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THE

LONDON QUARTERLY REVIEW.

OCTOBER, 1866.

ART. I.—1. *Essays and Correspondence, chiefly on Scriptural Subjects.* By the late JOHN WALKER, sometime Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, and a Clergyman in the Establishment. Collected and prepared for the press by WILLIAM BURTON. Two vols. 8vo. London: Longmans. 1838.

2. *Sermons and Sunday Tracts.* By JOHN N. DARBY. London: Morrish.

3. *Repentance unto Life, and Sunday Tracts.* By C. H. M. London: Morrish.

4. *Notes on Genesis, Exodus, and Leviticus.* By C. H. M. London: Morrish.

5. *Things New and Old: a Monthly Magazine for the Lambs and Sheep of the Flock of Christ.* Edited by C. H. M. London: Morrish.

6. *Justification in a Risen Christ, and Sunday Tracts.* By C. S. London: Morrish.

7. *Dublin Tract Society's Publications.* Dublin: D'Olier Street.

8. *Life Truths.* By the Rev. J. D. Smith. London: Partridge.

9. *The Heresies of the Plymouth Brethren.* By JAMES C. L. CARSON, M.D., Coleraine. Twelfth Thousand. London: Houlston and Wright.

10. *Extreme Views on Religious Doctrines. Their Possible Causes, Probable Consequences, and Best Correctives.* Fourth Edition. By the Rev. F. F. TRENCH, M.A., Rector of Newtown, Co. Meath. London: Nisbet.

11. *Errors of the Darby and Plymouth Sect.* Reprinted from the *Record*. Third Edition. London: Nisbet.
12. *An Address to the Plymouth Brethren.* Second Edition. London: Hardwicke.
13. *Lay Preaching. A Sermon preached in the Chapel of Trinity College, Dublin.* By WILLIAM R. BAILEY, D.D., Rector and Vicar of Monaghan. Dublin: Herbert.
14. *Sermons on Topics of Lay Preaching.* By EDWARD A. STOPFORD, Archdeacon of Meath. Dublin: Hodges, Smith and Co.
15. *Lay Preachers and their Doctrines.* By Rev. E. NANGLE, M.A., Rector of Screen, Sligo. Dublin: Herbert.
16. *Lay Preaching and its Fruits, with Reasons for Withdrawing from the Movement.* By Rev. E. NANGLE, M.A. Dublin: Herbert.
17. *More about the Lay Preaching and its Fruits.* By EDWARD NANGLE, M.A. Dublin: Herbert.
18. *Lay Preaching in Ireland, and the New Gospel. A Tract for the Times.* By the REV. WILLIAM CROOK, Sligo. Third Edition. London: Hamilton, Adams & Co.
19. *A Letter to the Plymouth Brethren on the Recognition of Pastors.* By H. GRATTAN GUINNESS. London: Nisbet.

IT will be admitted by all competent to form an opinion on the subject, that a vast change for the better has passed over the various sections of the Protestant Church in Ireland since the introduction of Methodism about the middle of the last century. At that time the Church of England had scarcely a minister deserving the name throughout the length and breadth of the land. The parish clergyman was generally known as the best fox-hunter, or "shot," or card-player, or toper, or dancer, within the bounds of the parish. Presbyterianism was little, if at all, better, and the minor sections of Protestantism, while they had a name to live, were spiritually powerless; not a cathedral, or parish church, or Presbyterian meeting-house, or Baptist, or Independent chapel was open on Sabbath evening in town or country; and there was not a single lay preacher or Sabbath-school teacher in Ireland. What a marvellous change now in the good providence of God!

Without claiming for Methodism in Ireland the entire credit of the altered state of things which happily characterises our day, we think it cannot be denied that the change may be traced directly or indirectly to its influence. Its simple, pungent, glowing ministration of the Word of Life drew vast crowds,

to thousands of whom the Gospel proved the power of God unto salvation. It studded the land with humble buildings, which, if destitute of architectural pretensions, were honoured in the conversion and edification of multitudes. Its itinerancy gave it a kind of ubiquity. It instituted Sabbath-evening preaching and Sabbath-schools; it originated lay agency and lay preaching in Ireland; its agents, lay or itinerant, were speedily known and felt everywhere; and hence it is literally impossible to overrate its influence, direct and indirect, on other churches, or the debt which the cause of Protestantism in Ireland owes to it. In the principal towns of the South and West of Ireland it has created a taste for evangelical preaching, which has rendered necessary a new style of preacher and of preaching in the parish church as the only hope of retaining the congregation. In the province of Ulster it has been, if possible, still more influential upon Presbyterianism, in moderating the violence of its Calvinism, and saving thousands from Unitarianism and cognate forms of heresy.

For many years Methodism in Ireland stood alone in its advocacy of lay preaching, and as the result of that advocacy drew upon itself opposition and violent abuse from both Churchmen and Presbyterians. Churchmen and Presbyterians, one and all, ridiculed lay preachers as a class, and poured contempt upon all preachers not in "holy orders." A book now lies before us, published so late as 1815, in which a Methodist minister, the late Rev. Matthew Lanktree, replies in full to the aspersions cast upon lay preaching in a published discourse by a Presbyterian minister, the late Rev. James Huey, of Ballywillan, near Coleraine.* In his discourse Mr. Huey contends against lay preachers as a class, just as Dr. Bailey does in No. 13 of the above list. No High Churchman could attempt to make out a stronger case. The change in relation to this point which has passed upon many Churchmen, like the Rev. Edward Nangle, and upon Presbyterianism generally, of late years, affords no slender proof of the liberalising influence of Methodism on both systems.

During the Ulster Revival of 1859—60, lay agency became for the time the order of the day, and lay preaching was not only tolerated but popular. Any man who could speak could command a congregation, and a patient and respectful hear-

* *An Apology for what is called Lay Preaching: in a Series of Letters addressed to the Rev. James Huey, Presbyterian Minister of Ballywillan, near Coleraine, occasioned by his Sermon on the Divine Appointment of a Gospel Ministry.* By Matthew Langtree. Newry. Pp. 94. 1815.

ing. The masses of the population, now awaking simultaneously from their long sleep of spiritual insensibility, cried aloud, "What must we do to be saved?" and thankfully embraced the message from either minister or layman which brought balm to their wounded spirits. The Plymouth party, hitherto almost unknown in Ireland, seized the passing opportunity, and dexterously turned the newly-awakened feeling in favour of lay preaching to good account in the diffusion of their peculiar principles. Mr. Mackintosh (the C. H. M. of tract notoriety), formerly a schoolmaster at Westport, Mayo, one of their best men, was then in Coleraine, in the very centre of the movement, and with a choice band of assistants itinerated through the neighbourhood, letting no opportunity slip for inoculating the public mind with the Plymouth leaven. As speedily and noiselessly as possible churches were formed in an "upper room," wherever it was found practicable, and no pains were spared to poison the minds of the new "converts" against all existing churches. Presently the ministers of all denominations awoke to the real character of this new system, and "warned off" their people. Thus the Plymouth project was but partially successful. Those who came under its influence were, without a single exception, so far as we know, rendered practically worthless to the cause of Christ, and we scarcely remember a single case of an abandoned sinner who was converted through their instrumentality.

But though the project failed in the main, it was to some extent successful. Small centres, called "churches," were formed in many important towns and districts, and several skilful agents raised up, who were trained to the work of unsettling the minds of many youthful members of the various churches. The leaven silently spread. A wealthy Plymouth brother from England, or elsewhere, settled in a promising neighbourhood, opened his house for preaching the Gospel, scattering the D'Olier Street and similar tracts in tens of thousands. One after another became first unsettled, then alienated from the church of his former choice, and then within an incredibly brief period expanded into a preacher, or, as he called himself, an "Evangelist" of this new system. Within a few years, fifty, or perhaps more, such preachers, principally gentlemen (and ladies) of position, seem to have given themselves to promote the interests of this new organisation, and, as is evident from the list of pamphlets at the head of this article, have provoked considerable attention and not a little controversy.

The state of things in Ireland at present is summarily as follows:—A number of gentlemen, say fifty or more, lawyers, engineers, agents, and military men, are itinerating, principally through the South and West, preaching what they call "the Gospel." They are for the most part young, from twenty-five to forty, unmarried, with a fashionable moustache, and a gentlemanly appearance and bearing. They travel generally two and two, and on coming to a town perhaps bring an introduction to some "liberal" minister, and obtain the use of his school-house or chapel, as the case may be. They profess no connection with any of the sections of the Church, but wish merely to preach "the Gospel." If asked for their peculiar creed, they have no creed but the Bible, and immediately cite passage after passage with marvellous fluency and readiness. Several "unctuous" phrases are thrown in, with some not obscure hints as to the inefficiency of clergymen as a class, and the wonderful success of their own gospel. All reference to their peculiar opinions is carefully suppressed, and the "liberal" minister is taken with guile. Hundreds of handbills are sent out, and the walls duly placarded to the following effect:—"The Gospel will be preached at seven o'clock, in —— School-house, by A. B., Esq., and C. D., Esq. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. Come! come!! come!!! All are invited."

Of course, such a sensational bill produces the effect, and the place is crowded. The meeting is opened with a hymn from the Merrion Hall (or Plymouth) collection, to which one of the preachers sets a lively taking tune. Many ladies join, and the singing is admirable. Prayer follows; but the less that is said about it the better. A chapter is read, generally the third of St. John, and a loose, rambling, ill-digested exhortation given, which, so far as it is intelligible, aims to show the simplicity of the plan of salvation; "that a man has no more to do with the salvation of his soul than with the creation of the world,"[a] that he has "merely to believe what God has said about Jesus, and he is saved on the spot, and saved for ever." The second brother again sings; reads another portion, perhaps the fifteenth of Luke, and discourses from it in a similar light, flippant, chatty style, leaving the impression of remarkable ease and self-possession on the part of the preacher. They never repeat the Lord's Prayer, but do not choose to say why.

[a] "'What must *I do* to be saved?' 'Nothing whatever,' replied the Apostle. 'You have as much to do with the salvation of your soul, as you had with the creation of the world; believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." —*Sinclair's Letter to Rev. J. J. Black*, p. 20.

At the close, enquirers are invited to remain, to be taught the way of the Lord more perfectly; many generally accept the invitation. The preacher goes from seat to seat, asking each person, "Are you saved?" Suppose the person to reply, "No," the preacher asks, "Don't you believe that Jesus came into the world to save sinners?" "Oh, yes," the enquirer rejoins, "I believe that." "Well, then, you are saved, now and for ever," responds the preacher; "and you have God's word for it, for He has said, 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death into life.'" "Oh, but I don't feel aright." "Feel!" responds the preacher, "feeling has nothing to do with salvation; God has not said, 'He that feels so-and-so, shall be saved,' but 'He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life.'" This puts an end to controversy, and believers are multiplied to any amount. Hence we are not surprised to read in the *British Herald* of 1,200 converts to this new system in the West of Ireland within a few months; the wonder is that there not as many thousands.

That there is not the slightest exaggeration in the above statements is placed beyond all controversy by several of the pamphlets now before us, particularly those by the Rev. F. F. Trench and the Rev. William Crook, of Sligo. Mr. Crook says—

"The following extracts are from a letter by the Rev. Mr. Branigan, Presbyterian minister, Ballinglen, Mayo, giving an account of the revival (?) in his congregation, through the instrumentality of these gentlemen. They are of a peculiar value, inasmuch as they place beyond dispute the real doctrine of these gentlemen, and the consequent truthfulness of our preceding charges against them, as to the doctrines of repentance, prayer, &c. Mr. Branigan's testimony is of all the more value, as he announces himself as a convert to their new gospel:—

"'It is true I did not at first approve of the bomb-shell so suddenly shot into our midst by Mr. G——, when he told us "*not to pray, or sing, or ask* until we first *believed*." The shock was too great not to be stunned by it. It roused the fire of the "old man" in us all. The people elbowed each other to attend to this strange doctrine, and most, if not all, determined to resist the innovation. The shock being over, I fell back on my Bible and saw, as did my people, that the preacher uttered only what was true (?); but, notwithstanding, I was opposed to the way in which he stated it, or rather knocked us down by it, *with a furious onslaught* [and this is preaching the Gospel!].

"'I besought Mr. G—— to preach the truth more mildly and more palatably at the next meetings, but in vain; *down he pounced upon us again and again*. . . . After a hard and protracted *fight of argument*, a

few of the young people found peace in Jesus, and these being well instructed in the Bible and Catechism [?], I could not doubt that the Spirit [!] had blessed the conversation [or argument] to them, *the very people who had remained unimpressed by the preaching.*

"'The turning-point evidently is faith in the promise of eternal life, *a firm and unshaken belief* that we *are* saved, and *have* eternal life, *not because we feel or experience it*, but just because God, the Immutable One, says it. Believing the promise *there is instantaneous peace*, and by ever keeping the eye of faith fastened on the promise, the enjoyment of that peace cannot be lost.'"*

Mr. Crook's handling of Mr. Branigan some will think rather severe. But, if sharp and pungent, it was salutary; and we are happy to observe that, in the last edition of his pamphlet, Mr. Crook congratulates Mr. Branigan on his abandonment of these new notions, and his return to the more orthodox teaching of the Westminster Confession of Faith on the way of salvation.

No one who is acquainted with the Irish character will be surprised to learn that these young gentlemen are remarkably popular. On the occasion of their first appearance in a town, and perhaps for a few subsequent visits, great numbers attend. When the interest begins to flag, the name of some new esquire from London, Bristol, or Manchester is duly placarded; and thus the appearance of vigorous health is kept up. But after making due allowance for this high-pressure system, it would be idle to deny their popularity, more particularly with the gentler sex. About three-fourths of all their congregations are young ladies, and not a few of their most valuable and successful coadjutors are supplied from the same influential quarter. Moreover, we find no difficulty in understanding their popularity on other grounds. They are young men of position, and education, and, in some instances, of wealth; their manner is free, *dégagé*, and taking; there is an air of great disinterestedness thrown over the entire movement; the system is cheap, without money or price, and this to many is no trifling element of attraction (forgetting the common-sense maxim that what costs nothing is nothing worth); and last, and not least, the system is emphatically "Religion made easy"—a new and improved method of going to heaven, without the delay and annoyance of going in at the strait gate; in short, like the railway in travelling as compared with the wagon or machine of bygone days. In addi-

* From Branigan's Letter in *British Herald* for February, 1865, as quoted in *Lay Preaching in Ireland and the New Gospel*, p. 39.

tion to all these sources of popularity to the average mind, there is great apparent zeal for the conversion of sinners, together with remarkable earnestness in not a few instances; —indeed we have not the slightest wish to reflect upon the Christian character and worth of any of the agents of this remarkable movement.

In addition to these public meetings for preaching the Gospel to sinners, the "believers," or the church, meet on Sabbath mornings in a more select way, "in an upper room" where practicable, for the "breaking of bread," in imitation, as they think, of the Apostolic Church. No efforts are spared to induce the professed "believers" to withdraw from their former associates in Church fellowship, whom they are now taught to regard as "the world," and to unite with "the people of God." Thus many small centres, like those in Ulster to which we have referred, have been formed in the West and South of Ireland composed principally of pious, well-meaning people, not particularly remarkable for good sense, or vigour of intellect, drawn off by fair speeches from the various churches, more particularly from the Church of England. They have, moreover, at stated intervals, what are called "Believers' Meetings," or large aggregate assemblies of "believers" in some central place—like the Friends' Yearly Meeting—when several days are devoted to conversation and the delivery of addresses by prominent members.

Perhaps we should add that in Ballina, Coollany, and other places in the West, some of these gentlemen whose names are now before us baptized the converts publicly, by immersion, and this *in the name of Jesus only, and with reference to His human nature.* Mr. Nangle's first pamphlet, No. 15 in above list, was strongly in favour of the entire movement, and was written prior to the formation of these churches and these cases of baptism. His second and third tracts, Nos. 16 and 17, originated in these cases of baptism, and are as decidedly against the movement.

Such, then, is an outline of the remarkable lay preaching movement now in progress in the West and South of Ireland, and which is sympathetically affecting also the watering-places and fashionable resorts of England and Scotland. When we bear in mind the number, devotedness, and wealth of its adherents; the fact that its press in D'Olier Street, Dublin, is scattering tracts of the most captivating external appearance in millions annually, together with considerable sums granted by Müller (of Orphan House fame) and other prominent members of the Plymouth Brotherhood, for purposes of

evangelization in Ireland; we must be sensible of the existence of a wide-spread organization which is far too serious to trifle with, and which it behoves the churches, both in England and Ireland, thoroughly to understand. Once for all, we beg to say we pronounce no opinion on individual representatives of the system; we deal only with the system itself. We proceed to lay before our readers in as condensed a form as possible our impressions of the origin, character, and tenets of the Plymouth sect.

With respect to its origin, there is considerable diversity of opinion. The anonymous author of the able tract, No. 12 on our list, says—

"About the year 1828, or perhaps somewhat earlier, a general feeling of discontent with the existing state of the religious world was manifested by many Christians, who simultaneously, though without knowledge of what was going on elsewhere, had given themselves to the diligent study of the Scriptures, with the hope of discovering something better than had been furnished by the various forms of sect around them. The search, attended with much prayer, deep anxiety of spirit, many conferences of friends in Scripture-reading, and in some places with days set apart for prayer and fasting to ask for a blessing on their inquiries, gradually led to the adoption of those views which are understood to be distinctive of the Plymouth Brethren. It is now known that these deductions of Scriptural study were obtained in different places, and much about the same period—that is, within about a space of three years; and, as far as research can ascertain, it seems that in Ireland the movement first took place, and that the Christians in Plymouth adopted, by their own independent research, views to which others before them had arrived, and which others will hereafter from time to time embrace, ignorant of similar deductions either of their predecessors or contemporaries."*

This gentleman is correct as to Ireland having been the birthplace of this system, and, for aught we know, he may be correct also as to the date of the rise of Darbyism as a branch of the Plymouth stock; but the system in all its essential features was known in Ireland, and had attracted considerable attention, many years previously. So far as we can ascertain, the true date of the origin of this system is 1803; its birthplace, Trinity College, Dublin; and its real parent, one of the Fellows, the Rev. John Walker, B.D., author of a well-known work on logic, and several other scholastic works once in high repute in Ireland. He was a decided Calvinist and a truly able man, with an acute rather than a comprehensive mind, in which the destructive rather than the constructive element

* *An Address to the Plymouth Brethren*, pp. 3, 4.

predominated. He ultimately went to strange extremes, and, after thirteen years' honourable connection with the College, was expelled for his peculiar opinions in 1804. He subsequently founded a sect whom he denominated the "Separatists," popularly known in Ireland as the "Walkerites." Several small, troublesome churches holding his views lingered in various towns in Ireland till within the last few years, when they became merged in the Plymouth sect. The careful reader of the following document, containing a statement of his principles from under his own hand, will see that he was the parent of the modern Plymouth system, and that in the main features both systems are identical:—

"About eighteen years ago* a few Christians in Dublin, most of them at that time connected with the religious establishment of the country, had their attention strongly directed to the principles of Christian fellowship as it appears to have subsisted among the first disciples in the Apostolic Churches. They perceived from the Scriptures of the New Testament that all the first Christians in any place were connected together in the closest brotherhood; and that, as their connection was grounded on the one Apostolic Gospel which they believed, so it was altogether regulated by the precepts delivered to them by the Apostles, as the divinely commissioned ambassadors of Christ. They were convinced that every departure of professing Christians from this course must have originated in a withdrawing of their allegiance from the King of Zion—in the turning away of their ear from the Apostolic Word, and that the authority of this Word being Divine, was unchangeable; that it cannot have been annulled or weakened by the lapse of ages, by the varying customs of different nations, or by the enactments of earthly legislators.

"Under such views they set out in the attempt to return fully to the course marked out for Christians in the Scriptures of the New Testament; persuaded that they were called, not to *make* any laws or regulations for their union, but simply to learn and adhere to the unchangeable laws recorded in the Divine Word. Their numbers soon increased; and for some time they did not see that the union which they maintained with each other, on the principles of Scripture, was at all inconsistent with the continuance of their connection with the religious establishment of the country, or other religions differently regulated.

"But in about twelve months from the commencement of their attempt, they were convinced that these two things are utterly incompatible, and that the same Divine rule which regulated their fellowship in the Gospel with each other, forbade them to maintain any religious fellowship with any other; from this view, and the practice consequent upon it, they have been distinguished by the same *Separatists*.

* This document was published in Dublin in 1821.

"They are a very small sect, very little known, and less liked; nor do they expect ever to be numerous or respectable upon earth. Their most numerous church (assembling on the first day of the week in Strafford Street, Dublin) consists, perhaps, of about one hundred and thirty individuals. They have about ten or twelve smaller churches in different country parts of Ireland; and within the last two years a church in the same connection has appeared in London, assembling in Portsmouth Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields. It may be here needful to remark that, according to what they have learned of the Scriptural import of the term *Church*, even two or three disciples in any place—united together in the faith of the Apostolic Gospel, and in obedience to the Apostolic precepts—constitute the Church of Christ in that place.

"With respect to the tenets and practices by which they are distinguished from most other religionists in these countries, the following particulars may be noticed:—

"They hold that the *only true* God is made known to men exclusively in the Gospel of His Son Jesus Christ; so that those who believe the Divine testimony there revealed know the true God, but all others, however religious and under whatever profession, worship they know not what—an idolatrous fiction of their own minds. They never, therefore, speak of religion or piety *in the abstract* as a good thing, conceiving that *false* religion—particularly under the Christian name—forms one of the most awful displays of human wickedness.

"They hold that the distinguishing glory in which the only true God has made Himself known, consists in *the perfection of righteousness* and the *perfection of mercy* exercised by Him in the closest combination and fullest harmony, as the Saviour of sinful creatures and the Justifier of the ungodly, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus—through that propitiation for sin which He has made by His obedience unto death in the place of sinners, and which His resurrection from the dead proves to have been complete and Divinely accepted. They hold, therefore, that all solicitude or effort of the sinner to do anything, or to get anything, for the purpose of making his peace with God, and obtaining the forgiveness of his sins, must originate in the ungodliness of his mind, arrogating to himself that work which the Son of God came into this world to perform, and which it is declared He has finished.

"They hold that the forgiveness of sin, acceptance in the sight of God, and eternal life, come to the guiltiest of sinful men *as such*, and are assured in the Divine Word, to every one without distinction, who *believes* the testimony there delivered concerning Jesus of Nazareth. They hold, therefore, that salvation is brought to the sinner *with* the discovery of that Divine truth, not by any inquiries of his own after it, or endeavours of his own to obtain it, but in opposition to all his own ignorance of God and rebelliousness against Him—a salvation which is from first to last the exclusive work of God the Saviour.

"They consider the revelation made in the Gospel, not as any means afforded to sinners for enabling them to save themselves, much less as

any instrument designed to moralise and reform all the world, but simply as a Divine *testimony* of that salvation wherewith God Himself saves those whom He has ordained to eternal life out of a sinful world; as well as the instrument whereby He calls them to a knowledge of His name, and to the enjoyment of that blessedness of which He makes them partakers in His Son Jesus Christ. They hold that the only good and sure hope towards God for any sinner is that which is immediately derived to the chief of sinners from the belief of this testimony concerning the great things of God and His salvation, considering as vain, delusive, and ungodly, every hope which men derive from the view of any supposed circumstances of favourable difference between themselves and the worst of their fellow-sinners. And as they understand by the *faith*, with which justification and eternal life are connected, nothing else but the *belief* of the things declared to all alike in the Scriptures; so by true *repentance* they understand nothing else but the new mind which that belief produces. Everything called *repentance*, but antecedent to the belief of the unadulterated Gospel, or unconnected with it, they consider spurious and evil. . . . They hold that the subjects of Christ's kingdom upon earth shall be to the end of the world a despised and suffering people, hated by all men for His name's sake, just in proportion as they manifest the genuine characters of His disciples, and that the Apostolic Word comes to them at this day, containing the commandments of the Lord to them for their profit and for His glory, with just the same Divine authority which it possessed when the Apostles were personally in the world. They consider the idea of any *successors* to the Apostles, or of any *change* in the laws of Christ's kingdom, as utterly anti-Christian. They have therefore no such thing among them as men of the *clerical* order, and abhor the pretensions of the clergy of all denominations, conceiving them to be official ringleaders in maintaining the anti-Christian corruptions with which Europe has been overspread under the name of Christianity.

"Considering their agreement in the one Apostolic Gospel as the great bond of their union, they acknowledge themselves called to regard each other as all one in Christ Jesus, brethren beloved for the truth's sake, and on a perfect equality in the concerns of His kingdom. The expression of this brotherly affection they hold to be essentially connected with the most steadfast opposition to everything contrary to the purity of the truth which may at any time appear in their brother, as well as with the freest communication of their worldly goods for the supply of his real wants. They acknowledge it to be utterly inconsistent with this, and with the most express precepts of Christ, for any of them so *to lay by a store* of the world's goods for the future wants of himself or his family, or to withhold what he possesses from the present necessities of his poor brethren. In this, and in everything else, they conceive the real principles of Christ's kingdom to stand in direct opposition to the most approved maxims of this world.

"They come together on the first day of the week, the memorial day of Christ's resurrection, to show forth His death—the one ground of all

their hope—by taking bread and wine as the symbols of His body broken and His blood shed for the remission of sins. In their assembly (which is always open to public observation) they join together in the various exercises of praise and prayer, in reading the Scriptures, in exhorting and admonishing one another as brethren, according to their several gifts and ability, in contributing to the necessities of the poor, and in expressing their fraternal affections by saluting each other with an holy kiss. In the same assembly they attend, as occasion requires, to the discipline appointed by the Apostles in the first churches, for removing any evil which may appear in the body—in the first place, by the reproof and admonition of the Word addressed to the offending brother; and ultimately, if that fail of bringing him to repentance, by cutting him off from their fellowship.

"When any brethren appear among them possessing all the qualifications for the office of elders or overseers, which are marked in the Apostolic writings, they think themselves called to acknowledge these brethren in that office as the gifts of the Lord to His Church. But they hold that each church must exist and act together fully as a Church of Christ, previous to any such appointment, as before it. They conceive the office of elders to be nothing like that of *administering ordinances* to the brethren, but mainly that of persons specially charged with the watchful superintendence over them, and peculiarly called to be examples and guides to the rest in that course which the Divine Word prescribes alike to all. The authority of the Word is the only *authority* in matters relating to Christian faith and practice which they acknowledge. Belonging to a kingdom that is not of this world, they can have no connection with any of the various religions of the world."*

We insert this long extract because we wish to give our readers the means of fully comparing Walker's teaching with the Plymouth system, and the doctrine and practice of the lay preachers in the South and West of Ireland; and because we regard it as of some importance that the Christian public should know that the system, as such, originated in one of our national Universities, and claims as its parent one of the Fellows of Trinity College, Dublin. It is true that the modern Plymouth party advocate several notions not found in Walker's system, and which he would probably have repudiated; but the germ of the system, and all its essential features, are found in his writings, particularly in his Letters against Methodism, addressed to Alexander Knox, Esq., of Derry.

With regard to the epithet, "Plymouth Brethren," we use it not offensively, but simply because we know no other term

* Walker's *Essays and Correspondence.* Paper on *A Brief Account of the People called Separatists.* Vol. i. p. 556. The italics are Mr. Walker's.

that can supply its place. We are aware that the Plymouth party object to the name. But as they do not choose to be known by any name, but to exist as a narrow sect, with characteristic inconsistency protesting against all sections in the Church, and promoting its essential unity by further dividing it, a name must be found for them, and we see no reasonable objection to the name "Plymouth Brethren." If the public had agreed to call them "Ishmaelites," we suppose they would not have regarded the term as being complimentary; and yet, perhaps, many would think it far from inappropriate. Though the system originated in Ireland, an important tract depository in connection with the brotherhood was early established at Plymouth, and many influential "converts" were made in the same locality, principally from the congregation of Dr. Hawker, of Antinomian celebrity.* Thus we presume the term "Plymouth Brethren" originated, and it is likely to remain as the permanent designation of the disciples of the system.

Our space will only allow a few thoughts illustrative of the leading principles of Plymouthism. The system originated, as we have seen, not in the ranks of Nonconformity, but in one of our national Universities and the bosom of the State Church; and we regard it as the rebound of a peculiar class of mind from ultra-ritualism, or the excessive love of form in religion, to the other extreme of a hatred of all form. Mr. Walker was brought up in the midst of ritualism, and a mind such as his could not be passive under such a potent influence. He must act decidedly one way or the other. Two courses were open to him: either to yield to the mighty, magic influence, as Newman, Manning, and scores of gifted men have done, and find rest for his spirit in the bosom of the apostate Church of Rome; or, secondly, to rise above the prejudices of education, and emancipate himself from all love of form and rite in religion. He chose the latter path, and could not effect his emancipation without a serious struggle. He ultimately effected his escape by a violent revulsion, *which placed him in the other extreme for life;* and the injury which his noble nature sustained in the conflict will perhaps explain the bitterness of his opposition to the Established Church, in its entire framework and organization, as well as to Methodism and every other organization in the land. As nearly all the prominent leaders of the system

* See *Strictures on the Plymouth Antinomians.* By Joseph Cottle, of Bristol. London: Cadell.

since Walker's day, and the great majority of its members, were originally connected with the Established Church, will not the same principle explain their having gone to the other extreme now? And will not the injury sustained in the process shed some light on "the gall of bitterness," against the various sections of the Church, so abundantly distilled all around? The same thought will enable us to understand the philosophy of the peculiar doctrinal system of Plymouthism. If we suppose a man like Walker, occupying an extreme position, he will instinctively try to justify that position. This will lead, as in the parallel case of Unitarianism, to a denial of all creeds and forms of faith, so as to get every authority out of the way unfriendly to the new position. One denial would lead to another, until everything is denied inconsistent with the new and extreme position, which must be defended at all hazards. He is now done with creeds and forms of faith, which he dismisses with a sneer as "human;" but he is by no means done with the difficulties of his new position. New and formidable difficulties stare him in the face in the Word of God. How are these to be surmounted? This is now the question, as, if these cannot be explained away, all hope of making converts to the system is at an end. This lays the foundation of a rationalistic mode of interpreting the Word of God, so as to make it speak the peculiar dialect of the new system; and, as if this were not quite satisfactory, an "Improved Version" of the New Testament must be brought out adapted to the new form of opinion.* When to these is added the doctrine of the presidency of the Holy Spirit in every assembly of the saints, so as to exclude the possibility of error (a doctrine tantamount to the Romish figment of the Church as an infallible interpreter of the mind of God), we shall not be surprised either by strange and wild extremes in the way of doctrine, or by the insolent dogmatism with which these views are propounded.

There is another thought which, perhaps, may assist us to understand the philosophy of the doctrinal system of the Plymouth Brethren. Walker was not only a Churchman, but a sturdy Calvinist also, and we regard it as most significant that this system originated, not from Arminianism, but, like Unitarianism, from Calvinism. We are aware that Calvinists in the North of Ireland and elsewhere are accustomed to represent Arminianism as "a half-way house to Socinianism and kindred forms of heresy;" but they have

* See Darby's *New Translation of St. Paul's Epistles.* London: Morrish.

found it a matter of extreme difficulty to point out the link of connection or path of transition. In Erastian Holland, it is true, Arminianism has lapsed into Socinianism. But then the Calvinistic churches of Holland have equally become Socinian. But where are the English or Irish Arminian ministers who deny the Deity of the Son of God? Where are the Arminian congregations which have lapsed into the frigid zone of Unitarianism? On the other hand, if there be no connection between Calvinism and Socinianism in its various forms, how are we to account for the one following in the wake of the other, as a general rule, as the shadow follows the substance? Are not all the Socinians of Ulster the children of Calvinism—seceders from the synod of Ulster? And do they not all receive the *Regium Donum* as Presbyterians? Can any intelligent reader of Channing's life doubt that it was the Calvinism of Dr. Hopkins that made Channing a Unitarian? And when we see Calvinism produce Unitarianism in Ireland, in England, in Geneva, in New England, and elsewhere, we see no way of escape from the conclusion that there is some law either of affinity or reaction which would explain that connection, though it is not the design of this paper to point it out.

But we have again and again observed, that just as a certain type of Calvinistic teaching has produced Unitarianism amongst the hard-headed Presbyterians of Ulster, so a similar type of preaching in the Established Church has produced Plymouthism in the excitable South and West. Of late years there has been a marvellous revival of the ultra-Calvinistic type of preaching in Dublin, and among what is called the Evangelical section of the Irish clergy throughout the kingdom. Bethesda Chapel, Dublin, erected for the Rev. Edward Smyth,* somehow was transferred to Calvinistic hands, and from its pulpit the late Rev. W. H. Krause preached the most ultra-Calvinism, Sabbath after Sabbath, for many years, to vast crowds.† Other men of less note, both in the city and throughout the principal provincial towns, followed in the same path, and thus sowed the seed of which Plymouthism is the harvest. The Rev. F. F. Trench, rector of Newtown, writes a pamphlet in an admirable spirit, which he denomi-

* He was expelled from a church in the North of Ireland in 1778, and joined Wesley for a while, and laboured hard to induce him to secede formally from the Church of England. The charge on which he was expelled from the Church in Ulster was "preaching Methodist doctrine."

† Now published, in several volumes, edited by Rev. Dr. Standford, editor of the *Christian Examiner*.

nates "Extreme Views," and which he intends as a check to the Antinomianism taught by some of these preachers. But what he calls "Extreme Views" we should call the fair logical consequences of ultra-Calvinistic teaching, and see no ground for expecting the speedy decline of Plymouthism in Ireland while the evangelical clergy scatter the seed for it with unsparing hand, and their brethren of the high ritualistic school from an opposite extreme play so diligently into the same hands. Are we to be surprised if High Church ritualism (of which there is now an ominous revival in Ireland) meets with its proper punishment in an organized crusade against what Walker calls "the clerical order?" And is it not a natural illustration of "seed yielding fruit after its kind," when Calvinism developes in Antinomianism? We regard Plymouthism, then, so far as it is an ecclesiastical system, as a revulsion from the extreme of form in religion to the opposite extreme of the abandonment of all form; and its peculiar theological system as the result, in part, of its false ecclesiastical position, and, in part, of its Calvinistic origin. Similar principles will explain the rank prevalence of Plymouthism and its *congenera* everywhere. Popery and High Churchism in one way, and Calvinism in another, prepare the soil for its growth. The High cleric maintains the clerical monopoly of all spiritual functions—Plymouthism and Darbyism, alike in Ireland, England, France, and Italy, decry all clerical distinctions, in whatever sense or kind; High Church exaggerates and perverts repentance into dreary penance-work—Plymouthism in effect does away with it altogether; High Church perverts faith into the mere adhesion to the priest, and thus in effect does it quite away—Plymouthism does away with all but what it calls faith—by a perversion as gross as that of the Romanist—and makes such faith in a proposition to be all in all.

As to the peculiar tenets of the Plymouth Brotherhood, we have found extreme difficulty in ascertaining precisely what they teach. In fact, it is simply impossible to enumerate with certainty the peculiar shades of opinion entertained and taught by the various leaders of the system. There are three great leaders—Mr. Darby, whose peculiar views Mr. Mackintosh is understood to entertain; Mr. Müller, of the Orphan House, Bristol; and Mr. B. W. Newton, of Bethesda, Bristol; and minor leaders without end, who write under the mysterious cyphers and initials, "C. S.," "H.," "R. M.," &c., understood only by the elect, or the inner circle of the system, the secrets of which enviable fraternity we have

no ambition to understand. We have laboured hard to fathom the mysterious depths of Plymouthism, and probably have but partially succeeded. Once for all, we beg to express our thorough dislike of the foggy style so generally adopted by modern Plymouth pamphleteers. Not that they are wanting in perspicuity when they like; on the contrary, there are times when, for reasons best known to themselves, they employ a style crisp and clear enough. They can make thoughts stand out like mountain peaks in the morning sun when it suits their purpose to do so, and they have the peculiar faculty, like the cuttle-fish, of hiding themselves in their own ink when they do not want to be fully understood. We have read many of these "deep" pamphlets, and again and again have been reminded of Talleyrand's famous maxim, that the design of language was to conceal rather than to reveal thought. It is no small trial of one's patience to pursue a shadowy idea through the pages of a writer who mistakes obscurity for depth, and at the end to find the object of your pursuit so impalpable as to elude your grasp. Of all the cloudy writers who ever put pen to paper, we never encountered one equal to Mr. Darby; and we would give the second place to his brother Stanley.* If the Plymouth party complain that we have misrepresented their statements, they have only themselves to blame in not giving us an authorised exposition of their peculiar opinions, expressed in language that could not be misunderstood.

The system originated, as we have seen, in a revulsion of the mind from ritualism in the Church; and hence from the beginning it took the form of a testimony against existing sections of the Church, and a denial of various existing usages and doctrines distinctive of all such sections. It could hold no fellowship with any of them, as they were all corrupt in doctrine and in principle; and the Plymouth party alone were the people of God. Hence their grand mission was two-fold—first, to protest against all the sections of the Church; and, secondly, to endeavour to draw within their own net, from the world around, including the various churches which were

* Take the following as a specimen of Mr. Darby's transparency; he is speaking of the righteousness of God:—"This is the special doctrine of Paul; no thought of a righteousness of law required by another for us. There is atonement for sin in which we lay, which we had committed as in the first Adam; but I repeat, no conferring of righteousness on it, but closing its history, and being before God in death, in which He in grace took its place, in respect of the judgment due to it." *Darby on the Righteousness of God*, p. 9. Brother Stanley is at times more opaque than this, if, indeed, this be possible.

emphatically of the earth, earthy, as many of the simple-minded as they could inoculate with the peculiarities of their system. It is from this point of view that the peculiar tenets of the system must be understood. Hence it is, like Unitarianism, a negative rather than a positive system. It holds some doctrines, it is true, positively; but, in the main, the system consists of a series of negations of certain usages and doctrines entertained more or less fully by all the sections of the Church. The following embody the most important of these negations, and on these, so far as we know, all the sections of the Plymouth Brotherhood are agreed :—

1. *The denial of all creeds and forms of faith.* Each of the many sections of the Plymouth family is favoured with the presidency of the Holy Spirit in its "gatherings," and yet the spectacle is presented to the "world" of the saints at Bethesda and elsewhere "biting and devouring one another" on points of doctrine—an impressive illustration of the great advantages of emancipation from "human" creeds! We venture to think that the experience of the Plymouth Brotherhood will not be lost upon the various sections of the Church of Christ.

2. *The denial of all commentaries and expositions of Scripture.* This denial, to be consistent, should include Mackintosh's "Notes," "Darby's Sermons," the "C. S. Tracts," and the innumerable fly-sheets and pamphlets issued by Morrish, of Paternoster Row, and from the D'Olier Street Depository, Dublin. By what authority, we should like to know, are Wesley's sermons branded as "human," and Darby's labelled "divine"? If they brand Wesley's Notes, and the commentaries of Henry and Scott, as heretical, because *they* never discovered the mysteries of Plymouthism in the Word of God, they have no reason to complain if we return the compliment, and label Mackintosh's "Notes," and the D'Olier Street Tracts "poison," in characters not easily misunderstood. Meantime, it is going pretty far for a sect which has not yet demonstrated its infallibility, to place in its *Index Expurgatorius* all the creeds existing in the Church of Christ, and all the commentators too!

3. *The denial of all existing churches as sections of the Church of Christ.*

They do not positively assert that all the members of the various churches are on the way to perdition; but all the so-called churches are corrupt, and hence "believers" should leave them and join "the people of God."

