

THE  
BOSTON QUARTERLY REVIEW.

---

OCTOBER, 1838.

---

ART. I.—ON THE PROGRESS OF CIVILIZATION, OR REASONS WHY THE NATURAL ASSOCIATION OF MEN OF LETTERS IS WITH THE DEMOCRACY.

THE material world does not change in its masses or in its powers. The stars shine with no more lustre, than when they first sang together in the glory of their birth. The flowers that gemmed the fields and the forests, before America was discovered, now bloom around us in their season. The sun that shone on Homer still shines on us in unchanging lustre. The bow that beamed on the patriarch still glitters in the clouds. Nature is the same. For her no new powers are generated; no new capacities are discovered. The earth turns on its axis, and perfects its revolutions, and renews its seasons, without increase or advancement.

Does the same passive destiny attach to the inhabitants of the earth? Is there for us no increase of capacity; no gathering of intellectual riches? Are the expectations of social improvement a delusion; and the hopes of philanthropy but a dream? Or is there an advancement of the human condition? Can there be progress in the human race?

The subject rises in interest above the limited

character of individual pursuits; and is connected with interests that enlarge the heart, kindle imagination, and excite generous sympathies. It belongs to all. With a full consciousness, that personal convictions are of little weight, unless sanctioned by general approbation, that their justice should be questioned, unless they obtain an intuitive concurrence, it will be the object of this article to illustrate the capacity of the human race for constant progress, the method of furthering that progress, and the evidence of its reality.

I. Matter is passive. If at rest it would remain so forever; if set in motion, it continues its unmeaning course, without reason, purpose, or result. The capacity of the human race for improvement is connected with the universal diffusion of the gifts of mind.

The five senses do not constitute the whole inventory of our sources of knowledge. They are the organs by which thought connects itself with the external universe; but the power of thought is not merged in the exercise of its instruments. We have functions which connect us with heaven, as well as organs which set us in relation with earth. We have not merely the senses opening to us the external world, but an internal moral sense, which places us in connexion with the world of intelligence and the decrees of God.

It is the possession of this higher faculty which renders advancement possible. There is *a spirit in man*: not in the privileged few; not in those of us only who by the favor of Providence have been nursed in public schools: IT IS IN MAN: it is the attribute of the race. The spirit, which is the guide to truth, is the gracious gift to each member of the human family; not one is disfranchised; not one is cut off from the heavenly inheritance.

Reason exists within every breast. I mean not that faculty which deduces inferences from the expe-

rience of the senses, but that higher faculty, which from the infinite treasures of its own consciousness, originates truth, and assents to it by the force of intuitive evidence; that faculty which raises us beyond the control of time and space, and gives us faith in things eternal and invisible. There is not the difference between one mind and another, which the pride of philosophy might conceive. To Plato or Aristotle, to Leibnitz and Locke, there was no faculty given, no intellectual function conceded, which did not belong to the meanest of their countrymen. In them there could not spring up a truth, which did not equally have its source in the mind of every one. They had not the power of creation: they could but reveal what God has implanted in the breast of every one. On their minds not a truth could dawn, of which the seed did not equally live in every heart.

Knowledge is but the perception of relations. The intellectual functions, by which those relations are conceived, are the common endowments of the race. The differences are apparent, not real. The eye may in one person be dull, in another quick, in one distorted, and in another tranquil and clear; yet the relation of the eye to light is in all men the same. Just so judgment may be liable in individual minds to the bias of passion, and yet its relation to truth is immutable, and is universal.

To whatever class of moral emotions we direct attention, we shall be led to the same inference. In questions of practical duty, conscience is God's umpire in the breast. Its light illumines every heart. There is nothing in books, which had not first, and has not still its life within us. Religion itself is a dead letter, wherever its truths are not renewed in the soul. And here unchangeable truth asserts its prerogative. Though individual conscience may be corrupted by interest, or debauched by pride, yet the rule of morality is distinctly marked; like music to the ear, its harmonies reach the mind; and the moral judgment of conscience, when carefully analyzed and

referred to its principles, is always founded in right. The eastern superstition, which bids its victims prostrate themselves before the advancing car of their idols, springs from a noble root, and is but a melancholy perversion of that self-devotion, which enables the Christian to bear the cross, and subject his personal passions to the will of God. Immorality of itself never won to its support the inward voice; conscience, if questioned, never forgets to curse the guilty with the memory of sin, to cheer the upright with the meek tranquillity of approval. And this admirable power, which is the instinct of Deity, is the attribute of every man; it knocks at the palace gate, it dwells in the meanest hovel. Duty, like death, enters every abode, and delivers his message to every breast. Conscience, like reason and judgment, is universal.

That the moral affections are planted everywhere, needs only to be asserted. The savage mother loves her offspring with all the fondness that a mother can know. Beneath the odorous shade of the boundless forests of Chili, the savage youth repeats the story of love, as sincerely as it was ever chanted in the valley of Vacluse. The affections of family are not the results of civilization; they spring from the heart. The charities of life are scattered everywhere; enamelling the vales of human being, as the flowers paint the meadows. Boundless treasures of moral feeling are garnered up in the common breast. They are not the fruit of human culture, nor the privilege of refinement, but the natural instinct of Humanity.

Our age has seen a revolution in works of imagination. The poet has sought his theme in common life. Never is the genius of Scott more pathetic, than when, as in the *Antiquary*, he delineates the sorrows of a poor fisherman, or as in the *Heart of Mid Lothian*, takes his heroine from a cottage. And even Wordsworth, the purest and most original poet of the day, in spite of the inveterate character of his political predilections, has done homage to the spirit

of the age. With magic power he has thrown the divine light of genius on the walks of commonest life; he finds a moral in every grave of the village churchyard; he discloses the immense wealth of affection in the humblest minds, the peasant and shepherd, the laborer and artisan; the strolling pedlar is, under the powerful action of his genius, a teacher of the sublimest morality; and the solitary wagoner, the lonely shepherd, and even the feeblest mother of an idiot boy, furnishes the highest lessons in the reverence for Humanity.

If from things relating to truth, justice, and affection, we turn to those relating to the beautiful, we may here also assert, that the sentiment for the beautiful resides in every breast. The lovely forms of the external world delight us from their adaptation to our powers.

Yea, what were mighty Nature's self?  
Her features could they win us,  
Unhelped by the poetic voice  
That hourly speaks within us?

The Indian mother, on the borders of Hudson's Bay, decorates her manufactures with ingenious devices and lovely colors, prompted by the same instinct which guided the pencil and mixed the colors of Raphael. The inhabitant of Nootka Sound tattoos his body with the method of harmonious Arabesques. Every form, to which the hands of the artist have ever given birth, sprung first into being as a conception of his mind, and sprung from a natural power, which belongs not to the artist only, but to man. Beauty, like truth and justice, lives within us; like virtue and like moral law, it is a creation of the soul. The power which leads to the production of beautiful forms, the power which leads to the perception of beautiful forms, in the works which God has made, is an attribute of Humanity.

But here I am met by an interrogation. What! Do you despise learning? Shall one who has spent nearly all his life in schools and universities plead

the equality of uneducated nature? Is there no difference between the man of refinement and the savage?

*I am a man*, said Black Hawk nobly to the chief of the first republic in the world; *I am a man*, said the barbarous chieftain, *and you are another*.

I speak for the natural equality of human powers, not of human attainments; for the capacity for progress, not for the perfection of undisciplined instincts. The intellectual functions exist in the savage; the respect which we should cherish for Humanity receives the Comanche warrior and the Caffre, within the pale of equality. Their powers may not have been exercised, but they exist. Immure a person from light in a dungeon; as he comes to the light of day, his vision seems incapable of performing its office. Does that destroy your conviction in the relation between the eye and light? The rioter over his cups resolves to eat and drink and be merry; and he forgets his spiritual nature in his obedience to the senses; but does that destroy the relation between conscience and eternity? "What ransom shall we give?" exclaimed the senators of Rome to the savage Attila, the unlettered invader from the deserts of Asia. "Give," said the barbarian, "all your gold and jewels, your costly furniture and treasures, and set free every slave." "Ah," replied the degenerate Romans, "what then will be left to us?" "I leave you your souls," replied the savage, who had learnt in the wilderness to value the immortal mind, and to despise the servile herd, that esteemed only their fortunes, and had no true respect for themselves. You cannot discover a tribe of men, but you also find the charities of life, and the proofs of spiritual existence. Behold the ignorant Algonquin deposit a bow and quiver by the side of the departed warrior; and reverence his faith in immortality. See the Comanche chieftain, in the heart of our continent, inflict on himself severest penance; and reverence his confession of the needed atonement for sin. The Barbarian

who roams our western prairies has like passions and like endowments with ourselves. He bears within him the instinct of Deity; the consciousness of a spiritual nature; the love of beauty; the rule of morality.

And shall we reverence the dark-skinned Caffre? Shall we respect the brutal Hottentot?

You may read the right answer written on every heart. It bids me not despise the sable hunter, that gathers a livelihood in the forests of Southern Africa. All are men. When we know the Hottentot better, we shall despise him less.

If it be true, that the gifts of mind and heart are universally diffused, if the sentiment of truth, justice, love, and beauty exists in every one, then it follows, as a necessary consequence, that the common judgment in politics, morals, character, and taste is the highest authority on earth, and the nearest possible approach to an infallible decision. This inference I dare not avoid; and if from the consideration of individual powers we turn to the action of the human mind in masses, we shall still retain our good hopes for the race.

If reason is a universal faculty, the decision of the common mind is the nearest criterion of truth. The public mind winnows opinions; it is the sieve which separates error from certainty.

This is evident from the nature of the case. The exercise of one faculty on the same relations would naturally lead to the same results.

But it is said there are differences. And this again proves the supreme judgment of the general mind. Truth is one. It never contradicts itself. One truth cannot contradict another truth. Hence truth is a bond of union. Men agree in sustaining it. The common mind asserts and reveres it. But error not only contradicts truth, but may contradict itself. Thus there may be many errors, and each at variance with the rest. Truth is therefore of necessity an element of harmony; error as necessarily an element of discord. Thus there can be no public judgment but a

right one. Men cannot agree in an absurdity ; neither can they agree in a falsehood.

Let us not avoid the practical test. I venture on the apparent paradox, that the public mind never received an unmixed error. Not that wrong opinions have not been cherished by the masses, but the cause always lies in the complexity of the ideas presented. Error finds its way into the soul of a nation, only through the channel of truth. It is to a truth that men listen ; and if they accept error also, it is only because the error is for the time so closely interwoven with the truth, that the one cannot readily be separated from the other.

Absolute error can have no existence in the public mind. Wherever you see men clustering together to form a party, you may be sure that however much error may be there, truth is there also. Apply this principle boldly ; it contains a lesson of candor, and a voice of encouragement. Yes, there never was a school of philosophy, nor a clan in the world of opinion, but carried along with it some important truth. And therefore every sect that has ever flourished has benefited Humanity ; for the errors of a sect pass away and are forgotten ; its truths are received into the common inheritance. To know the seminal principle of every prophet and leader of a sect, is to gather all the wisdom of the world.

By heaven ! there should not be a seer, who left  
The world one doctrine, but I'd task his lore,  
And commune with his spirit. All the truth  
Of all the tongues of earth, I'd have them all,  
Had I the powerful spell to raise their ghosts.

The multitude is therefore the oracle to which we are to listen reverently ; the tribunal before which we are to plead. Discarding the errors of individuals and of parties, we are to seek for the universal truths, which are the dictates of pure reason, and form the common faith of Humanity. Truth emerges in her brightness from the contradictions of individual opinions ; she raises herself in majestic serenity above



the conflict of sects; she acknowledges as her nearest image the general voice of mankind; the expression of universal reason; the concurrent testimony of the race.

Time would fail me, were I to pursue this subject in all its bearings. I pass therefore to a point, which has been less considered. The sentiment of beauty, as it exists in the human mind, is the criterion in works of art, inspires the conceptions of genius, and exercises a final judgment on its productions.

For who are the best judges in matters of taste? Do you think the cultivated individual? Undoubtedly not; but the collective mind. The public is wiser than the wisest critic. In Athens, where the arts were carried to perfection, it was done when "the fierce democracie" was in the ascendant; the temple of Minerva and the works of Phidias were invented and perfected to please the common people. When Greece yielded to tyrants, her genius for excellence in arts expired; or rather purity of taste disappeared; because the artist then endeavored to please the individual, and therefore humored his caprice; while before he had endeavored to please the race.

When after a long eclipse the arts again burst into a splendid existence, it was equally under a popular influence. During the rough contests and feudal tyrannies of the middle age, religion had opened in the church an asylum for the people. There the serf and the beggar could kneel; there the pilgrim and the laborer were shrived; and the children of misfortune not less than the prosperous were welcomed to the house of prayer. The church was, therefore, at once the guardian of equality, and the nurse of the arts; and the souls of Giotto, and Perugino, and Raphael, moved by an infinite sympathy with the crowd, kindled into divine conceptions of beautiful forms; and appealing to the sentiment of devotion in the common mind, they dipped their pencils in living colors, to decorate the altars where man adored. By

degrees the wealthy nobility desired in like manner to adorn their palaces ; but the genius of Humanity was not present at the attempt, and the quick familiarity of the artist with the beautiful declined. Instead of the brilliant works which appealed to the soul, a school of artists arose, who appealed to the senses ; and in the land which had produced the most moving pictures addressed to the religious feeling and instinct with the purest beauty, the banquet halls of the nobility were covered with grotesque forms, such as float before the imagination, when excited and bewildered by sensual indulgence. Instead of holy families, the ideal representations of the virgin mother and the godlike child, of the enduring faith of martyrs, of the blessed benevolence of evangelical love, there came the motley group of fawns and satyrs, of Diana stooping to Endymion, of voluptuous beauty, of the forms of licentiousness. Humanity frowned on the desecration of the arts ; and the true genius of painting, no longer vivified by a common feeling with the multitude, refused to adapt itself to individual humors, and disappeared.

If with us the arts are destined to be awakened into a brilliant career, the inspiration must spring from the triumphs of democracy. Genius will not create, to flatter individuals or decorate saloons. It yearns for larger influences ; it feeds on wider sympathies ; and its perfect display can never exist, except in an appeal to the general sentiment for the beautiful.

Again. Italy is famed for its music, its inimitable operas. It is a well known fact, that the best critics are often deceived in their judgment of them ; but that at the first representation, the pit, composed of the throng, does, without fail, render a true verdict.

But the taste for music, it may be said, is favored by natural organization. Precisely a statement that confirms my argument for the natural capacity of the race ; for taste is then not an acquisition, but in part a gift. But let us pass to works of literature.

Who are by way of eminence the poets of all mankind? Surely Homer and Shakspeare. Now Homer formed his taste, as he wandered from door to door, a vagrant minstrel, paying for hospitality by a song; and Shakspeare wrote for an audience, wholly composed of the common people.

Or to state one more single instance. The little story of Paul and Virginia is a universal favorite. When it was first written, the author read it aloud to a circle in Paris, composed of the wife of the prime minister, and the choicest critics of France. They condemned the story, as dull and insipid. The author appealed to the public; and the children of all Europe reversed the judgment of the Parisians. The judgment of children, that is, the judgment of the common mind under its most innocent and least imposing form, was more trustworthy, than the criticism of the select refinement of the most polished city in the world.

Demosthenes of old formed himself to the perfection of eloquence by means of addresses to the crowd. The great comic poet of Greece, emphatically the poet of the vulgar mob, is distinguished above all others for the incomparable graces of his diction; and it is related of one of the most skilful writers in the Italian language, that when inquired of where he had learned the purity and nationality of his diction, he replied, from listening to the country people, as they brought their produce to market. He had learned his language in the streets.

But it is unnecessary to seek examples in detail. At the revival of letters a distinguishing feature of the rising literature was the employment of the vulgar tongue. Dante used the language of the populace and won immortality; Wickliffe, Luther, and at a later day Descartes, each employed his native language, and carried truth directly to all, who were familiar with its accents. Every beneficent revolution in letters has the character of popularity; every great reform among authors has sprung from the pow-

er of the people in its influence on the development and activity of mind.

The same influence continues unimpaired. Scott spurned a drawing-room reputation; the secret of Byron's power lay in part in the harmony which existed between his muse and the democratic tendency of the age; Wordsworth, even in the midst of his passion for a hierarchy, pleads earnestly for the rights of labor. German literature is almost entirely a popular creation. It was fostered by no monarch; it was dandled by no aristocracy. It was plebeian in its origin and manly in its results. "The public," says Schiller, "is my study and my sovereign. Of this and of no other tribunal do I acknowledge the jurisdiction. Its decrees I fear and reverence. My mind is exalted by the intention to submit to no restraints but the invisible decisions of the unbiassed world; to know no court of appeals but the soul of Humanity."

The same confidence may exist in the capacity of the human race for political advancement. The absence of the prejudices of the old world leaves us here the opportunity of consulting independent truth; and man is left to apply the instinct of freedom to every social relation and public interest. We have approached so near to nature, that we can hear her gentlest whispers; we have made Humanity our lawgiver and our oracle; and, therefore, principles, which in Europe the wisest receive with distrust, are here the common property of the public mind. The spirit of the nation receives and vivifies every great doctrine, of which the application is required; no matter how abstract it may be in theory, or how remote in its influence, the intelligence of the multitude embraces, comprehends, and enforces it. Freedom of mind, freedom of the seas, freedom of industry, each great truth is firmly grasped; and whenever a great purpose has been held up, or a useful reform proposed, the national mind has calmly, steadily, and irresistibly pursued its aim.

II. A devotion to the cause of mind is therefore a devotion to the cause of Humanity, and assures its progress.

Every great object, connected with the benevolent exertions of the day, has reference to the culture of mind. The moral and intellectual powers are alone become the common inheritance; and every victory in the cause of Humanity is due to the progress of moral and intellectual culture. For this the envoys of religion cross seas, and visit remotest isles; for this the press in its freedom teems with the productions of maturest thought; for this the philanthropist plans new schemes of education; for this halls in every city and village are open to the public instructor. Not that we view with indifference the glorious efforts of material industry; the vast means of internal intercourse; the accumulations of thrifty labor; the varied results of concentrated action. But even here it is mind that achieves the triumph, and that exults in expectation. It is the genius of the architect, that gives beauty to the work of human hands, and makes the temple, the dwelling, or the public edifice an outward representation of the spirit of propriety and order. It is science, that guides the blind zeal of cupidity to the construction of the vast channels of intercourse, which are fast binding the world into one family. And it is as a method of moral improvement, that these increased means of intercourse derive their greatest value. Mind becomes universal property; the poem, that is invented on the soil of England, finds its response on the shores of lake Erie and the banks of the Missouri, and is admired near the sources of the Ganges. The defence of public liberty in our own halls of legislation penetrates the plains of Poland, is echoed along the mountains of Greece, and pierces the darkest night of eastern despotism.

From the universality of the intellectual and moral powers, and the necessity of their culture for the progress of the race, I deduce the great doctrine of

the natural right of every human being to moral and intellectual culture. This right is limited to no condition, and let me add to no sex. It is time that the rights of woman were asserted, not in the spirit of a Wolstonecraft, but in the spirit of Christianity. It was an absurd attempt, to found the claims of woman to equality on a material basis; to command her to come in competition with the industry and the strength of man. Not such is the lesson of our religion; or of conscience. The claims of woman to equality are found in her moral nature; and they need only to be presented under this aspect, to be readily acknowledged. Among the chosen and most faithful followers of Christ was woman; and her education, the development of her powers, the exercise of her high endowments are a duty not less imperative than the culture of man. Let woman share in every benefit, which the diffusion of culture achieves for the race.

It is the glory of our fathers to have established in their laws the equal claims of every child, to the public care of its morals and its mind. From this principle we may deduce the universal right to leisure. Such is the voice of nature; such the conscious claim of the human mind. The universe opens its pages to every eye; the music of creation resounds in every ear; the glorious lessons of immortal truth, that are written in the sky and on the earth, address themselves to every mind, and claim attention from every human being. God has made man upright; that he might look before and after; and he calls upon every one not merely to labor, but to reflect; not merely to practise the revelations of divine will; but to watch the displays of divine power. Nature claims for every man leisure, for she claims every man as a witness to the divine glory, manifested in the created world.

Yet evermore, through years renewed  
In undisturbed vicissitude  
Of seasons balancing their flight  
On the swift wings of day and night,  
Kind nature keeps a heavenly door  
Wide open for the scattered poor,

Where flower-breathed incense to the skies  
 Is wafted in mute harmonies ;  
 And ground fresh cloven by the plough  
 Is fragrant with a humbler vow ;  
 Where birds and brooks from leafy dells  
 Chime forth unwearied canticles,  
 And vapors magnify and spread  
 The glory of the sun's bright head ;  
 Still constant in her worship, still  
 Conforming to the Almighty Will,  
 Whether men sow or reap the fields,  
 Her admonitions nature yields ;  
 That not by bread alone we live,  
 Or what a hand of flesh can give ;  
 That every day should leave some part  
 Free for a sabbath of the heart ;  
 So shall the seventh be truly blest,  
 From morn to eve, with hallowed rest.

The right to universal education being thus acknowledged by our conscience, not less than by our laws, it follows, that the public mind is the true recipient of truth. Do not seek to conciliate individuals ; do not dread the frowns of a sect ; do not yield to the prescriptions of a party ; but pour out truth into the common mind. Let the waters of intelligence like the rains of heaven descend on the whole earth. And be not discouraged by the dread of encountering ignorance. *The prejudices of ignorance are more easily removed than the prejudices of interest ; the first are blindly adopted ; the second wilfully preferred.* Intelligence must be diffused among the whole people ; truth must be scattered among those who have no interest to suppress its growth. The seeds that fall on the exchange, or in the hum of business, may be choked by the thorns, that spring up in the hotbed of avarice ; the seeds, that are let fall in the saloon, may be like those dropped by the wayside, which fowl birds of the air gather up, before they have taken root. Let the young aspirant after glory scatter the seeds of truth broadcast on the wide bosom of Humanity ; in the deep, fertile soil of the public mind. There it will strike deep root, and spring up, and bear an hundred fold, and bloom for ages, and ripen fruit through remote generations.

It is alone by infusing great principles into the common mind, that revolutions in human society are effected. They never have been, they never can be, effected by superior *individual* excellence. Time will allow but a single illustration. The age of the Antonines is the age of the greatest glory of the Roman empire. Men distinguished by every accomplishment of prowess and science, for a century in succession, possessed undisputed sway over more than a hundred millions of men; till at last, in the person of Mark Aurelian, philosophy herself seemed to mount the throne. And did she stay the downward tendencies of the Roman empire? Did she infuse new elements of life into the decaying constitution? Did she commence one great, beneficent reform? Not one permanent amelioration was effected; philosophy was clothed with absolute power; and yet absolute power accomplished nothing for Humanity. It could accomplish nothing. Had it been possible, Aurelian would have done it. Society can be changed, the human race can be advanced, only by moral principles diffused through the multitude.

And now let us take an opposite instance; let us see, if amelioration follow, when in despite of power truth finds its way into the bosom of the common people, and Christianity itself shall furnish my example.

When Christianity first made its way into Rome, the imperial city was the seat of wealth, philosophy, and luxury. Absolute power was already established; and had the will of Claudius been gained, or the conscience of Messalina been roused, or the heart of Narcissus, once a slave, then prime minister, been touched by the recollections of his misfortunes, the sovereign power of the civilized world would have been moved. And did the apostle of divine truth make his appeal to them? Was his mission to the emperor and his minions? to the empress and her flatterers? to servile senators? to wealthy favorites? Paul preserves for us the names of the first converts;



the Roman Mary and Junia; Julia and Nerea; and the beloved brethren. All plebeian names, unknown to history. Greet them, he adds, that be of the household of Narcissus. Now every Roman household was a community of slaves. Narcissus himself, a freedman, was the chief minister of the Roman empire; his ambition had left him no moments for the envoy from Calvary; the friends of St. Paul were a freedman's slaves. When God selected the channel by which Christianity should make its way in the city of Rome, and assuredly be carried forward to acknowledged supremacy in the Roman empire, he gave to the Apostle of the Gentiles favor in the household of Narcissus; he planted truth deep in the common soil. Had Christianity been received at court, it would have been stifled or corrupted by the prodigal vices of the age; it lived in the hearts of the common people; it sheltered itself against oppression in the catacombs and among tombs; it made misfortune its convert, and sorrow its companion, and labor its stay. It rested on a rock, for it rested on the people; it was gifted with immortality, for it struck root in the hearts of the million.

