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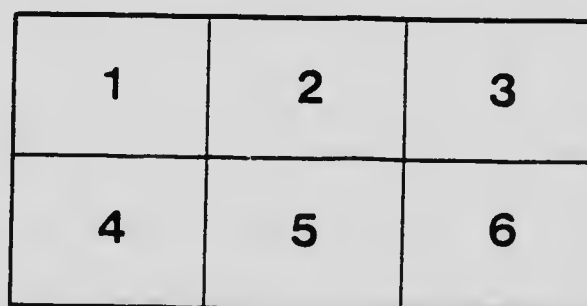
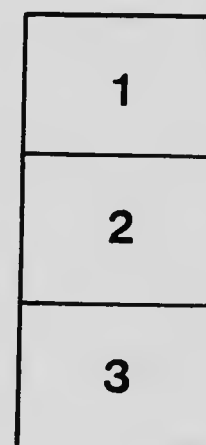
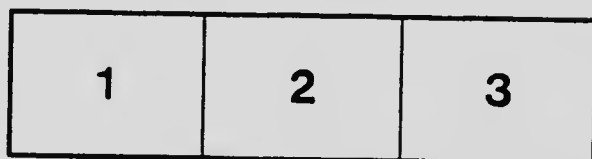
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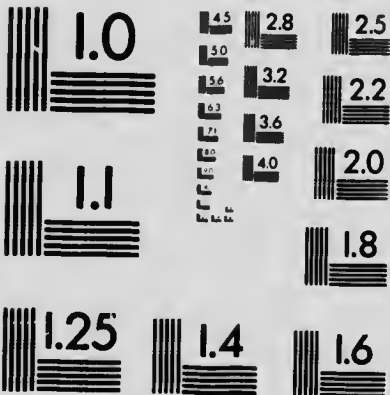
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# MODERN RELIGIOUS PROBLEMS

BY  
PROFESSOR OBMUZZ

*The aim of this little book is to lay before the public a concise result of modern historical criticism on the teachings of the founder of Christianity. The dogmas of the churches are crumbling beneath the advance of modern scientific methods of inquiry. "Back to Jesus" has been the cry of late. His teachings and life are to be our guide. The facts are presented in a new way, so that the readers can draw their own conclusions.*



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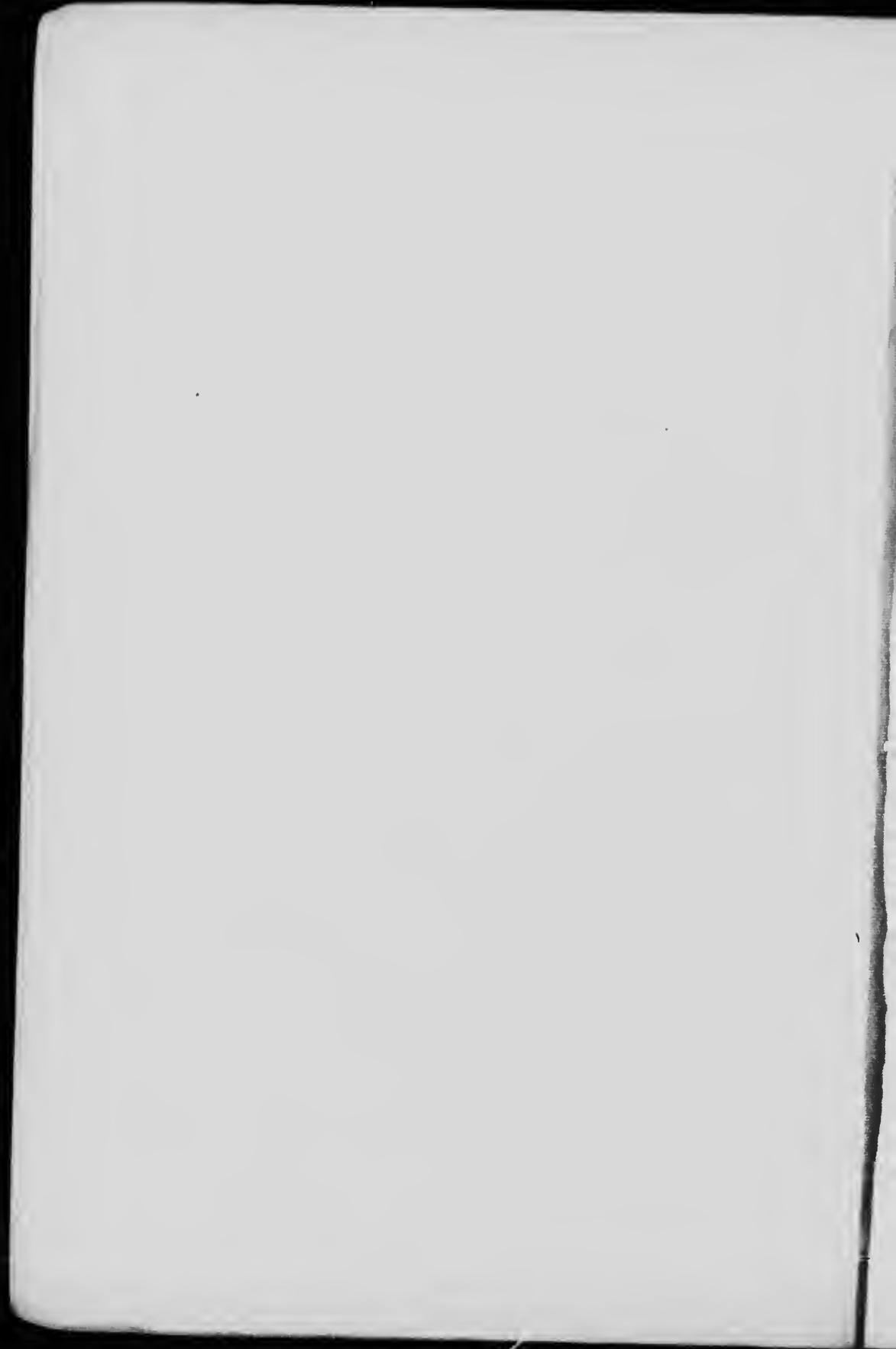
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## FOREWORD.

This little book asks to introduce itself to you and demands your careful attention for what it has to say. It is going to prove to you that religions, creeds, traditions and Bibles are crumbling beneath the weight of intellectual criticism; that the founders of Religions are themselves now called before the bar of intellectual and scientific knowledge, and asked to explain why it is that many of their sayings and teachings are directly opposed to the progressive spirit of this age.

In past times the founders of religions were worshipped as Gods, and were protected their teachings from criticism. The rise of knowledge has dissipated this superstitious idea. They must all now appear and answer for their sayings before the bar of scientific criticism.

I am aware that the success of my opinions depends not upon the force of my arguments, nor upon my ability to present them to the public, but upon a predisposition of society to receive them. Reasonings which in one age would make no impression whatever, will be received in the next with applause. And this standard of opinions is created

by the intellectual type of the age. It is a social tendency springing from education and the development of the intellect. Philosophy and religions have set the current of previous ages ; but unless science will put its hall-mark upon every opinion in the present day it will not take root. In other words we must get at the facts before we give out any opinions.

The religious ideas of this age will perish by indifference not by controversy. The Rationalistic spirit has stamped its impress upon the character of this age, but its influence will be felt more fully in the next. This spirit has diminished the influence of fear as a motive of religious thought, and has developed the sense of truth and justice.

There is to day a wide spread belief among Christians that Jesus was meek and lowly of spirit ; that he was kind and gentle. A careful study of his life and teachings shows that he was always scattering broadcast anathemas and curses against all those who would not think as he thought; consideration for the opinions of others he had none, the rich and learned he sent without any pang of remorse to the fiery furnace, whose door was always open to receive those who dared to differ from him. Had his ideas even to a limited extent been carried out all freedom of opinion would have been destroyed, liberty would have been stifled in the cradle, and priests carrying out his instructions would

have made of this world a veritable shambles.

The Roman Catholic Church during the worst period of her history, when she butchered and burned and destroyed all who dared to differ from her, or to think for themselves, when she trampled under foot every religious, political and social liberty, did not even then carry out to the full the cruel, narrow and intolerant instructions of Jesus ; if she had there would have been no one left to tell the tale of woe. To the sayings of Jesus must be traced the cruelties of the inquisition, the narrow bigotry of the Calvinist, and the oceans of innocent blood shed from the Arian controversy of the fourth century to the massacre of St. Bartholomew in the sixteenth.

Many of his sayings while they have the appearance of charity and humility are mere empty platitudes, and are inoperative in any conditions of society which has existed or is likely to exist while men inhabit this globe. These sayings are not original with him, they belong to every religion and have been the dream of every religious enthusiast who has been too ignorant to study nature and her ways.

His teachings, by centering men's minds upon religious subjects and neglecting the study of philosophy and every branch of science, have had the direct result of putting the world

back 1800 years. After wasting these long years on useless religious discussions we had to come back again and take up the work where it was cut off by the advent of Christianity. The revival of learning and the spirit of Rationalism, two things antagonistic to the teachings of Jesus, were the first gleam of hope to men after the dark ages.

No period of this world's history has such a bloody record, as the period during which his teachings were most fully believed in and carried out. Not carried out to the letter, for if they had been, no one would have been left to tell the tale!

From him Christianity has drawn her spirit of intolerance and persecution. In a direct line from him came to us Torquemada, and Philip the Second and John Calvin.

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16-16.)

"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matthew 15-24.)

"No man cometh unto the Father but by me." (John 14-6.)

These twelve Jesus sent forth and commanded, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (Matthew (10-5.)

What a little narrow band of selfish men would be saved if Jesus is telling us the truth. Just himself and his friends.

Read this little book carefully through and learn something about Jesus and his religious teaching.

---

A SHORT HISTORY  
OF THE  
SAYINGS OF JESUS.

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DIFFCULTY OF THE TASK

To get an intelligent view of Jesus and his teachings is a most difficult task, as they are set in the framework of a miraculous narrative. His sayings are scattered through the writings of four historians, and it is impossible now to gather from these sayings any consecutive method of teaching reasoned out and put together as a body of religious ideas. So irrelevant and contradictory and unintelligent are these sayings as they have come down to us, that over three hundred religious sects have been founded upon them.

His biographers have made the work more difficult for us, as they colored much of what he said and did with their own ideas. They accepted as genuine many incidents and narratives which were only traditions and exaggerations.

At a later date when theological disputes began to widen and grow deeper, the fathers of the second and third centuries again filled in many episodal matters, as it suited their theological views. Religious forgeries were always accepted by the fathers of the Church as a pious act. The church enrolled these men among her saints; but their acts in tampering with the old documents caused unnecessary theological discussions and much suffering. The early Councils put their seal of sanctity upon this undigested mass of exaggerations and traditions and contradictions and forgeries and called it the inspired word of God. Such are the foundations upon which the stupendous structure called Christianity rests.

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#### PROOFS.

“Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.” (Matt. 5-5.) This statement is not true, and never was true. In this strenuous age the meek man has a very poor chance of inheriting anything. “And if any man will sue thee at the law and take thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.” (Matt. 5.40.) This statement like that of the meek man will not fit into any condition which has existed or is likely to exist upon this earth. The Greek Religion taught us to admire bravery in men and beauty in women; the race must aspire to



the highest. The sayings of Jesus are suited only to a nation of slaves, and they brought forth millions of idle sensual and useless monks. "But I say unto you that you resist not evil; but whosoever smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the left also." Jesus did not himself practice this precept, for we find him going into the temple. "And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple." (John 2-15.) His bitter sayings against the Scribes and Pharisees shows anything but a meek temper; his whole life contradicts these injunctions which he laid down as the proper rule of life for others to follow.

Everytime the Bible has been revised a large part of it was discarded. At the Reformation of the sixteenth century, the Protestant revisers threw out eight books from the old Bible which was the authorized and inspired Bible of the Church for one thousand years. Luther retained several books in his Bible which John Calvin and his followers threw out. When the book was again revised in 1881 by a body of scholars from the ablest divines in Europe and America, much irrelevant matter was cut away. The only verse in the Bible upon which the doctrine of the Trinity rests, was admitted to have been a forgery, and was rejected from the revised version. "For there are three that bear record

in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." (Epistle of John ch. 5-7.) The beautiful story where the angel comes down once every year and stirs up the waters in the pool of Saloam, and after the angel, whoever went in first was cured, is also rejected as being untrue.

Many other incidents were put into brackets as being without any foundation of facts, but as they were beautiful stories they were left in, but students could reject them if they wished. The story of the virgin birth was in the balance, but the majority decided to retain it. For to reject this story would upset the divinity of Jesus.

The first two chapters of Matthew and the first chapter of Luke, which tell about the virgin birth are forgeries inserted into these documents during the pontificate of Eleutherus A.D. 170.

Jesus according to Matthew was born during the reign of Herod the Great. And the stories of the wise men who came from the East, and the murder of the innocent children, and the beautiful Star of Bethlehem, and the journey of Joseph and Mary into Egypt belong to his reign. He was the chief actor in these incidents for they all centre around him. They are all parts of the Virgin Birth Story. This

whole story was copied into the Gospel according to Matthew from a book called the "Infancy of Jesus," which is among the apocrophal books of the Church of Rome, and had a wide circulation during the early years of Christianity. These stories are to be found in no other place, and they are identical nearly word for word with the stories in Matthew. The Church Councils rejected this book as uncanonical and untrue, but it was said to be good reading for pious souls seeking salvation.

