

Earl of Pembroke, were religious men; Simon de Montford, the founder of the House of Commons, was a religious man and the friend of the most religious men of his day. Edward I., the generous foster-father of Parliamentary liberty, was a religious man. The political efforts of the great Puritans were sustained by that lofty self-devotion to the public good which had its root in their religion. Now there is coming on in Europe with renunciation of allegiance to God, a relapse into political superstition and servility, which reminds one of the Roman Empire, when the people had no God, but worshipped Cæsar as the earthly divinity of material order and sensual enjoyment; and when patriotism as well as religion found a last refuge among the stoics, a part of whose creed bore a marked resemblance to a part of Christianity.

"It is in the midst of a world to a large extent sceptical, to no small extent positively materialist, that we are met here this evening to devise measures for strengthening and extending institutions, the object of which is to train up children in the service of God. And if not in the service of God, in what service are children to be trained up, unless it be that of their own interests and appetites. In the service of Humanity? So Materialism of the most generous kind and that which has least severed itself from the previous state of thought and feeling declares. But what is Humanity? Christianity can tell. Christianity believes that all men are made of one blood, and that all are made in the image of their Creator. Christianity believes that all men are brethren and members one of another. Christianity in short teaches the unity of Mankind in God? But to Materialism surely Humanity is a word without meaning; at least without any meaning that can command our reverence or kindle our self-devotion. In the philosophy of Materialism, man is in no essential respect distinguished from the brutes. Morality, public or private, is mere gregariousness; it is nothing but the individual instinct of self-preservation extended to the herd. Tribal feeling subtilized into a sort of etiquette may be said to be Darwin's account of morals. Is there anything in such a humanity which can demand reasonable self-devotion, reasonable self-sacrifice, or keep individual appetites and passions in subjection to the common good? Even the unity of the human race is denied; and it is difficult to see what sacred bond of duty or affection can be said to exist between the offspring of an African, and the offspring of an Asiatic ape. In what does the tie of fraternity between me and any other human animal in whom I do not happen to have a personal interest consist? What binds me to be just or kind to him or to put myself to trouble, and forego the enjoyment of my short span of life for the sake of improving his condition? Nay, if he comes in my way, what forbids me to get rid of him as I would get rid of any other noxious animal? The Materialists will say, because you will be hanged. But suppose I have cunning enough to escape the halter, or suppose I am a despot like the late Emperor of the French, and able to shoot down my opponent with impunity, why should I feel remorse. Darwin, in fact, denies the existence of remorse, or at least he denies to it any real significance. At the time of the Jamaica massacre, that most hideous outbreak of the cruel panic of a dominant race, a leading man of science of the Materialist school, who espoused the cause of Governor Eyre, published a letter, in which he said in broad terms, that, in shedding innocent blood, it made all the difference whether the person whose blood was shed was an Englishman or a negro. An English member of Parliament, of Materialist proclivities, said, with regard to the native tribes of New Zealand, that the first business of the settler was to clear the country of the wild animals, the most noxious of which was the wild man. And there are people whose definition of wild men is pretty elastic, but who, if they were seriously alarmed about their property or privileges, would comprehend a good many of their fellow creatures. Less startling, but still deeply significant, are the utterances of Mr. Greg, the author of *The Creed of Christendom*, who is always exhorting the rich to conspire against the poor, and of M. Renan, the author of *The Life of Jesus*, who, when he touches on social subjects, writes in the same strain of class selfishness. I don't think you will find at present any basis for Human Brotherhood, or for anything that depends on it outside religion. Humanity in the mouth of a Materialist seems to be merely a metaphysical expression, used by the very people who are always sneering at metaphysics: or rather it is a relic of Christian sentiment unconsciously retained in their minds, the twilight of a sun of charity and fraternity which for them has set. And therefore, I cannot believe that the service of Humanity is a very definite or effective principle in which to train up your child. The day may come when science will grow as a motive for morality, public and private, and as a rule for the formation of character, equivalent to those now given us by religion. But it has not come yet. The day may come when science will furnish a spring of national and human progress equivalent to that which, up to this time, has been furnished by the Christian desire of realizing the ideal of society set forth in the Gospel. But it has not come yet. Devotion to mankind and care for the future