"A voluntary society! The Church of God divided into a number of separate voluntary societies! This seems to me very shocking." "It appears to me that you first do wrong by forming these societies, and then say others must do so, too, by joining them. I find nothing like this in the New Testament. We read, 'The Lord added to the Church;' every one on his conversion was necessarily added to the Church, but there is nothing in any way like joining a voluntary association." "But now, solemnly, as before God, do you believe that if our Lord were here on earth He could join any one of the voluntary societies, and in doing which He would have to separate from all the Christians in the others? Remember our fellowship is with Christ, and I fully believe He could not join your societies neither could I." *

Sentiments in substance identical with the above must be familiar to all readers of the Plymouth tracts, as well as to all who have been in the habit of conversing with their agents. The meaning of all this is that the members of the different churches should abandon the systems in connection with which they found the Saviour, and join the Plymouth Brethren, who are exclusively the Church of God.

Now, on this spirit of aggression on the churches around, we have a few words to say. First, we should have a much higher opinion of Plymouthism if we saw its advocates going out into the highways and hedges, and, in the true spirit of primitive evangelism, seeking in order to save the lost. Why not take the field against sin, and the various forms of wickedness, rather than against the professing Church? Where are the Plymouth Missions to the Romanists, or to the heathen of our towns and villages at home? We think that the various sections of the Church have some right to complain of a system which avows, as its direct and immediate object, the drawing off of the children whom God has given as the fruit of honest Christian labour, which labour *they* were too self-engrossed to put forth. And when the object is not honestly avowed, and access is sought to various congregations under pretence of preaching "the Gospel," as in Mr. Nangle's conversation at Skreen, for example (as exposed in one of the pamphlets before us), we cannot see that it much improves the case.

Secondly, to us there is a good deal of High Church intolerance in conduct like this. A High Churchman regards *form* as the principal thing, and he is so smitten with an

* From *The Skelston: a Friendly Word to the Christians in England.* A Plymouth Tract, ingeniously written, designed to unsettle the minds of the members of the various churches, and entangle them in the meshes of the Plymouth net. Great efforts are made to circulate it. It is anonymous as usual.

overweening regard for it, that he is prepared to sacrifice the *spirit* of Christ as seen and manifested in better men than himself in his zeal for it. Hence he will sneer at the baptism and ordination of a Nonconformist like Hall, or Chalmers, or Jabez Bunting. And why? Simply because they have the courage to disapprove of his form, which they should believe—because he says so—to be the true Apostolic form. Our enlightened Plymouth brother puts his absence of form and ritual, which is still *his* form, into precisely the same prominence in *his* system, and—with an arrogance in comparison of which the pride of Popery itself looks small—unchurches all the churches in Christendom because they will not abandon their own forms and accept of his. If there be any difference between the principle at issue in both cases, we cannot see it. Both assume the doctrine of infallibility, and both mean by the right of private judgment the obligation to agree with their view.

But, thirdly, are our Plymouth Brethren prepared to prove that their peculiar system has a monopoly of the Divine blessing? We think not. This is a step rather advanced even for High Churchmen of the most ultra school, and hence they modify it somewhat after the following fashion:—"We do not limit the grace of God. He has uncovenanted as well as covenanted mercies. Nonconformists may, *possibly*, be blessed by His Spirit; but while they thus presumptuously despise His ordinance of episcopacy, they have no warrant to *expect* it. He may do more than He has promised, but woe to those who reckon on this." So the luminaries of the Plymouth school may say, "The grace of God abounded to bless even men so imperfectly taught, and living in so imperfect a Church-system, as Baxter, Doddridge, and Wesley; but whoever wishes to receive the fulness of the Spirit must leave full scope to the Spirit's energies; and that can only be by following God's own system of a church, and *that is our system*. Now, wilfully to reject that, and continue in your present imperfect, human system, is deliberately to cast away all hope of His blessing." Thus extremes meet.

4. *The denial of the Christian ministry as an order appointed by Christ.* The Plymouth party do not deny the doctrine of ministry in the Church after a certain fashion; but they reject the institution of a separated ministry, as understood by any of the sections of the Church of Christ, with the exception, perhaps, of the Quakers. Their teaching on this subject has, at all events, the merit of being clear and unmistakeable. With much that Mr. Mackintosh says about the

ministry being the gift of Christ to His Church, and the impossibility of ordination making a true minister in the absence of a call from God, we thoroughly agree. With much also of what the Plymouth party say with regard to persons exercising their various gifts for the edification of the Church, we have no controversy. But these things do not touch the precise point in dispute. That point is the denial of all distinction between ministers and people, rulers and ruled, shepherd and flock, in the Word of God. The Plymouth party, one and all, deny with Walker any such distinction; but, instead of fairly grappling with the Scripture evidence to the contrary, they, after the approved Plymouth fashion, prove something else wide of the point in hand.

But the Plymouth doctrine as to the ministry, however seductive as a theory on paper, has proved a most miserable affair in practice, themselves and their friends being judges. Mr. Guinness, one of their special friends, who was publicly baptized by one of them a few years ago, published a letter to them some time since on the "Recognition of Pastors," in which he says: "The shape of your churches is simply amorphous, *shapeless*; your system is the mere negation of system, and your ground is in my judgment untenable." There is "growing uneasiness in many of the body with the state of things existing." Some "have caused divisions and offences." Many "feel a reaction from the extreme views once entertained." "Confusion" exists, "exercising in many the grace of long-suffering to a very painful degree." "The doctrine of impulsive ministry" is vaguely held by many. "Whole churches endure, year after year, the vain talking of those whose mouths should be stopped." Mr. Guinness concludes by saying, "The last twenty years have been a cloudy and dark night in the history of Brethrenism; the wear and tear of reality have put their ideal Church to the test, and it has fairly gone to pieces."* Is the present crusade in the South and West of Ireland an attempt to retrieve its failing fortunes?

Out of this denial of the institution of a separated ministry have sprung two prominent doctrines of the Plymouth Brotherhood, namely, their doctrine of "gifts," and of "the presidency of the Holy Ghost in their gatherings as a church." On each of these doctrines we must say a few words. Their theory of "*gifts*," so far as we can understand it, is in sub-

* *A Letter to the Plymouth Brethren on the Recognition of Pastors.* By H. G. Guinness. Nisbet.

stance as follows:—That the gifts needed for edifying the Church are directly supernatural, having nothing in common with the natural qualifications which distinguish man from man; that they come immediately of the Spirit being bestowed according to the inscrutable wisdom of Christ, but in no known connection with natural or acquired powers; that not every devoted Christian, though to his piety be added the highest talents, and the most persevering study, is "gifted" in the Plymouth sense; that men of the deepest piety, most solid learning, and greatest natural powers, may be the most unfit to minister to the edification of a "gathering of the saints;" that "gifts" are bestowed, we know not when, or where, or how; that they come suddenly—in short, *miraculously* (for this is the plain English of it), as in the Primitive Church; and that any academy, college, or other system of training ministers is essentially sinful, as being an attempt to put human learning and human talent into the place of the Spirit of God. There are three passages in St. Paul's Epistles to which they appeal in support of these supernatural gifts, Rom. xii. 6—8, 1 Cor. xii. 29, and Eph. iv. 11; just the passages to which the disciples of Edward Irving appeal in support of their claim to the gift of tongues, and similar extravagances, which have done so much to bring religion into contempt with thoughtful sceptics. The passage from Romans enumerates as gifts received by the Christians at Rome—"Prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhorting, giving, ruling, showing mercy," and the Plymouth argument is, that these "gifts" were imparted supernaturally to the Primitive Church, and are given in the same way now to the Church, and of course to themselves. But we should like to ask, do the Plymouth party lay claim to the gift of "prophecy" as well as to the gift of "ministry"? If not, why not? This passage does not say that all these "gifts" were directly supernatural: but if it be pressed into the service of Plymouthism, its advocates should lay claim to the spirit of prophecy. Perhaps they will, in due time, as the system is in a transition state. The passage in 1 Corinthians enumerates altogether a different class of "gifts"—"Apostles, prophets, teachers, workers of miracles, healers, speakers with tongues, interpreters;" how it bears upon the Plymouth case we confess we cannot see. If the fact that these "gifts" were bestowed upon the Church of Corinth miraculously proves anything to the Plymouth case, some of the saints in the "gatherings" at Dublin, Bristol, or London should long since have received the "gift" of "working miracles" as well as of "ministry." By what

authority do they claim this passage as a Divine warrant for the one, and omit the other? Mr. Trench tells us that several members of the Church of England of his acquaintance who embraced Plymouth views ultimately went over to Irvingism. We are not surprised at this, as Irvingism is the fair logical terminus of the Plymouth argument on this head.

"But is not the passage in Ephesians conclusive as to the fact that the 'risen Christ' gave miraculously to His Church 'some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers?'" This passage says that these persons were gifts from Christ to His Church (which, we suppose, no one ever doubted), but it does not say they were in every instance given miraculously; and neither does it supply a shadow of proof of the question at issue between the Plymouth party and the various sections of the Church—namely, that the *miraculous supply* of "evangelists," "pastors," and "teachers" was to be the permanent law in the New Testament Church. The Plymouth party admit that the age of miracles has passed away, so far as the supply of "apostles and prophets" is concerned; and by what kind of logic can they contend for its permanence with regard to the supply of "evangelists, pastors, and teachers"?

The doctrine of the *presidency of the Spirit*, as held by the Plymouth party, is closely connected with their theory of "gifts," and demands a fuller exposure than the claims upon our space will allow.

1. "They assert the exclusive government and personal presence of the Holy Ghost as completely, in every sense, as Jesus was with His disciples and governed them: 'Jesus being glorified on high, God hath sent the Holy Ghost' (Acts ii. 4—36). Now from that moment we search in vain in the New Testament for any church government, except the sovereign guidance of the Holy Ghost. As really as the blessed Jesus had been present with the disciples in the Gospels, equally so is the Holy Ghost present with the Church in the Acts."[*]

2. This government of the Holy Ghost is not only generally extended over the whole Church, but He presides in person over every particular "gathering," guiding the worship, inspiring the teachers and preachers, conferring "gifts," and ruling these as a sovereign. Hence we are told, "All the Christians in a neighbourhood assembled together in the name of Jesus; the

[*] *Christ the Centre*, p. 7.

Spirit gave diversities of gifts: some were gifted to preach, others to exhort, and so on with all the various manifestations of the Spirit; and He, the Spirit, was really present in their midst, dividing to every one severally as He would. When the sovereign presence of the Spirit of God was owned, this was the order." At the sixth page of *Worship and Ministry* we are told that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit's "presence and *supremacy* in the assemblies of the saints is one of the most momentous truths by which the present period is distinguished;" and the writer further says that he could not "have fellowship with any body of professing Christians who substitute clerisy in any of its forms for the sovereign guidance of the Holy Ghost." "No gathering can claim to be a Church of God save that company that meets in the name of Jesus, and in the dependence upon the presence, supply, and *ministry* of the Holy Ghost."* But now we are told that in the present day by all the churches "this presidency of the Holy Ghost is forgotten, and that a man fills His place. This disowning of God the Holy Ghost is most sad in every way." "God is disowned in the assembly for guidance in worship." "When you meet for worship, you do not submit to the Holy Ghost and allow Him to preside over the meetings, using whom He will."†

8. Those whom the Holy Ghost uses are as much inspired as was the Prophet Jeremiah; the words they utter are as much the Lord's own sweet words as those which God spoke to Jeremiah. So we learn from the following extract:—"How sweet were the words of the Lord to him. 'Let them return unto Thee, but return not Thou unto them' (see Jer. xv. 16—21). Such is the privilege of all, in these days, who have been led to own the real presence of the Holy Ghost in the assembly. The Lord's words have indeed been found to be sweeter than man's."‡ Mr. Darby asks, if God is there, "is He not to make His presence known? If He do, it is a manifestation of the Spirit *in the individual who acts*: it is a gift, and if you please, *an impulse*. It is *God acting; that is the great point*."§ Once more: "We meet on the principle that God the Holy Ghost (who dwells in believers individually and in the body collectively) alone has a right to speak in the meeting, and He has a right to speak by whom He will."‖ These extracts must suffice; we could multiply them to any amount.

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* *The Lord's Supper and Ministry.* † *Christ the Centre*, p. 9, 24.
‡ *Ibid.* p. 10. § *Presence and Operation of the Spirit*, p. 21.
‖ *Torquay Statement*, as quoted by Govett.

As they have not chosen to give any Scriptural authority for these marvellous claims, we shall not be expected to grapple with statements like these, which, in truth, are mere fanaticisms of the wildest sort. The following extracts will serve to illustrate the practical value of this doctrine of inspiration, and of the presidency of the Holy Ghost, in the Plymouth "gatherings;" they are all taken from the writers of the Plymouth Brotherhood, and will show what they have gained as a community by denying the doctrine of the Christian ministry as an order in the Church :—

"You have continual opportunities for testing ministry. Many occasions offer themselves in which it would not be difficult to decide if the teaching were a spiritual gift, or whether, in many instances frequently occurring, it is not a manifestation of ignorance, incompetence, and absurd garrulity. How these things may be going on at present I cannot affirm, but I remember well the severe punishment inflicted on enlightened Christians by the ministry of those whose manifest duty was to learn and not to teach. This, in some instances, used to be endured till it became intolerable; then came the necessity of expostulation, and in some instances of something more, creating heart-burnings of wounded vanity and angry murmurings which it was hopeless to appease. 'The Spirit divideth to every man according as He wills,' was generally understood to be the principle of ministry, and the logical deduction in the minds of the uninstructed and presumptuous was, that when they willed to teach it was the will of the Holy Spirit that they should teach. Hence, in instances not unfrequently occuring, persons of very imperfect education and of very shallow acquaintance with the Scriptures were 'called on to speak,' and, in their own opinion, 'the Lord was manifestly with them.' They had their friends and partisans; and when the hour of reproof came, it was interpreted as an act of jealousy on the part of 'gentlemen' who could not endure to see their inferiors assume the position of their superiors. Hence arose bitter animosities and a radical feeling, sometimes plainly expressed, that '*the rights* of the poorer brethren were borne down by a conspiracy of gentlemen and ladies.'

"Instances also might now and then be found where the ministry of a vain and forward individual was tolerated from year to year, owing to the impossibility of remedying the nuisance. Those who were the victims of his presumptuousness suffered in silence; they shunned strife and contention, and preferred endurance to resistance, and so the bold prater kept his seat on the saddle, never descending from the hobby-horse of his vanity. But such remembrances are painful, and, moreover, it would require a volume to register them."—*From an Address to the Plymouth Brethren* (Hardwicke), pp. 20, 21.

"This, however, is certain, that it was an established maxim to allow periods of silence in the meetings, in order that opportunities might be offered for any 'to deliver any message which they had

received, or to speak as they might feel led,' &c. With these convenient opportunities the poorer members of the congregation, who go straightforward in their reasoning, and are unacquainted with the *finesse* of metaphysical distinctions, understood, as they had been induced to understand, that those who ministered did so by the Holy Ghost. If they themselves were 'called on to speak,' or, in other words, if they felt an inclination so to do, they believed it to be a spiritual impulse, and they had no doubt that the absurdities which they occasionally uttered were the voice of the Spirit. Such exhibitions, from persons who do not understand the art of dressing up their crude thoughts in refinement of expression and delicacy of phrase, shock us at once by presenting us nonsense unveiled, in the pure state of nature, though the staple of their teaching may not be one atom more foolish than the perverse mysticism or idle maundering of their betters. The absurdity which, in the mouth of a clown, would provoke immediate disgust, may, from the lips of a rhetorical charlatan, be so presented as to appear something very deep. I have known the idlest and the wildest speculations from a gentleman pass off very well, and I have seen much less offensive matter from the uneducated greeted with a very different reception. This, at any rate, is certain, that both one and the other have occasionally appeared in the form and with the pretensions of 'ministry' amongst you, whatever may have been the opinion entertained of them."—*Ibid.* pp. 22, 23.

"If statements like these have been argued by them with great success, the consequence of the argument seems to have been overlooked; for, if there are no gifts of government, no presidential authority, and no office of the overseer, it must be a hopeless attempt to establish any order in a large body of Christians. It seems almost self-evident that where a multitude is called on to act in continued operation without any acknowledged government, the practical result must be anarchy and confusion; and truly the history of the Brethren has shown this clearly enough. Without rulers, without government, without pastoralauthority, they jog on from time to time by the management of coteries, and by the influence of certain individuals in the different gatherings who, more or less, assumed, as it were by accident, the direction of affairs. But this is a precarious and uncertain state of things, passable only for the sunshiny days of peace; in the hour of danger and in the hour of the tempest it is a total failure, or rather helps to increase the mischief."—*Ibid.* p. 24.

"The Darbyites began to break bread at Plymouth apart from the Newtonians; a secession was established, and the incomparable union, which was intended to convince all sects of the sin of separation, ended, after an experiment of a few years, in a most painful schism, sufficient to warn all spectators from approaching a system which could produce such distressing consequences. This was as the revolt of the ten tribes; there has never been peace in your Israel since that day, nor will there ever be again."—*Ibid.* p. 30.

The following, on the celebrated Bull of Pope Darby, ex-

communicating Mr. Newton, the saints at Bethesda, and all in every place who sympathised with him or them, are most significant documents. We are concerned that we have not space for this notable document *in extenso*.

"I doubt whether in all the annals of ecclesiastical strife there has been anything like it; for though we can read often enough of parties in Christendom, animated by popes, emperors, or councils, to attack whole populations on the plea of heresy, and to rage against them with fire and sword, yet we know that these were the acts of an ignorant multitude, strangers to every Christian grace, and Christians only in name. But in this frightful schism it was brother against brother, the regenerate against the regenerate (or so supposed to be), and friend against friend. Some the year before had been taking sweet counsel together, and had fled from the cold-heartedness and formality of the sects to find a common refuge in the love of Christ, reflected in the love of the Brethren, who had renounced all worldly hopes and emoluments, and had given up everything to cast in their lot with those who had escaped from the pollutions of the world; who had by innumerable acts of self-sacrifice shown the sincerity of their Christian affections; who had thought no labour, toil, or suffering too much for the service of the saints; who had thrown all the energies of their being into the love of the Brethren, in such services as were rarely equalled; who would have laid down their lives cheerfully for the sheep, as but a poor proof of their devotion to the Shepherd, now suddenly, in the space of a few days, found themselves separated from their companions, with a yawning gulf of fiery hatred between them, and their brothers of yesterday marshalled against them on the other side in battle array, with voices of execration and threats of vengeance. The friendship of many years, the tender remembrances of Christian fellowship, and all the sweet charities of life, were not only renounced, but laughed at. The bitterest possible words of hatred were hurled at those who came under the description of the circular; and Christian gentlemen, or those who had hitherto enjoyed that double character, seemed to think that they could not more surely earn the approbation of their commander, or fight his battle with greater success, than by adopting the coarsest language of the rude multitude, and the most revolting deportment of bullies. And all this was done with mockery and a sort of 'hurrah' of triumph. The tears and consternation of some were turned into raillery, their amazement and distress were quoted as excellent jokes: old family friends were, in some instances, greeted with a stare of surprise when they ventured to make a morning call; they were treated as bold strangers that had intruded into the house without introduction. Even ladies met with this reception from the males of their species, for in cases like these one shrinks from calling them men. The more stern these savages were to their best friends, the more did they show their zeal for the glory of the Lord, and His *precious, precious* name."—*Ibid.* pp. 34, 35.

"But amongst the Brethren another spirit has betrayed itself: some principle not yet analysed has been all along working deep, essential mischief in the hearts of these people—a principle which, under the outward show of much love, and with the habitual language of the most luscious piety, has been fostering the seeds of overbearing tyranny, has concealed the most dangerous fanaticism under a saintly exterior, and has nurtured the spirit of Cain under the garb of the meek and holy Abel. Can we account for the phenomenon on any theory than that it must be the system itself which furnishes the soil and atmosphere suitable to these pernicious seeds and enables them to germinate? The result is obviously exceptional, and is not to be found elsewhere; it is not, therefore, one of the accidents of humanity, a history of the usual progress of violent passions; it is something deeper and closer not yet discovered."—*Ibid*, p. 38.

Speaking of the "saints" at Ebrington Street, Mr. Darby says—

"I fully believe that the work which has resulted in Ebrington Street is a direct and positive work of Satan; I mean simply and solemnly what I say." "I have not the least doubt that Mr. Newton *received his system by direct inspiration from Satan*, analogous to the Irvingite delusions." "I am perfectly satisfied that persons here (Plymouth), over whom I mourn, are direct instruments of Satan, and that their work is of a seducing spirit, to which many may, and several have, given heed; I repeat it, of a seducing spirit or devil."—*Darby's Retrospect of Events*, pp. 8, 10.

As Mr. Darby is under the presidency of the Holy Spirit, and Mr. Newton, too, according to the Plymouth creed, the "world" will, in all probability, believe what they say about each other, and we cannot see that they have any cause to complain or charge us with misrepresenting them. We can only find space for one more extract, though we have at least a score of a similar class now lying on our desk.

"The excitement and confusion," says Mr. Culverhouse, in his *Statement as to the Jersey, Guernsey, and London Case*, pp. 5—10, "which prevailed at the conference precluded, I regret to state, all sober investigation. It is impracticable, dear brethren, to describe the true state of things, either in the gatherings or at the conference. Every remonstrance is unheeded. Insinuations, slanders, insolence, threats, and violence are resorted to. I designate it an inquisition.... At the meeting of the 21st inst., the doors were guarded and locked. A brother on applying for entrance was seized by the throat and thrust back. Our brethren, Mr. Darby, Mr. Wigram, Dr. Cronin, and Mr. Lean are the chief and ruling members."

Dr. Carson, of Coleraine, says—

"I have received a long letter from the person alluded to by Mr. Culverhouse as having been seized by the throat. He says, 'On entering the meeting one Saturday night I was seized by my throat by Mr. ——, and nearly strangled; and I bore, for several days, the marks of this old gentleman's talons on my neck, and yet this old gentleman is allowed still to teach. This account you will find recorded in Mr. Culverhouse's pamphlet, for he was there and examined my neck. . . . Several sisters rushed out in great fear and alarm; one said, 'it was like a menagerie of wild beasts.' . . . . I am extremely glad that I have been delivered from the worst sect that a Christian man can meet with under the canopy of heaven. . . . They pretend to be wholly led by the Holy Spirit, whereas all things are arranged beforehand, who shall lecture, who shall pray, who shall give out hymns.'"—*Dr. Carson's Heresies of the Plymouth Brethren*, p. 62.

We need not add a word on the Plymouth denial of the doctrine of the Christian ministry, and its effects on their teaching system. Our readers will regard the practical workings of the system, as illustrated in the above extracts, as furnishing its best refutation.

4. *The denial of the generally received doctrine of the Atonement, and the substitution for it of a doctrine of atonement adapted to their peculiar views.* We do not mean to charge the Plymouth Brethren with having given up the idea of atonement, or with not holding the doctrine prominently in their peculiar theological system. On the contrary, the doctrine of atonement through the shedding of blood holds a prominent place in their teaching, and has very much to do with their popularity. But it is possible to hold *a* doctrine of atonement without holding *the* doctrine of the Word of God on this vital question. And it is possible to say a great many glowing things about the blood of Christ as the foundation of our peace, without presenting that blood in the same relation to pardon, and to the entire system of evangelical truth, in which we find it presented in the Word of God. It is obvious, moreover, that just in proportion to the importance of any doctrine will be the importance of holding it exactly as it is presented in the Word of God; and, at the same time, the danger of departing from the teaching of inspired truth a hair's breadth on any pretext whatsoever. The Plymouth system is a system of extremes all through; hence any truth which it does hold it is likely to hold in an extreme or exaggerated form, and this may lead to most serious error, as we believe it has done in the present case in Ireland and

elsewhere. Nearly all the Plymouth pamphlets which we have read, and the Plymouth preachers whom we have heard, teach an extreme or exaggerated view of the Atonement, which leads to confusion and error. They hold and teach that Christ suffered, not what the schoolmen call the *tantundem* or equivalent for human transgression, but the *idem*, or actual penalty, stroke for stroke; that the Atonement actually paid every sinner's debt, "to the last farthing," so that all his sins, "past, present, and future," were "put away," or forgiven, when Christ died; and that saving faith is the mere assent of the mind to this proposition: "Christ paid my debt, past, present, and future, eighteen hundred years ago, hence I am saved now and for ever."

It will be seen, then, that the peculiar view of the Atonement taught by the lay preachers in Ireland, and the Plymouth party generally, embraces the old Calvinistic view of Christ as having borne the *idem*, or actual sin of His people, stroke for stroke—as having paid the actual debt "to the last farthing;" and, with characteristic confusion and absurdity, they preach this provision as having been made for all men, thus uniting, or rather attempting to unite, the Calvinistic and Arminian views of the Atonement in what they call "the Gospel." We regret that we have not space at command to examine further their peculiar theory, and illustrate its logical absurdities and tendencies. One of the pamphlets before us goes very fully into the doctrinal errors of this system, particularly in relation to the Atonement and saving faith, and gives various extracts from their tracts and pamphlets illustrative of their views. To it we have pleasure in directing the attention of our readers. Our space will only admit of one extract, showing that this gospel leads inevitably to Universalism.

"But, secondly, let us look at the *logical consequences* involved in this commercial, unscriptural, pounds-shillings-and-pence view of the Atonement. Every one can see that when an insolvent debtor's debt is paid, the law has no further claim against him, and it is a matter, not of mercy, but of simple *equity* or justice that the prisoner be set free. Further, it is equally clear, that if the debt be paid by any one for the prisoner, it cannot morally or legally be exacted *twice*—that is, from the prisoner's representative and from the prisoner himself at some future day. And now, in the light of their own illustration of the central doctrine of the Atonement, let us ask these gentlemen one or two questions. They may prove awkward, but we must be allowed to press them, as they are of vital importance to the full understanding of this miserable system of popular error. *Whose 'debt, to the last*

farthing, did Christ pay when He died on Calvary? That of His *own people*, or that of *all sinners as such?* If the former—that is, believers, and their debt only—*no one not included in His plan can possibly be saved*, do what he will or can, inasmuch as Christ paid 'the last farthing' for His own people merely, and left the others to pay their own, or take the legal consequences. This is the old Calvinistic idea of Toplady and the Westminster divines, and is now nearly exploded, as no man dare preach reprobation from any pulpit in the land, and no man can hold Calvinistic election and logically deny reprobation. The thing is simply impossible; the laws of mind are as fixed as those of matter. If a man deny that three and three make six, what he wants is not light, but an understanding. If Christ 'paid the debt' of His people merely, it follows as conclusively as anything can follow in this world, that no others can *possibly* be saved, and hence all the placards, handbills, and preaching of these gentlemen are worse than useless! But they will probably say, 'We do not hold the doctrine of a limited atonement, and never preach it.' Very well, you take the other alternative, then, and say Christ paid to the last farthing the debt of all sinners, without exception, and this is our gospel. Will you please show us, then, on this principle, *how any sinner can by possibility be damned?* You say, 'The debt, to the last farthing, was actually paid for every sinner when Christ died.' If so, *surely the law can have no claim now, or at any future period*, and it is a matter of simple equity, as well as of absolute certainty, that every sinner in the world must ultimately be saved! This new theory of the Atonement lands us in sheer Universalism, and there is no escape from this as the logical consequence of the system. Why, then, lose time, and money, and strength in preaching and various efforts to save 'dear souls'? On the principles of this new gospel they are in no danger, their 'debt, to the last farthing, is paid'—was paid before they were born; hence they never were *really* insolvent, and their final salvation is matter of simple equity! Thus every man, believer or unbeliever, may joyfully sing the following stanzas from the New Gospel Hymn Book:—

"'From whence this fear and unbelief,
If God the Father put to grief
His spotless Son for me?
Can He, the Righteous Judge of men,
Condemn me for that debt of sin,
Which, Lord, was charged on Thee?

"'If Thou hast my discharge procured,
And freely in my place endured
The whole of wrath divine:
Payment God will not *twice* demand—
First, at my bleeding Surety's hand,
And then *again* at mine.'"*

* *Hymns sung at the Special Services, Dublin and Kingstown*, No. 84.

"Hence we are not surprised at the conclusion of an honest farmer in the King's County, after hearing one of these gentlemen preach: 'Well,' said he, 'I never understood the Gospel before; I shall give myself no trouble about either repentance or faith—it is all nonsense. This gentleman has proved to my satisfaction that Christ paid my debt before I was born [poor fellow! he was easily satisfied], and whatever time I go into the other world I will claim my discharge from all legal consequences, as a matter of simple equity.'

"The advocates of this new gospel will probably say, 'We never preach universal salvation, but, on the contrary, insist upon faith as the grand condition of salvation.' This is easily said, but it is quite another thing to escape the logical consequences of their system. We have proved, beyond all possibility of refutation, that their theory of the Atonement leads to sheer Universalism; and we have now to ask these gentlemen another question. If Christ has paid every sinner's debt to the last farthing, how can faith be the condition of salvation? The payment of the debt is either a fact or a fiction of your imagination. If a fiction, what becomes of your gospel? If a fact, unbelief cannot reverse that fact or affect it in any way. The sinner's debt was paid before he was born; if this be a fact, it remains true whether he believes it or not—aye, whether he ever hears about it or not. It cannot by any possibility make the slightest difference as to his final safety.

"But we shall perhaps be told that 'unbelief, or the rejection of Christ, is the damning sin.' But we should like to know how does this relieve the case? You say, 'Christ paid the debt of every sinner to the last farthing.' Very well; this payment either included this sin of unbelief or it did not. If it did not, how is this sin of unbelief to be forgiven? If it did, the debt cannot have been paid and due also."—*Lay Preaching in Ireland, and the New Gospel*, pp. 24, 27.

As one error generally leads to another, this false view of the Atonement leads to a false view of pardon, and of saving faith, and of oneness with Christ, on each of which points we must say a word or two. If Christ actually paid the debt of every sinner, it will follow that all his sins, past, and present, and future, were forgiven, or "put away," eighteen hundred years ago; and hence we shall not be surprised at the following extract from the Rev. J. D. Smith, who seems thoroughly to have embraced the doctrinal system of Plymouthism, and who preaches it from Sabbath to Sabbath in Merrion Hall, Dublin:—

"Whilst in Switzerland the other day, a Genevese was very anxious to know that the Lord had put her sins away, and a lady present, who had attended some of the meetings at Kingstown, said, 'It is ten months since He put my sins away.' I replied inquiringly, 'Was it so?' The answer came eighteen hundred years ago. 'Yes, Christ

bore them then, and having once borne them, He will bear them no more.

"'He's gone inside the curtained sky
To die no more.'

And if your sins were not put away eighteen hundred years ago, they never will be."—Smith's *Addresses at Freemasons' Hall*, No. 2, p. 23.

Here Mr. Smith is evidently blinded by his peculiar theory of the Atonement, and confounds atonement with pardon, though the Bible distinction between the two is broad and palpable enough. The same stupid blunder is made by Mr. Mackintosh in all his pamphlets, and by all the Plymouth teachers now in the West of Ireland. They first adopt an extreme theory of the Atonement, and then are logically compelled to go a step further and confound the Atonement with the pardon. But the Atonement is one thing, the pardon resulting from it is altogether another. The Atonement was finished eighteen hundred years ago, "once for all," and constitutes the meritorious ground or medium of pardon for all, while it actually pardoned none. The pardon is administered by God in the capacity of a Judge, from age to age, to every penitent sinner who embraces Christ as He is offered in the Gospel. No more dangerous type of preaching can well be imagined than one that confounds atonement with pardon. In our judgment, such slipshod preaching does far more harm than good, and sows the seed of mischievous error to spring up and trouble the Church in after years.

The passage from this to a false view of saving faith is very simple. A false theory of the Atonement leads to a false theory of pardon, and this again to a false theory of the faith which apprehends the pardon. They first confound atonement with pardon, and then, as living faith is not essential to such a pardon as this, they simplify faith (or explain it away) into a mere assent of the mind to a proposition. Hence we are told in one of the D'Olier Street tracts, "God proclaims to all a complete salvation [covering the future as well as the past, as the writer endeavours to show], transferable to any sinner who will have it, by the simplest and easiest act of which the human mind is capable."* But we should like to know, what difference it can make whether the sinner believes that his debt is paid or not, if, as a matter of fact, it has been actually paid. Poor Walker involves him-

* *A Letter on the present Religious Movement (called "Revivalism") in Kerry.* Dublin Tract Repository.

self in sad and humiliating confusion with this theory of simple faith. He found it anything but "simple" work to harmonise his theory with the teaching of the Word of God. He tells us, in the extract given above, that "by the faith with which justification and eternal life are connected, he understands nothing but the *belief* of the things declared to all alike in the Scriptures; that forgiveness of all sins, acceptance in the sight of God, and eternal life, come to the guiltiest of sinful men *as such*, and are assured in the Divine Word to every one, without distinction, who *believes* the testimony there delivered concerning Jesus of Nazareth." All this is apparently simple enough, and any one would understand by "believing this testimony there delivered," a simple act of the mind; but in his letter to Haldane he explains his simple theory of faith in the luminous sentence—"In merely *believing* a thing declared to me, there is no *act* of the mind at all, but a conviction produced on the mind by the evidence, which the report appears to me to carry with it."* And again he tells us that this simple faith can only be exercised by the elect! What sad confusion we have here, and this from a professor of logic! This extreme view of the Atonement is the root also of the Plymouth doctrine of "oneness with Christ," or "imputed sanctification." Mr. Smith says, addressing the sinners at Merrion Hall,—"Oh! will you not come to such a Christ? What keeps you from Him? Sirs, have I not shown you that the Lord Jesus became sin for you?"† "Oh, transcending mystery, that the Lord of life and glory should become sin for us." "He hung there with *sin* on Him, from which, in punishing, God hid His face." "The Lord Jesus is one with His people in regard *to their sins*."‡ And this is intended to prepare the way for teaching like the following:—"Christ in His perfectness and holiness is mine: 'What a righteousness is this! even the righteousness of God in Him,' which every saint before God, in his union with Christ, is. Having it, we have nothing more to desire. It is a righteousness greater than that of the first Adam, greater than the righteousness of angels; it is a *Divine* righteousness, which seats the believer in the very *presence* of God, and enables him to *behold His face in righteousness*." We might multiply extracts to the same effect from the pamphlets of Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. Stanley, and others of the Plymouth brotherhood. Thus Mr. Mackin-

* Walker's *Reply to J. A. Haldane, Esq.* Vol. i. p. 452.
† *Life Truths*, p. 82. ‡ Ibid. p. 79. The italics are Mr. Smith's.

tosh says,—"God only sees him in Christ and as Christ. He becomes one with Christ for ever. But 1 Corinthians i. 30, distinctly teaches that Christ is made both justification and sanctification to all believers. It does not say we have righteousness and 'a measure of sanctification.' We have just as much Scripture authority for putting the word 'measure' before righteousness as before sanctification. The Spirit of God does not put it before either. Both are perfect, and we have both in Christ. God never does anything by halves. There is no such thing as a half justification; neither is there such a thing as a half sanctification."* Mr. Mackintosh forgot to enumerate "redemption" also. Are the Plymouth believers actually glorified now?

We need not take up the reader's time with refuting, for the thousand and first time, doctrine like this. It is merely a hash of the ultra-Calvinism of Crisp, Toplady, and Hawker, of Plymouth, rendered popular and taking by a certain unctuous phraseology peculiar to believers of the Plymouth school. No one will be surprised to hear that Merrion Hall is crowded, and that the preachers of this Antinomian gospel draw crowds and boast many converts. But they boast the lame, and the halt, and the blind. Mr. Nangle, who, in his first pamphlet, said he knew many sinners called from darkness to light through the instrumentality of the lay preachers, in a subsequent pamphlet, retracts this statement, and now regards these "believers," who boast of their "completeness in Christ," as still "in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity," and is deliberately of opinion that the "movement" has done far more harm than good in his parish. Within the last few days, we heard one of these "believers," who was perfectly drunk, attempt to instruct some Romanists in a railway carriage in this doctrine of a finished sanctification in Christ—a sanctification which was in Christ, and not in poor fallen human nature; and this Antinomian leaven is rapidly spreading in Ireland just now. We question if at any time the conflict was more serious in any part of the United Kindom.

We had intended to notice at least three other of the negations peculiar to Plymouthism as a system; namely, the denial (practically at least) of the agency of the Spirit in experimental religion, which is the result of the extreme view of the Atonement to which we have referred, and has led to serious error in relation to the doctrine of repentance, saving

* Mackintosh on *Sanctification*, p. 14.

faith, pardon, regeneration, and assurance of salvation; the denial of the law as the rule of life for Christian believers, and the consequent denial of the Divine authority of the Sabbath; and the denial of the Gospel as the power which is to subdue and save the world, involving an examination of their peculiar theories of Millenarianism. But space fails us now, and our readers have probably had enough of the subject for the present. From what has been shown, intelligent readers will be able to judge for themselves how far such doctrines as these taught by our new lights are likely to promote Christian intelligence or edification. We regard Plymouthism as a perilous and mischievous heresy. We regret to find how deeply it has vitiated the zealous efforts in the way of lay preaching, which are being made throughout the three kingdoms. In watering places, and military stations especially, has it found favour. It is needful for all Christian ministers to understand it, and to be on their guard against it. For its cure, however, we can look only to one source—a liberalization of the polity of the Church of England in regard to the employment of lay preachers and prayer leaders. Having no sphere in the Established Church, and being repelled by the narrowness of its forms, such men overleap all bounds and barriers, and become roving evangelists without a church, a commission, or a creed.

ART. II.—*Twenty-Seventh Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Births, Marriages, and Deaths in England.* London. 1866.

THE first authentic record of registration occurs in the year 1538, when an injunction was issued by Cromwell, Lord Privy Seal, that a register-book for weddings, christenings, and burials should be kept in every parish church, under a penalty of three shillings and four pence for every case of neglect. The fine was to be expended in the repairs of the church; but, in consequence of some irregularity, a new injunction was issued in 1547, ordering the fine to be given to the poor. Fresh inquiries were instituted in the first year of Elizabeth, but they resulted in nothing beyond a recommendation that the fine should be divided between the poor and the church. A Bill providing for a diocesan registration was read before the House in 1563, and thrown out. Nothing more was done until the year 1590, when Lord Treasurer Burghley took the matter in hand. Vigorous and systematic measures were adopted; every clergyman on institution was required to promise that he would diligently keep the register-book; and in 1603 a decree was issued that all the ancient registers in each parish should be copied into a parchment book. A further step was taken by the Long Parliament in the appointment of a parish registrar; but on the Restoration the function reverted to the clergy. In the reign of William III. duties were levied on births, marriages, and deaths, and the clergy were compelled, under a penalty of £100, to collect the necessary statistics. This was a serious grievance, and entailed a vast amount of labour, especially as parents tried in every way to evade the tax on births. An Act was therefore passed (7 and 8 Will. III., c. 35) making parents responsible to give notice of births within five days of their occurrence, under a penalty of forty shillings. The imperfect working of the system led to the adoption and repeal of various legislative measures; but nothing was accomplished until the year 1833, when a Select Committee of the House of Commons, after a long and comprehensive investigation of the subject, recommended "a national civil registration of births, marriages, and deaths," which should include all ranks of society, and "religionists of every class." A scheme was laid before Par-

liament, which, after various emendations, issued in an Act (1 Vic., c. 22), which came into operation on July 1st, 1837.

In order to give force and effect as legal evidence to existing registers and records, a Commission was appointed in 1836, "to enquire into the state, custody, and authenticity of all registers or records, not being parochial, of births or baptisms, deaths or burials, and marriages duly solemnized." Upwards of 7,000 books belonging to various congregations, and 1,500 registers of the Society of Friends, were examined and pronounced authentic; and by an Act passed in 1840 they were made receivable as evidence. The discovery of some new registers belonging to the Society of Friends led to the appointment of a second Commission of Inquiry in 1857. Application was made to all the various churches and congregations in England. The Jews and the Roman Catholics declined to submit their registers to investigation. But as the result of this second Commission, 303 registers, including 270,000 entries, were authenticated, and placed in the custody of the Registrar-General.