Luke denies the whole series of these stories, for he tells us that Jesus was not born till ten years after the death of Herod the king. If Luke is telling the truth, (Luke 2-2.) Then Herod could not have talked to the wise men from the East, nor murdered the innocent children, nor could the beautiful Star of Bethlehem have materialized, nor Joseph and Mary have taken the donkey trip to Egypt. For he had been dead ten years before these events happened. Josephus, the Jewish historian, who was contemporary with these events, and who wrote a life of Herod and told us about every wicked act which he did or attempted to do, does not mention this massacre of the innocent children, and if it ever occurred he would have known about it, as he lived in Galilee and Jerusalem. He was unfriendly to Herod and would not therefore conceal this wicked act. Mark does not mention any of these stories, and yet he must have heard

about the virgin birth and the wise men from the East, and the trip to Egypt, had they been true. His mother's house in Jerusalem was the rendez-vous for the disciple after the tragedy of the crucifixion. Mark when a young man met the disciples there and heard all the stories about Jesus told and retold many times. But not one word does he tell us about these strange events, which if they were true he must have known. Luke who, as he tells us, got his information from those who were eye-witnesses of the events does not mention any of these strange things; but on the contrary gives them a flat denial. We must conclude therefore that in the days of Mark and Luke they were unknown. Luke had the Gospel according to Matthew before him when he wrote his history. Why did he reject the first and second chapters? Because they were not then part of this work.

Matthew and Luke are trying to prove that Jesus was the Messiah, and therefore descended in the direct line from David to his father Joseph. If Joseph was not his father we fail to see anything gained by this geneological tree. These historians are only making fools of themselves; for in one statement they are trying to prove that Jesus is the Messiah that was to come from the line of David, and in the next statement they say that Joseph was not his father. If not; the tree falls to the

ground. If he is the Messiah the virgin birth story is untrue as his mother Mary belonged to the tribe of Levy. If the virgin birth story is true then he is not the Messiah who was to come from the line of David. Theologians can take whatever horn of this dilemma they wish.

These documents have been so tampered with and filled in with irrelevant matter that it is impossible for us to day to know what is true and what is false. The first chapter of Mark and the first chapter of John, which tell about the baptism of Jesus and the calling of his disciples are such contradictions that theologians have been at their wits end to know how to reconcile them; but no reconciliation is possible; for if one is true then the other must be false. They stand a stumbling block to the wise and a monument to the foolish. Upon such a mass of contradictions and forged traditions Christianity rests, as upon a bed of sand. The uprising tide of historical criticism is sweeping this bed into the ocean of uncertainty. The end of the greatest religious monopoly which the world has ever seen is at hand. When will people learn that priestcraft is a curse, that Christianity is but a gilded frame, and that all the church's claims are false? To disabuse the public mind of this great error is no easy and no thankful task—yet it must be done, and we must do our part.

## JESUS THE JEW.

To get a correct idea of Jesus and his teachings we must know where he stood in the world's history, what were the social and political conditions of the age in which he lived; what race did he spring from, for everyone carries with him the hereditary traits of his race. At the time of his birth Judea was a subject province of Rome. The Romans looked upon the Jews as a strange unnatural race distinct from all other human beings. They were always hard to govern and were continually making trouble. Judaism was antagonistic to civilization as it was understood by the Greeks and the Romans. From the Greek and Roman views of life come philosophy, science, art and good government, everything which makes for progress and happiness, everything which we now call modern civilization. This was a progressive view of life, always willing to let go the old and adopt the new.

The Jew at the time of Jesus stood where his forefathers had stood five hundred years before. He was unprogressive, and set his back against every kind of change. He believed that God had chosen him as a special race and had given to him alone a true religion and a correct view of life. His ideas of civilization and religion were petrified. To him science was a sin and knowledge a crime. Rabid intolerance is no passing phase of the Jewish mind. It

was remarked by Juvenal, the Roman satirist, as the most important feature of his character. This intolerance was due to two ideas; his belief in an infallible inspiration, written for him in a book, and the connection of Church and State. Both these views Jesus inherited and firmly held. They were the keystone of his new kingdom of heaven. Upon these two false principles Christianity is founded. The persecuting religions of the world are those who most firmly held to these two ideas. The Christian religion stands first as the greatest shedder of innocent blood, for she has shed more than all other religions put together. The Mahomedan Religion comes second. Both are State Religions and believe in Infallible Bibles. A State Religion is the rule of priests under the cruel and hypocritical garb of religion. The clergy are continually crying out: the Church! the Church is in danger! with the same narrow-minded intolerance as the Ephesian silver smith, who cried, Diana! The worship of Diana is in danger.

When we ask is toleration a Christian virtue? That is, is it a virtue which has been specially practised by Christians? History answers the question for us with so emphatic a denial, that we may well spare ourselves the pains of farther enquiry.

The idea of an infallible authority completely cuts the ground from under true freedom

of thought ; it renders the free exercise of the understanding a mark for moral censure. Science is the direct antithesis to infallibility ; it is continually letting go the past and stretching out to the future. Every belief and every religion should have as their foundations, facts verified and acquired by scientific methods. Unreliable stories, and virgin births, and old fables, and worn-out traditions, and forged documents must be discarded from any system of religion which intelligent men can receive. The truth may be said to resemble one who is climbing a mountain side ; as he ascends new vistas appear before him ; as he rises higher and higher, wider and still wider are the landscapes beneath him. Around him is the trackless expanse of the unknown and above the unaccessable heaven of the unknowable.

Truth does not rest upon the authority of any book or inspired prophets or chosen people, it is a growth and widens as knowledge widens. He can not be in the wrong whose life is in the right, is the direct opposite to the sayings of Jesus, " He who believes and is baptized shall be saved, he who believeth not shall be damned." A simple act of unintelligent faith saves a man ; be he a thief on the cross or the worst criminal that ever lived, blind faith gets him to heaven. And following this wicked injunction of Jesus, the Inquisition never lighted the fires of persecution for the defaulter, the



fornicator, the lascivious person, or any other doer of evil works ; but they were reserved for the man of pure life who could not give intellectual assent to the teachings of Jesus. Persecution came from the infallible Bible which his church said was a record of his sayings and doings. If he is a god, he is personally answerable for the millions of innocent lives which were sacrificed by his church, carrying out his commands. If he is only a man, we place him with Peter the Hermit and other religious enthusiasts, whom thousands of the human race would have prayed, that they had never been born. For he brought into this world more misery and sorrow than any other man who ever lived or died.

Whether there be one God or two or three or a dozen is a matter of mere speculative interest. But to live so that your life is always in the right is a matter of interest to everyone with whom you come in contact.

If the teachings of Jesus are true, religious persecution would become a pious and charitable duty. If God designed to punish men for their opinions, it would be an act of charity to place the Church of Rome once again in supreme power ; to use fire and the sword upon the bodies of heretics, so as to save their souls from the eternal fire and brimstone of Jesus. He was not able to display the spirit of a per-

secutor in his deeds, but he displayed it in his words

Believing that it was in his power to condemn his fellow creatures to eternal tortures, he did condemn by anticipation all the rich and all the learned men among the Jews. He believed that God reigned in heaven and that the Devil ruled on the earth. All the prosperous men were the favorites of the Devil and the poor unfortunates were favorites of God. The rich and the learned would go with their master to eternal pain, and the poor and ignoble would go with their master God to eternal joy.

In his parable of Dives and Lazarus, he did not say that Dives was bad nor that Lazarus was good, but that Dives had received his good things on this earth, and therefore was not entitled to anything in the next. Lazarus had received evil things on earth and was therefore entitled to a seat next the throne in heaven. Dives might have been as virtuous as the Pope who is also clad in fine linen and who like Dives fares sumptuously every day, but he had got all that was coming to him. The Devil must have been helping him or he would not have become rich, so to Hell with his master he goes. Lazarus might have been as wicked as Jack the Ripper of London fame, depleted in mind and body and full of sores, but

he was poor. God and Jesus were both his friends, to heaven he is carried by the angels.

“Woe unto you that are rich,” said he, “for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are full, for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you, for so did their fathers of the false prophets.” Here Jesus dooms to Hell fire all the happy people and the good and the rich, just because they enjoyed this earth and the fullness thereof.

The thirteenth chapter of Matthew is made up of parables about the kingdom of heaven. The parable of the sower, who went out to sow. Some seeds fell by the wayside and some on stony places. And in verse 24 he again likens the kingdom of heaven to a sower, which sowed good seed in his field and while he slept an enemy came along and sowed tares among the wheat. And in verse 47 he likens the kingdom of heaven to a man who cast a net into the sea, the good fishes were gathered into vessels and the bad ones thrown away. The same idea underlies these three parables, viz.: Heaven was to be a place where a few of the chosen were to enjoy eternal felicity, but the great majority of men were to be sent to the fiery furnace. To use his own words: “So shall it be at the end of the world; the angels shall come forth and

sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Jesus was always at his best when he was consigning millions of his fellow-creatures to hell, not a pang of remorse does he ever express that so many poor souls are to be lost. It serves them right; they did not listen to me, is always on his lips.

The hundreds of millions who had never heard about his little kingdom and himself, he takes no account of. As long as himself and his disciples will be provided for he is satisfied. Of all the narrow selfish religious creeds that were ever invented, his is the most selfish and tyrannical. During the worst period of the persecutions of the Roman Catholic Church; when Terquemada reared the burning stake in Spain and sent thousands of innocent victims to the fiery furnace, when Charles V in a few years burned fifty thousand in the Netherlands alone, or when his son Philip II. consigned four million of souls to be destroyed, because they would not obey him and the Pope. All these persecutions would have been but like a summer shower to a winter blast compared to the suffering millions whom Jesus remorsefully sent to his fiery furnace. These parables alone must rank him not with Terquemada, nor with Philip, nor with the Duke of Alva, but in a class by himself, as the most

cruel and remorseless of all who ever lived or died.

The parable in Matthew 20th where he likens the kingdom of heaven to a man who hired servants to work in his vineyard, is not in keeping with our present ideas of justice. He hired men to work for twelve hours and he gave them a penny, he hired others to work for six hours and he gave them a penny, he hired others to work for one hour and he gave them also a penny. When the men who worked for twelve hours complained of getting only the same pay as those who worked for one hour, he answered them as a slave master would answer menials, "Take what is thine and go thy way; I will give unto this last man as unto thee." Yet this arbitrary selfish and unjust answer is in keeping with every part of the life and teachings of Jesus; a domineering Jewish tyrant. It is a fortunate thing for mankind that this kingdom of Jesus did not materialise. Based upon arbitrary intolerance and injustice the race under his rule would by this time have become extinct. A bargain is a bargain, we all admit this; but there must be behind every bargain a basis that will endure. Anything built upon injustice must soon die out. This parable is the most unjust business transaction on record.

He pronounced eternal punishment against all who refused to join him and worship him.

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. He that believeth not shall be damned. People must discard all domestic ties, cultivate self-abasement and do nothing which could possibly raise them in the esteem of other people. For they could not be rewarded in the kingdom of heaven and on earth both. Or to use his phrase: They could not serve God and mammon, they could not get rewarded in both kingdoms. Did anyone ever hear or read of such nonsense as this. And yet we are told that a God is speaking to us. If a man gave a dinner he was not to ask his rich friends, lest he should be asked back to dinner, and in this way have his reward, but he must ask the poor, and therefore God would reward him in heaven. The idea of doing right just because it was right, did not occur to the Jewish mind of Jesus. To do ones duty without reward was above the moral ethics of this Jew. Every man is to get a reward, if the Devil did not give it here, God would give it in heaven. Of course we must remember that it is a Jew who is speaking to us. If a man fasted, he must pretend to feast, otherwise he would be looked upon as a devout man and lose his reward. Men were to love their enemies, to return good for evil; Why? Not because it was good to do so, but that they might be paid with compound interest in a future state. It is no wonder that such teachings became the foster-mother of the

worst and most tyrannical religion that this world has ever known.

Jesus believed that disease proceeded from sin, he therefore told those whom he healed to sin no more lest a worse thing should befall them. In the East a text from the Koran dissolved in water and drank cures many diseases. The patient believes it; and the mind somehow does the curing. Mrs. Eddy might have got a point or two had she studied the Koran.

When at Jerusalem Jesus completely failed to do any works. In this city were many great men, doctors of law and learned scribes. He lost his temper, and called the learned doctor's a generation of vipers, whited sepulchres and serpents; he declared that they should all be sent to hell and damnation. He was always ready to send everyone who did not think as he thought to hell.

Swedenburgh had a vision of hell, and he tells us about it. The first person he saw as he entered the gate was John Calvin, he who so remorselessly sent poor little infants there, because they were not baptised in the name of Jesus. Swedenburgh did not see any infants there, but he saw John suffering the torments, which he so ruthlessly demanded that others should suffer. John Calvin who consigned the greater part of the human race to hell was there suffering in that unholy place.

