

wings of the butterfly in the shape of mesmeric superstition and reverence for one of its hierophants who had bewitched her soul.' The religion of Comte, like the community which professes it, has been the subject of an epigram: it has been called Roman Catholicism without Christianity. For God it substitutes as the object of worship the Great Being Humanity, whose servants Comte says, are to take the place of the slaves of God, while the Heavens will henceforth declare the glories not of God, but of Kepler and Newton; a sentiment which by the way both Kepler and Newton would have rejected with abhorrence. Humanity is to be symbolized by the figure of a woman with a child in her arms. There is to be a priesthood with a high priest at its head. There are to be regular services with a liturgy and sermons. There are to be sacraments connected with all the chief epochs of life. There is to be a calendar, the saints of which are to be the benefactors of mankind. Whence all this is taken, is not doubtful. No Utopian, however visionary, ever really soars beyond experience. The Republic of Plato is only an idealized Sparta, and the Church of Comte is an imitation of the Church of Rome. It has proved an imitation not less faithful than that of the British ship by the Chinese ship-builders who reproduced the model given them, dry-rot and all: for already it has a schism and an Anti-Pope, a rupture having taken place between M. Lafitte, the High Priest of Humanity, and Dr. Congreve, the English Head of the Comtist Church. M. Lafitte is accused by the Anti-Pope of straying from the Founder's path, making too much of mere science, and appealing too little to the hearts of the proletariat and the women. He has now given himself over to a worse heresy by turning Chauvinist, or to use the English phrase Jingo; while Comte, though he was thoroughly French

as well as Catholic in grain, and claimed for France the primacy of his regenerated world, was nobly strict in his international morality and opposed to aggrandizement and war. What is Humanity? the Christian must ask when he is invited to accept it and its embodiments as substitutes for God manifested in Christ. Is it really a Great Being, or being at all? Is it anything more than an abstraction, such as might be formed by speaking of equine nature as equinity and canine nature as caninity, if we may be allowed to coin those terms? If it is an abstraction, will not the worship of it be more absurd than even that of a stone idol, which at all events has a real existence? If, on the other hand, it means the aggregate of human beings, and is another name for mankind, it must comprehend the wicked and can hardly be a fit object of worship. A religion without a God as it is the last, is about the strangest, birth of time. Yet nothing can be more distinct or earnest than the claim put forward by the Comtist community to a religious character. The language of its preachers—and it has preachers of the highest eloquence—is not only spiritual but full of pious unction. Against Materialism, such as represented by Mr. Huxley and the extreme physicists, Mr. Harrison wages a vigorous war. The inference which those who are still in the theological state of existence take leave to draw is that the religious sentiment is ineradicable, and that the disturbance of the Evidences is not the extinction of faith. In truth, the Positivist Church though it prefers to call the Christian Ideal Humanity can hardly be said to be outside Christendom the real bounds of which, as the world is beginning gradually to perceive, are wider than its dogmatic or ecclesiastical circumscription. Between Gambetta and Mr. Harrison, after all, the difference is wide.