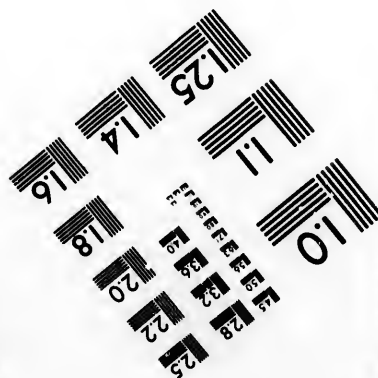
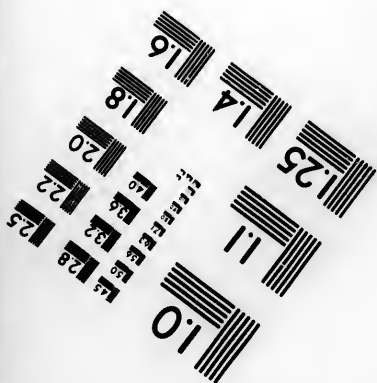
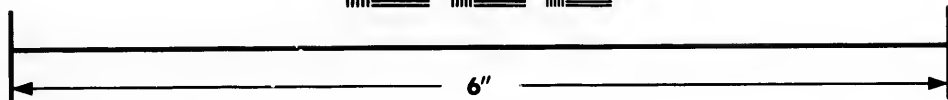
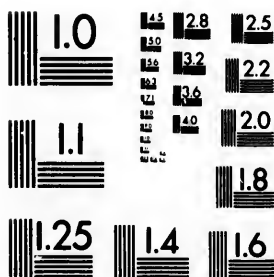


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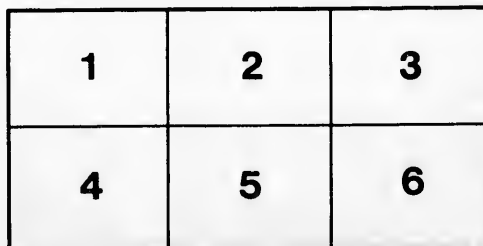
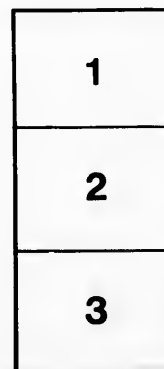
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PHYSIOLOGY

IN

THOUGHT, CONDUCT AND BELIEF.

BY DANIEL CLARK, M.D.,

Medical Superintendent, Asylum for the Insane, Toronto.

NO two people among all the sons and daughters of Adam are alike in every respect. This law of diversity applies to everything animate and inanimate, from the definite forms of the crystal, the dewdrop and organized bodies up to the planetary orbs. This absence of uniformity is also seen in the mental constitution of every individual. The phlegmatic, the nervous, the emotional, the affectional, and the intellectual can be singled out from among the masses by the observation of physical appearances, movements as well as mental states.

Temperaments are substratal agencies which modify, to some extent at least, the mental constitution of each of us. The instrument may not decide the *kind* of its operations, but it does affect the *quality*. The body may not give direction to volition, nor map out the pathway of conduct; but its condition may, and often does, affect, to a considerable extent, their force and extent. In disease, this statement needs no illustration. Each person knows how much thought is affected by a restive stomach, by a disordered liver, by a splitting headache, or by nervous prostration: so in health our minds are affected by physical conditions. The bodily medium in which, by which, and through which, are all our mental processes, cannot be ignored in judging of varieties of thought. No two persons think alike on any subject. We have only to look around among our neighbours and enter into discussion with any one of them on any

speculative subject to verify this fact. The leading politicians range themselves in parties according to beliefs. The rank and file who follow each may seem unanimous when guided by personal motives, party-pride, party-success, class interests, or it may be solely love of country. These bonds may give apparent accord, yet, each individual of the millions of the electorate will differ in detail when he breaks loose from these bonds, and frankly gives his individual opinions.

Among those who study the exact sciences, this diversity is also met with where least expected.

The scientists cannot well differ about phenomenal facts, which appeal to the senses for confirmation, but they will run into extremes of diversity in drawing conclusions from these undisputed data. The moment they theorize, that instant they diverge in opinion. All scientific books are a standing evidence of this statement. The pupil may follow the master implicitly if the student walk by faith alone; but when he has thought for himself, and gained possession of new facts, he at once speculates for himself, and applies the scalpel to dissect his teacher's scientific creed. His faith is rudely shaken, and under new light disappears, to be supplanted by the latest accepted theory. This hankering after new fields of exploration; this desire to add to our knowledge; this 'biggin' castles in the air; this cackling over the hatching of new ideas, are often all commendable, if

regulated by judgment and supported by incontrovertible evidence; yet, they point to the ever-changing nature of human knowledge and opinion, based upon idiosyncrasies.

It may seem a contravention of this law when one observes great social, political and religious upheavals in which the many are often led by a few restless, impetuous spirits, in which is a ceaseless desire for change, with the firmness and genius to bring these revolutions to a successful issue. This condition of all-pervading enthusiasm never is enduring. No sooner has the full tide of fervour and excitement overleaped the usual barriers and reached the utmost boundaries, than the ebb sets in at once. The power of the united volume is expended, and each particle of personality asserts its right to quietness and rest; in other words, it assumes its normal condition. In the same way, no sooner do the agitations excited by wrongs, despotisms and intolerance come to an end, than the individual purpose comes into play and schisms, sects, personal ambitions and egotistic ascendancies come to the front: thus the normal condition returns. In the circumscribed area of small communities one master-mind may, by its influence, control and consolidate heterogeneous elements; but no sooner is this binding element removed than disintegration sets in. The units isolate themselves, according to the law of each. The family traits, natural perversity, education by precept and example, wilfulness uncurbed, vicious license unrestrained, and the inherited tendencies so different in each, show how much one man has to contend against more than another to resist crime, and to what extent the judgment and moral sense of each is warped by these underlying forces.

