

a fixed standard of doubt, doubters have endeavoured to suit their views to the times. When the religious part of the community argued the existence of a God from the works of creation, they acknowledged that, and then contended that no other light than that of nature was requisite. Since the commencement of the nineteenth century, Infidels have had another and a very different school of theologians with whom to contend.—These men of God, like Paul, say “the world by wisdom knew not God.” They called upon the disciples of Paine to prove their own faith. “You say, gentlemen, that you believe in the existence of the Supreme. What is the testimony on which you base your faith?” It was found to be on the intelligence they had obtained from their parents and teachers. Not one could point to a higher source of information. It soon became necessary for them to adopt views that contained no affirmation—leaving every thing beyond the ken of vision in doubt and uncertainty. This is the common ground of sceptics at the present time. Anxiously desirous of overturning christianity, they favour and discard by turns every thing. Phrenology, Animal Magnetism, Mesmerism, Neurology, Pathetism, Slavery or Anti-slavery, Temperance or Intemperance, Republicanism or Monarchism, freedom of speech or a muzzled press, as best suits the propagation of doubt and unbelief of the great facts on which rests the christian superstructure—the congregation of the Lord.

“He who comes to God must believe that HE IS.” This is the central idea of all knowledge worth possessing. When once this great truth is suggested to the human mind, it is impossible to forget it. Witnesses from earth, sea, and sky, attest its certainty. Though nature *alone* is inadequate to the task of communicating spiritual knowledge to man; yet when the great truth is once developed to the human mind, it gives to the whole creation another aspect. Every thing proclaims his wisdom and power.

Infidelity is a disease of the heart rather than of the head. The few individuals who have had the temerity to stand before the world and merely utter their *doubts*, relative to the existence of a great *first* cause, have not done so until after they have had a long contest with their own consciousness; until they have created some god of their own; for a god every man must and will have! Riches, honours, fame, pleasure; some appetite or passion, has claimed the strong affections of the most stoical of ancient and modern philosophers. Some one or more of these gains such an ascendancy, that the question arises “Shall I serve the author of my being or yield to that power on which my heart is placed?” The struggle is often long continued; but when the mind yields to the world, the flesh, and the devil, scepticism and infidelity are sure of a victim.

Having given himself up to the dominion of the flesh, it is not surprising that he should try to believe that there is nothing in the universe but matter; that God is every thing, and every thing is God; and that it is no matter whether there be any God or not! In this way I can account for Atheism, and only in this way. I view it in the light of a mental disease, brought on in a manner not unlike intemperance. The victim thinks he can see contradictions in God’s word—some things to him inexplicable; he takes draught after draught—often in the company of those who are inebriated already; and after having been frequently