For the purposes of registration the population of England and Wales is ranged under eleven divisions. These are subdivided into forty-four registration counties, which differ more or less from the boundaries of the counties proper, inasmuch as the district or union which extends into more than one county is placed within that in which either the principal town or the greater part of the population is located. These counties are distributed into 641 districts, which are collections of contiguous parishes or places, and are generally identical with the Poor Law Unions of the same names. These districts are again divided into sub-districts, in each of which there is an acting Registrar. In London alone there are no less than 135 sub-districts. The registration officers consist of a Registrar-General, whose appointment is made under the great seal, and whose head-quarters are in Somerset House; assisted by a chief-clerk, six superintendents, and a staff of clerks appointed by the Treasury. It is his duty to certify Nonconformist places of worship, to carry out the provisions of the Compulsory Vaccination Act, to prepare the returns ordered by the Public Health Act, to keep the non-parochial registers, to organize and superintend the census, and to present weekly, quarterly, and annual reports. Each district has its Superintendent-Registrar, and each sub-district its Registrar and Deputy-Registrar. The sub-district Registrars receive only a subsidiary remuneration. In their ranks may be found tailors, grocers, druggists, auctioneers, agents,

schoolmasters, undertakers, clerks, solicitors, and preachers. Medical men are rarely selected, their proverbially wretched handwriting being fatal to that accuracy which registration demands. The original registers are lodged with the Superintendent-Registrars, by whom certified copies are sent every three months to Somerset House. These are arranged and indexed so as to be accessible to the public. A fee of one shilling is charged for searching for any particular entry; and for half-a-crown a certified stamped copy may be obtained, which the Act ordains shall be receivable as evidence in judicial proceedings. The total cost of the registration department is about £100,000 per annum, and is met by poor-rates and a Parliamentary grant.

The particulars tabulated by the Registration officers are for all practical purposes sufficiently exhaustive, excepting, perhaps, under the head of deaths. In the case of births the points ascertained are: the date and place, the name, if any, and the sex of the child, the father's name and surname, the name and maiden surname of the mother, the father's rank or profession, the signature, description and residence of the informant, and the child's baptismal name, if added after the registration of the birth. The marriage register contains the following particulars:—the place and time of the marriage, the names and surnames of the contracting parties, their age, civil condition, rank or profession, the name, surname, and rank or profession of the father of each; by what rites or ceremonies the marriage was performed, whether by banns, license, or certificate; the name of the person by whom the marriage was solemnized, and the signatures of all parties concerned, and two witnesses. The register of deaths contains the name and surname of the deceased, the sex, age, and rank or profession; the time, place, and cause of death; and the signature, description, and residence of the informant, who must have been present at the death, or in attendance during the illness of the deceased, or, in default of such evidence, an occupant or inmate of the house in which the death occurred. When an inquest is held, the coroner must be the informant. The informant in a case of birth must be one of the parents, or an occupant of the house. If the child should be a foundling, the overseer of the parish must give notice to the Registrar.

The estimated population of England and Wales in the middle of the year 1864 was about twenty millions and three-quarters. The number of persons married in this year was 360,774; the number of children who were born alive was

740,275; and the number of deaths was 495,531. The natural increase of population, by the excess of births over deaths, was 244,744, a daily increase of 669. This increase, however, was considerably lessened by emigration, for in 1864 no less than 208,900 emigrants left those ports of the United Kingdom at which Government agents are stationed. Of these 58,000 were of English origin, 15,319 of Scotch, 118,061 of Irish, and 17,520 were of foreign origin. The United States gained 147,042 of these emigrants, 53,463 sailed for British colonies, and 8,195 for other places.

The first item of interest in the Registrar-General's Report is that of marriages. In the year 1864 there were 180,387 marriages in England. This exhibits a proportion of 1·736 of persons married to each hundred of the population. The mean proportion per cent. for the last twenty-six years was 1·643. The marriage ceremony in England may be performed either in the churches of the Establishment, in some duly registered place of worship, or at the office of a Superintendent-Registrar. When the ceremony takes place at the Registrar's office, six persons must be present in order to make the marriage valid—the Superintendent, the marriage Registrar of the sub-district, two credible witnesses, the bridegroom and the bride. In a registered place of worship the officiating minister takes the place of the Superintendent, but the presence of the Registrar is indispensable. In the churches of the Establishment the clergyman, uniting the civil and religious functions, dispenses altogether with the presence of the Registrar, and is, in fact, his own Registrar.

Up to the year 1837 marriages could only be solemnized in England according to the rites of the Established Church, except in the case of Quakers and Jews. The Marriage Act of that year provided for the celebration of marriages in Dissenting Chapels under certain restrictions. Recent legislation has furnished further facilities, so that the trouble and expense of arranging a marriage in a Dissenting Chapel are not much greater than in the Church. But the presence of the Registrar at all marriages celebrated in Nonconformist places of worship is felt by many to be a grievance. An invidious distinction is thus alleged to be made between Dissenting ministers and the clergy. Whether, however, it would be wise to dispense with the attendance of the Registrar, is a question of grave importance: the question is one surrounded with difficulties. The status of a Nonconformist minister is necessarily undefined. Any man, whatever his character and competency, may gather together a few disciples and con-

stitute himself their pastor. But if the power of performing the marriage service, without any responsible civil oversight, were committed indiscriminately to persons of this class, it is obvious that the widest scope would be given for irregular unions, the enormities of the Fleet would be reiterated, and anything like an adequate marriage registration would be impossible. The simplest and most satisfactory solution of the difficulty would be given by an Act rendering the presence of the Civil Registrar indispensable at *all* marriages, whether in or out of the Establishment. This would do away with invidious distinctions, would in nowise compromise the dignity of the clergyman, and would lead to a more exact marriage registration. The Registrar-General complains, with just a dash of irony, that the clergy are so wrapt in their sacred functions that they do not always write the names of the contracting parties distinctly, and that they very often omit important particulars.

Of the 180,387 marriages registered in 1864, 141,083 were celebrated according to the rites of the Established Church, 15,627 were performed in Nonconformist places of worship, and 8,659 according to the rites of the Roman Catholics. There were only 58 Quaker marriages, 349 marriages of Jews, while no less than 14,611 were performed at the office of the Superintendent Registrar. The large proportion of Roman Catholic marriages is attributed to the residence of so many foreigners in England. The intermarrying of Quakers is on the decline; the Jews, on the other hand, are exhibiting an increase. The registers of 1864 record the largest number of Jewish marriages that has been known for twenty-four years. The number of marriages in the Establishment, though bearing the proportion of 78 per cent. of all marriages, is steadily declining, while the number of marriages not celebrated according to the rites of the Established Church is nearly five times as large as in the year 1841. The proportion of marriages celebrated with religious rites is 92 per cent.

The number of marriages performed at the Superintendent-Registrars' Offices is very unequally distributed over the country. It is excessive in the counties of Durham and Northumberland, and in most of the larger seaport towns. Seamen and miners, it would appear, have an objection to attend a place of worship, and gladly avail themselves of the register offices. Were it not for this provision, it is probable that many of this class would not marry at all. Such marriages, therefore, "are not withdrawn from the churches of the Establishment, or from the chapels of the Nonconformists,

but from the ranks of immorality." In Carlisle the proportion of marriages of this class is without parallel. Out of 378 marriages in 1864, 229 took place at the Registrars' Offices, or more than double the number of marriages in the Established Church, and more than six times the number of those celebrated in other places of worship. It appears that before the passing of Lord Brougham's Act in 1856, which extinguished the Gretna Green marriages, the common practice in Carlisle was for persons intending to marry to cross over the border to the famous turnpike, where, in the loose and irregular fashion of Scotland, they could be married without ceremony or delay. The introduction of railways had, up to the passing of this Act, afforded such facilities to the lower classes for the trip into Scotland, that the number of marriages in the northern counties had been considerably reduced. The keeper of the turnpike on the English side of the border registered no less than 757 marriages in the year preceding the passing of the Act. Sometimes more than forty eager couples were married in one day. Lord Brougham's Act destroyed the occupation of the famous blacksmith; for it provided that "no irregular marriage contracted in Scotland by declaration, acknowledgment, or ceremony, shall be valid, unless *one* of the parties had at the date thereof his or her usual place of residence there, or had lived in Scotland for twenty-one days next preceding such marriage." So perished the glory of Gretna Green; but the Carlisle people, unable to reconcile themselves to the loss, avoid the religious ceremonial of marriage, and flock to the office of the Registrar.

The average cost of marriage, in the way of fees, ranges from twelve shillings, which represents the lowest average cost, to sixty-four shillings, which represents the highest. The privilege of a special license, permitting marriage at any time, in any church or convenient place, is very costly, and is seldom claimed but by persons of high rank. The number of marriages by license, at an average cost of 64*s*., was in 1864, 26,579, or about 15 per cent. The number of marriages by banns or certificate was 153,808, or about 85 per cent. So that love, after all, has an eye to economics. The total annual cost of marriage fees is a little under £200,000, about half of which is paid by one-seventh of the number of those who marry. But the fee is not the only question of cost in marriage. Prosaic as the fact may appear, it is, nevertheless, fact, that the number of marriages in any given year is considerably affected by the price of wheat. In seven years,

during which the average price of wheat was 66/3 per quarter, the proportion of marriages to every 100 of the population was ·804, of which ·135 belonged to the middle class, and ·669 to the lower. During a period of eight years, when the average price of wheat was 43/4, the proportion of marriages was ·832 per cent., of which number ·702 belonged to the working class. High prices have little influence over the marriage of the wealthier orders of society. Whatever the cost of the quartern loaf may be, they marry and are given in marriage. But it makes all the difference to the working man. To him the quotations in the *Mark Lane Express* mean wedding-rings and hopes fulfilled, or hope deferred, and protracted solitude. The same considerations affect the season at which marriages take place. In the first three months of the year work is scarce and provisions are generally dear. In this quarter there are always the fewest marriages. The number rises in the spring and summer quarter, and reaches its maximum in the autumn, when food is comparatively cheap and the working man has money in his pocket. Among the higher classes the close of the London season is the fashionable period of marriage; but Whitsuntide and Christmas are most popular with working men. In agricultural districts, however, the terms of service exert some influence.

Fewer marriages take place on Friday than on any other day of the week. This is the more remarkable because Friday was the *Dies Veneris* of the Latins, and with the Saxons the day of the goddess Friga. The superstition which regards Friday as unlucky may be traced to the influence of the early Church, which selected that day as one of mortification, partly because of its being the day of the Crucifixion, and partly to counteract the excesses of heathenism. But whatever the origin of the superstition, Friday is regarded with the same abhorrence by persons "about to marry," as by sailors who are outward bound. The most popular day for marriages is Sunday, which is chosen probably as a holiday. Next in order comes Monday, almost invariably a loose day among working men. Saturday is the third in popular favour, as being the day on which wages are paid, and as succeeded by two holidays. Only two out of every hundred marriages are celebrated on Friday.

It is necessary that the bridegroom and the bride should sign the marriage register. In the year 1864, of 180,387 couples who were married, in 109,569 instances the bridegroom *and* the bride *wrote* their names. In 47,236 instances, the bridegroom *or* the bride made a *mark* instead of writing

their names. In 26,582 cases, both the bridegroom and the bride signed with marks. In other words, 100,400 persons who were married in England in 1864, either could not or did not write their names in the register. This is a very grave and unsatisfactory state of things. It is just possible that some of these thousands were able to write. Generous bridegrooms sometimes refuse to write their names out of delicate regard for the feelings of their less accomplished brides; and generous brides too have done the same for their unlettered husbands. Some people, too, who do not write well, shrink from exhibiting their awkward autographs before the minister or registrar. Others, as is natural, are a little too nervous at the critical moment, to command the necessary firmness. But if a very large margin were granted for such cases, there would yet remain the startling fact that some 90,000 persons per annum marry in England, who at a marriageable age, and in marrying circumstances, cannot write their names. The fact appears more striking, when it is remembered that those who marry are a selected class, and include very few who are infirm or idiotic.

The proportion varies in particular districts. The mean average of those who cannot write their names is 23 per cent. in the case of men, and 32 in the case of women. But many districts exhibit a proportion deplorably below this. The lowest rate is that of South Wales, where 56 per cent. of the women who marry cannot write. For many years North and South Wales have exhibited a very low average. Staffordshire is not much better. The ignorance of the colliers in that district is proverbial. Only fifty-one women in every hundred who married, and sixty-one men were able to sign their names in the register. In Lancashire the proportion of women who made a mark was 47 per cent.; that of the men was only 25. This disparity is very marked, and depends on causes that may be readily ascertained. In the West Riding things are only a little better, the proportion of writing men being 76 per cent., while that of women was only 57. The highest proportion of men was in Westmoreland, where 89 per cent. of the men who married in 1864 wrote their names. The highest per-centage of women occurred in Sussex, where 83 in the hundred were able to write.

These statistics compare very unfavourably with those which are furnished by the register books of Scotland. From the Eighth Detailed Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Scotland, it appears that *all* the women of the county of Kinross who married, wrote their names in the registers. In other

counties the proportions per cent. were almost as creditable. In Peebles and Kincardine they were 98, in Roxburgh and Kirkcudbright 96, in Perth 94, in Fife 92, and even in the Orkneys 93. The proportion of men in the same districts is equally creditable, being 97 per cent. in the counties round Aberdeen, and 92 in the Orkneys. Only in the highlands of Inverness, Ross, and Cromarty, where the use of the Gaelic tongue embarrasses the progress of education, does the per-centage of those who cannot write, fall nearly to the level of the more ignorant counties of England. Dark, however, as this picture seems for England, it has a brighter side. The registers exhibit year by year a steady improvement. Scarcely more than twenty years ago, *one* in *three* of the young men, and *one* in *two* of the young women who married, could not write their names in the register. During this period the mean per-centage has fallen from 33 to 23 in the men, and from 49 to 32 in the women. Twenty years hence we may surely hope that there will be no column in the Registrar-General's Report, for those who cannot write their names.

From the report before us, it would appear that marriage is with the community at large very popular. This may be inferred not only from the number of those who marry, but mainly from that of those who marry again. Marriage is notoriously a lottery. It does not follow that every man who marries increases his happiness thereby. But if he ventures on a second marriage, there is fair ground for the assumption that he admires the institution. Neither this Report nor any other furnishes us with the means of ascertaining the proportion of widows and widowers who have entered into marriage engagements more than twice. If our statistics could give details on this subject, their revelations would doubtless tend to make our case very much stronger. Be this as it may, no less than 41,318 persons who had been previously married, married again in 1864. Of these, 24,962 were widowers, and 16,356 were widows. One would suppose that a widower, bent on second marriage, would naturally prefer a widow, not only for the sake of her larger experience, but because of the mutual sympathy arising out of their similar loss. Facts, however, do not bear out the supposition. Of 24,962 widowers who remarried, only 8,845 married widows. All the rest, to the number of 16,117, married spinsters. As a very proper retaliation, 7,511 widows married bachelors. Eight men who had been divorced, married spinsters, and four married

widows. Eight bachelors married divorced women, and two widowers did the same. Of widowers who re-married in 1864, 1 was 19 years of age, 5 were 20, 353 were 21, 142 were between 70 and 75, 40 were between 75 and 80, 5 were between 80 and 85, and 5 between 85 and 100. Two widows who re-married were 17, 4 were 18, 8 were 19, 18 were 20, 36 were between 70 and 75, 7 between 75 and 80, and 1 between 80 and 85. But we must turn to other matters.

The question of age is as difficult as it is delicate. The registrar can generally get at the age of the bridegroom, but that of the bride is not quite so accessible. The most that he can legally exact, is explicit information as to whether the parties are minors or of full age. Beyond these points many ladies refuse to pass; and even in cases where fuller information is volunteered, the utmost gallantry cannot fail to suspect reserve. It is almost impossible to believe that so many blooming and blushing brides are only *thirty*. In 62,947 cases, however, of persons married in 1864, the precise age was not given. It is, therefore, impossible to calculate with perfect accuracy the ages at which people marry in England. From the tables furnished in the Report, and which must be regarded as giving only an approximate return, it would appear that out of 117,440 men, and the same number of women, who married in 1864, 28 women were 15 years of age, 5 men and 244 women were 16, 65 men and 1,396 women were 17, 560 men and 5,103 women were 18, 2,642 men and 9,248 women were 19, 7,120 men and 12,868 women were 20, and 49,826 men and 46,015 women were 21. From this age the proportion gradually declined to the age of 80, beyond which 11 men and 1 woman married. The favourite age, therefore, for the marriage of both sexes is between 20 and 21.

From these facts it appears that the wide-spread impression that people do not marry at so early an age as in by-gone days is incorrect. The proportion of early marriages has been steadily increasing since the returns were first registered in the year 1841. In that year the proportion of persons who married under 21 years of age, was 4¼ per cent. of men, and 13¼ per cent. of women. In the year 1864, it rose to a per-centage of nearly 6¾ in the case of men, and upwards of 20 in the case of women. These figures, however, exhibit but one side of the truth. Marriages among the operative classes at an early age, are undoubtedly on the increase. The wages commanded now by working people of both sexes,

admit of earlier unions than in former years, when labour was less remunerative. The spread of education drives young men to seek a home for themselves, instead of herding indiscriminately with their brothers and sisters under the family roof. But early marriages among the middle and upper classes are becoming more and more rare. And this fact is on all accounts most unpromising for the moral and social life of England.

On every side one may meet with young men, ranging from twenty-one to thirty-five, who have a fair salary and respectable prospects, lounging in their clubs or chambers, thronging reading-rooms and promenades, who, a hundred years ago, would have settled down as married men, and become the happy fathers of families. Nor is it difficult to divine the cause. It lies in the inexorable decrees of fashion. The young men of the upper classes must not marry without an establishment. They must begin where their fathers were content to leave off. The old and blessed notion of two respectable and intelligent young people taking each other for better or worse, starting in life in some little cottage or simple apartments, working their way up year by year through a process of economy, (in itself, when hallowed by mutual love, perfectly delicious,) and at last reaching a competence which they have worked for and deserved, and which a past economy alone can make enjoyable—this notion is well nigh exploded, and lives but in the dreams of the poet. Instead of this, a young man must not think of marriage until he can afford his handsomely furnished house, his three or four servants, his aristocratic locality. Into a home which he is severely taxed to maintain, he must bring a young lady, highly educated in every other branch of knowledge than that which is essential to domestic happiness, and launch her at once upon a life of care, the responsibilities of a large establishment, refractory servants, and an exacting society. Is it possible, among such circumstances, to anticipate the pleasures of home? Then, again, the mere cost of a fashionable wedding—the bridal trousseau, the long string of beautiful but costly bridesmaids, the elaborate breakfast, the gorgeous flunkeys, the splendid greys, the unlimited largesse, and the trip to the Continent—acts as a deterrent which discourages many a man on the threshold of married life.

The Juggernaut of respectability has had votaries enough. It is wrong that young men who intend to marry at all should put off their choice until they become almost old men, on the plea that their income is too small. It is wrong that young

girls, who would make the best of wives and mothers, should wait until the blush of their girlhood is gone, and care has written its story upon their brow. As much real happiness may be got out of two hundred a year as out of five. There is no such inspiration to a man's industry and diligence as the fact that he has a young wife at home, for whose weal he is working, and whose smile will reward him on his return. The business of making a small income go a long way is not so melancholy as people imagine it to be. There is positive pleasure among the makeshifts of a newly-married life. Where there is brain, and health, and mutual love, with a fair income and promising prospects, young people should marry, the decrees of fashion notwithstanding.

A most invidious, but only too popular phrase, represents a woman's chance of matrimony as being very meagre when she has passed into that mystic period, a certain age. Facts, however, are stronger than satire. The tables of the Registrar-General show that the chances of marriage extend far beyond the period ordinarily assigned. For in 1864, 8,367 of the women who were married were above 30 years of age, 4,543 were above 35, 3,047 were above 40, 1,821 above 45, 1,036 above 50, 502 above 55, 286 above 60, 74 above 65, 37 above 70, 8 above 75, and 1 above 80. Some of these, it is true, were widows; but 30 spinsters were between 60 and 65, 3 between 65 and 70, and 2 between 75 and 80. The age of a spinster is evidently no fatal barrier to her matrimonial chances; nor, on the other hand, is it safe to conclude that a very old bachelor will finish his journey alone. For, according to the returns of 1864, 8 bachelors held out till they were beyond 70, 1 yielded at 75, and one who had braved the hardships of single life for more than 80 years at last accepted a widow of his own age! These, however, are exceptional cases. Spinsters who marry bachelors are in their glory at 21. Spinsters who marry widowers are most numerous between the ages of 25 and 30. Widows who marry bachelors have their best chance between 30 and 35. But if they are content to take widowers, their harvest of opportunity lies between the ages of 45 and 50.

Nothing in the records of marriage is more curious than the discrepancy in the ages of persons married. In 1864 a youth of 16 married a girl of 21; another of 17 married a woman of upwards of 30; and a third, who was 20 years old, married a woman who was between 40 and 45. In two cases young men of 21 married women between 50 and 60. A widower of 65 married a girl of 18. Three widowers who

were above 75, one above 80, and one who was nearly 90, married girls of 21. Even these cases are transcended by one which occurs in the Report for 1861. In that year a bachelor of 25 was married to a widow of 80!

The number of women between the ages of fifteen and fifty-five in England and Wales, according to calculations made in 1860, was 5,563,632. Of these 2,928,039 were married, and 2,635,593 were single or widows. Deducting the widows, and allowing for the increase of the population, there will be at the present day upwards of two millions of marriageable women who are not married. Emigration and the growing hesitation of the upper classes on the subject of marriage will doubtless lead to the gradual increase of this class. It is a question of grave importance how provision shall be made for the support of this vast number of unmarried women, most of whom are dependent on their own industry for a livelihood. Philanthropy and an enlightened legislation are closing to them spheres of labour which once offered them a scanty remuneration at the cost of their unwomanly degradation. Machinery is daily supplanting them in other industrial departments. The sewing-machine is making families independent of the sempstress. Benevolent schemes for employing female labour in telegraphy and printing have generally failed. Emigration, as a matrimonial speculation, is to a large majority most repulsive; and, as a means of acquiring a livelihood, it is scarcely inviting. In no department has the philanthropist wider scope than in this; in none has he greater difficulties. But, whatever the difficulties, this is a subject which must attract the attention of those to whom social questions and problems are matters, not merely of sentiment, but of solemn responsibility.

The marriage rate in England and Wales for 1864 was higher than in Scotland, France, or Austria. The number of persons married to every hundred living in England was 1·736; in Scotland, 1·454; in France, 1·552; and in Austria 1·672. The Austrian rate has generally been in advance of that of England. The number of persons married in England in 1864 was 360,774, as against 588,494 in France, and 389,674 in Austria. The Italian rate was 1·592 per cent., the number of persons married being 354,764.

The total number of buildings registered for the solemnisation of marriages up to the 31st December, 1864, was 5,163. Of these 157 belonged to the Scottish Presbyterians, 1,600 to the Independents, 1,091 to the Baptists, 602 to Roman Catholics, 158 to Unitarians, and 14 to Moravians. The

Wesleyan Methodists have 584 registered chapels; the other Methodist bodies, 553; the Welsh Calvinists, 207; the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, 39; the New Jerusalem Church, 23; the Irvingites, 17; and all others, 118. The Presbyterians are strongest in Northumberland; the Independents and Baptists in South Wales; the Catholics and Unitarians in Lancashire; the Wesleyans and the various sections of Methodism in the West Riding, and the other bodies in Lancashire.

The Births of living children in England and Wales in the year 1864 were more numerous than in any previous year. The number registered was 740,275, being 12,858 in excess of the number returned in 1863. The average birth-rate of the twenty-seven complete years of registration, 1837—64, was 3·342 per cent. of persons living. In 1860 it was 3·437; and 3·461, 3·504, and 3·539 in the three following years. In 1864 it was 3·564, the highest rate known since the commencement of registration. To every 28 persons living in 1864 there was one child born alive. This proportion varies in different localities. It is generally low in purely agricultural districts. Among mining and manufacturing populations, on the other hand, it reaches its maximum. In Herefordshire, for instance, the birth-rate in 1864 was only 3·084 per cent., while in Staffordshire it was 4·093, and in the county of Durham it was no less than 4·298. In London, where there is a larger proportion of unmarried persons than in any other district, owing to the claims of domestic service, and the necessities of mercantile and professional pursuits, the birth-rate is generally below the average. In 1864 it was 3·480 per cent. This variation of the rate in particular districts is evidently not accidental, but dependent on certain laws. For ten years Durham has maintained the highest average. Next in order comes Staffordshire, which during the same period has stood second. The West Riding of Yorkshire comes next, and is followed by Lancashire, Monmouthshire, and Warwickshire. For ten years Herefordshire has stood at the lowest rate. This difference cannot be attributed altogether to the varying marriage rate of these districts. Seven districts exhibit a higher rate than Durham, and five show a lower rate than Herefordshire.

Of the total number of children whose births were registered in 1864, 377,719 were males, and 362,556 were females, being in the proportion of 104·2 males to every 100 females born. This proportion varies considerably in different counties. In Rutlandshire the proportion of males was 114·6 to every 100

females. In Nottinghamshire it was 106·1, in Northumberland 106·5, and in the North Riding of York 106·1. In Hertfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Herefordshire, and Westmoreland, the average was in favour of females, the numbers being respectively 98·4, 98·7, 98·6, and 95·9 males to every 100 females born. That this variation is purely accidental, may be gathered from the fact that the counties which in 1864 exhibited the greatest proportion of males, in the year 1863 showed the greatest proportion of females. The average rate, however, of 104 males to every 100 females born is evenly maintained from year to year, and would seem to augur well for the matrimonial prospects of the latter. But, unhappily, the proportion, which in early life promises so well, varies materially in the course of years. Before the age of twenty the excess of the deaths of males over those of females is about 15,000, the infant mortality of boys being much greater than that of girls. In the actual constitution of the population the female element predominates in the proportion of 105 to 100. The proportion in marriageable ages is yet larger; so that of necessity great numbers of women must live and die unmarried.

Births follow an almost invariable order as to season. In the first quarter of 1864 the number registered was 192,947; in the second quarter the number was 188,895; in the third, 181,015; and in the fourth, 177,478. These numbers fairly represent the average of 27 years, the mean rates per cent. in the four quarters being 3·503, 3·479, 3·209, and 3·180. Some light, perhaps, is shed on the rate of infant mortality by these figures. The largest number of births occurs in the first quarter of the year, when the temperature is low and unfriendly to the conditions of health. Thousands of children die yearly at the age of a few days or weeks. It is somewhat singular that the death-rate exhibits the same proportion as the birth-rate as to season. The largest number of deaths is registered in the first quarter of the year, and each succeeding quarter exhibits a gradual lessening of the rate.

The birth-rate in Great Britain in the year 1864 was 3·569 per cent. of persons living, as against 3·564, the average of England. The birth-rate in Scotland, with a marriage-rate lower than that of England, was 3·606 per cent. of the population; in France the birth-rate was only 2·621; in Italy it was 3·793; in Spain 3·812; and in Austria it reached the high average of 4·043, though the Austrian marriage-rate is lower. The births of British subjects at sea were 380, the mean average for eight years being 289.

Any calculation of the number of births to a marriage must necessarily be approximate only. The births to the number of marriages in any given year could be determined only by following the families and counting the children belonging to each of them unto the end. If the number of marriages did not fluctuate from year to year, the division of the births in each year by the marriages of the year would express the fecundity of marriage with tolerable accuracy. But the marriage registers of England exhibit a large annual increase. It is unfortunate, too, that in the registration of births the age of the mother is not specified; for if the interval between the mean age of marriage and the mean age of mothers when their children are born could be ascertained, it would indicate the calendar years with which the births of any given year should be compared. In Sweden the interval between the mean age of mothers at marriage and their mean age at the births of their children is found to be six years; the interval in England cannot differ very much. So that "if the legitimate births of given years are divided by the marriages of six years earlier date, the quotient will be the proportion of children to a marriage within close limits." By this method of calculation the births in England to the average marriages in 1862, 1863, and 1864 were 4·255, 4·301, and 4·304. In Scotland the births were, to the average marriages of six years, 4·694. From this it would appear that the number of children to a marriage in Scotland is greater than in England. But in point of fact the women of England, taken collectively, are more prolific than the women of Scotland. One thousand Englishwomen bear 123 registered children annually; the number borne by a thousand Scotchwomen is 120. The apparent paradox is explained by a peculiarity in the Scotch law of marriage. The proportion of *recognised* wives is much lower in Scotland than in England. In the former country only 44 per cent. of women between the age of 15 and 55 are recognised wives, while in England the percentage of wives is 52. According to Shelford,* the law of Scotland legitimates all the children of married people which were born before marriage, on the assumption that from the beginning of the intercourse of the parties a consent to matrimonial union was interposed, although the contract was not formally completed or avowed to the world until a later period. The legitimation of children *per subsequens matrimonium* is admitted, with modifications, in France, Spain, Portugal,

* *Law of Marriage*, pp. 783, 784.

Germany, in many other countries, and in several of the States of America. England stands almost alone in refusing absolutely to legitimate children born out of wedlock. The wisdom of this policy is obvious. Hundreds of women are living in Scotland in a state of quasi-marriage, hovering between concubinage and marriage, and expecting, if they have any children, to see them legitimated by subsequent marriage. Children born in this pre-nuptial state are registered as illegitimate, and are afterwards admitted to the rights of legitimacy. This complicates the registration, and exhibits results seemingly paradoxical. With this explanation, it does not appear necessary to assume "that there is any essential difference in the organisation, the fecundity, or the virtue of the women living north and south of the Tweed."

A brief paragraph in the Report discloses a low state of morals in England, which few, but those who are conversant with statistics, would be likely to suspect. No less than 47,448 children were registered in 1864 as born out of wedlock. Even this number does not represent the actual state of things. Owing to a defect in the English Registration Act, which does not make the registration of births compulsory, many cases of illegitimacy are never recorded. It is to be feared, too, that very many are never known, save by the mother. There can be no doubt that the crime of infanticide is carried to an excess in England that is most shocking. Dr. Lankester, who has given serious attention to the subject, has stated it as his deliberate judgment, that 16,000 women are living in London whose infant children have been murdered by their hands. Were there but a tenth of this number in the whole country, the fact would be appalling. But there is too much reason to believe that Dr. Lankester's statement is very near the truth. The number of children who are buried as still-born is suspiciously large. In All Saints' Cemetery, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 521 interments of children, reported still-born, have taken place within the last seven years. Unfortunately the Registration Act does not provide for the registering of still-born children. Their interment should be forbidden unless the mother can produce a coroner's or registrar's certificate. But even this check would have but a limited effect. Hundreds, if not thousands of infants, are born in England annually, who are never presented for interment.

The actual number of illegitimate births in 1864, though in excess of the number registered in 1863, by 307, shows a proportion to the total number of births that is slightly lower

than that of the previous year, being 6·4 to every 100 births, against 6·5 in 1863. But this variation is so slight as scarcely to modify the fact that for many years the proportion of children born out of wedlock has been steadily increasing. The progress of education, the improvement of the dwellings of the poor, and the wholesome changes wrought in the system of factory labour have evidently done little towards the lessening of an evil which is at once a calamity and a disgrace. *One* in every *fourteen* of the children born in England and Wales is born out of wedlock. The proportion varies in particular districts. While the mean rate is 6·4 per cent. it rises in Cumberland to 11·8; in Westmoreland and Norfolk to 10·5; in the North Riding of Yorkshire to 9·4; in Nottinghamshire and Shropshire to 9·2. It is lowest in the extra-Metropolitan districts of Middlesex, where it stands at 4 per cent. In London it is 4·2, and in Surrey it is 4·4.

These averages are not very variable. From year to year certain districts maintain their high rate of illegitimacy. Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Norfolk have for a long time exhibited the highest average. In these counties, therefore, there must be some local habits and conditions favourable to this form of crime. It cannot be traced to the deficiency of education. In Monmouthshire and other counties where education is notoriously defective, the rate of illegitimacy is below the average; whereas in Westmoreland and Cumberland, where education maintains a high standard, the number of illegitimate births reaches its maximum. The mining districts of Durham, Staffordshire, and Cornwall, not generally distinguished for the morality or intelligence of their population, exhibit a low average of illegitimate births. Nor in the purely agricultural counties is the proportion so high as might be expected from the habits of the people. The proportion of marriages in particular districts might be supposed to influence the rate of illegitimacy. Where the marriage rate per cent. is high, the number of illegitimate births might naturally be expected to be correspondingly low. Statistics, however, do not sustain this expectation. For though the marriage rate in Cumberland, Northumberland, and Norfolk is below the average, the rate in Middlesex and Surrey, where the number of illegitimate births is so small, is lowest of all. Something may be gained towards the solution of the difficulty from the fact that the counties which contain several large towns show the lowest average of illegitimacy. Lancashire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Staffordshire, and the West Riding, the great industrial centres, exhibit a low rate of

births out of wedlock. The high rates occur mainly among rural populations and districts which are made up of small towns. And, probably, if the subject were duly investigated, it would be found that these are the districts in which "statutes," wakes, and fairs are the most numerous and popular.

It is to be regretted that the Report of the Registrar-General does not give any information as to the rank and profession of the mothers of illegitimate children. The fullest intelligence of all branches of the subject is necessary to the conception and maturing of any repressive scheme. It is a sphere in which legislation can do but little. It is the province of philanthropy. And all plans and theories will prove abortive unless founded upon an accurate and comprehensive estimate of the whole case. The details arising out of any thorough investigation would, doubtless, be sadder and more startling than any impressions that can be made by bare statistics. But the simple fact that one in every fourteen children born in England is a child of shame, ought to rouse all right-minded men from a state of apathy, or at best mere sentiment, into practical and vigorous action. Foremost among the nations of the earth in schemes of social and religious elevation, England should no longer suffer the intolerable disgrace which these figures disclose, without taxing her wisdom and resources for some means of preventing its perpetuity.

But while devising some method of repression, philanthropy should aim at mitigating, as far as possible, the evil already done. The birth of 47,448 illegitimate children in one year is to be deplored not only in its moral aspects, but in its bearing on the children themselves. Their life, originated in crime, enters on a heritage of certain neglect. In the honest home, however poor, the birth of a little one is an era of gladness and pride. Though his advent involves lessened rations and abridged comforts, he is welcome. All that can be done for him will, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, be cheerfully done. Rarely is such the lot of the child of shame. His very existence is a disgrace. His presence is increasingly hateful. The glow of health in his face is watched with disappointment. He is a hindrance to marriage and to the obtaining of situations, and his death is hailed as a relief. To such a fate more than forty thousand children are born year by year. Homes for foundlings are not popular. They are looked upon as offering a premium to crime, and as encouraging the evil which renders them necessary. There is

some reason in the objection; but it arises out of the imperfect management of foundling institutions. So long as they contemplate the severance of mother and child, they set the one free to return to the course of vice, and they materially lessen the chances of life in the case of the other. But if they take in both, the child has the incomparable advantage of its natural nourishment, and the mother, under the humanising influence of nursing, and the kindly discipline of an institution which aims at her reformation, is placed in circumstances most favourable to her moral recovery and restoration to virtuous society. The present system offers her no chance. She must either give up her child and return again to the dangers of a second disgrace; or she must be consigned to the moral horrors of the society of the workhouse; or she must bear her burden about with her, a perpetual embarrassment to her in her endeavour to gain a livelihood, a constant reproach, and an ever-present temptation to cruelty and crime.

It is high time that the appalling rate of illegitimacy should occupy public attention. A sickly and prudish refinement, which would turn away from the question as too delicate for investigation, is surely out of place in the presence of a moral evil of such monstrous proportions. The illegitimate increase of the population to the extent of 48,000 a year, a number equivalent to the entire population of considerable cities, is the most startling fact in our current history. Even prostitution, with all its loathsome and heart-rending statistics, cannot compare with it in some of its aspects. For there is every reason to believe that these 48,000 mothers do not belong to the class of habitual criminals. Many of them do probably live in the ranks of crime, and are hardened and shameless. But in the majority of cases they represent lives hitherto virtuous. They come from homes over which their first sin has cast a shadow of unutterable shame and sorrow. No one can know the amount of parental agony, the fearful home-wreck, which these numbers indicate. Nor is there much hope that the victim of a first temptation will return to the paths of virtue. In most instances she passes into the ranks of prostitution and is lost. This is not merely a picture of the past. It does not represent a casual catastrophe. It is a picture which is being reproduced at a rate of tens of thousands of copies year by year. To find a remedy for this evil, or even a check to it, is the most difficult problem of the day. Legislation is almost powerless, except in the way of increasing the penalties of seduction, and abolishing especially the whole system of penal fines. No amount of

money can represent the damage done to the individual and to society by the seducer. His offence should never be dealt with by a civil court. It belongs to the criminal court, and should be visited in every case with the penalty of imprisonment and hard labour. Something too might be done, perhaps, by the legislature, in the way of offering small marriage premiums, under certain conditions, to the poorer classes. The legal cost of marriage, though very slight, is yet an embarrassment to some, and might in special cases be lowered. The building of homes for the poor, which, while containing private rooms, should combine one common eating room, where the daily meals might be furnished on the principle of the soldier's mess, would materially lessen the cost of housekeeping, and encourage marriage. Public opinion, too, should be brought to bear on this question. There are some ranks in life which public opinion would scarcely affect. But if, in the middle and upper ranks, society would set its face resolutely against all men of loose and immoral habits—if the known seducer were shunned as an alien and an outcast, whatever his gifts, or wealth, or status—if every home-circle were closed against tainted reputations—there would be some little hope of lessening the deplorable average of social crime. The real remedy, however, lies deeper than legislation and public opinion. The leaven of true religion alone will rectify the tone of society, and make it pure.

But to return to statistics. It has been shown that the natural increase of births over deaths in the year 1864, was 244,744, or 669 daily. This large increase was somewhat modified by the emigration of 208,900 from the ports of the United Kingdom. Only 58,000 of these, however, were of English origin. On the other hand, the births registered do not represent the entire number of births, for the registration of births is not compulsory. It may be assumed, however, that the actual daily increase of the population of England, is between five and six hundred. This rate is advancing year by year, and is becoming a grave question to the political economist. The area of England and Wales in statute acres is 37,324,883, so that the proportion of acres to each person living is 1·80. This, of course, is inadequate to the support of life. Happily there are broad and fruitful acres in other lands over which the flag of England floats, and her well-filled purse rewards the toil of nations who pour their produce at her feet. But without belonging to the school of alarmists, one may look to the future with no little anxiety. The general introduction of machinery is supplanting manual

labour and lessening the demand for "hands." The labour market is already overstocked. Emigration will doubtless go on at an increasing rate, but it is by no means an unmixed good. The emigrant vessels which leave our shores daily carry with them the very cream of the working population. The infirm, the lazy, the vagrant, and the criminal classes remain behind to fill the wards of our workhouses, to swell the ranks of "casuals," to raise our poor rates, and to complicate the difficulties of legislation. The average number of paupers receiving weekly relief in 1864, was 915,442. It is now probably not less than one million a week, and it must obviously increase. The multiplication of workhouses on the present system is most undesirable. Recent investigations have shown only too clearly that the moral influence of the society of the workhouse is no better, and is possibly worse, than that of the prison. The casual wards are the resorts of men who never meet but to conspire against property and law. The pauper wards are schools in which the young are initiated in vice and idleness. The passage from the workhouse to the prison is the natural and almost inevitable result of the present system. It is evident that we want an entire renovation, not only of the administration, but of the principles of the Poor Law, and of prison discipline. Crime cannot indeed be stamped out as epidemics are stamped out, by isolation. But, so long as we congregate masses of paupers, or masses of criminals in our present loose manner, we may expect the spread of a contagion, leading on the one hand to idleness, and on the other to crime. Our colonies drain away from us only the able-bodied and the honest. It were vain to wish that they could share with us some of the responsibility of the infirm and helpless, or be disposed to give to the criminal classes a chance of self-reformation which they can never have in the society and spheres of crime. A comprehensive system of emigration under the sanction and direction of the Government, on a scale more liberal than at present, and providing for classes not contemplated by the system now in vogue, would materially lessen the difficulties which suggest themselves to the political economist. His standpoint, however, does not disclose such a picture as that which opens up before the eye of the moralist. More than three-quarters of a million of new lives are added to the population of England year by year, each of which is destined to exert a wide influence and to survive all material decay. Many thousands of the newly born die soon after their birth, it is true; but most of these leave a hollow in some heart. Among those

that live there are germs of benevolence which shall whiten the harvest field of good deeds with new blossoms: of thought which shall fructify the age with new theories and wonderful inventions: of taste, which shall ripen into the verse of new laureates, and into the colossal achievements of architecture; and there are germs of crime, which, in their rank expansion, shall fill our jails, tax our honest industry, perplex the legislator, and unnerve the philanthropist. Thought stands paralysed in the attempt to picture the future of each of these new lives, through the various phases of mortality to its destiny in that world in which conscience will weave for it wreaths of eternal gladness, or wrap it in the shadows of a cheerless remorse.

