

## THE ORTHODOX BASIS OF REVIVALISM.

**D**URING certain lectures which were given last winter in the Tremont Temple, a comparison was made between the intellectual culture of Boston and of Edinburgh. It was suggested by the fact, or rather, we should say, by the partisan report, that the latter city had gladly welcomed the revivalists and sat at their feet. Would not the pride of Boston also succumb to the Holy Spirit, and welcome its unsophisticated instruments? It is certain that in both cities there is enough intelligence to resist and repudiate a vicious system of religious influence, and enough ignorance and sentimental feeling to welcome it. The intellect of Boston has not yet been humbled; perhaps because it has not yet been addressed. The sectarian motive, the interested parochial sentiment, the love of common sensation, has been addressed: evangelical ministers, paraded on the platform, did somewhat stiffly countenance the singing and cheap utterance; the old style of praying, slightly revamped, notified the Lord that then was the time to be moving in the matter, as if He had some infinite indifference to lay aside in order to diffuse more generally the Holy Spirit; some churches in debt ran in debt for a Tabernacle that the Lord might be with men (He could not allege that no chance has been offered Him in Boston); representatives of the Old South Church, which has been doing such a sharp bit of trading in patriotic reminiscence, went into trading in cheap excitement; with a stock of easy sobs and tears, and toys of doctrine stuffed with saw-dust, they sustained the interest. But the intelligence of Boston was not touched in the remotest manner; and it never can be by a method that is only intelligent in its adroit appeal to ignorance. Persons will be disappointed who expect that knowledge, culture, spiritual intuition, the pure emotions of noble minds, the sense of natural laws, and the feeling of a supernatural presence, are going to succumb

to a few stories, such as figure in the slop-column of religious papers, and to the cumulative effect of congregational singing. No; the Lord will decline to come to the genuine Boston by such conveyances; the Holy Spirit will not be flattered by those theatre tears.

This is the most sensational age of a sensational people. We have already lived by sensations to the verge of ruin; and now, in the lull of trade, the collapse of overdriven interests, the decay of manifold enterprises, there is occasion and a wide temptation to cry up cheap ware, and hawk it about with voluble emphasis: "Here's your genuine Gospel; here's redemption at popular prices; good as the best and warranted to last." The American loves dearly to live loud in the ears of men. The revivalist and the walkist are competing. Not long ago, when Weston had finished his five hundred miles, late on a Saturday night, in the presence of a great and applauding crowd, he announced that he proposed to attend divine service the next forenoon, and sent to the chorister a request that "Nearer, my God, to Thee" should be sung. Five hundred miles nearer than all the rest of us! So are gymnastics and the Gospel reconciled: and the stentorian voices can pelt great crowds with platitudes.

Has not the demand for muscle in connection with Christianity been somewhat overdone of late? We are told that the most popular preachers are the robustest and the healthiest men, who can hurl their sentences down a long aisle, and launch them through great spaces which do not dissipate their magnetism. Every member of a great crowd gets his ration, and indeed many waste-baskets-full of fragments might be gathered up. The consonants and vocables are swept out by the sexton. They drop like snow-flakes, and melt out their little conventional souls.

Why should it seem desirable to cover half an acre with a roof, under which human beings, by the mere physical contact of multitude, can achieve a fact which is more real than any fact that is exploded at them from the platform,—the fact of sympathy, the increment of feeling by adding units together, each one a little grain of powder which the rubbing of any common match can set off, till the ignoble origin assumes impressive proportions? But the running together of these obscure sensations does not accumulate into a steady glow, at which each soul may light its

taper and carry home an undying flame. The soul only lends itself to swell a general puff, and each relay of souls goes off in the same conspiracy of incoherence. If these popular flashes could ever kindle a moral and spiritual life, the world would by this time be too good for any style of preaching.

I was lately looking at Washington Allston's refined and tender portrait of Dr. Channing. The large-orbed eyes seemed to gather into themselves the spaces where God has set a tabernacle for the sun. But the thin, compressed lips had an expression of deprecating space, and of craving only the deepest silence, that the pure ethics of the soul might be overheard, not by long vistas of bodies waiting to receive their customary shock, but by a cluster of spirits competent to hear a still, small voice. The lungs became sonorous enough only to express the reddening of the delicate inspiration which passed through them. The body was the wick of a smouldering soul.