'I have been fighting all my life against these secret vices, and have only partially succeeded. I was born in the midst of vice and crime, and drew in my badness with my mother's

milk,' was the piteous wail of despair which fell upon the ear of the writer from the lips of a young man who longed for a better life. Good habits are of slow growth, and bad tendencies continually assert themselves. There is too often an unequal strife between a desire for good, with a weak will on the one hand, and an active vice on the other. The house must be occupied by some tenant, if not by 'the better angel of our nature,' it will be by its evil spirit. Inherent motives, passions and desires are as varied as the human face. Thought, feeling, desire, and action are all present, but in ever-changing proportions. In chemistry a very few elements in slightly different combinations form compounds, not only dissimilar in physical appearance, but widely apart in their inherent properties. Starch, sugar, alcohol and vinegar have the same constituent elements, but no sane man would say that beyond the radical atoms they have anything in common: so the few elements in the psychical man in varied proportions do produce such individual types as would make it impossible to measure humanity by a common standard. He is like the few fundamental notes of music which can be arranged in endless melodies; or like the letters of an alphabet to whose myriad words there is no end.

In heathen countries, where a blind faith prevails, reasoning in religious matters seldom comes into play, and, as a consequence, differences seldom arise. In so ignorant a state of society a hearty allegiance to mere matters of detail might be expected; yet, if historians are to be believed, when individual differences arise, it is astonishing what variety of opinion crops up. The more enlightened a community becomes, the more striking are these contrasts. It is interesting to study this matter in the light of physiology, and to try to discover how much religious opinion may share the fate of secular knowledge, by being, to some

extent at least, affected, if not determined, by physical conditions. The emotional man will never look at all things in precisely the same light as the cool, clear-headed thinker. His intellect is dominated in a greater or less degree by his feeling. The hysterical female, who seems to be wholly a bundle of nerves, is led by them into the reception of vagaries, which another, with a better balanced mind, and a less susceptible organization, would laugh at, as being evidence of the wild imaginings of a disordered mind. One man has been born with a bilious temperament, which tinges every thought and incident of his life with melancholy. The most strenuous efforts can but partially shake him at times out of this slough of despond, only to sink again into it when the stimulus is removed. Another man has from childhood been full of buoyant spirits. He always looks upon the sunny side of everything. He is the life of every party and the centre of fun, merriment and every kind of enjoyment. He cannot help himself, for it is as natural to him, and as indispensable to his physical and mental health, as is the air he breathes. We all know him; and, like the former, he is in every community. The first is always apprehensive of trouble, and goes about the world with a whine, and with his head bowed like a bulrush. He sees the judgments of an avenging fate ever impending on his head, or hears the anathemas of an angry Deity following him throughout his life. The sunshiny type of a man takes misfortune, trouble, and disaster with a patience and good humour a Turk might envy. Both may have been educated alike in religious and secular knowledge, but the one has his whole life jaundiced and beclouded, because of the temperament he has inherited, and the other has his every thought and feeling infiltrated with that hopefulness which he received as a legacy at his birth. One man finds no pleasure in certain indulgences, such as drunk-

ness and lasciviousness. He may never have had any taste or inclination for excesses of any kind, and hence, such offer no temptation to him. Another is continually fighting against his appetites or his lusts, and has been so warring—it may be—from childhood, because of a brutish longing implanted in his nature, consequent on his physical organization. He may fall after a struggle against this downward tendency, or his dominant will may control his constitutional defects. If not, on the other hand, being judged by his external acts, he is held up to public scorn and contempt. His fights and conquests are not counted to him, and his neighbour, who has no such ball and chain of physical degeneracy to contend against, is judged to be a model of propriety. Public opinion is not to blame, for the real hero, who has conquered a thousand inward foes in an every day struggle, is never known, because the irrepressible conflict is carried on in the inner citadel of his being. The writer, in an official document, has put this fact in another form, thus:—“It may be supposed that three culprits were selected at random for committing like crimes, under precisely similar circumstances. Were it possible for us to get behind the external acts and see the motives and tendencies which impelled each, it would be found that no two did the unlawful deeds under exactly similar impulses. Assuming 100 to be the standard of a normal man, it might be found that the inherited propensity, or the natural aptitude to do evil, might be put hypothetically 82, 76, 40. The resisting power of each against the doing of certain things, and the impelling momentum of volition goaded on by desire or passion to act in a particular direction, might be supposed, for illustration, to stand in some such proportion. It follows, then, that the crime of him who was influenced by the most powerful motives for good, and had the least constitutional strength to deter, would, in the eyes of Omniscience,

be much more guilty than the poor creature whose volition would be so largely dominated and environed by hindrances no mortal may know. This inequality needs no argument to prove it, for in a greater or less degree it enters into the experience or observation of every one in some form or other. Their actual responsibility and guilt are comparatively very unequal. For the last year or two an epidemic of murder and other atrocities has been sweeping over the Dominion, and any one who has inquired into the history of these transgressors of the law will be struck with the different circumstances by which each has been surrounded, as given in his history, antecedent to the perpetration of the crime.

