

and I know not where to find him;" and that Christian truth is as silent before the world as Christ himself was when he stood before Herod, and answered him nothing! Well, then, the work is done! The energetic teachers of the propaganda of unbelief have accomplished their long-cherished purpose, and the professors of an earnest and devoted faith in Christ have departed, leaving no memorial behind them except their "curious books," or their hoary tombstones, which record the old faith in him as the resurrection and the life.

When such a crisis as this has at last arrived, the world will surely pause, and count the fruits of victory. Wise men will then doubtless consider, with an earnest spirit, what has been gained to humanity by this tremendous revolution, in all those opinions and ideas cherished during so many ages; and the well-wishers of mankind will examine the spoils which the conquerors have ready for enriching the poor and needy, as the result of this triumph over a religion that was clung to by the best and noblest men with a tenacity overcome only when earth was old, and time was well-nigh ending. But may we not now anticipate such a solemn review, by asking those who are wishful to destroy Christianity, what they intend to put in its place when it is gone? If they have anything to give us, let us know what it is. Let us know it, and see if it is better than the old religion: if it is better suited to meet the wants of man in every period and condition of his varied life; if it is likely to do better work on earth, and produce better fruit; if its truth rests on better evidence, and if, in short, it is such a gift from heaven that angels with songs of joy might announce this new peace on earth, and this new message of good will to man. Such questions, though often asked, have not hitherto received any reply. If there be a something better in store for us than Christianity, the blissful secret has not yet been revealed. Infidelity, often so loud in attacking Christianity, is silent as a god of iron or brass when we ask at its shrine, What wouldest thou have me to be and do, and how live and rejoice as an immortal being? What, then, we again ask, would be lost and gained on both sides after the war, in the event of Christianity being destroyed? We Christians know full well what we would

gain and lose! We would gain nothing, but lose everything;—we would lose all which we most love in the universe of God, —all which makes us rejoice in existence, —all which enables us to look at the past, present, and future with perfect peace! In simple and earnest truth we say it, that were it possible to disprove the existence of Jesus Christ as our life here and for ever, we would be, of all men, most miserable.

It is true that, in regard to many an object of affection, it may be said—

‘Better to have loved and lost, than never to have loved at all!’

But not so in regard to our love of Jesus Christ! Better never to have seen that glory filling the heavens and earth, and making life a constant thanksgiving and praise, than, after having seen it, to be persuaded by any witchery that it was all a dream—a fiction of the imagination—a ghostly superstition—and that, if we are wise men, we will seek for it no more, but contentedly fall back upon our own being, and live on “without Christ in the world.” And are we in those circumstances to be told that we may still have comfort in “religion without the supernatural,” and rejoice in “the eternal and essential verities of morality?” Only think of it, Christians! The living man, the light and hope of the family, is murdered; but a disciple of pure science and calm philosophy enters it, and tells its agonized members that he has, on conscientious principles, been compelled to help in committing the murder, but that it is folly and ignorance to indulge in such grief, for science has analysed their friends, and preserved in a series of neat phials, which they may easily carry about them, all his constituent elements, his “essentials,” his carbon, his silica, this and that gas—everything whatever which made up all they were accustomed to touch and handle; therefore they may “comfort one another with those words!” And thus would the enemy of Christianity presume to comfort us with his “essentials,” when he has slain our living Lord! Comfort indeed!

“Comfort? comfort scorn’d by devils! this is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow’s crown of sorrow, is remembering happier things!”

If Christianity then is false, we who believe it have gained nothing, but lost everything, and are “of all men most miserable.”