Paul tells us that for twenty years Jesus was

an earth-bound spirit, that he was continually appearing to him in visions and dreams, and that by suggestion he helped him to write the worst system of theology that this world has ever known. The good people whom Jesus did not send to hell Paul sent and those whom Paul left, John Calvin sent. If these three religious enthusiasts could have had their way, heaven would be a place where the grass would be growing in the main business streets, and choice corner lots would be given away. Take the Devil and hell out of Christianity and there is nothing left. If there was no Devil and no hell there would be no need for Jesus to atone for our sins. He once cursed a fig tree because he found no fruit on it. He was disappointed and vented his anger on the tree. This act is about on a par with that of Xerxes who flogged the sea to show his authority.

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### EVADING QUESTIONS.

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He always evaded any direct questions which was asked of him. His answer to Nicodemus is both evasive and dishonest. Jesus was discoursing about the kingdom of heaven, and Nicodemus not understanding much of what was said about this epicene kingdom, which was sometimes described as being on this earth, and sometimes as being in the spirit-world, and sometimes as having a little of the qual-



ities of both worlds, asked him how a man could be born again so as to enter this new kingdom. This answer of Jesus to an honest man, asking an honest question is the worst in history. "If I tell you of earthly things and ye do not believe, then how will ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things." Jesus had no correct idea himself about this kingdom. His ideas about heaven and hell and this earth were all wrong. This kingdom of heaven was an imaginary kingdom which never materialized. We would class it to-day among the Arabian Night Tales or the Elusian Mysteries. He could not tell Nicodemus anything about it, as he did not know much about it himself, so he evaded the question. The sky-pilots of the present day, whose opinions about things on this earth are of very little value, tell us a great many things about heaven and hell; and men who know most about things on this earth, know very little about things in the other world. I fail to see any common sense in this answer of Jesus to Nicodemus.

When Pilate asked him, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" For he was brought before Pilate on the charge of putting himself up as a king, which was a very serious charge to be tried before a Roman magistrate. He answered, "Sayest thou this of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?" Pilot brushing aside this evasive answer, said, "Art thou a king then?"

Still Jesus evaded the question and replied "Thou sayest that I am a king." Pilot realising that he was only a poor religious enthusiast, wished to let him free. Somehow it was impossible for Jesus to give a straight answer to a fair question.

When we confront the clergy to-day with facts and prove to the hilt that the Bible is an unreliable mass of fiction and mythology, that is the part of it upon which the Christian Religion is founded. They invariably follow the bad example of their master, and evade direct questions. What is against their preconceived theories they turn into allegories and symbols.

Clergymen are taught at their theological colleges how to evade the truth, and how to answer objections against their dogmas, knowing these objections to be true. When a clergyman has mastered his theological course, his mind is unable to judge of facts, and to follow the conclusions to which the facts lead. He has been trained to brush aside facts and to support imaginary theories. His whole life is spent in endeavoring to support theological dogmas which are crumbling down, and which threaten to bury him beneath them. In middle life he becomes Jesuitical, cunning and deceitful. Robert Burns put these ideas in the following beautiful lines:

Some books are lies frae end to end,  
And some great lies were never penn'd,  
Ev'n ministers, they hae been kenn'd in holy rapture,  
Great lies and nonsense baith to vend and nail 't wi' Scripture.

## JESUS ON MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE.

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When a woman caught in the act of adultery was brought before Jesus, for him to pronounce judgment against her; he told those of the Scribes who were without sin to cast the first stone. He did not command that the man, who must be equally guilty with the woman, should be punished, nor did he say: bring this man before me, for he is more guilty than the woman, and I will cast the first stone against him. Jesus' ideas about marriage were the ideas of the Jews of his day. "But I say unto you, that everyone that putteth away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress." (Matt. 32.) There is no penalty put upon the man for divorcing his wife. He may divorce her without cause, she may be innocent, but she cannot marry again. Of course the man may marry as often as he likes, Jesus puts no penalty upon him. And he makes an excuse for the bad law which Moses made against woman. "Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffereth you to put away your wives." Just think what this statement means. The Jews were a wicked and a sensual Race, and therefore God made a wicked and sensual law of marriage to suit them. With all due respect to Jesus we must differ from him in our estimate of God's moral character. But Jesus did not reverse this law, but made it

more binding against the woman. By the law of Moses woman was part of the property of the man. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbours." The wife is classed in with the rest of his chattels. This law is made to protect the man's property and a woman is part of his property.

Why is it wrong for a divorced man or woman to re-marry? Is it a crime against any law of nature? What difference can it make whether a woman is a widow or whether she is divorced? Nature never asks this question; and if you have not violated nature's law, you have not violated God's law. Nature looks to the propagation of the race alone and she pays no attention to divorce courts, nor societies' attempts to make men and women respectable. She smiles at the different laws of marriage, which every nation has made to suit its own selfish purposes, and their frantic efforts to keep up their little rules of respectability. Martial virtue is largely a matter of latitude and longitude. One wife in Europe and America, twenty in Asia and Africa. God smiled at the harem of Solomon and never blamed him for having one thousand wives and concubines. The same God, who is said never to change his opinions, frowns on us poor moderns for even marrying a divorced woman. Is it not true that our notions of marriage propriety are nothing but the reflections of our religious beliefs.

Let us examine the grounds on which the present Christian theory of marriage is based. One of the ten commandments is supposed to have been written to safeguard it, but as I have already shown, this commandment only safeguards the chattels of the man, and she is one of the chattels, along with the ox and the ass. God, in whom, according to St. Paul, "there is no variableness neither shadow of turning," has sanctioned polygamy; for all his dear friends Jacob and David and Solomon went the limit in this holy ordinance of marriage. And Jesus did not rebuke the man who caused the woman to commit adultery. How could he; when his Father permitted it to his favorites. And his Father never changes his opinions. The God of the Bible for thousands of years approved of marriage relations totally unlike those said to have the sanction of our Christian God—and remember—God does not change his views on anything. What would be the use of worshipping a God who was always changing his opinions.

Jesus was a celibate so was Paul, and this throws some light on their views towards marriage. Paul tells us that marriage is allowable but better do without it, you have a better chance of going to heaven if you do not marry. How good of Paul to tell us that this act upon which depends the whole existence of the Race, is a detriment to our entrance to heaven. And

so the Church herded together thousands both sexes who looked upon marriage as sin and in this way did what they could to destroy the whole human race. For violating natural laws, they would be rewarded in heaven. The marriage laws of the present day are absolutely irreconcilable with every law of nature. Civil laws were made by ignorant and prejudiced priests, and narrow-minded celibates. Marriage rests upon law, and law is the expression of the will of the majority. The Christians make one law and the Mahomedans make another. Nature does not care whether a man has one wife or one hundred, nor whether a man marries a divorced woman or a widow. God never made any laws about marriage, but left this social arrangement for people to settle among themselves.

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### GOD, JEHOVAH THE FATHER.

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The question is often asked of independent thinkers, Do you believe in God? I always answer this question by asking: what do you mean by the word God. There have been so many Gods in past times, and there are so many different ideas about God in the present day that the word would require to be defined before any one can give an intelligent answer to it. But we may say that we do not believe

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in the Jehovah of the Jews ; we do not believe that any God commanded the indiscriminate slaughter of innocent women and children, nor the destruction of whole races of men, nor giving over to the lust of a cruel and licentious soldiery, young maidens taken in war ; nor that a God could be partial to any special race of men ; nor that a God would advise a people to rob their neighbours. Yet this is the picture which the old Bible draws about this Jehovah who was the God of the Jews. And this is the God whom the Christian Church asks you and me to worship. And they tell us that this God never changes his mind, that he is the same, yesterday, to-day and to-morrow. I will now answer the question, and say positively I do not believe in this cruel and vindictive Jehovah of the Jews.

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But Jesus brings before us in the guise of a loving Father, this same God who in his wrath commanded the Jews to utterly destroy the Caananites, men, women and children and who also delivered over to their enemies the Jews themselves because they would not worship him and him alone. The same God who has never been known to change his ways is brought before us again as a loving Father. But on account of his past record we are rather shy in accepting him. "We fear the Greeks even when bearing gifts," is an old saying. Jesus tells us that he is a loving

Father; he governs the angels in heaven with mercy and justice. This is his special domain. This earth we know is badly governed; but Jesus tells us that the Devil has full charge here and this is the reason why it is badly governed. The old prophets told us a different story about God, they said that he was his own Devil, and did his own cruel work. "Now go and smite Amalek and utterly destroy all," was the direct command to King Saul. "And Joshua did unto them, as the Lord bade him he smote all the souls that were therein with the edge of the sword." (Josh. 11-9.)

He is a loving Father now Jesus tells us. We are glad to know it, but we have our doubts. "Behold the fowls of the air, your heavenly Father feedeth them are ye not much better than they." (Matt. 6-26.) "Take no thought therefore, saying, what shall we eat or what shall we drink, or where withall shall we be clothed, for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." (Matt. 6-30.)

This is a good Father indeed, the poor will welcome him to their homes. They need coal and provisions; times are hard and prices are high and wages low. This kind Father of Jesus knoweth that they have need of all these things. All they want is faith that Jesus is telling the truth about this Father in heaven.

What sublime nonsense is this talk when brought into touch with the actual facts of life



as we know them. We know about a world where sorrow and misery exists and have always existed; a world where hundreds of thousands die every year in India of starvation, a world where hundreds of thousands eke out an existence worse than death, in the slums of every large city, a world where a volcano breaks out without warning, and destroys thousands of poor people in an hour or where hell breaks loose and destroys the whole inhabitants of an island, as in Martinique, when thirty thousand perished in a day. Shipwrecks and railroad accidents and coal mines send their thousands every year to an unprepared grave. How different are the facts from the ignorant platitudes which Jesus tells about. We now know that there is no Father who interferes with the laws of this universe, or helps the poor or cures the sick. We learn from history and from science about an Infinite Intelligence who governs by law; but the loving Father of Jesus we fail to find any trace of him on this earth. So we must decline to believe in him as we declined to believe in the heartless Jehovah of the Jews.

But do I believe in a God? It makes no difference to my readers what I believe; what you really are asking me is to tell you what I know about a God. We must approach this subject from the negative side as we can make no positive affirmative. I have never known about

any law of nature which asks me to worship God, or that I should believe in a God. Law requires not worship but obedience. I have never known anything in nature to prove that there is a God of love, governing this world. "Nature is bloody in tooth and claw" is the statement of Darwin and Huxley. They carefully examined her laws and this is their final and positive verdict. Wolves and foxes live on the rabbits, their stomachs are made to digest flesh only. The rabbit is given swiftness of foot to escape his enemies; but the fox is given cunning to circumvent the rabbit. The poor rabbit breeds by the million, he is the food for others. What a devilish plan all this is, the rabbit could justly say. The big fishes eat the small ones, and so the bloody game goes on. All this history gives a flat denial to the platitudes of Jesus, that God looks after the sparrows. The sparrow like the rabbit must look after himself.

"Laws are the modes of operation of an unseen, but ever present, ever active, and for want of a better word we must call an Intelligent Spirit," but a Spirit which as far as we can tell by our own experience and that of our fellows operates invariably by law.

This is a living world upon whose bosom we feed; it is not a dead world as you have been taught. It has a life and a spirit and it is this which renders man a possibility upon

this planet. This world is a living world, so by the law of vitality the warm waters of the early oceans were caused to swarm with minute living beings. By the law of variation governed by innate tendency,—that is a tendency to climb upwards and onwards to man—they commenced as soon as they began to propagate, to deviate from the ancestral form towards higher organic forms; and by the law of heredity, the deviations were transmitted, and new and more advanced forms of life came into existence. Life abounds wherever the conditions are favorable for its development. There lay in the foetal womb of the globe the power to produce man, but the improvements of millions of years were necessary to mould man into his present form.

But some one of my readers may ask, Do you believe that these blind laws could ever make the seeing eye and the hearing ear? Let me say: These laws are not blind. They are the modes of operation of the all-seeing and all-knowing Spirit without whose direction man could never have been produced. As a child derives from its father and mother a spirit which presides over its organization from the time when it is all but an invisible dot till it is born; so the Universal Spirit, never for an instant absent from the world has operated by means of these laws during millions of years, and through myriads of forms, till at length it

was able to say: "I have made man"

This Universal Spirit which rules the world exacts obedience to her laws, she is merciful to the individual who happens to be in the way, but she is all merciful to the race. She builds up perfect forms of life in her own way. She has had long experience in the work of building and knows what is best. Man is only the last link of a chain that extends through the ages; we do not see all the links, but we see a sufficient number to assure us that they are there, and the chain has never been broken. It is this God who is the ever present, ever operating Spirit of the Universe, who makes man and every form of life upon this globe.

Walt Whitman says truly:—

Afar down I see the huge first nothing,  
I know I was even there;  
I waited unseen and always, and slept through the lethargic  
mist,

And took my time, and took no hurt from the fetid carbon.

"Long I was hugged close; long and long  
Immense have been the preparations for me  
Faithful and friendly the arms that helped me;  
Cycles ferried my cradle, rowing and rowing like cheerful  
boatmen

For room for me stars kept aside in their own rings,  
They sent influences to look after what was to hold me  
Before I was born out of my mother generations gulded me

"Look down on the hell this earth once was  
Yet here in this fiery hell, is the spirit that  
shall develop the world into an earthly paradise,  
and produce man, and make him her  
worthy lord."

