

gotten gains held fast in his clenched hand. How long must the night be to sleep away the memory of such a hideous life? If he wakes, will not the recollection cling to him still? Are there any waters of oblivion that can cleanse his miserable soul? If not—if he cannot *forget*, surely he cannot *forgive* himself for the baseness which now he has no opportunity to repair. Here then is a retribution which is inseparable from his being, which is a part of his very existence. The undying memory brings the undying pain.

Take another case—alas! too sadly frequent. A man of pleasure betrays a young, innocent, trusting woman by the promise of his love, and then casts her off, leaving her to sink down, down, through every degree of misery and shame, till she is lost in depths which plummet never sounded, and disappears. Is he not to suffer for this poor creature's ruin? Can he rid himself of it by fleeing beyond "that bourne from whence no traveller returns"? Not unless he can flee from himself: for in the lowest depths of the under world—a world in which the sun never shines—that image will still pursue him. As he wanders in its gloomy shades, a pale form glides by him like an affrighted ghost. The face is the same, beautiful even in its sorrow, but with a look upon it as of one who has already suffered an eternity of woe. In an instant all the past comes back again. He sees the young unblessed mother wandering in some lonely place, that only the heavens may witness her agony and her despair. There he sees her holding up in her arms the babe that had no right to be born, and calling upon God to judge her betrayer. How far in the future must he travel to forget that look? Is there any escape except by plunging into the gulf of a nihilism?

THE ARGUMENT CHANGED FROM NEGATIVE TO POSITIVE.

Thus far in this paper I have taken a tone of defence. But I do not admit that the Christian religion needs any apology: it needs only to be rightly understood to furnish its own complete vindication. Instead of considering its "evidences," which is but going round its outer walls, let us enter the gates of the temple, and see what is within. Here we find something better than "towers and bulwarks" in the character of him who is the Founder of our Religion, and not its Founder only,

but its very core and being. Christ is Christianity. Not only is he the Great Teacher, but the central subject of what he taught, so that the whole stands or falls with him.

In our first conversation, I observed, with all your sharp comments on things sacred, you professed great respect for the ethics of Christianity, and for its author. "Make the Sermon on the mount your religion," you said, "and there I am with you" Very well! So far, so good. And now, if you will go a little farther, you may find still more food for reflection.

THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST

All who have made a study of the character and teachings of Christ, even those who utterly deny the supernatural, stand in awe and wonder before the gigantic figure which is here revealed. Renan closes his "Life of Jesus" with this as the result of his long study: "Jesus will never be surpassed. His worship will be renewed without ceasing; His story (legende) will draw tears from beautiful eyes without end; His sufferings will touch the finest natures; ALL THE AGES WILL PROCLAIM THAT AMONG THE SONS OF MEN, THERE HAS NOT RISEN A GREATER THAN JESUS"; while Rousseau closes his immortal eulogy by saying SOCRATES DIED LIKE A PHILOSOPHER, BUT JESUS CHRIST LIKE A GOD!"

Here is an argument for Christianity to which I pray you to address yourself. As you do not believe in miracles, and are ready to explain everything by natural causes, I beg you to tell us how came it to pass that a Hebrew peasant, born among the hills of Galilee, had a wisdom above that of Socrates or Plato; of Confucius or Buddha? This is the greatest of miracles, that such a Being has lived and died on the earth.

The more you reflect on this Wonder of the Ages, the more difficult will it be to account for it. Where did this Being come from? Was He a natural outgrowth of the Hebrew race, or even of the Hebrew Religion? As you know, I have lately been in the East, visiting Jerusalem and travelling through Palestine. I saw much of the Jews, and found their condition so abject that I could hardly think of them as the descendants and representatives of one of the great races of the world. Not only were they miserably poor, but apparently wanting in elevation of mind and character. Though, like the Pharisee, they thanked