The number of Deaths registered in England and Wales in 1864 was 495,531, or about 1,357 per diem. In 1863 the deaths were 473,837, so that in 1864 there was an increase of more than 20,000. The death-rate in proportion to the population was 2·386 to 100 persons living; the average for the previous 10 years having been only 2·213 per cent. During the cholera epidemic in 1854, the rate was but 2·352. Under the previous epidemic, in 1849, the mortality rose to 2·512, and during the prevalence of influenza, in 1847, it reached the proportion of 2·471. With these two exceptions the death-rate of 1864 was higher than that of any other year since the present system of registration was instituted in 1837. The rate of mortality in Scotland was 2·382, almost exactly the same as in England. The mean rate of Great Britain was, therefore, 2·385. In France it was 2·172; in Italy, 2·952; in Spain, 3·064, and in Austria, 3·016. In the nine years 1854—62, the annual death-rate in France was always higher, and in some cases very much higher, than in England. In 1863 and 1864, however, it fell below the English rate. With this exception the death-rate in England compares very favourably with that of the Continent of Europe, so far as available statistics indicate.

Though 2·386 represents the mean average of deaths in England, the average of particular localities exhibits a marked variation. The geological structure of the district, the nature of the water, the density of the population, the social habits of the people, have much to do with the raising or depressing of the rate. Westmoreland, which has for a long series of years maintained its character as the healthiest county in England, exhibited, in 1864, an average of but 1·820. The next lowest rate was that of the extra-Metropolitan district of Surrey, which was 1·902. Dorsetshire, Hampshire, Rut-

landshire, and Lincolnshire, ranged between 2·023 and 2·052. Staffordshire exhibited a high rate, 2·518; London stood at 2·653; Monmouthshire and the West Riding of Yorkshire at 2·656, and Lancashire showed the highest rate in England, 2·718. For many years the rate of mortality in Lancashire has been beyond that of any other county, exhibiting an average of more than two and a half per cent.

Taking the annual average rate of mortality for the ten years 1851—60, it would appear the healthiest towns in England are Farnborough in Surrey, and Bellingham in Northumberland, where the deaths average only 14 to every thousand persons living. In London the healthiest district is Hampstead, where the rate is 17. The City of London shows an average rate of only 19, whereas Whitechapel reaches 28, and the parishes of St. George's-in-the-East, St. Saviour, and St. Olave rise to 29. Hull and Macclesfield show an annual rate per thousand of 25; Stockport, Salford, and Bradford stand at 26; Bristol, Birmingham, Ashton, Preston, Bolton, and Newcastle average 27; Leeds, Sheffield, and Wolverhampton, 28; Merthyr Tydfil rises to 29; Manchester to 31; and Liverpool reaches the enormous average of 33. Since these numbers were taken, there has been a marked improvement in the sanitary condition of many of the large towns, and their death-rate has been correspondingly reduced.

As might be expected, the annual rate of mortality is higher in the districts which comprise large towns, than in those which embrace smaller towns and villages. In 142 districts and 56 sub-districts of the former class, the mean rate per cent. in 1864 was 2·598, while in the remaining districts it was only 2·107. In many cases, however, the great natural advantages of fresh air and a scanty population are countervailed by inadequate drainage and an imperfect supply of water. Some villages, most salubriously situated, are decimated year by year by typhoid fever. Even the watering-places, which stand on good sites and have many natural advantages, exhibit in some instances a high rate of mortality, chargeable mainly to insufficient drainage. The building of these towns is in the first instance an experiment, and capitalists do not like to risk the cost of drainage, until they learn whether the speculation will pay. The work is thus postponed or evaded, and in many cases never accomplished at all. The death-rate of Brighton is 20 to 1,000 living. In the Isle of Thanet, which includes Ramsgate and Margate, it is 23. It is also 23 in Whitby. In Clifton and

Hastings it is 24, and in Bath and Yarmouth it reaches the high rate of 25. The rate in the Isle of Wight was only 15 to 1,000 living, in 1864; in Torquay it was but 16; in Cheltenham and Eastbourne it was 17, and 18 in Worthing. The high death-rate of Hastings is not to be attributed to the number of consumptive patients who resort thither, for Torquay is even more popular as a winter resort for invalids, and yet the rate of mortality there is but 16.

Of the 495,531 persons whose deaths were registered in 1864, 253,619 were males, and 241,912 females. The average rate of mortality was 2·514 per cent. and 2·264 per cent. respectively. This is slightly above the mean average, which is 2·321 of males and 2·149 of females. The lower death-rate of females is established by the average of a long succession of years. It has been already shown that in the actual constitution of the population the female element predominates. If, for the sake of comparison, equal numbers were taken, a million males to a million females, the number of deaths among males in the year 1864 would be 111, as against 100 deaths of females. On the same principle, the average exhibited during 27 years would be 108 to 100. In the first year of life the proportion of males who die is very much greater than that of females. In 1864 the number was 62,818, against 50,117. In the second year the number in 1864 was 21,025, against 19,540. This proportion gradually decreases until the age of 10, from which point up to the age of 35 more females die than males. From 35 upwards the proportions vary, seeming to follow no fixed rule. After 70 women have a better chance of living than men. 16,774 men died in 1864 who had reached an age between 75 and 85. The number of women of the same ages was 19,783. Between 85 and 95 the number of deaths of men was 4,286 against 6,040. Twenty-eight males reached the age of 100 and upwards, 16 dying at 100, 4 at 101, 3 at 102, 1 at 103, 3 at 104, and 1 at 109. No less than 70 females died at or beyond the centenarian point, 29 at 100, 12 at 101, 9 at 102, 8 at 103, 4 at 104, 4 at 105, 1 at 106, 2 at 107, and 1 at 108. As a rule women die at a lower rate and live to a greater age than men. At 60 years of age and upwards, there were at the Census of 1861, 146 women to 100 men. The disparity in the rate of mortality between the two sexes is to be attributed to the greater exposure to the weather, the heavier character of labour, and the more constant communication with sources of infection in the case of men. They, too, are exposed to accidents more constantly than women, and the proportion

of deaths by violence is enormously greater among men than women.

The deaths are invariably more numerous, excepting during epidemic visitations, in the first or winter quarter than in any other. The mean average of the four quarters for 27 years, was 2·497, 2·222, 2·044, and 2·178. But in all the quarters of 1864 the mortality was above the average. In the first quarter, ending March 31st, it was 2·772; in the second, 2·260; in the third, 2·141; and in the fourth, 2·349. This higher rate of mortality is traceable to unusual meteorological conditions. In only three months of the year was the mean temperature above the average, and in only one of these three was the temperature decidedly above the mean average. The rain-fall in the year was, at Greenwich, only 16·8 inches, the annual average for fifteen years having been 23 inches. The humidity of the air was 78 (complete saturation = 100), or five below the average. The mean weekly motion of the air was 1,597 miles, that is to say 97 less than the average.

The first or winter quarter of 1864 was unusually fatal. No less than 14,698 persons died in excess of the average number. The fall of the thermometer to the freezing point of water raises the mortality throughout the country. The population of London, it appears, is excessively sensitive to cold. The high price of coals renders it impossible for the poor to provide themselves against the rigour of a severe winter. On one chill night, Thursday, January 7th, the temperature fell to 14·3°, or to 17·7° below the freezing point of Fahrenheit. The "cold wave of the atmosphere" on that night extinguished 877 lives in London alone. As a general rule the three months of the spring quarter, April, May, and June, are healthier than the winter, and somewhat less healthy than the summer. The spring of 1864 was no exception to this rule. The deaths registered were less by 26,097 than the deaths in the first three months, though the average was 2·260 per cent., or ·073 above the average of the spring quarter of the previous ten years. The weather during the quarter was unusually unsettled. The degree of humidity was 73, or 4 below the average. The mean temperature was above the average, being in excess in April and May, but in defect in June. The rain-fall was but 3·5 inches, which is below the average. The mortality, in ordinary seasons, is lowest in the summer quarter. This rule only fails when malignant cholera, favoured by the heat, rages in the country. The summer quarter of 1864 was distinguished by anomalous

meteorological phenomena. The humidity of the air in the month of August was only 65, the average being 77, and saturation being represented by 100. The lowest degree of humidity previously known in August was 69. The weight of vapour in a cubic foot of air was only 3·7 grains, or 1 grain less than the average. The rain-fall in the three months amounted to 4·5 inches, or 3 inches below the average. The mean temperature was also slightly below. Ponds and wells were dry, and water was sold in some places at 3*d*. per bucket. On the whole it was the driest summer on record. The death-rate, as the consequence of these unusual meteorological conditions, was high, being 2·141 per cent. against an average of 2·000. Had the atmospherical conditions been as favourable in the summer of 1864 as they were in 1860, the deaths would have been less by 22,887. The number of deaths registered in the autumn quarter of 1864 was 123,451, the largest number reached in that season since the commencement of registration. The weather was unusually cold and dry. The rain-fall was deficient, and the want of water, combined with atmospherical irregularities, raised the death-rate to a height never known but in seasons of choleraic epidemic.

Certain hours of the day and night are more fatal to life than others. From calculations founded upon 2,880 cases, it appears that the smallest number of deaths occurs in the hours between ten in the morning and three in the afternoon. The hours between three and six in the morning are most fatal, the maximum rate occurring between five and six. No less than forty per cent. die between 5 and 6 a.m. The regularity of these averages proves the action of some law, the principle of which it might be of great advantage to discover. The present system of registration provides only for the date of death. If provision were made for ascertaining the hour of departure, the statistical information thus gained would doubtless lead to important conclusions. For such questions not only offer food to the curious, but they involve principles an accurate knowledge of which might possibly furnish fresh light on the conditions of life. But if the fact that the early morning hours are most fatal to life be discarded by science as of no physiological value, poetry, at any rate, will not fail to discern in it a certain fitness. It seems most natural that the soul should pass out on its long journey at the break of day.

Of the total number of deaths registered in London in 1864 a per-centage of 16·27 occurred in hospitals, workhouses, and

other public institutions. The deaths in workhouses were 7,055, and in general hospitals, 3,558. The number of deaths in the British army at home and abroad was 3,510. The proportion of those who died abroad was not so large as might have been expected, being 1·735 per cent. of officers, and 1·893 per cent. of non-commissioned officers and privates. The deaths of British subjects at sea, exclusive of soldiers, marines, seamen of the Royal Navy, and merchant seamen, was 589. There were 3,893 deaths of merchant seamen. Notwithstanding the many risks to which seamen of the merchant service are exposed, their life is, on the whole, a healthy one, the death-rate being only 1·99 per cent. The return, however, does not include seamen dying ashore in foreign parts.

The threescore years and ten of man's life has dwindled down, in England at least, to an average duration of little more than 33 years. This low average is to be attributed mainly to the truly appalling mortality of infants. Nearly one-sixth of the number of children born in England die before they are one year old; more than a quarter die before they reach the age of five; more than a third die before twenty. In 1864, as we have seen, the total number of deaths was 495,531. Of these, 112,935 occurred in the first year of life, 40,565 in the second, 20,951 in the third, 14,662 in the fourth, and 10,690 in the fifth. The total number of deaths under 5 years of age was 199,803. Between the ages of 5 and 10 the deaths were 23,635; from 10 to 15 they were 11,065; and from 15 to 20 they were 13,581. The total number of deaths under the age of 20 was therefore 248,084, or a little more than half the number of deaths registered in the year. It has been already shown that women live longer than men. It is found also that at marriageable ages the married have a better chance of life than the single. Not less curious is the fact that, as a rule, tall people live longer than those who are short.

It is impossible to study the statistics of death without coming to the conclusion that they indicate a rate of mortality immensely beyond that which Providence designs. It is true that man is born to die; it is equally true that he is born to live. God has given him powers, not only for the cultivation of life's pleasures, but for the maintenance of life itself. It were a monstrous supposition that all the mortality of England is divinely decreed, excepting in the sense that God has made certain laws, the violation of which is fatal to life. He would be guilty of blasphemy against Eternal Goodness who should assert that the myriads of little children who die in great

suffering, die thus because it is God's order; or that genius and virtue and valour are cut down in their very prime, solely at the sovereign appointment of Heaven. The registers of deaths are in many instances records of human recklessness and obstinacy, rather than of Divine order. It is appointed unto man *once* to die; but it is something within the province of man himself to determine when that once shall be. By profligacy and folly he may bring about his death in the midst of early years; by prudence and a proper observance of Nature's laws he may postpone it to the day of grey hairs. The tables of registration prove that, apart from the cases in which the sovereignty of God asserts itself beyond all human precautions, and for the wisest ends, death itself is reducible to certain laws and limits.

The most interesting and instructive tables in the Registrar-General's Report are those which exhibit the *causes* of death. Of the 495,531 deaths registered in 1864, 4,478 were from causes not specified or ill-defined; 3,321 were the subjects of inquests which were not successful in ascertaining the cause; the remaining 487,732 were certified by medical men or credible informants with an accuracy sufficient for obtaining very valuable results. The cases officially specified are ranged under five heads—viz. *zymotic diseases*, *constitutional diseases*, *local diseases*, *developmental diseases*, and *violent deaths*. To the first or zymotic class belong four orders, the principal of which is *miasmatic* diseases, such as small-pox, measles, scarlatina, diphtheria, whooping-cough, typhus, cholera, &c. Diseases of this class carried off in 1864 no less than 118,825 of the population, or nearly one-fourth of the total number who died. The most fatal of the orders under this class was scarlatina, which destroyed 29,700 lives in the year. Of these 18,709 were children under five years of age, and 8,027 between 5 and 10, the most fatal periods being the third and fourth years. But though the mortality was highest at the early ages, a considerable number fell victims to scarlatina in advanced life: 44 cases occurred in which the patient was more than 45 years old; 20 in which he was above 55; 7 occurred between the ages of 65 and 75; and in 4 cases the patient was upwards of 75. During the ten years 1855—64, this terrible scourge carried off no less than 179,544. If we include the kindred diseases, *diphtheria* and *cynanche maligna*, which were generally referred to scarlatina, this disease destroyed in the ten years no less than 225,508 lives. Typhus fever, in its various forms, was fatal in 1864 to 20,106 persons, the largest number registered during 15 years. The estimated

number of persons attacked by this disease was 165,400, or about 79½ in every 10,000 of the population. Diarrhœa was fatal to 16,432; whooping-cough to 8,570; measles to 8,321; and small-pox to 7,684. From these figures it would appear that *zymotic* diseases are on the increase, especially in the forms of scarlatina and typhus. This is the more discouraging because of the vigorous efforts which have been made for lessening their severity. It is almost certain, nevertheless, that the terrible fatality which in one year hurried 118,825 of the population of England to the grave, might have been extensively mitigated, if not altogether prevented. Zymotic diseases are dependent for their growth and spread on preventible causes. They have their favourite haunts; they flourish only under certain predisposing circumstances. They are the handmaids of filth, darkness, closeness, and ill drainage. They love rooms with immovable windows; they glory in homes with adjacent pig-styes; they revel in ill-ventilated alleys. In no department are the lower orders of the English people more ignorant and insensate than in that of sanitary science; and, however they may be elevated in social status and industrial efficiency, until they are taught the love and possibility of cleanliness, the blessedness of an open window, and a wholesome skin, they will fall like the leaves of autumn, but withered and dead before their time.

The second class is that of *constitutional diseases*. The deaths under this class in 1864 were 87,190. The most formidable of the diseases of this class was *phthisis*, which proved fatal to 53,190. Dropsy carried off 7,386; cancer was fatal to 8,117; 7,700 persons died of hydrocephalus; and 3,111 of scrofula. The deaths from phthisis occurred mainly among females, and above the age of 25, between which and the age of 35 the deaths of both sexes numbered 13,430. This disease was fatal to 669 men and 406 women beyond the age of 65; to 79 men and 58 women who were above 75; to 5 women above 85; and to one who was on the verge of 100. The third class, that of *local diseases*, exhibited in 1864 no less than 189,039 deaths. Of these 59,627 were caused by affections of the brain, including 26,382 from convulsions, and 20,931 from apoplexy and paralysis. Diseases of the digestive organs carried off 20,969; but the largest number of deaths in this class was caused by diseases of the breathing organs. No fewer than 75,376 persons died of bronchitis and kindred diseases, not including phthisis. Phthisis and chronic bronchitis are often confounded by those who are not skilled in diagnosis. The two diseases differ essentially, and depend on

very distinct conditions. Bronchitis is invariably influenced by depression of the temperature, whereas the mortality of phthisis is scarcely affected by weather changes. The two diseases together, however, destroy more of the population than any other disease. Their united force carried off in 1864 the truly appalling number of 128,422 persons, or more than one-fourth of the total number of the dead.

The *developmental diseases*, which constitute the fourth class, arise out of the processes of development, growth, and decay. They include malformations, premature births, and teething; to the last of which 4,285 deaths are ascribed. The deaths of 29,634, chiefly infants, are referred to atrophy and debility, without the intervention of active disease. Childbirth was fatal to 2,582 women, and 1,484 died of metria, or, as it is generally called, puerperal fever. The average mortality of women from childbearing is 5 deaths of mothers to every 1,000 children born alive. Sheer old age carried off 29,498.

The fifth class exhibits the smallest numbers. The *violent deaths* in 1864 amounted to 17,018, or 1 in every 29 deaths. Of these 15,091 were the results of accident or neglect; 412 were cases of manslaughter or murder; 1,341 persons committed suicide, and 21 died by the hand of the hangman. The item of accidents exhibits an alarming waste of life. For without doubt a little precaution would have prevented nine-tenths of the deaths recorded. If machinery were more carefully guarded, if the bye-laws of mining districts were more vigorously maintained, if mothers ceased to be guilty of an unnatural carelessness in leaving their little ones within reach of fire and boiling water, if buildings were more firmly constructed, if cheapness were not so earnestly enforced by the public, if crowded thoroughfares were crossed by light bridges, the deaths by accident would dwindle down to a mere nothing. Of accidental deaths, 6,500 were caused by fractures and contusions, 166 by gunshot wounds, 115 by cuts and stabs, 2,987 by burns and scalds, 274 by poison, 2,714 by drowning, 1,245 by suffocation, and 1,130 by causes not specified. Of 412 returned under the head of murder or manslaughter, including 192 infants under the age of one year, 248 were cases of murder, and 164 were judged as manslaughter. Leaving out the infants, whose murderers are seldom visited with capital punishment, 64 persons were murdered in 1864. The proportion of persons hung to the number of murders committed shows that many who deserve the gallows escape it, some through the recommendation of

juries, some through the mitigation of the sentence, and some through legal technicalities. Six persons were killed by lightning.

The cases of suicide are remarkable, not only for their number, but for the striking regularity of the law by which they seem to be governed. Sixty-six persons in every million of the population commit suicide, year by year. This proportion has been singularly maintained through many years. But this is not all. A constancy of ratio is exhibited not only in the act of suicide but in the mode of committing it. The following table shows the proportion of suicides to every million of the population of England and Wales in the years 1858—1864.

Means Employed.	1858	1859	1860	1861	1862	1863	1864
Gunshot Wounds . .	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Cutting and Stabbing	13	14	14	13	11	13	12
Poisoning	6	6	8	6	6	6	7
Drowning	10	11	11	11	10	12	10
Hanging	30	27	30	30	30	28	27
Otherwise	4	3	4	5	5	4	5
	66	64	70	68	65	66	64

From this table it will appear that hanging is the favourite mode of suicide. Then follow in order throat-cutting, drowning, poisoning, and shooting. It must not be assumed that the tendency to suicide is beyond control. There is no law rendering it imperative that 66 men in every million should put themselves to death; but it is nevertheless clear that the number of persons who will commit suicide in the year may be predicted with some degree of certainty, and also the methods by which they will compass their death. Unquestionably, however, the number of suicides might be diminished by lessening the facilities or modifying the causes which lead to it. Insanity predisposes to suicide; any means by which insanity may be prevented or cured will reduce the number of lunatic suicides. The strain, or the idleness, of the mind induces suicide; change the conditions, and you lessen the

probabilities. Public opinion has an influence in promoting or preventing suicide. Make it a base, cowardly, ignominious thing to take away one's own life, and the temptation would lose its force.

A supplementary table furnishes particulars of diseases which are fatal to only a few persons, but which are of a peculiar type. For example: 116 persons died of *mumps*, 4 of *hospital gangrene*, 3 of *yellow fever*, 8 of *tape-worm*, 1 of *sweeps' cancer*, 49 of *melancholy*, 19 of *lock-jaw*, 3 of *grief*, 28 of *hysteria*, 4 of *whitlow*, 14 of *elephantiasis*, 9 of *fright*, one case of which was that of a man above 45 years of age, 12 of *hydrophobia*, 2 of *glanders*, and 1 of *rage*, which was the case of a man between 55 and 65 years old.

Elaborate and exhaustive as these calculations appear, they are not in all cases accurate, partly because of the imperfection of medical science, and partly because of inadequate registration. A very valuable letter written to the Registrar-General by Dr. Farr, calls attention specially to the latter point. There is at present no means of checking the registrar in cases where the informant cannot read. Very few registrars have falsified the public records, but cases of the kind have occurred, and their recurrence ought to be made impossible. The informant is often, particularly in country districts, totally unequal to the duty of giving adequate and reliable information. The facility of registration has encouraged criminals, and the successful registration of undetected and unsuspected murder has been known to lead to the commission of further crime. The medical certificate cannot always be secured; for many thousands die yearly who have no medical attendance during sickness, and whose bodies are not seen after death by authorised medical men. Dr. Farr suggests that in all cases where there has been no medical attendance, the informant should be instructed to apply to a medical officer, specially appointed for the duty in each district. This officer should visit and view the body, and if all was right, should send his certificate to the registrar, who should register the death, and issue the proper warranty for burial. If, however, the case should seem suspicious or obscure, the medical officer should refuse his certificate, and refer the question to the coroner. Much trouble, inaccuracy, and possible dishonesty would be avoided, the facilities of murder would be lessened, and an additional safeguard would be given to human life. The only objection to this scheme is that of expense; but the additional cost would only be some fifty or sixty thousand a year—an incon-

siderable sum as compared with the advantages of perfect accuracy, and the detection of crime.

With the exceptions indicated by Dr. Farr, the system of registration may be regarded as well-nigh perfect. The names on the registers, up to December 31st, 1864, were 35,593,715. In round numbers, the books in Somerset House contain the record of four million marriages, or eight million persons married, sixteen million births, and eleven million deaths. The value of these records cannot well be over-estimated. In the settlement of legal questions they are gaining fuller attention year by year. In 1864 no fewer than 8,346 searches were made for registers at the Central Office. The facts as tabulated and illustrated by the Registrar-General in his Annual Reports throw light on some of the most difficult of our social and physical problems. No one can study them attentively without grave reflections. Apathy and indifference are startled in the presence of figures which plead with silent eloquence for the sympathy of the philanthropist. The columns which record the processes and results of crime cannot but rouse the energies of the Christian. Even the casual reader must feel indebted to Mr. Graham, whose industry and admirable method have succeeded in clothing a blue book with the fascination of a romance.

ART. III.—*Ecce Homo: a Survey of the Life and Work of Jesus Christ.* Fifth Edition, with New Preface. London: Macmillan & Co. 1866.

THE writer of *Ecce Homo* keeps his secret well. He is still shrouded in a mystery that doubtless adds much to the popularity of his remarkable work. But he is evidently watchful of all the currents of opinion concerning his essay; and the new preface appended to the fifth edition shows that he is keenly sensitive to the reception accorded to his speculations. We have waited with considerable interest for the explanation which we felt sure would sooner or later be evoked. It has in some measure disappointed our expectation; but it contributes a few additional elements for a due appreciation of the writer's design, and enables us to speak on certain points with a more absolute confidence than we could have felt before it appeared.

However fascinating these views of an unknown thinker concerning our Saviour's mission have proved, we feel assured that the class of persons to whom they are entirely acceptable is exceedingly small. The reason of this is plain enough. They are far too high in their tone, and pay too loyal a tribute to Christ, for the multitudes who, in the recklessness of unbelief, revolt against the orthodox faith, and treat Christianity as a human device amenable to human criticism. Hence they give no satisfaction to any of the sceptical schools of the day. On the other hand, they ignore, and sometimes seem to outrage, the principles of belief that are profoundly dear to the true Church of the Redeemer; and whatever approbation they have received from the too hasty and too generous verdicts of some orthodox writers we are sure will be withdrawn on maturer consideration. The middle path which this anonymous writer aims to strike out is one that can never be beaten into a Christian highway by him or any man. The Rationalist sceptic must needs turn back from it after a very few steps, and the simple believer in the inspired volume must, if he remain faithful to his principles, recoil from it with pure dissatisfaction. These two assertions we will endeavour to establish.

There are two things that cannot fail to neutralise the author's honest effort to conciliate the freethinkers of our

time; one is the arbitrary use which he makes of the Christian documents, and the other is the undefinably superhuman view which he gives of the person and character of the Redeemer. With regard to the gospels, he assumes a position which will never be allowed him by the spirit of Rationalism. It is in vain that he is willing to renounce St. John as savouring too much of a free and idealised portraiture; and equally in vain that he surrenders some parts of the other three to the demands of criticism. The fact remains that he accepts all the essentials of the evangelical exhibition of the Redeemer, and that he makes precisely the same use of them that believers in inspiration make. The simple criterion that he adopts, viz. the assuming as undeniably true what all the evangelists concur in narrating, will not satisfy the critical school. They reject it by simply asserting that each of the writers might have drawn from a common tradition, or that they copied one another's record. But it is not so much the quantity that he receives as the manner in which he receives it; it is the general tone of his submissive appeal to the gospels that must mar his endeavour to conciliate the sceptics. They cannot but resent the confidence, very much resembling reverence, with which the narratives of the evangelists, and especially the words of our Lord, are made the basis of argument and teaching. They must feel sometimes tempted to suspect that the author is a true believer in disguise, imposing on their simplicity; or, that being impossible, they will aver, and we heartily agree with them, that he has no right to eliminate what he pleases from the records, trace out his own gospel in the gospels, and build the superstructure of so imposing a system upon so arbitrary a foundation. At any rate they will feel, as we also feel, that his hold of the Four Gospels is not much more tenacious than their own, while his use of them as a teacher, professing to inaugurate a new inquiry, is far too confident for such a faith in them as he professes. They will say, in a word, that while he accepts the gospels in the spirit of a Rationalist, he preaches his own gospel in the spirit of a dogmatic theologian.

Again, the Christ exhibited in this book can never be understood or accepted by our sceptical inquirers. It is true that up to a certain point the picture of the Founder of Christianity drawn by this artist is perfectly in accordance with their views; but before he finishes the sketch he throws around it a dignity and majesty that cannot but repel them. They will cheerfully accept the "young man of promise" in

Nazareth, and feel strong sympathy with all that is here described as the gradual formation of the plans and projects of the great Innovator; they will assent to very much of the eloquent and discriminating estimate of the value of Christianity in human progress; but they will not follow the writer when he proceeds to place Jesus of Nazareth in a position of transcendent superiority to the rest of mankind, and in a relation of unique worship to the Father in heaven. There is no school of sceptical opinion that will own such a Christ as this. There is no possibility of reconciling such a Christ with the fundamental principles of Rationalism. He is immeasurably too high for man, while immeasurably too low for God incarnate. Through all the phases of modern free speculation concerning Christ, the watchful eye of faith never fails to discern that His mere and simple humanity is inflexibly maintained. Socinianism and not Arianism lies at the basis of all. Not one of them but postulates for Jesus the limitations, infirmities, errors, and failures of our common humanity, reverencing Him not for His absolute, but for His relative, superiority to other men. Hence it enters into their systems as a necessity that Christ should be compared with other benefactors of the race; in most of them He is made to suffer disparagement in some points of the comparison. But this book marks off Jesus of Nazareth from the rest of mankind, and that with a solemnity and earnestness that will never be tolerated by free thought. Here, again, it is not so much the direct statement of the author as the tone of his entire speculation. However low that tone may be in the estimation of a humble worshipper of the God-man, it is altogether too high and too intolerant for the Socinianism of modern theology.

But while we are persuaded that our author will not exert much influence for good upon the restless spirits whom he seeks to help, we think there are many whom he will injure. Sturdy and consistent Rationalists will be repelled. But there is a large class of Christians or semi-Christians, to whom the fascination of this book will be perilous. There is in it a certain quiet mystic tenderness which has an inexpressible charm for multitudes of thinkers in our time. They have no relish for the coarse infidelity that has, for a quarter of a century past, in Germany, France, and England, commented upon the person and merits of Jesus. They sigh for something better than that. The exposition of Christianity that they desire must unite elements that are not found in the dreary systems of pure Rationalism; it must unite with a

suppression of the doctrine of the Trinity, a lofty respect for the wonderful being of Christ; it must combine with a denial of the main dogmas of Christian faith a certain mystical substitute for them; and it must reconcile a refusal to admit the Divine evidences of Christianity with a high estimate of its moral power in the history of human advancement. It is our sincere conviction that there has been no book published of late that will do more to conciliate that class. *Ecce Homo* ministers largely to a kind of human passion for Christ, while it breathes no hint of His true Divinity. It has no dogmatic theology, while it has a quaint substitute for all Christian doctrine under other names. It admits no supreme Divine credentials for Christianity, and yet its delineation of the work of Christianity in the world is most enthusiastic in its tone. The great popularity of the work induces us to fear that this midway class is increasing, and it is for the sake of some of them who may read our pages that we shall now show why we think a sound Christian faith must entirely discard this new and unknown teacher, and reject his version of Christianity.

We go to the very root of the matter when we charge this inquiry with neglect or suppression of the first fundamental principle of all human study of the person and work of Christ —the teaching of the Holy Spirit. When it pleased God to send His Son into the world for man's salvation, He sent His Spirit, His personal Spirit, to reveal to man the true being of that Saviour, and the nature, and terms, and processes of that salvation. It is He who presents Jesus of Nazareth to the human race, and says *Ecce Homo*, "*Behold the Man*, raised up to be your Redeemer and your Ruler for ever." And the mystery of the natures, and person, and work of the Redeemer He committed to the keeping of the Holy Ghost, whose office it is to prepare man's ears to hear and his eyes to see the Being on whom all his hopes depend. In the economy of our salvation the Son revealing the Father is Himself revealed by the Spirit; the teaching of the Holy Ghost is as absolutely essential as the atonement of the Son. In other words, the doctrine of the New Testament is that the great subject it presents is inaccessible to the human faculties without a Divine Teacher. The author of *Ecce Homo*, like all others of the same class, sets out with an entire renunciation of this truth. He professes, from an induction of passages gathered out of the sacred writings, to arrive himself, and aid others to arrive, by the simple study of an honest mind, at a better view of Christian truth than is generally held.

He may demur to this, and deny that any such direct teaching of a Divine Person is promised in the records which he accepts as authentic. But we hold it impossible to construct a fair epitome of the statements common to the Four Gospels without including this great truth. If not so plainly stated in St. Mark, the evangelist whom our author makes his central authority, it is laid down by the other three in the most express terms; they unite to represent our Lord as declaring that nothing short of a direct illumination from the Father can enable the believer rightly to apprehend and rightly to confess the Son. And St. John, whose testimony is not impeached in this book, gives us the final assurance of Christ, that the teaching to which He had previously referred as the teaching of the Father, should be the revelation of the Holy Ghost, a Person distinct from the Father and the Son, but manifesting both with Himself to the human heart. Surely any account of the witness borne by Jesus to Himself must be incomplete which omits to include that He always claimed to be an Object unapproachable to human understanding, except under the condition of an immediate personal Divine guidance.

If it be insisted that the language thus interpreted is capable of another meaning, and that Divine teaching signifies no more than the general help which God affords to every honest inquirer, we can only reply that we have not so learned the sense of New Testament phraseology. We collate the Gospel with the Epistles, and listen reverently to St. Paul when he tells us, with express allusion to the very point under present discussion, that *no man can call Jesus Lord but by the Holy Ghost.* We make our appeal to any dispassionate reader of the New Testament, and rely upon his assent when we assert that the spirit of the whole series of its collected writings enforces the necessity of a specific submission to the Holy Ghost as the Divine Interpreter of the doings of Christ. There is a knowledge of the letter of Christianity that man may gain for himself and teach his fellow; but there is also an interior wisdom that comes only from above. There is a study of Christ which is after the flesh, but there is also another and better knowledge of Him that "flesh and blood" cannot acquire, but which must be taught by His Father in heaven.

It may be objected, finally, that the design and scope of the author's inquiry precluded any reference to this higher teaching and interior knowledge. He may plead that he had to do with those who would be insensible to such a truth, and that his work simply aims to conduct an inquiry which might serve

to assist many in disencumbering themselves of their prejudices, and approaching the greatest subject of human thought with every possible advantage. But here again our unbending principle comes to our help. The doctrine of the New Testament is that, without the illumination of the Spirit, no man can either know or teach the things of Christ with any effectual result. If the work before us had a negative character, if it challenged infidelity and argued away its objections, if it occupied itself with clearing from the threshold preliminary obstacles, leaving the entrance into the sanctuary for another time or another teacher, the case would be widely different, and these remarks would be misplaced. But the author of this inquiry lifts the veil from the recesses of Christ's nature, shows us His secret thoughts and the gradual shaping of those most wonderful plans that have changed the course of the world's history, traces the establishment of the Christian commonwealth and all the great principles that adapted it to the world and attracted the world to it—deals, in short, with all the new mysteries of our Saviour's mission—without one word of reference to the necessity of a stronger light than mortal intellect can kindle. It is this deplorable and fatal defect that mars and misleads this and so many other well-intended efforts to help a perplexed generation out of its difficulties. Let us now mark what effect it has upon the present work, as seen in the great omissions it occasions, and in the errors it engenders.

The Jesus of this work is presented to us as man, and nothing more than man. It is not merely that the human aspect of his person and work is alone exhibited; any other and higher nature is passed by and, as it were, studiously rendered needless. The miraculous birth of the Eternal Son of God in human nature is nowhere hinted at; it is not, indeed, denied in word, but the theory of the book is constructed on a foundation with which the mystery of the Incarnation is incompatible. The curtain rises on the form of "a young man of promise in Nazareth, not yet called the Christ;" the evangelical record of His birth and His own testimonies to His coming forth from the Father, wrought though they are into the tissue of His whole teaching, are simply passed by; they are not postponed for after consideration, but omitted as embarrassing and, indeed, fatal to the scheme of the whole argument, which purports to investigate and disclose certain principles laid hold of by the profound mind and noble heart of a perfect man for the lasting benefit of his race. We see throughout the volume nothing beyond the

elaboration of a scheme of marvellous wisdom, goodness, and foresight by a personage whose enthusiasm even to death has been sufficient to kindle the enthusiasm of countless followers. That our Saviour came into the world to execute a commission given to Him in eternity, to carry out into their accomplishment purposes which He had "heard of the Father," and plans which had been matured in heaven before the earth was, is a truth which, though it runs through the Bible, and was always on the lips of Jesus, never enters into the system of this author, or of the school that finds in him its latest exponent.

The treatment of the baptism by the River Jordan gives ample evidence of this. The relation between John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth is the relation between a feebler and a stronger enthusiast pursuing the same design. John "successfully revived the function of the prophet;" "he attempted in an imperfect manner that which Christ afterwards fully accomplished." Of his predestination as the forerunner of Jesus, and of his own most clear testimony to the eternal sonship of the Messiah whom he announced, not a word is said. He simply recognised in Jesus a lamb-like soul, which—unlike his own turbulent spirit, "whose recklessness had driven him into the desert, where he had contended for years with thoughts he could not master, *among the dogs rather than among the lambs of the Shepherd*—had never been disturbed, whose stedfast peace no agitations of life had ever ruffled," and whom therefore he announced as the *Lamb of God*. John's baptism "had something cold and negative about it." He proclaimed that his successor's baptism would be "with a holy spirit and with fire"—that is, according to our author's interpretation of these great words, with a moral warmth that should cleanse, with an enthusiastic virtue which is the soul of Christianity. The baptism of our Lord Himself—that wonderful scene which, to the eye of faith, connects the glory of the Trinity with the entrance of the Messiah on His work—is introduced as an "incident which is said to have occurred just before Christ entered upon the work of his life."

"Signs miraculous, or considered miraculous, are said to have attested the greatness of Christ's mission at the moment of his baptism. There settled on his head a dove, in which the Baptist saw a visible incarnation of that Holy Spirit with which he declared that Christ should baptize. A sound was heard in the sky, which was interpreted as the voice of God Himself, acknowledging His beloved Son. In the agitation of mind caused by his baptism, by the Baptist's designation of

him as the future Prophet, and by these signs, Christ retired into the wilderness; and there in solitude, and after a mental struggle such as John, perhaps, had undergone before he appeared as the prophet of the nation, matured that plan of action which we see him executing with the firmest assurance and consistency from the moment of his return to society. A particular account, also involving some miraculous circumstances, of the temptation with which he contended successfully in the wilderness, is given in our biographies."—P. 9.