A bishop of the Church of England said the other day that the Christian Religion was the only religion which gave an intelligent and correct idea of God. I told him that the statement was wholly untrue; for the Christian religion of the present day gave us no correct idea about God. Whatever ideas of any value that we to-day hold regarding God are taken wholly from the knowledge which science has given to us about this immense universe in which we live. We do not to-day hold one idea about God that was held by the early Christian Church. We may think we do, till we come to test the meaning of our words, by actual experience and knowledge; then the empty phrases pass away like the mist before the morning sun.

Our present ideas of God are completely antagonistic to every idea held by Moses and the prophets, they are also opposed to every idea held by Jesus or Paul.

Moses painted for us a God of war; vindictive and heartless, who commanded the Jews to rob and steal and slay with the sword all their enemies. Every man and woman and child was to be ruthlessly butchered and the maidens turned over to the Jews to satisfy their brutal lusts upon, "to every man a maiden or two." One law was to be made for the Jew and another for the foreigner. He was a partial God and had his favorites. Jesus made an apology for

this bad God and said that he made bad laws because the Jews were a bad people; and he did the best he could under the condition. What a strange idea Jesus must have had about our Christian God who does everything right (?) and as ministers tell us is all powerful.

The later prophets widened his sphere of usefulness, for we find him pouring out the vials of his wrath upon the Babylonians and Assyrians and Egyptians; large promises are made to the Jews; but these promises have never been kept. He is still the same hard-hearted vindictive personality. Now and then we get a glimpse of righteousness but it is very faint and only conditional. A few simple-minded men have spoken well of him in prose and verse. But even the Devil has many good points about him: "This goes without saying."

The Bishop has to admit that the God of the old Bible is not a God whom good men can love; but he says the God of Jesus is the God to whom every knee should bow. Let us see; we will get at the facts and then judge afterwards.

Jesus' ideas centre about a personality whom he calls The Father: All you had to do was to ask this Father for anything in his name and you would get it. If you wanted to remove a mountain, this was a simple thing, presto! and away it goes. About a God who rules millions of worlds by Law, Jesus had not the faintest

idea. A Father who meddled with everything, and would do all kinds of impossible things, just for the asking. Hell was always in demand, and its gates open to receive the millions of poor wretches who would not doff the hat to The Father and his viceregent here. All the rich and the learned were consigned to this fiery furnace. We see the spirit of the vindictive Jew and the cruel God of Moses in this Father. "The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hand is the hand of Esau."

Now my dear Bishop where did Christianity get her present ideas of God from?

She stole every one of them from science, and appropriated them to her own use. The Infinite Intelligence which rules by Law is irreconcilably opposed to every idea in the Old and the New Testaments. It is an idea which has come to us from a deep study of scientific knowlege. The Christian Church opposed this idea till it was impossible for her to oppose it any longer. This idea cuts athwart every conception of Jesus about The Father, and every conception of Moses and the prophets. Whatever is true and lasting in our present ideas about God comes to us from the study of Science.

One of the greatest of modern Scientists tells us that: "We can regard as perfectly certain that the known historical period is a *mere* nothing in point of time, compared with the

periods during which our Race has actually inhabited the earth, this historical period is comparatively only a creation of yesterday. Our Race has been upon the earth for hundreds of thousands of years." If this statement is true, as it surely is, How does Jesus' plan of salvation work out? "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned." And what happens his belief that Adam and Eve were the first of the Race? His whole conceptions of God and salvation and religion were merely those of an ignorant narrow-minded Jew of the 1st century. Sooner or later this truth will dawn upon the world.

Let there be many windows to your soul,  
That all the glory of the Universe  
May beautify it. Not the narrow pane  
Of one poor creed can catch the radiant rays  
That shine from countless sources. Tear away  
The blinds of superstition; let the light  
Pour through fair windows broad as Truth itself.  
And high as God. Why should the spirit peer  
Through some man-curtained orifice, and grope  
Along dim corridors of doubt, when all  
The splendors from unfathomed seas of Space  
Might bathe it with the golden waves of Love?  
Sweep up the debris of decaying faiths;  
Sweep down the cobwebs of worn-out beliefs,  
And throw your soul wide open to the light  
Of Nature and of Knowledge. Tune your ear  
To all the worldless music of the stars  
And to the voice of Wisdom, and your heart  
Shall turn to truth and goodness as the plant  
Turns to the Sun. A thousand unseen hands  
Reach down to help you to the peace-crowned heights,  
And all the forces of the Firmament  
Shall fortify your strength. Be not afraid  
To cast aside half truths, and grasp the whole.

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.



## THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

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Without a correct knowledge of this Kingdom of Heaven it will be impossible to understand many of the sayings of Jesus. His cousin John preached about the immediate coming of this kingdom. The Messiah long promised to the Jews was about to arrive. John told all men to repent for a great crisis was at hand. Jesus got the idea of this kingdom and the coming Messiah from John. He enlarged upon them, and after a time began to think that he was the long promised Messiah. He did not hold this view at first, as we learn from the answer he gave to the disciples of John who were sent to get a categorical reply from him. This direct question he evaded, but told the messengers to judge for themselves, and to go back and tell John the things which they had seen and heard. He cast out devils and healed the sick. This was a proof that he had supernatural powers. He mistook this power of physical and mental healing, which he possessed, for the greater powers which the Messiah was supposed to exercise and control. As these healing gifts began to develop, he imagined that he was destined to perform some wonderful work.

Time has not vindicated his ideas about this imaginary kingdom of Heaven which was to be established upon this earth, she has on the

contrary declared them to be hopelessly bankrupt, visionary and irrelevant. They were the views of a Religious Enthusiast, ignorant of every law of nature and history. But without understanding something about this kingdom, we can have no correct idea either of Jesus or his sayings. This was the one central point about which his whole life revolved, and many of his sayings and parables bear directly upon this kingdom.

According to Jesus heaven was a place where God and the angels alone dwelt. No man had ever gone there, except perhaps Enoch and Elias. God ruled over the angels there as a good father rules over his children. It was above the firmament, or blue dome of the sky. The principles of Justice and Mercy and Truth were fully carried out in this perfect government of the Good Father in Heaven. This earth according to the belief of Jesus was ruled over by the Devil and his angels, everything here was mismanaged, dreadful crimes were continually being perpetrated upon good men, they were poor and they were persecuted. The rich men were the friends of the Devil and he helped them to get rich and get into power. This control of the earth by the Devil and his angels is soon to come to an end, and Jesus is the one sent by God to do this work. He is the Messiah the vice-regent of God upon this earth; his work is to establish a government

here among men similar to the perfect government which God exercises in heaven. How this transformation was to take place he did not know, but when he went up to Jerusalem for the last time he expected that he was then to be given the control over this new kingdom. He entered Jerusalem as a sovereign; the rabble shouting his coming greatness and the disciples calling out with a loud voice, "Blessed be the king that cometh in the name of the Lord (Luke 19-38); he entered the temple and assumed the authority of a king; for he drove out of the court-yard all those who transacted any business there. He had no right to interfere with the management of the temple; but he assumed this authority expecting every day that God would come down in the clouds and appoint him to his new self-created position, as his vice-regent upon this earth; when he would immediately begin a crusade against the rich and the learned, and the Devil, and send all who would not agree with him and worship himself, to hell. Of all the reformations that have ever been carried out upon the earth, and they have been many and cruel, this would have been the most drastic, and would have caused the most suffering and sorrows. Jesus would have swept millions remorselessly into hell, without any pang of regret. How beautiful is the sublime thought of Robert Burns when speaking about the Devil:—

But fare you well, auld Nickie-ben  
O wad ye tak a thought to men!  
Ye aublins might—I dinna ken still hae a stake  
I'm wae to think upon yon den e'en for your sake.

But the cruel heart of this vindictive Jew had no sympathy for anyone, only those who doffed the hat to him.

In this Kingdom of Heaven upon the earth the Jews were to have the first seats, that is those of them whom he would judge worthy of the position. The rich and the learned he would at once send with the Gentiles and the Devil to hell. Men of the type of Lazarus and all the poor and useless vagabonds would get the first seats, on the condition of acknowledging his majesty—and every menial would be sure to do this. The good Gentiles were to be given the crumbs which were left after the Jews had satisfied themselves. This kingdom of his was a Jewish kingdom and was ruled over by the Jewish God Jehovah, the same God who years before had helped to slaughter the Amalakites and gave to each Jew a maiden or two as his share of the spoils of war. The men and boys were all slaughtered in cold-blood by special command of this Jewish God. This is the same God Jehovah, who never changes, as the Bible tells us, who was to be the President of this new Jewish Kingdom whose vice-regent Jesus was to be. I have never read anywhere in the sayings of Jesus where he apologized for the wicked cruelties of

his Jewish father Jehovah, so I take it for granted that he fully approved of all his past acts. In the old Bible God is his own Devil, and does all his own cruel work. The old Jewish rulers and prophets never heard about a Devil. Slaughtering innocent women and children and giving over maidens to a ruthless soldiery was good work in their eyes as long as it was not their own women and maidens who suffered. The difference between good and evil, was simply this; if their throats were cut it was evil, if their enemies suffered it was good. Jesus gave his sanction to this wicked God and Devil combined of the Jews, called Jehovah.

In the time of Jesus the partnership had been dissolved and a real live Devil existed, with a tail and hoofs on, so at least Jesus believed; and the Devil ruled over this earth, and ruled it badly. Jesus never rose above the religious superstitions of his time and his people.

I always spell the Devil's name with a capital D, as I think he is worthy of this distinction. "We may not pay him reverence, for that would be indiscreet, but we can at least respect his talents. A person who has for untold centuries maintained the imposing position of spiritual head of four-fifths of the human race and political head of the whole of it, must be granted the possession of executive abilities of the loftiest order. In his large pre-

sence the other popes and politicians shrink into midgets for the microscope. I would rather see him and shake him by the tail than any other member of the European Concert." These are the words of Mark Twain, but how wide and charitable and just are the ideas of this great humorist and how narrow and ignorant are the ideas of Jesus. How can intelligent men in the present day believe that Jesus was a God when he held such foolish ideas about the Devil, and when he believed that diseases were caused by sin, and that the world was coming to an end in his time, and that he was the Messiah who had come to establish again the Rule of the Jews. He believed in all the mythological stories in the old Bible as being real historical events. He believed that hell was a hole under the ground, just as the old prophets did, and he believed that heaven was just above the blue dome of the sky. His whole ideas about political economy were wrong. His opinions about everything were most crude and ignorant, vain, selfish and egotistical. How can any intelligent man call him either a wise or a good man, is something which I cannot understand.

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### PARABLES.

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It is very difficult to gather from his parables any idea as to what he meant, about this kingdom. But one idea runs through all the parables. This kingdom was to be a despotism

of the most archaic type. Your hat was to be in your hand ready at all times to doff to Jesus and The Father. You were not allowed to think for yourself, for independence of thought always means difference of opinion, and to differ in opinion from him meant that you were immediately consigned to a fiery furnace. There was not even a purgatory according to his views where men could be sent for probation and instruction.

One hears in the present day, that the church does not carry out the beautiful teachings of their master. The Church of Rome in its worst days, never fully carried out the cruel vindictive commands of Jesus.

Many of his sayings, when quoted alone, have the appearance of being kind and good, but they are thoroughly inoperative and are merely the ideals of a sentimental theorist.

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you. That ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other also." There is no practical sense in this statement. In this world we must face conditions just as they are. We do not make the conditions. The British Admiralty do not obey this injunction of Jesus, for they are building two dreadnaughts to the one of Germany. Again, "And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of

the field how they grow, they toil not neither do they spin. Therefore take no thought, saying, When shall we eat? or when shall ye drink? or where withal shall ye be clothed (for after all these things do the Gentiles.) For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."

Do the churches in the present day believe these sayings? If they do, why do they not obey them? And why are they so grasping for money? The Church of England is a State Church and the Church of Scotland is a State Church. They put their hands deep into the public treasury and take all they can get. The small Frees in Scotland grabbed the whole property of their neighbours, and it took a special Act of Parliament to get it out of their greedy hands. But this has been the history of the Church from all time. They put the ideal platitudes of their master to one side, they were inoperative and they knew it. But his intolerant spirit they understood and carried out. Every sect into which the Christian Church is divided is intolerant, and selfish and dishonest, and they would fly at each others throats to-morrow were it not that the law keeps them in check. Their master was intolerant and cruel, what can you expect from his disciples.

That this imaginary Kingdom of Heaven was to be upon this earth we gather from Matt.



ch. 13 v. 24-25-26. The parable of the sower, who went out to sow seed. He intended to carry out his arbitrary rule here and to send everyone who dared to oppose him to the fiery furnace. The Gentiles were to be swept into this great furnace by the million. He would look on with cold indifference to the sufferings of everyone.