The slow and cautious man is typical of another class. He may be of a languid temperament, and as a natural consequence lacks energy. It takes time for him to gather and put into practical shape his plans. No one is better aware of his habitual inertia than himself. In the battle of life, he feels that he must rouse himself from his characteristic indolence if he expect to succeed. Need, greed, or ambition may excite him to put forth efforts either spasmodically, or by continuous mental stimulation, thus to rouse the flagging powers. He needs no one to tell him of his constitutional lethargy, and how necessary it is to overcome it. To some extent he succeeds, but he glides easily into his natural groove when he lets his inclination have full play. The stubborn man is a somewhat different character. Right or wrong he is hard to convince. This is doubly true, should he happen to be egotistic as most stubborn men are. His love of his own opinions, his apprehended chagrin, should he confess his mistakes in respect to his conceptions of men and things, or it may be his honest convictions, lead him to hold out with great tenacity against his opponents. From childhood this has been his trait, and were it not that it might be looked upon as a photograph

of some one in particular, his physical appearance might be readily sketched. A change of base in many such might be looked upon as an example of a modern miracle. Did the occasion arise such a man would be a martyr for right or wrong. Martyrdom only implies that a man believes he is right, and has the courage of his convictions. Had he lived in the days of Mahomet, when converts were outwardly made by giving them the alternative of accepting the Koran or the sword, the stubborn man would have chosen the latter and have been thankful for the opportunity of becoming a martyr to his convictions. Such a man is a great contrast to the weak, vacillating creature who has no opinion of his own. His poor life is mostly automatic. He is almost as passive as a looking-glass, which reflects images passing before it, but can originate none of its own. He is the pliant wax ready at any time to receive impressions from every impinging stamp. The last impression remains only until a successor displaces it. He may be good-natured and agree with everybody from pliability or sheer indifference; led by the present, the influences of the past are lost upon him. He is a waif tossed upon the surf of opinion. Having neither sail nor rudder, this fickle craft drifts helplessly about on the ocean of life, the sport of circumstance and the plaything of every passing breeze. He was always of this manner and remains so in spite of warning, education, or of experience. We all know such among either kinsmen or acquaintances. Some men again have a naturally sensitive moral nature. From childhood upwards their moral judgments are so commendable that it is said of them that they are too good to live long. A child, born next door, shews from the earliest years of life bad propensities. The badness crops out with every year's growth, and in everything he does. Time, good example, a wholesome education, do

not eradicate the innate wickedness. Bluntness is seen in the sense of moral obligation. He is selfish, cruel, crafty, with low instincts; although he may behave himself, having respect to the punishment of crime in a law-abiding country, yet his conscientious scruples are of the faintest kind. Selfishness and its interests guide all his actions. From the cradle to the grave—as a juvenile specimen of depravity, or as a hoary-headed sinner and hypocrite—he is full of all manner of ingrained evil, and it seems utterly beyond human effort to straighten the crooked moral nature. He is the Pariah of society, to whom precept, example and education bring no change of propensity. Let the Christian philanthropist study these sad unfortunates in the haunts of vice, in the homes of charity, and in the prisons of any land. How far such are responsible for conduct or belief lies with Infinite Wisdom. In many such deplorable cases the generous and loving nature will see that it is pertinent to ask, as was done before on a memorable occasion: "Did this man sin, or his parents?" and the answer will be to all of us, "Our fathers have sinned and are not, and we have borne their iniquities." Can it not often be said that this downward tendency is the fulfilment of a hereditary law which "visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation?"

The next typical class is too often seen in this nervous and excitable age, in which men trot through life and gallop into the grave.

The impetuous man is continually running headlong into difficulty. He jumps at conclusions without due deliberation. He passes through life in the work of continually making mistakes and correcting them; or, as Sydney Smith has phrased it, in continually passing empty buckets down into an empty well and then drawing them up. If experience have any effect upon him, it is only by continually watch-

ing himself and standing guard over his natural bent of mind. He is a perpetual blunderer, unless on the alert to check his heedlessness in forming half-thought-out opinions and plans, then acting upon them without due forethought and circumspection. Usually of a nervous temperament, he either enjoys life hugely, or is suffering more acutely than his phlegmatic brother. If sanguine, he is anticipating with pleasure the fruition of some ill-digested scheme; or failing in that he is immediately in hot pursuit after another chimera. He, doubtless, has a mission to fulfil, but few can find it out. His schemes are of short duration, and have the spice of variety—one at a time, but nothing long.

Intellectual activity does not always mean will-strength. Mozart was a musical prodigy, not simply in the execution of music, but also in its creation; yet he had no strength of character. Coleridge had his imagination not only active but also under the control of the intellect, as is evidenced in the weird rhyme of 'The Ancient Mariner.' In decision of character he was a weakling. Poe was a man of undoubted genius and great mental activity; but was as unstable as water, being driven to and fro in the most vacillating manner by every tempest of desire and passion. His will was the slave, not the master: he wanted equilibrium. Byron has shown in his poetry the highest genius combined with keen powers of analysis; yet he was the veriest child of impulse and emotion. Cowper, in his poems and letters, shows keen discrimination, deep pathos, and rare humour, yet he was so weak-willed that his moods might have been taken like degrees on the thermometer, to indicate his mental condition, ranging from zero to fever heat. His volition was the weakest part of his being, and so he was a child of circumstance. In none of these was one faculty a counterpoise or complement of the other to constitute a well balanced mind.

Such men can be culled by the dozen out of every community. They cannot help the unpleasant fact that they have nervous, irritable, and impulsive temperaments. This typical organization is to a great extent characteristic of all true poets, musicians, and children of art, great or small. They are strung to a greater degree of tension than are ordinary mortals. At the same time, there is much force in what John Stuart Mill says ('Autobiography,' p. 169): 'I saw that though our character is formed by circumstances, our own desires can do much to shape these circumstances; and that what is really inspiring and ennobling in the doctrine of free will is the conviction that we have real power over the formation of our own character; that our will by influencing some of our circumstances can modify our future habits or capacity of willing.'