So completely was this greatest of all reforms carried forward in the vale of human life, that the great moral revolution, the great step of God's Providence in the education of the human race, was not observed by the Roman historians. Once indeed at this early period they are mentioned; for in the reign of Nero, the purity of Christianity being hateful to the corrupt, Nero had abandoned its professors to persecution. The Christians in Rome, in the darkness of midnight, were covered with pitch and set on fire to light the streets, and this singularity has been recorded by the Roman historian. But the system of the Christian morals, the religion which was to regenerate Humanity, which was the new birth of the human race, escaped all notice.

Paul, who was a Roman citizen, was beheaded, just outside of the walls of the eternal city; and Peter,

who was a plebeian, and could not claim the distinction of the axe and the block, was executed on the cross, with his head downwards to increase the pain and the indignity. Do you think the Roman emperor took notice of the names of these men, when he signed their death warrant? And yet, as they poured truth into the common mind, what series of kings, what lines of emperors can compare with them, in their influence on the destinies of mankind, in their powerful aid in promoting the progress of the human race?

Yes, reforms in society are only effected through the masses of the people.

III. And such action does take place. Human life has gone forward; the mind of the race has been quickened and edified. New truths have been constantly developed, and, becoming the common property of the human family, they have improved its condition and ensured its progress.

This progress is advanced by every sect, precisely because each sect, to obtain vitality, does of necessity embody a truth. The irresistible tendency of the human race is to advancement. Absolute power has never succeeded in suppressing a single truth. An idea once generated may find its admission into every living breast and live there. Like God it becomes immortal and omnipresent. The tendency of the species is upward, irresistibly upward. The individual is often lost; Providence never disowns the race. The individual is often corrupt; Humanity is redeemed. No principle, once promulgated, has ever been forgotten. No "timely tramp" of a despot's foot ever trod out one idea. The world cannot retrograde; the dark ages cannot return. Dynasties perish; cities are buried; nations have been victims to error, or martyrs for right; Humanity has always been on the advance; its soul has always been gaining maturity and power.

Yes, truth is immortal; it cannot be destroyed; it is invincible, it cannot long be resisted. Not every

great principle has yet been generated; but when once developed, it lives without end, in the safe custody of the race. States may pass away; every just principle of legislation which has been once established will endure without end. The ark has mouldered; the tabernacle disappeared; the Urim and the Thummim lost their lustre; but God, who revealed himself on Sinai, is still the God of the living. Jerusalem has fallen, and the very foundations of the temple have been subverted; but Christian truth still lives in the hearts of millions. Do you think that infidelity is spreading? And are you terrified by a handful of skeptics? When did the Gospel of all truth, that redeems, and blesses, and sanctifies the world, live in the hearts of so many millions, as at this moment? The forms under which it is produced may decay; for they, like all that is the work of man's hands, are subject to the changes and chances of mortal being; but the spirit of truth is incorruptible; it may be developed, illustrated, and applied; it never can die; it never can decline.

No truth can perish; no truth can pass away. Succeeding generations transmit to each other the undying flame. Thus the progress of the race is firm and sure. Wherever moral truth has started into being, Humanity claims and guards the bequest. Each generation gathers together the imperishable children of the past, and increases them by new sons of light, alike radiant with immortality.

---

ART. II. — *The French Revolution. A History.* By THOMAS CARLYLE. Boston: Charles C. Little & James Brown. 1837. 2 vols. 12mo.

“WHAT induced Thomas Carlyle to select such a subject as the French Revolution,” we have heard

asked by those, who, having read only the "Sartor," think him a poetical mystic. "Did he write for bread, or from sympathy with that social movement?" To those who know him it is plain enough, that our good friend, however pinched by want, could not let out his mind to do job-work. His Pegasus would break down at the plough. Carlyle's heart is always, must always be, in what he does.

He selected this subject then, because to him there came a voice out of the Chaos, we may be sure. But farther, to any one, who will review his literary course, the explanation will be clear enough of his interest in that ruin and recreation of a social world. The gradual progress of his studies through Voltaire and Diderot led him to the observation of this unparalleled phenomenon. But his taste, his instinct guided him also. Like his master Goethe, he has been always hunting for a "bit of Nature." Whether he is writing of Burns or Richter, of Novalis or Elliott, of the Spirit of the Age or its Characteristics, or finally of Mirabeau, he everywhere shows the same longing after the genuine product of Nature. Hypocrisy however self-deceived and respectable is his horror, and is greeted with nothing more civil than an "anathema maranatha." This is his "fixed idea," his creed; and he clings to it with an unquestioning *bigotry*. Yes! *bigotry*; — for noble as the creed is, it is yet a *creed*; and, though he might deny it, a "formula;" and his range of sympathy, his candor of judgment, and even truth of moral sentiment are narrowed by this notion. In consequence he is prejudiced. He trusts to his first impressions. He casts his eye on a man with cutting penetration, and is satisfied that he knows him. He takes him by the arm, and by the feeling of the iron or flabby muscle judges instantly of his vigor. Truly he seldom seems much deceived by this instinctive love of Nature. Shams vanish before his glance, as gauze would in the fire. Yet even this love of Nature seems to us a kind of *Cant* after all. But we check ourselves; we do not like to say

even thus much in the way of fault-finding with one of the truest, honestest of critics and of men.

Our student of Nature had already picked up rare specimens here and there as he found them; and now at last he has arrived at this grand volcanic outbreak, and sits down amid mighty heaps of most indisputable genuineness, to learn what is in man. And truly he is nowise repelled by stench of sulphur and dreads not burns. But there was another reason for the study of the French Revolution. Carlyle loves man, loves the men he lives among. He is not indifferent to the temper of his own age, and thinking it, in its philosophy and professed maxims, a peculiarly mechanical, self-conscious, and artificial one, he cannot but obey the inward behest to sound his prophecy in men's ears, whether his fate be Cassandra's or not. He doubtless feels as if a sick generation needed a sanative; and what better than the pure crystal of natural feeling? His text is certainly a healthy one, and his homilies have a freshness, as if he had dipped with a leaf from the bubbling spring. In a word, our author probably anticipates, as many others do, that the *matchless* British constitution may be rent asunder by some larger growth of the social germ; and meanwhile, he may think it would be well for us not to hinder but to aid, as we can, the process.

Carlyle, we feel sure, has dropped all conventional spectacles, and opened his eyes to the true characteristic of our times, — which is, that the "better sort" are being elbowed more and more for room by the "poorer sort," as they step forward to gather a share of the manna on life's wilderness. Perhaps he thinks it high time, that they who are clad in decencies and good manners should busy themselves in teaching their brother "sans-culottes" to wear suitable garments. We believe then that our author was led to a study and history of the French Revolution, because he saw it illustrating in such characters of fire the irrepressible instinct of all men to assert and exercise their natural rights; — and the absolute neces-

sity which there is, therefore, that man's essential equality with man should be recognised.

Mr. Carlyle has evidently done his work like a man. He appears to have read most voraciously, and sifted most scrupulously. And when one thinks of the multifarious mass which he must have digested in the process of composition, we cannot but equally admire his sagacity, and respect his faithfulness. Add the consideration, that the first volume, when fully prepared, was by an unfortunate accident destroyed; and that the author, without copy or plan, was thus forced to tread over when jaded the path he had climbed in the first flush of untried adventure; and that yet with this additional labor he has been occupied only some two years and more upon the book, and our estimate of his ability, his genius, his energy, cannot but be great.

And now what has he produced? A history? Thiers, Mignet, Guizot forbid! We for ourselves call this French Revolution an Epic Poem; or, rather say the root, trunk, and branches of such a poem, not yet fully clothed with rhythm and melody indeed, but still hanging out its tassels and budding on the sprays. And here, by the way, may it not be asked whether Carlyle is not emphatically the English poet of our epoch? Is he not Shelley and Wordsworth combined, and greater than either? Thus far indeed we have seen this luminary in a critical phase chiefly. But it is not because he has read, in the life of the men he has apotheosized, true poems, incarnations of that ideal he worshipped? It seems to us an accident, that prose and criticism, not odes and positive life, have been his vein. Had he but form and tune what a poet was there! This book we say is a poem, the most remarkable of our time. It is not like a written book; it is rather like the running soliloquy of some wonderfully living and life-giving mind, as it reads a "good formula" of history; — a sort of resurrection of the dry bones of fact at the word of the prophet. Marvellous indeed! It seems as if, in some camera

obscura, one was looking upon the actual world and sky and moving forms, though all silent in that show-box. Of all books this is most graphic. It is a series of masterly outlines *à la Retzch*. Oh more, much more. It is a whole *Sistine Chapel* of *fresco à la Angelo*, drawn with bold hand in broad lights and deep shadows. Yet again it is gallery upon gallery of portraits, touched with the free grace of Vandyke, glowing with Titian's living dyes, and shining and gloomed in Rembrandt's golden haze. And once more, let us say in our attempt to describe this unique production, it is *a seer's second sight of the past*. We speak of prophetic vision. This is a *historic vision*, where events rise not as thin abstractions, but as visible embodiments; and the ghosts of a buried generation pass before us, summoned to react in silent pantomime their noisy life.

The *point of view*, from which Carlyle has written his history, is one which few men strive to gain, and which fewer still are competent to reach. He has looked upon the French Revolution, not as a man of one nation surveys the public deeds of another; nor as a man of one age reviews the vicissitudes of a time gone by. Still less has he viewed it, as a religionist from the cold heights, where he awaits his hour of translation, throws pitying regards on the bustling vanities of earth; or as a philosopher, from his inflated theory of life, spies out, while he soars, the battle of ideas. And it is not either in the passionless and pure and patient watching, with which a spirit, whose faith has passed into knowledge, awaits the harmonious unfoldings of Heaven's purposes, that he has sent his gaze upon that social movement. But it is as a *human spirit*, that Carlyle has endeavored to enter into the conscious purposes, the unconscious strivings of *human spirits*; with wonder and awe at the mighty forces which work so peacefully, yet burst out so madly in one and all at times. He has set him down before this terrible display of human energy, as at a mighty chasm which revealed the inner deeps of

man, where gigantic passions heave and stir under mountains of custom; while Free-will, attracted to move around the centre of holiness, binds their elements of discord into a habitable world. As a *man* Carlyle would study *man*. It is as if he were ever murmuring to himself; "Sons of Adam, daughters of Eve, what are ye? Angels ye plainly are not. Demons truth cannot call ye. Strange angelic-demoniac beings, on! on! Never fear! Something will come of you." Carlyle does not pretend to fathom man. His plummet sinks below soundings. We do not know a writer, who so unaffectedly expresses his wonder at the mystery of man. Now this appears to us a peculiar and a novel point of view, and a far higher one than that of the "progress of the human race." Not that he does not admit progress. The poor quibbles of those, who see in one age only the transmigration of the past, do not bewilder him. But he feels how little we can know, and do know, of this marvellous human race,—in their springs, and tendencies, and issues. This awe of man blends beautifully with reverence for Providence. There is no unconscious law of fate, no wild chance to him, but ever brightening "aurora splendors" of divine love. Enough, however of this point of view. We will but add that its effect is to give the most conscientious desire of seeing things exactly as they are, and describing them with scrupulous truth. Hence we suppose his intense effort to transfuse his soul, and animate the very eyes and ears of the men, who lived in that stormy time, and mingle up his whole being with theirs. Hence too the pictorial statement of what he gathers by that experience; and hence, in fine, a mode of historical composition, wholly original, which must revolutionize the old modes of historicising, so "stale, flat, and unprofitable," do theories and affected clearness appear, after we have once seen this flash of truth's sunlight into the dark cave of the buried years.

Of the *spirit*, in which this book is written, we would say that it breathes throughout the truest,



deepest sympathy with man. Wholly free from the cant, which would whine, and slap its breast, and wring its hands, saint-like, over the weaknesses, which the canter himself is full of,—it yet is strict in its code of right. Most *strict* indeed, though somewhat peculiar. It is not the proper or decorous, which he prizes, but it is the true. And of all writers he is the most unflinching in his castigations of pretence. He never flatters, he never minces; but yet he speaks his hard truth lovingly, and with an eye of hope. He does not spare men, because he sees more life in them than they wot of. While he says to the moral paralytic, “sin no more, lest a worse thing befall thee,” he adds, “rise, take up thy bed and walk.” He is kind, and pitiful, and tolerant of weakness, if it only does not affect to seem what it is not, and paint the livid cheek with mock hues of health. This leads us to say a word of his irony and humor, and he is full of both, though chiefly of the latter. No man has a keener eye for incongruities. It is not the feebleness of men, or the smallness of their achievements, which excites his mirth;—for where there is humbleness in the aspiration, he is of all most ready to see the Psyche in the crawling worm. But what appears to him so droll is the complacence and boastfulness, with which crowds build their Babel to climb to heaven, and the shouts of “glory” with which they put on the cap-stone, when their tower is after all so very far beneath the clouds. He loves so truly what is good in man, that he can afford to laugh at his meannesses. His respect for the essential and genuine grows with his success in exposing the artificial. Under the quaint puffings and paddings of “vanity fair” he does really see living men. He joins in the carnival. He looks upon it as a masquerade, and it is with real frolic that he snatches off the false nose or the reverend beard, and shows the real features of the dolt who would pass for a Solomon. He evidently does enjoy a practical joke on primness. But if he would, like the doctor

in the tale, make his gouty patient hop on the heated floor, it is only for his *cure*. Carlyle seems to us full of true benevolence. He loves everything but insincerity. This he cannot abide. It is the very devil, and he has but one word, "Apage Satanus." He stands among the Pharisees with the indignant words bursting from his heart, "Ye Hypocrites." In this relation it is too true our friend is nowise angelic, but only too much a man. His contempt is too bitter. We do not readily tolerate in a frail mortal the scornful mirth, with which Carlyle sometimes shows us the cloven hoof under the surplice. Not that the indignation is not merited. But is a man ever pure enough from all taint of falsehood himself, thus to wield the spear of Michael against the dragon? Yet honor to this brave and true man. It is because he has struggled so hard, and withal so well, to disentangle himself from the last thread of cant, that he has so little patience with the poor flies yet buzzing in the web. This loathing of the formal, which a vigorous nature and a bold effort have freed him from, is, we take it, the true and very simple explanation of that occasional rudeness, and even levity, with which, it must be confessed, he speaks of so called worshippers and worship.

And this introduces us to a consideration of his religious spirit. Some perhaps would say, have said, that Carlyle's writings are not baptized into that "spirit of adoption which cries Abba Father." But to us no writings are more truly reverential. It surely is from no want of faith in the fullness of divine love, from no insensibility to the nearness of almighty aid, from no doubt as to the destiny of the soul and its responsibilities and perils, that he uses so little of the technical and prescribed language of piety. Oh how far, far from it. But he will not name the Unnamable. He will not express more than he feels, or desecrate by familiarity what he does feel, yet knows not how adequately to utter. His sense is so abiding of our present imperfect development, his hope is so vast in that good which Provi-

dence has in store in its slow but harmonious processes, that he will not "enter the kingdom of God by violence." To him the Infinite is ever present. That holy and eternal life is his life, — the soul of his soul, — the love of his love, — the wisdom of his wisdom, the power of his power, — the Father. But he strives not so much to look upon the dazzling glory of this central source, whence all of good and fair streams forth; — rather with lowly eyes would he drink in the beauty rayed abroad from each object which its light vivifies and hallows. He would *worship* in the longing to be true and pure, in the dutifulness, the cheerfulness, the humble joy, the patience, and the charities of daily life. His devotedness should be his devoutness; his joy should be his thanks; his progress his confessions; his hopeful energy his prayer; and his offering of the First Fruits a full developed, genial healthiness of nature.

But it would carry us too far to say the half of what we feel about this noble soul, whom we love, not for being the "healthiest of men," for that he is not; but for the pure instinct and reposing confidence, with which being sick, as the most are, he gives himself up to the "mighty mother" to be nursed on her bosom.

With a few words on his style we must bid Mr. Carlyle for the present farewell, only hoping for that rich fruitage of his autumn years of which this summer flush is the promise. Of his later writings it would not be far from the truth to say that we like them, not by reason of the style, but in *spite* of it. They are so savagely uncouth by the side of his former classic gracefulness. It is a savage crowned with ivy though, and crushing luscious grapes as he dances. But the *Life of Schiller* and the early essays had all this naked strength and free play of movement, and yet were decent. They wore their garland of imagery like a festive wreath; and though bright and cheerful, with the melody of pipes, they had no lawless friskiness. He has always been remarkable for the picturesqueness of the metaphors which clothed his

thoughts. But this growth of the symbolic has become ranker and ranker, until, in this last book, the very trees in full foliage are fringed with mosses. It seems as if the axis of his mind had shifted, and the regions of fancy had been brought from the temperate zone beneath the tropics, and hidden germs were bursting prodigally into life. With this teeming fruitfulness and gorgeous wealth we associate the thought of miasm and disease. One feature of this style though we do like much, it is its freedom, its conversational directness, its point and spirit, its infinite variety. How far preferable to the dandy precision of so called elegant styles, and to the solemn dryness of so called clear styles. Is it a delusion however that something of that old bewitching melody of his earlier speech has been sacrificed? There is less to our ear of that rhythm which used to charm us, of that sound and sweep like the bursting of long swelling billows on the broad beach. But we have no notion meanwhile that there is any degeneracy in the artist. We believe that there has been a progress even. We think this present style a transition one. It is a struggling for some adequate utterance, for some word of power which should open the deaf ear; for we must remember his countrymen have been deaf comparatively, and perhaps for the want of some free, hearty speech, less prim than suited the scholar's garb. Will not this Apollo find one day the murmuring shell? Some, wiser than we pretend to be, settle this matter of style summarily. They will have it that Mr. Carlyle is "*affected*." We commend to all such for candid consideration these few sentences of his own. "*Affectation* is a cheap word and of sovereign potency, and should not be rashly applied. Its essence is that it is *assumed*: the character is, as it were, forcibly crushed into some foreign mould, in the hope of being thereby reshaped and beautified: the unhappy man persuades himself that he is in truth a new and wonderfully engaging creature, and so he moves about with a conscious air, though every movement betrays

not symmetry, but dislocation. This it is to be affected, to walk in a *vain show*. But the strangeness alone is no proof of the vanity. Many men who move smoothly in the old established railways of custom will be found to have their affectation; and perhaps here and there some divergent genius be accused of it unjustly. The *show*, though common, may not cease to be *vain*; nor become so for being uncommon. Before we censure a man for *seeming* what he is not, we should be sure that we know what he *is*."

---

ART. III. — *Conversations with Children on the Gospels*; conducted and edited by A. BRONSON ALCOTT. Boston: James Munroe and Co. 1836. 2 vols. 12mo.

THIS is a difficult book for Reviewers. It is not easy to say what it is, or what it is not. It is hardly safe to assume it as an index to the views and opinions of its editor, or to the character and worth of the school in which these Conversations were held. The Conversations published are incomplete; they comprise only one year of what was intended to be a four years' course. The very nature of such conversations precludes the possibility of recording them with perfect accuracy, though these were recorded with great fidelity; and then, they constituted the exercise of the scholars for only a part of one half-day in a week, the rest of the time being taken up with the studies common in other schools. As it regards Mr. Alcott, these Conversations very imperfectly reveal him, or his system of instruction. One is in constant danger of misapprehending him, and of ascribing to him views and opinions which belong

solely to the children. Even his own questions, if we are not on our guard, may mislead us; for they were frequently suggested by the remarks of the scholars, and designed merely to induce them to carry out their own thought.

Mr. Alcott has received much reproach, and we fear been made to suffer in the prosperity of his school on account of this book. He has been treated with great illiberality, and made to undergo as severe a persecution as the times allow. As a man he is singularly evangelical, pure minded, in love with all that is beautiful and good, and devoted soul and body to what he deems truth, and the regeneration of mankind. He is conscious of being sent into this world on a high and important mission, and his great study is to discharge that mission to the acceptance of him that sent him. Yet no man among us has been spoken of in severer tones, or been more seriously injured, for the moment, by the misapprehension and ill-nature, the misrepresentation and abuse, he has had to endure from those who affect to lead public opinion. It is painful to record this fact. For there is no man in our country who so well understands the art of education, and who is capable or desirous of doing more for establishing a system of Human Culture, in consonance with our faith as Christians and as republicans. And there is no fault, nor even shadow of a fault to be found with him; save that he will be true to the deepest and holiest convictions of his own mind; and will never sacrifice what he holds as truth, virtue, manhood, independence, to popular opinion, to a sickly taste, or a heartless conventionalism. It is not much to our credit, that we condemn him for this.

Mr. Alcott may not be sound in his philosophy, he may not be correct in all his views, and he may carry, and we believe he does carry, some of his favorite notions to extremes; but he deserves profound reverence for his determination to be a Man; to be true to Human Nature; for his fearless assertion of his own convictions, and for his deep and living faith

in God and Humanity. He aims to be himself and not another; to think his own thoughts and not another's; and having done this, he will not lock up his thoughts in his own bosom, and seem to acquiesce in reigning dogmas; but he will utter them, regardless of the reproach or injury he may sustain by so doing. Such a man in these times, when there are so few who feel that they are Men and have a part of their own to act, is not to be cast aside, to be trampled on, without great detriment to our social and moral progress. Did we know what is for our good, we should seek out such men, and honor them as prophets sent from God to foretell and to usher in a more glorious future.

Still we are not at all surprised that Mr. Alcott and his publications are so little appreciated, and so greatly misapprehended. Mr. Alcott is a reformer. He does not believe that the Past has realized the highest worth man may aspire to; he does not believe that the methods of teaching usually adopted, or the systems of education contended for by our teachers and professors generally, are at all adapted to the purpose of rearing up MEN, and of making them walk as becomes moral and intellectual beings, made in the image of God and possessing a Divine Nature; he thinks that the aim of our systems of education, whether private, public, domestic, or social, is too low, and that the methods adopted are destitute of science, above all of vitality, that they are too mechanical, and make of our schools only commendable "tread-mills." Now to think and say all this is to reflect no great credit on our thousands of school-teachers and learned professors and their friends, nor upon those who boast the efforts we have made and are making in the cause of Education. This is as much as to tell his disciples, that unless their righteousness, in this respect, exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, the Chief Priests and Elders in the teaching Art, they shall in no wise be qualified for undertaking to rear up men and women, fit to be the citizens of a

free and Christian Republic. Can the Chief Priests and Elders, the Scribes and Pharisees, be made to believe this ; or to regard him who utters it in any other light than that of a reviler, a blasphemer ? Reformers are never understood and appreciated, till the reforms for which they contend are to a good degree realized.

Then again, Mr. Alcott is a peculiar man. He has observed more than he has read, and reflected more than he has observed. He is a man, though eminently social in his feelings and tastes, who has lived mostly in communion with himself, with children, and with Nature. His system is one which he has thought out for himself and by himself. It has therefore almost necessarily taken the hues of his own mind, and become somewhat difficult to communicate to minds not constructed like his own. The terms he has made use of in his solitary reflections to express his thoughts to himself have a special meaning, a special value in his use of them, of which those with whom he converses are ignorant, and of which it is often extremely difficult for them to conceive. In consequence of his solitary reflections, of his little intercourse with the world at large, and his limited acquaintance with books, he has framed to himself a peculiar language, which, though formed of the choicest English, is almost, if not quite wholly unintelligible to all who have not become extensively acquainted with his mode of thinking. He very easily translates the thoughts of others into his language, but it is with great difficulty that he translates his thoughts into their language. People generally in hearing him converse form no conception of his real meaning ; and if they attach any meaning to what he says, it will in nine cases out of ten be a false one. This, however, though it accounts for the misapprehension of people, in regard to him, is not altogether his fault. People may misapprehend him, because they do not understand themselves. There are not many men who have thoroughly analyzed their own minds,



become masters of their own ideas, and so familiar with them that they can recognise them when clothed in a new dress. We are familiar with certain words, which we suppose we use as signs of ideas, but which we use very often as substitutes for ideas. When we find these words defined, or hear them used indeed as signs of ideas, and as signs of the very ideas for which we should have used them, had we used them for any, we are at fault; we find ourselves introduced to entire strangers with whom we can hold no conversation. We know not our own ideas; and very likely are frightened at them, and run away from them as though they were the Evil One himself.

But due allowance made for men's own ignorance as it regards the ideas they really express, if any, by the words they use, it is still extremely difficult to understand Mr. Alcott's system in all its parts. In the work before us it is but partially developed, and nowhere has he to our knowledge given us a complete development of it. But as we believe he really has a system, and one which is truly his own, and withal one for which he is willing to labor and suffer reproach, privation, and, perhaps, death itself, were it necessary, we shall,—availing ourselves of all our means of arriving at a just comprehension of it,—endeavor to lay it before our readers, as faithfully and as fully as we can, within the very narrow limits to which we are necessarily restricted.