"How far that little candle throws its beams!"

In the meantime, robustious-pated gentlemen

"fill the bores of hearing  
To the smothering of the sense."

But, we are told, an evangelist need not possess the structure of a Channing in order to bring souls to Christ. Such a structure, indeed, would be too light to carry the message of redemption; too refined to entertain its homeliness. When Christ was born, he was put into a manger; there, while the ox ruminated, the divine thought also revolved its message, to pass from those lowly surroundings into the blood of mankind. So the homeliness of an evangelist may be his providential gift.

But it depends upon the method and direction in which an earnest and homely mind applies its ability for addressing other minds that are on the same plane of culture. Neither homeliness nor refinement can undertake to misrepresent the universe, to trade in misstatements of the facts of human nature and of the moral order, and to set forth a conception of God which is shocking to the unsophisticated conscience. Some one, in quoting Pope's line, inverted it, and said, "An honest God's the noblest work of Man." But is the God of the evangelist an

honest one,—is he the God who drew forth the piety of Jesus as the caressing sun draws kisses of fragrance from the flowers?

Suppose now we should divest the evangelical conception of Deity of the artificial sentiment and textual haze which cling to it: let us translate it into the plainest English prose. It would be a perfectly legitimate transaction, because we do not question the saintship of many Calvinistic believers any more than we do that of many Buddhists and Mohammedans. The Catholic Church, which Orthodoxy dreads and despises, has a record of saintship quite equal to its own. Human nature is superior to every creed, and has displayed its heroic fidelities in all countries. When we are bidden to observe the virtue which has flourished under the Orthodox conception of a God, we beg leave to allude to the flourishing and whole-souled iniquity of numbers of its prominent believers, while at the same time we point to the great and good men of all beliefs and nations who never had the advantage of living after Calvin, or in these days of revivalism. The divine quality of mankind—the God made flesh and dwelling here—dwells here in superb unconsciousness of all our catechisms. To show the inconsistency and curious impossibility of Calvinism will not smirch the bloom of its saintship, nor undervalue its splendid services to democracy. But its God is none the less an absurd and impracticable Being. Its men have been mostly superior to it, and amusingly unconscious of its impotency for their genuine deeds. So have men of all nations and periods of belief been unconscious of the primitive and independent value of their human nature. They have constantly referred their own exploits to their own conception of a Deity. In the meantime, the Divine Spirit, not at all offended, has continued at its task of bringing men-and-women-children into the world.

But it is also true that the most extensive immoralities can be traced to erroneous conceptions of the Universe and of the God who rules it; and perhaps under every creed vice has been considerably fostered in this way. So that it is always in order to overhaul the popular conceptions, to show their technical immorality, their corrupting drift. Simply to show their intrinsic unreasonableness must contain some benefit for the mind. This is to be done by taking off the imposing and venerable vest-

ments of doctrines, and then leaving them to stand in the plain air of English.

First, then, an absolute, and therefore infinitely free, Volition, perceiving the necessity of freedom for mankind and giving it free-will, but with the knowledge that this free-will is going to bring sin into the world. This is a doctrine of free-will that theoretically acts only to account for evil and to take from God the responsibility. Practically it shifts the responsibility doubly back upon God.

Second, an infinite Power, existing from all eternity, possessing eternal advantages over every created thing, and consequently capable of really creating them in his image; and yet, when the time for men arrived, so creating them that they are forced to construct the conception of a devil in order to account for the facts!

Third, an omnipotent and omniscient Being, able to calculate the predestined result of the first attractions of atoms and the latest loves or hatreds of souls; and yet spoiling his human children in advance, while they yet lay in the mother's womb of eternity, and rendering it morally impossible that they should practise holiness by making them so that their first act is one of rebellion and dissent from virtue.

Fourth, a tender and merciful and impartial Father, who became so compromised in the act of creation that some malevolent and antagonistic element got the better of him,—came in and worsted him at the very moment of production of his first work, the fathers and mothers of mankind, by insinuating into them unpaternal and unmotherly qualities, and driving God into second thoughts and subterfuges and artifices for repairing this hideous mistake; compelling him to invent a scheme of redemption, but not till after some hundreds of thousands of years-full of men and women had expired, and fallen with their precious freight of loves and yearnings into the pit of bottomless woe!

