

## Our Contributors.

### CONCERNING THE POWER OF FACE.

BY KNOXIAN.

Emerson in one of his essays discusses a quality of human nature which he calls "power of face." Ordinary mortals generally call the quality "cheek," or "brass," but Emerson, being a Boston man, had to give it a more high-toned name. As long as we have a clear idea of the thing meant the name is a matter of little importance. Probably "cheek" or "brass" describes the quality as well as "power of face," but it may be as well to use the term suggested by the Concord philosopher.

Power of face is much easier illustrated than defined. Tozer said to his young pastor: "There's nothing as takes like a coorse." There's nothing as takes like a good illustration. One does not need to hunt long for a good illustration of the power of face at the present moment. Charles Stewart Parnell has more power of face than any living man. Probably he never had a successful rival in this line since the world began. We cannot think of one. The cool manner in which he utterly ignores the fact that he brought disaster to his party and to his cause, the brazen hardihood with which he met and out-generalled those who wished to depose him, the audacity with which he meets the Irish people show that Parnell's power of face is almost infinite. He is a splendid representative of that numerous and, we fear, growing class of callous men who can hold an unblanched cheek against anything. That unfortunate young man whose name was in everybody's mouth a few weeks ago was another illustration of what marvellous things may be done by the power of face.

Illustrations of the power of face abound in the rural districts. Farmers are constantly fleeced by sharpers who have the power of face and the power of tongue largely developed. The fellow who goes about on the back concessions telling farmers that his "shoddy" is genuine broadcloth that he can sell for half the price of broadcloth, and stuffing them with stories about the enormous profits made by men in the regular trade, has enormous power of face. Every man of reasonable intelligence ought to know that goods cannot be sold for half their value unless the seller has stolen them or does not mean to pay for them. Every intelligent man knows that people in the regular trade are not making fortunes very rapidly at the present time. The tramp who sells his shoddy on the back concessions must have tremendous power of face or he could not tell his stories.

For gigantic power of face the quack doctor stands unrivalled. The man who can deliberately deceive the sick and dying for the sake of getting their money must have a cheek as brassy as Birchall's. The early settlers suffered not a little from these brazen impostors. Hard work, exposure in all kinds of weather, and a diet of pork and green tea destroyed the health of many a brave old pioneer. Swindlers calling themselves high-sounding names perambulated the country, professed to cure every kind of disease and stuffed the unfortunates with stories about the "regular doctors." Many a good old settler whose disease was incurable gave these wandering scamps large sums of hard-earned money for making him more miserable. Many a decent man whose only malady was a dyspeptic stomach or torpid liver or weak nerves was led to believe that he had some wonderful disease and was bled financially until he was weak enough. The quacks used to put up at hotels along the leading roads, or in backwoods' villages and announce that the great doctor had come. How the dyspeptic old settlers did assemble. Of course, they might have had more sense. Hardly anybody has much sense when he is sick and a good many have not a great deal to spare even when in good health.

The campaign falsifier has tremendous power of face. A man who can stand up before an audience largely composed of respectable citizens and tell a deliberate falsehood is a disgrace to his country and to his party. This vile offence is generally committed when the means of detection are not at hand. The man on the other side may not be well enough informed to expose the falsehood. Perhaps there are no books or documents within reach by which the falsehood can be nailed. Possibly it is the evening before polling day and the falsehood can do its work before it can be exposed. The power of face that can palm off a falsehood on a public meeting under any circumstances is satanic, but when the thing is done because the speaker knows he is the last and that no one will be allowed to reply—when it is an attack on a man who has already spoken and will not therefore be allowed to defend himself—then the thing is cowardly as well as satanic. The campaign falsifier should be abolished. His power of face is a breach of the peace. There are quite enough of intelligent respectable men in this country to discuss public questions. Nobody should listen to a man whose only power is power of face. He should be ranked along with the "hay fork" man and the "seed oats" man and other people of that kind.

Did you ever study the power of face that some beggars have. How the fellow does work his features and modulate his tones and put in the pathos as he tells you a long story about a sick wife or suffering family that have no existence. What practice and self-control a fellow must have before he can do his work so well. Half the men who address tea-meetings and Sunday schools can't tell the truth in as powerful a way as that scamp can tell his tissue of falsehoods. They have a better cause but not so much power of face.