Certain aptitudes are obviously natural to many, hence the juvenile love of certain playthings; yet perfection is acquired by practice, and so it is in all our efforts of thought and volition. The tendency of physical bias may obstruct desires, but its restraining power is made somewhat inoperative and partially powerless by a new direction being given to bodily and psychic force. In this way a new governor keeps rebellion down in the domain of potentiality and energy. This is a most prominent influence which is brought to bear to curb a natural and malign disposition, or to intensify a good propensity. These, and such as these, are correctives or exciting agents to keep in abeyance or lead in a contrary direction the individual, yet the innate tendency, temperament, or physical condition is constantly cropping up in spite of these deterrents or directors. All proper training must take into account the aptitudes of the mind, have in view the natural bias, and incite the latent faculties. Disposition is a natural growth, and cannot be a manufactured product. Every character will assert itself according

to its own laws of development, just as much as the oak or the rose. We can train them, but we cannot change their nature.

The men of keen intellect and low emotional qualities, such as Voltaire, Rousseau, Gibbon, John Stuart Mill, and Herbert Spencer, could never look upon matters of speculation or faith, except by miracle, in the same light as gentle and loveable Melancthon, genial and sympathetic Wesley; soul-stirring Chalmers; kindly and attractive Pio Nono; or long-suffering, patient and brotherly Livingstone. In these men, the vehicles of emotion, affection, intellection and volition were widely varied, and, as a consequence, so were their modes of thought and conduct. It is seldom this earth is visited by men who excel in all their receptive and active powers. Even those of moderate capacity lack in symmetry of nature. If one faculty or trait towers above its fellows, it is too often at their expense. We may find the man of keen and commanding intellect low in emotion and affection. He is like a wintry sky, very clear but very cold. Intense feeling, passion, excitability and nervous impressibility are not often found with a towering intellect; yet humanity thus varied is threatened with ostracism if it give not unanimous assent to trifles in belief. We all know what reception awaits any man in society who cannot in honesty accept any of the Christian creeds in their entirety.

In discussing this matter, it is not to be forgotten that many influences are brought to bear to counteract these physiological tendencies. Constant effort to overcome bad propensities and to cultivate moral conduct, at length form a habit which becomes a rule or law of nature, and to some extent, at least, dominates over natural bias. There is a spontaneity in every person, which, in its constant exercise, is increased in potency for good or evil. The more good a man does, the more easily is it performed; and the

converse is true in respect to evil. The handiwork of the deft craftsman, which, at first, is clumsily done, becomes, by constant practice, perfect, and his fingers, arms and brain are, by exercise in a uniform direction, almost automatic in their movements. The expert needle-woman, the patient knitter, or the plodding pedestrian can let the mind wander fancy free, while the fingers and feet, by repeated uniformity of motion, do their work without special mental effort, such as was needed in the days of apprenticeship.

Example is a powerful incentive to modify natural qualities of character. Without endorsing the theory of Descartes, it is evident we are *monkeyish* in the desire to copy after some human ideal. If we are in the company of any person we admire, we almost intuitively make such our pattern, to some extent, in modes of speech and action. This is particularly seen in budding orators, in the pulpit, at the bar, and in the forum. The low habits of an associate are soon found to be contagious, especially if we admire any qualities he may possess, such as courage, constancy or kindness.

A second counteracting agent is education. A child can be taught to believe any faith, either of theology or metaphysics, if inculcated by those it can trust. Brahminism, Parseeism, Mahomedanism, Catholicism, Protestantism, are all evidences of the abiding power of early training. The difficulty of eradicating even the least absurd of the dogmas, which have found a lodgment in the mind in early life, shows how tenacious are first impressions. So well-known is this fact, that denominational teachers put forth every effort by means of literature or by word of mouth to instil into the young and plastic mind, not only moral and religious precepts, but also to teach implicit faith in sectarian creeds and beliefs. The latter gain such a hold on our minds, when thus engrafted with zeal and earnestness, that it is only

by considerable effort that we are able to shake ourselves loose from their grasp, so as to be able to look at the grand fundamentals of the Christian religion, or to detect specious error, with an unbiassed judgment.

All kinds of literature now so widespread in its influence, is only another form of making mental impressions by a written power.

The press, the exponent of public opinion, is no exception to this rule. Every issue of the various newspapers is full of contradictory conclusions drawn from common sources of information. This diversity is manifest when no extraneous influences could modify opinions. It is an educator of a very successful kind. Not only is this true in the dissemination of general news, and in the expounding of social questions, but also in being both the leader of public opinion and its reflector, where the general judgment of a community crystalizes into definite form. At the present day, both the secular and sectarian press is each of necessity a special pleader. The party organs plead, as a counsel does in court, for their clients, either as plaintiffs or defendants. Both sides hold with great tenacity, that the principles each enunciate, are necessary to the salvation of the country. The sectarian press is brought into existence mainly for the special purpose of formulating and defending religious dogmas. Public opinion is largely moulded by these potent auxiliaries, and at the same time by a sort of reflex action, in its return often controls them in their apologies, defences, doctrines and assertions. Thus the two forces act and react upon one another. The influence of the press to mould and direct individual thought, is very great. The reader, who from year to year, peruses the same religious or political newspaper or periodical, is almost invariably led into accepting all that these assert. Human credulity in persistent and reiterated assertions, be they true or false, is wonderfully prevalent. It is not surprising then, that

the aid of the press is so eagerly desired by parties, sects, or corporations seeking to mould the opinions of the public. The press, in its many ways and means, is the most active proselytizer of the age.