Fifth, a forecasting and considerate Creator, who, after devising at great expense—no less than that of coming down here and being born as a man—the plan of shedding his own blood for his own satisfaction and to ransom man from death, could keep it hushed up for centuries, as if it were eternity's profoundest secret, to let it out in a stingy style to a few people in a cor-

ner, and leave it to creep about in two or three languages over a scanty portion of the planet; he perfectly indifferent all the while to the millions who never happened to hear of it, and who came into this life as into a man-trap, as if to be caught by the neck and throttled, and carried off by the common sewer of eternity.

Sixth, an omnipresent, all-searching, pervasive, immanent Holy Spirit, brooding over, couched within, this horrible strata-gem of life for thousands of years; watching every relay of newborn souls from the cradle to the grave, and following their fall still further, as in a reverie we let the driving snow-flakes spell our sight; watching their black, damned souls piling up drifts of insoluble misery in the streets of some infernal city, with no evangelist there to recommend the blood of Calvary,—which is not yet shed,—no baritone to sing up the lost sinner.

Seventh, a righteous God, leaving the whole earth to mere good deeds, to vile works, to filthy philanthropies, to scurvy sacrifice of men for each other, to an incessant bloody atonement of brotherhood, to the dear delights and agonies of maternity,—and all in vain; the God himself responsible for confining this knowledge of redemption to a few northern latitudes, and somewhat dependent upon periods of commercial depression to make his children feel where the shoe really pinches; he standing outside the rinks and tabernacles of revivals, like a policeman, to watch who does not go in, and who comes out unbathed in his own blood shed nineteen centuries ago: surely, did any so-called radical, freethinking, infidel movement ever condense into deliberate expression, ever boil down into a few nonchalant phrases, such an immense, immeasurable, ghastly fraud? And yet honest men commend this fraud of a Deity as a Saviour of sinners; itself the chief of sinners. And persons prepare little devices of song, silent prayer, piteous story, to touch people's hearts into accepting this tremendously impossible Creator as the God of their souls, and the objective point of their ardent worship.

Was such a Creator worthy to have made this universe? Could such a slovenly, disorderly spirit, full of shifts and afterthoughts; ever spoiling precious material; ever patching, never ending, the cobbling of his own work; falling at length into great agony and bloody sweat, not perhaps because the work threatened to be a failure, but because he had become so confused as to call upon

himself and ask why he had forsaken him,—could this style of mechanic have let fall into measureless space one rounded, lucent drop from his finger, swarming with infusoria of stars, streaked with galaxies, crossed by meteors that never jostle,—a drop whose contents pass and mingle, weave the thread of a dance by ratios of harmony, advance and recede in movements of the most stately courtesy, so that the sky is to us a spectacle of order and proportion, a monitor of irreversible method, a pledge against interpolation and afterthought, a certificate of the divine immutability? And when the planets spell out these letters of consistent method for us every night,—the same which patriarchs read and shepherds wondered at,—is there scrawled anywhere a hint that the Creator would begin to fumble and boggle when he came to studding the firmament of human life with souls, making myriads of them for ages in a way to spoil, and then punishing them for spoiling; making them from condemned material, and sending them upon an unmapped ocean, on an undescribed adventure, with a misleading chart, to sink or swim by luck; he then, though repenting that he made them so, not going honestly at work to build all future souls upon a more seaworthy pattern, but making himself, in a fit of economy, into one perfect pattern soul, too perfect for perfect reproduction, the despair of imitation, and then converting this perfect soul of his into a message to all the others whom his apprentice-work had spoiled, to this effect,—that unless they believed in this perfect soul that he was, and accepted his amount of innocent blood as atoning for his own mistakes as a Creator, they shall all be damned? Yet this is the concealed, but animating, theory of revivals!