The account of our Saviour's temptation is then subjected to a very strange and very subtle criticism, the style of which is such as to make us glad that the author nowhere afterwards attempts to comment upon the great crises of the Redeemer's life. The miracles that cling to the narrative of the temptation are done away with by an innuendo. "Nothing is more natural than that exaggerations and even inventions should be mixed in our biographies with genuine facts." No eye-witness describes them; we have no positive assurance that Christ Himself communicated them to His followers; they may pass. But the temptation itself was a reality; the gentle Lamb of God becomes for the first time conscious of His miraculous powers, and this, though none of our biographers point it out, "is visibly the key to the whole narrative. What is called Christ's temptation is the excitement of his mind which was caused by the nascent consciousness of supernatural power." In His extreme need He "declines to use for his own convenience what He regards as a sacred deposit committed to him for the good of others;" thus was the first temptation surmounted. But we fail to see the virtue of this resistance if we regard it as simply the Saviour's refusal to make bread for Himself: nor can we see that the answer, "Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God," so "exquisitely became the Lamb of God," unless we bear in mind, what our author's theory omits, that out of the mouth of another than God the temptation to make stones into bread had proceeded. It was the suggestion that would separate His will from His Father's that constituted this mysterious temptation, not the mere thought of using His own Divine power for His own urgent need. With the account of the second temptation we have not the same fault to find. But the exposition of the third, which furnishes the key of the whole volume, is grievous to the spirit of a Christian:—

"A vision of universal monarchy rose before him. What suggested such thoughts to the son of a carpenter? What but the same new

sense of supernatural power which tempted him to turn stones into bread and to throw himself into the arms of ministering angels? These, together with the Baptist's predictions and those Messianic predictions of the ancient prophets, on which we can imagine that he had been intensely brooding, might naturally suggest such an imagination. He pictured himself enthroned in Jerusalem as Messiah and the gold of Arabia offered in tribute to him. But, says the narrative, *the devil said to him, If thou wilt fall down and worship me all shall be thine.* .... We are perhaps to understand that he was tempted to do something which on reflection appeared to him equivalent to an act of homage to the evil spirit. What, then, could this be? It will explain much that follows in Christ's life, and render the whole story very complete and consistent, if we suppose that what he was tempted to do was to employ force in the establishment of his Messianic kingdom. .... He must have heard from his instructors that the Messiah was to put all enemies under his feet, and to cru shall opposition by irresistible God-given might.... And, in the request, it was because Christ refused to use his supernatural power in this way that his countrymen rejected him.... And as this caused so much surprise to his countrymen, it is natural that he should himself have undergone a struggle before he determined thus to run counter to the traditional theory of the Messiah and to all the prejudices of his nation.... But he deliberately determines to adopt another course, to found his empire upon the consent, and not upon the fears of mankind, to trust himself with his royal claims and his terrible purity and superiority defenceless against mankind, and, however bitterly their envy may persecute him, to use his supernatural powers only in doing good. This he actually did, and evidently in pursuance of a fixed plan; he persevered in his course, although politically, so to speak, it was fatal to his position, and though it bewildered his most attached followers; but by doing so he raised himself to a throne on which he has been seated for nigh two thousand years, and gained an authority over men greater far than they have allowed to any legislator, greater than prophecy had ever attributed to the Messiah himself. As the time of his retirement in the wilderness was the season in which we may suppose the plan of his subsequent career was formed, and the only season in which he betrayed any hesitation or mental perplexity, it is natural to suppose that he formed this particular determination at this time; and, if so, the narrative gains completeness and consistency by the hypothesis that the act of homage to the evil spirit by which Christ was tempted, was the founding his Messianic kingdom upon force."—P. 15.

It is to us an astonishing fact that a book of which this passage strikes the key-note can find such favour with many who accept the Divinity of Christ and the Divine origin of Christianity. We shall not attempt to discuss point by point the erroneous assumptions that pervade it, but must be con-

tent with hinting at them. The "hesitation and mental perplexity" which is attributed to the Redeemer finds no place in the record; the temptation is repelled before it is fully uttered, and in such a way as to overthrow this ingenious superstructure. Had the subtle writer given the Saviour's reply in this case as in the others, it would have answered his own folly as well as Satan's temptation. It would have told him that there was another reason which induced the Redeemer's holy indignation; that, tempted as our representative, He would teach us how to overcome by enforcing the supreme claims of God. It would have pointed to another occasion on which the same words, *Get thee behind Me, Satan*, were uttered to the same tempter who invisibly and through Simon Peter would turn him away from His cross. That might have reminded the author of another season, when Jesus did betray mental perplexity in the presence of His dark hour and final agony. And this again might have suggested to him, what it has suggested to the thoughtful reverence of multitudes who hold "the current conceptions concerning Christ," that, so far as the experiment of the Prince of Darkness would try whether or not Jesus might be deterred from obtaining the world's allegiance by another method than the cross—entering in *some other way* to His kingdom,—the vain temptation was repelled by a Divine-human person that could not thus be tempted.

It is unfortunate for this theory that the forty days' trial in the wilderness preceded these last temptations, which took place at the close, and when Christ was emerging again from His mysterious retirement. The author, however, may make light of this difficulty, being prepared to surrender the historical correctness of the narrative whenever his theory may require it. Suffice for him and the multitudes of readers who admire him, that Jesus had in the wilderness a "vision of universal monarchy;" that He there matured a scheme of realising that vision in a way that no man could have been prepared to anticipate; and that He immediately began on His "return to society" to carry out that scheme. For ourselves, we confess that the manner in which this writer, and others of the same class, speak of the private cogitations of Jesus, of His plans, schemes, and contrivances (for this last word is not wanting), outrages the deepest instincts of our Christian faith. It is not that we object to the idea of a plan according to which the Redeemer conducted His saving work. The scheme, the counsel, the economy of redemption, runs through the entire Scripture: it is sketched for the future Messiah in the Old Testament (though not, as our author

says, with a more restricted range than the reality); it is evidently present to the Redeemer from the beginning to the end of His ministry; it is grandly dilated upon by the Apostles, from their first speeches in the Acts, through the theology of the Apostles, down to the visions of the Apocalypse. But the eternal purpose of God, the mystery hid, revealed, and in some sense hidden again until the end shall come, is in the Scripture something very different from the scheme and calculation of human benevolence and foresight which lies at the foundation of *Ecce Homo*. To us it seems as if this interpreter of Christ's mission studiously endeavours to make the idea as opposite as possible to the "current conception" which Holy Scripture gives to those who reverently read it. Not a word is said of the Spirit who led Jesus into that wilderness where He is supposed to have laid His plans; not a word of His being inspired, and taught, and directed of God; any reference to His calm consciousness of the *hour* appointed for every movement of His life is excluded. All is constructed on a notion that savours too much of the purely human. The loftiest things that are said of the transcendent dignity of the new legislator fall immeasurably below the standard of the New Testament, and the transition from the pages of this essay on Christ's plan to the pages of the evangelists is, as it were, rising from earthly to heavenly things.

It is impossible but that an error so fundamental as this is should stamp its effect upon the entire argumentation. Hence we find its influence neutralising much that is otherwise very striking and suggestive, not to say beautiful, in the delineation of the new Divine theocracy which it was the purpose of Christ to set up. "The prophetic designation which had fallen upon him, perhaps, revealed to himself for the first time his own royal qualities; and the mental struggles which followed, if they had led him to a peculiar view of the kind of sovereignty to which he was destined, had left upon his mind a most absolute and serene conviction of his royal rights. During his whole public life he is distinguished from the other prominent characters of Jewish history by his unbounded personal pretensions. He calls himself habitually King and Master, he claims expressly the character of that Divine Messiah for which the ancient prophets had directed the nation to look." He came forth from the wilderness with the deep resolution to be the King of a new society, "representing the majesty of the invisible King of a theocracy, as its Founder, Legislator, and Judge." Not, however, a king

according to the conception current among the Jews. "The Christ himself, meditating upon his mission in the desert, saw difficulties such as other men had no suspicion of. He saw that he must lead a life altogether different from that of David, that the pictures drawn by the prophets of an ideal Jewish king were coloured by the manners of the times in which they had lived; that these pictures bore, indeed, a certain resemblance to the truth; but that the work before him was far more complicated and more delicate than the wisest prophet had suspected." The measures which He adopted disappointed the expectations of the people, and His death was the result.

But what were His credentials? The chapter that answers this vital question discloses the subtle error of the volume as to the kingdom of God. We have His own testimony that Christ did not simply represent the invisible King of the theocracy, He was Himself the King, and asserted and proved His Divinity by His words and works. He came, however, according to the Scripture, to found another kingdom than that of His absolute Divine authority, by dying for the sins of the world. Hence, although He always spoke and acted as the supreme King, it was, as it were, by anticipation; the foundation of His kingdom was His cross, and not till after His resurrection did He declare Himself invested with all power. His true credentials were His vicarious sufferings for the sins of men, sealed by His resurrection from the dead as the conqueror of sin and Lord of a redeemed earth. Of this we hear nothing, and yet the author approaches the subject near enough to indicate that he deliberately evades it, as the following quotation will show:—

"This temperance in the use of supernatural power is the masterpiece of Christ.... and it is precisely this trait which gave him his immense and immediate ascendency over men. If the question be put —Why was Christ so successful? Some will answer, 'Because of the miracles which attested his Divine character.' Others, 'Because of the intrinsic beauty and divinity of the great law of love that he propounded.' But miracles, as we have seen, have not by themselves this persuasive power.... On the other hand, the law of love, however Divine, was but a precept.... It was neither for his miracles, nor for the beauty of his doctrine, that Christ was worshipped. Nor was it for his winning personal character, nor for the persecutions he endured, nor for His martyrdom. It was for the inimitable unity which all these things made when taken together. In other words, it was for this, that he whose power and greatness, as shown in his miracles, were overwhelming, denied himself the use of his power,

treated it as a slight thing, walked among men as though he were one of them, relieved them in distress, taught them to love each other, bore with undisturbed patience a perpetual hailstorm of calumny; and, when his enemies grew fiercer, continued still to endure their attacks in silence, until, petrified and bewildered with astonishment, men saw him arrested and put to death with torture, refusing steadfastly to use in his own behalf the power he conceived he held for the benefit of others. It was the combination of greatness and self-sacrifice which won their hearts, the mighty powers held under a mighty control, the unspeakable condemner, the *Cross of Christ*."—P. 47.

These eloquent words are followed by others still more eloquent, depicting the effect upon men of such sufferings voluntarily endured. But they fail to touch the secret of the constraining power of the Passion. There was more in the cross to St. Paul than "the voluntary submission to death of one who had the power to escape death." "Christ's voluntary surrender of power," simply and apart from the atoning virtue of His death, was *not* the favourite subject of all the Apostles. The absolute devotion which should requite it was not simply matter of human "opinion and feeling;" nor was this "the ground of that obedience to Christ and acceptance of His legislation which made the success of His scheme." As St. Paul is here for once referred to, he may be permitted to speak for himself; and his uniform testimony is that only a Divine revelation through the Holy Ghost of the saving power and cleansing virtue of the blood of Atonement, could kindle the love of Christ in the soul. It is scarcely true to say that those who witnessed our Saviour's abstinence from self-vindication by the use of His miraculous power, felt any such influence from it as is here asserted. The cross, with all its preparatory sufferings, passed from their eyes without enkindling this profound devotion, until a power from on high revealed the sacred mystery of its meaning to the life and destiny of the believer. When they came to know that in His cross He had been made a curse for them, and that His crucifixion was the sacrifice of a Divine-human victim to the claims of the law, then, but not till then, "the law and the lawgiver were enshrined in their inmost hearts for inseparable veneration."

In the chapters which treat of our Saviour's kingdom, and the terms of admission to it, we have a clear and undisguised picture of the religion of nature placed under certain Christian influences. Nothing is brought to man; all is evoked from his nature as Christ finds it. This radical defect, in our judgment, mainly characterises the whole treatise, and may

be taken as a key to the errors, which, however beautifully veiled, are errors fatal to the foundation. Let the following words be well weighed; they close the striking exposition of that "winnowing fan" which the Baptist predicted as Christ's method of testing human nature:—

"When he rejected the test of correct conduct which society uses, Christ substituted the test of faith. It is to be understood that this is not strictly a Christian virtue; it is the virtue required of one who wishes to become a Christian. So much a man must bring with him; without it he is not worthy of the kingdom of God. To those who lack faith, Christ will not be Legislator or King. He does not, indeed, dismiss them, but he suffers them to abandon a society which now ceases to have any attraction for them. Such, then, is the new test, and it will be found the only one which could answer Christ's purpose of excluding all hollow disciples. . . . We want a test which shall admit all who have it in them to be good whether their good qualities be trained or no. Such a test is found in faith. He who, when goodness is impressively put before him, exhibits an instinctive loyalty to it, starts forward to take its side, trusts himself to it, such a man has faith, and the root of the matter is in such a man."—P. 66.

From this it would appear that the work of Christ in the world is to find out and bind to Himself all those who have "the root of the matter" in them. The test is the presentation of His living person, and the attraction is the effort of goodness upon a soul having already in it a touch of goodness, and already justified by that faith. Hence we are told that Jesus obtained the unlimited devotion and obedience of His servants, even to the sacrifice of life, "by no other means than the natural influence of a natural superiority." An endless succession of variations follow on this theme: its music is played, and with no small charm, throughout the remaining chapters. It is made the one and supreme prerogative of Christ as a legislator that He did not trust to reason, but to example; this is represented as the grand distinction between His work and that of all the philosophers who went before Him. His ultimate object, like theirs, was the moral improvement of mankind, a statement to which it may seem captious to take exception, but which we hold to be absolutely wrong in the sense in which it is here understood. But in *improving* the morality of men Christ differs from Socrates, inasmuch as He imposes the authority of His own excellence upon His followers, and kindles the natural faith of man into an enthusiasm of devotion to Himself and imitation of His virtues that effectually kills all sin in the soul. "As love provokes love, many have found it possible to conceive

for Christ an attachment, the closeness of which no words can describe." And as love to Christ is excited by the contemplation of His goodness, so there is in the nature of man "a love for humanity as such; a natural passion, which would be universal if special causes did not extinguish it in special cases, but, like all other human passions, it may be indefinitely increased and purified by training and by extraordinary influences that may be brought to bear upon it. Now this is the passion on which Christ seized, and treated it as the law-making power or root of morality in human nature, trained and developed it into that Christian spirit which received the new name of ἀγάπη."

It is needless to remind our readers that there is a deep double error pervading all this—an error as to the true character of original sin, and an error as to the nature of the "extraordinary influences" brought to bear on it by the Redeemer. Surely there are some words, spoken by our Lord, which the author of *Ecce Homo* well knows, and would admit to be the "true sayings of Christ," that teach a doctrine very different from those which he takes such delight in propounding. He himself, when speaking of baptism, gives us a somewhat elaborate exposition of the night-scene with Nicodemus, in which he represents the Redeemer as teaching the ruler that men must not think of giving their name to the founder of the kingdom at a secret interview, to return afterwards to the routine of secular life: "those who would enrol themselves among the citizens of it were to understand that they began their life anew, as truly as if they had been born again." But why, admitting the importance of this conversation with Nicodemus, does he deliberately pass by those clear and piercing sentences which enforce the necessity of the soul's new birth? Why does he omit, as if they had not been spoken, any reference to the words, "*That which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the spirit is spirit!*" We have no disposition to deny to our poor humanity what capacities of goodness the fall has left it, still less to restrict the measure of good influence which His alliance with our nature has put forth upon it. But we must protest with all earnestness against a style of teaching that studiously, and with a seeming emphasis on the word, speaks of the natural man as having in him, as it were, a natural Christianity which needs only to be placed in the presence of Christ to become active.

When we read of "extraordinary influences brought to bear" upon man's natural instinct of love, we supposed that

possibly some concession was about to be made to the "current opinion" as to the renewing of the Holy Ghost. But it is far otherwise. The Holy Ghost is indeed spoken of, but only as a term used to signify the power of ardent feeling excited in the soul. The strain is faithful to the end, and this is the conclusion of it:—

"A single conception enthusiastically grasped is found powerful enough to destroy the very root of all immorality within the heart. As every enthusiasm that a man can conceive makes a certain class of sins impossible to him, and raises him not only above the commission of them, but beyond the very temptation to commit them, so there exists an enthusiasm which makes all sin whatever impossible. This enthusiasm is emphatically the presence of the Holy Spirit. It is called here the enthusiasm *of humanity*, because it is that respect for human beings which no one altogether wants raised to the point of enthusiasm."—P. 320.

How is this enthusiasm kindled? This vital question has been present to the writer's mind throughout his book, and has received a great many kinds of indirect and vague reply. But, as if conscious that here has been his failure, the question is asked again at the close, in the tone of a note of despair. At an earlier stage of his investigation St. John's Gospel is appealed to for help; for, although scarcely admitted as a text-book, St. John plays a prominent part in *Ecce Homo:* "The enthusiasm can hardly be kindled except by a personal influence acting through example or impassioned exhalation. When Christ would kindle it in His disciples He *breathed* on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Ghost;' intimating by this great symbolical act that life passes into the soul of a man, as it were, by contagion from another living soul." But it would be a great mistake to infer from this, or any other reference to the Holy Spirit, that the writer means the gift of the Holy Ghost, as a regenerating Spirit, in the current Christian sense. Nothing seems further from his thought. His last word on the subject is, that this enthusiasm "was shown to men in its most consummate form in Jesus Christ." Christ did not obtain by His death, and send down as the gift of His ascension, the Holy Ghost. He Himself had the enthusiasm kindled in Him—*how*, no one can tell; for "it was the will of God to beget no second son like Him." But since He has shown it, men have found it possible to imitate Him; and every new imitation revives the power of the original. Not, however, that "Christ is the direct source of all humanity;" in Him it

was displayed in a supreme and unique manner, but the examples of His imitator who came nearer to us may do more to "hand on the torch from runner to runner in the race of life." Hence we cannot but feel that *Ecce Homo* leaves its readers in a state of hopeless confusion as to the redeeming power of Christ in human nature. It disguises, by fair words, the absence of those cardinal doctrines of atonement and regeneration which give meaning to the words that Christ is the *life of the world.*

If anywhere we might expect an utterance approaching to clearness on this vital subject, it is in a description on the meaning of the Lord's Supper. But we find no satisfaction there, and should not allude to this chapter were it not for the view given of the Christian sacraments generally. These solemn observances were "most desirable," indeed, "matters of extreme importance," in order to preserve the distinctness of the Christian society from the world, baptism serving that purpose, and the unity of the Christian Church in itself, an end effected by the common supper. The Christian communion is, as it were,—the author feels but evades the degradation of the term—"a club-dinner," symbolically expressing the fact and the manner of their union. But the fact first—the fact of the universal brotherhood of mankind, "pensioners on the bounty of the universal Father." When Christ declared that the bread was His body and the wine His blood, and said—to appeal once more to St. John—"Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you," He taught that *life*, the healthy condition of the mind, consisting "in a certain enthusiasm for human beings as such," will not spring up spontaneously or by any effort of our own, but that men must learn to love each other "by eating His flesh and drinking His blood." This metaphor belongs to a style of "vehement" language by which Christ and His Apostles were wont to express intense personal devotion to the Lord: "It is precisely this intense personal devotion, this habitual feeding on the character of Christ, so that the essential nature of the Master seems to pass into and become the essential nature of the servant—loyally carried to the point of self-annihilation—that is expressed by the words, 'eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ.'" The writer seems to feel the insufficiency of this interpretation; he is himself amazed, and teaches us to feel amazed at the unbounded personal pretensions which Christ advances. To us, knowing full well the Divine Person who utters these words, His pretensions are indeed amazing, but they are per-

fectly consistent, and receive the full homage of our reason as well as our hearts. But how strange, and indeed incomprehensive, is the demand of Christ on any other theory, as the following extract shows. We have to select the sentences, but only for the sake of brevity:—

"It is common in human history to meet with those who claim some superiority over their fellows. . . . Few, indeed, are those to whom it is given to influence future ages. Homer by creating literature, Socrates by creating science, Cæsar by carrying civilisation inland from the shores of the Mediterranean, Newton by starting science upon a career of steady progress, may be said to have attained this eminence. But these men gave a single impact like that which is conceived to have first set the planets in motion; Christ claims to be a perpetual attractive power like the sun which determines their orbits. They contributed to men some discoveries and passed away; Christ's discovery is himself. To humanity, struggling with its passions and its destiny, he says, Cling close to me, cling ever closer to me. . . . But it is doubly surprising that these enormous pretensions were advanced by one whose special peculiarity, not only among his contemporaries, but among the remarkable men that have appeared before and since, was an almost feminine tenderness and humanity. This characteristic was remarked, as we have seen, by the Baptist, and Christ himself was fully conscious of it. . . . If he judged himself correctly, and if the Baptist described him well when he compared him to a lamb, and, we may add, if his biographers have delineated his character faithfully, Christ was one naturally contented with obscurity, wanting the restless desire for distinction and eminence, which is common in great men, hating to put forward personal claims, disliking competition and 'disputes who should be greatest' so much, finding something bombastic in the titles of royalty, fond of what is simple and homely—of children, of poor people, occupying himself with the concerns of others, with the relief of sickness and want, that the temptation to exaggerate the importance of his own thoughts and plans was not likely to master him; lastly, entertaining for the human race a feeling so singularly fraternal, that he was likely to reject as a sort of treason the impulse to set himself in any manner above them. Christ, it appears, was this humble man. When we have fully pondered the facts, we may be in a condition to estimate the force of the evidence, which, submitted to his mind, would induce him, in direct opposition to all his tastes and instincts, to lay claim, persistently, with the calmness of entire conviction, in spite of the offence which his own followers conceived, to a dominion more transcendent, more universal, more complete, than the most delirious votary of glory ever aspired to in his dreams."—P. 178.

With this extract we leave the reader to judge for himself what the conception of Christ will be when the author of *Ecce Homo* shall have delivered himself fully on Christian theo-

logy, and expanded his half views into their complete exhibition. The last sentences of the volume—though marred by a display of bad taste which runs more or less through the whole work, and is singularly at variance with the general grace of its style—might seem to promise that the sequel of this undertaking will do something to vindicate the majesty of the person and the Divinity of the work of Christ. "The new Jerusalem descended *out of heaven from God.*" "The creative effort which produced that, against which, it is said, the gates of hell shall not prevail, cannot be analysed. No architects' designs were furnished for the New Jerusalem; no committee drew up rules for the Universal Commonwealth. It was an achievement of Christ's will and power that has no rival on earth." In what sense the Christian state came down from heaven, and what was the power that with such mysterious calmness and inconceivable power created it, we presume we have yet to be told. But, whatever may hereafter be said as to the superhuman origin of Christianity—if, indeed, anything will be said—we cannot forget that throughout the whole of this work Christ's motives, calculations, aims, contrivances, and expedients, are analysed by a human critic in a style that seems strangely to contradict the words we have just quoted. And to us the concluding words of the volume come with a feeling of inexpressible relief—whatever the sense may be in which the author uses them—*out of heaven from God.*

Christ's legislation for the Christian commonwealth occupies a large portion of the volume. It is elaborately worked out; but contains nothing that may be termed new, although the terminology and manner of presentation differ from that to which Christian writers are wont to adhere. We shall not be able to do more than make a few remarks on some of the fundamental principles that are here assumed.

And, first, it seems to us that there is a great and needless effort to separate between the ethics of Christianity and its doctrines. In other words, the idea of Christ as a Teacher, sent from God to communicate, by Himself and through His Apostles, a system of doctrine—which is everywhere in the later New Testament called the Gospel, or the Faith, or the Truth—is kept too entirely in the background, and by implication suppressed altogether. The volume proceeds on the supposition that the Lord completed His legislation for His kingdom before He left the world, and that the whole of the Christian scheme may be found within the compass of the Four Gospels. Whereas, if we take the entire New Testament

in our hands, we find that the code of Christian ethics does not assume its complete and full form until the spirit of inspiration has gathered the Church around the "Apostles' doctrine" concerning the cross. It is true that the fundamental principles of morality were not and could not be essentially changed by the promulgation of Christ's new doctrine; but it is equally true that the entire system of Christian ethics is seen in all its clearness, and receives its most impressive sanctions, only when connected with the peculiar doctrines of Christianity. The several chapters of *Ecce Homo*, which treat of the laws of philanthropy, mercy, forgiveness, beautiful and searching as they are, would be infinitely more beautiful and more true to the New Testament if they were re-written with a constant reference to those doctrines of the incarnation, atonement, and eternal judgment with which they are always connected in Scripture, but from which in this treatise they are entirely disjoined. In short, however effectually it serves the writer's purpose to take the "morality" of Christianity first, we think the order an inverted one, and shall not occupy much time with the "ethics" of this treatise until we have the promised "theology" to examine.

This, however, leads to another observation. The Christianity taught by this volume, or rather for which this volume conciliates the favour of sceptical inquirers, is of the freest possible type of latitudinarianism as it regards the letter of revelation on the one hand, and the personal independence of the individual spirit as its own law-maker on the other.

The "Christian, a Law to Himself," is the title of one chapter. It dwells with much emphasis upon that enthusiasm or Divine inspiration which makes the subject of it independent of all external commandment. It is impossible not to sympathise with this principle or fact—for fact it is—when rightly stated and free from exaggeration. "Love is the fulfilling of the law," and when the supreme love of God becomes the "royal law" of the soul, it must needs expel every other alien passion, rendering to God all service of devotion, and for God's sake rendering to man all service of charity. But the positions of this chapter are amenable to the charge of onesidedness and exaggeration. It makes this "all-purifying passion" simply the passion for man as such, for the race in the individual; in short, the enthusiasm in humanity. Now we cannot but think that this sovereign inspiration within the soul is not the love of man, but of God; the sacred fervour which, when it is shed abroad in the spirit of man,

restores him to his rest, and furnishes him with the impulse and the strength for every relative duty. It is not the human race, but God that is the object of this central enthusiasm; not man in the individual, but God in man. Hence we have the highest authority, saying, "Ye did it unto Me." Further, there is a spirit of exaggeration reigning in the whole argument which is characteristic of this free and idealist school. It is scarcely true to say that Christ "did not have a code of morals in the ordinary sense of the term—that is, an enumeration of actions prescribed and prohibited. Two or three prohibitions, two or three commands, he is, indeed, recorded to have delivered; but on the greater number of questions on which men require moral guidance he has left no direction whatever." Among our Lord's last words to His Apostles He bade them go forth and "teach all men to observe all things that He had commanded them," an injunction which as it looks back upon a long series of commandments, delivered in the gospels in a variety of forms, and not always as positive injunctions, so it looks forward to a still more plenary communication of His will through the Holy Spirit. Let any one with an unbiassed mind take the entire New Testament, and examine how far it is a directory of conduct and a code of ordinances and prohibitions, and he will find that the Christian instinct of health is not thus absolutely confided in. While he will feel the truth of the remark that "in the language of Hebrew poetry, a voice behind is saying, 'This is the way, walk ye in it,'" he will also feel that all the stress is not to be laid upon the *voice*, but some of it must be reserved for the *way*.

The same exaggeration appears in the discussion on "Positive Morality," which seems to us to place the New Testament in such a relation to the Old as is fatal to the unity of Divine revelation, and extremely perilous to the foundations of the then faith. Here we must make a few extracts:—

"Of the Scriptures of the Old Testament he always spoke with the utmost reverence, and he seems never to have called in question the Jewish view of them as infallible oracles of God. Some parts of them, particularly the book of Deuteronomy, seem to have been often present to his thoughts. Yet even the Old Testament he regarded in a sense critically, and he introduced canons of interpretation which must have astonished, by their boldness, the religious men of the day. For he regarded the laws of Moses, though Divine, as capable of becoming obsolete and also incomplete. On the question of divorce he declared the Mosaic arrangement to have been well suited for the 'hard-heartedness' of a semi-barbarous age, but to be no longer justifiable in the

advanced condition of morals. So, too, in the matter of oaths, the permission of private revenge, and other points on which the Mosaic legislation had necessarily something of a barbaric character, He unhesitatingly repealed the acts of the lawgiver and introduced new provisions. . . . It was the inspiration, the law-making power, that gave Christ and his disciples courage to shake themselves free from the fetters even of a Divine law. Their position was a new and delicate one, and nothing but such an inspiration could have enabled them to maintain it. To pronounce the old law entirely true, or entirely false, would have been easy; but to consider it as true and Divine, yet no longer true for them, no longer their authoritative guide, must have seemed, and must seem even to us, at first sight unnatural and paradoxical. It may be illustrated, however, by what every one has observed to happen in the process of learning and art. For the beginner rigid rules are prescribed, which it will be well for him for a time to follow, punctiliously and blindly. . . . But the principle at the same time that it explains the rules supersedes them. It was in this manner that Christ found the Mosaic law at once Divine and in part obsolete. But not only did he find it in part obsolete, he found it throughout utterly meagre and imperfect."—P. 183.

There is much confusion in these statements, which it would require a long dissertation to expose and clear up. Let it be remembered, generally, that it was the same Lawgiver who gave the laws of morality on Mount Sinai and the Mount of Beatitudes; and that He said, "I came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil them." Whatever changes He introduced were not changes in the code of morals, as the word is understood in this volume; whatever relaxations He permitted in observances formerly binding upon a nation, were far from being a release "from the fetters even of a Divine law." Surely there can be given a better and more reverent account of our Lord's more spiritual republication of a law which, in all its essentials, He retained, than this. Is it not evident in every page of the gospels that He honoured the decalogue, for instance, so far as to remit men's consciences to its precepts, "Ye know the commandments"? The style in which a higher and better interpreter of Christ's will delivers Himself, is a sufficient protest against all this. "If there be *any other commandment*, it is briefly *comprehended*, not abolished or lost, in the saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Now where is this saying found, "*Thou shalt* love thy neighbour as thyself," but in that very law of which the author of *Ecce Homo* says that it was a system of passive morality, in opposition to the Christian, which is active and positive, *thou shalt* superseding *thou shalt not*?

"The Christian moral reformation may indeed be summed up in this—humanity changed from a restraint to a motive." This is a dictum to which, on many grounds, exception may be taken. The motive power of goodwill to man reigns in the Old Testament as well as in the New; we cannot imagine the God of holiness omitting that when teaching His creatures their duty and bidding them, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." The entire series of the ancient Scriptures, with all their charity in precept and example—the laws, the psalms, and the prophets—protest against this unguarded statement. *Thou shalt* and *thou shalt not* are inseparably intertwined throughout the Bible, and while man is in his earthly probation God hath joined them as the united sanction of human duty; let not man put them asunder. But our objection goes deeper still; it is one that has again and again been hinted at. Humanity is not the sphere of the Christian moral reformation, it is only one element in it. Christ has shown the spirituality of the requirements of the law of both its prohibitions and its injunctions; He has pointed to the recesses of the human heart as the seat of holiness; this holiness He nowhere declares to be, what it is constantly asserted to be in this volume, the enthusiasm of love to humanity, but something of which this enthusiasm is only one, and that an accidental, development. It is the supreme ascendency of love to God in the soul, expelling not selfishness only, but sin, the root of it, and bringing the will of man into perfect accordance with the will of God. The kingdom of God is not only the Christian commonwealth, it is also the indwelling of the Holy Trinity, "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," communion with God as well as fellowship with man in charity. And beautiful, touching, and holy as is the idea of the "enthusiasm of humanity," it is doing it great injustice to make it the final end of our Saviour's new legislation among men.

We must quote one more passage, which strikes a chord so grateful to our feeling that we regret to have to censure it in any measure. But censurable it is, when we comprehend all the meaning of its theme, *Christian Morality*—

"Those who stood by watching His career felt that his teaching, but probably still more his deeds, were creating a revolution in morality, and were setting to all previous legislations, Mosaic or Gentile, that seal which is at once ratification and abolition. While they watched, they felt the rules and maxims by which they had hitherto lived die into a higher and larger life. They felt the freedom which is gained by destroying selfishness instead of restraining it, by

crucifying the flesh instead of circumcising it. In this new rule they perceived all old rules to be included, but so included as to seem insignificant, axioms of moral science, beggarly elements. It no longer seemed to them necessary to prohibit in detail and with laborious enumeration the different acts by which a man may injure his neighbour. Now that they had at heart, as the first of interests, the happiness of all with whom they might be brought in contact, they no longer required a law, for they had acquired a quiet and sensitive instinct, which restrained them from doing harm. But while the new morality incorporated into itself the old, how much ampler was its compass! A new continent in the moral globe was discovered. Positive morality took its place by the side of negative. To the duty of not doing harm, which may be called justice, was added the duty of doing good, which may properly receive the distinctively Christian name of charity. And this is the meaning of that prediction which certain shepherds, reported to have come to them in a mystic song, heard under the open sky of night ('carmine perfidiæ quod post nulla arguet ætas'), proclaiming the commencement of an era of 'good will to men.'"—P. 189.

The angels have given us a better interpretation of their song than this. It was not the advent of One who was to exalt justice into charity, but rather to make both one, by saving His people from their sins. They did not sing between the two Testaments that now at length goodwill should reign *among* men only, but rather that the gospel of God's goodwill was to be revealed in the sacrifice of Christ, bringing God's peace to man and returning in glory to God in the highest. But it is not with this rhetorical use of the mystic word the shepherds "reported," that we quarrel. It is with the sweeping assertion that morality or Christian charity is doing good to man, "briefly comprehended," as it were, in this one saying, goodwill towards men; and with the no less indefensible assertion that "all old rules" were made by Christ to seem "beggarly elements." Neither Christ nor His Apostles ever countenanced the restriction of the former position, nor the positive error of the latter. St. Paul's authority—and we are bound to think St. Paul a high authority with the author of *Ecce Homo*—may be appealed to as repudiating both in one sentence. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation teacheth us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly." Here we have the true fundamental principles of positive morality that supersede all formulated enactments, the principles of all human holiness. But he does not teach us that the grace of God leaves man—leaves the subjects of the Christian commonwealth—to the spontaneous development of these principles; it *disciplines*

us, it instructs, guides, and trains, by gentler and severer means, its pupils or its patients, to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts; and by this process of education purifies a holy people unto Christ, who died to redeem us from the penalty of our sins and to give us the spirit of a new obedience. If St. Paul's nervous word, "beggarly elements," is borrowed from him, he should be allowed to put his own meaning on the term. But we are very sure that he would never have mentioned its application in this passage; he would not have permitted it to be used by all those innumerable precepts of self-government, righteousness, and devotion, by the painful observance of which human nature rises to the perfection of an instinctive obedience to all the laws of God. The Supreme Legislator knew "what was in man," and while He made love to Himself—not love to man—the test and impulse of all obedience, He required that it should be shown by *keeping all His commandments*.

The sum of all is, that this book gives us, we were about to say, the ideal legislator of an ideal community. Now, that there is an ideal commonwealth ever before the Legislator's view, we admit as heartily as the author of *Ecce Homo*. Indeed we think those parts of his work are the most valuable in which he insists on the necessity of regarding the Saviour's ideal, and not the sad reality in the world, as the standard of our estimate of Christianity.

But this idealism—if the term may be so used—is carried much too far. It tends to obscure, while it seems to brighten, the form of the Founder of Christianity, as legislating for the souls whom He came to prepare, by a teaching condescension the counterpart of His atoning love, for a future kingdom, as yet existing only in the ideal. Making Him only man—so far as we can see—it yet leaves Him not enough of man for the need of mortals. It seems paradoxical, but, if we may trust our feeling after reading this book very carefully, it is true, that while the Redeemer is bereft of His eternal Divinity, the true secret of His supreme authority and majesty, He is, at the same time, depicted as a Legislator of such awful grandeur and severity that only very few can hear His words and live. As Legislator, He is not brought down to the need of those for whom He legislates. He delivers, as it were, counsels of perfection to an exceedingly elect few. And His law is too simple, too high, too stringent for any but the interior circle. There are always some souls, multitudes of souls, who enter into that relation with Christ in which He rules without law. But there are always in the Christian commonwealth an in-

finitely larger number who are under the legislation of a gentle and meek Saviour, laying His burden upon them that they may find rest, and bringing them under a yoke of merciful severity. He is a Legislator of more tender and gracious accommodation to poor human nature than this book makes Him. He is more actual and nearer to us than this ideal lawgiver. His Saviour-heart, and His skill as the Physician of human souls, however much talked about in this book, are not allowed to leave the right impression on our minds. He is too much the Legislator, too little the Saviour.

This undue ascendency of the ideal affects the view given of the Christian Church. With many of the eloquent paragraphs that describe and enforce the universal benevolence of the community bearing the name of Christ, we heartily agree. But the end and government and life of the Church are evermore referred, in the spirit of onesidedness and exaggeration that pervades the book, to one idea — the enthusiasm of humanity. It is, indeed, truly, though not altogether gracefully, said, that "the Church has sustained another part on earth besides that of the sister of charity; she has not merely sat by sick beds and played the Lady Bountiful to poor people." And still better we read, "accordingly the enthusiasm of humanity in Christ did not propose to itself principally to procure qualifications and enjoyments for the senses of men, but to make the Divine image more glorious in them and to purge it, as far as possible, from impurities." But in his enthusiasm for the enthusiasm of humanity, the writer represents Christ as ordaining preaching and baptism, "because he regarded it as essential to the diffusion of true humanity that men should form themselves into a society of which humanity should be the law, and that they should signalise their entrance into it by undergoing a special rite of purification." When the glow of this ardour for man declines, St. Paul reminds Christians "of their ideal;" that ideal being expressed as "putting on Christ," "Christ formed within," "filling up the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." In other words, the great Christian law of edification is the building of the Church; the second great obligation of Christianity was to "convert mankind to Christian humanity or holiness." This ideal of the end of the Christian Church brings all into subordination to it, removing out of sight all the New Testament teaching as to the external constitution of the Church as a society governed by the Holy Spirit, and setting only in a prominent light those portions of it that are concerned with the diffusion of the spirit of humanity. Hence

the tendency of the whole is to make the Church not so much the conservator of the truth—a body growing up into the fulness of Christ, by the edification of a ministry and ordinances settled for ever, and thus slowly but surely winning the world to the obedience of the faith—as a mystical community kept together by the enthusiasm for the human race, and for ever varying its expedients according to the fluctuations of human misery and the exigencies of every age. "At last the time came when the hidden principle of all law was revealed, and Christian humanity became the self-legislating life of mankind."

Once more, the idealist influence is seen in the morbid and exaggerated estimate which is expressed, and when not expressed, implied, of the success of Christianity in the world from age to age. The ideal that the Christian poet saw coming from heaven was "for a moment almost realised, and may be realised again. But what we see in history behind us and the world around us is, it must be confessed, not 'like a bride adorned for her husband.' The bridal dress is worn out, and the orange-flower is faded." This is not only bad taste; it is unsound theology and hollow criticism. The writer has an ideal of the militant Church in his mind which fairly belongs only to the Church when it has attained its perfection. Hence the constant tone of disparagement that pervades all his descriptions. Although he admits that the Christian Church "still displays vigour and a capacity of adjusting itself to new conditions, and in all the transformation it undergoes remains visibly the same thing, and inspired by its Founder's universal and unquenchable spirit," yet he has but a slight respect for what it has done in the world at large—"it is possible to make it a question whether mankind has gained on the whole"—and by a variety of hints betrays his conviction that it is an unrealised ideal still. Hence it is easy and almost necessary that he should glide into the notion that too much has been expected of Christianity from its votaries. It is, after all, only "one of many revelations, and is very insufficient by itself for man's happiness." Its ideal cannot be worked out but by the co-operation of another revelation, reserved for these last days. "We live under the blessed light of science, a light yet far from its meridian, and dispersing every day some noxious superstition, some cowardice of the human spirit." It is true that "Christian morality, if somewhat less safe and exempt from perversion than science, is more directly and vitally beneficial to mankind." But he does not expect much from the Christian

institute so long as it exacts supreme homage as the only regenerator of society. He has pitched his ideal, we repeat, too high; and finding it incapable of adjustment with the facts of the world, he seems to turn in despair to other more practical agents attaining more sure results. What his real thoughts are as to the work of Christianity in the world, we may gather from the rash and irreverent words in which he classes those who, "content with Christianity, disregard science," with the enemies of light "who took away the keys of knowledge" in Christ's day, and then utters his final indignation thus:—"Assuredly they are graceless zealots who quote Moses against the expounders of a wisdom which Moses denied in vain, because it was reserved for a far later generation, for these modern men, to whom we may with accurate truth apply Christ's words and say that the least among them is greater than Moses." Charges such as we have now brought against this book have, it would seem, been urged by others. The writer refers to them in his new preface; but in such a way, it seems to us, as to show that it is far easier to write paradoxes than to defend them.

We here close for the present; not doubting that we shall meet the author of *Ecce Homo* again in these pages. In shutting the book after a careful reading, we cease to wonder at its popularity with a large class of the religiously disposed public. It is carefully adapted to meet the case of all who, "musing in their hearts" concerning Jesus of Nazareth, are repelled, on the one hand, by the coarse infidelity of the modern critical school, while, on the other, they think it freedom to spurn the restraints of theological Christianity. To them it offers a free, but not, on the whole, irreverent handling of the "mysteries of Christ." The style in which its investigations are conducted is graceful and eloquent, such, indeed, as to win most upon those who study it most carefully. But, for ourselves, we have no doubt that its charm will be gone when the song is sung out, and that it will sink into the mass of that spent literature which figures conspicuously for a season, excites an expectation which it disappoints, and sooner or later gives place to the teaching that gives a more "certain sound."