Mr. Alcott is known mainly as a schoolmaster, but as a schoolmaster, as we usually think of schoolmasters, he must not be viewed. Unblessed with an abundance of this world's goods, he has often been obliged to confine himself to the drudgery of mere schoolmaster duties; but he is an original thinker, and he aspires to be an educator, not of children only, but of mankind. His system of Human Culture is designed for the human race, and is valued by him as true in itself, and as the means of raising all men to the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus. He pro-

fesses to have a whole system of Theology, Morality, — a philosophy of Man, of Nature, of God. His method of teaching is but the means by which men are to be led ideally and actually to the Absolute. His philosophy he regards as the philosophy of the Absolute. It is as the theologian, the philosopher, the moralist, and the philanthropist, rather than as a schoolmaster, that he is to be regarded. But we proceed to develop his system.

Suppose a man who has no means of knowledge but his five senses. Such a man can take cognizance, of only material objects, of sensible qualities. Color, form, extension, solidity, sound, odor, taste, comprise all the objects of knowledge he can consistently admit. In a word, external nature is all he knows. External nature is to him what it appears. It is real, not symbolical. It indicates nothing which it is not, — nothing on which it depends, and of which it may be regarded as the sign or apparition. It is what it appears, and when seen it is known, and when known that is the end of knowledge. Nothing more is to be known.

In Nature everything, as known by this man of five senses, and of five senses only, is concrete. Nothing is abstract. There are particulars but no generals. Mankind is merely a collective name, and has no meaning beyond the number of individual men and women it designates. A tree is a tree and nothing more. Truth and virtue are abstract nouns, invented for the convenience of conversation, but void of meaning. There may be true stories, true views, but not truth, conformity to which makes the individual story or view a true one. There may be virtuous men and women, but no virtue, conformity to which makes one virtuous.

But is this true? Are all things what they appear? And does all that is appear? Is the Appearance the Thing? Or is the Thing that appears always back of the Appearance? Is it the Thing that we recognise with our senses, or is it only the sign, symbol, or

shadow of the Thing? In man, is it the man that is apparent to the senses? The senses perceive the body, but is the body anything more than the symbol of the man? Take all the phenomena with regard to a man, presented us by the senses, and do they constitute the man? The man is evidently a collection of forces, moral, intellectual, and physical. We observe in him moral affections; we know that he performs the act of thinking; we see that such things as growth, decay, digestion, nutrition, and the like, are constantly going on in him. Now is there not back of these Something that produces them? Is it the feet that walk, or is it the man that walks? Does the brain think, or is it the man that thinks? The stomach, does it digest, or is it the man that digests? The heart, does it love, or is it the man that loves? Back then of the sense-phenomena lies the real Man, the Thing, the Reality, of which what is apparent to the senses is the mere symbol, or sign. The appearance, the apparition is not the man, but a mere index to point us to where the man is and to what he does.

Take a plant. The senses show us a certain number of phenomena. But in that plant are there not things which the senses do not show us, of which they can take no cognizance? Back of this sense-plant is there not the spirit-plant, that is, the real plant of which the senses show us only the appearance or symbol? The real plant is the law that is manifesting itself; the force which pushes itself out in what we call growth, in the bud, the blossom, the fruit; and which makes it precisely what it is, and not something else. It is not meant by this that the senses deceive us; it is only meant that they do not show us the Thing, but its sign; not the reality, but the phenomenon, as a word is not the idea, but its sign or symbol.

We do not give these examples as demonstrations, but merely as illustrations to make our meaning obvious. Now apply the remarks we have made of man and of the plant to all nature, and you have Mr. Al-

cott's doctrine of Nature, or more properly of the external world. The external world is merely the world of the senses ; it is not a real but an apparent world, not substantial, but phenomenal. He does not distrust the senses as do the Idealists, but he denies their power to attain to realities. They stop short of the Thing, and merely give us its sign. They show us where the Thing is, but leave it for the spirit to see what it is.

Pursuing the path in which we have started we may go much further. The Real is always the Invisible. But the invisible world which we have found lying immediately back of the sensible or apparent world, is it the ultimate world ? Is there not another world which the soul may discover back of that ? All effects are included in their causes, and we have not attained to the Thing till we have attained to the ultimate cause. Absolute reality of all things can then be found only in the absolute cause of all things. A cause in order to be a cause must be free, self-sufficing, and self-acting. If absolute then it must be one, for more absolute causes than one is an absurdity which the reason rejects. The world of the senses must then be resolved into the invisible world of the reason, which may for distinction's sake be called the *intelligible* world ; and the intelligible world must then be resolved into the Absolute world, the world of Unity, which, if we understand Mr. Alcott in his terminology, may be called the world of Faith. In man he recognises sense, understanding, or reason, and Faith or Instinct ; each of these has a world of its own. The absolute world, that is, Absolute Reality is found only by Faith or Instinct, and is the world of Absolute Unity.

Now, Absolute Unity, in the bosom of which all things exist, is God. In the last analysis all Reality resolves itself into God. God is the sum total of all that is ; the only Substance, the only absolute Being, the only absolute Reality. God is the Universe, and the Universe is God ; — not the sensible

universe, nor the intelligible, but the Instinctive; — not the universe seen by the eye of sense, nor that seen by the eye of reason or understanding, but that seen by the inner eye of the soul, by Faith or Instinct.

Now the universe of the senses and that of the understanding are both manifestations of God. The sensible universe is God as he appears to the senses; the intelligible universe is God as he unfolds himself to the intellect; the universe beheld by Faith or Instinct, that is, by the highest in man, is God in his absoluteness; as he is in himself, the real, not the manifested God. We take our stand now on the revelations of Instinct; that is, in God himself, and from his point of view examine and interpret all phenomenal worlds and beings. In descending from him through the intelligible world and the sensible, we perceive that all laws, all forces, all things, so far forth as they have any real being, are identical with God. God is not the plant as it exists to the understanding, or the senses; nevertheless, he is all the reality, all the absolute being there is in the plant; God is not man, and man is not God, as he exists to the senses, or to the understanding; nevertheless all the real being there is in man, all that is not phenomenal, appearance merely, is God, "in whom we live, and move, and have our *being*."

By a psychological examination of man, we find that he takes cognizance of the three worlds, or universes we have enumerated. Man must have then three orders of faculties, corresponding to these three worlds. He is not then merely endowed with five senses, as we supposed in the beginning; he has, above his five senses, reason or understanding; and above this, as that which attains to the Absolute, Faith or Instinct; which, so far as we can perceive, is very nearly identical with what M. Cousin calls Spontaneity or the Spontaneous Reason. Now in the business of education, we should have reference to these three worlds, or these three orders of faculties, and according to their relative importance. The

education which has been and is most common has reference almost exclusively to the world of the senses; some few philosophers and teachers are laboring to make it conform to the world of the understanding; few or none labor to make it conform to the world of Instinct, to the absolute Truth and Reality of things. This last is Mr. Alcott's work. To call attention to this work, to show by his instructions what it is, and by his example how it may be and is to be done, is what he regards as his mission. As a partial experiment, as an intimation of what may under more favorable circumstances be accomplished, he had these Conversations recorded as they occurred, and has finally published them to the world.

Having thus far glanced at what may be called Mr. Alcott's metaphysical system, we may now proceed without much difficulty to seize his theory of education, and to a general comprehension of his views of Childhood and of Religion. These views have struck many minds as absurd, but the absurdity, we think we find in the views of others, is often an absurdity for which we alone are responsible. We assign to others very frequently the absurd views which originate with ourselves; and it is a good rule for us to observe, that so long as a man's views appear to us to be wholly absurd, if he be a man of but tolerable understanding, we should judge ourselves ignorant of his real meaning.

Instinct, which must be carefully distinguished from Impulse, is according to Mr. Alcott's theory the Divine in Man. It is the Incarnate God. Our instincts are all divine and holy, and being the immediate actings, or promptings of the Divinity, they constitute the criterion of Truth and Duty. They are what there is in man the most real and absolute. They are then the most Godlike, the most Divine, partake the most of God; they are then to be regarded as the highest in man, to which all else in him is to be subordinated. The instincts are to be followed as the supreme law of the soul.

The instincts, inasmuch as they are the Divine in man, the Incarnate God, contain all the truth, goodness, reality there is in man. The Divine in man, or the God Incarnate, is one with the Universal, the Absolute God. There is nothing in the sensible universe, nor in the intelligible universe, that is not in the Absolute God. All things are in God, and God is in man. In our instincts then are included, in their law, their reality, both the world of sense and the world of the understanding. To know these worlds then we must look within, not abroad. To become acquainted with God and his manifestations we must study the instincts. Knowledge, truth, goodness, all that can deserve to be called by either name, must be drawn out of the soul, not poured into it. Human culture, therefore, as the word *education*, (from *e* and *duco*,) literally implies, is merely drawing forth what exists, though enveloped, in the soul from the beginning.

As the child is born with all the instincts and with them more active and pure than they are in after life, it follows that the child is born in possession of all truth, goodness, worth, human nature can aspire to. Therefore said Jesus, "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Childhood is therefore to be revered. The wise men from the East do always hail with joy the star of the new-born babe, and haste to the cradle to present their offerings and to worship. The educator must sit down with reverence and awe at the feet of the child, and listen. Till this be done, little progress can be expected in human culture.

The child is pure and holy. It obeys freely and without reserve its Divine Instincts. It smiles, loves, acts, as God commands. The true end, or one of the great ends of Human Culture must be to preserve the child in the grown up man. Most people at a very early day lose the child, and go through life bewailing their lost childhood. The whole family of man may be represented as the distracted mother, who

wept with loud lamentation for her children, because they were not. The only exception to this is, that they too often lose their childhood without being conscious of their loss. Childhood is lost ; the innocency, the freedom, the light of the instincts are obscured, and all but annihilated, by the false modes of life which are adopted ; by the wrong state of society which prevails ; by intemperance, in eating, drinking, sleeping, and the like ; and by the mistaken education which men have unwisely encouraged,—an education which tends perpetually to raise sense and understanding above Divine Instinct, and to subject us to shadows and illusions, rather than to truth and reality. Hence, the necessity of strict temperance in all the habits of the body, and of early attention to the instincts, so that they may be called forth and strengthened before the senses and the understanding have established their dominion over us.

The body in its true state is to the soul what the outward universe is to God,—its veil or covering, or more properly, its symbol which marks to the senses the place where it is. What are called bodily appetites and inclinations, come from the soul, not from the body ; proceeding from the soul, they should be regarded, in themselves, as of like purity and divinity, as any of the instincts of our nature. The exercise of them all, and in all cases, should be regarded as a religious exercise, and should be performed with all the feelings of awe and responsibility, with which we accompany the most solemn act of religious worship. All the functions of the body, as we call them, but which are really functions of the soul, are holy, and should be early surrounded with holy and purifying associations. Hence the conversations in the volumes before us with the children, on the mysterious phenomena attending the production and birth of a new member to the human family, or what Mr. Alcott calls the Incarnation of Spirit,—conversations which have caused him much reproach, and done him, for the moment, we fear no little injury.



His motives were pure and praiseworthy, and his theory seemed to require him to take the course he did, and he should not be censured; but for ourselves, we regard as one of the most certain instincts of our nature, that one which leads us to throw a veil over the mysterious phenomena by which the human race is preserved and its members multiplied. Mr. Alcott's theory requires him to respect all the Instincts, and why this less than others? In attempting to eradicate it, he appears to us to be inconsistent with himself, and likely to encourage more prurient fancies than he will be able to suppress. Nature in this has provided better, in our judgment, for the preservation of chastity in thought and in deed, than man can do by any system of culture he can devise.

Pursuing the rules implied in these general principles, the educator aims to call forth into full glory and activity the grace and truth with which man is endowed. He labors to train up the human being committed to his care, in obedience to the Highest, to see, and respect, and love all things in the light, not of the senses, not of the intellect even, but of Faith, of Instinct, of the Spirit of God,—the “true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world.” If he succeeds in realizing his aim, the result is a perfect Man, “armed at all points, to use the Body, Nature, and Life for his growth and renewal, and to hold dominion over the fluctuating things of the Outward.” Realize this in the case of every child born into the world, and you have reformed the world,—made earth a heaven, and men the sons of God in very deed. This is the end Mr. Alcott contemplates; this end he believes can be attained by his method of viewing and disciplining the soul, and by no other. Hence the magnitude of the work he is engaged in,—the importance of his doctrine, and his method of culture to the human race.

If now for the word *God*, we substitute the word *Spirit*, and call spirit absolute Being, and the absolute, the real universe, which lies back of the sensi-

ble universe and the intelligible, also spirit, and therefore regard all power, force, cause, reality, as spirit, and spirit everywhere as identical, we may, with the expositions we have made, attain to a proximate notion of Mr. Alcott's theory of God, Man, and Nature, as well as of Human Culture. He sees spirit everywhere, and in everything he seeks spirit. Spirit regarded as the cause and law of organization is God; spirit organized is the universe; spirit incarnated is man. An identity therefore runs through God, Man, and Nature; they are all one in the fulness of universal and everlasting spirit.

Spirit, though incarnate in the case of every human being, attains rarely to anything like a perfect manifestation. A perfect manifestation, however, is not to be expected, because there are no bounds to the growth of spirit. Many bright specimens of the worth men may attain to have been exhibited at distant intervals in the world's history; among which Moses, Socrates, and Jesus are the worthiest. Of these three Jesus stands first.

With this estimate of the character of Jesus, the Records of his life must of course be regarded as the most suitable text book for the educator. They give the children for their study the model nearest to perfection, that can as yet be found. Besides all this, the identity of spirit, and therefore of human nature in all ages and countries of the world, implies an identity between Jesus, or the Instincts of Jesus, and the Instincts of the child. The coincidence, which we may discover between the manifestations of the pure Instincts of Childhood and those recorded of Jesus, becomes therefore a proof of the accuracy of the Record. If we can reproduce in children, as yet unspoiled, the phenomena recorded of Jesus, then we have a new proof, and a strong proof, that the Record is a faithful one. These Conversations on the Gospels, therefore, so far as the answers of the children may be regarded as a reproduction of Jesus, the doctrines or precepts ascribed to Jesus, constitute a class

of evidence for Christianity, which the Christian theologian will find not without value.

These are, rudely and imperfectly sketched, the chief outlines of Mr. Alcott's system, so far as we have ourselves been able to comprehend it. Of the two volumes before us we will not attempt to form an estimate. Different minds will estimate them differently. That they do in part accomplish the end for which they were designed we think no one can reasonably deny. They may be read with profit by all students of the New Testament; and to minds of some quickness of apprehension they will open up, in that often read but poorly comprehended volume, many views of rich and varied beauty on which the soul may feast with delight. Parents and Sunday School teachers will find them a valuable help in their work of instructing their children, and in conversing with children on religious subjects; and to them we conscientiously commend these volumes, not for the doctrines they may be supposed to teach, but for the suggestions they contain, and for the method of approaching the young mind they in part unfold.

As it regards Mr. Alcott's religious and metaphysical system, we have not much to offer. We have aimed to state it, not to criticise it. It strikes us as neither absurd nor alarming. We see much truth in it, and we recognise in it the marks of a mind earnestly in love with truth and willing to labor to gain it. The system, though original with Mr. Alcott, is by no means new or peculiar. As a whole we do not embrace it. We differ from him in several essential particulars. We do not admit that identity between Man and God, and God and Nature, which he does. God is in his works; but he is also separate from them. Creation does not exhaust the Creator. Without Him his works are nothing; but He nevertheless *is*, and *all* He is, without them. I am in my intention, but my intention makes up no part of me. I am in the word I utter; and yet I am the same with-

out the word that I am with it. In uttering it I have put forth a creative energy, but I nevertheless retain, after uttering it and independently of it, all the creative energy I had before. So of God. The universe is his intention, his word, and we may find him in it; but he remains independent of it, and is no more identical with it, than my resolution is identical with the power I have of forming resolutions, or than my word is identical with the power that utters it. Mr. Alcott appears to us not to distinguish with sufficient accuracy between the Creation and the Creator. The relation of the universe to God, according to him, is the relation of a word to the idea it stands for, whereas we regard it as the relation of an effect to its cause. It would be hard for us to entertain his views, without becoming more pantheistic than we believe truth and piety warrant.

But notwithstanding this, Mr. Alcott's views of education, as he reduces them to practice, are unexceptionable. If he runs into an extreme in some cases, if he dwells too much in the Inward, and insists too much on Spontaneity, he probably goes not farther than is necessary to counteract the strong tendency in an opposite direction, which is the most striking characteristic of our schools as they are. What we regard as erroneous in his theory, can in the actual state of things amongst us have no bad effect. We have overlooked the Inward; we have lost our faith in the Spiritual; and it is well that a man comes amongst us, who persists in directing our attention to the voice of God that speaks to us, is ever speaking to us, in the soul of man. The Instincts, as Mr. Alcott calls them, are no doubt from God; they deserve to be studied and revered; we must, however, be on our guard that we do not become exclusively devoted to them, for if we do we shall become Mystics.

ART. IV. — *Philosophical Miscellanies, translated from the French of Cousin, Jouffroy, and Benjamin Constant. With Introductory and Critical Notices.* By GEORGE RIPLEY. Boston: Hilliard, Gray, & Co. 1838. 2 vols. 12mo.

THESE two volumes are the first of a series of translations, Mr. Ripley proposes to bring out, from time to time, under the general title of *Specimens of Foreign Standard Literature*. The works he proposes to translate, or to cause to be translated, are the works in highest repute in France and Germany, the best works of the ablest scholars and most distinguished authors of the two nations in the departments of Philosophy, Theology, History, and General Literature. He will be assisted in this undertaking by some of our first scholars and most eminent literary men, and will, if he realizes his plan, give us not only specimens of foreign standard literature, but also specimens of correct and elegant translation.

Mr. Ripley's undertaking is a noble one, and one in which our whole country is deeply interested. The importance of reproducing in our own language the standard literature of other nations cannot easily be overrated. Every nation has its peculiar idea, its special manner of viewing things in general, and gives a prominence, a development to some one element of universal truth, which is given by no other nation. The literature of one nation has therefore always something peculiar to itself; something of value, which can be found in the literature of no other. The study of the literatures of different nations will necessarily tend, therefore, to liberalize our minds, to enlarge our ideas, and augment our sum of truth. Very few among us have the leisure or the opportunity to make ourselves sufficiently acquainted with foreign languages, to be able to relish the works of foreigners save in translations. It is always on translations that the great mass of the people must depend for

all the direct benefit they are to receive from the labors and researches of foreign scholars ; and it is the direct benefit of the great mass of the people, that the American scholar is bound always to consult.

If translations are to be made at all, they ought to be well made, and to be of the best works, the standard works of the languages from which they are made. We have many translations from the French and German, but in a majority of cases, perhaps, we may say of works that were hardly worth the translating. This may be said especially in reference to the German. The American public study Germany not in the mature productions of her ripest scholars. Second and third rate authors, and second and third rate performances, at best, are those most generally translated. This is a grievous wrong to Germany, for it compels us to judge her for altogether less than she is ; it is also a grievous wrong to ourselves, for it deprives us of a good we might receive, and which we need. Translations too are in general miserably executed, by persons who are in no sense whatever qualified to be translators. This perhaps is more especially the case in England than in this country. They are made too often by literary hacks, who must make them or starve, and who have no adequate knowledge of either the foreign language or their own, and not the faintest conception of the thought they undertake to reproduce. In consequence of want of taste and judgment in selecting the works to be translated, and of proper qualifications on the part of translators, translations in general, unless of purely scientific works, serve little other end than to encumber our book-shelves, corrupt the language, and overload it with foreign idioms and barbarous words and phrases. Both these evils are sought to be avoided by Mr. Ripley's plan, and will be, if his plan be realized, as we doubt not it must. His plan ensures us a French or German classic reproduced in English, and constituting ever after an English classic, whereby the intellectual and literary

treasures within reach of the mere English student will be greatly augmented, the language itself enriched and perfected, the national taste refined and purified, and the national character elevated.

We are also much in want of the works Mr. Ripley proposes to reproduce. We have much to learn in the departments of Philosophy, Theology, and History, from the literatures of France and Germany. We are comparatively a young people. We have had a savage world to subdue, primitive forests to clear away, material interests to provide for. Our hands have necessarily and rightly been employed, and our thoughts busy, in procuring the means of subsistence and in preparing the theatre of our future glory; and we have not had the leisure to pore over the records of the past, to push our inquiries into surrounding nature, to sit down and patiently watch the fleeting phenomena which rapidly pass and repass over the field of consciousness, or to engage with spirit and ardor in high and extensive literary pursuits. It is not our fault, then, if we are in some respects behind the cultivated nations of the Old World. We shall not be behind them long. There is a literature in the American soul, waiting but a favorable moment to burst forth, before which the most admired literatures of the Old World will shrink into insignificance, and be forgotten. This nation is destined to excel in every department of human activity. It now takes the lead in commercial and industrial activity; it will take the lead in the sciences and the arts. From us is, one day, light to radiate, as from the central sun, to illumine the moral and intellectual universe. To us shall come, from all lands, the statesman, the philosopher, the artist, to gain instruction and inspiration, as from the God-appointed prophets of Humanity. We need not blush, then, to avail ourselves for the moment of foreign resources. The capital we borrow from abroad we shall profitably invest, and be able soon to repay, and with usury too.

This is not all. We are now the literary vassals of

England, and continue to do homage to the mother country. Our literature is tame and servile, wanting in freshness, freedom, and originality. We write as Englishmen, not as Americans. We are afraid to think our own thoughts, to speak our own words, or to give utterance to the rich and gushing sentiments of our own hearts. And so must it be so long as we rely on England's literature as exclusively as we have hitherto done. Not indeed so much because that literature is not a good one. English literature, so long as it boasts a Shakspeare and a Milton, cannot suffer in comparison with the literature of any other nation. For ourselves we reverence it, and would on no account speak lightly of it. But it cramps our national genius, and exercises a tyrannical sway over the American mind. We cannot become independent and original, till we have in some degree weakened its empire. This will be best done by the study of the fresher, and in some respects superior literatures of continental Europe. We must bring in France and Germany to combat or neutralize England, so that our national spirit may gain the freedom to manifest itself.

Moreover, excellent as is the English literature, it is not exactly the literature for young republicans. England is the most aristocratic country in the world. Its literature is, with some noble exceptions, aristocratic. It is deficient in true reverence for man as man, wholly unconscious of the fact that man is everywhere equal to man. It is full of reverence for that mass of incongruities, the British Constitution, which contains more of the character of the institutions of the Middle Age, than any other constitution or form of government to be found in Europe. It bristles from beginning to end with Dukes and Duchesses, Lords and Ladies, and overflows with servility to the great, and with contempt, or what is worse, condescension for the little. The constant and exclusive study of a literature like this cannot fail to be deeply prejudicial to republican simplicity of thought and



taste, to create a sort of disgust for republican manners and institutions, and to make us sigh to reproduce, on American soil, the aristocratic manners and institutions of England. Things seen at a distance are always more enchanting than when seen close by. Did we live in England we should spurn her institutions; but seeing them only at a distance and through the idealizing medium of poetry and works of fiction, they appear unto us beautiful and exceedingly desirable. We think it would be a fine thing to be Dukes and Duchesses, Lords and Ladies, to wear titles, ribbons, stars, and coronets, and to be elevated above the vulgar herd. We grow weary of our democratic institutions, submit to them with an ill grace, and do what in us lies to hinder their free and beneficial working. It does not occur to us that those of us, who sigh to reproduce English institutions, might, were the thing done, possibly be at the foot instead of the summit of the new social hierarchy; nor do we reflect that a nobility is elevated to its height only by making the immense majority of the people serve as its pedestal. It may be pleasant to be one of the nobility, to stand with one's head far above one's fellows; but it is not very pleasant to be the pedestal on which another stands. We wish no brother man to appear tall because his feet stand on our head; and rather than be obliged to run the risk of having some vain, fat, ignorant, proud, titled mortal stand on our head, we choose to forego the pleasure of standing on another man's head.

The corrupting tendency of English literature in this respect, on our young men and young women too, is easy to be seen, and threatens to be disastrous. Patriotism dies out; love for democracy becomes extinct; and our own government, in proportion to its fidelity to American principles, becomes the object of the severest censure, the most uncompromising hostility, or the most withering ridicule. Our own writers cannot arrest the tendency; because a considerable portion of them, formed by the study of

English literature, are themselves carried away by it; and because the remainder are too few in number, and their voices, though clear and strong, are lost in the universal din of English voices, which we are continually importing. In other words, English works reprinted and circulated here are so much more numerous, and owing to the fact that they can be furnished much cheaper, are so much more extensively circulated than the works of native authors, that they overpower them, and almost wholly counteract their influence.

