

and many of the passengers have left it for other conveyances. Those that remain are for the most part aware that they have been depending all along upon what little steam was left in the boiler when the fires of Rome were withdrawn from under it. They suspect that they may be only playing at train now; but the engineer keeps blowing his whistle and the guard goes round to examine the tickets, and the brakesmen rattle their brakes, and it is not such bad fun after all. For the carriages are warm and comfortable and the day is cold, and so long as they are tipped all the company's servants are very obliging. But those who know where they want to go, are not so contented.

For several centuries the Church of England has performed the difficult feat of blowing hot and cold in two directions at once—saying to the Roman Catholics "Reason!" and to the Sceptics "Believe!" It was adjusting the force of its two-faced blowing, that it has managed to keep itself so long from falling off the fence. But now the fence itself is giving way. Disendowment and disestablishment are in the air. And what does your Church urge in its own behalf? Its usefulness. It is *useful* to have a number of educated, moral, unworldly men, scattered all over the country, who prevent the world from utterly forgetting the name of religion, and who act as centres of benevolent work. But the question now is no longer one of repeating prayers, and giving alms to the poor, as it was five hundred years ago. The people have come of age, and have taken their thinking and the direction of their social, private and even spiritual affairs into their own hands, for they have found out that their clergy know no more about "things of Heaven" than they do themselves.

But the Church of England, it is said, has become so liberal that all ought to support it. Truly, one can go to an excellent imitation of the mass, or sit under a virtual Unitarian, and still be within its fold. This beautiful tolerance, however, only means that the Church has found it necessary to make itself an open common, where every one can put up his own booth, and give his special performance if he will only join in the defence of the endowments. Tolerance and liberality are contrary to the laws of the existence of any church that believes in divine damnation, and their appearance in the Church of England is not a sign of renewed life, but of ap-