ART. IV.—1. *Felix Holt the Radical.* By GEORGE ELIOT. Three Vols. London: W. Blackwood & Son.
2. *Elster's Folly.* By MRS. HENRY WOOD. Three Vols. London: Tinsley Brothers.
3. *Hereward the Wake.* By REV. CHARLES KINGSLEY. London: Smith, Elder and Co.
4. *Armadale.* By WILKIE COLLINS. Three Vols.
5. *Chronicles of Carlingford.* Three Vols.
6. *Beyond the Church.* By MISS MAJORIBANKS. Three Vols.

THE statistics of novel writing and novel reading, if they could be collected, would present some curious facts. The total number of issues in a season, even if we exclude the novelettes, whose name is legion, which appear only in the pages of the monthly magazines, must be something extraordinary. The season which has just closed has, perhaps, hardly been so prolific as its predecessor, but it has contributed a sufficiently large quota to the already groaning shelves of Mr. Mudie, and will doubtless in due time furnish abundant stores to meet the demands of the trunk-maker and cheesemonger. We have no means of determining what is the average number of readers found by each of these works; but as publishers would not continue to publish works unless they could sell them, and as the circulating libraries would not buy books for which they could not find readers, we are driven to the conclusion that there are a large number of people who, at all events, skim through a considerable proportion of these books, and who are, to some extent, in many instances more than they themselves imagine, influenced by them, while there are not a few who derive from them almost their sole intellectual food, and are materially affected by their representations. It is useless, indeed, to deny that fiction is a very powerful instrument, and perhaps more powerful at the present moment than ever, because of the wide extent of area over which its influence extends. It is quite true that it is not the highest class of minds which is affected by it, and to them it may seem absurd that any lasting impression can be produced by writers of so inferior an order as those to whom, for the most part, the novel-reading world at present does homage. It

would, however, be a false policy to act upon such an impression, and to treat as unworthy of notice writers whose very popularity gives them a certain prestige and power, and whose constant reiteration of their views on men and things must produce more or less effect.

One of the most serious features in the case is the extent to which books of this character find their way into the families of devout Christian men. We can well remember the time when novel-reading was regarded, especially among Methodists and Evangelical Dissenters, as a grave error, hardly consistent with the maintenance of a Christian profession. Now the very opposite of this is the case, and *Lady Audley's Secret*, *Aurora Floyd*, or *East Lynne* may not unfrequently be found lying on drawing-room tables, from which in a former generation *Old Mortality* or *The Heart of Mid Lothian* would have been rigidly excluded. No doubt, as a matter of fact, the one extreme has produced the other; but however this may explain, it can hardly be accepted as justifying, the present state of things. A wise regulation of the reading, especially of young people, is undoubtedly more difficult than either of the extreme courses, but the difficulty cannot be regarded as a sufficient reason for renouncing every attempt to accomplish so important an end.

We are not disposed to claim a very high place for works of fiction, or to assign to them any important office in the work of mental discipline. But, on the other hand, they are not to be wholly despised. The imagination and fancy are talents given to us by God, and they would not have been given at all if they were not fitted to subserve some valuable purpose. They may be cultivated too exclusively, they may be suffered to usurp the position which belongs to the judgment or even the conscience, they may be so employed as to prevent the man from attending with proper calmness and sobriety to the practical business of life. But their frequent abuse does not prove that they have no use. Hence it may be pleaded that such writings throw a beauty over what would else be vulgar and mean; that they help to give a clearer insight into human character and actions, that they raise the mind to a higher tone of thought and feeling, that they provide a mode of pleasing relaxation for the overtasked brain and too sensitive nerves of a generation whose mode of life render such relief specially desirable, and even necessary. Works of imagination may in some degree accomplish all this. But it is undeniably true that they very frequently fall far below even the humblest of these ends; that, instead of refin-

ing, they deprave the taste, that they enfeeble rather than strengthen the intellect, that they stimulate the very feelings which they should have sought to repress, and that the recreation which they profess to furnish frequently degenerates into the worst forms of intellectual dissipation.

Our magazines are largely to blame for the multiplication of this species of literary trash. It seems now to be thought essential to the success of any periodical that it should have two or three serial tales regularly going on in its pages, and that it should secure the services of some writers whose names have secured a certain notoriety, and who often continue in this way to palm very inferior wares upon the market. Under such circumstances, indeed, the authors neither do justice to themselves nor to their readers. They are compelled to produce a certain portion at regular intervals, and it is almost necessary that every portion should produce some sensation. Hence the spasmodic, feverish, exciting style in which the tales are written, often regardless alike of the dramatic unities and of all literary finish. How much even a powerful writer may degenerate under such influences may be seen from a tale which is at present appearing in the *Argosy*. Mr. Charles Reade is a man of undoubted genius, and some of his earlier works possessed considerable force, and helped in the advocacy of some important social truths. There was always a certain tinge of eccentricity about his writings, and too great a straining after effect; but stimulated by the necessity for keeping up a continual excitement, owing to the exigencies of a monthly publication, he has in *Griffith Gaunt* run perfectly wild. Every successive portion of the story has presented some new phase, each one more extravagant and improbable than its predecessor. The characters are overdrawn, and, with hardly an exception, extremely repulsive; the incidents are improbable, and the absurdity of the whole destroys the very interest it was intended to create. If an author possessed of so much talent can suffer himself to be thus carried away, it is not difficult to understand how impossible it must be for those of an inferior order to resist the obvious temptation to cultivate immediate and startling sensations, rather than to aim at high permanent reputation.

Chambers's Journal furnishes one of the most signal examples of the baneful effects of the course at present adopted by our periodicals. It was long one of our most sober, sensible, and instructive publications, not altogether free from tendencies which many deplored, but still, on the whole, conducted with great judgment and propriety. Its

lighter portions in particular were marked by considerable talent, and were admirably calculated to divert and refresh the mind. Unhappily in an evil hour it was induced to follow in the wake of its contemporaries by commencing the publication of serial tales, and recently it has been distinguished by the extremely sensational character of the novels that have appeared in its pages. Sensationalism is the crying literary vice of our times. It has invaded other departments of literature; even theology itself has not wholly escaped its influence, but it is in fiction that it has worked the greatest mischief. Quiet pictures of common every-day life, with their great struggles and practical lessons, are at a discount, and there is an incessant craving for excitement. However it may seem to be in harmony with the spirit of the times, it is undoubtedly only a temporary mania from which there is sure to be reaction, and perhaps very sudden and violent reaction; but for the present the current appears to be so strong that even writers of a higher stamp are carried away, and deface the beauty of their works by the introduction of some element of this kind. Mrs. Oliphant does her spiriting very gently, but even she does not altogether abjure the common practice, and her *Chronicles of Carlingford*, though depending for their effect upon very different qualities, have their sensational portions, which are rarely more out of keeping than in her pages. Whatever may be thought of the theological tone of *Salem Chapel* and the *Perpetual Curate*, it will not be denied that both would have been works of greater art if the episode of Mr. Vincent's sister in the one, and that of Rose Elsworthy in the latter, had been omitted. They contribute so little in either case to the highest interest of the tale, and might so easily be taken away without any material interference with the main plot, that they would almost appear to have been inserted in deference to the prevailing taste. George Eliot has been still less infected by this tendency, but even she has not wholly escaped. *Felix Holt*, one of the greatest and most remarkable books of the day, if not fatally blemished, is certainly robbed of a great deal of its excellence by her inability to resist the temptation of interweaving a mystery into a tale that, so far from needing such meretricious attraction, is unquestionably degraded by its presence. Apparently our authors have so little reliance upon the discernment and taste of the public to whom they appeal, that they feel as if they could not afford to tell a simple story in a simple style, and, whatever their skill in the delineation of character or the

illustration of principle, dare not rest for success upon these alone.

It would not require much space to demonstrate the inferiority of the sensational story in a literary light, but it is the moral tone of such books which is especially objectionable. Their chief material consists of great crimes—crimes the very mention of which ought to revolt the moral feeling of the reader, but which, when presented so frequently before the mind, and especially with such accessories and surroundings as are, for the most part, to be found in these stories, are tolerably sure to lose something of their native repulsiveness. We have before referred to this point in these pages, but the evil has become so flagrant that we feel it necessary to enter a new and even more emphatic protest. We do not for a moment mean to say that the authors who appear to think that a tale would not be complete unless it contained a bigamy, an elopement, and a murder, are all disposed to extenuate the moral guilt of these offences, or would advise their fair readers to imitate the examples of those extraordinary heroines whom they are so fond of depicting, the beautiful women of elegant figure and golden locks, whose fascinating exterior only hides a subtle brain and a pitiless heart, who play so prominent a part in many of our modern stories, especially those from female pens. But we do say that it is impossible to cultivate extensively this kind of acquaintance—to have the mind engaged and the feelings interested in the plots and machinations of these ruthless schemers, to be almost unconsciously drawn into the habit of regarding such crimes as being neither very exceptional nor very monstrous, —without having the moral nature degraded. It may be said, indeed, that crime, though doubtless made very interesting and piquant, is rarely represented as triumphant, but, on the contrary, as the fruitful source of endless difficulties and troubles to those by whom it is committed; and that these pictures, therefore, serve as beacons to warn the young and inexperienced. As much could be said of the *Newgate Calendar*, which might on these principles be regarded as a very beneficial and moral study. It is hardly, however, the book which Christian parents would like to see their sons and daughters devouring with an eager interest, hurried on from volume to volume in the excitement awakened by the adventures of the remarkable men whose career it relates. Still we hesitate not to say, it would be harmless as compared with many of the novels which find hosts of eager admirers.

Mrs. Henry Wood is one of the great offenders in this line.

After apparently hesitating for a time between the more sober and the more exciting class of works, and alternating one with the other almost in regular rotation, she appears now to have committed herself entirely to the sensational school. *Elster's Folly*, her last, is decidedly her worst, the least careful and elaborate in plot, the feeblest in style, and in many respects the lowest in moral tone. Yet she has in it a theme which, if wisely and thoughtfully treated, might have yielded great and valuable results. Elster, the hero, is a young man of considerable natural parts, with many noble impulses, with a heart that recoiled from deliberate baseness and crime, but yet so vacillating in purpose and so weak of will, so easily brought under the sway of any stronger nature with which he was thrown into contact, that he was continually led into follies so serious that in their ultimate consequences they became crimes. Such a character might in skilful hands have been employed to enforce lessons to which all would do well to give heed, lessons of sound practical wisdom and moral purpose; but, in order to this, it required delicate and skilful treatment, and Mrs. Wood's is very far from being this. The conduct of the hero, instead of revealing those nicer shades of character which might have been expected, is a compound in about equal proportions of idiotcy and wickedness. A man who is the real husband of one woman and the reputed husband of another, while he is at the same time in love with a third, having been married in ignorance to the first, and in simple weakness to the second, while secretly he was sighing over the folly that has separated him from the only one for whom he ever cared, must be either a fool or a monster, and in either case is little fitted to point a moral or adorn a tale. Sometimes we pity him for his feebleness; at other times we condemn him for that innate selfishness which is the root of his moral irresolution, and at all times we feel that his conduct is too remote from that of men in the possession of their ordinary reason to constitute even a salutary and impressive warning.

Mrs. Wood may as well dismiss from her mind the notion that any moral good can arise from such representations. Such works as *The Channings* and *Mrs. Halliburton's Troubles* may be comparatively tame; but they will secure for her more of the respect of all whose respect is worth having, than those feeble attempts to follow in Miss Braddon's wake, to which she has recently devoted herself. She must surely have met with men and women of a noble type who are neither knaves nor fools, but are possessed of a strength of

character, which under the guidance of right principles, is directed to the accomplishment of worthy ends. How is it that she does not introduce some of these? It would not be complimentary to herself to suppose that she is incapable of describing them, as it is not complimentary to her readers if she believes they have not the taste to appreciate and admire them. In common, however, with a good many other writers, she appears to think that the public relish nothing so much as pictures of thorough-paced villany, unscrupulous, pitiless, and crafty; and hence these form the staples of her story. It is true that this is not the type of character represented in the hero of *Elster's Folly*. He is bad, mainly owing to his weakness, and we feel continually that that weakness is put forth as a plea to awaken a certain degree of sympathy in his favour. It would seem, however, as though it were impossible to write a tale without some one to play a darker part of crime, and this is no exception. The real villain, however, here, as in most of these stories, especially if they are written by women, is a woman. The Dowager Countess, who is the moving spring of most of the intrigues, is about as detestable a piece of selfishness as we have ever had the misfortune to encounter. She is not an Aurora Floyd nor a Miss Gwilt; she has neither their cleverness, nor their daring; she does not venture on bigamy or murder, but contents herself with the lighter offences of forgery and falsehood; in some respects, however, she is more repulsive than these more audacious heroines. Let us add, too, that hers is a portrait which, if somewhat exaggerated in some points, has more numerous prototypes, and may teach a more necessary lesson. We should hope few of our fair friends have such strong predispositions to murder as to need the warning supplied by Miss Braddon or Mr. Wilkie Collins; but the intense all-absorbing selfishness which was developed, though in rather a monstrous style, in the old Countess, is much more frequent, and it may not be unprofitable to see how far it may lead those who still wear the mask of conventional virtue and shrink from great crimes. But in order to the proper effect of such a portraiture, there ought to have been a contrasted picture of beautiful unselfish good. The nearest approach to this is in the case of the Rector's Daughter; but the character lacks force and impression, and in fact only serves to prove, if it proves anything, that the authoress is most at home in the delineation of wickedness. It is not difficult to see the temptation to which she and others yield. Whatever art a writer may possess, it is hardly possible to create a sensation out of

goodness. The gently flowing stream of purity, benevolence, and truth, pursuing its quiet way, and scattering blessings wherever it comes, presents but few attractions to the artist, who finds something more likely to call forth his powers in the wild waves of the tempest wrought sea of fierce and selfish passion, continually revealing some new feature of interest in its ever-changing phases, grand and imposing in the very wreck and desolation which it works. There is, however, a craving in the mind for repose, and he who forgets to minister to it, will, sooner or later, find that he has made a grave mistake. Our sensation-writers ignore this at present, and by their neglect prove that they are not masters of their own craft. The grave, earnest, and reasonable objections of moralists and religionists, grounded on the tendency of their writings, as serving to familiarise the mind with the worst forms of sin, to weaken that instinctive feeling which is one of the safeguards of purity, they will probably treat with little attention. They write to amuse the light-hearted, not to please the maw-worm taste of the Pharisee, they will probably say. They might give more heed, perhaps, if they could be made to understand that they are losing even their power to interest, by detaining their readers for ever in the contemplation of unrelieved wickedness. The better class of minds turn away in quest of something more natural, more pure, and more refreshing; while those who drink most deeply into their spirit, feel that the appetite grows to that which it feeds upon, and craves for something more exciting than they, with the remnants of taste and self-restraint still belonging to them, are prepared to supply.

A book of much greater merit, in every respect, than *Elster's Folly*, is *Armadale*. Mr. Wilkie Collins has done more, perhaps, than almost any writer of the day to foster the taste for sensational stories. He is a pure story-teller, spending comparatively little care on anything but his plot; but in his own department he is unrivalled. There is no one who, with more consummate skill, can weave an exciting tale out of the most slight and unpromising materials, leading his reader on from point to point with ever-growing interest, concealing the mystery on which the whole depends till the proper time for disclosure comes, and, meanwhile, ever dangling it before the eye with an art that tantalises even while it stimulates the curiosity.

Mr. Collins is a clever, and for a time is sure to be a popular, writer; and the moral tone of his books is, therefore, the more to be lamented. In *No Name* he has employed all

his genius so to gild one of the greatest offences a man can commit against the laws of morality and the well-being of society, as to hide its real character and excite sympathy for that which should be visited with stern reprobation. The tale is very powerful; the poison is distilled so subtly that the evil is wrought almost before suspicion is awakened; the art with which the whole is managed is so complete, that the mind unconsciously drifts on into an acquiescence in a state of things, which, were it free from the glamour which the author throws over the mental vision, it would at once condemn. There is no other of Mr. Collins's later books which is open to such serious exception; but we hesitate not to say that the tendency of all of them is to relax rather than to brace the moral tone of the reader.

In *Armadale* we have a Miss Gwilt, a portrait drawn with masterly art, but one from which every rightly constituted mind turns with loathing. Is she, we ask, a type of any class to be found in society, or is she simply a horrible monstrosity? Are we to believe that there are women, holding respectable positions, received into honest and even Christian circles, who are carrying on a system of intrigue and wickedness which we have been accustomed to associate with the name of Italy, but which we fondly believed had no existence in this country? Apparently our novelists would have us receive this notion, so determined is the pertinacity with which they go on producing heroes and heroines of this style. Now it is a Count Fosco, now a Lady Audley, now a Miss Gwilt; and, however it may be said, that in these tales the Nemesis rarely fails to overtake the guilty, and that the retribution exacted is sometimes very terrible, it must still be felt that even this is insufficient to remove the impression produced by the continued reproduction of such characters. We go even further, and assert that the tendency of the multiplication of these tales is to create a class of such criminals, if they do not already exist. We can well believe that the writers themselves little calculate the extent of the evil they are helping to produce. They are pleased with present popularity and success; they find they have the power of amusing, and are satisfied to employ it, never pausing to look at the ulterior consequences they may produce in many minds. Not the less certainly, however, do they scatter impressions calculated to shake that mutual confidence by which societies and, above all, families are held together, to abate our love of simple unpretending virtue, in fact, almost to destroy our faith in its reality.

It is only due to the author of *Armadale* to say that he does not leave his readers shut up to contact with wickedness alone. *Armadale* does develop a great moral truth which cannot be too earnestly or too frequently enforced. It is so rare to find in these books any ethical lesson on which we can dwell with satisfaction, that it is the more incumbent on us to give this the mention it deserves. We think, indeed, it might have been developed in a wiser and healthier manner, that a Miss Gwilt was not necessary, even as a foil to Midwinter and Armadale, and perhaps that the familiarity with her evil is more likely to leave a lasting impression on those young and susceptible minds, which ought most carefully to be guarded from such influences, than the spectacle of the good by which it was ultimately overcome. Still, we must acknowledge the presence of this element, and the implied recognition of the power that, notwithstanding the many adverse forces with which it has to contend, secures the ultimate victory for the good.

It may be objected that in judging of these books by their moral and religious tendency, we are ascribing to them too much importance, and testing them by a standard to which they cannot be expected to conform. They are intended, it may be said, only for those lighter hours in which the mind feels the necessity of unbending itself, and if they serve the purposes of recreation, we have no right to complain that they do not accomplish some higher end for which they were never designed. But such reasoning loses sight of some of the most important facts of our mental history. Our opinions and views are not due to any one class of influences, but to an infinite variety of impressions which are continually being made upon us, as much in our seasons of relaxation as in those of more serious and earnest application. We have other teachers besides those whom we distinctly recognise in that capacity, and perhaps the unacknowledged ones are often the most powerful. Their ideas are insinuated, rather than formally inculcated, and they quietly mingle with our currents of thought without being challenged and examined, as are opinions more elaborately set forth. They come to us when we are off our guard, and they gain their place and position before we have begun fairly to discuss them. These books of relaxation are, therefore, just those which need to be most carefully watched. They are instructors as well as entertainers, informal teachers, indeed, but not therefore less influential, and we have a right to demand of them that they show what spirit they are of, so that if we cannot altogether

commend, and perhaps cannot altogether shut them out, we may at least provide some prophylactics and correctives. Besides, many, we might say most, of these writers, are in the habit of dealing, more or less, with moral and religious questions, and with the latter especially, in the most unfair, ungenerous, and mischievous style. They announce no definite opinions—probably having none to announce—and the general tendency is to create the idea that there is no special value attaching to creeds, and no great power residing in spiritual emotions. They ignore almost completely the action of religious principles and impulses, and when they refer to them at all it is for the most part to pour upon them ridicule and contempt.

It is this spirit which prompted a writer in the *Pall Mall Gazette* to occupy himself with an elaborate arithmetical computation of the number of sermons delivered every year, with the view of showing the immense waste of time, thought, and energy involved in the continuance of the present habit of preaching; this inspires the continual sneers in which the *Saturday Review*—never more keen and sarcastic than when dealing with ministers of the Gospel—indulges; and this leads certain quasi-philosophers, some of whom may be found even in the ranks of Christian Churches, to speak with hardly suppressed scorn of "popular preachers." We should not pause, even if we had space, to defend the pulpit against these assailants; and it is the less necessary because the very bitterness and pertinacity of the attacks may be fairly accepted as the most certain testimony to the power of the institution against which they are directed. If the pulpit were really the feeble and obsolete thing which it is represented, if preachers were generally either poor twaddlers or wretched deceivers, if the great majority of sermons were listened to with simple weariness and produced no result whatever; if, in short, the pulpit only continued to exist at all because of the difficulty of dislodging a superstition round which the hoar of a venerable antiquity has gathered, we should have few of these sarcasms. It is the power of the pulpit which constitutes its real offence. It is because, after all the clever caricatures and cruel calumnies directed against preachers, large numbers of men will persist in believing that they are not mere actors, and that the preaching of the Gospel is something essentially different from the performance of an opera, that the attack is renewed again and again. We would charitably hope that those by whom such charges are indited have never had the opportunity of becoming intimately acquainted with the men whom they

thus hold up to ridicule, so as to understand their real motives and characters. Ignorance, indeed, is but a poor excuse for those who might reasonably be expected to understand the things and people of whom they write, but it is a venial transgression as compared with the gross misrepresentation of which otherwise they must be convicted. Whether, however, it be to ignorance or malevolence that such portraits are due, the effect is alike injurious; and it surely would be well for Christians to consider how far it is right for them to allow their children to be exposed to influences so calculated to diminish the respect in which religious men and institutions ought ever to be cherished.

Mrs. Oliphant is a writer of a very different stamp from those already described, but she seems equally incapable of appreciating the motives and principles of spiritual life. She is anything but a sensational writer, although she has occasionally been tempted out of her own proper line into that which at present is more popular; but, as we have already said, her ventures in this direction have been invariably attended with ill-success. Her strength lies in representations of ordinary life, and she would do wisely if she confined herself entirely to them. Her works would gain immensely in coherence, consistency, and real force if everything in the spasmodic view were rigidly struck out of them. The "Thursday evenings" at Miss Majoribanks', the little parties, and even more, the *petits soupers* at Mrs. Tozer's, the conference between Mr. Wentworth's maiden aunt, the scenes at the Hall and Vicarage, occasioned by the Romish proclivities of the Rev. Guy Wentworth, the various talks among the gossips of Carlingford, are done with marvellous cleverness; and if there is a slight exaggeration, it is not more than might be safely predicated and ought to be readily condoned. Pre-Raphaelite artists are apt to paint the skies rather blue, and to give the grass a deeper green than it ever wears; and if Mrs. Oliphant has fallen into the same error, and makes vulgarity a little too snobbish, and inanity rather too empty and heartless, we must not be too severe in our critical condemnation of sketches which, taken as a whole, are wonderfully truthful and effective. The art with which she has thrown interest around Carlingford, a very common-place town with extremely common-place people, just the sort of people, in fact, that one might be sure of meeting in any third-rate provincial town into which he might be cast, is worthy of all praise. She has succeeded, by means of pure genius, in giving her readers an intimate knowledge of, and personal interest in, its little local celebrities. We

know the succession of its rectors and of its Dissenting ministers too; we feel as if, were we thrown into it, we could at once find our way into its aristocratic lane and its more vulgar business streets; we could point out the surgery of Dr. Majoribanks, or the shop of old Elsworthy, or the respectable mansion out of which the pretty Miss Woodhouse used to issue on her errands of mercy; we have before our mind's eye an exact picture of Salem Chapel, contrasting in the simplicity of its old barn-like architecture with the more ancient parish church and the more pretentious and ecclesiastical St. Roques. In thus digging into the almost unpenetrated strata of English middle-class life in a small country town, Mrs. Oliphant has discovered a vein of great richness which she has known how to work to the best advantage. To a less minute observer and less practised artist the opening would not have been of the slightest value, for in his hands the portraits would have been too dull and common-place, and the incidents too monstrous and wearisome, to have been at all attractive. But our authoress knows how to discriminate between even the minutest shades of difference, and to reproduce them with astonishing reality. Her pictures have all the correctness of photographs, and if they are not wholly free from their hardness, are so carefully finished that they have a good deal of beauty.

It is impossible, however, for Mrs. Oliphant to depict that of which she has no accurate knowledge herself, and hence her representations of religious men and their doings, and still more their motives, are singularly superficial and unsatisfactory. We have no idea that she intends to be unfair. She has doubtless her own preferences, liking (if we are able to judge at all) the Churchman better than the Dissenter, and the High Churchman better than his Evangelical brother; the reason for her feeling being the same in both cases, the superior respectability and moderation of her favourite over his rival. Still we do not believe she would knowingly allow herself to be unfairly influenced. She seems to have "got up" religious parties and their distinctions much as a novelist intending to write a romance of the Middle Ages "gets up" the costumes, manners, and general characteristics of the period. She has the sense to perceive that among the middle classes of a country town the affairs of their religious communities occupy too prominent a place to be left altogether without notice, and she has therefore sought to learn something about them. But her knowledge is, at best, extremely superficial. No one has painted so many different varieties of ministers, and it

cannot be denied that they present certain general resemblances to the classes they are severally intended to typify, but this is all. Of the real ground of the deep-rooted distinctions between them, of the influences that have united to mould them and make them what they are, of the impulses by which they are chiefly moved and the aims which they seek, she has but a very imperfect conception. If we understand her at all, she is rather disposed to regard these sectarian differences as "Much Ado about Nothing,"—more the result of temperament, or education, or social position, than real conviction. The Tozers are vulgar, fond of patronising their minister, democratic and levelling, from a consciousness of their own social inferiority, yet puffed up with a sense of their own importance, and therefore Dissenters. The Wentworths are refined, cultured, aristocratic in tastes and tendencies; hence they delight in crosses, wax tapers, and all the paraphernalia of modern High Churchism. Of the strong convictions that underlie and regulate the outward peculiarities of both, she takes no more account than if they had no existence at all. Hence her Tuftons and Vincents, her Burys, Beverleys, and Wentworths, though very clever sketches, really contribute very little to a knowledge of the ecclesiastical parties and clerical teachers of the time. Her portraits are nowhere ill-natured, but the general impression left is certainly not a favourable one to religious men; on the contrary, the tendency is to give the idea that Christian ministers are a very weak class, sadly wanting in manliness and, if the truth must be told, in ordinary good sense, miserably deficient in the qualities which would fit them to be guides and instructors of others. Mrs. Oliphant would probably say that she pays its deserved tribute to religious earnestness with whatever party it may be found, that she respects even the scruples of the Romanising vicar of Wentworth, that she does justice to the glowing eloquence and youthful enthusiasm of Mr. Vincent, that she recognises the honest and self-denying work done by the devotees of St. Roques, and that her great aim has been to inculcate a spirit of wider toleration by leading each party to see something of its own deficiencies and of the excellences of its opponents. All this is good enough, but unhappily the tendency is to produce a feeling of general indifference to anything beyond the maintenance of that external religious decorum which respectable society holds to be essential, a kind of spiritual dilettantism fatal to faith, love, and earnestness.

"Miss Majoribanks" is occupied mainly with more secular

matters. The heroine is a clever woman, who seeks to make herself a position as the leader of the fashions at Carlingford, and the story is filled up with accounts of her little devices to conciliate general support to rivalries she awakened, the difficulties against which she had to struggle, and the tact with which she was able to overcome them. If it were necessary to have a fresh illustration of the petty troubles and equally petty joys of the world, if we wanted a new sermon on the old texts, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity," "The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them;" if we sought fresh corroboration of the truth that "he who liveth in pleasure is dead while he liveth," we might certainly find all this here. The pictures of a society which is "thoroughly of the earth, earthy," are striking and, if saddening, instructive in the highest sense. The utter emptiness and hollowness of a life which owns no high principle and leads on to no enduring end, which is unwilling to find place even for the influences of a pure and honest affection lest it should interfere with the designs of a small ambition, is here exposed with great art and power. "Miss Majoribanks" has no vices, and is free even from the government of strong passions; she is elegant, accomplished, lady-like, and in every way fitted to shine in the gay circles of fashion; she has that success which a desire to please and the untiring exercise of the art of pleasing is tolerably certain to secure, yet there is nothing to tempt any one to follow in her course. The tale would have been eminently useful if it had pointed out some more excellent way. As it is, the effect is depressing. Politics, business, science, social life, religion itself, appear to be only so many toys with which different classes occupy themselves for a time, but none of which yield any very high or satisfactory results. The clergyman of the story is Archdeacon Beverley, and he certainly fails to impress us with the idea that he has any nobler object or is inspired by any grander motives than the poor groundlings with whom he is associated. He is more precise and formal, more pompous, more inclined to stand upon his dignity, but hardly more attractive or more estimable than his companions. He is a "Broad" Churchman, a school on which Mrs. Oliphant has not touched before, and which, so far as giving any light as to its principles or peculiarities is concerned, she might just as well have left untouched now. In fact, we should doubt whether she has herself formed any very clear idea of the position which it actually holds. If we were to take our impressions from this work, we should define a Broad Churchman as one who believes every-

thing in general and nothing in particular, and whose rule of life is of a very liberal and accommodating kind, and who has a particular mode of speaking and acting—"his own Broad Church way"—though what that may be we are left to conjecture, for hardly a hint is given on the subject. The description of this worthy dignitary, who hoped to become a bishop if Carlingford should be made into a bishopric, is not very minute, and, so far as it goes, not very flattering to the party to which he belonged. The Broad Church way appears to have very much to do with the outward deportment, for in one place we are told "he fixed his eyes on the ground and entered, meditatively, without looking where he was going, in his own Broad Church way;" and on another occasion, when the unfortunate man had occasion to "wipe the moisture from his forehead," we are told that Miss Majoribanks "remarked at the moment that he had a Low Church look which she would not have expected from him;" nay, it seemed to be questionable whether such a fearful thing as wiping the forehead did not go beyond the follies of the Low Church, for it is added, "it was a very Low Church, not to say Dissentish, sort of thing to do." This certainly is a new badge of distinction for ecclesiastical parties. Mrs. Oliphant would not write such nonsense if she was dealing with the subject with which she was thoroughly conversant. Her ideas of the Broad Church, however, are of the most hazy, as will appear from the more detailed sketch of the Archdeacon:

"For there could be no doubt that he was Broad Church, even though his antecedents had not proclaimed the fact. He had a way of talking on many subjects which alarmed his hostess. It was not that there was anything objectionable in what he said—for, to be sure, a clergyman and archdeacon may say a great many things that ordinary people would not like to venture on—but still it was impossible to say what it might lead to; for it is not everybody who knows when to stop, as Mr. Beverley in his position might be expected to do. It was the custom of good society in Carlingford, to give a respectful assent, for example, to Mr. Bury's extreme Low Churchism—as if it were profane, as it certainly was not respectable, to differ from the Rector—and to give him as wide a field as possible for his missionary operations by keeping out of the way. But Mr. Beverley had not the least regard for respectability, nor that respect for religion which consists in keeping as clear of it as possible; and the way in which he spoke of Mr. Bury's view wounded some people's feelings. Altogether he was, as Mrs. Chiley said, an anxious person to have in the house; for he just as often agreed with the gentlemen in their loose ways of thinking, as with the more correct opinions by which the wives and mothers, who had charge of their morality, strove hard to keep them in the right way; and that

was the reverse of what one naturally expected from a clergyman. He was very nice, and had a nice position; and, under all the circumstances, it was not only a duty to pay attention to him, but a duty from which results of a most agreeable character might spring; but still, though she could not be otherwise than kind, it would be impossible to say that it was out of personal predilection that Mrs. Chiley devoted herself to her guest. She admitted frankly that he was not like clergymen were in her time. For one thing, he seemed to think that every silly boy and girl ought to have an opinion and be consulted, as if they had anything to do with it—which was just the way to turn their heads and make them utterly insupportable."

We need not say that we are not champions of the Broad Church principles; but it is unfair to write of any religious party after this fashion. It is not thus that George Eliot deals with subjects of this character. Of the general merits of *Felix Holt*, her last book, it is not our purpose here to speak at length; but we are bound to commend the care with which she has sought to understand the exact points of difference between the various religious parties to whom she refers, and the accuracy with which she describes them, and let us say, too, the sincere respect which she shows to true goodness wherever she finds it. Churchmen, Independents, General Baptists, are all introduced in the course of the present story, and none of them have reason to complain that they are treated with intentional injustice. There are some capital hits which, though they are too pungent to be altogether relished at first, contain an amount of truth which it would not be wise to ignore, especially considering that it is not spoken in an unkindly spirit. Here is an excellent little bit, and it is the only one which we have space to introduce. "That is Lyddy's fault, who sits crying over her want of Christian assurance, instead of brushing your clothes and putting out your clean cravat. She is always saying her righteousness is filthy rags, and really I don't think that is a very strong expression for it. I'm sure it is dusty clothes and furniture." We are never the worse for being reminded of the importance of practical religion. The only danger is, lest in the protest against a faith without works, there should be an attempt to have works without faith, and, looked at from our point of view, this is the great defect of *Felix Holt*. Goodness, and goodness of a very high pattern, too, is described and commended; but though we find it most conspicuous in some religious men, we do not feel that it is the necessary outcome and natural result of their deep religious convictions. On the contrary, we can hardly help receiving

the free impression that their religion is regarded rather as an evidence of weakness than as the source of all their strength. Thus Rufus Lyon, the Independent minister, is a perfectly unique and striking portrait, as unlike the Chadbands and Stiggins of Mr. Dickens or the Vincents of Mrs. Oliphant as a portrait by Sir J. W. Gordon is unlike the wretched daub we sometimes see on the walls of a millionaire, whose taste has not kept pace with the advance in his material wealth. His self-denying zeal, his passionate love for learning, his thorough consecration to his work, his singular simplicity of spirit and life, are very beautiful and are admirably drawn. Independents ought to be thankful to so accomplished a writer for the pains she has taken in depicting one of the class of men to whom they owe so much, and may reasonably profit by the kindly hints she gives as to their mode of treating such earnest workers. At the same time they will feel that there is a defect in the representation. The intense sincerity, depth, and beauty of Mr. Lyon's piety is fully recognised; but still we can hardly help feeling that the writer looks upon it as rather overstrained, as something which is quite as much fitted to excite our compassion as our respect, and the idea is strengthened by the mode in which *Felix Holt* deals with religious questions. In short, we must not conceal from ourselves the fact that, even with novelists most disposed to treat Christians and their work fairly, there is, for the most part, a deep-seated dislike of what they regard as mere dogma. They would have holy lives, and they do not see the connection between them and a pure Scriptural creed, and the error is so popular and so ensnaring that there is the greater need the more earnestly to warn the young against its delusions. It may be that, in some sections of the Church especially, the neglect of the ethical side of Christianity has induced a feeling of antagonism to that dogmatic truth which has been presented, not too decidedly and too earnestly, but too exclusively, and without a sufficient regard to its practical issues. Christian teachers will do well to profit so far by their observation of this as to give their exhibitions of the truth a greater completeness, and while resolutely holding fast by the doctrines they have received, to insist that the most convincing evidence of the Divinity of the doctrine is to be found in the beauty and holiness of the lives they fashion.

Felix Holt contributes some excellent additions to George Eliot's gallery of characters. Mrs. Holt, with her extraordinary ideas about Scripture and its interpretation, and her singular faculty of discovering some text to suit the purpose

of the moment, talks almost as amusingly, if not quite as profoundly, as the illustrious Mrs. Poyser. "I was born," she tells the unfortunate minister who had listened to her interminable talk, "in the General Baptist conviction, and as for being saved without works, there's many, I dare say, can't do without that doctrine; but, I thank the Lord, I never needed to put myself on a level with the thief on the cross. I've done my duty, and more, if anybody comes to that; for I have gone without my bit of meat to make broth for a sick neighbour, and if any of the church members say they have done the same, I'd ask them if they had the sinking at the stomach as I have." Equally good in her own way is Lyddy, the sharp, shrewd, somewhat satirical, but thoroughly good Lyddy, Mr. Holt's devoted servant. Parson Jack, with his *bonhomie*, his absolute devotion to his family, and his equally complete indifference to principles, is one of the cleverest portraits of the book. It is but fair to remember, however, that the writer lays her scene more than thirty years ago, and that both clergymen and Dissenting ministers are widely different from what they were at that time. Parson Jack has few counterparts left, and there are fewer of the Debarry class than was the case in the last generation. As a picture of the times immediately succeeding the Reform Bill, the book is remarkably faithful and instructive. Its greatest blot is the introduction of Mr. Transome's strange, repulsive, and, in our judgment, most improbable story.

A story from the pen of a clergyman of high repute, like the Rev. Charles Kingsley, and especially an historical tale, from the Regius Professor of Modern History, at Cambridge, might fairly be expected to be distinguished from the common ruck of the novels of the season, alike in artistic excellence and in Christian tone. We regret to say that so reasonable an expectation is certainly not fulfilled in the case of *Hereward the Wake*. As a story, it is dull and wearisome in the extreme; as a lesson on life, it is essentially defective and mischievous. There are, undoubtedly, materials sufficient for the construction of an interesting historical romance out of the records of that period of transition and disorder which followed the Norman Conquest, and there were heroic deeds done in resistance to the invader's power worthy of the artist's utmost skill; but Mr. Kingsley has sacrificed all such advantages in his desire to depict the achievements of a rude savage, and exalt him into a hero. Mr. Kingsley writes in his "own Broad Church way," as Mrs. Oliphant has it. He is a muscular Christian, and of course the heroes whom he

loves to honour belong to the same illustrious school; but, unfortunately, each new creation exhibits degeneracy. There was something very touching about Amyas Leigh; and Tom Thurnall, if less attractive and with faults less to be excused, considering the times in which he lived, had still a noble and generous nature; but we are at a loss to see what to admire in Hereward, except mere physical courage and daring. He was a coarse drunkard, who sullied the glories of his victories by his revellings and excess; he was a cold-blooded sensualist, who abandoned a noble-minded and long-suffering wife, who had sacrified her all, country, friends, treasure, personal comfort, and imperilled her very life for him; he was a recreant even to the country which he professed to serve; yet this is the man, forsooth, whom Mr. Kingsley is permitted in the pages of a periodical, edited by one so honoured as Dr. Norman Macleod, to hold up to the admiration of the young men and maidens of England.