This dream about himself and his kingdom would have passed away forever, only for the appearance of Paul upon the scene. He used this kingdom as a superstructure to build a new religion upon. Paul takes no interest in virgin births nor in miracles, nor does he ever quote the idealistic sayings of Jesus; but he takes up this kingdom and casts it over to suit his own peculiar ideas. According to Paul Jesus was the first man who ever rose from the dead and went into heaven, all others are still in the underground, in hades, but when Jesus reappears again upon this earth, surrounded by the angels, then all those who had died will come up from the underworld and receive again their old bodies, only these bodies will be changed into glorified or spiritual bodies. Those living on the earth shall be instantly changed; their physical bodies will become spiritual bodies, and Jesus will reign upon this earth over the good people; but the bad will be sent to hell, to enjoy that fiery furnace, which Jesus so often speaks about. And all this was

to come about in his own time. "What fools we mortals be."

Neither the theories of Jesus nor those of Paul ever materialized. They are antagonistic to the whole teachings of science. They are opposed to every system of philosophy. They are contradicted by every fact in history. This world in which we live is only in its infancy. Man has just began his course of progressive development. He is yet largely a savage, with many of the traits of his savage ancestry to be worn away. As he passes out to the world of spirits he leaves his body behind him, never to be taken up again. He is not to be swept into hell remorsefully, but he is to progress, and to work his way upwards and onward.

### HIS SAYINGS.

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Many of his sayings when fitted into this view of the kingdom have a meaning. "Think not of to-morrow; what is the use, for this world is coming to an end soon. If a man wants your coat give him your cloak also; you won't require either soon, and you will be able to tell your Father how generous you were, and get a little higher up. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Certainly; in this new kingdom of Jesus, the meek man and the poor and the lazy, and the mentally and physically unfit will all be there. Not

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one of these will ever open his mouth to express any new ideas, or have any independence of opinions. Menials and slaves will bow to the great I am, Jesus.

The Sermon on the Mount, which has been accepted by the Church as the basis upon which Christianity rests, has a meaning when fitted into this imaginary Kingdom of Heaven upon this earth. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth," what is the use, the earth is coming to an end soon, but give away everything you have, forgive everybody who has wronged you, and come and follow me. Perhaps to-morrow morning, The Father will be here to welcome us to his new kingdom. I will be the general manager, and I will look after you.

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There is not one thought in this sermon that is of any practical value, to any intelligent man striving to obtain a correct view of life, which will be of use to him in fighting the battles here, not one thought that will help to make him stronger or that will give him self-reliance and courage. "Give us this day our daily bread" is the voice of a sycophant crying in the wilderness of poverty. I will hustle and get my own bread is the voice of a strong man in our days, who is vigorous and courageous and resourceful. This so-called Lord's Prayer is addressed to weaklings and sycophants, and that large crowd of tramps who invest every

society. "Lead me not into temptation." Why should any man expect that God will lead him into temptation. This certainly is a strange view to take of God. Why not rather say to God, I have by my intelligence and labor gathered from thy garden bountifully, you should be glad that I have done so well, and obeyed your laws. I am the one of your sons who has come out on the top, are you not proud of me? And God will say, certainly I am proud of you, just as you are proud of your sons when they do well. The menials and sycophants, and lazy crowd which Jesus gathered around him I despise, I will send them all back, and remelt them in the fiery furnace which he always painted with an open door, for successful men like you.

He answered the woman of Canaan who besought him to heal her daughter, "I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." And when she persisted in her prayer; he said: "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to the dogs." He was the Messiah sent to the Jews; his kingdom of heaven was for the Jews, they were the specially chosen people of God. The Gentiles were the dogs who were to eat the crumbs cast to them by the chosen people. How he could reconcile his ideas of justice, with a God who was partial to any race or nation, is strange to us; but Jesus' ideas of justice were the narrow intolerant ideas of the Jews of his time. The Old

Bible taught him that the Jews were set apart by God as a chosen people, and he believed all that was written there. It is a fortunate thing for the human race to-day that neither Jesus, nor the God of the Jews, whom he calls his Father in heaven, nor any of this selfish race, had much to do with the government of this world. A higher and a nobler race has taken over things material and moral on this earth, and Jesus' parable that the Gentiles will eat the crumbs thrown from the table of the Jew is as false to history as every other parable and supposed wise saying that he spoke. How child-like and visionary were the theories of life which Jesus believed in. The world was coming to an end in his time and God was coming in the clouds to hand over to him the management of every thing on this earth. He with his narrow selfish Jewish ideas was to judge everyone on this earth, and the fiery furnace of hell was yawning to receive the hundreds of millions whom he without one pang of sorrow would cast in there. And this is the God-Jesus whom the Gentiles of this day are taught to worship and bow the knee to. But this old world has no intention of giving herself over to Gods or angels to manage; she is still making her nineteen miles a second round the sun and she cares very little about the opinions of religious enthusiasts. Sometimes an Alexander

or a Cæsar like a Colossus, strider over her and vainly think that they are masters of her destiny, but

“ His steps are not upon thy paths, thy fields  
Are not a sport for him, thou dost arise  
And shake him from thee, the vile strength he wields.”

How grand and sublime are the thoughts of the great English poet, compared to the narrow views of Jesus.

“ Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings and not one of them is forgotten before God.” Darwin tells us that of twelve robins born only three survive and grow to maturity, the weakest fall a prey to the cold and the wet grass, others succumb to cats and hawks, and snares. The strongest survive. They are the best fitted to fight the battle of life, and to produce a strong race of robins. Nature is bloody in tooth and claw is the statement of the great Scientist.

Science tells us that if by God is meant a mighty mechanic who manipulates dust or mud, moulding it into a man as a sculptor his clay model; or a great Ruler who is constantly interfering with his own laws; there is not a single fact in the history of the planet or of man that indicates the existence of such a being. Yet this is the Father in Heaven whom Jesus is constantly telling us about. When Jesus appealed to his Father in the end to save him from the acts of his own folly, he was disappointed, and cried in vain when on the cross, “ My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken

me." Jesus was not the only man who appealed to the Father in vain. Philip II. had the Pope ask a special blessing on his Armada, but in vain. The Russians had their priests bless crosses and ikons which were carried before them to battle, but in vain. History is a long record of religious enthusiasts, who prayed to the Father in vain. One lesson history may be said to teach us. There is no God in the universe who answers prayers, or is moved from his purposes by mercy or love. Jesus never understood anything about a God who worked intelligently by law. He has bequeathed to us a heritage of religious folly, which has antagonised every effort, which science has made during the last 200 years, to elevate the human race. His teachings have reared up an ecclesiastical system of stagnation which has set its back against every freedom of opinion, every intellectual and material progress.

We are living in a universe which pays scant regard to our existence. Nature sends a blast from hell and some thirty thousand of us perish in a moment, or an earthquake comes along and some two hundred thousand are sent to the other world without time to repent. The universe is here with us in it and we have to take our chances as to what may happen to us. It is not here for our special good as we vainly suppose. A stray comet might crash into our

planet at any moment, and then the earth and man and everything on it would be blotted out. But the heavens would still declare the glory of God as much without us, as when we were there. Instead of the teachings of Jesus, there will come to all a confidence in the universal, beneficent and intelligent operation of law.

The belief in irremediable woe for any portion of humanity will vanish; and its place will come to all the assurance of conscious, continued existence in a superior condition of being.

The belief of Jesus in a mechanical and day-laboring God, interfering with every little act of you and me must die with increasing intelligence; and it is worse than useless to attempt to save it.

When we bring these facts before the world, we are told, these were old times when men were in darkness, but the Church is different now. Is she? Let us see; we will quote a paragraph from the Montreal "Gazette" of Jan. 15, 1914. "The decision of the Inverness Library Committee to grant for a restricted period the opening of the reading room on Sunday is meeting with strong opposition from the churches. Professor McLeod of the Free North Church has warned the Committee that its action might lead to a policy of passive resistance by exemplary citizens with regard



to the payment of the library rates." Will the Church ever come into touch with modern progressive ideas? Never! Her founder was a narrow minded intolerant Jew. His successor, Paul was narrower still; and she has drunk deep from their intolerant ideas.

I append a synopsis of the religious views of Mark Twain, and I leave my readers to judge which are the more correct views of life those of Jesus or those of the American humorist.

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### MARK TWAIN'S RELIGION.

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"I believe in God the Almighty.

I do not believe he has sent a message to man by anybody or delivered one to him by word of mouth or made Himself visible to any one at any time or place.

I believe that the Old and New Testaments were imagined and written by man, and that no line in them was authorized, much less inspired, by God.

I do not believe in special providence. If one man's family is swept away by a pestilence and another man's is spared, it is only the immutable law of the universe at work. God does not interfere in such small matters, either in favor of one man or against another.

If I break the moral laws I cannot see

wherein I injure God. He is beyond reach of injury by me. I could as easily injure a planet by throwing mud at it. The moral laws are man's laws, not God's.

I would not interfere with any man's religion. If it comforts him it must be taken as a valuable possession to him. But I am not able to believe that a man's religion makes him anything but what nature made him, no matter what the religion may be."—*From Payne's Biography by Mark Twain.*

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## HIS TEACHINGS.

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The doctrine of exclusive salvation as taught by Jesus, is at the very foundation of the persecutions of every religious sect. The cruelties of the Church of Rome; the narrow-minded intolerance of the Church of England, and the bigotry of the Kirk of Scotland are all drawn from the doctrine of exclusive salvation through him alone.

This, which is the most fearful of all the evils which men have inflicted upon their fellows, is the direct result of the teachings of the founder of Christianity. If men believe with an intense faith that their view of a disputed question is the true one beyond all possibility of mistake, and if their view is not adopted by

everyone, the Almighty will visit upon the heretics eternal misery in hell fire, then sooner or later all good men will begin to persecute.

This has been the history of Christianity from its very commencement and until the governments of every country in Europe, took this power out of her hands she exercises it to the fullest extent. That the Church of Rome and the Church of England have at all times persecuted those whom they call heretics, no one will dare to deny. But that the Presbyterians should have persecuted does seem strange. But Lecky in history of the 17th century, p. 87 says: "In the Scotch Kirk a bare, hard and narrow dogma was the very essence of religion and was enforced with an intensity that has never been surpassed. Of all the Reformers, none breathed a spirit of such savage fanaticism as John Knox; and there is no branch of the Protestant clergy who long and steadfastly denounced every form of religious toleration as his successors. It is wholly untrue that they were intolerant only in self-defence.

The last and one of the very worst instances in British history of the infliction of death for the expression of religious opinions, was the execution in 1697 of Thomas Aikenhead, a young man of only 18."

The Scotch Kirk and her sister the Free Church are the most slavish of the believers in

the teachings of Jesus. They have drank deep from his intolerant spirit and from his narrow teachings of salvation through him alone.

To his charge must be laid the whole of the wicked persecutions against the poor witches in the middle ages, and during modern times, for he believed in and taught the power of devils to act upon men and women, and in his power to expel such devilish inhabitants from the bodies of men and women. His ignorant beliefs about insanity and demonology caused the mad crusade against those poor deluded people whom we now call witches.

Seven thousand victims are said to have been burned at Treves alone, six hundred by a single bishop of Bomberg, and eight hundred in a single year in the bishopric of Wurtzburg. In Toulouse, the seat of the inquisition, four hundred perished for sorcery at a single execution.

Many millions of innocent victims lost their lives in this way from 1450 to 1650. All this wicked crusade must be traced directly to the ignorant and superstitious views which Jesus held and taught in regard to demonology. This wicked crusade against the poor deluded people, mostly women, is the blackest spot in the history of mankind, and Jesus stands sponsor for this wicked crime.

## THE CHURCH, HER HISTORY AND WORK.

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The Christian Church is an institution whose professed object is the propagation of Christianity, which is a system of religion; but religion and morality are not synonymous terms. A religion is a system of faith and worship; morality pertains to the conduct of men as social beings in relation to each other. Religion is supposed to relate to the welfare of men in a future life and in another world; morality relates to the welfare of men now and here. What are called the cardinal virtues of Christianity are utterly demoralizing in their nature.

Take the doctrine of total depravity. To believe this doctrine you must feel that you are a living example of its truthfulness, you must be depraved. Take a little child, tell it that it is a poor depraved wretch; instill this into its mind from day to day, and what is the result? This child must become a low immoral being, must in fact become a Christian. If men believed in this wicked doctrine taught them by priests, they would to-day be lower than wolves.

Then comes the doctrine of the atonement. The idea that the wrath of a merciful God can only be appeased by the sacrifice of his in-

nocent Son. Let us place before our readers an analogy of this crime. Here is a father with a family of children, all of them are debased villians save one, a bright and noble boy. The father has become so enraged at the conduct of his vicious children, that the only way he can be reconciled to them is by having them murder this innocent child. This murder atones for all their crimes. Washed in the blood of their murdered brother they become pure and holy. Such a doctrine is shocking to every sense of justice, is antagonistic to every principle of morality.

Next take the doctrine of the forgiveness of sin. What effect has this upon public morals? Teaching that the penalties of violated law can be evaded. This is license for crime. Suppose that the Governor-General of Canada should issue a proclamation that all the criminals in the jails should get their freedom, just by saying that they were sorry for their crimes, and believed that his Under-Secretary had paid for all the crimes they had committed; yet this is what Christianity teaches us, that we can evade the penalties of violated law, by believing that another can suffer for us. The Moral Governor of the Universe is supposed to punish the innocent for the guilty. Suppose a judge who has condemned a man to be hanged for a crime, would accept an innocent man to be hanged in his stead, the whole nation would

rise in rebellion at such an outrage on justice. Yet this is what God is supposed to have done.

