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RELIGION AND CULTURE.

THE simple and comprehensive idea of education includes within itself almost everything. It is as many-sided as human nature, and its limits are as wide as the capacities of the soul, which in its hopes, desires, and aspirations is infinite. All things have an educational value, and that man is educable is the great and guiding fact in history. Forms of government, laws, social customs, literature, industrial arts, climate, and soil not only educate, but are esteemed according to the kind of education which they give. Whatever tends to make one more than he is or to hinder him from being less than he is, is a part of education. The various races of men are doubtless unlike in their natural endowments, but they differ far more widely by reason of the dissimilar educational influences which have acted upon them.

It may be affirmed with truth that our good qualities are acquired.

We are taught to be modest, truthful, brave, gentle, humane, as we are taught to speak a language. Excellence is thus a triumph over nature, and virtue is the result of victories over instinctive passion. The tendency so common in our day to exalt instinct, almost to consecrate it, springs from an optimistic theory which is utterly at variance with the facts. The wise man does not follow nature but subdues it into conformity with reason; though to do this he must, of course, work in accordance with the laws of nature. The first and deepest element in the life of the individual as of the race is religious faith, which consequently is the chief and highest instrument of education. Religion is man's supreme effort to rise above nature and above his natural self. It gives him a

definite aim and an absolute ideal. "Be ye perfect," it says, "as your Heavenly Father is perfect." It constitutes him a dweller in a world where mere utility has no place. It gives him high thoughts of himself, and thereby exalts his aims and heightens his standards of conduct. It makes him feel that to be true, to be good, to be beautiful, is most desirable, even though no practical gain or use should thence follow. It turns his thoughts to spiritual worth and diminishes his estimate of what is accidental and phenomenal. It addresses itself to the soul, and seeks to give it that pre-eminence which is the condition of all progress; for, "by the soul only shall the nations be great and free." It proclaims the paramount worth of right conduct, which alone brings a man at peace with himself, and thus makes possible the harmonious development of his being. Little cause for wonder is there that everywhere in all time priests should be the first teachers of the race; that poetry, and music, and painting, and sculpture, and architecture should first become possible when the creative voice of faith in the unseen commands them to exist. But upon this it is not my purpose now to dwell, and I merely intimate that true religion, as it appeals to all man's highest faculties with supreme power, must necessarily promote true culture. The direct aim of religion, however, is not to produce culture, nor is it the immediate aim of culture to produce religion; and it may, therefore, happen that they come in conflict. I take the matter seriously, and have not the faintest desire to join in the easy sneer with which this word, *culture*, is often received. That in the mouths of the frivolous and the vulgar it should be no better than cant, is only what may happen to any word which such persons take up, and it were wiser to reflect that the ideal of culture has exercised an irresistible fascination over many of the most finely endowed minds that have ever lived.

The word itself may not indeed be the best; but it seems to serve the purpose better than any other which we who speak English possess. They who propose culture to us as something desirable, would have us aim at a full and harmonious development of our nature, greater freedom from narrowness and prejudice, more disinterested and expansive sympathies, flexibility and openness of thought, courtesy and gentleness, and whatever else goes to form the idea of a liberal education. And if we ask them what end we may expect to gain by following this advice, we betray our inability to appreciate their words. Culture is an end in itself, and brings its own reward. It is good to have a trained and flexible mind, wide and refined sympathies. Just as those who are truly religious do not value their faith for any worldly advantage which it may give them, so the disciples of culture cannot consider the pursuit of excellence as a means of success. To aim at such a

result would be to deny the virtue of culture. They are little concerned with the usefulness of knowledge. The knowledge is more than its use, and they choose rather to be intelligent than to be rich or powerful or in office.

To urge the pursuit of learning with a view to money-making is apostasy from light, is desertion to the enemies of the soul. This opinion, it is needless to say, is in open conflict with our American notions of education. Utility is our guiding principle in this matter, and to say of any kind of knowledge that it is not useful is to condemn it. The best defence which we can set up in behalf of religion itself is to prove that it promotes the general welfare; that it is useful, not that it is true. Hardly any man with us is able to rise above this spirit, which controls not only our elementary, but equally our higher education. We universally regard knowledge as a means to worldly success. A certain mental training we hold to be essential, and those who go beyond this study with a view to entering some one of the professions. But to study for even a learned profession is not the way to get a liberal education; for this highest culture comes when the mind is disciplined for its own sake, and not with the view to narrow and fit it to any trade or business. Hence, it not unfrequently happens that successful professional men are almost wholly lacking in general intelligence, mental flexibility, and wide sympathies. And this is even used as an argument against culture.