It is of no use for the agents of these movements to point to what they style results; to cast up columns of figures of converted and redeemed souls; to flank them with columns of souls who have been impressed. If they really succeed in enticing souls to believe heartily in such a God, who became a Saviour to redeem the results of his own work, the souls are *perverted*, not converted. I do not care how immoral their previous lives may have been, nor how temporarily correct their demeanor grows; the most abandoned of them, if they could have been conscious of the whole scope of the mental act to which their faith was pledged, never committed a greater immorality than to believe in such a

doctrine of Deity. It has helped to keep the world infested with unexpiated crime; it is the dry-rot of civilized communities; instead of effecting a reconciliation of man and God, it introduces an irreconcilable antagonism into the nature of God himself, turning one part of him into an imperfect Deity and another into a Saviour who cannot obliterate the imperfection, and does not become a Saviour for that purpose; it pretends that the God who made men as they have been for ages is a God of such perfect justice that he is obliged to turn himself into a Saviour to have his sense of justice satisfied; that he makes men such as they are, and then in afterthought black-mails them, keeps levying a ransom,—was ever a doctrine of such ingenuity invented to keep up the breed of sin? Do not look at the fugitive statistics of revivals, but ponder the incessant record of evangelical depravities. "Age cannot dim, nor custom stale, their infinite variety." Read there, while your native and unbiased moral sense is stunned, the natural and inevitable effect of believing in an immoral God; the unconscious and organic effect of it; an effect as subtle and invisible as malaria, for which poor human creatures in ignorance are not responsible, but for which all their sincerity is but the antidote of a quack.

Conceive, for instance, what is going to be the result, in the long run, of impressing an intemperate person with the notion that his pledge of total abstinence is a delusion; instead of it he must believe in Christ; that is the belief which renders all pledges made by the personal conscience superfluous; a simple pledge is nothing but a moral snare. We know that the success and glory of the Washingtonian movement rested upon the private pledge. It may have been broken many times, letting the victim drop into his sea of drink; but it constantly recurred, and finally became strong enough to hold the man,—as when a foundering vessel has a line thrown to it from the land; it ravelled like tow; another and another is sent across the surf, till one passes that is strong enough to be a safety-line, though it is spun of hemp like the first. A pledge, like an oath, belongs to personal religion; and a pledge visibly made to men is in the majority of cases more binding than a secret promise made to heaven, because it involves the social honor of the pledger, and keeps before him the salutary restriction of the public voice. Whoever, in the name of religion,

undermines the peculiar sentiment that is involved in pledges, is an enemy of the public morality.

And what is the belief in Christ which is proposed as a substitute? Not a belief that he was a holy man who must have abhorred intemperance at the same time that he represented the modern love and pity which respect the victim and strive to make him sin no more; not an effort of the imagination to bring into the moral life the figure of a perfect and benignant being to be a restraining presence, like the memory of some dear, dead mother; but merely this—believe that he was God in the flesh doing atonement for your love of drink, so that it shall not be imputed to you; stop drinking principally because infinite justice satisfied itself in Christ! Had that been for hundreds of years a morally effective statement, there would not be to-day one evangelical drunkard.

Perhaps a victim of his drink, imbibing the unwonted stimulus of a sympathetic crowd, and swayed by the sweet song full of pitying words, may undertake to abstain by virtue of that abstract statement concerning the efficacy of the second person in the Godhead. How long will his weakened brain keep up such a thoroughly artificial attitude? What is there in it, organically connected with the laws of human nature, that can enter into a man's soul and resist his raging for strong drink? Ask him to become temperate because the square described upon the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the two squares described upon the other sides; beseech him to become sober because the antipodes exist, though he has never been there; conjure him by any purely technical statement that does not carry any weight of moral obligation, as soon as by this metaphysical afterthought of the theologians, which may possibly restrain his hankering hand as he walks around the next decanter: but he will do well not to take many walks. He is left at the mercy of a phrase, like the man whose furniture and other effects served as mnemonics, and helped to fix all sorts of dates and philosophical statements. Once, during his absence, the servant removed an old box from his room, and sent the shirts and stockings which had been in his bureau to the wash. On his return he was inconsolable, and insisted that now he knew

nothing of Assyrian history, and that all his proofs of the immortality of the soul were in the suds.

