

thereof; a system which, twenty-five years ago, insisted upon verbal inspiration, a personal devil, an endless hell, literal interpretation of all references to science in the Bible, the efficacy of prayer in material matters, unfailling perdition outside the narrow pale of each individual sect, but is now extremely chary of touching upon any of these points; a system whose essentials of yesterday are the non-essentials of to-day, and whose essentials of to-day will be the non-essentials of to-morrow; a system which *dare not* give reason play, but whose motto has ever been, "Reason is Satan's weapon; doubt not, simply believe;" a system which, to fill its Churches with even inattentive congregations, *acknowledges* that it must resort to every conceivable artifice to please the popular taste; a system whose priests do not profess to *teach* (much less to practice) the plainest precepts of Christ (e.g. absolute non-resistance, the giving away of all goods, the disparagement of riches); a system which has begotten religious hatred and sectarian bitterness the world over, and is to-day ready to rise into a flame in Germany against the Jews, and in Ireland under "the Orange and the Green;" a system which confesses that it exerts no appreciable effect upon the masses in our large towns, and says by the mouths of its teachers: "We must at all hazards reach the children, whose minds are not fully formed. Our thinking people do *not* believe that such a system comes ready-made from the hands of a pure and holy God.

The world, in this regard, is awakening like a giant from its sleep of centuries. The latent doubters of yesterday are the avowed unbelievers of to-day, and the timid sceptics of to-day are the fearless infidels of to-morrow. Ecclesiasticism, (and all forms of orthodoxy, are, after all, but feeble imitations of Romish ecclesiasticism: the sects which are loudest in their cry of an "Open Bible," being just as tenacious as Rome herself that this Bible shall first be accepted as inspired, and then interpreted according to their own "ipse dixit")—ecclesiasticism, we repeat, is receiv-