Now in this situation nothing can be more suitable or more succoring for us, than large importations of French and German literature. France and Germany are monarchical, it is true, but not aristocratic. Monarchy has been, in Europe in general, popular rather than aristocratic in its tendency. The people have in most countries less to dread from the monarch than from the noble. Monarchy raises one man indeed above, far above the people, but in doing this, it lessens or neutralizes to some extent the distinctions which obtain below it. The writings of French or even German scholars breathe altogether more of a democratic spirit than do those of the English. Those of the French are altogether more democratic than the writings of American scholars themselves. Then, again, we have in this country not much to fear from the monarchical tendency. There is nothing monarchical in the genius or temper of the American people. We remember yet the struggles our fathers had with the king, and that we are the descendants of those who dethroned Mary Stuart, and brought Charles Stuart to the scaffold. Then we have no powerful families as yet that could make interest for a throne, no individual influential enough, universally popular enough, or far enough elevated above his brethren, to be thought of in connexion with a crown. We have too long been accustomed to govern ourselves, too large a portion of our citizens have taken a direct share in the affairs of government, and may always

hope to take a direct share in them, to think of abandoning them to any one man. We can arrive at monarchy in this country only through aristocracy. We do not apprehend that this will ever be the case. The aristocratic tendency is the only tendency we have to apprehend serious danger from; but even this tendency will, we trust, be arrested before it shall have done any lasting injury to our institutions. The study of French and German literature will arrest this tendency. It will break the dominion of England; and, without excluding English literature, will furnish us new elements, and a broader and more democratic basis for our own.

We are also anxious that French and German literature should be cultivated among us, because it will correct in some measure the faults of our own democracy. One extreme always begets another. The tendency on the one hand to adore England, and approach English manners and institutions, begets on the other hand a tendency to a rabid radicalism, from which danger may be apprehended, but from which good is not to be looked for. If the wealthy, the cultivated, and literary, as is and has been too much the case, approach England, the democracy of the country becomes to a great degree deprived of the helps of refinement, cultivation, literature, and the conservative element which always goes with them. True democracy has always a conservative element, and is no less wedded to order than to liberty. It unites the two; and is always normal in its proceedings. It is broad enough to take in all Humanity, and free enough to allow all the elements of human nature to develop themselves fully and harmoniously. Now in English literature this is never the case. The element of order and its adherents are separated from the element of liberty and its adherents. The exclusive study of that literature has to a considerable extent produced the same result here. Hence our democracy becomes in some measure partial, exclusive, and able to enlist on its side only at best a small

majority of the nation. This is a serious evil, and it is that from which we have more to dread than from anything else whatever. Democracy so long as it is broad and comprehensive, so long as it is true to itself, and to all the elements of human nature, is invincible, and able to go forth "conquering and to conquer."

Now in the master-pieces of French and German literature we shall find the two great elements, of which we have spoken, always united and working in harmony. There is nothing rash, nothing violent, destructive. Progress, the perfectibility of man and society is admitted and contended for, at the same time peaceable and orderly means by which to effect it are pointed out. The tree has its natural growth, and by natural growth attains its height. It is not made higher by being plucked up by the roots, and held up by artificial means. Erudition, science, philosophy, religion, art, refinement, are all combined with the spirit of progress, and made subservient to the elevation of the people. The cultivation of French and German literature must have a similar effect here, and this is what we want, and what, if Mr. Ripley's plan succeeds, we shall have.

This too is the country in which the noble ideas of man and society, which French and German scholars strike out in their speculations, are to be first applied to practice, realized in institutions. There the scholar may study; there the philosopher may investigate man; there the politician may explore the city, and ascertain how the state should be organized; and there they all may deposite the result of their speculations, their researches, their inspirations in books; but, alas, in books only; for to them is wanting the theatre on which to act them out, the practical world in which to realize them. They have old institutions to combat; old prejudices to overcome; old castles and old churches to clear away; an old people to re-youth, before they can proceed to embody their ideas, or to reduce them to practice. More than all this, they

want the freedom to do it. Authority is against them, and armed soldiery are ready to repulse them. But here is a virgin soil, an open field, a new people, full of the future, with unbounded faith in ideas, and the most ample freedom. Here, if any where on earth, may the philosopher experiment on human nature, and demonstrate what man has in him to be when and where he has the freedom and the means to be himself. Let Germany then explore the mines, and bring out the ore, let France smelt it, extract the pure metal, determine its weight and fineness, and we will work it up into vessels of ornament or utility, apply it to the practical purposes of life.

In passing from the proposed series of translations and the importance of the undertaking to the volumes before us, we would remark that, viewed simply as translations, they must possess in the estimation of every scholar a high worth. We doubt whether better specimens of translation are to be found in the language, — better specimens certainly *we* have never met. Familiar as we are with the originals, we read these translations with pleasure. They do not seem to be translations. They have all the freedom and freshness of original compositions. Yet they are faithful and literal even, altogether more so than translations in general. They are true reproductions, and could have been made only by a man who comprehended their subject-matter hardly less thoroughly than did their original authors. Mr. Ripley deserves high praise for the example he has set to all future translators. He has not only reproduced his authors, but he has done it in pure classic English, in which the most fastidious critic will be troubled to find a single idiom, word, or phrase at which to take offence. In doing this he has done much. He has proved that translations may be made without corrupting the language. He has also rendered an important service, in these volumes, to the philosophical student, by doing much to fix our philosophical language, and to free it from that vagueness

and uncertainty, which have heretofore so grievously afflicted all who have attempted to write or read on philosophical subjects.

The several pieces which make up these volumes are selected with great judgment and taste. They are, of their shorter productions, the most important productions of their authors, and are superior to any thing else of the kind that we know of in any language. They are so selected and arranged as to form, with the Introductory and Critical Notices by the translator, very nearly a continuous whole, and to constitute something like a regular treatise on the object, method, and history of philosophy, the philosophy of history, morals, and religion, and the destiny of man and society. The Notices are in part original, and in part selected or translated. They are of great value, and were other proof wanting, would prove the translator an acute critic, an accomplished scholar, an able philosopher, and a true and warm-hearted friend of his race.

As to the general merits of the authors of these Miscellanies, we refer our readers to the introductory notices by the translator. They are three authors, who are an honor to France, and to mankind. Benjamin Constant was long known throughout Europe as an ardent lover of liberty, as the devoted advocate of constitutional government, and as a distinguished literary and political writer. His great work, *De la Religion considérée dans sa Source, ses Formes, et ses Developpements*, exhibits much erudition, philosophic insight, and religious and philanthropic sentiment. We are glad to find that it is to be included in Mr. Ripley's series. It is just the work needed in the present state of religious doubt, indifference, and fanaticism in this country, and its study would do much to reconcile Faith and Reason, and to restore us to a pure, rational, and living faith in Christianity. Jouffroy is a profound psychologist, a clear and eloquent writer, and one of the ablest and safest moral philosophers, it has ever been our good fortune to meet. He was a

pupil of Cousin, is a professor of philosophy in the Faculty of Letters at Paris, and one of the principal disciples of the New French School. Cousin is well known as the chief of the New French Philosophy, and he is unquestionably, if not the first, one of the first philosophers of the age.

The subject-matter of these volumes is worthy of the most serious attention. The time has gone by in this country, when it could be accounted a mark of good taste or of superior wisdom to sneer at metaphysical studies. The public mind has been awakened, and mental and moral science is henceforth one of our most cherished studies. Men have outgrown tradition, and they begin to find themselves unable to legitimize their beliefs. They begin to be troubled with the problem of human destiny. They ask themselves, wherefore they are here; what is the solution of the enigma of human existence; what man knows, and wherefore he can know that he knows. They find themselves forced by the state of their spiritual affairs to give an account to themselves of themselves, of their knowledge and their belief, their hopes, fears, and doubts. They are compelled therefore to philosophize. And they must continue to philosophize, for the problem once raised, it will not down till it is solved. Every work therefore that treats on this problem which torments the soul, every work which proposes to aid us to meet this inward questioning, of which we have become conscious, and which we indulge more and more every day, must be hailed with joy, and sought after with avidity. We have lost the early faith of childhood, we have arraigned the catechism, and we must now wear out a life of painful doubt, or attain to a rational conviction.

These Miscellanies will aid us. They state with great clearness and distinctness the principal problems which have tormented the soul in all ages; and if they do not solve them, they at least give us the law of their solution. If they do not give us a philosophy which is perfectly satisfactory, which exhausts human

nature, they do give us the true method of philosophizing, of legitimating scientifically the universal beliefs of mankind. More appropriate to the present state of the public mind they could not be. The scholar will read them with delight; the divine, the moralist, the statesman will find them invaluable in directing them in the discharge of their several functions, and in solving the theological, moral, and political doubts they everywhere meet, and which seem almost to paralyze the spiritual powers of man. They are full of masculine thought. They breathe a liberal tone, assert with earnestness and power the rights and the worth of man, as man, and show a profound reverence for truth, beauty, goodness,—God. They are just the volumes for us young Americans, to quicken within us a sense of the dignity and reach of our mission, to kindle our faith in ourselves and in Providence, and to enable us to elaborate the glorious future which awaits mankind.

- 
- ART. V. — 1. *Principles and Results of the Ministry at Large in Boston.* By JOSEPH TUCKERMAN. Boston: James Munroe & Co. 1838. 12mo. pp. 327.
2. *Affaires de Rome. Mémoires adressés au Pape; des Maux de l'Église et de la Société, et des Moyens d'y remédier.* Par M. F. DE LA MENNAIS. Bruxelles: J. P. Meline. 1837.
3. *Paroles d'un Croyant. Septième Édition, augmentée de De l'Absolutisme et de la Liberté.* Par le même. Paris: Eugène Renduel. 1834. 8vo.

It is not our intention in this article to review at length the works, the titles of which we have quoted, though we desist from doing it not without much self-denial. We have introduced these works together



because they have something kindred in their spirit and object, and because they show us men, reared in widely different communions and countries, coming to virtually the same general conclusions. Dr. Tuckerman's work needs no commendation from us in this community. His own character and the Ministry, with which he has inseparably connected his name, speak for him as no reviewer can. The works of the Abbé de la Mennais, here introduced, are not his greatest works, but the most in consonance with our present purpose of any we have seen. They possess a high value, and should be in the hands of every one who believes Christianity has yet a mission to fulfil.

In a foregoing article we have endeavored to prove that the natural association of men of letters is with the democracy; we design in what follows to present some considerations which may tend to show, that the natural association of the clergy and of Christians generally is also with the democracy.

In attempting to do this we shall enter into no discussion concerning theological dogmas; we shall take sides with no sect, and show a preference for no particular communion; we shall by no means approach the borders of another world, and attempt to determine the happiness or the misery that awaits us hereafter, or the means of gaining the one or avoiding the other. We propose to speak of Christianity merely in its social and political aspects, in its bearings upon man's earthly condition.

We regard the mission of Jesus as twofold. One of its objects, and perhaps its most important object, was to make an atonement for sin, and raise man to God and heaven in the world to come. Of this object, — the more exclusively theological object, — we have nothing to say in this journal. The other object of his mission was to found a new order of things on the earth, to establish a kingdom of righteousness and peace for men while yet in the flesh. In this sense Christianity has a social and political character.

In its social and political character, Christianity has been too seldom considered. The clergy have rarely presented it in any other character than that in which it relates to another world. They have dwelt on its power to create a heaven for the sanctified soul hereafter; but only incidentally have they touched upon its power to create a heaven for the human race on the earth. They have boasted its efficacy in preparing us to die; but rarely its efficacy in preparing us to live. To hear them, one would be led to suppose that the great object of our thoughts and efforts should be to get out of the world the easiest way we can, and that the great value of religion consists in its ability to aid us in accomplishing this laudable object. Yet who knows not to live knows not to die; and who studies not to create a paradise here, may, perhaps, doubt whether he shall find the gates of a paradise open to him hereafter.

We risk nothing in saying that the great object of Christianity is to raise us all up to "the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus." In order to accomplish this object, it must neglect no element of human nature. Man's whole nature must be accepted, freely and harmoniously developed, or he cannot be perfected. Leave out of the account that part of his nature which connects him with the Unseen, the Eternal, and the Immutable, and bestow what care you will upon what remains, and he will be forever dwarfed in his growth. Nor different will be the result if you call forth into full activity his religious elements, but neglect those by which he is led to found the state and live in society. If then man is to be perfected by the aid of Christianity, Christianity must accept and develop his social and political nature, as well as his religious nature.

This granted, it follows that Christianity has concern no less with politics than with theology, with earth than with heaven, with time than with eternity. Whatever relates to forms of government, to state policy, to the actual or possible condition of men, to

the actual or possible influences which combine or may combine in the formation of character, it must concern itself with, as well as with what relates to theological dogmas, or religious rites and ceremonies. It must have instructions for us as statesmen and as citizens, as well as instructions for us as church members, dreaming only of saving our souls in a world to come.

And what in its social and political character does Christianity teach us? What cause does it espouse? Does it take sides with the people, or with the people's masters? Does it declare all men equal before God, and consequently equal among themselves; or does it show us the Father as instituting and approving the social distinctions which obtain in civilized communities, and thinking twice, as a French lady has it, before damning persons of a given quality? Does it teach us that the many were created to be used by the few? Was Jesus the prophet of kings, hierarchies, nobilities, the rich, the great, the powerful; or was he the prophet of the democracy, sent from God to preach glad tidings to the poor? In a word, is the natural position of Christians, so far forth as they are Christians, with the aristocracy, or with the democracy, with those who would govern the people, or with those who would clear the field for the people to govern themselves? We will let the Abbé de la Mennais speak for awhile. Perhaps we can gather the answer to these questions from what he shall tell us.

“Two doctrines, two systems dispute to-day the empire of the world, — the doctrine of Liberty and the doctrine of Absolutism; the system which would found society on Right and that which would yield it up to brute force. On the triumph of one or the other will depend the future destinies of the human race. If victory remain with brute force, men, bowed to the earth like beasts, dull, mute, panting, hastened by the whip of the master, will go through life moistening with their sweat and tears the rude furrows they must turn up, and without hope, save that of burying in the grave at last the grievous burden of their misery. But if Right obtain the victory, the human race will pursue its course with its head

erect, its brow serene, and its eye fixed on the future, the radiant sanctuary where Providence has deposited the rewards promised to its persevering efforts.

“The struggle between these two systems becomes every day more violent. On one side are the people, their patience exhausted, burning with desire and hope, stirred even to the bottom of their hearts by the long dormant but now awakened instinct of all that which constitutes the real dignity and grandeur of man, strong by their faith in justice, by their love of liberty — which rightly comprehended is true order, — and by their unflinching resolution to conquer; on the other side, are the absolute governments, with their soldiers and agents of all sorts, their public resources, money, credit, and the innumerable advantages of an organization, all the parts of which hold together, are mutually interlinked, and afford one another a reciprocal support, whilst it isolates, restrains all outside of itself, and renders all movement impossible, except between the sabres of a couple of *gendarmes*, and all speech out of the question, except in the ears of a couple of spies.

“Nothing at first sight can seem more unequal than the respective forces of these two opposite camps. But let it be observed, on the one hand, that in proportion as the armies are more numerous, the more immediately are they from the people, and the more thoughts, wishes, and feelings must they have in common with the people; the people in fine themselves, having in the main, however it may be attempted to persuade them to the contrary, no interests but their own, cannot be made to submit, for a great while to come, to be mere passive instruments in the hands of their oppressors. Let it also be observed, on the other hand, that the excessive expenses which the maintenance of these armies exacts, involving sooner or later universal bankruptcy, which becomes every day more and more threatening to every European state, must hasten the moment when these huge masses of men will be dissolved for the want of the means to keep them on foot. Besides, experience proves that in a contest between two forces, one material, the other moral, the last in the long run is always sure to triumph. Now moral force or power is wholly on the side of the people. To be convinced of this, we need but consider for a moment in themselves the system of Liberty defended by the people, and the system of Absolutism which the Sovereigns have undertaken to make prevail for their own profit.

“Liberty, which has its root in the holiest and most impre-

scriptible laws of human nature, would represent perfect order, were it possible to realize perfect order on earth. But if this perfection be denied to man, by reason of the internal disease with which he is afflicted, it nevertheless should be regarded as the goal to which he should tend, the end towards which he should unceasingly direct all his efforts. Neither the people nor individuals can in this life be wholly delivered from their infirmities, which to a certain extent are inseparable from them; but it is the duty of both to be constantly advancing in the cure which begins here, to be completed elsewhere. Whence it follows, that society, progressive by its very nature, must involve continual changes, successive revolutions. We are frightened at this word revolution, and we well may be, if we understand by it the disorders produced by selfish interests and heated passions in the bosom of a nation, in which new ideas and new hopes are fermenting. But revolutions which mark an onward step taken in true civilization, and open thus a happier era, revolutions which spring from the development of the sense of justice, have assuredly in their result a character altogether different; and instead of being dreaded as curses, whatever the sufferings which accompany them, they ought to be hailed as blessings from God, and as striking proofs of the influence he exercises over the general destinies of Humanity. They are, so to speak, God manifested to our senses in the world. For certainly these transformations which change the condition of mankind by elevating it, these sudden gales which drive us, albeit now and then athwart rocks or shoals, towards more fortunate shores, have in them something that is divine.

“The most radical revolution, taking it in all its bearings, which the human race has in fact ever undergone, was, without any comparison, the establishment of Christianity; and that which has been going on in Europe for the last fifty years is nothing but a continuation of it. Who sees not this is totally incapable of seeing anything, and more incapable yet of comprehending contemporaneous events. Eighteen hundred years of social labor have hardly sufficed to prepare these events. For what is now the question? Is it merely to modify some of the forms of power, to reform a few abuses, and introduce into the laws a few amendments which every body judges to be necessary? Not at all. It is not this which so powerfully agitates and stirs up the people. With them it is a question of substituting, in relation to the very foundations of social order, one principle for another, the equality of nature for the inequality of blood, the liberty of all for the native and abso-

lute dominion of a few. And what is this but Christianity diffusing itself outside of the purely religious society, and quickening with its puissant life the political world, after having perfected the moral and intellectual world, far beyond what the most sanguine formerly dared hope ?

“Christianity lays down as the fundamental principle of its doctrine, under the point of view we are now considering it, the equality of men before God, or the equal rights of all the members of the human family. And on this subject we may remark, that this important doctrine has no historical and philosophical value, unless we admit the unity of the race, without which evidently one race might be naturally superior to another, as Aristotle among the ancients maintained. The Christian doctrine, therefore, which in conformity with ancient traditions teaches that the human race springs from one and the same stock, is unquestionably the most favorable to Humanity, and ought to be guarded with the greatest care, as the very foundation of all reciprocally equal justice, and of all equitable society. In this respect, science, which at times is quite too hardy in its physiological conjectures, has some important duties to fulfil.

“The principle of the equality of men before God necessarily brings forth another, which is only its development, or rather its application, namely, the equality of men among themselves, or social equality ; for should there exist under this relation any essential and radical inequality relative to rights, this inequality would render them primarily unequal before God. Religious equality tends therefore to produce, as its consequence and complement, civil and political equality. Now civil and political equality has, for its form, liberty ; for it excludes fundamentally all power of man over man, and obliges us to conceive, in the outset, society, the state, under the idea of a free association, the object of which is to guaranty to each of its members his rights, that is, his liberty, his native independence.

“These rights guarantied by the association are of two orders. First, spiritual rights of thought and of conscience, which are held from God only, whether he be considered as the author of the moral law, which binds all intelligent beings together, and to which they owe voluntary obedience, or as the primal source of all virtue and of all reason. Second, rights of a secondary order, so to speak, material, relative to the body, to organism, and which are reduced in their essence to the right of preserving life, that is, of organism itself, and the external things necessary to its preservation. These external things are called property.

“ It follows from this that, as the direct object of all true society is to guaranty right, it must, in order to realize this object, guaranty to each and all of its members, in the external order, liberty of thought and conscience, and the liberty of living and acting, or the liberty of person and property.

“ Liberty of thought and of conscience, in union with the recognition of a moral spiritual law, that alone which makes man sociable, precedes the free association, or the institution of the state, and is its indispensable condition. This law, no more than the liberty which corresponds to it, namely, the civil liberty of thought and conscience, can therefore in any manner whatever be made to depend on the social compact, or a subject of the explicit or implicit preliminary deliberations which the formation of the social compact supposes; and consequently civil and political law, possessing no power to pass any statutes on this primitive right, which it can neither create nor destroy, and which it must protect against all acts that would impair it, respects it as superior to itself, prohibits and punishes, as offences against society, certain acts which are hostile to it; but it does not establish it by any of its prescriptions.

“ Personal liberty, or the right to live and act freely, implies the absence of all will, of all authority that would impose arbitrary restrictions upon this liberty itself; that is, it implies the coöperation of each member of society in support of the fundamental law of society.

“ The natural element of society, relative to human organism, or to the constitution of the state, is not the individual, but the family; because the element of society should be able like society to perpetuate itself; and because the individual dies, but family is immortal.

“ Family is composed of the father, the principle of generation, of the wife, who is its medium, and of the child, which is its expression. These three together constitute the organic man, man reproductive, perpetuated, — man that does not die.

“ Hence it follows that marriage, without which there is no family, is in this respect the first basis of society.

“ The second basis of society is property, for without property life is not possible. Now as life is not arrested in its transmission, property should not be; it should be hereditary like life, because it is inseparable from it. And since man cannot live without some property, permanent or transitory, it follows that he cannot be free and independent in his person, if his property be dependent, if he be not the sovereign master of his field, his house, his industry, his labor.

“Liberty of property and property itself may be attacked in three ways: first, by attributing to the state, or its chief, a paramount right of domain, which would be at bottom only an indirect and arbitrary power of life and death over all the members of the state; second, by attributing to the state, or its chief, the right to collect, under the title of impost or tax, some portion of the revenues of property, without the consent of its owners; for this right, to which it would be impossible to assign any fixed limits, would imply that of seizing the totality of the revenues of property, or pure and simple confiscation; the third is to attribute in any degree whatever to the state, or to its chief, the right of administering the property of its members; for the right of administering one’s own property is inherent in the very right of property itself, without which it would be purely fictitious.

“We can now comprehend how that the movement, which is everywhere remarked among Christian nations, is only the social action of Christianity itself, which continually tends to realize, in the political and civil order, the liberties, which the fundamental maxim of the equality of men before God contains in germ; and consequently, to free the spiritual man entirely from all human control, and property from all arbitrary dependence on government. Now this object can be obtained only by a social organization, the double character of which shall be the exclusion of all constraint in the spiritual order, and all intervention of government in the administration of property, or special interests, whether individual or collective. In this regard, government, the simple executor of the law made by all, or by the delegates of all, will merely take care that no one overstep the boundary of his own rights, or do violence to the rights or liberty of others.

“Spiritual liberty has for its expression liberty of religion or of worship, liberty of teaching, liberty of the press, and of association. When one of these, especially the last, is not complete, the others are but so many empty names. Ask not then under what form of society live the people thus deprived of their natural rights; ask rather under what tyranny they live.

“Liberty of person and of property has for its foundation election, combined with a system of free administrations within the limits we have determined. There is in fact no liberty, where the agents of power are not responsible, and where they are really responsible they cannot be hereditary. If the one be real, the other must be fictitious, and reciprocally.

“On the hypothesis of hereditary government no remedy for its abuses can be offered but the maxim supposed to be



implied of the amissibility of power. But power may be amissible in two ways, one regular, the other violent; that is, by election and by insurrection. Who can hesitate between the two? And what is it to organize society, but precisely the same thing it is to establish a series of means which, as far as human foresight can go, shall render it unnecessary, in order to save invaded rights, to recur to the dangerous hazard of insurrection?

"Such are the principles the people are instinctively seeking to realize, and which they will realize sooner or later most assuredly; for a right once known is a right conquered. Man never renounces a right which has once revealed itself to him as just. If he would do it, he could not. His nature would oppose him. And in this opposition is that very moral power, which is always sure to triumph in its struggles with material force.

"With the doctrines of Liberty now compare the doctrines of Absolutism. We will draw these from documents of unquestionable authority. The first two are Catechisms, published by the express order of the Emperor of Russia and the Emperor of Austria. The third is a semi-official writing, which produced, some years since, a very lively sensation in Italy, where the governments took great pains to circulate a large number of copies. We will speak first of the Catechisms.

"His Apostolic Majesty of Austria teaches the little children of his Empire, that the persons as well as the goods of his subjects belong to him, that he is absolute master, and may dispose of them as seemeth to him good. This doctrine, if it find credence, has the advantage of simplifying, to a marvellous degree, the whole administration of government. Does the Emperor need money or soldiers? He has but to say to one, Give me thy purse, and to another, Give me thy son. All is his, all without exception. This is his gospel, the *good news*, which he commands to be preached to the people in the name of Jesus Christ. And apparently for fear that, through mistake or evil intention, the purity of these maxims should be impaired in the Christian pulpit, he orders that the priests in certain places, in Milan for instance, be constrained to submit their sermons, before pronouncing them, to the superior lights of the police! The minds of the people and their hearts too, in the case of the Italians especially, must needs be very corrupt not to bless such an order of government! When the people become so ungrateful to their sove-

reigns, what can they look for but the vengeance of Heaven, and the end of this guilty world ?