There are signs that the more intelligent among Orthodox believers are disturbed in their conventional drowse by the unwelcome reports of the continual villainies that hide under the shadow of the creed; they are mortified, alarmed, conscious of an indefensible spot; they hurry with the old material to strengthen it, instead of throwing themselves behind the bulwark of natural morality and cutting down all the tangled underbrush in front that will obstruct their fire. Then, too, they are plagued by the aggressions of the scientific men, and are becoming conscious that the customary arguments of their theology are too thin to wear, but too venerable to surrender. They tacitly acknowledge that virtue and heroism exist among unchurched people, that villainies can skulk in pews and pulpits. Now waking in this worriment and unrest, as people do in river-bottoms during the spring freshet to find all their utensils afloat and Nature's simple element standing fathom deep in the house, what shall they do,—escape with the sweetness of life, or stay and drown out of deference to the old dwelling and its heirlooms?

Indeed, a revival is needed through the breadth of this country: there is no man of any belief so indifferent as to question that. But in this moment of a great opportunity, when the people are suffering from every kind of reaction, from over-speculation, over-living, from the vast accumulation of frauds in politics, in trade, in offices of trust,—when the great country's new century opens in doubt, in disquiet, in lassitude, in national depression,—the revival that we need cannot be extorted from the old doctrines that have sheltered so much immorality: they are squeezed dry; they are husks that fly before the flail of Natural Religion. What! cure the fever in a typhoid district by opening all the drains? Disinfect a hospital by inviting all the small-pox patients to lodge there? Let us try something else. Don't revive the old doctrine: a thousand years settle in deep decrepitude upon it. There is no Medea who is sorcerer enough to cut it up, and boil it into young life in the cauldron of a new statement. An intrinsic falsity cannot be revived. A partial truth cannot be juggled into a whole one. Opinions that are at once unnatural and obsolete cannot be modernized and freshly commended. It is simply pite-

ous to observe how the Orthodoxy that suspected it was becoming indefensible is clutching at the phrases which promise to save it. They look like life-belts, and were indeed once full of wind; but the grasp of the drowning man is too vigorous for the material, and it exhales with a sound like rhetoric. How strikingly this has been brought to our attention in some late attempts to coax the life still to linger in a moribund Atonement! A king who punishes himself, or who chastises himself, to satisfy a sense of justice that is hurt by a violation of his law, violates the very sanctuary of law, and appeals to our deepest sense of injustice. A teacher who holds out his hand to be struck by an offending pupil is not punished for the offence: there is no chastisement for him in the single blow that is given to his palm. The pupil is chastised for the iniquity of a theory that, fortunately, could not have been repeated in the same school without hilarity. Moreover, such a theory involves the necessity that every sinning man should have a chance to inflict upon his Redeemer, wherever he can find him, a personal chastisement over and above the moral infliction of his sin. It is too absurd. The spasms of lecture-rooms and tabernacles cannot galvanize a soul back into that corpse whose crime has been that it lived by false pretences on the human heart. If a great people would tingle with Revival, let it stand in the circuit of Nature and permit the element to stream through it; let the limbs shudder at the salutary shock of morals and natural religion; let the hearts become reservoirs of this universal power.

What do we mean by saying, Recur to Nature, pursue the method of her laws, rest upon the principles of natural religion? Are these also phrases which the liberal thinkers have fallen into the habit of using, while they are unconscious that they express no corresponding fact? We might illustrate the substantial verity of the terms we use by showing, for instance, what is the true mental method in the attainment of any branch of science, in the pursuit of any knowledge, in the development of any social and moral condition. But the revivalist would admit our facts, and repudiate our inference. He would deny that they relate to his business of converting souls to Christ; in that province, he says, the Holy Spirit operates by a different method. We cannot come to any agreement, because we do not occupy a

