

lemn duty to sum up two and two, and find the product five in theology." All which means, I suppose, that if our shopkeepers would only discard doctrinal Christianity, commercial morality would rapidly improve, as they would discard the short-weights, false balances, and all adulteration, along with the noxious theology.

But enough of this. It is certainly not a pleasant task to have to deal with a writer whose utmost charity is put forth in the half-extorted acknowledgment that he does not, in the majority of cases, impute deliberate want of candour to those with whom he differs in opinion. Were it not that his communication appeared in a periodical so respectable as the CANADIAN MONTHLY, and for the fact that I contribute to the pages of the same periodical, self-respect would compel me to keep silence. As it is, my answer must be in the nature of a protest rather than an answer. When some unknown person calls out in the street that most of the people walking beside him are fools or knaves, I believe the remedy is to take no notice of him, or to hand him over to the police.

III. If the teachings of the Revivalists be true, Laon declares that "then all that we dignify by the name of modern culture is a damnable illusion and fraud." This is what is called strong language, but it is not the strength of wisdom. In his explanatory letter he defines modern culture as "the every-day beliefs and sentiments of modern society," which again are "the results of the educational process through which the modern world has been passing;" and this educating force consists of modern science, philosophy, poetry, literature, criticism, in one word, of modern thought. Had Laon proved, or attempted to prove a contradiction between those departments of thought and Christianity, or shown that rejoicing in the one was incompatible with rejoicing in the other, he would have been entitled to a respectful hearing. But when he simply asserts that there is a contradiction, all that can be done is to deny the assertion and to call for the proof. Until proof is offered, there are only the two contrary affirmations; and the matter not being personal, should not rest on personal character, as *Æmilius Scaurus* was satisfied his case should rest when he was accused by one *Varius* of *Sucro*. "*Varius Sacerdotis ait, Æmilius Scaurus negat. Utri creditis, Quirites?*" I might, in the

mean time, therefore, content myself with denying Laon's position, and calling it a libel on that modern thought which is really the child of Christianity; but for the fuller illustration of the subject I shall add a few remarks.

First, as to the process of training. Our modern teachers are myriads in number, and who has read them all with sufficient care to classify their works according to their attitude to Christianity? I do not profess to have beside me such an Index, *Expurgatorium* or otherwise. Some modern writers are professedly unbelievers; others, equally eminent to say the least, are devout believers. But as the work of the great majority does not require of them a profession of their faith, they are satisfied with doing their work without unnecessary exposition of their creeds; and we say of them, "those that are not against us are on our side." For Christianity takes knowledge of and sanctifies all the relationships of life, counts all work honourable, and commands us to be diligent in our business and faithful in our callings. I am not warranted to call out names on one side or on the other. That too is, at the best, but a poor way of deciding what is truth. But taking the names given by Laon as representatives of that culture which is opposed to Christianity, I must charitably suppose that he is very imperfectly acquainted with their writings. Of only one of them—alas for the son Arnold of Rugby!—ought it to be said, that he is not a Christian. Even he might think us uncharitable in refusing to him the honourable name, but he denies the resurrection, and if Christ be not risen our faith is vain. But fancy the indignation of Walter Scott or of Thackeray, had either been told that the tone and bent of his writings was in fundamental contradiction to Christianity. And they would do well to be angry. Now they are dead, and it ill becomes any one, under the plea of admiration, to dishonour their memories. True, they were not preachers of the Gospel, but they helped on the good cause. They were noble Christian men, and their writings made men better, braver, truer, tenderer. But Laon's delusion reaches its height when he speaks of Tennyson:—"The poet who hints that 'good may somehow be the final goal of ill,' and that some virtue may reside in 'honest doubt,' what terms of execration can be too strong for him?" I see no call for "execration."