Differences of opinion are to my mind evidences of higher attainments than is unanimity. Independent conclusions attest research, while general accord on mere matters of speculative thought—not containing self-evident truths—implies that the many have not investigated for themselves. Debateable ground is to be found over all the fields of mental enquiry. The exact sciences, including mathematics, are as full of argumentative principles, in some of their branches, as are the doctrines of perception or of the unconditioned in metaphysics. Theories and abstractions are as full of the elements of wordy warfare, as are the dogmas of Biblical interpreters. The fact is, we are directly certain of nothing beyond our own consciousness; all other knowledge is inferential; hence the room for doubt, difference, induction, and it may be delusion. This being the case, it would be surprising if all could agree on details in either secular or sectarian matters. Nothing short of implicit faith in an infallible interpreter, who could think for us, would be able to produce accord in any system founded on faith, more than on evidence. As a matter of fact, a large majority of mankind thinks by proxy. An otherwise busy life, indifference, laziness, or ignorance, each or all lead to concordance in much, where intelligent enquiry would necessarily give scope to analysis and dissent, or to enlightened acquiescence. We accept conclusions, as children take a dainty morsel, having implicit faith in the logician who lays down the premises. We reason with ourselves, that life is too short to permit us to make the least enquiry into the *why* and *wherefore* of even matters of vital importance to us now and hereafter, so we while our brief day away by attaching

our faith on a something which may be true, or which in our condition may be the gravest error. Nothing short of a mental earthquake can shake such a mind out of its natural or acquired lethargy. Native-born inertia and mental freedom are hereditary foes.

This charge is not true of a large portion of an educated nation. Taking into consideration how differently constituted we are, the wonder is that we agree so thoroughly as we do, even in regard to radical and cardinal matters. Perhaps there is no subject of thought in which there is so much variety and antagonism of opinion as in religion. Here speculation runs riot. What is called free-thought is not confined to what are conveniently designated non-essentials, for every man constitutes himself a free lance to run tilt against one phase or another of even the fundamentals. It is true that believers in certain creeds can be found everywhere by the million. The wise maxims of Confucius, the philosophic abstractions of the disciples of Brahma—the fantasies of Mahomet—the fetish orgies of African magicians—the astronomical delusions of the Parsees—and the multifarious creeds of Christendom, represent the religious beliefs of a large majority of the world's inhabitants, who give a general assent to the expressed or implied doctrines of each, even when formulated on mere tradition. The exceptions prove the rule. The extremes taken in religious revolutions show that intermittently whole communities are swept away in an enthusiasm, not always according to knowledge. Church History is full of these evidences of ecclesiastical upheaval. Outward forms, gorgeous ceremonies, and unpalatable exactions are rebelled against, as a tyranny, not to be tolerated; and in their place are put severe simplicity and emotional manifestations, equally extreme, if not so apt to dwarf intellectual appreciation of spiritual necessities. One class of pious thinkers gave external expression to religious fervour in the erection

of magnificent temples, models of taste, beautiful in outline and fair in proportions. Another class equally enthusiastic with iconoclastic fury made them a mass of ruins or looked upon them with contempt, and as a standing testimony of their detestation worshipped in structures, with no more architectural taste than is displayed in a match-box or an oyster can. These hideous erections were meant as an emphatic protest against the æsthetic tastes of the former, and undoubtedly they were a remonstrance in caricature, as far as stone and mortar could embody indignation. One class worshipped with grand oratorios, wailing chants, and stirring anthems, in which is the highest style of harmony and melody. The other in marked contradiction, must sing their uncouth rhymes to simple music. The latter were in dead earnest, but honest purpose found no rhythmical expression. The one had an elaborate ritual, the other must eschew it as an abomination: the one kneel in prayer, the other enter a *standing* protest. In the one form magnificent instrumental music assisted at worship; therefore the other must have nothing more complicated and melodious than an *instrumental* tuning-fork. Organs, fiddles, flutes, cornets, and such like were agencies of Satanic device. The one must attach great importance to stoles, surplices, genuflexions, and divers postures, the other, in strong Anglo Saxon, anathematized the use of these and the introduction of forms as sacrilege and pride, and then took equal *pride* in going to the other extreme. These tidal waves of thought are seen ebbing and flowing in one generation after another. Christianity pure and simple is followed by a showy medievalism. Protestant heretics surge to the surface, and with trenchant billows of argument maintain the ascendancy for a time, until their doctrines become heresy no longer. Prelacy is followed by Puritanism. Moderatism is submerged in Emotionalism: Now, it is natural-

ism against supernaturalism, or more properly, natural theology against revealed theology. Scientific truth is forced into an unnatural conflict against speculative dogma: the phenomena of nature against the evidences of Christianity. The two citadels are really one, and when the clouds of combat clear away, it will be seen that they have one common foe in *Nihilism*. The warfare will doubtless accomplish this result, that religious thought will turn to the future with its grand possibilities, and not to the past with its imperfect knowledge and halting interpretations. Few take much interest in the controversies between Augustine and Pelagius, Luther and Calvin, Wesley and Whitfield, or between High and Low Churchism.