The reason why many people are humbugged and swindled is because they don't know mere power of face when they see it. They confound it with power of brain, or power of heart, the power of grace or some other power.

A fellow comes into a neighbourhood and sets up for a social lion. He poses as a person of distinction and tries to make the local people believe that he is a long way above them. The ladies get up little parties for him and the tailors give him any amount of good clothes on credit. After a while he leaves with his board and tailor bills unpaid. People wonder how he made so many victims. The explanation is that he brought his great power of face to bear on soft citizens.

The so-called evangelist who announces that the world never heard the Gospel until he preached it to them; who mildly states that the people in the Churches, especially the Presbyterian Churches, are all going to the bad place, who broadly hints that he has a monopoly of the power that saves and sanctifies; who denounces the "hiring clergy," and then takes all the money he can get and whines for more—this gentleman has a power of face not often excelled.

There are few things in this world that pay much better than power of face. In proportion to the amount and kind of capital invested it brings large dividends. It pays about as well in the Church as in the world. The reason power of face pays so well is because there are so many people who don't know mere power of face when they see it.

### MODERN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND MODERN DOUBT.

#### THE VASTNESS OF THE VISIBLE UNIVERSE NO GROUND FOR SCEPTICISM.

BY PROF. GEORGE P. FISHER, D.D., LL.D., OF YALE UNIVERSITY.

What is the bearing of astronomical science upon the truths of revelation respecting man and redemption is a question of much interest. Carlyle is credited with saying that the Copernican doctrine struck a mortal blow at the accepted faith of Christians in a great divine intervention in behalf of man. Whether there be any good foundation for such a judgment or not, there are not a few who sympathize with it. It is said that astronomy fails to corroborate the sublime words: "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and for years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth; and it was so."

The relation of the teachings of geology to the first chapters of Genesis has excited so much attention in these later years that the moral truth contained in this portion of the Bible has often been left in the background. That the earth was gradually prepared to be the dwelling place of man, and arranged to correspond to the wants of his nature, is a fact of importance. But higher truth than this enriches the first pages of the Sacred Volume. There, at the outset, stands the great protest against pantheism and atheism—the sublime announcement, sounding like the voice of the Creator Himself: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth!" Then there is the description of man, as exalted above the lower orders of being through the possession of a living soul that comes directly from his Maker and bears his image—a denial of the degrading theories which, on account of resemblance of physical organization, have sought to identify mind with matter and to represent the beast as on a level with the rational creature. Then follows the momentous fact of man's fall from holiness—involving, of course, his freedom and responsibility, the origin of sin in the voluntary transgression of law, and that wonderful description of the phenomena of guilt to the essential truth of which every heart responds: "And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden!" We have here a series of statements that warn the conscience, now as always, not to listen to the suggestion that sin is an accident, or something involved in the nature of man, as the plan is included in the seed, but ever to look upon sin as man's own perverse, guilty act, done in disregard of the will of God. And, then, the mysterious connection of physical disorder and distress with the moral ruin of man is asserted; and thus the sufferings of the human race are made consistent with God's wisdom and justice. It would be easy to show that this mass of truth—however it may be clothed in figure and symbol—enters into all Christian views of God, of man, his rights and his duties to his Master and his neighbour, and constitutes to this day the impregnable doctrine—*impregnable* because grateful to reason, as well as verified by Scripture—by which Christianity confronts pantheism and all the different theories that are really, though unconsciously, its fruit. On the foundation of this mass of truth, Christianity, the system of redemption from sin and its consequences, is founded. Whence, one might ask, did the Israelites get these moral ideas, by the side of which the Greek philosophy, the ripest product of uninspired wisdom, is so defective! They must have had light from above.