of Humanity are still Christian, and without them public spirit must die. We imply, by promoting Sunday Schools, our conviction that children ought still to be trained up in the knowledge of the Lord. We also imply our adherence to that organic law, as it may be called, of Christian civilization which sets apart one day in seven as the Lord's Day. This law, like the rest of the Christian organization, is naturally threatened by the advance of Materialism. At New York, it seems, they are trying to open the theatres on Sunday. The Jewish Sabbath is no more. It was part of a religious system which, spiritual life not having fully come into the world, was necessarily ceremonial. Its strictness probably too had some reference to the existence of slavery, and was intended to secure, by firm religious barriers from the casuistry of avarice, the day of rest for the slave. A spiritual religion has superseded Jewish Sabbaths and new moons with all the rest of the minute and punctilious observances which constituted the religion of obedience under the law. But Christianity has ratified and incorporated with itself the special dedication of one day in seven to the purposes of spiritual life. When the world is convinced that spiritual life is a dream, the Christian Sabbath will of course become a foolish interference with business and pleasure, but not till then.

"Your own experience and judgment, to which I am not capable in this matter of adding anything, will have sufficiently warned you of the necessity of measuring with care the amount of religious exercises of any kind imposed upon a child, and of the danger, if we exceed the proper measure, of producing coldness and aversion. I was once standing in the street of one of the great manufacturing cities in England with a friend, whose guest I was, and watching the vast throng of artisans, the flower of English industry, and the most active-minded portion of the population, going home from their work. I asked my friend to what places of worship that throng would go on the morrow. His answer was, to none; and upon my inquiring the reason, he said that they had all been disgusted with religion by being overdosed with it in childhood. This answer was only to a very limited extent, true. The Secularism which is now the creed of most British workmen is the spirit of the age. If any institutions are answerable for it, they are those through which the State has interfered with the Church, and has degraded and paralysed her by so doing. But the warning was not wholly without weight. At the public school at which I was in England, we were compelled in those days, though many of us were mere children, to go through the long Anglican Service in the College Chapel six times at least in every week, and sometimes more. It was enough to quench devotion in the breast of an apostle. Of course you cannot allow a child to say for itself whether it shall go to church and Sunday School or not. Yet in the case of a child as in the case of an adult, it is well to remember that spontaneity is of the essence of religion. If we force a child to go through religious exercises for which it has no taste, and which are beyond its spiritual capacity, we run the risk of producing not only formalism, but something still more pernicious. Strong influences of every kind are operating against religion, and we must avoid implanting in the young heart a germ of dislike which the adversary may cherish and bring to fruit.

"In one respect religious teaching as well as teaching of all kinds, has been of late rendered far less irksome to the child. There has been a vast improvement in children's books. This is a field which genius itself need not disdain. Many things are too hard, but nothing can be too good for a child. Milton has given us a definition of good poetry. He says it must be simple and sensuous; that is appealing direct to the mental sense, not to the understanding, as much of our metaphysical poetry in the present day does, and to a pretty strong understanding too. In the same way a child's book ought to be simple and sensuous, addressed not to the discursive faculties, which are as yet undeveloped, but to the eye of the mind and to the heart. Of course by simple, Milton does not mean namby-pamby, any more than by sensuous he means sensational. Our Lord's parables were teachings for childlike minds, and they are models also of teaching for a child.

"A special feature in this meeting besides those I have mentioned, worthy of notice, is the union which it bespeaks of different churches in a common good work. I take this to be the fruit, in some measure at least, of religious equality. You could hardly bring it to pass if one of our churches exercised lordship, and the rest were treated as dissenters. Assailed by a swarm of foes from without, barely holding her own against their advancing legions, the Christian Church is still torn by intestine divisions, at once scandalous and enfeebling. During the siege of Jerusalem the Jewish factions were fighting in the beleaguered city while the Roman battering ram was thundering at the gates. It seems vain to hope that differences of opinion can be removed, and unity restored, by doctrinal discussion. The doctrines which divide Christians may often be utterly unpractical; they may be to the mass of the people mere