From first to last the tale is a glorification of simple brute force, unrelieved by any high genius, and undirected to any grand patriotic object. And this, we suppose, is muscular Christianity! Let us say at once that we are not insensible to the importance of some points of his teaching. We have no sympathy with the namby-pambyism and sentimental dreaming, both in religion and politics, against which Mr. Kingsley has always so earnestly protested. We believe that an ascetic contempt for the body is as un-Christian as it is unphilosophical, and that an attention to physical law, and to the cultivation of that health and vigour which may render us capable of rendering good service to God and man, is essential to the completeness of our religion. But we do not, therefore, conclude that great strength and prowess, capability of endurance or gymnastic skill, are necessarily religious, or that athlete and Christian are convertible terms. We do not believe that in the present condition of our humanity, the world is ever to be governed on any rose water theory; and, unfortunately, we do not see any signs of the dawn of that era of universal peace and charity, whose advent some sanguine prophets were a few years ago so fond of predicting. But, on the other hand, we cannot regard war as anything but a terrible calamity; nor can we exult in deeds of sanguinary violence, often as purposeless as they were cruel. Mr. Kingsley's teachings were, undoubtedly, a reaction from an opposite extreme, and to a certain extent commanded our sympathy; but the vehemence of his own feelings, unrestrained by those correcting influences which we might have

supposed, would have exercised great sway over him, have carried him to lengths from which we should have hoped that, as a man of taste and refinement, not to say as a minister of the Gospel of Peace, he would have recoiled. Some of the chapters in the present tale would have been admirably suited to the columns of journals which chronicle with a special gusto every detail of those horrible prize fights, the interest in which these apostles of muscular Christianity have done much to revive, but are singularly out of keeping with the professed aim and established reputation of *Good Words*. We have only to compare this extraordinary rhapsody with some of the tales that have appeared in the same journal, with, for example, the editor's own less elaborate but equally manly and far more healthful story of the *Old Lieutenant*, with Mrs. Craik's *Mistress and Maid*, or with Alexander Smith's novelette in the same volume, to be made thoroughly conscious of the intellectual, as well as moral, inferiority of this *Hereward*. If, indeed, it had had to trust to its own intrinsic literary merits, the book would have fallen still-born from the press, and even now, with all the prestige derived from Mr. Kingsley's great name, we doubt whether it will find many readers. The legends and traditions about white bears, Cornish giants, the mare Swallow, the magic armour, the sword Brainbiter, and all the rest of it are not particularly entertaining, and the idea of their being light reading must be regarded by most novel readers as a very sorry joke.

Mr. Kingsley would, probably, tell us that he never intended to represent Hereward as the type of a Christian hero; that, on the contrary, he distinctly points out how much of the old savage and heathen element there was in his character; that he is described as having "never felt the influence of that classic civilisation, without which good manners seem, even to this day, almost beyond the reach of the white man," and still more as "godless, sceptical of Providence itself," and withal strongly tainted by a dark superstition. Still, he is throughout the hero of the story, towering with all his vices above his compeers as the noble English champion. His brutal deeds are recorded without shuddering, if not even with a sort of grim satisfaction, and the impression is certainly conveyed, that though his coarseness, and drunkenness, and, above all, his disloyalty to his wife, were deserving of keenest censure and punishment, yet his feats of daring, accompanied though they were often by barbarous cruelties, were so worthy of admiration, that if his great offences were not to be condoned, yet they were to be treated with leniency because of

his dauntless courage, his marvellous prowess, and his love of English liberty. The feeling with which the author regards him is to be judged from the concluding passage relative to this fierce, ungoverned, sensual hero. "They knew not that Hereward was alive for evermore, that only his husk and shell lay mouldering there in Crowland choir, that above them and around them, and in them, destined to raise them out of that bitter bondage, and mould them into a great nation, and the parents of still greater nations in lands as yet unknown, brooded the immortal spirit of Hereward, now purged from all earthly dross—even the spirit of freedom, which can never die." What may be the exact meaning of this wild rhapsody we do not profess to determine; for we are certainly at a loss to find any interpretation by which it can be reconciled either with Christianity or common sense. It appears to us a poor parody on the song of the American War—

> "John Brown is dead,
> But John Brown's spirit is marching on."

But in this there was some sense, for John Brown, by teaching and example, had kindled a spirit of enthusiasm and reverence for the rights of humanity, of resolution to break the chains of the slave, and overturn the power of the oppressor, which directly led to the election of Abraham Lincoln. But what is the spirit spoken of by Mr. Kingsley, which in one clause appears to be the "immortal spirit" of Hereward himself, "purged from all earthly dross" (where, how, and when we are left to conjecture), and in the next the spirit of freedom. In either case we equally object to the implication contained in the passage, in the one on theological and moral, in the other on historical, grounds. We should be sorry, indeed, to believe that the spirit of English freedom was incarnated in such a wild, lawless Berserk as Hereward, as we are certainly unprepared to endorse the theology which teaches that such a life as his was followed by an immortality of blessedness. But, perhaps, we are going too far when we attempt to extract any serious or rational meaning from such a piece of idle rodomontade and bombast.

On one point, however, we are bound to be clear. Such teaching may be very attractive to a certain class of young men; its high-sounding words about virtue and purity, and self-restraint, and fearless courage in vindication of the right, may deceive the unwary, but Christian teaching it is not. It insists upon one class of virtues to the depreciation

and neglect of others quite as necessary, and it ministers to the growth of a spirit in decided antagonism to a Gospel whose highest blessings are reserved for the meek, the merciful, the peacemakers—its tendency is to justify the strong in their aggressions upon the rights and privileges of the weak. Its only logical outcome, however Mr. Kingsley may fail to perceive it, is to establish the most devilish of all maxims, that "might is right;" from first to last it fosters that "pride of life" which is "not of the Father, but is of the world."

Broad Churchism has found another and more formal exponent in the anonymous author of *Beyond the Church*, who has undertaken to satirise the different parties within the Established Church, in order to justify the course of one who ultimately breaks loose from all his moorings and drifts away into a state of religious independence, which abjures all dogma and renounces fellowship with every sect, but still seeks to maintain a life of consistent practical godliness. The novel is one which deserves careful attention, as a very significant specimen of the kind of thoughts and feelings at present fermenting in the breasts of many young men. As a story, it is not particularly clever. Indeed, the plot is not the essential part of the book, being constructed manifestly for the sole purpose of introducing certain characters necessary to the working out of the ulterior idea the writer has in view. There is a great deal of smartness, to say the least, in the hits at some of the Church parties, and in the sketches of University life a vividness, truthfulness, and power which must produce impression. But it is in its keen and cutting sarcasms on the inconsistencies that mark respectable religionists, in its portraitures of clerical character, in its bold and daring comments on Christian dogma, that the power of the book consists. Before he became a free-thinker, the hero, a young Oxonian destined for the Church, had been a free-liver; but when the deepening earnestness of his character led him to examine the foundations of the faith, and, as the result, to doubt as to the rightfulness of subscription, he soon found that his father, a rector of the old port-wine and fox-hunting schools, would not treat these vagaries of opinion with the same tolerance which he had previously extended to his breaches of the moral law. With caustic and not altogether undeserved bitterness, therefore, he complains at a time when his refusal to take orders had clouded all his earthly prospects, led to his expulsion from his father's house, and exposed him to uni-

versal obloquy,—"I find that while I was a mere heathen and cared nothing about religion, no one was shocked, or said a word; since I have begun to try, and think, and act aright, all my friends reproach me." There is also considerable justice in the description of the way in which the clergy deal with the formularies to which subscription is required. "He found that each guest read and interpreted the *carte* differently; then generally each selected his own favourite, or if he could not find it, called some other by that name, and then vowed *it was* in the *carte*. He found that many never looked at the bill of fare, but ate at random —that some said all dishes were to be found at the Church's banquet, if you only know where to look; others that many viands were actually noxious and indigestible, and ought to be expurgated. So the end was frequent disputes and quarrels, and the unhappy *carte* being flung at the head of some guest." No doubt the author here hits the weakest point of the Anglican Church; but if he wanted to reconcile men to the existing state of things, he could hardly have done it more effectually than by conducting his hero into a state of mere negation in reference to all distinctive beliefs.

The book abounds in sketches of the clergy of different classes, professedly taken from real life, and giving us, if we are to accept them all as genuine, a considerable insight into the penetralia of Anglicanism. But such artists are apt to overdo their work, and it is so here. The fiercest enemy of the Church of England will hardly believe that the Rector of Easimore, who had as much religion as a Zulu and as much feeling as a stone, is really a sample of a large class; or that the generation to which he belonged has only disappeared to make way for another of whom the Rev. Cyril Ponsonby is a fitting representative. The sketch of Marbecke is clever enough, and is, we fear, only too truthful an exposure of the spirit that animates too many wielding considerable influence at Oxford. The whole tone of the book, however, is irreligious; and the episode of Mr. Harcourt, if not absolutely immoral, decidedly low in tone and loose in principle. Fordyce loses all faith in the Christian system properly so called; he becomes a zealous devotee of science, and an earnest worker for the social and sanitary improvement of the poor; for, "most important of all, he perceived how that a man, desirous of benefiting the lower orders, must commence by improving their social and sanitary condition before preaching heavenly truths to their minds, and that science must be the pioneer

of Christianity." And this is the point to which the cold indifference of one class of the clergy, the Romanising puerilities of another, and the loose, illogical, often un-Christian, if not positively anti-Christian liberalism of a third, are driving a large number of thoughtful young men. We like neither the spirit nor the teaching of the book; we are not captivated by its smart cleverness, but we accept it as an exhibition of the operation of some of the mighty influences which are at present hindering the progress of evangelical truth among us, and a reminder of the responsibility resting on all who desire earnestly to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. And this, perhaps, is one of the main uses of such books in general. They are a kind of barometers, whose indications we must study with thoughtfulness and care, if we would know what currents of feeling are stirring the popular mind, and be prepared to meet them with wisdom and effect.

ART. V.—*La Guerre et la Crise Européenne.* Par MICHEL CHEVALIER. Paris: Garnier Frères, 6, Rue des Saints-Pères. 1866.

IT is hardly possible to exaggerate the importance of the events which are about to create a new Germany, to change the face of Europe, and to go farther towards the establishment of a real balance of power among the leading nations of the Old World than anything that has happened in modern history.

It has been observed with truth that wars in Asia are sometimes productive of great changes in a short space of time, while those of Europe have been generally long and yet comparatively barren of results. This is owing to the strong individuality and vitality of the races of Europe, and their consequent power to resist conquest and assimilation by strangers. We have now, however, reached a crisis in which considerable changes in the political geography of Europe also have been effected by short though bloody struggles. Coinciding as those changes do with ethnographical and, to a certain extent, with religious demarcations, they are apparently destined to be permanent, for the same reason that caused them to be so speedily brought about; instead of being so many laborious efforts against their nature, they have been wrought in the direction pointed out by the natural aspirations of the peoples concerned. The short Italian campaign of 1859, awakening Italy from the sleep of ages and giving her political existence, has had more effect upon the map of Europe for the future than all the wars of Napoleon I. The few days' shock between the armies of Protestant Prussia and Catholic Austria upon the upper waters of the Elbe has not indeed given Germany its definitive shape, but has set that shape within sight and reach, making its attainment, humanly speaking, certain. The incalculable sufferings of the Thirty Years' War secured an all-important yet barely negative end—they saved German Protestantism from threatened extermination; the seas of blood shed during the wars of the first French empire were the price of Europe's triumphant reaction against the ambition of Napoleon, but the campaign of 1866 has determined the supremacy of Protestantism in Germany,

and it has interposed an effectual obstacle to attempts at universal empire by any future rulers of France. Thus the treaties which are being negotiated while we write, and will, we hope, be satisfactorily concluded before these pages meet the reader's eye, will be distinguished by results complementary of those concerned in the treaties of Westphalia and Vienna, but positive and far more decisive.

To speak thus is to confess that we are among those who can look upon the weakening of the house of Hapsburg with equanimity, and we do so without any qualms of conscience. Our past alliances with Austria were dictated by expediency on both sides. It was our common interest that she should serve as a check upon the ambition of both France and Russia, and she was under tacit obligation to that effect towards us and towards all central Europe. So far as Russia was concerned, she proved unfaithful to the compact; in all other respects she was overpaid for her services, and she has used her power and her opportunities in a way with which no friends of liberty and Protestantism should sympathise.

The readiness with which the British Government, press, and people have acquiesced in the humiliation of an old ally, has been much criticised in France and in some other countries. It has been called a mean and ungenerous homage to mere success; we have been converted by the needle-gun, forsooth; what was wrong yesterday becomes right in our eyes to-day when we perceive in it any advantage for ourselves, and we waste no time in weeping over the vanquished. To all this we can reply that the advantages we see in the new state of things concern the general interests of Europe, and not those of England exclusively, and that the recognition of the beneficial tendency of the events in question involves no judgment as to the merits or demerits of the principal actors.

We cannot profess any very cordial admiration of either William I. or his prime minister. His Majesty remains as before, an arbitrary, narrow-minded, obstinate, old soldier, with the best intentions, but without the least idea of the meaning and conditions of constitutional government. The Count de Bismarck has, so far, gained by the revelations of this summer, that he no longer appears to have trifled with his countrymen's right to self-government merely for the sake of revelling in his absolutism. His internal policy, arbitrary and illegal as it must still be pronounced, was a means towards the accomplishment of a purpose which he was obliged to conceal; his foreign policy, vexatious and arrogant

as it was, came from the determination to put his country in a position which he knew that she was able to occupy, but from which she was debarred by existing arrangements. We will even go so far as to say that in political matters, within certain limits, might does constitute right; that is to say, what is wrong in the abstract, never can become right; but these are steps only to be blamed when undertaken precipitately by those who have not vigour enough to carry them out, and the indignation we feel at an apparently useless perturbation of the peace of Europe may be legitimately changed into satisfaction when some strong hand has averted evils greater than those it inflicted, and has set the public order of Christendom upon a more solid foundation. Notwithstanding these extenuating circumstances, however, we shrink from contemplating the responsibilities involved in the originating of war upon such a scale as that we have just witnessed without absolute and pressing necessity, and we feel that there are stains on the Count de Bismarck's proceedings which can be effaced by no utilitarian considerations. In 1848 he pronounced the attack of the Germans upon the Danes in Schleswig Holstein to be in the highest degree unjust and frivolous, *Ein höchst ungerechtes frivoles und verderbliches Unternehmen*. Fifteen years later he renewed it himself—renewed it ostensibly in support of the claims of the confederation, and then, when Denmark had succumbed, he shifted his ground, and rested the usurpation of the Duchies by Prussia and Austria on the incontrovertible rights of the King of Denmark, which had now been transferred by his formal cession to the conquerors. The same sort of unscrupulous dexterity was exhibited in his method of fastening a quarrel upon Austria, and of preparing for aggression, while professedly arming only in self-defence. He dragooned at home and violated the rights of the Prussian people, that he might play the successful sharper abroad. The liberal party among his countrymen may give him the bill of indemnity that he asks for; but it is a bad precedent at the beginning of their constitutional history that a minister should be allowed to govern for years in a manner confessedly illegal, for secret reasons, and with a view to possible future advantages. The results may reconcile England to such conduct in a foreign statesman; but most assuredly we would not allow it to be tried upon ourselves.

It must be added that the conflicts and the changes of the present crisis were inevitable; they must have occurred sooner or later. M. Chevalier, writing on the eve of the explosion

and strongly deprecating it, complains that Europe was like a ship drifting into the horrors and financial ruin of war without any real necessity. Like Napoleon III. he thought a congress could settle everything. Since the work of the Congress of Vienna was gradually going to pieces, European order, he says, rested on no solid foundation, it was at the mercy of incidents, or intrigues, or acts of successful violence. "The larger States are obliged to be constantly on the alert; the smaller are condemned to tremble incessantly; their sovereigns, when they go to bed at night, are not sure of finding their crowns upon their heads when they awake." To this uneasy sense of general instability and of undefined dangers, he rightly attributes the state of armed peace—that prodigious waste of resources, and of the years of millions of men in the flower of life who might otherwise have been employed in reproductive labours—a state which ties chain-shot to the foot of every country in Europe, a dead weight upon all moral and material progress. Neither M. Chevalier nor his master, however, perceives that what the nations of the Continent require is the satisfaction of their legitimate aspirations; each nation wishes to be itself, and to be free; it is impatient of absolutism in a native government, and of every foreign government, even the mildest. If new treaties could have satisfied these two aspirations without war, they would have been received as a boon; if not, the whole world would have laughed our diplomatists and their work to scorn, and the state of instability would have been aggravated. Treaties, like other bargains, are only good when men gain by them.

Leaving the question of liberty in abeyance for a moment, there were until 1859 four countries in Europe, the populations of which felt themselves hindered in different degrees from becoming themselves, *i.e.*, realising a national life, and constituting themselves as political unities capable of asserting it. The Christian populations of European Turkey groaned under the sway of a handful of strangers; Poland agonised under the crushing weight of Russia. We can speak of neither here. Italy and Germany had less to complain of, Germany least of all, but the rank occupied by its people among the foremost of the earth disposed them and entitled them to feel peculiarly impatient of a political state out of keeping with their intellectual and general development and paralysing their strength.

France, England, Spain have long since emerged from the chaos of the middle ages as consolidated empires; the several provinces or petty kingdoms that once possessed a

partial or a total independence having melted into one. At a somewhat later period all the Russias underwent the same process. Italy and Germany, on the other hand, remained broken up into separate sovereignties. Both countries suffered thereby the consequence of their own inordinate pretensions. The Pope and the Holy Roman Emperor claimed to rule the world between them. Their perpetual antagonism, variously combined with the intervention of other powers, hindered Italy in the first instance from attaining to national unity: Italy was punished for her usurpation of a false spiritual supremacy by becoming the prey of all the neighbouring nations. The Popes were just strong enough or dexterous enough to prevent other potentates from consolidating the Peninsula into one state, and they never succeeded in accomplishing the task themselves. Germany in its turn was punished for its violences and injustices towards Italy by remaining itself also disunited. Every emperor who made expeditions south of the Alps, especially those of the house of Hohenstauffen, had to secure the fidelity of the great vassals by granting them guarantees of independence and practical sovereignty which his successors were unable to recall. Every Pope on bad terms with the reigning Cæsar raised up some new claimant to the Imperial dignity; and whichever of the rivals proved successful had to purchase the support of the princes, until, to borrow Voltaire's sarcasm, the Holy Roman Empire had the disadvantage of being neither holy nor Roman nor even an empire. The sceptre's becoming hereditary in the house of Hapsburg might have checked this tendency towards the dispersion of the national strength, but that it became so too late; the Reformation had intervened, and the difference of religious communions confirmed the isolation of the several populations. The Protestant States had to watch with jealousy over the means of professing their religion undisturbed, and their continued independence involved that of the Roman Catholic States.

For the last fifty years the only real obstacle to the emancipation of Italy was the iron arm of Austria; and, when Napoleon III. was provoked into breaking the rod of the oppressor, Italy started into life, unity, and liberty—to the astonishment of all men, to its own, and to that of the powerful neighbour who had intended to give Piedmont a province, but became the unintentional instrument of the liberation and reconstitution of a whole nation.

It was now the turn of the Germans to ask themselves

why they should be the last to attain the political unity which seems almost an elementary condition of national life? why the most intellectual people of Europe should be the only one remaining in the helplessness of feudal disorganisation, deprived of the power and influence to which it was entitled by its central position, its numerical strength, its wealth, energy, solid qualities, and high culture?

Here the obstacles to a satisfactory solution of the question were immense, and apparently insurmountable for the present. Of course, the most desirable method of communicating some capacity of motion and action to the unwieldy confederation would have been that of legal and peaceable reform by general consent—the assumption of real powers of self-government by the populations of the several States, and their association in a confederation so constituted, that, in a military and in a commercial point of view, in that of foreign policy, and that of general home interests, the federal relation should be predominant over all forms of sectional independence. The constitution of Switzerland is one of this order, and is found to work so well that it gives close practical unity to populations of different religious communions and speaking three languages. But then Switzerland is a confederation of Republics; its cantons, though unequal, are not so out of proportion with each other that anyone can ever be tempted to brave the rest of the confederation; moreover, it is under no necessity of having any foreign policy except that of keeping out of scrapes. If the power of Switzerland entitled it to the perilous honour of a seat in the council of European potentates, its two religions would soon make questions of foreign policy the occasions of fatal domestic strife.

No German State could be invested with the *hegemonia*, or executive power of the confederation, for that State would be thereby exalted to a real sovereignty over the others, and it would be too much to expect them to consent to this. If, indeed, an unquestioned predominance marked out some one State as the natural claimant of the *hegemonia*, then patriotism might lead the people of the minor States to mediatise their sovereigns and accept the leadership of that foremost member of the confederation. But Germany presented two great rival States with claims that balanced each other: Prussia being the most purely German of the two, and committed to no extra-German interests; Austria, on the other hand, apparently the most powerful, and clothed with the prestige of ancient imperial dignity. Neither

could be expected to yield to the other, and their rivalry was aggravated by difference of religion.

Again, were a really acting executive, instead of being selected from existing sovereigns, to be chosen by general election, as in Switzerland, Germany would have become practically a Republic, and for this, of course, its princes of all dimensions were equally indisposed. Nothing short of a complete, popular, and violent revolution could bring about such a transformation. The Germans were too wise to risk this dangerous and tremendous issue; and, even had they wished it, popular revolutions cannot be the work of conspirators dispersed over an immense surface. They require a focus of preliminary agitation, the signal must be given from some great centre recognised as such, and upon which all eyes are fastened; that is to say, the political unity wanting in Germany must already exist before a general revolution could be possible.

Reform and revolution being thus set aside, two other alternatives might be suggested—partition and conquest. At one time, during the year 1813, Stein and Hardenberg did actually bring Metternich to agree that the two powers should divide all Germany between them, taking the Mayne as their boundary. This would have simplified matters, but not exactly in the sense of German *unity*, and it is well that the project fell to the ground; it would have given the bigoted and despotic Hapsburgs immense power, and that so distributed as to facilitate its prolongation.

The only remaining solution of the difficulty was that by the sword—the complete weakening and humbling of Prussia, or else the defeat of Austria and its exclusion from the Confederation. But Austria seemed too powerful and Prussia too energetic for such a decisive result as either of these to become possible, and the interference of a neighbour strong enough, or complaisant enough, to help the German colossus to become master of its own formidable resources, was hardly to be looked for. In short, whichever way one turned, the issue seemed hopelessly blocked up. The old double-headed eagle was an emblem but too apt of the unwieldy organisation that was unable to put itself under the direction of a single and effective will. Ever muttering its "To be, or not to be," Germany seemed like a political Hamlet, a satire upon its own habits of thought, conducted to an endless oscillation between *seyn* and *nicht-seyn*. The not having a country of their own in the full sense of the word, and the being thus shut up to literary and scientific pre-

occupations exclusively, may have helped to train the Germans of the present century to their wonderful power of comprehending past and foreign states of mind; but many a proud patriot like Gervinus mourned over the price at which this flexibility and universality were bought.

Under such circumstances it has been indeed a singular dispensation of Providence, and a remarkable illustration of the truth that—voluntarily or involuntarily—men and nations are members one of another, that recently enfranchised Italy should have played such an important part in helping Germany out of the labyrinth in which it was lost. Her ill-commanded battalions and crews fought valiantly at Custozza and Lissa; Bixio and his soldiers have shown the world that the Italians are not a mere people of artists; but, without discussing the relative merits of the men or the arms in the Italian and Prussian armies, it is certain that if there had been peace on the Venetian frontier, Francis Joseph could have had 150,000 more soldiers in the army of the North, and at the battle of Sadowa half the number would have been enough to turn the scale in his favour. If Italy had not been under arms, watching her opportunity, the Count de Bismarck would never have undertaken the war; and, as it was, he only did so when her exhausted finances and waning credit seemed about to constrain Austria to reduce her forces to a peace establishment. Thus, it was only when a German power gave tardy and interested help to long-injured Italy, that the unity of Germany itself began to be constituted.

Venice has been to Austria for the last half-century what all Italy so long proved to Germany—its temptation, its victim, and its punishment. The armies of the French Republic first substituted a short-lived democracy for the old oligarchy that ruled over the Queen of the Adriatic. After that, by the preliminaries of Leoben, General Bonaparte took upon him to cede it to Austria as a compensation for Flanders, and the provinces on the left bank of the Rhine. The Directory did not dare to disavow the stipulations of the successful soldier, and confirmed them by the treaty of Campo Formio, without so much as consulting the French Assembly on the matter. Strange practical comment on the *Declaration of the rights of man*, and on all the principles which the French Revolutionists had been assisting! but the early zeal of the French for the Republic and for freedom had been already quenched in blood, and, if M. Quinet does not ante-date Napoleon's schemes of usurpation and conquest, the victorious

General was already taking his measures to prepare as wide an extent of territory as possible to become his own future spoil.

Were we to believe Napoleon's own statement made at St. Helena twenty years after the event, he handed Venice over to Austria "in order to strengthen the patriotism of the Venetians, to prepare their future emancipation, and make them ready by and bye to receive any kind of national government whatever!" Generally speaking, we have very little confidence in the liberalism so freely professed at Longwood; it is too suggestive of the repentance of the lamed and invalided fox in the fable. In the present case, at any rate, Napoleon must have reckoned very much upon the credulity of posterity when he gave utterance to such a barefaced piece of hypocrisy; it is remarkable, however, as a confession that he gave up Venice without any serious intention that it should remain prematurely Austrian. He ceded it to purchase a more valuable possession, but with the intention of resuming it on the first decent opportunity, reckoning meantime upon the beak of the Austrian eagle to tear and macerate the prey, and render it all the fitter for the future easy digestion of France. It is a meet judgment upon the injustice and selfishness of both the contracting powers that the vicissitudes of the poor Venetians have really had the effect, which Napoleon only pretended to anticipate, of preparing them to receive a national government at any price.

The Emperor had no right to cede the Rhenish provinces without the consent of the German Diet; but the house of Hapsburg has always used its "great position in Germany," as the language goes, for the furtherance of its own interest rather than those of the empire.

It was upon this concession of Venice that Napoleon rested his lever, with Machiavellian subtlety, for the gradual disorganisation of Germany. It was stipulated in the treaty of Luneville, which completed and ratified that of Campo Formio, that the princes dispossessed on the Rhenish frontiers, along with those of Tuscany and Modena, should have their indemnity within the limits of the German empire, through the secularisation of the ecclèsiastical states, and the mediatisation of many of the smaller secular states. The Emperor of Russia was nominally to share with the First Consul the privilege of acting as umpire over the redistribution of territory; but Napoleon was really the final arbiter of the interests of the princes concerned, and this position enabled him to develop in them a spirit of cupidity and rapacity stifling all

sense of justice, shame, and patriotism, accustoming them to mean solicitation of the stranger and to every base intrigue.

In doing this Napoleon was only following the example of Louis XIV. When the day comes in which Germany shall be finally rid of its royal and august and serene highnesses, and can look back with opened eyes upon its history, it will be astonished at all that its patient people have borne with at the hands of their feudal masters. The Imperial Library at Paris contains a collection of original receipts by which a number of German princes, imitating the baseness of our own Stuarts, certified that they had duly received their pensions from the French treasury. The electors of Hanover, Mayence, Cologne, Saxony, Bavaria, Brandenburg, the son of the Elector Palatine, the bishops of Spire, Strasburg, and Munster, the Duke of Brunswick, the Marquis of Boden-Durlach, the Count of Cassel, etc., figure on these unhappy parchments. Their signatures are there, and—that no seal upon their infamy might be wanting—their arms, blazing in all the pomp of heraldry!

In the redistribution of territory under the auspices of Napoleon, Austria and Prussia had lion's shares; and by this means all the rest of Germany was rendered suspicious of them and hostile. After Jena and Austerlitz the empire was broken up, and both powers excluded from the new confederation of the Rhine. M. Thiers, in his History, lately expressed himself delighted with this combination, and finds it most favourable to the balance of power in Europe! So incorrigibly is the French mind bent upon surrounding France with mere satellites, or at best with weakened neighbours. The French Protestants in general, with a few enlightened and really liberal Catholics and freethinkers, eschew the selfish ambition of war and conquest, and are more solicitous about liberty at home than power to tyrannise abroad; but it is the reverse with the great body of the nation—they comfort themselves for being nothing at home by military renown and political prestige abroad.

The possibility of the German people having a will of its own, or claiming a voice in the disposal of its own destinies, does not seem to have presented itself to the imagination of Napoleon and his contemporaries. But the people awoke to self-consciousness at last amid the countless sufferings and humiliations imposed by the haughty foreigners; the national movement of 1813—14 was wholly their work, for their kings and grand dukes had neither the patriotism, nor the courage, nor the mutual confidence necessary to rouse them up against

the oppressor, and many of them were connected with him by marriages or by the gifts received at his hands. Even the much ill-treated Frederick William III. at first hastened to disavow General Yorck, when, after the retreat from Moscow, the latter had concluded with the Russians a separate arrangement of neutrality for the Prussian troops of the French army of invasion. When the War of Deliverance, as the Germans call it, was over, princes and people were, for one short honeymoon, all in raptures with each other, and full of mutual admiration: on one side abounded promises of liberty and self-government; on the other, vows of lasting allegiance: alas! all these fair visions were dissipated at the Congress of Vienna: Baden and Wurtemberg stuck out for the old system of absolutism in the several States of Germany and independence of each other, and the allied sovereigns and plenipotentiaries assembled at Vienna were but too ready to disregard the rights and wishes of the Germans as they did those of all other peoples.

The reconstitution of Europe under the auspices of the Congress of Vienna was founded on no self-consistent principles of abstract right; or rather the monarchs and statesmen assembled there vacillated between the principles which had prevailed during past centuries, and those which were then beginning to shape themselves indistinctly in the minds of men, and have not even yet been fully recognised in theory, still less carried out in practice. It was a policy of expedients, sometimes appealing to the idea of nationality and making use of successful insurrections; at other times, and these the more frequent, disposing of populations just as Bonaparte had done, like flocks of sheep, careless of their wishes, of their remembrances, and of all historical antecedents. Not only is Europe still suffering from the acts of injustice then committed and the acts of reparation omitted, but both its statesmen and its public opinion are more or less labouring under that confusion of thought between contradictory principles of political right which still subsists, and is probably about to disappear under the influence of the events that have taken place and their inevitable consequences.

The feudal system, as it slowly grew up after the barbarian conquests, was founded in the first instance upon the fact that the strongest put themselves in possession of the lands of the weakest, then upon the recognition of this fact by the highest representative of the element of strength and its transformation into hereditary right, and, finally, to complete the ideal, upon the submission of all ranks to the authority of

a pontiff supposed to act as a disinterested arbitrator—a sort of visible tutelary Providence moderating the passions of unruly men.

The transition from this age to that of absolute monarchy was an epoch of calamities and crimes. Louis XI., Ferdinand of Arragon, the Hapsburgs, and the Tudors—all the monarchs of Europe — seemed to have graduated in the school of the petty princes of Italy, the cruel and unprincipled Borgias, Medicis, and their peers. The law of brute force prevailed as absolutely as it had done in the usurpations of the pre-existing system at its origin. The mass of the people, individually less wretched than before, because they were emerging from serfdom, reckoned for nothing in a political point of view; kings played with their subjects as with counters, and each nation was like a rudimentary being whose vital powers were concentrated in one organ. The whole science of international relations was summed up in two maxims—everybody who has it in his power to hurt us is our natural enemy, and anybody who has it in his power to injure this dangerous neighbour is our friend. The gains of any one nation in trade, as in war, were supposed to consist of the losses of others, and frontiers were considered from an exclusively military point of view, as if the world were nothing but one broad field of battle. There was room for no natural right in this system, except that of hereditary succession; internal policy was determined by dynastic, not by national interests; external relations and rights were founded upon positive treaties alone, and these passed between rulers who did not trouble themselves about the consent or participation of their subjects. The free cities, corporations, and privileged bodies, which had come into existence in the previous state, lost their relative power of reaction against despotism. The selfishness and perfidies of the occupants of the Papal chair had deprived them of their controlling political power even before the half of Europe had thrown off their spiritual yoke. In short, there remained no necessity for any saving hypocrisy; no check upon the ambition of any sovereign disproportionally strong, except the union of others in their common interest to resist his aggressions. It was hoped that alliances of this kind, reduced to theory and become traditional, would maintain a balance of power; but how complete a failure the system so-called has been, appears from the simple fact that during 400 years of arbitrary monarchy in Continental Europe, the years of war were nearly as numerous as those of peace.

The Reformation indirectly introduced germs of civil and political liberty into circulation; for the vindication of the supreme claims of God over individual man logically leads to the feeling of the individual's responsibility as an agent, and to the assertion of his value as the Lord's free man. It was in the spirit created by the Reformation that the States of Holland first boldly proclaimed that princes were made for their peoples, and not peoples for their princes. The *cahiers* of the *Tiers Etat* at Orleans in 1561, under influences more or less directly Protestant, asked to have the States-General assembled at regular intervals, called for the suppression of duties upon goods passing from one province to another, and for unity of weights and measures, recommended that priests having care of souls should be chosen as of old by the people, and bishops by the clergy and people, that tribute to Rome should be suppressed, and a college established in every town. Had France persevered in this direction, it would have anticipated its revolution by two centuries, escaped its horrors, and secured it against reaction; it would have put all the elements of its national life, civil, political, and religious, in a state of equilibrium.

Unfortunately for France, she rejected the Reformation. She afterwards at the Revolution attempted to appropriate and to improve the civil and political liberties developed as fruits of Protestantism in Holland, England, and America. The political part of this great experiment has proved a failure in France itself; but, notwithstanding the temporary eclipse, the principle of self-government is being more and more understood, honoured, and practised throughout Europe. It is now, therefore, time for thinkers at least to see that the right of self-government at home draws after it an equivalent revolution in the principles of international right; nations that have assumed their majority have a right to reconsider, and, if needs be, to recall treaties contrary to their true interests, made without their participation by arbitrary guardians. They who govern themselves should be allowed to stipulate for themselves, to make their own arrangements for external relations, as well as for internal legislation. Nay, more than this; they have the right to group themselves in the political circumscriptions that suit their natural affinities and interests as understood by themselves. If the people have a natural right to choose the governors and the form of government they please, how can they be refused the prior right to choose the national unity of which they are to form a part?

Of course if it were to be understood by this that the whole edifice built by preceding generations might be swept away, all historical associations and traditions broken up, all existing relations of human societies called in question until ratified by a series of new sovereign determinations,—if all Christendom were to be reconstructed, and all geographical masses redistributed, at a moment's warning, by the decisions of a ballot-box,—nothing but chaos could come of it; but there is no fear of the world's ever being disposed to try so wild a scheme. We only mean that the public opinion of Christendom tends to sympathise with nations that suffer from treaties they did not themselves negotiate, and with civilised races subjected unwillingly to alien rule. The old principle of vested rights founded on the stipulations of rulers is losing ground before an instinct of natural right, which would throw the world into confusion if attempted to be put in practice universally, immediately, and sweepingly, but will bring about a more contented and stable state when asserted gradually, and only in cases where the contradiction between positive convention and natural right is excessive, and affects large and nearly unanimous masses.

The ideal of civilised society would be the coincidence of positive and natural rights, the former being the expression and formal recognition of the latter—contracts formed by common consent and based on justice, *i.e.*, security for the liberty of each only controlled by respect for the liberty and interests of others—room for the exercise of every capacity, the pursuit of every good, and the satisfaction of every legitimate aspiration. As men are, and will remain, short-sighted and selfish, this ideal can never be attained; but we shall increasingly approximate to it, as society becomes more permeated by vital Christianity, and politicians are actuated by higher principles. A day is coming in which international arrangements, instead of passing as the recognition of successful craft and violence, will be respected beforehand as the dictates of justice in every case, until the contrary has been demonstrated by experience or by incontrovertible reasoning. Dynastic interests may be contrary to each other—and they have been big with wars and calamities—but we now know that real national interests are never contrary to each other, that the good of each is the good of all; therefore, the more dynastic interests are supplanted by national, the less probability there will be of conflict and aggression.

As the nations of Europe and America are now constituted, they present societies bound by certain conditions of common

origin, race and language, religion and manners, historical remembrances, geographical position, productive and commercial interests, and they group or tend to group themselves in political societies, uniting as many of these conditions as possible. Thus nature, history, interest, and consent, in varying unequal proportions, determine nationality. In Switzerland, for instance, common remembrances, interests, and consent are seen to form a really compact confederation of republics, notwithstanding diversities of origin, language, and religion.

We Englishmen are slow to understand the subordination of conventional to natural rights, because we are accustomed in all spheres to fictions that obscure thought, and we have an almost superstitious fear of abstract formulas, not knowing where they may lead us; we feel less than our French neighbours do the necessity of reconciling our opinions and our practice, and our very practice has been forcibly one-sided, because of the medium surrounding us, for we assert self-government at home, and our Foreign Secretary has generally had to do hitherto with governments who did not consult their peoples. However, the fact that we feel the rights of which we are slow to proclaim the theory, is evident from the light in which the British public has been disposed to consider some of the most important political questions of the last forty years; that feeling was the secret of the sympathy manifested for Greece, Poland, and Italy, and it is not the less real in cases where it is not so evident at the surface. Whence, for instance, the impatience or the disdainful indifference with which we turned away from the complicated questions of legal right and international jurisprudence involved in the Schleswig Holstein controversy? We simply felt that the German part of the population ought to be allowed to become Germans, the Danish to become Danes, and so make an end of the matter. Why were many of the most zealous and consistent friends of the United States so little disposed to rest their disapprobation of the Confederate revolt on the technical question of the letter of the constitution being against it? We felt that this was a mere lawyer's plea; a nearly unanimous population of six millions had a right to try to assert its separate political existence if it pleased, even by revolution. We only wished the trial to fail because its object was not simple independence, but the forcible extension and perpetuation of slavery. Again, whence the indifference with which we at this moment witness the absorption of Hanover by Prussia?

It is certain that up to the recent cession of the Ionian Islands, liberal Englishmen felt their conscience burdened by the forcible retention of this small subject population, while neither the Channel Islands, nor India, nor Ireland cost us a moment's hesitation. The reason is evident: the natives of the Ionian Isles are and wished to be Greek; the Channel Islanders, though French by their language, are English by all their associations and interests, and by their choice; India is not inhabited by a nation, but by a medley of races incapable of so much as conceiving the meaning of patriotism, and ready to prey upon each other if left to themselves; Ireland is not a nation, but a diseased member of England; in it, as in the west of England, the highlands of Scotland, and in every colony, Saxon and Celt are indissolubly wedded. It is in the English language that the Irish agitator harangues; it is under the shelter of English liberty that he plies his trade; Irish blood has been shed in all our battles; Irish genius has shone in our senate and in all our literature; the attempt to assert a separate nationality was settled for ever at Derry, and on the Boyne, at Athlone, Aughrim, and Limerick, a century and three-quarters back. The wealthy and the enlightened, with the soundest and most prosperous part of the working classes, are enthusiastically English, and all national hopes of future good for Ireland depend on its union with England.

After this long but not irrelevant excursion upon the domain of principles, we may return to 1815. Napoleon's mathematical genius and despotic temperament alike tempted and helped him to wield the sovereignty of numbers on the field of battle. He availed himself, for his own selfish purposes, both of the force that had been created by the recent enthusiasm for liberty, and of the sort of interregnum that prevailed between the old theory of political right and that which was just beginning to come into existence. He cared as little for formal treaties as for national aspirations, so that no check upon his ambition remained except the despair of the multitudes it armed against him and the unflinching resistance of England. Let us hope his will prove to be the last gigantic effort to imitate the old Roman method of imposing a mortal uniformity by oppression and conquest, instead of realising human unity by liberty and justice. When the Colossus lay prostrate, his conquerors assembled at Vienna had a sort of partial consciousness of the wants of the time. They felt that the Christian nations of Europe constituted one vast body, possessing, to a great extent, the principal elements of homo-

geneousness, adoring the same God, showing in different degrees the same culture; and they saw that the opportunity then presented of establishing a permanent balance of power was one that had not occurred for centuries. Unfortunately the allied sovereigns saw nothing in the French Revolution except the crimes which had sullied and disfigured it. Animated with the best intentions, they failed to apprehend the principles on which a new order of things might be founded with some hope of stability; they could not bring themselves to understand that the happiness, order, and prosperity of a people must be essentially its own work; and, under the influence of the generous but Utopian and theocratically minded Alexander, the so-called Holy Alliance was formed—that mutual assurance of thrones against peoples, which patronised the interference of Austria to crush constitutional government in Piedmont and Naples in 1821, and that of France in Spain, two years later.