But while geology has expanded, the lesson of Genesis is that the earth was made for man and was adapted to meet his wants, the science of astronomy would appear to have a contrary tendency. In the room of the old idea that the firmament was spread out and hung with glittering lights for the

sake of the earth and man, we are now taught that the earth is itself a diminutive star, and that but a small portion of the stellar universe can be discerned by the human eye. Indeed, the Copernican discovery has produced a total revolution in our conceptions of the material creation. The earth has been driven, as a usurper, from her throne of glory in the centre of the world to a little nook in the boundless empire. The constellations, instead of waiting, like a troop of vassals, are most of them too far for our dim vision to reach them. The remotest fields of space to which the most powerful telescope can penetrate, display systems on systems, and still leave the imagination to fill up the infinite void beyond. No effort at painting the scene which every starry night presents anew can rival the effect produced by the sober figure of science. Let one go out on such an evening with the astronomic tables in his hand, and meditate on what his eyes behold! As the buzzing insect which you strike from your hand is to this great globe, with all its mountains and its oceans, so is the globe to the visible universe. The facts of later science were not known to the sacred writers. Yet we read in one of the Psalms: "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained, what is man that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that Thou visitest him? For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour!" The Psalmist felt the majesty of the heavens, and looked upon them, as we do, with the deepest wonder. At midnight, as we may conceive, from the top of his palace, he turned his eye upward and watched the planets, pursuing their silent march; then, glancing at the earth and its puny inhabitants, he was overcome with a sense of his frailty and insignificance, and cried: "What is man that Thou art mindful of him—the son of man that Thou carest for him?" How could the Creator give to so obscure a creature as man a moment's thought?

Sentiments of this nature abound in the Scriptures, especially in the poetry of the Old Testament. The feebleness of man is set forth in varied and affecting imagery. This life is wind—a shadow—a vanishing cloud—a flower that blooms in the morning and withers at night. The fleeting existence is contrasted with the permanence of nature: "One generation passeth away and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth forever." The book of Job is full of these thoughts: "Can a man be profitable to God? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that Thou art righteous?" "Is not God in the height of heaven? and behold the height of the stars—how high they are! And thou sayest, Can God know? Can he judge through the dark cloud?"

Yet, as these old Hebrews believed, as we know, to whom the Gospel has come, even better than they—God is mindful of man. He *does* think of us. He never ceases to care for us.

Even the host of stars—whatever grander office they fulfil in the universe—are made at the same time to be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and for years, and to be lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth. Whatever nobler purposes they may accomplish for *this* use, also, they were adapted by the Creator. And no one can gaze on the form and aspect of the heavens, on the perfect symmetry of that vaulted dome, in the splendour of noonday, or when pale fires are kindling in myriads upon the darkening surface of the evening sky—no one can behold this ineffable grandeur and beauty, and doubt that here is an *arrangement* to give joy to man. By whatever optical laws the effect is produced, for whatever ends infinitely higher than the convenience and delight of man the heavens were made, this *arrangement* is plain. The *intention* of the Creator to elevate and gratify the human mind by spreading over us the sun-lit and star-lit sky is undeniable. One motive, therefore, in the structure of the material universe, was the good of man. Thus does the Creator consult our happiness in those contrivances which are destined to accomplish other ends remote from our comprehension. Out of all the worlds He has erected a roof over man's destiny. At the moment when we are awed by the revelation of His greatness we are touched by the disclosures of His condescension.

(To be continued.)

### FRENCH-CANADIAN EVANGELIZATION.

The Board of French Evangelization desire to present the following brief statement of their work to the friends of the cause. There are about a million and a-quarter of French-speaking people in the Dominion of Canada, a very large majority of whom are still connected with the Church of Rome. The object of the Board is to give a pure Gospel to this class of our countrymen. Three different agencies are employed:—

1st. Colportage.—During the year sixteen colporteurs were employed. They visited upwards of 35,000 families, and distributed 3,578 copies of the Scriptures, in whole or in part, together with 24,500 French tracts and pamphlets. The average salary of a colporteur is \$420 per annum. To any one contributing this amount the Board will gladly forward, each month, copies of the reports of one of the colporteurs, where this is desired.

2nd. Mission Schools.—As soon as a group of families in any French settlement abjure Romanism, a mission school is opened and an earnest Christian teacher appointed. At present there are thirty-six day schools in connection with the fields worked by the Board, employing thirty-nine teach-