

Very true. The intelligent German has long ago outgrown the established and popular creed. His morality is not dependent upon the Bible teaching; his ethics rest on a firmer basis, and his actions are not guided by the fear of an angry God, or a reward in a hereafter. It is not so with the majority of Americans.

The Bible has been the only source—and alas! it is so still—from which this great nation has drawn its inspiration for right-doing and thinking. The Bible has been the book out of which they have received instruction in morality; their conscience has been formed according to its fallacious teachings. A book which was written nearly two thousand years ago, containing many noble sentiments, but more scientific errors than truths, more false statements than true ones, serves to-day an intelligent race as the sole instigator, the sole inspirer, to moral virtues, moral conduct, and moral excellences! Is it to be wondered at that our social edifice is trembling in its very foundation, that vice is multiplying, that sin is increasing, that the infection is spreading, and that the passions are breaking through their artificial restraints? Distrust is undermining our social, commercial, and political relations. Honest men are losing all confidence; theft has become a universal vice; stealing, defrauding, embezzling under some cunning device is an every-day occurrence. The temptation to go astray has taken a hold upon our people. And mind! it is not among the poor and needy, not among the lower orders of society that vice is increasing. There are many, it is true, who are driven by want and by a neglected education towards dishonesty and licentiousness. It is not to them I am referring now. The debasing propensities have reached our upper and middle classes as well. Our well-to-do and well-cared-for sons and daughters—the children of honest parents—are infected by the moral pestilence.

Their education has been first-class; they have attended the Sunday-school regularly; they have been devout church-members; and their love for God cannot be doubted. They have lately read about the new science. They have seen extracts from Darwin's *Origin of Species*, of Huxley's explanations of the *Evolution of the Universe*, of Spencer's *Sociology*, of Tyndall's lectures on *Light and Electricity*. They are puzzled. Why? This is all in contradiction to what the Bible teaches; it differs widely from what they had learned,—what they had read in the Book of books. Either here or there there must be falsehood!

The anathema against the new revelations are of no avail. Its doctrines have already advanced too far. The spell of the Church is broken; and the sooner it is recognized the better for man's happiness and his ultimate advancement.

The Liberals have a great work before them. They have to educate the people's conscience, so that they may perceive the new truth. They have to establish a new morality derived from scientific experiences. The Religion of Humanity must have a fixed standard of morals. It has to show and explain the evil effects of vice,—how it acts upon ourselves, our children, and our posterity. The Liberals have to explain, teach, expound, make clear the laws by which our life is governed. They have to show that our actions are indeed foreordained by a wise unrelenting power of Nature, and that a neglect of these laws will be punished here among our own kind and kindred. Every noble act, every sacrifice for the good and the true, is a benediction to those nearest to our heart, and brings bliss and happiness to mankind. Righteousness means happiness in the visible world. Goodness and purity of action produce goodness and purity of sentiment. Goodness is and always will be good; badness is and always will be bad.

The Liberals have to popularize the sciences, show their bearings upon all the relations of life, and make the right application of the manifold beneficial discoveries. They have also to show the value of resthetical culture; how inspiring, ennobling, and elevating the different arts and sciences have been in the past; that the cultivation of art is a necessity,—a necessary path in the education of a civilized community.

We have also to show that the most lovely and amiable, the most beautiful sentiments are an outgrowth of elevated and intelli-

gent thought, leading us to higher spheres; that these lovely sentiments are by no means peculiar to the Christian Religion but belong to all ages and to every civilized country. Man's vanity, his ambition, his self-love, his egotism, have to be directed to loftier spheres, where there is satisfaction without satiety, gratification without repentance. What has been held out to be gained in a future life has to be realized here, and it has to be shown that this can only be when all men and all women know and fulfil their duties, love and show proper regard for their fellow-beings.

Life is full of sacrifice; but man wants to know why he shall sacrifice. He cannot soar on high without a clear ideal held out for his reach. The temptations to go astray are too strong, vice is too alluring, and his ignorance of causes and effects is too great.

The new ideal is loftier, more beautiful, more inspiring than ever it was, but it wants to be proclaimed,—it awaits its new apostles.

The Liberals must stand firmly together; we have a great, an arduous work before us, and we have a mighty enemy to contend against. Success can only be gained by a close alliance, by self-sacrifice, and by a clearness of purpose. We have to be magnanimous towards those who cannot sympathize with our cause; severe, unrelenting, but just towards our opponents. Many of us may have to give up our own less important schemes for the sake of the party and its success. Our demands are founded upon reason; and so let our actions, our deeds, be guided by a superior wisdom; and may we never forget the *h* aim we are pursuing! Let us have a clear perception of our ideal, and let the ideal stand out in vivid colors before the mind's eye, so that we may gain strength and endurance for the arduous task upon which we start out to a better life and a nobler existence.

THE CHILD AND THE SUNBEAM.

BY WM. M'DONNELL.

'Twas beauteous eve, a sunset beam
Descended on a mother's grave,
And like a mourner, it would seem,
A weeping willow there did wave;
And culling simple flow'rs quite wild,
Which sprang from tears that fell around—
There sat a little orphan child.

And oft at summer-day's repose,
When o'er the earth was nature's hush,
When dew was trembling in each rose,
And mellow light half hid its blush
Among the simple flow'rs quite wild,
Which sprang up there from tears that fell—
Were seen the sunbeam and the child.

The autumn came, and summer's bloom
Passed like a friendly smile away,
The willow leaves fell o'er the tomb,
And transient sunbeams scarce would stay;
And then the simple flowers quite wild,
Which grew from tears shed round the grave,
Seemed fading like the orphan child.

'Twas eve again; a stormy cloud
Hung darkly o'er that lonely place,
The wintry blast was long and loud,
No eye a sunbeam there could trace,
But 'neath the withered flow'rs so wild,
Which once had risen there from tears—
Lay sleeping too the orphan child.

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