

often apparently gratuitous cruelties—of nature. Above all, creation is supposed to have been supplanted by evolution, which, in spite of partial objections, lingering doubts, and the imperfections sure to be found in any new-born theory, is to all appearances destined soon to be the scientific creed of the world. With the belief in a Deity perishes that in the immortality of the soul, which, apart from animistic superstitions and special fancies about the other world, is a belief in the connection of the human soul with the Eternal. Nothing apparently is left but the secular consequences of conduct, human law, which the strong may make or unmake, and reputation, which success, even criminal success, may to a great extent command. That which prevails as Agnosticism among philosophers and the highly educated prevails as secularism among mechanics, and in that form is likely soon to breed mutinous questionings about the present social order among those who get the poorer share, and who can no longer be appeased by promises of compensation in another world. All English literature, even that which is socially and politically most conservative, teems with evidences of a change of sentiment, the rapid strides of which astonish those who revisit England at short intervals. There is a recoil, of course, from the brink, which looks like a reaction, and there is a political rallying round the established church, which in what have been called tory-atheist journals is seen in grotesque union with cynical repudiation of that church's creed. There is perhaps an increase in church-building and church-going, but the crust of outward piety is hollow, and growing hollower every day. Those who know the inward parts of American society will be able to say better than the writer whether the same process is going on there. It is true—and the fact is of the profoundest significance and of the highest importance—that in the minds of some men who combine great depth of character with powerful and scientific intellect the religious sentiment, stripped of all special forms and formularies, appears as a sentiment to have grown stronger than ever. Here, perhaps, is something which whispers that the succession of attempts to connect the soul and life of man with the soul and life of the universe, which we call religious, and which have upborne the great types of character, the great civilizations, the great efforts of human-

ity, are not destined to end in futility and final failure. But, at present, if a man of this class admits you to the recesses of his thoughts, you find there nothing definite, nothing communicable, nothing which will serve the purposes of humanity at large; some make-shift drawn from personal study or experience, some mixture, perhaps, of Christian ethics with ancient philosophy, a plank of the theological wreck which will barely hold two.

What, then, we ask, is likely to be the effect of this revolution on morality? Some effect it can hardly fail to have. Evolution is force, the struggle for existence is force, natural selection is force. It is not possible, at all events, that their enthronement in place of the Christian theory should leave untouched a type of character which is a renunciation of force—which is weakness, humility, poverty of spirit, self-abnegation. But what will become of the brotherhood of men and of the very idea of humanity? Historically these beliefs are evidently Christian. Will they survive the doctrines with which, in the Christian creed they are inseparably connected of the universal Fatherhood of God and of the fraternal relation of all men to Christ? On what other basis do they rest? 'God,' says the New Testament, 'hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth.' Blot out the name of the Creator, and on what does this assertion of the unity and virtual equality of mankind rest? What principle forbids the stronger races and those that have superior fire-arms to prey upon the weaker? What guards the sanctity of human life, if there is nothing more divine in man than in any other animal? Mr. Roebuck says, 'The first business of a colonist is to clear the country of wild beasts, and the most noxious of all the wild beasts is the wild man.' What is to be said in answer to this, and why is it not to be extended in principle to all the human lives which may stand in the way of the elect of nature, and the strong and cunning masters of their kind? Nothing, we must recollect, can in any but a figurative sense be henceforth sacred; everything must present its natural title to existence, which according to the theory of evolution, must apparently be some sort of force. It may be the collective force of a community, not that of an individual; but if the individual sets the better of the