“ We have just seen that the Emperor of Austria has a very lofty idea of himself and his rights ; but it is nothing by the side of the Czar Nicholas. The head of a church foreign to Catholicism, he yet believes it, — so does his zeal for the truth devour him, — his duty to concern himself with the religious instructions of his Catholic subjects ; and in a Catechism, printed at Wilna, and taught officially in all the schools and churches, he teaches them how they are to *adore* the autocrat, and explains to them, with great unction, the religious *worship* they are bound in conscience to offer him. Is he not for them, in fact, not merely the image but a real incarnation of the Divinity ? Down on your knees ! His will is the sovereign order ! his commandment the law ! Goods, life, all must be lavished, all must be sacrificed at the first nod of the Tartar-God. His subjects must love him from the bottom of their hearts, obey him, whatever he ordains, and never suffer themselves to complain, even in secret ; but follow the example of Jesus Christ, *who submitted without a murmur to the sentence of death pronounced against him by the legitimate authority.* The pen drops from my hand. It was reserved for this man to enlarge the borders of blasphemy.” — *Paroles d'un Croquant. De l'Absolutisme et de la Liberté.* pp. 203 – 214.

The other document referred to is entitled *Dialoghetti sulle materie correnti nell' anno 1831*, and from the account the Abbé de la Mennais gives of it, (for we know it only through him,) it must be a very interesting production. It gives us, he says, “ under forms sometimes grossly burlesque, sometimes downright atrocious, the whole system of Absolutism, with a frankness and a fidelity to be sought for in vain elsewhere. Here is no reticence, no hypocrisy ; all is naked. One might call it a candid *proces-verbal* of the counsels of Pandemonium. The author, in more than one place, appears to be very indignant that a timid policy, through prudential considerations, should sometimes judge it necessary to veil, modify, soften the doctrines which are at bottom its invariable rule. As for us, who prefer above all things a language clear, precise, exempt from all falsehood, circumlocution, or equivocation, we are so far from blaming this

fiery defender of despotism for his contempt of those wily and pusillanimous managements, that we really thank him for the brutal sincerity of his convictions and of his speech. The word which others retain upon their lips he utters in a loud and distinct voice. This is surely much the best." But interesting as the document is in itself, and notwithstanding the light it throws on the system of Absolutism, and the designs according to which the sovereigns of Europe regulate their conduct, we must pass it over with merely two or three extracts. The system it unveils must strike every citizen of this country, at all imbued with the spirit of our institutions, as absolutely atrocious. This system is as simple as it is revolting. "God has given the people to the kings. The people belong to the king in like manner as your flocks and herds belong to you; they are their property, their *patrimony*. This is all. Conditions, compacts, charters, — such things must not be dreamed of, that is clear." The doctrine of these Dialogues, we suppose, is contained in the Letter which Experience is represented as addressing to the European Sovereigns. We extract a few paragraphs.

"When, in order to restrain the wicked, it is not sufficient to raise the voice, you must raise the hand and punish, and let the punishment be both certain and severe. Those who meditate the overturning of the world have taken their measures from afar, and prepared impunity for themselves and adherents by *preaching humanity and the moderation of penalties*.

"For some time you have allowed yourselves to be seduced by their nonsense, and in order to be gentle and merciful, you have ceased to be just. Thus has the way been opened for the introduction of all iniquity. The certainty of pardon has loosened the restraints imposed by fear, and for each criminal absolved, a hundred faithful subjects have become criminals. Retrace your steps; and if you would have few to condemn, be sure that you condemn inexorably. Forbearance has been tried, and proved to produce only evil; *make trial of blood*, and you will soon see that it will no longer be the fashion to profess oneself a rebel. Begin with small offences which lead to great ones, and be sure that the punishments

you inflict be *severe and terrible*. The ferocious souls of base wretches are not to be frightened by infantile chastisements, advised by a silly philosophy. God, who is the father of mercies, has created a hell for the punishment of the sinner, and the *creation of a hell serves in a marvellous manner to people heaven*. Would you spare innocent blood, be persuaded that HE IS THE BEST PRINCE WHO HAS A HANGMAN FOR HIS PRIME MINISTER." — pp. 224, 225.

This is not precisely the language held by those who amongst us labor for the melioration of our criminal code, but it will no doubt be acceptable to those who still believe there is use in inflicting capital punishment. But here is an extract we commend to the grave consideration of the advocates of universal education.

"One great cause of the disorder, which now obtains in the world, is the too wide diffusion of Literature, and that itching desire for reading which has penetrated the very bones of even fishermen and hostlers. Literary and scientific men are doubtless needed in the world, and so too are shoemakers, tailors, blacksmiths, ploughmen, and artisans of all sorts. It is always necessary to have a great mass of tranquil and honest folks, who can be contented to live on the faith of others, and who are satisfied to have the world guided by the intelligence of others, without aspiring to guide it by their own. *For all these folks reading is dangerous; because it stimulates minds which nature predestinated to a narrow sphere, gives rise to doubts which their limited information cannot solve, accustoms them to intellectual pleasures which render labor monotonous and wearisome, quickens desires out of all keeping with their humble condition, and by rendering them discontented with their lot, leads them to attempt to procure another.*

"This is wherefore instead of favoring unlimited instruction and civilization (*civilità*) you should, with prudence, set some bounds to them. Were there a master found who could in a single lesson make all men as learned and as scientific as Aristotle, and as polite as the Grand Chamberlain of the king of France, it would be necessary to knock him in head forthwith, so that society should not be destroyed. Reserve books and studies for the *higher classes* and for such extraordinary geniuses as may break through the obscurity of their condition; let the cobbler stick to his last, the peasant be contented with his mattock, without striving to spoil both heart and head by learn-

ing the Alphabet. In consequence of a mistaken diffusion of literature, and disproportioned culture, an innumerable race of clowns and catch-pennies have turned society into chaos, by attempting *in spite of nature* to associate themselves with the higher classes, and you are compelled to skin one half of your people to make breeches for the other half; who, born to live by the axe and spade, demand places and pensions, and pretend to obtain the means of living, and of living well, by their pen. All these petty sages, without solid study or judgment, all these diminutive lords, with patrimony insufficient to boil a pot, have naturally in their hearts discontent and envy, and are combustible materials ever ready to be kindled into a revolution. The fatal propagation of letters has collected this inflammable mass; and by an adroit and discreet diminution of culture, you must stifle the flames of a self-styled philosophy, and remove the train from your thrones.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Above all, if you would keep the people quiet, secure your thrones, and cure the disorders of the world, you must bring back respect for religion, which, everywhere derided and rejected, finds no safe asylum, no not even in the temples. Ministers of the altar are become the scoff of the people, and their very name serves with the vulgar to designate all sorts of extravagance and baseness. . . . This hatred and this contempt of religion is the work of the revolution allied to impiety; and you cannot but be aware that the blows struck at religion have shaken your thrones and threatened to demolish them. And what have you done to reëstablish in the hearts of the people religion, that protector of thrones? And where is the king whose zeal is ardent for the cause of God? Princes, you are yourselves good and religious, but are the goodness and religion of kings always the power which governs states? Does it never happen that religion may rule in the heart of kings, and yet become the tool of the interests and policy of cabinets? Lay your hands upon your breasts and answer me truly, which one of your kingdoms is it, in which a volume of edicts and royal ordinances may not be collected in opposition to the canons of the Church? which of your palaces is it, in which there is no saloon ornamented with the spoils of the sanctuary? which one of your governments is it, that has not compelled the Pastor of the Vatican to weep? So long as religion, struck by kings, stands trembling before their thrones, how can it regain its dominion over the hearts of the people? And so long as the people do not respect the restraints of religion, how can they be expected to submit to the empire of

kings? Princes, comprehend, ponder, and hope; league yourselves in good faith with the priesthood; and without placing yourselves under its feet, give it your hand; for though you are the first born, you are nevertheless children of the Church. Accord with that wise, discreet, and pious mother, employ speech, example, address, clemency, and severity to heal the wounds of religion. Raise again the stones of the altar, and its solidity shall give strength and permanency to your thrones.

\* \* \* \* \*

“What we have thus far read,” says the Abbé in conclusion, “is then only the *secret* thought of those who now govern the world. And what in fact are they doing everywhere, but conforming to it in their practice? Thus we know their object and what they hope to accomplish. What most strikes us in this theory of despotism is its perfect consistency as a whole; attempt to modify it on any one point, and the whole system crumbles to pieces. Counsels in appearance the most exaggerated, maxims the most atrocious, are the legitimate consequences of the principle, the triumph of which is to be secured. There are no means of avoiding them. The inflexible logic of things, invincible necessity, leads to this result; and when I see everywhere princes or their agents carrying out these execrable principles into practice, I censure the men far less than the doctrines which rule them. Slaves of their own tyranny, they are compelled to forego every sentiment of justice, piety, fraternal love, to divest themselves of the human form, to be clothed with that of I know not what infernal phantom. Marked in the forehead with a fearful sign, God has decided that their aspect should shock the earth, so that the horror they inspire might begin for them here below the punishment of hell, to which they are doomed.

“But examine somewhat closely this system, which is presented as a perfect model of social organization. At the summit is placed the absolute prince who may do whatever he will; by his side stands the hangman; all else, men and property, are his *patrimony*. But there will at least be equality of servitude, equality of wretchedness? Alas, no. Below the prince are two distinct races, eternally separated; to the one wealth, instruction, information; to the other labor, ignorance, the bed of straw, and *polenta*, (the food of the *lazzaroni* of Naples,) the entire and eternal deprivation of the *dangerous pleasures of the intellect*, hopeless poverty, and an irrevocable brutishness. This last race is properly compared to beasts of burden. *Nature has made it what it is*, and that it must remain. But beasts of burden have plenty of proven-

der and fresh straw on which to rest. The plebeian merits not so much.

“ In the society confided to the care of the hangman, the *galley-slave is more fortunate than the laborer, and the prison is sweeter than the domestic fireside*. This is indeed an anomaly, but what shall we do to make it disappear? Meliorate the condition of the workingmen? Allow some rays of enjoyment to pierce the roof of the dark hovel of the poor? What say you? These are the *whimsies* of a silly philosophy. What then shall we do? Consult Experience? She will tell us that to restore the monarchical felicity of former times, and bring back order into all things, it is necessary to augment the horrors of the prison, and the tortures of the galley, in a word, to create a hell upon earth.

“ We cannot believe that such a doctrine is destined to prevail henceforth in the world, that it can succeed in stifling the love of liberty, which is now rising into a flame in the hearts of the people. In vain you abuse force, imprisonment, torture, kill; neither cudgellings, nor fetters, nor musket balls can disannul the eternal laws of God and Humanity. You may say, and cause to be said, that in struggling against your despotism, in claiming the political and civil enfranchisement of the people, in laboring to redress their wrongs, to solace their unutterable sufferings, to elevate their social condition, that we shake the foundation of all society, provoke disorder, and violate the precepts of Christianity; but, *it is too late*; these means are now used up. For in our turn, we may ask, what then for you is society, order, and Christianity? We may, we *will* ask you to show the act of cession, by which God and Christ have delivered over the human race to you, as your inheritance? ” — pp. 230 - 237.

Here are the two doctrines, the two systems, which are now disputing the empire of the world. The cause of Liberty is the cause of the people, the democratic cause. The cause of Absolutism is the cause of the people's masters and oppressors. Which of these two causes does Christianity espouse? Christianity, says the Abbé, espouses the democratic cause, the cause of the people; for the liberty the people are seeking to realize, is nothing but the social and political application of Christianity. From this he draws the very natural inference that Christians, that the church, ought to espouse the popular cause, league with the people, and not with the sovereigns.

The governments throughout all Europe are in one sense distinct from the people, and have interests of their own in opposition to the people's interests. They everywhere oppose the system of Liberty, and consequently the people who are laboring to realize it. They everywhere are seeking to reëstablish, or to perpetuate a system of absolute rule, which reduces the millions to complete slavery in person and in property. And in this nefarious design the sovereigns have the hearty coöperation of the church,—in all its divisions and subdivisions. The church, throughout all Europe, leagues with the governments, clothes their arbitrary authority with the sacred character of legitimacy, and shelters them with its spiritual ægis from the arrows of popular indignation. Instead of speaking to the people in tones of sympathy and encouragement, instead of feeding the holy love of Liberty burning in their hearts, firing them with the zeal, the energy, the indomitable will to be free, to rise from their thralldom, and to be men, and men in a condition to show forth the virtues and the bearing of men, it steps in between them and their tyrants, commands them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost to desist; and assures them that another step forward is taken at the hazard of the vengeance of the sovereign, the curse of the church here, and the curse of God hereafter.

This is now the position of the church throughout the Old World. And its position, allowance made for the difference of political institutions, is very much the same here. Here the government is founded on Right, and is with the people. Our government is an attempt to realize the doctrine of Liberty. Here therefore the church, to favor the cause of Liberty, is not called upon to side with the people against the government. We have no war between the people and the government, for the government is but the simple executor of the popular will. The true position of the church here, if it would be the friend of Liberty, is to side with the government, or rather



with the cause the government in theory represents; and its duty in this case would be to explain to its members and, by all the legitimate authority it possesses, induce them to cherish the principles on which our political institutions are founded. Does it do this? Not at all. It is here an opponent of the government, and of course an opponent of the people, inasmuch as it opposes the government of the people's choice. It is as faithful to the doctrine of Absolutism, as it can be in a democratic country. It is here a disturbing force, and anti-popular in its influence. The people find it here, as elsewhere, a let and a hindrance. Its ministers, with comparatively few exceptions, have no sympathies with the democracy. They have been educated in schools into which the utmost care is taken to prevent the spirit of the age from penetrating; and they are educated to look for the golden age in the past, not in the future. They read old books, or old books reproduced, form their minds in the study of the aristocratic literature of England, treasure up old maxims, and sympathize almost entirely with their European brethren. They have no confidence in the people,—of whom they know but little,—no just conceptions of the rights and the worth of man, no dream that they are set apart to the holy work of realizing a kingdom of freedom, righteousness, and peace on the earth. They are ill-informed, thoughtless, or apparently thoughtless, as to the destiny of man in this life; sometimes, indeed, they are zealous in some partial reform, which they endanger by their indiscreet zeal; at other times so prudent as to be useless, except to serve as drawbacks upon the democracy, and to give the alarm when the prophet from God speaks, or to cry out "blasphemy," when a brother pleads for the rights of man, and calls upon the people to take possession of their rights.

We know very well that the clergy will not admit our statement to its full extent, because they probably are in some sense like those who crucified Jesus, doing they know not what. We charge them with

no evil intention. We are not their judges. They seem to us to be entirely ignorant of their true position and of their real duty. Not many of them, — perhaps none of them, — would maintain, in general thesis, the doctrine of Absolutism, and most of them, we are inclined to believe, regard themselves as friendly to liberty. Nevertheless they are not truly democratic.

The doctrine of Liberty in the main is realized politically in this country; but not yet socially. The form of government is free, but the people are not all of them as yet imbued with the true spirit of freedom. A large party in the country are laboring to secure the adoption of measures which may render even our political freedom insecure. But be this as it may; there is a wide discrepancy in American society between the theory we have avowed in our institutions, and the principles according to which we regulate our practice. If we have realized political equality, we have not yet realized social equality. We have here, in this blessed land of equality, vast multitudes who are yet far below the rank to which man is entitled. The doctrine of Liberty here leads us to labor for the realization of social equality. In Europe the doctrine must be applied politically, to the forms of the government, to the constitution of the state; but here its application requires us to labor for the abolition of all artificial distinctions, of all inequalities of ranks or classes, and of all differences in the social position of members of the same community, not growing out of differences founded in nature, or in moral worth. It requires us to labor to make every man a man, neither more nor less than man.

Well, do the clergy understand this? Do they exert themselves to do this? Do they in their conversation, their sermons, their publications, countenance an equality of the kind we have stated? Do they teach that men are equal, have equal rights, and that it is impossible for them to enjoy equal rights in a

social state, where great inequality of conditions obtains? Do they make the poor conscious of their rights, feel that they are men, and were not born to be used by their more fortunate neighbors? We fear they do not. They preach that all the distinctions which obtain in society are the appointment, the express appointment of God; and that he who attempts to do them away is not only visionary but impious. They preach to the poor, to the down-trodden, we admit; but they preach submission, and quiet. Keep quiet, they say to those they regard as the lower class, submit to the order of things you find established. God has wisely ordered distinctions in society, made some to be great and others to be small, some to be rich and others to be poor. It is necessary for the beauty and harmony of society, that some should be at the base of society, as well as some at its summit. Do not be envious of those above you. Do not complain of the rich and prosperous. You cannot all be rich and distinguished. They who are above you have cares and anxieties you know not of. The tallest oaks feel most the fury of the blast. The humble reed is sheltered at their feet, and soon recovers its erect position, if perchance a passing wind bend it to the ground. The distinctions you complain of are the sources of your greatest happiness, and of some of the noblest virtues of which human nature is capable. Were all equal, where would be gratitude for benefits received, where were the protection and kindness which the favored show the unfortunate? If there were no rich men, who would give you employment, and how would you find bread for your wives and little ones? Be satisfied then with your lot. God has assigned you the place which best befits you; submit. Do your duty where you are, and hope that ere long God will take you to himself, and permit you to live in a world, where there are no high or low, no rich or poor, no bond or free, but where all are brothers and like the angels of God!

We are sorry to send this report of our clergy to

the Old World. It will not, we apprehend, exalt our national character, nor do much to commend American institutions, or to encourage the friends of Humanity struggling there and dying in the cause of Liberty. Nevertheless we have no right to send a different report. If the clergy knowingly and intentionally side with despotism, as far as they can in this country, we suppose they are willing it should be known; if they do it ignorantly, our report may be of some service to them, by enabling them to see themselves, as the friends of Freedom see them.

In a civil and political sense, we cannot discover that the church regards Christianity in any other light than that of a curb, a bit, a restraint, a means by which the people may be kept in order and in submission to their masters. The clergy, under this point of view, are a sort of constabulary force at the service of the police, and meeting-houses a substitute for police offices, houses of correction, and penitentiaries. Far be it from us to deny the great worth of Christianity in this respect. We acknowledge the virtues of the church, as an agent of the police; but we hope we may be allowed to believe that Christianity requires the church to possess other and far higher virtues. It should not merely keep the people in subjection to an order of things which is, but fire them with the spirit and the energy to create a social order, to which it shall need no constabulary force, lay or clerical, to make the millions submissive.

But if the church, both here and in Europe, does not desert the cause of Absolutism, and make common cause with the people, its doom is sealed. Its union with the cause of Liberty is the only thing which can save it. The party of the people, the democracy throughout the civilized world, is every day increasing in numbers and in power. It is already too strong to be defeated. Popes may issue their bulls against it; bishops may denounce it; priests may slander its apostles, as they did and do Jeffer-

son, and appeal to the superstition of the multitude; kings and nobilities may collect their forces and bribe or dragoon; but in vain; IT IS TOO LATE. Democracy has become a power, and sweeps on resistless as one of the great agents of Nature. Absolute monarchs must be swept away before it. They will fail in their mad attempt to arrest the progress of the people, and to roll back the tide of civilization. They will be prostrated in the dust, and rise no more forever. Whoever or whatever leagues with them must take their fate. If the Altar be supported on the Throne, and the Church joined to the Palace, both must fall together. Would the church could see this in time to avert the sad catastrophe. It is a melancholy thing to reflect on the ruin of that majestic temple which has stood so long, over which so many ages have passed, on which so many storms have beaten, and in which so many human hearts have found shelter, solace, and heaven. It is melancholy to reflect on the condition of the people deprived of all forms of worship, and with no altar on which to offer the heart's incense to God the Father. Yet assuredly churchless, altarless, with no form or shadow of worship will the people be, if the church continue its league with Absolutism. The people have sworn deep in their hearts, that they will be free. They pursue freedom as a Divinity, and freedom they will have, — with the church if it may be, without the church if it must be. God grant that they who profess to be his especial servants may be cured of their madness in season to save the Altar!

The people almost universally identify Christianity with the church. They cannot reject the church without seeming to themselves to be rejecting Christianity, and therefore not without regarding themselves as infidels. Will the clergy consent to drive the people into infidelity? Can they not discern the signs of the times? Will they persist in maintaining social doctrines, more abhorrent to the awakening instincts of the people than atheism itself? A people, regard-

ing itself as infidel, is in the worst plight possible to pursue the work of social regeneration. It is then deprived of the hallowed and hallowing influence and guidance of the religious sentiment; and it can hardly fail to become disorderly in the pursuit of order, and to find license instead of liberty, and anarchy instead of a popular government. For its own sake then, and for the sake of liberty also, the church should break its league with the despots and join with the people, and give them its purifying and ennobling influence.

The church must do this or die. Already is it losing its hold on the hearts of the people. Everywhere is their complaint of men's want of interest in religion; everywhere is there need of most extraordinary efforts, and various and powerful machinery to bring people into the church, and few are brought in, save women and children. The pulpit has ceased to be a power. Its voice no longer charms or kindles. It finds no echo in the universal heart. Sermons are thought to be dull and vapid; and when they call forth applause, it is the preacher that wins it, not the cause he pleads. Are we at any loss to account for this? The old doctrines, the old maxims, the old exhortations, the old topics of discussion, which the clergy judge it their duty to reproduce, are not those which now most interest the people. The dominant sentiment of the people is not what it was. Once it was thought that the earth was smitten with a curse from God, and happiness was no more to be looked for *on* it than *from* it. Then all thoughts turned to another world, and the chief inquiry was, how to secure it. To save the soul from hell hereafter was then the one thing needful; and the preacher, who could show how that was to be done and heaven secured, was sure to be listened to. It is different now. Men think less of escaping hell, have less fear of the devil, more faith in the possibility of improving their earthly condition, and are more in earnest to extinguish the fires of that hell which has been burning here ever since the fall. The church must

conform to the new state of things. She cannot bring back the past. Yesterday never returns. If she would have her voice responded to, she must speak in tones that shall harmonize with the dominant sentiment of the age. *She must preach democracy*, and then will she wake an echo in every heart, and call forth a response from the depths of the universal soul of Humanity. She can speak with power only when she speaks to the dominant sentiment, and command love and obedience, only when she commands that which the people feel, for the time at least, to be the one thing needful.

In calling upon the church, by which term we mean especially the clergy of all communions, to associate with the democracy, and to labor for the realization of that equality towards which the people are everywhere tending, we seem to ourselves to be merely recalling the church to Christianity. We freely acknowledge the past services of the church. She has done much and done nobly. She has protected the friendless, fed the orphan, raised up the bowed down, and delivered him who was ready to perish. She has tamed the ruthless barbarian, infused into his heart the sentiment of chaste love, and warmed him with admiration for the generous and humane; she has made kings and potentates, who trample on their brethren without remorse, and lord it without scruple over God's heritage, feel that there is a power above them, and that thrones and diadem, sceptre and dominion, shall avail them nought in presence of the King of kings, before whom they must one day stand and be judged, as well as the meanest of their slaves; she has done a thousand times over more good for the human race than we have space or ability to relate, and blessings on her memory! eternal gratitude to God for that august assembly of saints, martyrs, and heroes, which she has nourished in her bosom, and sent forth to teach the world, by their lives, the divinity there is in man, one day to be awakened and called forth in its infinite beauty and omnipotent energy!

But while we say this, we feel that the church now, in both its catholic and protestant divisions, is unconscious of its mission, and has become false to its great Founder. Jesus was, under a political and social aspect, the prophet of the democracy. He came to the poor and afflicted, to the wronged and the outraged, to the masses, the down-trodden millions, and he spoke to them as a brother, in the tones of an infinite love, an infinite compassion, while he thundered the rebukes of Heaven against their oppressors. "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers," says he to the people's masters, "how can ye escape the damnation of hell!" His word was with power. Ay, was it, because he spoke to the common soul, because he spoke out for outraged Humanity, and because he did not fear to speak to the great, the renowned, the rich, the boastingly religious, in terms of terrible plainness and severity. Before his piercing glance earth-born distinctions vanish, and kings and princes, scribes and pharisees, chief priests and elders sink down below the meanest fishermen, or the vilest slave, and seem to be less worthy to enter the kingdom of heaven than publicans and harlots. Their robes and widened phylacteries, their loud pretensions, their wealth, rank, refinement, influence, do not deceive him. He sees the hollow heart within them, the whited sepulchres they are, full of dead men's bones and all manner of uncleanness, vessels merely washed on the outside, all filthy within, and he denounces them in woes too terrible to be repeated. Here was the secret of his power. The great, the honored, the respectable, the aristocracy, social or religious, beheld in him a fearful denouncer of their oppressions, a ruthless unveiler of their hidden deformity, while the poor, the "common people," saw in him a friend, an advocate, a protector, ay, an avenger.