common ground. What can we propose which the evangelist, upon his own principles, is bound to recognize as possessing a common element of authority? Suppose we refer to the method which Jesus himself pursued in addressing human souls. I, for one, have always been not only perfectly willing, but eager, to accept, as possessing high spiritual authority, the tone and treatment of Jesus, whether he indulged in powerful invective or gentle persuasiveness. For Jesus was an evangelist; the breathing and suffering Jesus was a genuine revivalist. The dead Jesus has been converted by the afterthought of men into an atoning figure, and his operation is made technical and official. But mark how Jesus dealt with souls who were face to face with him, long before the curious discovery was made that he was the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world. The supreme motive of his life was to command the kingdom of a holy life to men. How did he do it; how did he gain it himself; how did he describe it? In terms that most impressively rebuke the manners of the modern revivalist. "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how." What a happy representation that is of the whole method of the Creator, which he pursues in every part of the world, and has found so effective, either in bringing the universe itself slowly forth out of chaotic conditions, or in fashioning a blade of grass! Nothing could be more organically true to Nature than the similes which the imagination of Jesus selected spontaneously to express his sense of the method of spiritual growth. He had felt his own soul grow in harmony with all the rest of Nature, impalpably, without spasmodic appliances or tricks of speech. There never was a nobler example of the soul's function to deposit religion silently and by relays of time. It took time, remoteness, modesty, and patience to ripen his own ministry into that bright, tender passion-flower whose roots have been transferred into the soil of humanity. We can count the spikes, the hammer, and the spear-head; but they were turned off at a forge where hurry does not strike too soon, nor delay too late. His images derived from husbandry always emphasize deepness of earth, judicious letting alone, and patient waiting. Some seeds will spring up *because* they have no deep-

ness of earth; they are scattered by hysterical moods and skin-deep emotions, and the same shallowness forbids them to have a root. The natural inclinations toward truth are as minute as seed. God in man is a mustard-seed—the least of all seeds. How imperceptibly this seed falls into us! The bosom of the earth, though it is all alive with the elements of future harvests, is scarcely less conscious of the light shower that drips between the sower's fingers. You would not expect the earth to recollect the day in Spring when seeds fell, and gave a tingling feeling of first life to the surface. Hardly can man recollect, though he pretends to, and officiously names the day and hour, when a heavenly disposition began to redeem him. Jesus did not believe in forcing plants; he insisted upon the gentle revolution which the swelling and germinating of a seed describes. He is incessantly playing with such unobtrusive figures, commending the spiritual life because it is like the gradual infusion of the flavor of salt, of the quickening of leaven, of the mild diffusion of the candle's light. But all his figures appropriate genuine and indispensable elements which cannot be spared from a single day of our life. Is he dealing in rhetoric, or describing how he became the first Christian?

Now there is nothing in the structure of the modern soul that exempts it from obedience to the same law of gradual and silent development. An American starts furnished by birth with certain tendencies for goodness and viciousness. The history of his nature reaches back farther than he can trace, but it accumulated in the same way by which it must be extended; and he does his soul great injury if he tries to introduce convulsive efforts, sudden transitions, emotional surprises, into its life. If he starts with the theory that religion must be quickened in him by submitting to attacks upon his feelings, his heart will grow calloused beyond the provocation of the keenest lash, and its normal beat will be destroyed. It is important to emphasize this in a country where many sects appeal so largely to mere states of feeling, and depend so loosely upon men's confession of their past lives and states, and upon the rhetoric of hopes which coruscate for a brief hour against a murky background. Next morning, hearts, like shells of rockets, strew the ground; and the spiritual life is reduced to a remembrance of that sputtering moment. But the kingdom

of God is planting, tilling, expecting, waiting with even breath, taking it upon trust that hidden seeds have tender sprouts without pulling them up to see. Nothing is permanent but what is gradual. At the rate of an inch or so to a century America emerged before Europe from the old deep, displacing it, shouldering it imperceptibly to either hand, till at length there were new lands for men. Is a human soul less than a continent, less permanent, to be treated trivially, spasmodically, to be forced by the fervors of camp-meetings, to be lashed to racing speed by the phrases of revivalists, to be starved by the dealers in common-places, to be bullied by texts, to be chased and run down and pommelled by cant about conversion and definitions of a change of heart. Why! think of the possible future of a human soul; think of its immeasurable past, and of its sublime transitions from epoch to epoch of perpetual life! What a long and deep inspiration of the divine breath it is! What an oak it is destined to be, with roots wide-clutching into the soil of a universe, and umbrage resisting the storms of ages to sway robustly in the perennial weather! Can you grow a soul in five minutes in a Tabernacle, as the Indian jugglers pretend to mature a rose-bush before your eyes? Give the soul more time. This life will deposit but one ring of the thousands. Let it be patiently and surely done, and do not feed it as we do the railroad traveler who has but one trip to make, and lunches by steam.