But the worst doctrine of all, is the doctrine of future rewards and punishments. The Church teaches us that after death there are just two conditions or localities, a heaven and a hell. This heaven is a reward; a reward for what? Good conduct? No! A reward for believing doctrines which no rational human being can believe. This hell is a punishment for what? For crimes committed? No! For a failure to believe what only idiots and ecclesiastics can believe. What does the founder say? He that doeth good works shall be saved; not one bit. "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." What does Paul say? "A man is not justified by the works of the law but by the faith of Jesus Christ," (Gal. ii: 16.) What does Luther say? "Every doer of the law, and every moral worker is accursed, for he walketh in the presumption of his own righteousness." (Table Talk.) According to the teachings of Christianity, a man may live a pure and noble life, and yet if he does not believe in her senseless dogmas, he is damned. A man may lead a life of vice and crime, and yet, if he believes, he is saved.

Let us now trace the results which flowed from these teachings. We will consult her historians. Writing to one of his churches,

Paul says: "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles." (I Cor. v. : 1.)

Two centuries later, Mosheim speaking of the early Church, says: "Many were sunk in luxury and voluptuousness, puffed up with vanity, arrogance, and ambition, and addicted to every other vices (Eccl. Hist. p. 23.) We will follow her a little further. Christianity has now become the State religion, paganism has nearly disappeared. Salvian, a Christian preacher of the fifth century, says: "The very Church of God, which ought in all things to please God; what does it, but provoke him to anger. With the exception of a very few who flee from vice, what is almost every Christian congregation, but a sink of vice?"

Let us see what the great English historian, Hallam says about the eighth century. "France reached her lowest point at the beginning of the eighth century, but England was at this time more respectable, and did not fall into complete degradation until the middle of the ninth. There could be nothing more deplorable than the state of Italy during the succeeding century." (Mid. Ages p. 460.)

This period is the noon of Christianity, and the noon of Christianity is the midnight of morality. "Thus the slimy serpent of superstition drags its sluggish length down through



the centuries, leaving nothing but pollution in its trail.”

The Reformation has come. The Church of England is established, what does she do for the morals of her people. Let Lord Macaulay speak to us: “It is an unquestionable and a most instructive fact, that the years during which the political power of the Anglican hierarchy (the Church of England) was in the zenith were precisely the years during which national virtue was at the lowest point. (Hist. Eng. vol. 1, p. 141.) And again the same writer says: The Church of England continued to be for more than 150 years the servile handmaid of monarchy, the steady enemy of public liberty.

The divine right of kings and the duty of passively obeying all their commands were her favorite tenets. Once, and but once, for a moment and but for a moment, when her own dignity and property were touched, she forgot to practice the submission she had taught.”

And Lecky says: About this ecclesiastical monopoly. “Created by court intrigue and aspiring to spiritual authority scarcely less absolute than the church from which she sprung, Anglicanism was always the most servile and efficient agent of tyranny. No other church so uniformly betrayed and trampled upon the liberties of her country. In all the fiery trials through which English liberty has passed since

the Reformation, she invariably casts her influence into the scale of tyranny, supported and eulogised every attempt to violate the constitution and wrote the fearful sentence of eternal condemnation upon the tombs of the martyrs of freedom."

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### CRIMINAL STATISTICS.

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One of the most wicked acts perpetrated at the present day is the squandering of millions of money every year to try and convert the heathen. One hundred millions each year are wasted uselessly, when money is so much needed to build homes for our own poor. The following list of Criminal Statistics would be a sufficient argument against spending any more money in this way.

ENGLAND.—In 1873 Sir John Trelawney, a member of Parliament, moved that an examination of all the prisons in England and Wales be made with a view of ascertaining the religious beliefs of those confined in them. Here is the result:—

|                            |   |   |   |         |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|---------|
| Roman Catholics,           | - | - | - | 38,581  |
| Church of England,         | - | - | - | 96,097  |
| Protestant Dissenters,     | - | - | - | 10,705  |
| Total Christian Adherents, | - | - | - | 145,383 |
| Non-religionists,          | - | - | - | 379     |

Five hundred Christians to one infidel.

FRANCE.—DeBow's revue of the census states the religious belief of French criminals to be as follows:—

|                  |   |   |   |        |
|------------------|---|---|---|--------|
| Roman Catholics, | - | - | - | 18,939 |
| Protestants,     | - | - | - | 598    |
| Jews,            | - | - | - | 130    |
| Mahomedans,      | - | - | - | 53     |
| Atheists,        | - | - | - | 0      |

Not one Atheist in the prisons of France. Yet a single Atheistical Society of France numbers 20,000 (twenty thousand.)

CANADA.—Confined in the prisons of Ontario in 1880:—

|                   |   |   |   |       |
|-------------------|---|---|---|-------|
| Roman Catholics,  | - | - | - | 918   |
| Episcopalians,    | - | - | - | 765   |
| Presbyterians,    | - | - | - | 152   |
| Methodists,       | - | - | - | 64    |
| Baptists,         | - | - | - | 3     |
| Total Christians, | - | - | - | 1,902 |
| Free Thinkers,    | - | - | - | 8     |

NEW YORK CITY.—Dr. Sanger's history of Prostitution contains the following information respecting the religious beliefs of the prostitutes of New York City:—

|                 |   |   |   |     |
|-----------------|---|---|---|-----|
| Protestant,     | - | - | - | 967 |
| Catholic,       | - | - | - | 970 |
| Non-professors, | - | - | - | 63  |

Such are the fruits of priest-craft! Why bring this terrible religion to the Chinese and Hindus, when its fruits born among us have been so bad.

Christians claim that it is churches and religion that prevent crime; we claim that it is schools and intelligence, that will free the world from vice. As church influence declines, and as progressive education increases, the number of criminals are steadily decreasing. In England crime has decreased 25 per cent. during the last forty years, and during this period church influence has declined, education has increased and the free-thought movement has taken a firm hold of intelligent thinkers. Since the adoption of compulsory education in Prussia crime has been reduced 51 per cent. Five years of compulsory education in New York City has been attended by a decrease of 36 per cent. in the number of juvenile offenders. Schools produce intelligence, and intelligence promotes virtue, churches foster ignorance, and ignorance is the parent of vice.

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### THE CHURCH AND CIVILIZATION.

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With a triumphant air the church points to the civilization of our times and claims it as her product. But let me remind Christians that not until Rationalism was born, not until science commenced her career did our modern civilization dawn.

Lecky, the greatest authority of modern times, says: "For more than three centuries the decadence of theological influence has

been one of the most invariable signs and measures of our progress." Carlyle says: "Just in the ratio that knowledge increases, faith diminishes."

Every writer of history tells us that during the middle ages, when the Christian Religion was at the zenith of her power, then crime, debauchery and every form of wickedness were at their height. At no period of the world's history had morals sunk so low. Rome during its decline, never sank to the level that Europe did during the middle ages, when priests and monks filled the land. And yet this great Teutonic Race, whom Christianity dragged to such a low level, has been brought up to its present high state of development, by the march of science under the banner of freethought. Under the white banner of science march the intellectual hosts of England, France, and Germany; around the cross still throng the ignorant hordes of Russia, Italy and Spain.

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### THE CHURCH AND SCIENCE.

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The Church claims to be the friend and patron of science, and yet there has scarcely been a scientific truth that she has not tried to crush. Every distinguished scientist has been branded by her as an infidel. Bruno Copernicus and Galileo, because they wished to enrich the world with knowledge, suffered in the dungeons

gloom, and at the stake. Kepler gave to the world the fundamental laws of astronomical knowledge, and because they failed to harmonize with the crude notions of Jewish barbarism, his Protestant friends drove him from the University he had so long and so highly honored. Upon the devoted heads of Bacon and Newton, Descartes and Laplace, Leibnitz and Humboldt, all the grand heroes of science, have the shafts of Christian malice and ridicule been hurled.

When a new scientific theory is advanced, the Church opposes it, because it conflicts with the teachings of the bible. When that theory becomes an established fact, the Church then accepts it, and affirms that it is in perfect harmony with the Bible, and in the end coolly informs the world that it is indebted to her for the discovery.

Protestants blame the Catholic Church for persecuting Galileo, but this is only the pot calling the kettle black. Let us hear what Martin Luther has to say about this great scientist, for they were contemporary. Luther says: "People gave ear to an upstart astrologer, who strove to show that the earth revolves, not the heavens or the firmament. The fool wishes to reverse the entire science of Astronomy. But sacred Scripture tells us that Joshua commanded the sun to stand still, and not the earth," and every ignorant Protestant in Chris-

tendom shouted "You've got him Martin."

When Darwin published his "Theory of Evolution," every pulpit, and every priest was arrayed against him; we hear the idiotic sneers of "Darwin" and "Monkey." But Evolution has triumphed. The Church has again been vanquished, and now we learn from the lips of priests that Christianity and evolution are in accord. In a few years we will be told that Darwin and Spencer, Huxley and Wallace were Christians, and we will be surprised to know that their works are monuments of Christian civilization.

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### THE CHURCH AND EDUCATION.

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The Church plunged Europe into mental darkness and kept it there for one thousand years. During that time ignorance was a virtue and the pursuit of knowledge a crime. "In almost every Council" says Halam, "the ignorance of the clergy forms a subject for reproach. It is asserted by one held in 992 that scarcely a single person was to be found in Rome itself who knew the first elements of letters. Not one priest in a thousand in Spain about the time of Charlemagne could address a common letter of salutation to another." When printing was invented, the Church denounced it the black art. When Caxton introduced the art into England, the bishop of London before,

a convocation of his clergy said: "If we do not destroy this dangerous invention it will one day destroy us." A prophecy which is destined to be fulfilled. The Church is in favor of education only as long as she is permitted to manage it. Catholics and Protestants are alike the enemies of secular education.

The Church claims to be the guardian of civil and religious liberty. Yet human liberty has never had a deadlier foe. The fact is that wherever you find a fragment of the Christian Church, I care not what name it bears — Catholic or Protestant, — Lutheran or Episcopal, Presbyterian or Methodist, you find an enemy of liberty. Every apostle of liberty or science or freedom of thought has been murdered or maligned by this slimy monster of superstition. The Church does not kill now because it does not have the power to kill. The fagot and the sword have been wrested from her bloody hands, and hatred and slander are the only weapons left to her now.

That many Christians are zealous workers in the cause of temperance I am glad to acknowledge, but they should remember that they are simply following in the wake of an Infidel movement. That Infidels and not the Church inaugurated temperance reform.

John Stuart Mill, one of the greatest of modern thinkers has truly said: "The greatest burden ever put upon the shoulders of mankind has been the attempt to drag Christianity up to our modern moral and intellectual ideas."



## BIBLE CONTRADICTIONS.

*No man has seen God.*

No man hath seen God at any time. (John i. 18.)

*God does not repent.*

God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent. (Num. xxiii. 19.)

*God no respecter of persons.*

There is no respect of persons with God. (Rom. ii. 11.)

*God just.*

A God of truth and without iniquity. Just and right is he. (Deut. xxxii. 4.)

*The Lord pitiful.*

The Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy. James (v. 11.)

*Fury not in God.*

Fury is not in me. (Is. xxvii. 4.)

*God is love.*

God is love. (1 John iv. 8.)

*Moses saw God.*

And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face. (Ex. xxxiii. 11.)

*God does repent.*

And God repented of the evil that He hath said that He would do. (Jonah iii. 10.)

*God respects persons.*

Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. (Rom. ix. 13.)

*God unjust.*

It was of the Lord to harden their hearts that . . . he might destroy them utterly. (Jos. xi. 20.)

*The Lord pitiless.*

The Lord shall have no mercy on their fatherless and widows. (Is. ix. 17.)

*God furious.*

I will cause my fury to rest upon them. (Ezekil v. 13.)

*God is hate.*

I will make mine arrows drunk with blood. (Deut. xxxii. 42.)

*God will not destroy.*

Neither will I again smite  
anymore everything liv-  
ing. (Gen. viii. 21.)

*Children not punished for  
fathers.*

The son shall not bear the  
iniquity of the father.  
(Ezekiel xviii. 20.)

*God tempts no man.*

Let no man say when he is  
tempted, I am tempted of  
God, for God cannot be  
tempted with evil, neither  
tempteth he any man  
James i. 13.)

*One law for all.*

Ye shall have one manner  
of law, as well for the  
stranger as for one of  
your own country. Lev.  
xxiv. 22.)

*No man has heard God.*

Ye have neither heard his  
voice at any time, nor seen  
his shape. (John v. 37.)

*God will destroy.*

I will utterly consume all  
things . . . saith the Lord.  
(Zephaniah i. 2.)

*Children punished.*

I am a jealous God, visiting  
the iniquities of the fa-  
thers upon the children.  
(Ex. xx. 5.)

*Abraham tempted by God.*

And it came to pass after  
these things that God did  
tempt Abraham. (Gen.  
xxii. 1.)

*A different law for strangers.*

Unto a stranger thou may-  
est lend upon usury; but  
unto thy brother thou  
shalt not lend upon usury.  
(Deut. xxiii. 20.)