The issues of to-day are between natural and revealed religion. Both have the same author, but multiform reasoning puts too often upon each different and divergent interpretations. The mere scientist defies the antiquated theologian, and points to history as evidences of his blunders and errors in Biblical hermeneutics. He flings at his head the opinions of the early fathers, in respect to cosmography, astronomy, physiology and in latter times, the science of geology and natural history. He shows how the mere dogmatic theologian has been forced to change his ground to meet the requirements of undisputed scientific facts. Within the last quarter of a century, the Christian Church has advanced in intelligent thought far beyond the old camping ground. Many creeds remain on the ecclesiastical statute books, but as far as belief in them is concerned they are virtually obsolete and inoperative. Even the most dogmatic laggard in the onward march is inclined to give a broader and more rational scope to individual thought. For example, this is especially seen in the *materialistic* views formerly held in respect to future punishment. The horrible word picturing of the physical sufferings of the

lost are scarcely ever heard now from any pulpit. The same is true in respect to many of the views held of the Divine attributes, such as those of justice and mercy. A latitude of opinion is given now, which, but a few years ago, would have led to acrimonious discussion, trials for heresy and ostracism from church organization, and even from society. The personal is asserting itself against cast iron rules in minor matters of faith. The nature of God, and that of man and his destiny, are being discussed with a freedom which indicates, not disaster to scriptural truth, but an assurance of a more abiding hold on mankind's intellect and conscience. Untrammelled judgment will gain the ascendancy in spite of edicts, canons or discipline. In view of this fact, it is well to remember that latitude is not license, any more than political freedom is unbridled passion, let loose to the utter perversion of law and order.

If creeds are infallible as are the Scriptures interpreted by them, then are they permanent, unchangeable, and above revision. If their authors are finite men, with limited knowledge, then is it clear as noonday, that some time or another, their formulated interpretations must be revised, corrected, and abridged in details, as surely as have been the scientific deductions of centuries ago. The Old Testament is dim, shadowy, typical and incomplete. The New Testament is more full and integral. The latter is evolved from the former in interpretation and fulfilment. More light through man's experience and in natural religion will still be thrown upon its pages, and the minor matters in the creeds of to-day will look as absurd as many of those which were received as gospel truth in the early ages of Christianity. The recent bolt of the able and conscientious ministers of Scotland from the sharp lines of the Westminster Confession of Faith to the other extreme of the widest latitudinarianism, is only another evi-

dence of the desire of the individual to insist upon his right to private opinion. In the volume entitled 'Scotch Sermons,' these divines play shuttlecock and battledore with the old landmarks of Biblical interpretation. One of them asserts that there is no reason to impute divine authority to those portions of Scripture which treat of matters which belong more properly to science and history than to religion. Another says miracles belong to the 'poesy of religion;' a man can disbelieve them and still be a very good Christian. The chief interest the Church now has in the signs and wonders recorded in the Gospels is a scientific one, lying in the direction of the philosophy of religion, in the field of historical speculation.' The Dutch Covenant Theology, as evolved by the Synod of Dort—with its solemn bargainings between God and Adam, and between God the Father and God the Son—appears 'a fashion as quaint and artificial as the Dutch landscape gardening, which, along with it, came into vogue in the British Islands.' By one fell swoop they attempt to destroy the creeds of Augustine and Calvin. They reject the dogmas of the descent of man from the Adam of the Book of Genesis; the fall of Adam by eating the forbidden fruit; the imputation of Adam's guilt to all his posterity; the consequent death of all men in sin; the redemption in Christ of an election (or body of elect persons) according to grace; the quickening in the elect of a new life; and the eternal punishment and perdition of those who remain unregenerate. This is a pretty thorough weeding out of what we have been led to believe were Gospel truths. The God of this new school is the Eternal Reason, the Everlasting Intelligence, the Infinite Love, the Only True Substance of which is this Material Universe as the phenomenal manifestation. The existence of God is assumed, and rests in obscurity and ultimate mystery. The editor (Prof. Caird) uses no figure

of speech when he says, 'he who lives nobly and wisely, who rises above the narrow life of sense to identify himself with that which is universal and infinite, is sharer in a life of humanity that is never arrested, and shall never die.' He speaks of a personality which comprehends within it the life of nations as well as of individuals. These emancipated preachers warn their hearers and readers against dogmatism, sacerdotalism, ecclesiasticism, sectarianism, and Pharisaism. These discourses are a mixture of rationalism, pantheism, and pure positivism, which ought to delight the soul of Auguste Comte. They are, doubtless, an attempt to give the moral aspect of the doctrine of Evolution, to meet the doubts of those who see no solution of a scientific nature in the old creeds. They are unsatisfactory because they put a poor substitute in place of the comforting system they would abolish.

It is well to urge man to do what is in accordance with moral government, for his own sake, as well as that of his evolved posterity; but it needs a very little knowledge of ourselves and our condition to feel that self-effort, at its best, is a poor substitute for the Cross and all the truths which cluster around it. It may be true, in an analytical sense, that religion has to do with the spiritual or moral in man, and the theological with the intellectual. As a matter of fact, the former depends on the latter. The idiot, the insane, the temporary delirious from fever, alcohol, or any toxic agent, are irresponsible, because of the permanent or temporary dethronement of the intellect. There can be no conscience where there is low intellectual capacity. The oft-quoted expression of our moral nature being 'God's Vice-gerent on earth,' is only a poetic fiction. The most atrocious crimes, and the most abominable practices, have been committed by those who in sincerity thought they were doing God's service. Our moral judgments depend on an enlightened understanding for correct knowledge.