The resistance of Canning, supported by the enlightened public opinion of Europe, paralysed the Holy Alliance; but the imperfections of the treaty of Vienna remained. France was only wounded by it in her self-love, but the Germans had more serious reasons to complain. It was something, indeed, to have the number of their absolute masters reduced to 38, for they had been over 300 before Napoleon I. Moreover, as they were generally governed in a way consistent with their material well-being, they were not wretched enough to lose all patience and break out in rebellion; the more so that, as has been already observed, there existed no centre from which a revolutionary movement could originate with any hope of success. But they were heart-sick at seeing their country a cypher in the councils of Europe, and at having it supposed that they had no mission to perform except to dissect *coleoptera*, and dispute the existence of Homer. It was humbling to have no voice in the government of their own country, and more humbling still, for the natives of the smaller States at least, to find themselves absolutely without protection when they ventured into distant regions. In short, the Germans could neither change their condition, nor reconcile themselves to it; they could but slumber or fret alternately under the guardianship of their thirty-eight nurses, and they revenged themselves for this state of political torture by feeling as ungenerously as possible towards all the weaker races in contact with them.

The Zollverein was a first attempt of Prussia to secure by legal and peaceable means a measure of national unity under

its own leadership. It so far entitled itself to the gratitude of Germany, and drew attention to its claims to grasp the *hegemonia*. Germany might, indeed, recognise in the northern power a much fitter representative of its instincts and aspirations than the southern. Prussia was a country in which primary instruction was obligatory and universal, honourably distinguished by intellectual and scientific achievements in every sphere, along with advanced industrial and commercial activity, general prosperity, and a desire for freedom similar to that which existed throughout the whole German Fatherland, but here stronger than elsewhere. Its people were themselves as ambitious as their government of acquiring the direction of the common national energies; they desired to wield the power they sought for purely German objects, and were rendered formidable beyond their numbers by discipline, military organisation, and administrative ability.

No circumstances could be imagined more favourable to the success of a great revolutionary movement than those of 1848, because the simultaneousness of so many insurrections hindered the absence of a common centre from being felt in Germany. But there was all the inexperience of leaders and parties unaccustomed to political life; there were the extremes and Utopias of revolutionists hostile to Christianity, and, therefore, ignorant of themselves and of the conditions in which human nature finds itself, impatient of the imperfections and limitations inseparable from all stages of progress, and disposed to assert their own views and supposed interests without any concession to those of others. Man's freedom is a summons to show what is in him; the freedom that is attained unexpectedly in a time of excitement awakes his slumbering tendencies with equal promptitude and intensity, and so a godless revolution is necessarily the emancipation of selfishness; it lets loose the demon that is in each breast, and then pits them all in internecine antagonism to each other. No sooner had the Frankfort Parliament assembled in 1848, than the masters and the workmen engaged in various trades clamoured against each other, or united to contend for the most absurdly superannuated system of protection. This parliament cheered for Radetzky, applauded De Radowitz when he said the Mincio was the German frontier, procured the incorporation of the Duchy of Posen in the Empire, thanked Windischgratz for bombarding Prague, tried to separate Limburg from Holland, and Schleswig Holstein from Denmark. In a word, the heretofore cosmopolite and good-natured Ger-

mans displayed the most reckless, unscrupulous, and suicidal selfishness towards each of the nationalities with whose interests their own were mixed up—Dutch, Danish, and Polish, Tchek, Magyar, Croatian, and Italian! After passing half a century in discussing the *ego* and the *non ego*, says a publicist, they showed a marvellous incapacity to distinguish between *meum* and *tuum*.

The episode of the mismanaged Schleswig Holstein crusade was especially fatal in its consequences, because it drew away attention from matters that should have been settled first of all; and, by revealing the weakness of armed mobs when not fighting behind barricades, it proved that the help of the princes and their armies was necessary. Frederick William IV. tried to obtain from the princes by negotiation the dignity and a part of the power which he scrupled accepting at the hands of the parliament; but the weakness, and the sterile and endless discussions, divisions, and rivalries of the popular leaders encouraged resistance. The upper classes were terrified by the socialism of certain agitators; religious men, and even the public, were disgusted by the impiety of others; and at last the high-handed intervention of Russia in Hungary restored the second head of the eagle. The great opportunity was lost. The irritated and disappointed people of Germany found themselves once more tied to their thirty apron strings, and had the mortification of seeing the franchises, granted by their petty despots in an hour of panic-terror, recalled one by one by a triumphant reaction whose pride it was to keep no faith with political heretics.

The usurpation of the imperial dignity by Napoleon III., and the general tendency of his policy, aggravated the uneasy feelings of the German public. They had been in the habit of sympathising with liberal and constitutional France, and even of looking to her to give the signal for their deliverance. But to them, as well as to ourselves, the resurrection of the empire was suggestive of war and not of peace, and its policy seemed to aim at the same objects as the First Empire, but cautiously, with more of the conspirator and less of the highwayman. France had become once more a dangerous neighbour; and, therefore, the sense of their weak and dismembered state was the more disquieting and galling. For two centuries back, ever since the great religious war, and the treaty of Westphalia, the concentration and unity of France made her the leading nation of the Continent, and her people comparatively the safest from the outrages of foreign armies; but, whoever stirred, or whoever suffered throughout Europe, dis-

united Germany was the first victim. We have somewhere met with an old song—

> "In Germany begins a dance,
> Shall lead throughout Italy, Spain, and France,
> But England shall pay piper."

This characteristically British complaint is only partially true; not only has the dance generally begun and chiefly continued in Germany, but she has had to pay for it more dearly than we have done. Every quarrel has been fought out upon her soil, at the expense of the sufferings and the blood of her children. Every great war has proved for her a civil war; it was with Germany that Louis XIV., Louis XV., and Napoleon I. warred against Germans. Frederick the Great said of France that she need not allow a cannon to be fired in Europe without her consent. He might have added that, whoever applied the match, there was always some unhappy German at the muzzle of the cannon.

As the affairs of Schleswig Holstein in 1849 had illustrated the powerlessness of German democracy, Bismarck appropriately determined in 1863 to make them the occasion of exhibiting the vigour of a military government. He thus made the war with Denmark an experiment preliminary to the aggression he meditated, proving the practical superiority of the needle-gun, and the satisfactory working of the Prussian military organisation, and convincing him that he might venture upon the attempt to secure the *hegemonia* by the time-honoured methods of absolute monarchies—deceit and violence.

Now that the trial of strength is over, and that its results are manifesting themselves, the gains of Italy, if not as great as those of her ally, are more complete and final, so far as they go, and her progress less likely to be imperilled by future mistakes in policy. Discomfited Austria must needs make up her mind to exclusion from both Italy and Germany, and to leave the Pope's temporal sovereignty to its fate, so far as she is concerned. And yet, as has been observed on all hands, if Francis Joseph is wise enough to make a virtue of necessity, to accept frankly the place which has been left him, and to make peace with his own people, giving over to them without reserve or afterthought the liberties he has been alternately holding out and recalling,—if he does this, one of the grandest and most important spheres of political action in the world may yet perhaps be open to him. The influence of his house upon Italy was the misfortune and the bane of both. Its influence upon Germany has been the

great obstacle to German progress. But if he were now to become a Hungarian at heart? If he were to extend a really civilising sceptre over the broad and rich regions which still own his sway? If, instead of using men of many races and languages to keep each other down, he were to make himself the mediator, the interpreter, the federal link between them, developing the hidden resources of the soil, and calling out the untried capacities of races not yet spoiled and perverted by a false culture? To do all this would require no rare and mighty genius; he need but touch his people with freedom's magic wand, strive honestly and disinterestedly to keep the peace between them, and, for the rest, leave them to themselves. Were he to do this, the common voice of Central and Western Europe would hail in him the destined heir of the Sublime Porte, or at least of the greater part of its European territories—the head of the future Confederation of the Danube.

We fear it is too much to expect a Hapsburg to forget so far the traditions of his house, and the teaching of a Jesuit tutor. Yet of the five groups composing the population of the empire — Germans, Tcheks, Gallicians, Magyars, Southern Slavonians (it is hardly worth while to reckon the Roumans of Transylvania)—not one seems very generally or very cordially attached to the dynasty; the name Austria represents a court and not a people, and might therefore be blotted out of the map without the sacrifice of any nationality, but the contrary. The late Prince Metternich once said of Italy, in the pride and cruelty of his heart, that it was a mere geographical denomination. He little thought how truly it might be retorted that a nation without any political status has, from the simple fact of its existence, a better chance for the future than a conventional political denomination with which no nation is inseparably identified.

Austria's old *régime* of absolutism and Romish intolerance has left such an impression on all the neighbouring populations, that, at this moment, the one thing of which the Christian inhabitants of Turkey are most afraid, is that the Emperor Francis Joseph should seek compensation for his losses by taking possession of them with the concurrence of the other powers. They even prefer their precarious state under the nominal sway and occasional brutalities of the Ottoman Porte; Servians, Montenegrins, Bosnians, Roumans, Bulgarians,—they are all so disposed that the spectacle of years of local liberty and prosperity enjoyed by the subjects of Austria would alone reconcile them to accept his protection.

The exclusion of the eight millions of Austrian Germans from the new political organisation of Germany will weaken the ascendency of the German element throughout the Austrian Empire, and, to the same extent, favour the self-government and development of the other races; but it will also leave these eight millions the more ready to secede, and cast in their lot with their northern kinsmen. Even the proverbially faithful Tyrolese, oppressed as they are by heavy taxes, and smarting from defeat, are said at this moment to betray the wish to become one day united to Switzerland; and if Prussia shows herself wise enough and liberal enough to attract and absorb the Germans south of the Maine, those of Austria Proper will probably follow. In short, if the adoption of an altogether new system would secure for Austria an aggrandisement, such as is open to no other power of Continental Europe, failure to adopt it will almost certainly be followed by dismemberment.

As for the Prussians, they have attained the object of their national ambition at a moment when they least expected it, and through men who did not possess their sympathy or confidence. It has been a joyful surprise, and remains so, though bought by the most extreme and cruel sacrifices for so many families, and attended by so much that is still uncertain and menacing. They have, moreover, the satisfaction of feeling that it is owing to their own intelligent valour and discipline, as well as to the skill of Moltke, the vigour and promptitude of Bismarck, the hereditary generalship of Prince Frederick Charles, and the mechanical superiority of their arms. The detailed accounts of the battle of Sadowa show that if the use of the needle-gun made defeat more bloody and disastrous for the Austrians, the first cause of the victory was the disciplined intrepidity of the Prussian battalions. They engaged in the war unwillingly, but when they manœuvred upon the decisive field a really national interest nerved their arms. They had not merely to assert their own military honour and fidelity, but the rank that their country was to hold in Germany, and ultimately, though indirectly, the rank that Germany was to hold in the world; it was with the consciousness of this that they fought and conquered. The same consciousness of the final bearing of Prussian ascendency is leading populations who were at war with Prussia but yesterday to knock for admittance with almost abject haste at the doors of the new Northern Confederation, so that the world sees for the first time the spectacle of an unscrupulous ministry and an ambitious people almost obliged to preach moderation and

patience to the districts that solicit the favour of being taken possession of.

It was only last year that the courts of Vienna, Munich, and Stuttgardt tried to avoid renewing their association with the Zollverein; because they felt that this community of interests was a danger for their policy of particularism. Austria did withdraw, but the Governments of Bavaria and Wurtemberg were constrained by their subjects to renew the connection. The centripetal feeling is much stronger now; it threatens to overcome even the antipathy felt for Bismarck personally, the indignation roused by the brutal treatment of Frankfort, the annoyance of having to pay heavy contributions of war, and the still strong feeling of the uncertainties and the dangers created for liberty by victories won under the flag of absolutism. There is a party south of the Maine doing its utmost to persuade the southern states to organise themselves in a strongly democratic confederation, a little rival Germany, provoking its more bulky neighbour to jealousy; but even this party would be disarmed if it saw Prussia reasonably liberal. The military organisation of the Northern Confederation is now extended over a population of thirty millions; it lies with the Court of Berlin to extend it in a very few years, without any further rough courtship, over seven millions more; and, though it is hazardous to play the prophet in such times as these, we venture to predict that if the Cabinet of Berlin begins to be wise, and that of Vienna continues to be foolish, the whole 45,000,000 of Germans will one day be united under the same flag, and a total and irrevocable political union accompany the extension of the military system. Meantime the provinces or states only partially annexed need be in no hurry to get rid of their princes; the various little capitals and provincial centres will retain all the more refinement, intellectual life, and healthy local feeling by continuing to be the seats of nominal kings and grand-dukes, who in any case will constitute a very high class of resident noblemen; while the common national interests are intrusted to strong hands, and their direction can be disputed by no domestic rivals.

Germany craved two things — unity and freedom. The great essential stride has been taken towards the former; but if unity is to become a blessing, nay, if it is to be supportable to the Germans themselves and to their neighbours, it must have freedom for its complement. If Prussia is to remain an absolute and military power, violating the constitution at home, trampling on the first principles of self-government,

persecuting its noblest children, stifling discussion in the Parliament and in the press, and at the same time wielding the energies of Germany in support of a foreign policy, pursuing the old selfish method of war and conquest—then the smothered fires of revolution will remain burning under Central Europe, ever ready to burst out, and this government, so little sure of its own stability, will not the less be a pest to Europe, such as France and Russia have been, forcing all nations to waste their resources in prodigious military establishments, and providing other powers as unscrupulous as itself with reasonable excuses for their grasping ambition; in short, the governments of Christendom will remain what they are now—a mutual insurance company against all liabilities of peace, confidence, contentment, progress, and prosperity.

We anxiously wait to see what the next few months—not to speak of a more distant future—may bring forth. There are optimists who persuade themselves that the Count de Bismarck's absolutism is only assumed in order the more easily to lead his narrow-minded master, and that he reserves for Europe the spectacle of a political *volti-face* more surprising than all his other performances. They point to the bill of indemnity he asks for, to the official recognition that it is the right of Parliament to fix the budget, to the royal apology which so scandalised the feudal party and its organ the *Kreuz Zeitung*, and to the adoption of the system of direct election, universal suffrage and vote by ballot, for the new Parliament of the Northern Confederation. We are ourselves persuaded that the Prussian minister is a most supple and versatile character, and a man of his abilities ought to understand that moral conquests are the only sure ones; but we must say that, if he has been dissembling, he has played his part too well and continues to play it too long. It was with unmistakeable pleasure that he insulted the representatives of his country, and heaped contempt upon their deliberations and decisions; and even since the war, the prosecution of Herr Jacoby, and of the only newspaper that ventured to insert his speech, are specimens of the genuine arbitrary temperament. Von Bismarck is the creature of an aristocracy proverbially insolent and domineering, and it is not in human nature that he should speedily change for the better after success so rapid, so brilliant, and productive of such immense results. It is rather to be supposed that he has recourse to universal suffrage because he thinks the multitude will be more easily dazzled, and its

representatives more easily managed than those of the middle classes.

We do not therefore hope much from the men who are at the head of affairs in Prussia. The poor old King is evidently incorrigible: he gets by heart a tolerably decent apology for having acted unconstitutionally, and then, with the tone of an indulgent father who has much to forgive, he extemporises to a parliamentary deputation the confidential assurance that in the same circumstances he would have to act in the same way. They had made him lead a hard life these last years, he told his liege subjects from Brandenburg; he could never forget it, but must bequeath it as a painful experience to his son. It is to be hoped that by-and-bye the Crown Prince and his people may understand each other better, and that future generations of Prussians will forgive and forget the shortcomings of William I., since his very wrong-headedness will have accidentally contributed to their greatness.

We believe that the best hopes for the political future of Germany rest on the Protestantism of the greater part of the inhabitants of the new Northern Confederation, and on the patience, perseverance, and intelligent resolution of the people themselves. Many of those who know Germany best say that there is a spirit abroad which must gradually wear out and bring to nothing the yoke that the reactionary party attempt to impose upon them once more. The Prussians may be dazzled momentarily by their astonishing success, and make an idol of the needle-gun; but a Protestant people which has begun to taste the fruits of liberty cannot long put up with arbitrary power, even though it has made them conquerors. They have both legal and natural right on their side, and they will persevere in asserting them with the tenacity of the German character. Political and social phenomena, it has been truly observed, proceed by oscillations. Influences apparently opposed, but really complementary to each other, prevail alternately, because the wants from which they proceed make themselves felt alternately; such is the rhythm of national as well as individual life. To-day the enthusiasm for national unity and strength absorbs every thought, but to-morrow the passion for liberty will revive all the more intense from its temporary retrocession. The circumstance that the edifice of German unity remains unfinished will doubtless prove favourable to the development of German liberties; for the Prussian statesmen must in the end, willingly or unwillingly, court the popula-

tions as yet unannexed, which are so strongly attracted towards the Northern Confederation, and must strive to outbid their local rulers. Bavaria, Wurtemberg, and Baden will not renounce their independent existence, except to become parts of a really self-governing Germany. We suspect that after having surprised both friend and foe, the Count de Bismarck will be himself surprised to find that he has contributed to bring about such a state of things as will render future Bismarcks impossible; and for this at least his countrymen should be grateful.

The work of the French Revolution has fallen to pieces, so far as political liberty is concerned. The work of Napoleon fell to pieces: instead of being the providential man of his times, as his nephew would fain have us believe, nothing that he created out of France survives. The arrangements of 1815 have now fallen to pieces, all their principal features have been superseded by new ones. The stability of the Europe that is to be dated from the summer of 1866, will depend essentially upon the political state and moral temperament of the people of Germany: the hour for the moral trial of Germany has struck. If this is to prove one of the grand opportunities of history lost, it must be the fault of the Germans, for no nation is so placed as to be able to spoil it except themselves. Were France or Russia wantonly to attack Prussia, the establishment of constitutional freedom would be delayed indeed by the importance thereby given to military men and measures; but it would not be finally hindered, and as for the union of Germany, it would only be precipitated by such an attack. When the resurrection trumpet sounds, and the separate limbs of a great nation leap up to meet each other, as the prophet beheld in the valley of vision, then no earthly power can put them asunder. United Germany would be as irresistible to-day as France was in 1792-4, when the invading armies recoiled in every direction, stunned and reeling, from her frontiers. And Germany would be as little disposed now as France was then to cede to the stronger one foot of her soil. Time was when it could be said, with Napoleon III. at Bordeaux, "when France is satisfied Europe is quiet," or, to borrow Alexander Humboldt's way of putting the matter, "when France has a cold in her head all Europe sneezes;" but now, this hitherto modest and passive Germany has taken to sneezing on her own account, and nobody can stop her.

However, the mischief that strangers cannot work, may be brought about by the fault of the Germans themselves, if

they fail in meeting the responsibilities and overcoming the temptations of the crisis. It is notorious that the Seven Years' War filled the Prussians with a presumption and an arrogance that indirectly prepared for the misfortunes of the beginning of this century, and that to this day renders them disagreeable to their fellow-countrymen. If the prodigies of the late campaign should make the Prussians servile sabre worshippers, docile admirers of their ignorant, corrupt and reactionary nobles, and in the same proportion void of moderation towards foreigners, then all is over with the liberties, perhaps even with the unity, of Germany, and Europe is plunged once more into the state of chronic uneasiness and insecurity from which it might have been freed.

Were a free, a united, and a contented Germany to be able and willing to give itself wholly to the cultivation of the arts of peace, without having anything to fear from its neighbours, or giving them any cause for fear, it would be the beginning of the organisation of liberty and a pledge of security throughout Europe. France is supposed, on this hypothesis to have no motive for distrust and no excuse for attack. Even smaller neighbours, like Holland and Denmark, might be at peace; for a happy, industrious, self-governing people would not be irritable, grasping, and ambitious of material conquest, as the Germans showed themselves in 1848, when in the act of escaping exasperated out of their several prisons. Italy might disarm, having nothing more to ask for; and Austria would have no longer to maintain unjust usurpations and a false position. The whole continent would experience immediately a feeling of relief, even greater than it did when the campaigns of 1814 and 1815 disengaged the minds of men from the constant dread of a universal military despotism, setting them free to sow in peace and reap the fruits of amended legislation, increased instruction, and of the wondrous scientific discoveries and applications of the succeeding period. Europe could not indeed altogether disarm, because two causes of agitation would still remain—the Polish question and the Eastern; but even these would offer means of solution nearer and safer than any previously presented.

It was with reluctance that Maria Theresa consented to share the spoils of Poland, and ever since, for various reasons, Austria has invariably shown herself the least unwilling of the three dismembering powers to release their victim. When the full correspondence relating to the negotiations respecting Poland, during the years 1814 and 1815,

was published by order of the House of Commons in May 1863, it appeared that in a memorandum of December 2, 1814, Prince Metternich presented to the Congress of Vienna a proposal for the restoration of Poland with its frontiers of 1772, or, in default of the consent of Russia, with those of 1791. He offered on Austria's part to yield Gallicia without asking for any compensation. The resistance of Russia and Prussia put an extinguisher upon the project; but when Prussia shall have become co-extensive with Germany, she will no longer need the Duchy of Posen to give some cohesion to territories straggling in disorder across the map of Europe. Now, if two of the three powers that effected the partition, together with all Western Europe, should be unanimous, Russia would be constrained to consent to the restoration of unhappy Poland to its own people.

Again, with respect to the Eastern question, the great danger for the last generation has been the possibility of an alliance between France and Russia. Since the Crimean war in particular this has been the sword of Damocles suspended over our heads. Had Napoleon I. and Alexander agreed at Tilsit, they could have divided the world between them; and it is startling to think how easy it would have been up to this summer for Alexander II. and Napoleon III. to do almost as they pleased with Turkey, its magnificent territory, vast resources, and unrivalled position. At such a conjuncture, between the antagonism of its two greater powers and the complicity of its kinglings and their courts, running after Russian pensions and decorations, all Central Europe would have counted for nothing. Austria and Prussia would have taken opposite sides, neutralising each other, and England would have found herself practically alone against the two colossal military empires. This danger is now averted, we trust, for ever. It may now be possible for the leading powers, perhaps even without going to war with each other, to arrange the succession of the expiring Turk, and to provide for the emancipation of the native Christians, without allowing any nation an undue predominance.

When the electricity is expended, the clouds disperse. If it should please God to allow this century to bequeath to the future a state of things in which slavery shall have been abolished; Italy and Germany constituted as nations; Poland recalled to life; the south-east of Europe organised as a confederacy of Christian states; the temporal sovereignties of the Pope and the Sultan annihilated; Mahometanism definitively humbled even in Asia; religious liberty become

universal; self-government, a free press, and free trade recognised as fundamental principles by all Christendom; Australia fairly occupied from end to end by a growing English population;—if these labours of Hercules shall have been accomplished at the close of the century, and it is not impossible that they may, then, notwithstanding the frightful battles it has witnessed—notwithstanding Wagram and the Borodino, Leipzig and Waterloo, Antietam and Gettysburg, Solferino and Sadowa, *the nineteenth century will bequeath peace to the future.* The temptations to war will have in a great measure disappeared. The nations will know each other then, and respect each other's independence, and be so consciously dependent on each other's welfare that none can hurt another without feeling that it injures itself. The strong will as little think of oppressing the weak as the rich man in civilised society thinks himself entitled to ill-treat his poorer neighbour; the reign of law will succeed that of brutal force between nations as it has already done between individuals; the three millions of men in the flower of life who annually learn all manner of demoralisation in the armies of Europe may be sent home to reproductive labour. The debts that weigh down the nations—remembrances of former wars—may be gradually paid off, and the accumulating capital of the civilised world devoted to useful labours and conquests over nature, on a scale we cannot now conceive. A new era of rest and prosperity shall have dawned upon mankind.

As the experience of the past has given us all but too much reason to distrust each other, the removal of apparent causes of strife and aggression will not of course induce the nations to leave themselves without means of defence. But even at this moment we can anticipate that impending revolution in military matters which will henceforth make defence easy and aggression difficult. All adult males were once held to military service at the bidding of their feudal chiefs. The time of service was short, the conflicts of large armies comparatively rare, but the injuring of one's neighbours by innumerable acts of hostility on a small scale was the great business of life. Then followed the period of absolute monarchies, and standing armies, and conventional international right. The military profession became a science; the exclusive occupation of a small number of men who fought at the bidding and at the expense of the head of the state in wars that were pursued more methodically, vigorously, and uninterruptedly than before, but were separated by intervals of real peace. The spiral progress of mankind

has now brought us to a third period just beginning to open, parallel to the first, but happier far; a period in which all the able-bodied men of every land will once more have arms in their hands, but only to use them at their own bidding, and therefore ultimately only to use them if necessary in their own defence. It is because the present century is a time of transition that its wars have been upon a scale of such fearful magnitude, and so destructive of human life: the reign of despotism is not yet over, that of universal military service is begun. It is this coincidence that gives our times a horrible pre-eminence in mutilation and murder; but this cannot last — the universal conscience protests against it—nations in arms can no longer be brought to shed their blood for mere dynastic interests. Witness the collapse of Austria after the battle of Sadowa: what a difference between the immediate prostration of the power representing antiquated principles in religion, politics, and war, and the untiring Titanic energy and elasticity of the Americans, after a long series of defeats, or bloody and indecisive victories!

Napoleon I. was able to dispose of a million and a half of soldiers, because he turned into a new channel the boundless enthusiasm awakened by the French Revolution, and as it waned he supplied its place by the intoxication of military glory. The United States, in the hour of national peril, found multitudes ready to die for their country. Prussia and Italy would both have shown perseverance in the late struggle, if necessary; but Austria could not call up army after army before the scythe of the destroyer, because it was not really her people's quarrel.

The system which, we venture to prophesy, is about to be more and more generally adopted, can already be studied in Switzerland. The militia of that country are pronounced by good judges to be trained to a very respectable state of efficiency, including even the artillery, and are such soldiers as would prove formidable for defensive purposes at a day's warning. The weakest arm in this system is the cavalry, as must be more or less the case in all militias; but the use of breech-loading rifles is about to render cavalry a mere luxury in war. Now, with a population of two millions and a half, the Swiss are ever ready to meet a foreign enemy on their frontiers with two hundred thousand men, armed and disciplined, and this at an expense altogether trifling compared to that which would be necessary to keep up a standing army of one-fifth of the number. To test the difference between the two systems in an economical point of view, one need

only compare the Swiss Confederation with Belgium; the latter country has a population of five millions; it would, therefore, have a militia of four hundred thousand men. As it is, it can command a regular army of seventy thousand, costing about five times as much as the four hundred thousand would, if we take the expenditure of the Swiss as a measure!

The American militia before the war were little better than an armed mob; but the United States have at least shown that a country not exhausted by a large annual expenditure upon the army and navy, is best able to bear the strain that an unexampled crisis can put upon its resources. Of the great powers, Prussia is the one whose military system approximates most nearly to that of Switzerland. It is more expensive in proportion; but less so than that of the unmodified standing army, and we have just seen it prove as formidable a military power as France, even for aggression, with half its population. There can be no doubt that all the nations of the Continent will try to approximate to the Prussian system more or less; but the substitution of armies of citizens for armies of soldiers, yielding a blind mechanical obedience to their chiefs, must tell with incalculable weight in favour of liberty and peace.

The insular position of Great Britain spared her people much of the suffering and anarchy of the feudal times. It afterwards enabled us to assert and secure our liberties, civil and religious, earlier than others. It has since enabled us to do without a standing army in proportion to our population and means. Our weakness for aggressive purposes is the price we pay for the liberty of our people to give itself almost wholly to useful labours; it is a part of the position we hold in advance of the rest of Europe,—an experiment that we have tried upon ourselves, and that the whole world will imitate when a sense of common interest shall have made the frontiers of every land as sacred as the shores of this island. England may safely abstain from copying Prussia, and sending all her sons to the drill-sergeant; but she participates in the general tendency of the age after her own way, and according to her own instincts and traditions. Our volunteer force is the English shape of the general law that standing armies are being *supplemented* by citizen soldiers, preparatory to their being *supplanted* by citizen soldiers. The necessities of our vast colonial and foreign possessions may, perhaps, in a future day force us to retain a regular army, after all the other powers will have made the bonfire foretold by Isaiah—

> "For the greaves of the armed warrior in the conflict,
> And the garment rolled in much blood,
> Shall be for a burning, even fuel for the fire."*

The immediate danger for Europe is that of war between France and Prussia, or else the usurpation of a great part of Belgium by France with the countenance of Prussia. It is now certain, as it had been all along suspected, that Napoleon III. was privy to the plans of the Count de Bismarck, and encouraged him in his enterprise. Like most people, he probably thought Austria stronger than she has proved to be, and supposed that in allowing her to be weakened by the united arms of Prussia and Italy, he was continuing the policy of Henry IV., Richelieu, and Louis XIV.—*i.e.*, helping to weaken the leading German powers. It was natural enough that he should reckon upon sharing the spoils of Prussia, if successful, but exhausted; or upon preventing her dismemberment if unsuccessful, on condition of receiving an accession of territory for himself. He miscalculated the strength of Prussia, as well as the intensely national spirit and fierce patriotism of the Germans generally; just as he had previously underrated the strength of Italian aspirations towards unity, and of the American reaction against dismemberment. Thrice within a few years has this keen politician been misled by not making sufficient allowance for the strength of one and the same order of national instincts; he should have read the history of the nations in their looks.

Napoleon III. seems to have carried with him to the throne the habits of the silent conspirator. They form a part of his temperament, and he apparently believes it a necessity of his position that he should be ever laying plans to strike the imagination of the French by some new acquisition. And all his sagacity has ended in the procuring unity for Italy against his will in 1859, 1860, and unity for Germany against his will in the period beginning with this famous year 1866. From the traditional French point of view he has made matters worse than the treaties of 1815, by giving France stronger neighbours, and by a sort of irony of destiny he has had to stand a godfather for the two new-born nations, and to serve as the principal mediator and negotiator of arrangements that were so mortifying, like a man whom circumstances have made groomsman at his rival's wedding.

With Napoleon III. himself we believe in "providential men," and we further believe that he was raised to his present

* Isaiah ix. 5 (Lowth's Translation).

position precisely in order that he should make these two blunders. At least they are the two great services that his house has hitherto rendered to mankind. When great political changes are necessary in Europe, it is generally France that is used to bring them about, and France as a disturbing power is more readily put in motion and worked by a Bonaparte than by a Bourbon. And here we may in passing confide to the reader a secret that may be of use to him: we are no gamblers; we have never speculated in the funds; but we have observed for many years that the man who, even when appearances are to the contrary, reckons upon events turning out in the way best suited to promote the real interests of mankind—that man is less likely to be mistaken than the most sagacious and best informed politician. Let a man only be a true liberal, evangelical Protestant, and withal a true friend to the Anglo-Saxon race as a whole, and he need only consult his own wishes in order to know, in the long run, better than Napoleon III. when to buy in, and when to sell out!

It is not in the instincts of the French people that they should acquiesce without mortification in the aggrandisement of Prussia, and in their own ceasing to be the arbiters of Continental Europe. Even those liberal Frenchmen who only seek for their country the sort of greatness that is compatible with the independence and dignity of the other nations of Christendom, are not unwilling that France should be surrounded by weak neighbours, and that her forbearance should be the result of magnanimity rather than necessity. The *Revue des Deux Mondes* calls the spectacle of a united Germany, "a weight upon the breast of every Frenchman." To understand this feeling, we need only ask ourselves what would be our own, if we were suddenly to find that we had ceased to be the first of naval powers, and that, in a great measure, through the intrigues of our own rulers. It is galling, indeed, to liberal Frenchmen to see their country's relative pre-eminence sacrificed by the mismanagement of a man who does not allow them to govern themselves.

On the other hand, the sagacity of both the Emperor and his critics seems to have taught him and them that the mischief is irremediable: the concentration of strength in Germany is the result of an internal revolution which it was possible for a foreign power to help forward, but which it is impossible to check. The feeling of France ought to be, that she has only lost relatively, not absolutely; she has been wounded in her self-love, but her safety is not endangered,

and no real interest suffers. The true way to recover her foremost position would be to become once more the consistent advocate of liberal ideas in Europe, practising self-government at home, and recommending it abroad. Alas! so far from this, the *senatus-consultum*, limiting the right of discussions in the French Assembly, appeared contemporaneously with Bismarck's triumph. The Emperor's position is now a very false and difficult one; the safety of his dynasty is more endangered than ever by legitimate discontent, and he is perhaps obliged to draw the reins tighter at the moment at which he has shown himself least entitled to substitute his genius for the good sense of the nation. His whole tone, and the dismissal of Monsieur Drouyn de Lhuys, prove that there are not to be immediate hostilities; but that he is arming is certain. Whether this is merely a preparation for armed negotiation, or the result of a determination to lay hands on Belgium, or merely a kind of momentary satisfaction given to the self-love of the least reasonable part of the French people, time will show. It is something also to gain time, but it is painful to see that the evils of a state of armed observation of each other are for the present to be aggravated rather than diminished.

For our own part, we believe that the independence and general progress of the nations of Europe have much more to fear from Russia than from France; and in Asia, Russia, not France, is the natural enemy of England. Hence we hail the prospect of a united Germany as a check upon Russian ambition, much more than as a barrier against the French. Moreover, we repeat it, whatever present or nearer danger may arise from France, the real perils of the crisis are elsewhere; the new order of things can only miscarry through the fault of the Germans themselves; and if our hopes for them predominate over our fears, we are not without fears. The changes taking place in the heart of Europe are equivalent to a real revolution, and all experience proves that no revolutions are successful except those that are attended by a certain amount of religious life in harmony with the aims of that revolution. The independence of the United Provinces was asserted in the sixteenth century for the sole purpose of securing religious liberty: the Dutch would not have staked the lives and fortunes of every family in their land as heroically as they did, for any pearl of inferior value. The first civil war of England was another temporarily successful revolution, accomplished for the sake of surrounding religion with the guarantees of civil and

political liberty. The finally successful revolution of 1688, if effected by a more worldly-minded generation, was not the less the carrying out of the objects which the nation had learned to prize—a new oscillation of the pendulum that had been set a-going in 1641. If the country was slow to appreciate the change, if its stability was precarious for more than fifty years, if the London mob, and probably the numerical majority of Englishmen, was strongly Tory, it was because the religious life of the preceding period had declined.

The war of independence in America was undertaken for no directly religious purpose; but the doctrine that taxation without representation was tyranny was a corollary from the great principle we have already quoted, proclaimed by the disciples of the reformation in Holland, that princes were made for the peoples, not peoples for the prince. The arms of the colonists were nerved by the remembrances of the seventeenth century, and the war was carried on with most self-devotion and firmness by those districts which had participated most largely in the great revival of 1735. Moreover, the success of the great experiment made in America is undeniably owing to the general intelligence, moderation, and self-control, accompanying the diffusion of a relatively high degree of religious life.

Of the French Revolution we need only say with M. Edgar Quinet, in his eloquent despair, that it proclaimed all the liberties and all the rights of man. "Torrents of blood were shed throughout Europe for the sake of these conquests. Immense assemblies acclaimed, strengthened, constituted these new rights one after another. Two millions of men died in this cause. All the energy and power contained in human nature was spent in its service. Never will more self-devotion and more public virtue be exhibited by the multitude. Of the usual means of success in human affairs, orators, captains, magistrates, none were wanting. Every one lavished whatever he possessed; mothers gave their sons, and these sons their blood. Nor was even victory wanting, for all they that attacked this revolution perished without shaking it. And, after all these victories accumulated at home and abroad; after these immense assemblies, with all the noise that power, and genius, and glory can make, have passed away; after this crash of a society falling to pieces and another rising on the ruins; if I look around for the political results of such magnanimous efforts; if I seek the living echo of these words of fire, and these triumphal acclamations; if

I would contemplate at leisure the liberties acquired by such gigantic labours; if, after witnessing the seed cast into the furrow, I would measure the tree in its full growth; if . . . No! I cannot finish; the pen falls from my hand."

M. Quinet is not himself a believer in Christianity, and yet he confesses that the causes of the failure he deplores were that the revolution was not consecrated by any corresponding religious movement, and that persecution had weeded out of France the men of granite that were distinguished by firm religious convictions. Religious revolutions succeed, he tells us, because they alone create a spirit of unwearied self-sacrifice, a spirit all the stronger in isolation, defeat, and persecution. What a difference between the men of the sixteenth century and those of the French Revolution. "The former, conquered and scattered, carried the Reformation along with them into whatever regions chance, or ruin, or proscription threw them. Every man of them became a focus radiating it around him. The men of the Revolution, on the contrary, when they were conquered, hid themselves underground; engaged in other occupations; took another countenance, became other men; they purchased the privilege of being forgotten by being the first to forget themselves. No Jacobin ever published his memoirs."

France for two short intervals possessed political liberty, and it still possesses civil, but with a low degree of religious life, an imperfect measure of religious liberty, and with the religious ideas and institutions of the middle ages. There are two men in the vast majority of Frenchmen: the citizen —the merchant, the landowner—dates from 1789. The religious man belongs to the old *régime*, and, when apparently absent, is only asleep. Hence there is no equilibrium: France is condemned, for we know not how long, to oscillate between anarchy and despotism in one sphere, between superstition and unbelief in another. There has been until very recently an equivalent want of equilibrium in Northern Germany from a state exactly the reverse. The religious revolution had carried along with it the majority of the people, but the political institutions remained mediæval. The time has now come to adjust these relations, so that all the elements of national life may be in harmony, and this great country no longer suggest the prophetic symbols of a bear with one shoulder higher than the other (Daniel vii. 5), or a chariot with an ass and a camel yoked together (Isaiah xxi. 7). For this, the political eman-

cipation must be completed, the religions must be real and healthy. Lutheranism, the dominant system, is the least liberal and the least Protestant form of Protestantism, and then it is tainted almost to the core by Rationalism. If it is to continue thus, if the people are to remain practically Deists, or worse, then Germany must pass through many a bitter experience before she realises the blessings that seem within her grasp; for nations, like individuals, only find rest in the truth. A minority of earnest Christians are indeed enough to raise the general moral level of a country, to give a Christian character to its councils and to its public spirit; they are the salt of the earth. The great question then is,—will there be found salt enough in Germany? Has she the leaven wherewith to leaven the mass?

Happily, for the answer, we are not limited to the amount of religious life already manifested. Early in the eighteenth century, England was far more openly and cynically irreligious than France. Voltaire wrote in 1726, *à propos* of a Unitarian movement, "Arius' party has chosen a bad time in which to re-appear, for the present age is sick of disputes and sects; neither new religions nor new shapes of old religions can make their fortune now-a-days." Montesquieu visited England in 1729, and says in his *Notes*, "In France I pass for having little religion; in England I pass for having too much. . . . If any one speak of religion here, everybody begins to laugh. . . . Money is in sovereign estimation here; honour and virtue in little. . . . The English are no longer worthy of liberty; they sell it to the king, and if the king were to give it back to them, they would sell it again." At the present moment no serious writer would speak so strongly of the state of Germany.

Certainly, in 1861, the American people were not fit, in a Christian point of view, for the great crisis which came upon them. Men are never prepared. At none of His comings does the Son of Man find faith in the earth. But, by the grace of God, the Christian feeling, and self-devotion, and heroism—aye, and the Christian self-searching and self-reproach—called out during the struggle itself, like streams pouring into a river whose waters were too low, carried the ship over the bar in the perilous years 1863 and 1864. It may be thus with Germany now. The national movement of 1813 was attended by a religious revival, the first awakening from the rationalism of the eighteenth century, and it may be given us to see a new outpouring of the Spirit of God inflicting a mortal blow on the intellectually more formidable, but less

universal, unbelief of the present day. The Lord reigneth. His arm is not shortened. He must have blessings in store for the land in which He once raised up Luther and his fellows. But why speak of subordinate remembrances, when there is one that contains in itself the gems of all others? Germany is part of a ransomed world—a world that has received the gift of One greater than Luther. Every crisis in history is a preparation—direct or indirect, immediate or gradual—for the sovereignty of the true King and the spread of true liberty. We cannot but look *around* with some misgivings; but we may, and we should, look *up*.