*Moses heard Him.*

Moses spake and God an-  
swered him by a voice.  
(Ex. xix. 19.)

*The dead shall arise.*

The trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised. (1. Cor. xv. 52.)

*The Lord is merciful.*

The Lord is good to all and his tender mercies are over all his works. (Psalm cxiv. 9.)

*The law not destroyed.*

Think not that I am come to destroy the law. (Matt. v. 17.)

*Statutes good.*

The Statutes of the Lord are right. (Psalm xix. 8.)

*God wills all to be saved.*

Who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. (1 Timothy ii. 4.)

*God good.*

Good and upright is the Lord. (Psalm xxv. 8.)

*The dead shall not arise.*

He that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more. (Joh vii. 9.)

*Is He?*

And Joshua did unto them as the Lord bade him. He houghed their horses . . . and smote all the souls that were therein with the edge of the sword. (Joshua xi. 9, 11.)

*The law destroyed.*

Ye are not under the law, but under grace. (Rom. vi. 14.)

*Statutes bad.*

I gave them also statutes that were not good. (Ezekiel xx. 25.)

*Causes some to be damned.*

God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believe not the truth. (2 Thessalonians ii. 11, 12.)

*God author of evil.*

Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it. (Amos. iii. 6.)

*Do good in public.*

Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works. (Matt. v. 16.)

**THE COMMANDMENTS.**

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. (Ex. xx. 4.)

Honour thy father and thy mother. (Ex. xx. 12.)

Thou shalt not kill. (Ex. xx. 13.)

Thou shalt not commit adultery. (Ex. xx. 14.)

Thou shalt not steal. (Ex. xx. 15.)

Thou shalt not bear false witness. (Ex. xx. 16.)

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (Lev. xix. 18.)

*Do not good in public.*

Take heed that you do not your alms before men to be seen of them. (Matt. vi. 1.)

Thou shalt make two cherubims of gold. (Ex. xxv. 18.)

And everyone that hath forsaken father or mother shall inherit everlasting life. (Matt. xix. 29.)

Slay every man his brother, and every man his neighbour. (Ex. xxxii. 27.)

I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour. (2 Samuel xii. 11.)

Every woman shall borrow of her neighbour jewels of silver and of gold, and ye shall put them upon your sons and upon your daughters. (Ex. iii. 22.)

The Lord hath put a lying spirit into the mouth of all these thy prophets. (1 Kings xxii. 23.)

Now go and smite Amalek and utterly destroy all. (1 Samuel xv. 3.)

All these contradictions are supposed to come from the same God.

## JESUS, AND GENESIS, AND SCIENCE.

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In a sermon delivered in St. Paul's Cathedral in 1889, by Canon Liddon, D.D., D.C.L., one of the greatest lights and authorities of the Church of England, we read: "For Christians it will be enough to know that our Lord Jesus Christ set the seal of his infallible sanction on the whole of the Old Testament. He found the Hebrew Canon as we have it to-day, and he treated it as any authority which was above discussion. Nay more; he went out of his way to sanction not a few portions of it which modern scepticism rejects. When he would warn his hearers against the dangers of spiritual relapse, he bid them remember "Lot's wife—when he would point out how worldly engagements may blind the soul to a coming Judgment; he reminds them how men had drunk, and married and were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. If he would put his finger on a fact in past Jewish history, which by its admitted reality, would warn belief in his own coming resurrection, he points to Jonah's being three days and three nights in the whale's belly."

The preacher here brushes aside the common pretext made by apologists that Jesus was accommodating his better knowledge to the ignorance of his hearers, or that he shared the

popular ignorance or was ignorant himself. For he adds—"But they will find it difficult to persuade mankind that, if he could be mistaken on a matter of such strictly religious importance as the value of the sacred literature of his countrymen, he can be safely trusted about anything else. The trustworthiness of the Old Testament is in fact, inseparable from the trustworthiness of our Lord Jesus." If the trustworthiness of Jesus is to stand or fall with the belief in the sudden change of a woman's body into a pillar of salt, or on the admitted reality of Jonah's ejection, safe and sound on the shores on the Levant, after three days sea-going in the stomach of a gigantic marine animal, or on the belief that water stood two feet deep on a level plain, like a bank of sand, then I must agree with Huxley when he says: "Not only do I hold it to be proven that the story of the deluge is a pure fiction; but I have no hesitation in affirming the same thing of the story of the creation. Between these two lies the story of the creation of man and woman and their fall from primeve innocence, which is even more monstrously impossible than either of the other two."

Ministers and priests of less moral convictions than this eminent divine are willing to adopt any subterfuge to get Jesus out of the hole which he dug for himself, and they try to walk delicately between "types" and "allego-

ries"; but a certain desire for clearness of thought compels us to ask: When Jesus said that the flood came and destroyed them all, "did he believe that the deluge really took place or not?" He spoke of Noah's wife and his sons wives and the antideluvians marrying and giving in marriage as if he firmly believed in the story.

"What sort of value, as an illustration of God's method of dealing with sin, has an account of an event that never happened. If no flood swept the careless people away, how is the warning of more worth than the cry of wolf when there is no wolf. If Jonah's three days residence in the whale is not an admitted reality, how could it warrant belief in the coming resurrection? If Lot's wife was not turned into a pillar of salt, the bidding those who turn back from the narrow path to remember it and take warning is morally about on a level with telling a naughty child that a bogey is coming to fetch it away. And again, I ask, if one may play fast and loose with the story of the fall as a "type" or "allegory" what becomes of the foundation of Pauline theology? "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die so also in Christ shall all be made alive." (Cor. 15-21.) If Adam be held to be merely a myth, and the story of the fall only an instructive "type," what value has Paul's argu-

ment? When will ministers listen to the small still voice of reason and escape from the fetters with which ecclesiasticism has bound them. The position they have taken up is hopelessly untenable. It is raked fore and aft by the fatal weapons of precision with which the advancing forces of science are armed." (Huxley "Lights of the Church and Science.")

Most of my readers have been told many times from the pulpit, and by some writers of scientific note, that the story of the creation as told in the first chapter of Genesis is an accurate account of what happened; taken as a panoramic view which passed before the vision of the inspired seer. We are not much concerned with this document only in as far as it has the endorsement of Jesus, who believed it to be a truthful statement of facts. We will show that Jesus in his ignorance accepted a purely Babylonian myth as an actual reality, and we will point out that 500 years before his time learned Greek philosophers understood the theory of evolution as laid down by Darwin and Spencer. It is not much to our credit to worship a God who is ignorant of matters which had been known by intelligent men for 500 years.

I will pass over as a matter of very little moment the subterfuge by which theologians try to make a day mean millions of years, and turning into "types" and "allegories" what



is inconvenient to believe. All these vain attempts only sink them deeper in the mire.

"I am of the opinion that the unknown author of Genesis believed and meant his readers to believe his words as they understood them, that is in their ordinary natural sense. When he said that such and such a thing happened, I believe him to mean that they actually occurred. When he says a "day," I believe he used the word in the popular sense and not a period of millions of years, as his Christian apologists make him say. When he says "made" or "created" I believe he means that they came into being by a process analagous to that which the people whom he addressed understood by the words making or creating. I do not believe that he wrote this story by inspiration, not knowing what he was writing, because God would not have written such a monstrous mythical falsehood. It is not very respectful to the Supreme Being to suppose that he could not frame words which could accurately express his meaning. It is said as an excuse, that had the statements in the first chapter of Genesis been scientifically true, they would have been unintelligible to ignorant people; but how are matters to be mended, if being unscientifically untrue, they must needs be rejected by educated people."—*Huxley*.

We will now take up the story somewhat in detail. On the third day God made the grass

and the herbs and the trees even the fruit trees, everything complete as we now see it; but he did not make the sun nor the moon nor the stars till the fourth day. "And God made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; he made the stars also." (Gen. 1-16.) These were made on the fourth day. The stars were just thrown in for ornaments in the firmament, just as if a fairy had moved her wand and palaces rose into being. Theologians being at their wits end to reconcile this old Chaldean myth with actual facts, tell us that these days were long periods of time. A day might have been ten millions of years. So for ten millions of years grasses and herbs and fruit trees grew on this earth, without any sun to shine on them and produce the chemical action by which plants can alone grow. What a monstrous fable this is which says that our whole vegetable world grew for millions of years without the sun, so the last state of these reconcilers is worse than the first. This would have been a greater miracle than making them in one day. And without any sun as a centre to revolve around, the earth was somewhere in space for millions of years going it alone. There is no cosmogony ever written of any nation as foolish as this one which God is said to have written for the Jews and which his son Jesus has endorsed. The endorsement of these old mytho-

allogic fables by Jesus, has made the progress of science difficult, for his Church following his ignorant and egotistical footsteps has opposed every step made by science to improve human knowledge. Galileo was imprisoned and Newton was branded as an "atheist," and Lyall was called a "freethinker" and a scoffer of religion, and Kepler, the next to Newton of all the great men of science, was dismissed from the chair in the University which he so much honored. They were persecuted because in their search after truth, they discovered facts which showed that Jesus was wrong. Theologians wished to conceal the ignorance of Jesus.

After God had made the sun and the moon on one day, and had thrown in the stars as ornaments!!!; he started early next morning to make the fishes and the fowles. In the evening he looked back upon his work, "and saw that it was good, and the evening and the morning were the fifth day." Not a bad day's work to make the millions of varieties of forms of the fishes and the birds in one day. Is it possible for anyone to take this monstrous legend seriously.

It is not true that vegetable life came into being before animal life. The fossils found in the lowest rocks are those of the "starfishes" and "shellfishes." First came upon this earth myriads of forms of shellfishes. For millions of years, Aye! for tens and perhaps for hun-

dreds of millions of years the shores of those great oceans were covered with shells, that no painter ever wielded a brush to imitate in beauty of color.

" The Nautilus and the Ammonite  
Were launched in storm and strife ;  
Each sent to float, in its tiny boat  
On the wide wild sea of life.

And each could swim on the ocean's brim  
And anon its sails could furl,  
And sink to sleep in the great sea deep  
In a palace all of pearl.

And theirs was a bliss more fair than this  
That we feel in our colder time ;  
For they were rife in a tropic life  
In a brighter happier clime.

Thus hand in hand, from strand to strand  
They sailed in mirth and glee ;  
Those fairy shells, with their crystal cells  
Twin daughters of the sea.

But they came at last to a sea long past  
And as they reached its shore,  
On the storm-winds breath, came the blast of death  
And the Ammonite lived no more."

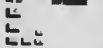
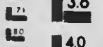
One of the most eminent teachers of Geology tells us that " Life did not commence on the land, for the land surface of the globe was a wilderness of bare and heated rock ; and life upon it was an impossibility." The first fossils we find give us reason to believe that life commenced in very simple forms, and in the ocean ; that the first living inhabitants drew their nourishment from her ample bosom . . . . We walk along the beach and find rows of shells and broken corals, heaped as the grass

that has fallen before the scythe of the husbandman; every tide bearing new harvests to the shore. We turn to the land but behold only barren rocks from whose heated surface vapor is rising in continual clouds. Nothing is heard save the volcanoes roar and the dash of the angry waves." (Denton's lectures p. 76-9.) These shells lived during the Silurian period which lasted for millions of years; but no vegetable life existed yet. In the next period above, called the Devonian, we find the first traces of fishes, and during the end of this period fishes and reptiles swarmed in the warm oceans, but now greatly cooled down. This was the age of fishes, for they were kings of creation then, as the shells dominated in the previous Silurian age. And now for the first time we find traces of sea weeds and ferns. This period lasted for tens of millions of years. Next above the Devonian we come to the Carboniferous period; during this time immense trees grew and ferns and grasses. From them were formed our coal beds. What strange trees they are. Immense ferns with great scales on them. The hot breath of the ground caused water to rise rapidly in vapor. These varieties are all gone now, millions of varieties have died out, as the conditions became unfavorable for them. Their many descendants are our pines and ferns. This period lasted tens of millions of years.



# MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

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With these facts before us we are in a position to form some estimate of the value of the Babylonian myth copied by the unknown author of Genesis, and endorsed by our Christian God, Jesus. Trees according to the myth appeared on the third day, and the fishes on the fifth. Geology tells us that fishes and reptiles appeared, ten of millions of years before the trees, and that of the old forms of fishes and trees which existed then, very few varieties are living now. And to the monstrous statement that trees lived and flourished before the sun was made it gives a flat denial.

In regard to birds which the writer of Genesis puts on the same day as fishes, Huxley says that the first certain evidence of them is after the appearance of land animals by a prodigious interval of time. So birds instead of coming in with fishes on the fifth day, would come in at the end of the sixth day, as the last of all the handworks of God. Animal and vegetable life have not been spasmodic but continuous. As the warm waters and the heated land cooled, new forms of life came into existence suited to the new conditions, and the huge forms of ocean and land animals who lived in the warm waters and on the damp earth died out. A new vegetation and new forms of animal life suited to the new conditions came in. The fruit trees and other deciduous trees which the writer of Genesis said he saw on the third day are but



of yesterday. This monstrous story in the Book of Genesis is a myth from one end to the other. But it concerns the writer of this book only in as far as such a mythological story could have been endorsed by a God, and such nonsense believed in by intelligent theologians. Why, must intellectual imbecility be a mark of moral earnestness, Ruskin once asked.