If the evidence furnished to conscience by the intellect be false, then is the moral verdict also false. The knowing and the judging are Siamese twins which cannot be dissevered by any metaphysical or theological process of reasoning; hence to speak of the purely spiritual being religion, and the purely intellectual being theological, is a fantastic distinction which these theological evolutionists have no proof of in their own consciousness, nor in the evidence educed in the conduct of others. Religion is that which brings man into proper relation with both God and man. It is not even certain routine duties and certain pious modes of thought, however good these may be at proper times and in certain places. Worship, charity, and devout aspirations are deluding if looked upon as the sum total of religion. Daily toil, recreation for mental and physical health, or even needed amusements are, in a sense, by no means less religious than are singing hallelujahs, or leading a prayer-meeting. All good and proper in themselves apart from one another, but all necessary to a Christian. A lazy man is told that, whatever his other religious qualities may be, if he do not provide for his family, he is worse than an infidel. The verdict of the world is the same. There is no denying the fact that Christianity, in its multiform aspect, has done much to improve the morals and heighten the aims of the nations where it has taken root. All sectaries seem to have aimed at this, whatever their watchwords may have been. This catholic feature makes it unique in nobleness among all the religions of the earth. The fulcrum idea of an Almighty Helper, of spotless purity, and the Golden Rule, have no parallel in any system of ethics or religion the world has ever, or will ever see, because of the perfect adaptation of these trustful relations and neighbourly requirements to all the conditions of our race. No cold abstract speculations can ever meet the require-

ments of an immortal being, seeking after and hungering for righteousness. This is an intuition of our being ; it is a golden thread which runs through the warp and woof of our nature. Why, then, should a strait-jacket of dogma be put on personal beliefs, which have in them no elements of morality, or even religion, to which reasonable objection could be taken ?

'What is truth?' was anxiously asked at the most momentous trial this earth has ever seen. The Christian world might be able to answer it in one short sentence : so could the sectarian world were the definition to the inquiry given on the common basis on which they all agree. Such would not likely be the case, however, for it would be alleged that the *whole* of truth consists of as many elements as there are creeds. This divergence goes further where religious freedom and secular education exist. In such communities mental diversity must compel individuals to accept as many creeds, written, verbal or implied, as there are persons. The outward assent of the multitude is no evidence of unanimity in matters of detail, and in speculative thought. It is possible for the enlightened and earnest Christians of the world to formulate a few essential articles of Faith, which may meet all the requirements of humanity, and at the same time not shackle the many whose natural and constitutional mentality must rebel against minute, and in many cases, absurd forms, ceremonies and faiths to which they are asked to subscribe. Millions of good Christians stand in the outer temple because of these adventitious obstacles. The most religious and able of the teachers of theology, at the present time, are looking for more satisfactory grounds of Biblical interpretation than are to be found in the musty tomes of the past ; and in those more enlightened investigations, excrescences are being lopped off, and general principles are taking the place of unimportant details. This tends towards the eman-

icipation of the individual from the thralldom of a coercing infinitesimal system of tenets. The knowledge of to-day and to-morrow must, of necessity, expunge much of the errors of yesterday. It is ever thus and shall be forever more, until infallible men are found to promulgate an infallible exposition of Divine procedure.

It must be borne in mind that in the past the greatest moral movements have been initiated, as a rule, outside of the Christian Church. Laymen asserting their individual opinions have revolutionized and purged the Church and society in many momentous epochs of the world's history. This is also true at the present time, only their influence is in this age more keenly felt and acted upon, because of increased general intelligence. The caged intellectual and moral nature within the Churches is pluming its wings for greater flights, and the danger is that wild imagination will carry the impetuous too far away from the realm of reason into that of wild speculation. Within the last few months, the Athanasian creed has found its critics inside the churches. Dean Stanley is so heterodox as to say : 'The Father is God in nature ; The Son is God in history ; and the Holy Ghost is God in individual experience.' The doctrine of total depravity is not insisted on with that positive vehemence with which it once was asserted. It is now often put in an apologetic way, with a tendency to give a poor sinner or heathen credit for disinterested acts of natural goodness and benevolence. There is little need of citing the changes daily occurring in religious thought. Its direction is towards finding a key to unlock the mysteries of natural law, and in this way account for much that was heretofore considered supernatural. Miracles, the resurrection of the body, demonology, visions, and such like, are being looked upon as normal or abnormal manifestations of physiological or pathological laws of our natures in manifest operation. If satis-

factory solutions can be found through the working of such laws, our faith gives place to knowledge of facts in natural religion. The Divine Author is the same, only the miracle-worker is changed to the law-giver. At one time tempests, earthquakes, epidemics, hobgoblins, ghosts, witches, fairies, spells, talismans and omens were looked upon as being direct and potent agents, manifestations or charms outside of natural solutions. These views now no longer are found where a knowledge of physical science exists. The many diseases which were thought to be direct judgments of God have their causes in violations of sanitary laws. The poor maniac who was supposed to be possessed of the devil, is now known to have the demon in a diseased portion of brain, and the kind of imps can be determined, to some extent, by the physical results. The same radical changes of belief are taking place in the religious world. A large section of the religious community may agree in believing that sin universally prevails, without giving credence to the dogma that *temporal* death is a consequence of it, and the result of one disobedience. Many millions may not dispute that there is a moral government in the world, without assenting to the belief that *eternal* punishment is a necessary consequence of evil. The doctrine of a vicarious atonement can be readily accepted, with our knowledge of a sin-stricken world to account for its necessity; but it is not a corollary of that doctrine to accept the idea that its efficacy extends to all without distinction of moral character. Morality teaches our duty to one another. Piety is our proper relation to our Maker. The Ten Commandments and the unparalleled Sermon on the Mount cover these two classes of duties and relations. These are believed in and acted upon by countless myriads to whom the minor and unmeaning Shibboleths are an abomination. All the faiths of Christianity and of Paganism might

be classified into essentials, on the one hand, and insignificant dogmas on the other, to show that such general principles may not be matters of unanimous disagreement, even when affected by the physical ground of differences of constitution. Thought dependent on physiological conditions finds, in generalization, a common factor. The greater the area of ground, the more numerous can be its occupants, but the nearer the multitude climbs to the top of a conical hill the more contracted is the elbow-room. Radical truths may not be gainsaid, because of their wide significance and application. The unimportant may not be agreed to by any two of the community, if left to their own cogitations and reasonings.