Jesus declared that the spirit of the Lord was upon him, because he was anointed to preach the Gospel to the poor; and he gave, when asked by the disciples of John, the fact that the Gospel was preached



to the poor, as one of the principal proofs of his Messiahship. He chose his disciples from the lowest ranks of his countrymen; and they were the common people who heard him gladly. Was he not a prophet from God to the masses? Was he a prophet to them merely because he prepared the way for their salvation hereafter? Say it not. The earth he came to bless; on the earth he came to establish a kingdom; and it was said of him that he should not fail nor be discouraged till he had set judgment,—justice,—in the earth and the isles waited for his law. He was to bring forth victory unto truth. In his days the earth was to be blest; under his reign all the nations were to be at peace; the sword was to be beaten into the ploughshare and the spear into the pruning hook; and war was to be no more. The wolf and the lamb were to lie down together, and they were not to hurt or destroy in all the holy mountain of the Lord. The wilderness was to rejoice and blossom as the rose, and the solitary place was to be glad. Every man was to sit under his *own* vine and fig tree, with none to molest or to make afraid. On the earth was he to found a new order of things, to bring round the blissful ages, and to give to renovated man a foretaste of heaven. It was here then the millions were to be blessed with a heaven, as well as hereafter.

This is the great truth that should arrest the attention of the church. The time has now come for this truth to be distinctly proclaimed and cordially accepted by every professed follower of Jesus. In saying this we cast no reproach on the Christian world for not having proclaimed it heretofore; for there is a time for all things, and nothing can come before its time. The time for the direct application of the social and political doctrines of Christianity was not until now. Nor in asking for a more prominent place for the social and political doctrines of Christianity, do we ask that men's attention be drawn off from the world to come. All worlds have their places and their claims, and no truth or aspect

of truth should be neglected. We ask not that men should strive less to save their souls and secure a heaven hereafter; we merely ask that they strive more, and more systematically and more religiously, to create a heaven here; we ask that the clergy bring out the great democratic principles of the Gospel; that they study and point out, and induce others to study and comprehend, their application to men's social and political relations; that they speak the language of encouragement to all who hunger and thirst after freedom; and inspire faith in the possibility of an essential improvement of man's earthly condition; that they preach ever the kindling doctrine of the fraternity of the human race, the natural equality of man with man, the equal rights of all men, and remind their congregations that all social conditions, social practices, and governmental measures, which strike against the doctrine of equal rights, are as repugnant to Christianity, as they are to democratic liberty and the true interests of mankind. We ask them to do more than to preach honesty and fidelity in the discharge of the duties belonging to the respective positions occupied by their hearers. There may be honesty and fidelity among thieves, and the thief may discharge, with the utmost promptness and fidelity, the duties that belong to his profession as a thief. Yet is he not the less a thief for that. We ask more than this of the clergy. We ask that they preach against all false positions, and take it upon them to point out what is the true social position of a man, as well as what are the proper duties of the position a man may hold.

In this we are far from asking the clergy to amuse us with visionary theories, or to send us on a wild-goose chase after a social perfection which can never be realized, and which perhaps it is not desirable to realize. Our own views of the social progress to be effected are by no means extravagant. We believe in the indefinite perfectibility of man and society, but we have struggled too long for progress, seen and

encountered and suffered too much, to look for any rapid advancement in either. But we do ask the clergy, and we do it not in our own name, but in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and of Humanity, to preach social progress, to teach that society, as well as the individual, may advance, and that it is a *Christian* duty to seek to perfect society no less than it is to perfect the individual.

It is by no means our intention to underrate the importance of seeking to perfect the individual man. Society is for man, not man for society. The growth and perfection of the individual man is, no doubt, the end always to be consulted in our social labors. Yet is the perfection of society, viewed in itself, of vastly more importance than the perfection of any one generation of individuals. In laboring to perfect the social state we are laboring for all coming time, for the countless millions of individuals to come after us; whereas in laboring to perfect the individual we are laboring for but an insignificant unit of an innumerable multitude, and for a being, so far as this world is concerned, that is to-day and to-morrow is not. But let this pass. Give to individual perfection all the prominence the clergy have ever claimed for it, still the perfection of the social state is a means to attain it. Man can never perfect himself, so long as he makes his own perfection the end of his exertions. He who labors merely to perfect his own soul, although he may make the doing of good to others his means, is no less selfish than he, who labors merely to gratify his senses, or to promote his own worldly interests; and we need not at this late day undertake to prove that no selfish man, no man, all of whose acts terminate in himself, is or can be perfect. All that is noble and praiseworthy in man is disinterested and self-sacrificing. To perfect ourselves we must, as it were, forget ourselves, even the perfecting of ourselves, the saving of our own souls, and bind ourselves to a good which is not specially ours, and seek

a perfection which is out of us and independent on us, as well as in us. A truth we utter here, which the clergy themselves have taught in that maxim so offensive to some, yet veiling the profoundest philosophy, that "a man must be willing to be damned before he can be saved." Jesus was not concerned with himself. He did not seek his own perfection; he did not labor, suffer, and die to save his own soul, but to redeem the human race, and establish the kingdom of God on the earth. He is our pattern. Let the clergy insist upon it, that we follow his example. Let them proclaim from the heights of their pulpits, with all the authority of their sacred profession, that wherever social evils can be found, there is the Christian's place, there the Christian's work; and that so long as social evils exist, no man is a true Christian who has not done his best to remove them; that no man is or can be a true Christian, in the full significance of the term, who has not done all that, with the force and light he possesses, he can do, to place every brother man in a condition to enjoy all his rights as a man and a citizen, and to unfold all the moral beauty and intellectual energy which God hath wrapped up in his soul.

Once more: We ask the clergy to refrain from checking the courage, and damping the enthusiasm of the warm-hearted champions of liberty, that ever and anon spring up in all communities, and demand a social advance. Let them refrain from taking counsel with Herod to destroy the "young child's life." Let them be ever, like the Wise Men from the East, able to recognise the star of him born to be king, and ready to fall down before the babe in the manger, and present their offerings of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Let them be ever on the side of the people; let them use all their efforts to cause every question, which comes up, to be decided in a sense favorable to the millions; let them not court the wealthy and the respectable, and shape their doctrines to the interests

and tastes of "the better sort;" but let them speak to the common mind; let them catch the inspirations of the masses, and be the organs through which the common soul of Humanity may give utterance to the divine thoughts and emotions which struggle within her. Let them do this, and they shall entwine themselves with the holiest and strongest affections of the age, resuscitate a love for religion, reverence for the church, and obedience to her commands; let them do this, and they shall again become a power sacred and legitimate, they shall realize the teachings of their Master in the sense in which those teachings are specially applicable to our times and the present wants of Christendom, make democracy an honor and not an accusation, give the people the powerful and hallowing support of the religious sentiment, baptize liberty in the font of holiness, and send her forth with a benediction to "make the tour of the globe."

---

ART. VI. — *American Liberties and American Slavery, morally and politically illustrated.* By S. B. TREADWELL. New York: John S. Taylor. Boston: Weeks, Jordan, and Co. 1838. 12mo. pp. 466.

MR. TREADWELL has attempted in this book to settle definitively the whole question, as to the right of the abolitionists to labor for the emancipation of the slaves. He takes up and professes to answer some forty popular objections to the proceedings of the abolitionists. He has done the thing admirably, no doubt, and to the entire satisfaction of his friends. But we are sorry to find that he has mistaken entirely the real question at issue, and paid not the least at-

tion to what we regard as the really weighty objections which may be urged against abolition proceedings.

Mr. Treadwell proceeds through his whole book, at least so far as we have read it, on the ground that the real question at issue is, Have the Northern abolitionists a right to *discuss* the abstract question of slavery? Now this is a great mistake, and this way of putting the question is altogether unpardonable. We have a right, as men and as citizens of an independent State, to discuss any question and all questions which concern any portion of the human race, and to discuss them freely and unreservedly. There is no limitation to this right, except as to the manner of exercising it. In discussing any question whatever, we are bound to show that respect for the opinions and characters of others, we exact from others for our own. Nobody objects to the mere discussion of slavery; and anybody may advocate, in the freest and ablest manner he can, the inalienable right of every man, whether black or white, to be a freeman.

We insist on this point. The abolitionists make no small outcry about the right of free discussion; they represent themselves as the champions of free discussion; and they take unwearied pains to make it believed that the whole cause of free discussion is involved in the Abolition question. Nothing is or can be more disingenuous than this. Abolitionists are in no sense whatever, either in principle or in practice, the champions of free discussion. Their conceptions of free discussion, so far as we can gather them from their publications, are exceedingly narrow and crude. In their estimation free discussion is to denounce slavery and slaveholders; and opposition to free discussion, is the free expression of one's honest convictions against abolition proceedings. A man who supports them defends the rights of the mind; he who opposes them attacks the rights of the mind. Now this sort of free discussion is altogether too one-sided to suit our taste. It is very much like our pil-

grim fathers' respect for the freedom of conscience. Our pilgrim fathers loved freedom of conscience so much, that they took it into their own especial keeping, and spurned the idea of sharing its custody with others.

Moreover, the abolitionists do not, properly speaking, discuss the subject of slavery. Nay, it is not their object to discuss it. Their object is not to enlighten the community on the subject, but to agitate it. Discussion is a calm exercise of the reasoning powers, not the ebullition of passion, nor the ravings of a maddened zeal. To discuss an important question we need not the aid of women and children, but of wise and sober men, men of strong intellects and well-informed minds. Discussion is also best carried on in one's closet, at least where one can keep cool; not in a crowd, where people of all ages and both sexes are brought together, and by the strong appeals of impassioned orators thrown into a state of excitement bordering upon insanity. When men have made up their minds, when the epoch for deliberation has gone by, and that for action has come; when their object is less to convince than it is to rouse, to quicken, to inflame; then proceedings like those of the abolitionists are very appropriate, and it is only then that they are ever adopted. It is perfect folly therefore for the abolitionists to talk about discussion. Any man, with his eyes half open, may see clearly that all this is mere pretence. Action, not discussion, is what they demand. Deeds, not words, are what they contemplate. To agitate the whole community, to inflame all hearts, to collect the whole population into one vast body, and to roll it down on the South to force the planters to emancipate their slaves, this is what they are striving to do. It is the *abolition* of slavery, not its *discussion*, they band together for, and it is idle for them to pretend to the contrary.

If any proof of this were wanted, it might be found in their treatment of every man who adopts conclu-

sions different from their own. Do they reason with him? Not they. They denounce him. They rush upon him with the fury of cannibals, and, as far as it depends on them, destroy his character, and make it impossible for him to hold up his head in the community. Do they answer the arguments urged against them? They? Mr. Garrison, we have it on good authority, stated in a public meeting in this city, that the arguments adduced against the abolitionists had never been answered, and he did not wish to have them answered. Discussion do you call this? Discussion! They know better than to stop to discuss the matter. We are right, say they. God and man are with us. We have a holy cause. Wo, wo, to whomsoever opposes us; mark him, friends of freedom; mark him, friends of the slave; he is a robber, a man-stealer, a murderer, and it requires "a pencil dipped in the midnight blackness of hell" to paint in appropriate colors the foulness of his heart. This is discussion, is it? The rights of free discussion are invaded, are they, because opposition to this method of treating our brethren is sometimes shown?

Abolitionists are merely discussing the question of slavery, are they? What mean then these thousands of Petitions to Congress, with their seven hundred thousand signers, a large portion of whom are women and children? What kind of arguments are these? What new light do they throw on the question of slavery? What understanding do they convince? What conscience do they persuade? They are merely discussing the subject of slavery, are they? What mean then these political movements they are preparing, these interrogatories they are addressing to candidates for office? Take the following from their official publications.

"The candidates presented to your choice will, of course, be nominated either by the whigs or democrats. The most prominent individual of the whig party, and probably their next candidate for the presidency, is a slave-holder, president of that stupendous imposture, the Colonization Society, author



of the fatal Missouri 'compromise,' and of the slavish resolutions against the abolitionists, lately passed by the Senate of the United States. On the other hand, the leader of the democratic party, 'the northern president with southern principles,' has deeply insulted this nation, by avowing his determination to veto any bill for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, which may be passed by a majority of the people, in opposition to the wishes of the slave States.

"No consistent abolitionist can vote for either of those individuals. It does not however follow, that he cannot vote for candidates for State offices, or for Congress, who may be their friends and supporters. If the candidate before you be honest, capable, and true to your principles, we think you may fairly vote for him, without considering too curiously, whether his success might not have an indirect bearing on the interests of Mr. Clay, or Mr. Van Buren. It is a golden maxim, 'Do the duty that lies nearest thee.' Vote for each man by himself, and on his own merits. If you attempt to make your rule more complicated, so as to include distant contingencies and consequences, it will be found perplexing and impracticable.

"The independent course in politics, which we have recommended, supposes great prudence, disinterestedness, energy of purpose, and self-control, in those who are to adopt it. May you justify our confidence in you. Do your duty. Come out, in your strength, to the polls. Refuse to support any public man who trims, or equivocates, or conceals his opinions. Beware of half-way abolitionists; and of men, who are abolitionists but once a year. Prove that you do not require the machinery of party discipline, to vote strictly according to your professed principles. Do this, and you will rapidly acquire a deserved influence. 'Such a party,' as Mr. Webster justly said, in speaking of the abolitionists, 'will assuredly cause itself to be respected.' *Within the next two years, the friends of freedom might hold the balance of power in every free State in the Union; and no man could ascend the presidential seat against their will.*"

So say the Board of Managers of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society in their Address to Abolitionists, an address, by the way, the least exceptionable and the best written of any abolition document we have seen. But does this look like *discussing* the subject of slavery? Take also the following from the "Human Rights," published by the American Anti-Slavery Society.

" *There is but one remedy.* Men must be sent to Congress, made of sterner stuff — men who, like Senator Morris of Ohio, are not ashamed to advocate the *rights* of their constituents. Dough-faces have had their day. Let us keep them at home, — their proper vocation is to head our Northern pro-slavery squadrons, armed with brick-bats and stale eggs. State offices too, and County and Town offices must be filled with men who will at least show as much zeal for the great objects which the 'Union' was intended to secure, as for the 'Union' itself, — men who will not esteem it their duty to choke discussion and encourage mobs to please the slaveholders. We need not debate this point. Every man's conscience will show him his duty.

" What we beg is, that duty may be done *in season.* Don't wait till candidates are before the people, and the elections are at the door, and the lines of party are drawn — and its wire work all fixed. Let your voice be heard at once. Let your determination be known, not to support any man who will not unequivocally pledge himself to *free discussion, free petition, and abolition where Congress has the power.* Let the political parties have this to reflect on before they select their candidates. No candidate ought to expect the vote of an abolitionist, who is not prepared to answer the following questions in the affirmative.

" 1. Are you in favor of abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia — for the honor and welfare of the nation ?

" 2. Are you in favor of so regulating commerce among the several states, that human beings shall not be made subjects of such trade ?

" 3. Are you opposed to the annexation of Texas to this Union, under any circumstances, so long as slaves are held therein ?

" 4. Are you in favor of acknowledging the independence of Hayti, and of establishing commercial relations with that nation on the same terms with the most favored nations ?

" But they *will* expect votes unless abolitionists bestir themselves in time. Crafty politicians always calculate on humanity's '*dying away.*' By our 'fathers' ashes' let them be disappointed henceforth and forever. Let the abolitionists meet in their societies, resolve on energetic and up-to-the-mark political action, and *publish* their resolution in the *county* as well as the abolition papers. Such demonstrations, in good time, will not be without their effect. Above all things, let the action when begun, like the good cause itself, '*die away*' *bigger and bigger.*"

The abolitionists are merely *discussing* the subject of slavery, are they ? What have the respective merits of

candidates for office, State or Federal, to do with the merits of slavery? What has the recognition of the independence of Hayti to do with the merits of slavery? If abolitionists are merely discussing slavery, we ask, what they have to do, *as abolitionists*, with questions like those here introduced? But we need dwell no longer upon this point. Abolitionists may say and believe what they will, but it is perfectly idle for them to dream of convincing any intelligent observer, that they are merely discussing the question of slavery. As we have said, their object is to abolish it, not to discuss it, and their means for abolishing it are not calm and rational discussion, but agitation, the agitation of the community, inflaming its passions, and directing, by means of the ballot box, the force they thus collect to bear directly on Southern institutions.

We say again, then, that Mr. Treadwell has not stated the real question at issue, and his book is therefore worthless. The real question at issue is, Have the citizens of the non-slaveholding States the right to set on foot a series of measures — no matter what measures — intentionally and avowedly for the purpose of emancipating the slaves? This is the question. Have we the right to commence a series of operations for the accomplishment of an object, and to prosecute them with strict and sole reference to the accomplishment of an object, over which we have no rightful jurisdiction?

Why is it that the abolitionists shrink from this question? Why is it that, — so far as our knowledge extends, — they have never in a single instance met this question, or even alluded to it? Shall we say, because they are conscious that they cannot meet it, without being forced to acknowledge that they are wrong in their proceedings, and ought forthwith to disband their associations?

Doubtless somebody must have the jurisdiction of the slave question. Who is it? Who has the legal right to abolish slavery? The States in which it exists, and the sole right to do it, says the constitution

of the American Anti-Slavery Society. If this be so, it is certain that the abolitionists, as citizens of non-slaveholding States, have not the right to abolish slavery. In laboring to abolish it then, they are laboring to do that which they have no legal right to do, even according to their own official confession. They then, so far as they labor to abolish it, are acting against law, are transgressors of the law, and obnoxious to its penalties. There is no gainsaying this.

This being so, on what ground will the abolitionists justify their proceedings? Will they take their stand above law, appeal from law to their individual conceptions of right, to the paramount law of Humanity — of God? We presume so. We believe this is their appeal, this the ground on which they attempt to legitimate their proceedings. Be it so. In taking this ground they set the law at defiance, and are either a mob or a band of insurrectionists. In taking this ground they justify all the lawless violence against which they have so vehemently declaimed. If one class of the community may set the laws at defiance, why may not another? If the abolitionists may set at nought the international law, which gives the slaveholding States the exclusive jurisdiction of the slave question, why may not other citizens say they have a right by mob-law to prevent them, if they can, from doing it? It were not difficult to convict the abolitionists of preaching the very doctrines the mobocrats attempt to reduce to practice. They ought not therefore to think it strange, that they have been in but too many instances the victims of lawless violence. When a portion of the community take it into their heads that they are wiser than the law, and commence the performance of acts in contravention of law, they ought to be aware that they open the door to every species of lawless violence, unchain the tiger, and must be answerable for the consequences.

Nevertheless we cheerfully admit, that, in saying

the abolitionists appeal from law as it is to what they consider it ought to be, to the paramount law of Humanity, we do not necessarily condemn them, nor even cast a shadow of a reproach upon them. There may be cases in which men shall be justified in doing this; nay, when it shall be their duty to do this. But this cannot be done without rebellion. They who do it declare the bonds of society broken, and society itself reduced to its original elements. It cannot be done in accordance with any existing social order; it therefore can be justified only in such cases as do justify rebellion, revolution. Revolutions are sometimes justifiable, and we as a nation hold to the sacred right of insurrection. If the abolitionists take the ground we suppose they do, they are in fact insurrectionists, they are revolutionists. This is their character. Now in order to justify themselves they must make out a clear case, that the present circumstances of our Republic are such as to warrant a revolution.

No doubt Justice, the paramount law of Humanity, demands the abolition of slavery. But of whom does it demand it? and on what conditions does it demand it? Does Humanity command us to abolish it in contravention of law? Is Humanity, all things considered, more interested in declaring the negroes free, than in maintaining those laws which the abolitionists violate in laboring to bring about the declaration? We say *declaring* the slaves free, and we do so designedly; for this is as far as the efforts of the abolitionists, if successful, can go. They cannot make the slaves free. The slave is never converted into a freeman by a stroke of the pen. Freedom cannot be conferred; it must be conquered. The slave must grow into freedom and be able to maintain his freedom, or he is a slave still, whatever he may be called. If then the abolitionists cannot make out clearly and beyond the possibility of cavil, that Humanity is more interested in declaring the slaves free than she is in maintaining the laws, the citizens of

non-slaveholding States must violate, before they can cause them to be declared free, they cannot make out a case that justifies revolution, nor a case that justifies their proceedings even admitting their own premises.

Slavery ought to be abolished, says the abolitionist, and what ought to be done it is right to do. It is right then to abolish slavery. This is enough for me. Ask me not to stop and consider what may be found in statute laws and paper constitutions. The tyrant's foot is on the neck of my brother; don't tell me to stop and ask whether, all things considered, it be my duty to run to his rescue. It may not be expedient to do it. But what of that? Let me alone. I will hurl the tyrant to the dust, and deliver my brother. We understand this feeling very well, and by dwelling upon it could work ourselves up, as we often have done, into a glorious passion, and become quite heroic. Still we believe harm seldom comes from stopping to consider.

We eschew expediency as a rule of action as heartily as do our friends the abolitionists. We are not among those who sneer at abstract right, and say we are not to regard it in practical life. Abstract right, as we view it, is absolute right, which is simply right, neither more nor less. Now we hold that every one is bound to consult the right and the right only, and having found it, to do it, let who or what will oppose. But we believe it is, before acting, very proper to determine what is right, not only in a general case, but in the particular case in which it is proposed to act. In determining what is right in any given case, it is necessary to take into consideration all the circumstances and bearings of that case. Right, it is true, never varies, but the action varies according to the circumstances under which it is performed. An action with certain general characteristics, performed under certain circumstances, shall be right, but performed under other circumstances shall be wrong; because in the latter case it is in fact

a different action from what it is in the former. A given action viewed in one of its relations may be right, yet viewed in all its relations it shall be improper to be done. It is therefore always necessary, in order to determine whether a particular action should be done or not, to survey it in all its relations, and to examine as far as we can all its bearings. The consequences of the action are by no means to be overlooked. True, the consequences of an action do not *constitute* its moral character, but they are necessary to be consulted in order to *ascertain* its moral character. The idea of right is unquestionably intuitive, of transcendental origin; but its proper application to practical life is a matter of experience, to be determined by the understanding.

Admit then that slavery is wrong, that it is right to abolish it, it does by no means follow that the citizens of non-slaveholding States have the right to abolish it; nor that the abolition proceedings are commanded by that law of right, to which the abolitionists so confidently appeal. A fellow citizen has wronged us. It is right that we should have redress; but it is right that we should seek redress only in conformity to the law of the land. We shall be held justifiable in morals, no more than in law, if we undertake to obtain redress ourselves, without reference to the legal method of obtaining it. The abolitionist must do more than prove that slavery is wrong, that it ought to be abolished, and that it is right to abolish it; he must prove first, that *he* has a right to abolish it, and secondly, that he has a right to abolish it in the way he proposes to do,—two things we hope he will forthwith undertake to prove, but which we fear he will be able to prove not without difficulty.

We go as strongly for liberty as the abolitionist. We protest with the whole energy of our moral being against the right of any man to hold his brother man in slavery. To the slaveholder, boasting the beauties of the slave system, its happy effects, and the sweet ties it creates between the master and slave, we have

no answer, but "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you." When we find the master willing to become, and desirous of becoming a slave, then, and not till then, will we listen to his defence of slavery. Man is born with the right to be free. Liberty is his inalienable right, and there is nothing in heaven or on earth to justify one man in depriving another of his rights. We can see, we think we do see, how God overrules slavery for good, and makes it serve to restrain or destroy other evils, which might perhaps lead to consequences still worse than those of Negro slavery itself; but this is in our judgment of the matter no excuse, no palliation of the guilt of those, by whose agency slavery was introduced and is perpetuated. On this point we have no controversy with the abolitionist. We sympathize with slavery no more than he does; and we are as far as he would be from appearing as the defender or the apologist of the slaveholder. Slavery is wholly indefensible; it ought to be abolished; it must be abolished; it will be abolished. But does it belong to us, who are citizens of non-slaveholding States, to abolish it? This is the first question we want answered.

To emancipate the slaves, viewed in itself, might be a praiseworthy deed. It were, if it could be done, a good work. But it is not therefore necessarily true that it is a work for us to perform. It is not only necessary to prove the work a good one, but that it is *our* work, before we have proved that we have a right to undertake it. Every man has, in the general allotment of Providence, his special work. Every community its special mission; and it is each man's duty to ascertain and perform his own work, each community's duty to ascertain and fulfil its own mission. Evil always results from the attempt of any one man to be that for which God and nature have not designed him, and consequently evil must always proceed from the attempt of any one to perform the task assigned another.