Though the idea of evolution was unknown to the inspired (?) writer of the Hebrew Cosmogony the Greek philosophers were acquainted with it. Thales and Aneximander, two philosophers contemporary with the editor of the Babylonian myth, describe the world as generated out of a primordial matter, which is at the same time the universal support of things. This substance is endowed with a generative or transmutative force by virtue of which it passes into a succession of forms. These words could not be much improved upon by a writer on biology or paleontology who wished to describe the evolutionary mode by which the world developed, with its infinite variety of forms. And the writer in the "Encyclopedia Britannica," under "Evolution" remarks that Heraclitus deserves a prominent place in the history of the idea of evolution and that he had foreshadowed some of the special views of Darwin. In the face of these facts how wilfully deceiving are the excuses of theologians, when they say that the cosmogony of the Bible

is as accurate as the times would admit. It is false, not only in its words but in the ideas which underline them. What becomes of this inspiration of falsehoods, endorsed by a son of God, when the truth was already known by the Greek philosophers.

Some one of my intelligent readers will be inclined to ask, But how did all this wonderful development take place? You have destroyed one theory, but you have not built up another. Let me give you a spiritual theory of how geology enables me to look at the earth as a great factory for making men out of granite. Imagine a factory that could mend its belts, make new wheels and new looms by its own inherent power and then you have a correct idea of what this planet is. There is in this universe a spirit whose operations are everywhere visible but whose essence for ever eludes us. I call this the Infinite Spirit to whose influence we owe our existence upon this planet, the law of nature being only its methods of operation. This is a living world upon whose bosom we dwell. There is nothing that the study of natural science so profoundly impresses upon the human mind as the universality and continuous operation of law; nothing that science so much condemns as the interference by Gods or sons of Gods with these laws.

“In the fiery furnace of the old primordial world, and the smoky atmosphere which surrounds it, lies all of which man is composed; here is that which shall make his bones and his flesh and his blood and his brains, and the spirit which shall cause matter to move through countless æons on the broad highway to man. You and I were there, for the world was pregnant with man. Millions of years pass away; the fiery seas are gone, metals have sunk to their cavern homes. Here is water boiling hot, an important element in the structure of his body, a step nearer is reached. Millions of years have passed; look again; animal and vegetable life are here; the first story of humanity is built; life has obtained a foothold and moves with giant strides to its goal humanity.” (Denton’s Lectures on Geology.) Life was in the fiery furnace of the pre-Cambrian period with its companions oxygen and hydrogen, but the opportunity for it to begin to work had not yet arrived. There is more than life required to complete the structure, there is the tendency moving towards an ideal. The spiritual ideal of man was below the geological horizon. If you saw a man making a statue, you are certain that he has an ideal in his mind, so in nature was the idea of man towards which it was working. The facts seem to indicate that life has developed from distinct organic beginnings along parallel lines as rapidly as the

improved conditions of the planet permitted. But just as the spirit of the child derived from the father and mother, presides over its organization from the time when it was an invisible dot till it is born, so the Universal Spirit never for an instant absent from the world, has operated by means of laws during millions of years and through myriads of forms until at length it was able to say, I have made a man, but millions of years will yet be necessary to finish him. What a noble conception does science give us compared to the miserable travesty of fiction and mythology which our theologians tell us came direct from the hand of God, and had the endorsement of his only son.

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### DECLINE OF THE CHURCH.

According to a census made in Berlin on a recent Sunday, only on an average of 165 persons attended the State Protestant places of worship of which there are 68 in the city. Protestant Germany has a State Church the same as Protestant England. In the town of Chemnitz in Saxony, with a Protestant population of 300,000 the Church attendance on this particular Sunday was only one person in every 133. In the country districts the attendance is better; but both in the country and in the towns the congregations are rapidly sinking and have been rapidly sinking for several years

past. A prominent journal in Berlin from which these facts are taken gave as the causes:

1st.—The influence of the anti-religious press. No attempt is made to answer their arguments; historical criticism has honey-combed the inspiration of the Old and the New Testaments; the doctrine of the Atonement is proven to be an immoral teaching and contrary to common sense and justice. When Luther broke the superstitions of the sixteenth century, the Catholics said that the Devil filled him with the pride of human reason. Protestantism once rested on Reason, Science and Education. The Protestant preachers of the twentieth century have parted with the intellectual and practical forces of the age. Like the ostrich when pursued they hide their heads in the sand, and think they are safe.

2nd.—Social Democracy is against the Church, because she throws all her influence on the side of aristocracy and wealth. In the great struggle now going on for social liberty, the Church tells the working man what Jesus told the laboring man in his time, "Take what is thine and go thy way . . . Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" The Church and the nobility have made the laws to suit themselves. But statistics clearly point to the day when the growing democracy shall tell the Church and the nobles, "Take what is thine and go thy way," we are tired of

your yoke and the teachings of your master. Notwithstanding the multiplication of churches, the great number of religious magazines and newspapers, the large amount of money subscribed annually for missions and other church purposes, the practical influence of the clergy diminishes year by year.

The progress which mankind has achieved during the last three centuries has been won by her scientists, her statesmen and her business men. Religion has given us nothing since the Reformation. Why is it that this great spiritual force of Protestantism, which shattered a Spanish Empire, which fused the Dutch provinces into a United Kingdom, and which gave to the world the vigorous national character of Scotland, has done nothing since? Why is she steadily ebbing away like a river lost in the desert? Because she has parted company in with the spirit of the age, with the practical teachings of science, and the progressive moral truth which lie at the basis of all social life.

3rd.—The notorious unbelief of the educated classes, which widens as education widens, and the industrial spirit which rose into prominence in the leading towns of Italy and Germany and developed a character which was preeminently practical, a character which leads men to care very little about theories, but very much about results. Out of this practical way of looking at things arose the spirit of Rationalism which

was the basis of the Reformation and which broadened out in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Then came the school of Scientists which laid down the principle that all true knowledge must be based upon facts, or to use the words of Sir John Herschell, "That in the search after Truth we must stand or fall by the result of a direct appeal to facts." The churches have totally ignored this corner stone upon which all science rests.

Whether the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost are three in one, or one in three does not concern this generation. Theology is dead. The spirit of the age is antagonistic to dogmas. There is a general belief current amongst all classes, that if a man lives a good life here, he will be alright in the next world, and all the teachings of Jesus or his Church to the contrary will not change this idea. The doctrine of the Atonement is a dead issue, Calvinism and the doctrines of predestination and infant damnation, is a theory of the past. It is as impossible to revive these teachings as to put life into the fossil remains of some extinct mammoth which lie embeded in the primeval stratas.

In an article in the "Literary Digest" of Feb. 14th, 1914, taken from the "North American," a religious publication of Philadelphia, we find the following. "Church attendance is on the decline. This is a nation-

wide phenomenon. It affects rural churches and those in great cities. It is not uncommon for edifices capable of seating 1000 to 1500 persons to have less than 100 worshippers at a regular Sunday service . . . During the last few months there has sprung into wide favor the idea, of a "go-to-church Sunday." This would imply that the ministers are satisfied if people will go to church one Sunday in the month and enjoy themselves on the other three Sundays. I would suggest that the old stories in the Bible be illustrated by means of nickel shows held in churches. The story of David and Goliath on the electric canvas would draw a large audience. The episode in the garden between Adam and Eve and God, if well advertised would be a good drawing card for a wet Sunday. Jonah and the whale and Jacob's drunken wedding feast would be amusing as well as entertaining. The story of the witch of Endor might gather some stray spiritualists to the Church and in this way redeem them from the fiery furnace of Jesus, where they are sure to go, if they neglect the teachings of the Church instead of following the facts which science is daily bringing out, "That everyone must meet the conditions which he has made for himself."

Does Science refer to facts that can be verified? So must religion. If the Church wishes to understand Revelation, it must first separate



itself from theory and tradition, and then by studying each separate fact, work its way on slowly and surely till it has built up by special investigation a generalization which may be called Revelation. The Church must come down to the proper scientific method of arriving at truth, and then it will understand revelation not as a mystery but as a scientific fact. This is the work which the Church has neglected and which has been taken up by the Society for Psychical Research and Spiritualism. It will then find that Revelation and Reason are not antagonistic. The trouble with the clergy is that they want to retain their old beliefs in the precise form in which they always held them, and they consider as the greatest strength of these beliefs their isolation from the rest of our beliefs and their peculiar supernatural origin. The Revelations contained in the Bible, they think will lose all their prestige and authority over men unless they be held to be a communication direct from God, different not simply in degree, but absolutely different in kind from all other communications. The clergy are clinging to the above line of argument for their lives, but the thinking portion of mankind is fast losing faith in that part of Church teaching which describes events antithetical to the laws of nature. The whole order of thought in which ecclesiastical belief originated is passing away.

## THE BEDEVILED SWINE.

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“ And all the devils besought him, saying, send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine; and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea (they were about two thousand) and were choked in the sea.” (Luke 5-13.)

2000 pigs represent a large amount of property, and the owner would in all likelihood have been ruined by this wanton destruction of his goods. The three writers of this story tell us that the people living in the neighbourhood came to him and besought him to leave their country. We do not blame them. None of his historians say that he offered to pay the owner of the swine for destroying these valuable assets, by which they made an honest living. This man never injured him, why should he have done his neighbour such a wrong! What about his fine platitudes in his Sermon on the Mount?

Gadara was a city of the Greeks, one of the cities of the Decapolis, a Greek colony bordering on the Lake of Galilee. It was not under Jewish jurisdiction, but was part of the province of Syria. From which it may be inferred that to keep swine was lawful and innocent. But even if the swine did belong to a

Jew (which none of the historians mention) Jesus had no right to cross the lake to a foreign country, and break the laws of that country by destroying personal property.

He had no more right to go to a foreign country and destroy property, than I would have to go to the State of New York, and, entering a saloon, break all the whisky bottles in the place. However much I believe in temperance, I have no right to interfere with the laws of another country. Why was this property destroyed? In order to cure a fellow-being from insanity, and make him a happy healthy man. Oh no! But just to please the devils!! A Scotch divine once preaching on this amusing and entertaining text, said, "What a joke Jesus must have had on the devils, when he knew that even if they got a home in the swine, it would be only for a few minutes. For they could not live in cold pork." This joke of Jesus on the devils may be the last straw that will make intelligent thinking, and earnest religious men cast aside forever this nightmare of Christianity.

Christian apologists driven to despair about this cruel act of Jesus, say, that the owner was a Jew and broke the law of Moses. But there is no law of Moses either in Leviticus or Deuteronomy forbidding a Jew to keep or trade in or herd swine. There is a law which forbids him to eat pork or touch the dead carcass.

Jesus did not accuse the keeper of the herd of having done anything wrong. He just obliged and fooled the devils, and did an innocent man a serious injury.

Others of his apologists admit the wrong done to an innocent man, but they say that this story, like many others, had got into the documents through the mistaken zeal of his biographers, or the transcribers of the documents. The story had its origin in an old pagan belief, that wicked spirits had to serve a probation in the body of pigs. On the sarcophagus of Seti I., King of Egypt, there is a representation of a wicked spirit entering the body of a pig. But if we accept this theory, where do we land? for we are inclined to ask, What part of the Bible is true and what part is false? We are in a sea of doubt, and getting out into the deep ocean of uncertainty. His apologists can take any horn of this dilemma they wish. There is little to choose between what is true and what is false in the New Testament. How long will intelligent men and women listen to this mass of folly and ignorance which is compressed into what is falsely called "The Inspired Word of God."

Why should we take up this story specially, and separate it from scores of others possessing the same underlying strata of myth, tradition and falsehoods; it is because behind it stands the doctrine of an old heathen demonology.

Upon this heathen demonology rests the fundamental beliefs of Christianity in a spirit-world ruled by devils; and behind this lies the question of the credibility of the Gospels and their claim to act as our instructors upon matters of religion or business; and behind this the still greater question, of how long, this prodigious fabric of Christian dogmas, which has been reared upon such false stories, intermixed with the superstitions of mediæval papistry, is going to survive.

The following quotation from Huxley in his "Essay on Agnosticism," p. 215 bears on this subject: "Everything I know of law and justice convinces me that wanton destruction of other men's property is a misdemeanor of evil example. Again the study of history, and especially of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, leaves no shadow of doubt on my mind that the belief in the reality of possession and of witchcraft, justly based alike by Catholics and Protestants upon this and innumerable other passages in both the Old and New Testaments, gave rise, through the special influence of Christian ecclesiastics, to the most horrible persecutions and judicial murders of thousands upon thousands of innocent men, women and children. I am bound to believe that Jesus implicitly affirmed himself to possess a knowledge of the unseen world, which afforded full confirmation of the belief in demons

and possession current among his contemporaries. I can see no escape from this dilemma; either Jesus said what he is reported to have said, or he did not. In the former case, it is inevitable that his authority on matters connected with the unseen world should be roughly shaken; in the latter the blow falls upon the authority of the synoptic gospels. If their report on a matter of such stupendous and far-reaching practical import as this is untrustworthy, how can we be sure of its trustworthiness in other cases?"

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