Does it follow that the soul develops its gifts with little trouble, because it is performed in a regular and silent order? So far from that, all souls, with or without culture, steeped in degradation or cockered by respectability, are alike in this respect,—that they find it no holiday matter to conform to the law of growth. The fine art of living, like every other art, shows the effort which it cost by an appearance of ease and lightness: according as that is reached, we estimate the triumph over obstacles. Let me help myself with an illustration. Your mood goes tilting over a billowy symphony that rolls so quietly conscious of power as to discredit any idea that it had a struggle for existence. But you have only to make your way up the stream of the composer's thought to come upon his rapids and feel the current boil. Perhaps you explore him with a very light boat, mere birch or *papier-maché*, finding good fortune if it is light enough to carry around

his fails; but you will hardly expect to go straight up against his sturdy purpose not to be baffled in reaching the deep, sunlit expanse below. He pays the price of all the fret, so he brings down to you moods from the mountains; you repay him with heart's ease and happier journeying, but amid it all the evolution of your soul must be infected with his strenuous and pathetic method. The symmetry that we worship is due to the opposition that it has met.

It is true, if a man swallows an indigestible article, it is not always quietly to be put out of the way. Perhaps it must be thrown off with a spasm; then the damage to the constitution must be repaired by the silent experiments of healthy feeding. But do we organize the cholera into a social force, and undertake to engineer with it the human race, in consequence of noticing that it is a revulsion from foul and ignorant living,—a revenge of Nature upon those who violate her salutary precept of cleanliness? Cholera is not a creed with which to work upon all subjects indiscriminately and to depopulate healthy and industrious streets, just because it has warned and ravaged foul precincts of mankind. Yet theology does this. Its systems of forcing religion by conversion turn all souls into patients, and are applications of cholera to regions fairly noted for salubrity.

For the average Conscience is really an assiduous disinfectant of society, blowing where it listeth, to lift and carry off on silent pinions the vapors which gather. What a household convenience is its viewless ventilation! But we cannot hurry the rate of its current. We cannot medicate what is medicine itself.

The effect of the popular methods of goading the Conscience and the spiritual sensibilities is to make them morbidly self-conscious, to call into diseased prominence the elements which thrive best in silence, to interfere with that slow refining process by the movement of which a religious tendency came into human nature. Nothing will satisfy our practitioners of the soul unless they can have the bare nerve under inspection, and prick it till it quivers. All delicate reserve upon the genuine topics of religion is violated; arteries are slashed to be bunglingly tied up; the eyes are taken out to be scoured and reset; the heart is pinched to make it flutter; stethoscope, ophthalmoscope, electrometer, sphygmograph,—all the tools of scrutiny are applied, and a hole

made in the stomach to be kept permanently open to watch the process of digestion and preserve a diary of the internal heat. God and Jesus, heaven and hell, are talked about in the tone of the caucus. The invisible soul is tortured into speech and a sad, caricatured visibility,—as if a sweet angel, who ought never to be really seen, but only felt, were compelled to throw a tremulous, distorted reflection of her grave and glorious face upon our looking-glass to startle us into a conviction of her presence; but, in doing that, to disappoint us, to disenchant, to breed suspicion that heaven is a vulgar place and Deity a collector of deformities. It is no angel that we see, but an ill-bred human face,—the lineaments of over-conscious egotism, the pretence that the divine order in the human soul needs readjusting. Sick with such a sight of our conceit, we might well despair of salvation.

No doubt, there are some souls who only get a surface for a vineyard by a volcanic upheaval. But Nature loves to symbolize our purest way of growing by the quiet in which she spent ages to deposit her vast plateaus from profound oceans, that she might get soil ready for the grain-crops that now satisfy the hunger of a world.

In the contagion of a heated air, a man will cry out, "I have found Jesus; I have found God!" It will take as much time to find God as He has existed. People will rave with delight over their sulphuret of iron, mistaking it for a trace of gold. Such mistakes prove very damaging to the human disposition. The placid heart of that Jesus who is so profusely *found* at revivals felt that there need be neither noise nor publicity about the new birth. The seeker came to him by night. He was told to let the Spirit circulate through the soul. You hear the sound thereof, become aware of its proximity, but cannot tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth.

Let the spirit that was in Jesus be the subject of another article, to supplement the present one.

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