The emancipation of the slaves, we say, is not our work. Slavery may be a sin, — but it is not ours; and there is no occasion for us to assume the responsibility of other people's sins. We have sins enough of our own, and more than we can answer for; we have more work to perform for freedom here, within the limits of our own territory, than we can perform in many centuries, even should we direct to its performance our exclusive attention and all our energies. Slavery, it may be, is a stain, a disgrace upon the community that tolerates it; but if so, it is not a stain nor a disgrace on non-slaveholding communities. We are not disgraced because Constantinople is a slaveholding city, nor are we because Charleston is a slaveholding city. The States that hold slaves are alone responsible for the institution. If, as they pretend, it be a good and praiseworthy institution, theirs be the glory of maintaining it; if it be, as the abolitionists regard it, a disgraceful, a wicked institution, theirs be the sin and disgrace of perpetuating it. They are of age, and are responsible for their own deeds.

The abolitionist considers that it is our duty to labor for the emancipation of the slaves, because our nation is a slaveholding nation, and is therefore disgraced in the eyes of foreigners. To foreigners, who reproach us with slavery, all we have to say is, when you have done as much to elevate labor and the laboring classes, as we have, we will hear you; till then hold your peace. To the abolitionists we deny the fact in toto, that we are a slaveholding nation. We are made one nation by the constitution of the United States, and are one nation no further than that declares us to be so. Now in the sense in which these United States are one people we do not hold slaves. Slavery is not recognised by the constitution; that is, it in no sense whatever exists by virtue of the constitution. It is not established by the laws of the Union, nor is it protected by those laws. In our capacity of one people, in the sense in which we are

one nation, we have no cognizance of the subject of slavery. We deny therefore that our republic is a slaveholding republic. We deny that it tolerates slavery, and request the abolitionists not to be too ready to assume a reproach to which they are not obnoxious.

But some of the members of the Confederacy hold slaves. Granted. So does Brazil, so does Turkey, so do a great many nations. But the members of the Confederacy that hold slaves, do it not by virtue of constitutional grants, not by virtue of powers conferred on them by their sister States, but by virtue of their State sovereignty, which they did not surrender into the hands of the Union, and which they still retain in all its plenitude, at least so far as this question is concerned. They stand then in regard to this question, as we have shown on a former occasion, precisely as independent nations, and we of course are no more responsible for their deeds, or affected in our national character by their misdeeds, than by those of any independent or foreign community whatever. Let us talk no more then about a slaveholding republic. We are not a slaveholding republic.

We must again point out to our abolitionists, that the Federal Republic is limited to a very few specific purposes. The States, for their mutual convenience, for the general welfare and common defence of the whole, formed themselves into a Federal league or Union. In the constitution is specified the extent to which the States, as free, independent, sovereign nations, consented to merge their State character and sovereignty into one nation. To the extent there specified, we regard the people of the several States as one people, and no further. To the extent there specified, and for the purposes there specified, a citizen of Massachusetts is also a citizen of the United States, and has the same right to concern himself, according to the mode there pointed out, with the affairs of South Carolina that he has with the affairs of Massachusetts. But beyond this extent he has no

more right to concern himself with the affairs of any State but the one of which he is specially a citizen, than he has with the affairs of France or China. Our duty, as citizens of the United States, is to observe in good faith the stipulations into which we have entered with our sister States; and so long as the slaveholding States perform towards us all the engagements they have made to us, we have, as citizens of the United States, no fault to find with them.

Now have the slaveholding States ever entered into an engagement to emancipate their slaves? Is it in the bond? When they came into the Union, did they stipulate to abolish slavery? Not at all. They retained that matter in their own hands. What right have we then to insist upon their doing it now? In what capacity do we call upon the Southerner to free his slaves? In our capacity as citizens of the United States? But in that capacity we have no right to meddle with the matter, because slavery is not one of the matters which come under the jurisdiction of the United States. The people of the United States have no legal cognizance of it. In our capacity as citizens of Massachusetts then? But as citizens of Massachusetts, we hold no other relation with the slaveholder in South Carolina, than we do with the slaveholder in Constantinople. In what capacity then? In our capacity as men and as Christians?

We are far from denying that, as men and Christians, we have no concern with the slave question. As a man, as a Christian, I have a right to concern myself with whatever affects my brother man wherever he is. But has this concern no limitation? Limitation or not, it is no greater in the case of Southern slavery, than in the case of slavery anywhere else. Our right and our duty to labor for the emancipation of Southern slaves, rest on our general right and duty to labor for the abolition of slavery wherever it exists. Now, before the abolitionist can make out that it is my right and my duty to make any special efforts to effect the emancipation of the slaves in the

Southern States, he must show that it is my right and my duty to make special efforts for the abolition of slavery everywhere. Nay, more than this, he must prove that it is my right and my duty to make special efforts for the correction of all abuses of all countries, to abolish every bad or wrong institution of every nation, to remove all national sins of all nations. Can he do this? He can do it only by doing another thing which is yet more difficult. He must prove that every man has the right and the duty to concern himself with the whole conduct, the entire life, of every other man, and that every man has the right and the duty to see that every other man forsakes his sins and does his duty.

It is the duty of Massachusetts to educate all her children; but is it the duty of South Carolina to undertake to compel her to do it? It is the duty of the citizens of this State to abolish the barbarous law that treats poverty as a crime; but is it the duty of the citizens of Georgia to compel us to do it, or to do it for us? The Autocrat of the Russias ought to restore Poland to her national independence; but is it our duty to do it for him, or to undertake to force him to do it? England ought to abolish the laws of primogeniture and entail,—monarchy, and the hereditary peerage; but is it our duty to make special efforts to induce her to do it? Is that abolition her work, or is it ours? Universal freedom should be established throughout the earth; is it therefore our duty to become propagandists, and band our whole community together into associations for carrying on a war with all nations who have not adopted a republican form of government?

Freedom requires us to recognise in each individual certain rights, and rights which we may no more invade to do the individual good, than to do him harm. He must have a certain degree of liberty. That liberty he may abuse; but so long as he does not attack our liberty, we cannot, without sapping all liberty in its very foundation, interfere with him. So of com-

munities. They stand in relation to one another as individuals. So long as any given community respects the rights of all other communities, no other community has any right to interfere with its conduct. Its external relations are just, and its internal affairs, so far as other communities are concerned, it has a right to regulate in its own way. To deny this is to deny its independence, is to strike at its liberty; and to attempt to interfere with its internal policy, is to declare war upon it, and must, if it be a spirited community and able to fight for its independence, lead to bloodshed and incalculable sufferings. Peace among the nations of the earth is to be maintained only by each nation's attending to its own concerns, leaving all other nations to regulate their internal policy in their own way. This principle is even more imperative in the case of the States which compose this Republic, than in that of nations generally. Our relations are so multiplied, are so intimate, and our intercourse is so frequent and various, that, without the most punctilious respect for the reserved rights of each, perpetual embroilment must result, and our union instead of harmony be a source of perpetual discord. We say therefore, inasmuch as slavery is an institution over which the slaveholding States have the exclusive jurisdiction, inasmuch as we, as citizens of the United States and of non-slaveholding States, have no concern with it, we are not called upon, whatever may be our opinion of it as an institution, to labor specially for its abolition. We are not called upon to abolish it.

But even admitting we were called upon to abolish it, or to labor for the abolition of slavery wherever it exists, we should still deny that the abolition proceedings are justifiable. They are contrary to the genius of our institutions; they make war upon the relations, which it was intended by our Federal system should subsist between the States which compose the Union, and are therefore, as we have said, revolutionary in their character and tendency.

We do not say that to abolish slavery is contrary to the genius of our institutions. The genius of our institutions is liberty, and unquestionably is repugnant to every species of slavery. If the institutions subsist, they must in their gradual unfolding sweep away slavery, and every vestige of man's tyranny over man. But according to our Federal system, all the internal affairs of the several States are to be managed by the States themselves. When, therefore, the citizens of one State disregard this system, and labor to control the internal affairs of another State, in the manner we have shown the abolitionists do, they are acting in opposition to the American system of government. The citizens of slaveholding States might, if they chose, adopt all the measures our abolitionists do, without being liable to this charge, and perhaps they ought in justice to labor even more zealously than do the abolitionists for the abolition of slavery. The error of the abolitionists consists in concluding from the duty of the citizens of the slaveholding States to their own,—of concluding from the fact that it is right for South Carolina, for instance, to labor to emancipate the slaves, it is therefore right for citizens of Massachusetts to do the same. The wrong is not in the end sought, but in the persons who seek it, and the means by which they seek it.

The abolitionists are wrong as to their point of departure. They begin, consciously or unconsciously, by assuming that the people of the United States are one people, not in the restricted sense in which they are so declared by the constitution, but in all senses, to the fullest extent, as much so as the people of France or England. They regard themselves not as citizens of Massachusetts or of New York, but as citizens of the United States. The division of the territory into separate States, they regard as merely for administrative purposes, or for the convenience of transacting governmental business. They see not and understand not that the division into separate States, is a division, in point of fact and in theory especially, into

distinct communities, separate nations, afterwards to be united by a league or compact; but a division altogether analogous to the division of a State for municipal purposes into counties, townships, and parishes. In giving the legal form to any public measure, they indeed recognise the boundaries of the States in like manner as they do the boundaries of a county, a township, or a parish; but in all else, in preparing the measure, in urging its adoption, in the combination and direction of influences which shall lead to or compel its adoption, they know no geographical boundaries, no civil or political divisions. Here is the source of their error. They begin by denying the sovereignty of the States, and consequently the Federal Republic created by the constitution, and by asserting the system of consolidation, another and altogether different system,—a system by which we become one vast centralized republic, adopting the division into States only as a convenient regulation for facilitating the administration of the affairs of government.

We say not that the abolitionists are in general aware of this, or that they would knowingly and intentionally do all this. They are probably aware of nothing but a morbid craving after excitement, and the determination, cost what it may, to abolish slavery. But we do say that the doctrine of consolidation, which we have stated, is that which lies at the bottom of their proceedings, and which has influenced them, and led them to adopt the proceedings they have. Had they been in the habit of contemplating the American political system in its true character, had they been in the habit of seeing in the division into States something more than a municipal regulation, than an affair of internal police, had they been accustomed to see in each State a distinct, independent, and sovereign community, in all matters, except the very few specified in the constitution of the United States, they had never taken those peculiar views of their own relations with the slaveholding commu-

nities, which have led them to adopt the measures of which we complain. Anti-slavery men they might have been, but abolitionists they could not have been.

We would acquit the abolitionists also of all wish to change fundamentally the character of our institutions. They are not, at least the honest part of them, politicians; but very simple-minded men and women who crave excitement, and seek it in abolition meetings, and in getting up abolition societies and petitions, instead of seeking it in ball-rooms, theatres, or places of fashionable amusement or dissipation. Politics, properly speaking, they abominate, because politics would require them to think, and they wish only to feel. Doubtless some of them are moved by generous sympathies, and a real regard for the well-being of the Negro; but the principal moving cause of their proceedings, after the craving for excitement, and perhaps notoriety, is the feeling that slavery is a national disgrace. Now this feeling, as we have shown, proceeds from a misconception of the real character of our institutions. This feeling can be justified only on the supposition that we are a consolidated republic. Its existence is therefore a proof that, whatever be the conscious motives in the main of the abolitionists, their proceedings strike against our Federal system.

Well, what if they do? replies the abolitionist. If Federalism, or the doctrine of State sovereignty, which you say is the American system of politics, prohibits us from laboring to free the slave, then down with it. Any system of government, any political relations, which prevent me from laboring to break the yoke of the oppressor and to set the captive free, is a wicked system, and ought to be destroyed. God disowns it, Christ disowns it, and man ought to disown it. If consolidation, if centralization be the order that enables us to free the slave, then give us consolidation, give us centralization. It is the true doctrine. It enables one to plead for the slave. The



slave is crushed under his master's foot ; the slave is dying ; I see nothing but the slave ; I hear nothing but the slave's cries for deliverance. Away with your paper barriers, away with your idle prating about State rights ; clear the way. Let me run to the slave. Anything that frees the slave is right, is owned by God.

We express here the sentiment and use very nearly the language of the abolitionists. They have no respect for government as such. They indeed are fast adopting the ultra-radical doctrine that all government is founded in usurpation, and is an evil which all true Christians must labor to abolish. They have, at least some of them, nominated Jesus Christ to be president of the United States ; as much as to say, in the only practical sense to be given the nomination, that there shall be no president of the United States but an idea, and an idea without any visible embodiment ; which is merely contending in other words that there shall be no visible government, no political institutions whatever. They have fixed their minds on a given object, and finding that the political institutions of the country, and the laws of the land are against them, they deny the legitimacy of all laws and of all political institutions. Let them carry their doctrines out, and it is easy to see that a most radical revolution in the institutions of the country must be the result.

Now, we ask, has a revolution become necessary ? Is it no longer possible to labor for the progress of Humanity in this country, without changing entirely the character of our political institutions ? Must we change our Federal system, destroy the existing relations between the States and the Union and between the States ? Nay, must we destroy all outward, visible government, abolish all laws, and leave the community in the state in which the Jews were, when there " was no king in Israel, and every man did that which was right in his own eyes " ? We put these questions in soberness, and with a deep feeling of their magnitude. The abolition ranks are full of in-

sane dreamers, and fuller yet of men and women ready to undertake to realize any dream however insane, and at any expense. We ask therefore these questions with solemnity, and with fearful forebodings for our country. We rarely fear; we rarely tremble at the prospect of evil to come. The habitual state of our own mind is that of serene trust in the future; and if in this respect we are thought to have a fault, it is in being too sanguine, in hoping too much. But we confess, the proceedings of the abolitionists, coupled with their vague speculations, and their crude notions, do fill us with lively alarm, and make us apprehend danger to our beloved country. We beg, in the name of God and of man, the abolitionists to pause, and if they love liberty, ask themselves what liberty has, in the long run, to gain by overthrowing the system of government we have established, by effecting a revolution in the very foundation of our Federal system?

For ourselves, we have accepted with our whole heart the political system adopted by our fathers. We regard that system as the most brilliant achievement of Humanity, a system in which centres all past progress, and which combines the last results of all past civilization. It is the latest birth of time. Humanity has been laboring with it since that morning when the sons of God shouted with joy over the birth of a new world, and we will not willingly see it strangled in its cradle. We take the American political system as our starting-point, as our primitive data, and we repulse whatever is repugnant to it, and accept, demand whatever is essential to its preservation. We take our stand on the Idea of our institutions, and labor with all our soul to realize and develop it. As a lover of our race, as the devoted friend of liberty, of the progress of mankind, we feel that we must, in this country, be conservative, not radical. If we demand the elevation of labor and the laboring classes, we do it only in accordance with our institutions and for the purpose of preserving them by

removing all discrepancy between their spirit and the social habits and condition of the people on whom they are to act, and to whose keeping they are entrusted. We demand reform only for the purpose of preserving American institutions in their real character; and we can tolerate no changes, no innovations, no alleged improvements not introduced in strict accordance with the relations which do subsist between the States and the Union and between the States themselves. Here is our political creed. More power in the Federal government than was given it by the Convention which framed the constitution would be dangerous to the States, and with less power the Federal government would not be able to subsist. We take it then as it is. The fact that any given measure is necessary to preserve it as it is, is a sufficient reason for adopting that measure; the fact that a given measure is opposed to it as it is, and has a tendency to increase or diminish its power, is a sufficient reason for rejecting that measure.

The constitution then is our touchstone for trying all measures. Not indeed because we have any superstitious reverence for written constitutions, or any overweening attachment to things as they are; but because we have satisfied ourselves by long, patient, and somewhat extensive inquiry, that the preservation of the constitution is strictly identified with the highest interests of our race. Its destruction were, so far as human foresight can go, an irreparable loss. We would preserve it then, not because it is a constitution, not because we are averse to changes, nor because we have a dread of revolutions, but because the safety and progress of liberty demand its preservation.

But can efforts in behalf of liberty be repugnant to the spirit of a constitution established avowedly in the interests of liberty? The abolitionists are in pursuit of liberty; liberty is their great idea; liberty is the soul of their movements; liberty is to be the end of their exertions; how then can their proceedings be dangerous to liberty? Very simply. In

their character of efforts merely in behalf of liberty, of course they are neither unconstitutional nor dangerous; but they may have another character than that; beside being efforts in behalf of liberty they may be efforts which strike against international law. The abolitionist would free the slave. So far so good. But he would free the slave by forgetting that slavery is an institution under the sole control of a State of which he is not a citizen. Here comes the danger to liberty. Here is a blow struck at the rights of communities, and as dangerous to liberty as a blow struck at the rights of individuals. He would free the slaves by combining the non-slaveholding States against the slaveholding States, by collecting in the non-slaveholding States a force sufficient to control the internal policy of the slaveholding States. Let him do this, and where is the independence of the States? Let him do this, and one part of the Union has the complete control of the other; and when this is done, is not our Federal system destroyed? It is possible then to pursue liberty in such a manner that the pursuit shall be in open violation of free institutions, and this is, as we allege, the case with the abolitionists.

But we can pursue the subject no farther at present. We are sorry to be compelled to separate ourselves from the abolitionists. There is something exceedingly unpleasant in being, even in appearance, opposed to the advocates of freedom. We have ever been with the movement party; our own position, the much we have suffered from things as they are, the wounds yet rankling in our heart, together with our own love of excitement, of new things, to say nothing of certain dreams we indulge concerning a golden age that is to be, strongly dispose us to join with the abolitionists, and to rush on in the career they open up to a bold and energetic spirit. There is something too in the very idea of freeing two or three millions of slaves, which, in these mechanical and money-getting times, is quite refreshing and capa-

•

ble of dazzling many an imagination. It addresses itself to some of the strongest propensities of our nature, and gives us apparently an opportunity to indulge a taste for the adventurous and the chivalric. There is something almost intoxicating in the idea of going forth as a bold knight in the cause of Humanity, to plead for the wronged and the outraged, to speak for the dumb, and to do valiant battle for the weak and the defenceless. Much that is noble, that is generous, that is godlike, naturally combines itself with such an idea, and enters into the motives of him who goes forth at its bidding. It may be that we have felt something of all this. But self-denial, even in the indulgence of what we call noble impulses, or rather the subordination of our impulses to the clearest and soberest convictions of our understandings, is one of the first laws of morality.

So long as we regarded the abolitionists as merely contending for the right to discuss the subject of slavery, we were with them; we spoke in their behalf, and were willing to be reckoned of their number. Later developments on their side, and a closer examination of the bearings of their movements on the political institutions of this country, into which we have entered, have convinced us that the cause of free discussion is not now, if it ever was, at all involved in their proceedings; that the cause of liberty even, is by no means in their hands; and therefore that we ought to separate from them, and to state clearly and boldly, the reasons which we think should induce all lovers of our common country to combine to stay their progress. It may be too late. We fear it is. The ball has been set in motion. It increases in momentum and velocity with every revolution, and the result we pretend not to be able to foresee. Already is it hazardous to one's reputation in this part of the Union to oppose them; already is it nearly impossible for any political party to succeed unless it can secure their suffrages. They have become a power. It is in vain to deny it. They are not likely

to become weaker very soon. We have not, therefore, dared to keep our convictions in regard to them to ourselves. In opposing them, we have had to show as much moral courage as they profess to have shown in opposing slavery. We have not, therefore, spoken from considerations we need be ashamed to avow. We may have spoken in vain. But we have said our word, feebly we own, but in sincerity; and we leave the result to God. We see danger ahead. We tremble for the fate of our republic; there are mighty influences at work against it; the money power is seeking to bind its free spirit with chains of gold, and mistaken philanthropy is fast rending it in twain; associations, sectarian and moral espionage are fast swallowing up individual freedom, and making the individual man but a mere appendage to a huge social machine, with neither mind nor will of his own; but we do not, we will not, despair of the republic. We hope with trembling, nevertheless we hope. The destinies of individuals or of nations are not left to blind chance. There is a providence that rules them, and we will trust that in due time the clouds that lower over us shall break and disperse, and the glorious sun of freedom and Humanity shine forth in all his noonday splendors. We cannot go back to the night and gloom of the past; the irresistible law of progress does and will bear us onward; and this republic shall yet prove itself the medium through which the human race shall rise to the knowledge and enjoyment of the inalienable rights of Man.

In conclusion, we would merely add, that in our judgment the first duty of the friends of freedom, of democracy, of progress, is to secure the political institutions established by our fathers. Nothing can come but in its time and its place. There is a method to be followed in taking up and discussing the great questions which concern mankind, or the progress of society. Errors always come from the fact that we take them up in a false order. Our inquiry should be, What is the question for to-day? Having ascertained

the problem for to-day, we should bend our whole attention to its solution. The answer to the question of to-day, will of itself lead to the solution of the problem which shall come up to-morrow. The question for to-day is the currency question,—not the most interesting question in itself surely, nor a question of the first magnitude; but it is the first in the order of time. It must be disposed of before we can proceed systematically to the disposition of any other. What will be the question for to-morrow, we ask not. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. It will doubtless be a question of magnitude. Great questions are hereafter to be ever expected. Humanity approaches manhood, grows serious, and refuses to trifle. As it regards the slave question, we leave it to those whom it more immediately concerns. If our republic outlive the dangers to which it is now exposed, the gradual unfolding of its spirit will abolish slavery; and we believe slavery will be sooner abolished, that is, the negro race sooner elevated to the rank of freemen, by leaving the whole matter to time, to the secret but sure workings of Christian democracy, than by any violent or special efforts of abolitionists, even if successful in declaring slavery abolished. Leave the whole matter to the slaveholding States, and in proportion as the negro advances internally, the legislature will spread over him the shield of the law, and imperceptibly but surely shall he grow into a freeman, if a freeman he can become.

If we would serve him and hasten that day, we shall best do it, not by direct efforts in his behalf, but by a steady development and realization of democratic freedom within the bosom of the non-slaveholding States. Let us correct the evils at our own doors, elevate the free white laborer, and prove by our own practice, and by the state of our own society, that the doctrine of equal rights is not a visionary dream. O we have much to do here at home. The beggar full of sores lies at our own gate. In our

own dark streets, blind courts, narrow lanes, damp cellars, unventilated garrets, are human beings more degraded, and suffering keener anguish, and appealing with a more touching pathos to our compassion, and demanding in more imperative tones our succor, than is the case with the most wretched of Southern slaves. O here are objects enough for our humanity. We walk not through the streets of a single Northern city without a bleeding heart. Wash the faces of those children, Abolitionists, which meet you in our cities incrustated with filth, clothe their shivering limbs, let in light upon their darkened minds, and warm their young hearts, before it is too late, with the hope of being one day virtuous men and women. Instead of poring over the horrors of slavery, read your police reports, and see your own society as it is. You have work enough for all your philanthropy north of Mason and Dixon's line. Do this work, do it effectually, and you shall aid the cause of oppressed Humanity everywhere, and the slave a thousand times more than by your direct efforts for his emancipation.

---

ART. VII.—*An Address delivered before the Senior Class in Divinity College, Cambridge, Sunday Evening, 15 July, 1838.* By RALPH WALDO EMERSON. Boston: James Munroe & Co. 1838. 8vo. pp. 32.

THIS is in some respects a remarkable address,—remarkable for its own character and for the place where and the occasion on which it was delivered. It is not often, we fancy, that such an address is delivered by a clergyman in a Divinity College to a class of young men just ready to go forth into the



churches as preachers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Indeed it is not often that a discourse teaching doctrines like the leading doctrines of this, is delivered by a professedly religious man, anywhere or on any occasion.

We are not surprised that this address should have produced some excitement and called forth some severe censures upon its author; for we have long known that there are comparatively few who can hear with calmness the utterance of opinions to which they do not subscribe. Yet we regret to see the abuse which has been heaped upon Mr. Emerson. We ought to learn to tolerate all opinions, to respect every man's right to form and to utter his own opinions whatever they may be. If we regard the opinions as unsound, false, or dangerous, we should meet them calmly, refute them if we can; but be careful to respect, and to treat with all Christian meekness and love, him who entertains them.

There are many things in this address we heartily approve; there is much that we admire and thank the author for having uttered. We like its life and freshness, its freedom and independence, its richness and beauty. But we cannot help regarding its tone as somewhat arrogant, its spirit is quite too censorious and desponding, its philosophy as indigested, and its reasoning as inconclusive. We do not like its mistiness, its vagueness, and its perpetual use of old words in new senses. Its meaning too often escapes us; and we find it next to impossible to seize its dominant doctrine and determine what it is or what it is not. Moreover, it does not appear to us to be all of the same piece. It is made up of parts borrowed from different and hostile systems, which "balk and baffle" the author's power to form into a consistent and harmonious whole.