Human reason, in healthful exercise, revolts against the acceptance of these non-essentials *en bloc*; yet, a belief in the worship of God, in the deity of Christ, in rewards and punishments, and in the law of love, would be accepted by millions outside of any church organization.

Let us suppose each religious community to be represented by a circle. If these circles are placed so as to intersect and interpenetrate one another to such an extent as that parts are common to all, it will be seen that all cover a certain uniform area. In this neutral ground of identical faith, all the Christian churches might inscribe the articles of a common creed. This might be comprised in three words—Repentance, Faith, and Godliness. These comprehend the three central ideas of all. If these are held fast, the odds and ends in the outlying segments are of little vital moment in the interests of humanity. All the *isms* may put their distinctive creed marks on these unimportant areas, only let us be free to accept or reject them as seemeth best to the earnest seeker after the cardinal truths of Christianity. Missionaries to the heathen adopt this plan, and herein do they show wordly wisdom and catholicity of spirit, such as actuated their Master in his mission.

work. As a rule, religious communities are made up of those who have many traits in common. A law of selection operates here. To use phrenological terms for want of better, any observing person can see one class distinguished by conscientiousness, firmness and self-esteem. These give force, pertinacity and earnestness to their views on religion. Another is marked by courtesy, credulity, refinement, culture and reverence. Order and doctrines inculcated by their religious teachers have great weight with them. A third is characterised by the social, ideal and emotional. Feeling is paramount, and ancient traditions have no effect on such organizations. A fourth has great veneration, marvellousness, ideality and firmness, a good deal of energy, and not much personal accountability. A fifth has a good deal of intellectuality, benevolence, little veneration, and small respect for forms and ceremonies. These typical classes might be extended, and each marked with a sectarian brand. This sort of evolution from among the masses and this law of selection are constantly going on in the religious world. This grouping is seen also among the sectaries of heathendom.

The unanimity of classes is largely brought about by extraneous influences. The majority of differences can often be traced to natural bias. This is continually cropping up in all mental action. Example, education and surroundings may over-ride, to some extent, the peculiarities of mind as far as external assent is concerned. Beneath this apparent *consensus* of belief, there are varieties of faith as distinctive as are the expressions and features of the human face. No two tools of steel have the same temper; no two instruments of music have the same tone; no two creatures have the same kind of vocal notes. So it is mentally and physically impossible, as men are constituted, for two rational persons to think alike. No example and no system of education, secular

or sacred, can obliterate these radical distinctions, which, for wise purposes, are implanted in our natures. Even hereditary tendencies are no exception to this rule. The reason of this is plain to any observer. Thought is affected by the body as music is affected in tone and melody by the kind of instrument which produces it. The player or composer has no control over its quality and scope of execution. Practice and skill may elicit the best notes of which it is capable, but there his power ends. A penny whistle and an organ may produce the same notes in unison, but there is no comparison in volume, scope and intensity. The colour of the prism will affect the sun's rays which pass through it. So does the body affect thought. The relation of body and mind is the battle ground of to-day. The attempts of the free-thinkers are towards bringing under one general law of development our physical, emotional, intellectual, and moral natures. The Evolution theory, promulgated by Darwin, Hæckel and that school of thought, is often held up to ridicule by those who have no other argument to offer. With superficial thinkers, irony, sarcasm, invective and cynicism take the place of refutation. Whether their arguments, based on observation, be true or not, these weapons alone are as harmless as Chinese gongs. Their research must be met by like assiduity. It will be conceded that the gap between the lowest specimens of humanity and the highest forms of the next lower creation is not very wide—in fact very close—physiologically or mentally. The distance widens very much if the average man be taken as a standard. Even were the doctrine of Evolution true, man, with his exalted powers of mind, might well be called a new creation. His greater capacity of reasoning—his keener susceptibilities—his grasp of abstract ideas—and his moral nature, all, are so transcendently above any other creature found on this terrestrial ball,

that let him be created *de novo*, or evolved in the past ages from lower organisms, still he is the crowning work in the animate creation of earth, and points more conclusively than aught, in sea or earth or sky, to his Divine origin. The lower forms of animal life, plus these additional capabilities and powers, virtually make man a new being, into whose nostrils was breathed the breath of life. While this is true, it is equally beyond contradiction, that if we compare our nature with that of the *quadrumana*, it will startle us to find how much we have in common. This school of thinkers do not deny a creator, but only join issue in respect to the number of creations beyond the primordial germs of life. In the same way there is really nothing alarming in materialism rightly understood and defined, yet, people go into hysterics over a caricature of this dogma of scientists. These explorers know of nothing but matter in its various forms, and hence infer that it is all that exists in the wide universe. We go to the other extreme, and deny a material existence, to much which may be found to come under that class of substances.

No doubt that subtle fluid called electricity is a form of matter. As far as we know, there is nothing in nature apparently more unsubstantial, unless we except the ubiquitous ether which pervades space. Suppose that entity called spirit, soul, mind, *psyche* or any other name, could be demonstrated to be matter, but infinitesimally more refined than any known material substance. Endow this sublimated indestructible and circumscribed matter with all the qualities, faculties, and active powers attributed to that substance called mind, and there is not an objectionable feature in the thought outside of fanciful sentiments and educational bias. In that sense this substance could have in it that which is involved in the Lucretian idea of being endowed with 'the promise and potency of life.' It would even then be a living and immortal personality. This need not wed us to the Agnostic doctrine of Shelley, which defiantly says :

' There is no God ;
Infinity within, infinity without, belie crea-
tion !
The inexterminal spirit it contains
Is Nature's only God.'

