we may be conscious of a new