

Mohammedan, Jew, and Christian alike, fastens the same charge of idolatry upon the theist or deist of every age and clime, as being the worshipper of an idol—not made with hands, it is true, but manufactured by the human brain. His words are, that man has ‘made all Gods, and shall unmake them.’ Prof. Clifford’s contention, no doubt, would be that the five senses give no more evidence of a God existing in space, than they do of a God existing in the wafer of the Catholic mass. He would probably say that, in both cases, the superstition or imagination (that is, the *belief*) of the worshipper equally projects God into the object outside his mind, whether that object be the material bread or the material universe. According to the *Guardian*, the ‘belief’ of Moses, of the Jewish high-priest, of the Trinitarian, the Christian, and the theist or deist, makes no difference in the nature of the act of worship performed by them, and ought not to influence our estimate of them, or the language which we use towards them. In short, to adopt the *Guardian’s* own illustration, every man who makes a false statement is a liar, no matter how firmly he may believe in the truth of what he says; and every man whose ideas as to the modes in which the Deity manifests Himself, differ from those of the editor of the *Guardian*, is an idolater. Does argumentation of this character really call for any more formal refutation than merely to strip it of all disguise and shew it in its naked deformity? I think not.

The editor of the *Guardian* is no doubt aware that, during several centuries, *universal* Christendom believed, as an integral and vital part of its religion, that the bread in the mass was God, or that God was present in it. Does he then stigmatise the Christianity of that age as idolatry, and brand as idolaters the whole body of Christians who then lived, including such men as Roger Bacon, Duns Scotus, Aquinas, Chaucer, Leonardo da Vinci, Michel Angelo, Copernicus, Savonarola, Sir Thomas More, and St Xavier; including also most of the leading reformers, such as Luther and Melancthon, who maintained, under the name of consubstantiation or *im-p-riation*, the doctrine that, ‘after consecration, the body and blood of Christ are substantially present in the bread and wine;’ a belief embodied, with little or no variation,

in the Augsburg, Westminster, and other Protestant Confessions, as well as in the thirty-nine Articles, a document accepted with certain limitations by Methodists themselves. Wesley himself believed in the Real Presence, and consequently, by the *Guardian’s* shewing, was an idolater in theory, and was kept from becoming one in practice, only by not acting out his professed belief, as he ought to have done. The duty of every Christian is to worship God wherever, in feeling after Him, he finds Him; and if Wesley found Him *really present* in the consecrated bread and wine, he ought to have worshipped Him there. The whole Christian world, then, being given over to ‘idolatry’ for several centuries preceding the year 1500 or thereabouts (indeed, the doctrines of the Real Presence and Transubstantiation may be traced back to Irenæus, Justin Martyr, and other Christian Fathers of the second century), will the editor of the *Guardian* be kind enough to tell us what, during those centuries, had become of the Christian religion, which we have been in the habit of fancying has descended to us in an unbroken stream from Christ and his Apostles? Perhaps he will say that Christianity continued to exist, though in a corrupt form. But the question is not one of mere corruption. The commandment, ‘Thou shalt have none other gods before me,’ is an essential part of Christianity, and an idolater, by violating that commandment, *ipso facto* ceases to be a Christian. The argument of the *Guardian*, then, commits it to the position that Christianity had no existence during several centuries prior to the year 1500, and that the three hundred million members of the Roman Catholic, Greek, and Lutheran Churches now living in the world, besides an important section of the Anglican Church, are not our fellow-Christians. And this is Christian charity, as exemplified in one of our leading religious journals in this nineteenth century after Christ!

—Whoever does or reads or writes all he means to do or read or write during a season of leisure? How discontentedly do we often survey the contents of a little library we take with us on a holiday excursion,—the Wordsworth we meant to study, the volumes of Ruskin or Carlyle we meant to dream over, but which have perhaps