

of the claim of Christianity to reveal to us not only the love of a spiritual father, but the grace of an atoning sufferer who died a "ransom for many." It is in the practical power which Christianity applies to stir us to combat with overwhelming evils, and to assuage the sufferings of penitent guilt and self-aborring contrition, that it brings certitude to the suspended judgment of pure culture, and reveals the force which even the impotent paralytic of the intellect may share. Christianity reveals its meaning not to the thinker, as such, but to the man who is overwhelmed by the sense of the needs and miseries of his race, and who grasps at that power, as a power from on high, which will enable him to grapple with these. Its language is not, "Sit and

be convinced," but, "Rise and walk." And already we seem to see evidence that in this age, as in other ages, we shall find our Christianity again in the strenuous effort to meet the violence, the impurity, the wretchedness, the poverty, the squalor, the despair of the most miserable of our people. As Christianity wanes at the West End of London, it revives at the East. It flickers and goes out in the breast of the student, while it flames up in the heart of the man who is really attacking evil in its worst strongholds. Culture is a wet-blanket for Christian faith only so long as the attitude of the mind toward evil is passive. It becomes subservient to Christian faith in the heart of the man who is really following in the footsteps of his Master.—*Spectator*.

THE POETS AS HELPERS.

IN this world of ours, with its temptations to conquer, its problems to settle, and its personal struggles to turn into triumphs, we need all the help we can get. Carlyle has written about the hero as pagan divinity, prophet, poet, priest, man of letters, king; but most of us, in our efforts to be heroic, do not expect to reach the honours connected with any one of these names. Our heroism must be shown in the daily round, which, even for the greatest men and women, is likely to contain much commonplace drudgery. When we have done the best that individual character can do, we still need help; and we turn for it to the heroic and the noble in religion and in ancient and modern history. Prophets and evangelists and ministers of our divine religion, leaders of thought, and poets and other writers, must aid us on the upward way.

The "poet" was once the "maker," and his creations at their best ought to be helpful makings. High poetry can come only from a mind in some sense high. The poet ought to be a hero, now bold, now gentle and winsome, but never a poltroon or a superfluity. His function is somewhat akin to that of the soothsayer, the teacher, the leader. Lowell, in his *Fable for Critics*, compares our modern Whittier with the minstrel Taillefer, who led the army at the battle of Hastings:

Our Quaker leads off metaphorical fights
For reform and whatever they call human
right;

Both singing and striking in front of the war
And hitting his foes with the mallet of Thor.
Preaching brotherly love and then driving
it in

To the brain of the tough old Goliath of sin,
With the smoothest of pebbles from Castaly's
spring
Impressed on his hard moral sense with a
sling.