In a moral point of view the leading doctrine of this address, if we have seized it, is not a little objectionable. It is not easy to say what that moral doctrine is; but so far as we can collect it, it is, that

the soul possesses certain laws or instincts, obedience to which constitutes its perfection. "The sentiment of virtue is a reverence and delight in the presence of certain divine laws." "The intuition of the moral sentiment is an insight of the perfection of the laws of the soul." These "divine laws" are the "laws of the soul." The moral sentiment results from the perception of these laws, and moral character results from conformity to them. Now this is not, we apprehend, psychologically true. If any man will analyze the moral sentiment as a fact of consciousness, he will find it something more than "an insight of the perfection of the laws of the soul." He will find that it is a sense of obligation. Man feels himself under obligation to obey a law; not the law of his own soul, a law emanating from his soul as lawgiver; but a law above his soul, imposed upon him by a supreme lawgiver, who has a right to command his obedience. He does never feel that he is moral in obeying merely the laws of his own nature, but in obeying the command of a power out of him, above him, and independent on him.

By the laws of the soul, we presume, Mr. Emerson means our instincts. In his Phi Beta Kappa Address, reviewed in this journal for January, he speaks much of the instincts, and bids us "plant ourselves on our instincts, and the huge world will come round to us." The ethical rule he lays down is then, "follow thy instincts," or as he expresses it in the address before us, "obey thyself." Now if we render this rule into the language it will assume in practice, we must say, obey thyself,—follow thy instincts,—follow thy inclinations,—live as thou listest. Strike out the idea of something above man to which he is accountable, make him accountable only to himself, and why shall he not live as he listeth? We see not what restraint can legitimately be imposed upon any of his instincts or propensities. There may then be some doubts whether the command, "obey thyself," be an improvement on the Christian command, "deny thyself."

We presume that when Mr. Emerson tells us to obey ourselves, to obey the laws of our soul, to follow our instincts, he means that we shall be true to our higher nature, that we are to obey our higher instincts, and not our baser propensities. He is himself a pure minded man, and would by no means encourage sensuality. But how shall we determine which are our higher instincts and which are our lower instincts? We do not perceive that he gives us any instructions on this point. Men like him may take the higher instincts to be those which lead us to seek truth and beauty; but men in whom the sensual nature overlays the spiritual, may think differently; and what rule has he for determining which is in the right? He commands us to be ourselves, and sneers at the idea of having "models." We must take none of the wise or good, not even Jesus Christ as a model of what we should be. We are to act out ourselves. Now why is not the sensualist as moral as the spiritualist, providing he acts out himself? Mr. Emerson is a great admirer of Carlyle; and according to Carlyle, the moral man, the true man, is he who acts out himself. A Mirabeau, or a Danton is, under a moral point of view, the equal of a Howard or a Washington, because equally true to himself. Does not this rule confound all moral distinctions, and render moral judgments a "formula," all wise men must "swallow and make away with"?

But suppose we get over this difficulty and determine which are the higher instincts of our nature, those which we must follow in order to perfect our souls, and become, — as Mr. Emerson has it, — God; still we ask, why are we under obligation to obey these instincts? Because obedience to them will perfect our souls? But why are we bound to perfect our souls? Where there is no sense of obligation, there is no moral sense. We are moral only on the condition that we feel there is something which we *ought* to do. Why ought we to labor for our own

perfection? Because it will promote our happiness? But why are we morally bound to seek our own happiness? It may be very desirable to promote our happiness, but it does not follow from that we are morally bound to do it, and we know there are occasions when we should not do it.

Put the rule, Mr. Emerson lays down, in the best light possible, it proposes nothing higher than our own individual good as the end to be sought. He would tell us to reduce all the jarring elements of our nature to harmony, and produce and maintain perfect order in the soul. Now is this the highest good the reason can conceive? Are all things in the universe to be held subordinate to the individual soul? Shall a man take himself as the centre of the universe, and say all things are for his use, and count them of value only as they contribute something to his growth or well-being? This were a deification of the soul with a vengeance. It were nothing but a system of transcendental selfishness. It were pure egotism. According to this, I am everything; all else is nothing, at least nothing except what it derives from the fact that it is something to me.

Now this system of pure egotism, seems to us to run through all Mr. Emerson's writings. We meet it everywhere in his masters, Carlyle and Goethe. He and they may not be quite so grossly selfish as were some of the old sensualist philosophers; they may admit a higher good than the mere gratification of the senses, than mere wealth or fame; but the highest good they recognise is an individual good, the realization of order in their own individual souls. Everything by them is estimated according to its power to contribute to this end. If they mingle with men it is to use them; if they are generous and humane, if they labor to do good to others, it is always as a means, never as an end. Always is the *doing*, whatever it be, to terminate in self. Self, the higher self, it is true, is always the centre of gravitation. Now is the man who adopts this moral rule,

really a moral man? Does not morality always propose to us an end separate from our own, above our own, and to which our own good is subordinate?

No doubt it is desirable to perfect the individual soul, to realize order in the individual; but the reason, the moment it is developed, discloses a good altogether superior to this. Above the good of the individual, and paramount to it, is the good of the universe, the realization of the good of creation, absolute good. No man can deny that the realization of the good of all beings is something superior to the realization of the good of the individual. Morality always requires us to labor for the highest good we can conceive. The moral law then requires us to seek another good than that of our own souls. The individual lives not for himself alone. His good is but an element, a fragment of the universal good, and is to be sought never as an end, but always as a means of realizing absolute good, or universal order. This rule requires the man to forget himself, to go out of himself, and under certain circumstances to deny himself, to sacrifice himself, for a good which does not centre in himself. He who forgets himself, who is disinterested and heroic, who sacrifices himself for others, is in the eyes of reason, infinitely superior to the man who merely uses others as the means of promoting his own intellectual and spiritual growth. Mr. Emerson's rule then is defective, inasmuch as it proposes the subordinate as the paramount, and places obligation where we feel it is not. For the present, then, instead of adopting his formula, "obey thyself," or Carlyle's formula, "act out thyself," we must continue to approve the Christian formula, "deny thyself, and love thy neighbor as thyself."

But passing over this, we cannot understand how it is possible for a man to become virtuous by yielding to his instincts. Virtue is voluntary obedience to a moral law, felt to be obligatory. We are aware of the existence of the law, and we act in reference to it,

and intend to obey it. We of course are not passive, but active in the case of virtue. Virtue is always personal. It is our own act. We are in the strictest sense of the word the cause or creator of it. Therefore it is, that we judge ourselves worthy of praise when we are virtuous, and of condemnation when we are not virtuous. But in following instinct, we are not active but passive. The causative force at work in our instincts, is not our personality, our wills, but an impersonal force, a force *we* are not. Now in yielding to our instincts, as Mr. Emerson advises us, we abdicate our own personality, and from persons become things, as incapable of virtue as the trees of the forest or the stones of the field.

Mr. Emerson, moreover, seems to us to mutilate man, and in his zeal for the instincts to entirely overlook reflection. The instincts are all very well. They give us the force of character we need, but they do not make up the whole man. We have understanding as well as instinct, reflection as well as spontaneity. Now to be true to our nature, to the whole man, the understanding should have its appropriate exercise. Does Mr. Emerson give it this exercise? Does he not rather hold the understanding in light esteem, and labor almost entirely to fix our minds on the fact of primitive intuition as all-sufficient of itself? We do not ask him to reject the instincts, but we ask him to compel them to give an account of themselves. We are willing to follow them; but we must do it designedly, intentionally, after we have proved our moral right to do it, not before. Here is an error in Mr. Emerson's system of no small magnitude. He does not account for the instincts nor legitimate them. He does not prove them to be divine forces or safe guides. In practice, therefore, he is merely reviving the old sentimental systems of morality, systems which may do for the young, the dreamy, or the passionate, but never for a sturdy race of men and women who demand a reason for all they do, for what they approve or disapprove.

Nor are we better satisfied with the theology of this discourse. We cannot agree with Mr. Emerson in his account of the religious sentiment. He confounds the religious sentiment with the moral; but the two sentiments are psychologically distinct. The religious sentiment is a craving to adore, resulting from the soul's intuition of the Holy; the moral sentiment is a sense of obligation resulting from the soul's intuition of a moral law. The moral sentiment leads us up merely to universal order; the religious sentiment leads us up to God, the Father of universal order. Religious ideas always carry us into a region far above that of moral ideas. Religion gives the law to ethics, not ethics to religion. Religion is the communion of the soul with God, morality is merely the *cultus exterior*, the outward worship of God, the expression of the life of God in the soul: as James has it, "pure religion, — external worship, for so should we understand the original, — and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

But even admitting the two sentiments are not two but one, indistinct, we are still dissatisfied with Mr. Emerson's account of the matter. The religious sentiment, according to him, grows out of the soul's insight of the perfection of its own laws. These laws are in fact the soul itself. They are not something distinct from the soul, but its essence. In neglecting them the soul is not itself, in finding them it finds itself, and in living them it is God. This is his doctrine. The soul then in case of the religious sentiment has merely an intuition of itself. Its craving to adore is not a craving to adore something superior to itself. In worshipping then, the soul does not worship God, a being above man and independent on him, but it worships itself. We must not then speak of worshipping God, but merely of worshipping the soul. Now is this a correct account of the religious sentiment? The religious sentiment

is in the bottom of the soul, and it is always a craving of the soul to go out of itself, and fasten itself on an object above itself, free from its own weakness, mutability, and impurity, on a being all-sufficient, all-sufficing, omnipotent, immutable, and all-holy. It results from the fact that we are conscious of not being sufficient for ourselves, that the ground of our being is not in ourselves, and from the need we feel of an Almighty arm on which to lean, a strength foreign to our own, from which we may derive support. Let us be God, let us feel that we need go out of ourselves for nothing, and we are no longer in the condition to be religious; the religious sentiment can no longer find a place in our souls, and we can no more feel a craving to adore than God himself. Nothing is more evident to us, than that the religious sentiment springs, on the one hand, solely from a sense of dependence, and on the other hand, from an intuition of an invisible Power, Father, God, on whom we may depend, to whom we may go in our weakness, to whom we may appeal when oppressed, and who is able and willing to succor us. Take away the idea of such a God, declare the soul sufficient for itself, forbid it ever to go out of itself, to look up to a power above it, and religion is out of the question.

If we rightly comprehend Mr. Emerson's views of God, he admits no God but the laws of the soul's perfection. God is in man, not out of him. He is in the soul as the oak is in the acorn. When man fully develops the laws of his nature, realizes the ideal of his nature, he is not, as the Christian would say, god-like, but he is God. The ideal of man's nature is not merely similar in all men, but identical. When all men realize the ideal of their nature, that is, attain to the highest perfection admitted by the laws of their being, then do they all become swallowed up in the One Man. There will then no longer be men; all diversity will be lost in unity, and there will be only One Man, and that one man will be God. But what and where is God now? Before all men have realized



the ideal of their nature, and become swallowed up in the One Man, is there really and actually a God? Is there any God but the God Osiris, torn into pieces and scattered up and down through all the earth, which pieces, scattered parts, the weeping Isis must go forth seeking everywhere, and find not without labor and difficulty? Can we be said to have at present anything more than the disjected members of a God, the mere embryo fragments of a God, one day to come forth into the light, to be gathered up that nothing be lost, and finally moulded into one complete and rounded God? So it seems to us, and we confess, therefore, that we can affix no definite meaning to the religious language which Mr. Emerson uses so freely.

Furthermore, we cannot join Mr. Emerson in his worship to the soul. We are disposed to go far in our estimate of the soul's divine capacities; we believe it was created in the image of God, and may bear his moral likeness; but we cannot so exalt it as to call it God. Nor can we take its ideal of its own perfection as God. The soul's conception of God is not God, and if there be no God out of the soul, out of the *me*, to answer to the soul's conception, then is there no God. God as we conceive him is independent on us, and is in no sense affected by our conceptions of him. He is in us, but not us. He dwells in the hearts of the humble and contrite ones, and yet the heaven of heavens cannot contain him. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. He is above all, the cause and sustainer of all that is, in whom we live and move and have our being. Him we worship, and only him. We dare not worship merely our own soul. Alas, we know our weakness; we feel our sinfulness; we are oppressed with a sense of our unworthiness, and we cannot so sport with the solemnities of religious worship, as to direct them to ourselves, or to anything which does not transcend our own being.

Yet this worship of the soul is part and parcel of the transcendental egotism of which we spoke in com-

menting on Mr. Emerson's moral doctrines. He and his masters, Carlyle and Goethe, make the individual soul everything, the centre of the universe, for whom all exists that does exist; and why then should it not be the supreme object of their affections? Soul-worship, which is only another name for self-worship, or the worship of self, is the necessary consequence of their system, a system well described by Pope in his *Essay on Man*:

"Ask for what end the heavenly bodies shine,  
Earth for whose use? Pride answers, 'T is for mine:  
For me, kind nature wakes her genial power,  
Suckles each herb, and spreads out every flower;  
Annual for me, the grape, the rose, renew  
The juice nectareous, and the balmy dew;  
For me, the mine a thousand treasures brings;  
For me, health gushes from a thousand springs:  
Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise;  
My footstool earth, my canopy the skies.'"

To which we may add,

"While man exclaims, 'See all things for my use!'  
'See man for mine!' replies a pampered goose:  
And just as short of reason he must fall  
Who thinks all made for one, not one for all."

Mr. Emerson has much to say against preaching a traditional Christ, against preaching what he calls historical Christianity. So far as his object in this is to draw men's minds off from an exclusive attention to the "letter," and to fix them on the "spirit," to prevent them from relying for the matter and evidence of their faith on merely historical documents, and to induce them to reproduce the gospel histories in their own souls, he is not only not censurable but praiseworthy. He is doing a service to the Christian cause. Christianity may be found in the human soul, and reproduced in human experience now, as well as in the days of Jesus. It is in the soul too that we must find the key to the meaning of the Gospels, and in the soul's experience that we must seek the principal evidences of their truth.

But if Mr. Emerson means to sever us from the

past, and to intimate that the Christianity of the past has ceased to have any interest for the present generation, and that the knowledge and belief of it are no longer needed for the soul's growth, for its redemption and union with God, we must own we cannot go with him. Christianity results from the development of the laws of the human soul, but from a supernatural, not a natural, development; that is, by the aid of a power above the soul. God has been to the human race both a father and an educator. By a supernatural,—not an *unnatural*—influence, he has, as it has seemed proper to him, called forth our powers, and enabled us to see and comprehend the truths essential to our moral progress. The records of the aid he has at different ages furnished us, and of the truths seen and comprehended at the period when the faculties of the soul were supernaturally exalted, cannot in our judgment be unessential, far less improper, to be dwelt upon by the Christian preacher.

Then again, we cannot dispense with Jesus Christ. As much as some may wish to get rid of him, or to change or improve his character, the world needs him, and needs him in precisely the character in which the Gospels present him. His is the only name whereby men can be saved. He is the father of the modern world, and his is the life we now live, so far as we live any life at all. Shall we then crowd him away with the old bards and seers, and regard him and them merely as we do the authors of some old ballads which charmed our forefathers, but which may not be sung in a modern drawing-room? Has his example lost its power, his life its quickening influence, his doctrine its truth? Have we outgrown him as a teacher?

In the Gospels we find the solution of the great problem of man's destiny; and, what is more to our purpose, we find there the middle term by which the creature is connected with the Creator. Man is at an infinite distance from God; and he cannot by his own strength approach God, and become one with him.

We cannot see God ; we cannot know him ; no man hath seen the Father at any time, and no man knoweth the Father, save the Son, and he to whom the Son reveals him. We approach God only through a mediator ; we see and know only the Word, which is the mediator between God and men. Does Mr. Emerson mean that the record we have of this Word in the Bible, of this Word, which was made flesh, incarnated in the man Jesus, and dwelt among men and disclosed the grace and truth with which it overflowed, is of no use now in the church, nay, that it is a let and a hindrance ? We want that record, which is to us as the testimony of the race, to corroborate the witness within us. One witness is not enough. We have one witness within us, an important witness, too seldom examined ; but as important as he is, he is not alone sufficient. We must back up his individual testimony with that of the race. In the Gospel records we have the testimony borne by the race to the great truths it most concerns us to know. That testimony, the testimony of history, in conjunction with our own individual experience, gives us all the certainty we ask, and furnishes us a solid ground for an unwavering and active faith. As in philosophy, we demand history as well as psychology, so in theology we ask the historical Christ as well as the psychological Christ. The church in general has erred by giving us only the historical Christ ; but let us not now err, by preaching only a psychological Christ.

In dismissing this address, we can only say that we have spoken of it freely, but with no improper feeling to its author. We love bold speculation ; we are pleased to find a man who dares tell us what and precisely what he thinks, however unpopular his views may be. We have no disposition to check his utterance, by giving his views a bad name, although we deem them unsound. We love progress, and progress cannot be effected without freedom. Still we wish to see a certain sobriety, a certain reserve in all speculations, something like timidity about rushing off into

an unknown universe, and some little regret in departing from the faith of our fathers.

Nevertheless, let not the tenor of our remarks be mistaken. Mr. Emerson is the last man in the world we should suspect of conscious hostility to religion and morality. No one can know him or read his productions without feeling a profound respect for the singular purity and uprightness of his character and motives. The great object he is laboring to accomplish is one in which he should receive the hearty coöperation of every American scholar, of every friend of truth, freedom, piety, and virtue. Whatever may be the moral, philosophical, or theological system which forms the basis of his speculations, his real object is not the inculcation of any new theory on man, nature, or God; but to induce men to think for themselves on all subjects, and to speak from their own full hearts and earnest convictions. His object is to make men scorn to be slaves to routine, to custom, to established creeds, to public opinion, to the great names of this age, of this country, or of any other. He cannot bear the idea that a man comes into the world to-day with the field of truth monopolized and foreclosed. To every man lies open the whole field of truth, in morals, in politics, in science, in theology, in philosophy. The labors of past ages, the revelations of prophets and bards, the discoveries of the scientific and the philosophic, are not to be regarded as superseding our own exertions and inquiries, as impediments to the free action of our own minds, but merely as helps, as provocations to the freest and fullest spiritual action of which God has made us capable.

This is the real end he has in view, and it is a good end. To call forth the free spirit, to produce the conviction here implied, to provoke men to be men, self-moving, self-subsisting men, not mere puppets, moving but as moved by the reigning mode, the reigning dogma, the reigning school, is a grand and praiseworthy work, and we should reverence and aid, not

abuse and hinder him who gives himself up soul and body to its accomplishment. So far as the author of the address before us is true to this object, earnest in executing this work, he has our hearty sympathy, and all the aid we, in our humble sphere, can give him. In laboring for this object, he proves himself worthy of his age and his country, true to religion and to morals. In calling, as he does, upon the literary men of our community, in the silver tones of his rich and eloquent voice, and above all by the quickening influence of his example, to assert and maintain their independence throughout the whole domain of thought, against every species of tyranny that would encroach upon it, he is doing his duty; he is doing a work the effects of which will be felt for good far and wide, long after men shall have forgotten the puerility of his conceits, the affectations of his style, and the unphilosophical character of his speculations. The doctrines he puts forth, the positive instructions, for which he is now censured, will soon be classed where they belong: but the influence of his free spirit, and free utterance, the literature of this country will long feel and hold in grateful remembrance.

---

#### LITERARY NOTICE.

*The Nature and Extent of Religious Liberty. A Sermon preached at the Church in Brattle Square, on Sunday morning, June 17, 1838.* Boston: I. R. Butts. 1838. 8vo. pp. 19. — This sermon was called forth by the prosecution and conviction of the editor of an Infidel paper, in this city, for the alleged crime of Blasphemy, — a prosecution and conviction on which the press throughout the country has very freely commented, and concerning which it has, with very few exceptions, expressed but one opinion, — that of unqualified condemnation. Our own opinion on the matter can hardly be called for, since we have given at some length, in a previous number of this journal, our views of religious liberty in general. We are decidedly opposed to all prosecutions for blasphemy. Blasphemy is an offence, if an offence, which brings along with it its own punishment, and the horror it excites is in all cases sufficient to render the blasphemers impotent to injure society.

The author of the sermon before us has been thought to take sides against religious liberty, to have by no means given a true and faithful account of its nature and extent; and certain are we that the definitions and explanations he gives are sufficient to legitimate the most perfect system of religious tyranny. Yet we are inclined to believe he is by no means the enemy of religious liberty, and not at all disposed to check freedom of inquiry or freedom of utterance. Through the whole sermon there seems to us to run a singular confusion of ideas. In the first place the author does not distinguish the moral restraints which every man should feel in regard to the formation and utterance of his opinions, from the restraints which may be imposed and enforced by civil society. In strictness a man may have no moral right to be an atheist, because it may be true that no man, who maintains a pure heart and properly exercises his intellect, can fail to find convincing proof of the existence of a God. But it does not follow from this that civil society has a right to prohibit atheism, or to punish the promulgation of atheistical opinions. A man has no moral right to hate his neighbor. Every man is bound to love his neighbor as himself; but shall civil society therefore pass penal enactments against hatred to one's neighbor, and attempt by positive law to enforce love to one's neighbor? Not all that is morally wrong can be prohibited by law, nor all that is morally right enforced by law. Civil society is restricted in its action to the suppression merely of those outward acts which interfere with the equal rights of all its members. If the belief and propagation of atheism abridged or impeded the exercise of the right to believe and propagate theism, then would it be within the duty of government to prohibit and labor to eradicate it. But such is not the case. He who adopts a given belief, and seeks to propagate it, infringes by that no one's rights, so long as others are left free to believe and maintain an opposite belief. No one's rights are injured, and therefore government has no occasion and no right to interfere.

The author of this sermon, in the second place, also seems to confound the utterance of certain opinions with the manner of their utterance. We know him too well to believe that he would in any case check free utterance; but he does not believe that men have a right under plea of religious liberty, of the right of conscience, to make gross and wanton attacks on the cherished sentiments of the community. But in this two things are confounded which should be kept distinct. First, religious liberty, the civil right to form and utter without any restraint our own opinions. This right is sacred, and the author of this sermon, we presume, would hold it so. Let it then be held so; let it not be questioned. Second, the right of a man to make gross and wanton attacks, not on public opinion merely, but on public sentiment, the most cherished sentiments of the community. Now this has no necessary connexion with the question of religious liberty, and only serves to confuse and mislead the mind when treated in connexion with it. We say at once, that no man has a right to make gross and wanton attacks on the cherished sentiments of the community, and that civil society is competent, if it be thought expedient, to pass and enforce laws against them. All we ask on this

point is, that the laws be equal, and open to the minority as well as to the majority. If it be made a penal offence to attack in a gross and wanton manner the sentiments of the majority, we insist that it shall be a penal offence to attack in a gross and wanton manner the sentiments of the minority, — that it shall be as unlawful to outrage the feelings of an infidel as of a Christian. Respect to the feelings of every man, whatever the opinions he holds, is a moral duty, the fulfilment of which every man has a right to exact, if need be, even by law.

Nevertheless the expediency of laws against gross and wanton attacks on the sentiments of others we much doubt. They could not be enforced in case of the minority, and the majority do not need them. He who attacks in a gross and wanton manner the dearest sentiments and most cherished convictions of the community, by so doing renders himself odious and powerless. The whole weight of the community is against him; the dearest sentiments and the most cherished convictions of the community are against him, bear down upon him, and crush him. He is marked and avoided, treated with neglect or contempt. What harm can he do? To be the object of general horror, of general loathing and disgust, to be treated with neglect or contempt, to feel that he is regarded no longer as a man, but as a public nuisance, is punishment enough one would think to satisfy the feelings of the most vindictive. Why seek to punish more?

If the writers on the subject of religious liberty will take care to distinguish what is our moral duty in the formation and propagation of religious opinions, from the right of civil society to interfere in the matter, and to make a complete disruption between the question of religious liberty, and the question of one's right to outrage the sentiments of the community, and leave each question to rest on its own merits, the community will very soon come to right conclusions on the whole matter, and there will be nowhere any disposition to impose any civil restraints upon the formation and the utterance of opinions. Men will seek to suppress errors of opinion by addresses to the reason and the conscience, not by fine and imprisonment, and government will restrain itself from all interference in the matter, so long as no one infringes the equal rights of another.

---

This number completes the first volume of our journal. We return our thanks to the public for the favor with which they have received it. Our success has not been great, but more than we looked for. We regard the Boston Quarterly Review no longer as an experiment. We shall with the year commence a new volume with new courage. Our next number may be expected to contain a somewhat elaborate exposition of the New French School of Philosophy, an article on Animal Magnetism by an Adept, besides several other articles either prepared or in a state of preparation.