That we take a utilitarian and low view of education is neither accidental nor unintentional. It is the view which our history suggests and seems to justify, and it is the one which we as a people have deliberately chosen to adopt. And in the estimation of a very great many persons the result is satisfactory. The aim is not exalted, and it has been attained with remarkable rapidity and ease. Hence we are self-complacent and inclined to boastfulness. We point with pride to our vast population, to the boundless extent of territory which we have subdued and forced to yield up its wealth, to the roads and cities which we have built, to the schools which are within the reach of all and are the same for all, to the industrial and commercial enterprise which enables us to compete successfully in the markets of the world with the oldest and richest nations, to the inventive genius which leads in the application of mechanical contrivances to the production of personal and social comfort, and to crown our happiness we are the freest of all peoples. That we are faultless no one pretends to claim; but our achievements are so real and valuable, that we should not be slow to believe that the methods which have enabled us to accomplish so much will give us also the power to overcome the dangers which may threaten our peace and progress. Our aims are mechanical,

and in congratulating ourselves upon the success with which we attain them we lose sight of the fact that these aims ought not to be pursued as ends in themselves. Freedom and wealth, like railroads and telegraphs, are means and not ends. Their value is not in themselves, but in what is made possible through them; and it is the office of culture to force people to recognize this. The cultivated mind is smitten with the love of an internal and spiritual beauty, and holds machinery cheap. It is bent upon seeing things as they are; it looks through marble walls and gaudy liveries and the smoke of factories, and will not be content until it discovers what beauty and truth, if any, are hidden under these shows. It is wholly free from the superstition of wealth and success. If the rich man is ignorant, coarse, and narrow, he is a beggar in the eyes of culture. Fond parents in this land find great comfort in the thought that their boy may one day be President of the United States; but if the President is a sot or a boor, culture will ignore him though he should hold office for life.

We cannot laugh at culture to any good purpose, for it has the spiritual mind which judges all things. To the opinions of the vulgar it gives no heed, and they who have insight are reverent, seeing that it is good. It can be indifferent even to fame. Here again we may remark that its unworldly temper and spiritual standard of perfection bring it into friendly relation with religion. Culture is concerned with the formation of the mind and the character, and values all things with reference to this end. It does not despise temporal and mechanical benefits, but seeks to turn them to the account of the soul. The man is more than his money, or his office, or his trade. Wealth is good in that it gives freedom and independence, the opportunity for self-improvement. The worth of all this money-getting industrialism which absorbs our life is in the preparation which it makes for culture. The test of civilization is the degree of human perfection which it produces. To dwell with complacency upon the thought of our cities, railroads, and wealth, is to be narrow and vulgar. We are not concerned with wood, and stone, and iron, but with man. What kind of man will this social mechanism shape? This is what we are interested to know, and this is what culture would have us keep in view. There are many intelligent, and otherwise not unfriendly persons, who placing themselves at this standpoint, find it impossible to look with enthusiasm or even complacency upon our American life. M. Renan, for instance, with whom the idea of culture is supreme, takes no pains to conceal his opinion of us. "The countries," he says, "which, like the United States, have created a considerable popular instruction, without any serious higher education, will long have to expiate this fault by their intellectual mediocrity,

their vulgarity of manners, their superficial spirit, their lack of general intelligence."

Again: "The ideal of American society is further removed than that of any other from the ideal of a society governed by science. The principle that society exists only for the welfare and freedom of the individuals of which it is composed, would seem to be contrary to the plans of nature, who takes care of the species, but sacrifices the individual. It is greatly to be feared lest the final outcome of this kind of democracy be a social state in which the degenerate masses will have no other desire than to indulge in the ignoble pleasures of the lower and vulgar man." And M. Renan thinks it probable that the senseless vanity of a population which has received elementary instruction, will make it unwilling to contribute to the maintenance of an education superior to its own; and he, therefore, has little hope that democracy will prove favorable to culture and the production of great men, which, in his opinion, is the end for which the human race exists. With this view of American life Mr. Matthew Arnold coincides. The circumstances of the case force him to think that America, the chosen home of newspapers and politics, is without general intelligence; "and that in the things of the mind, and in culture and totality, America, instead of surpassing us all, falls short." The cause of this he finds not so much in our democratic form of government as in the inherited tendencies of the people of the United States, which issues from the English Puritan middle class and reproduces its narrow conception of man's spiritual range.

The Puritan character with all its good points is undoubtedly angular, partial, and without æsthetic sympathy or appreciation, and the predominant influence of New England more than democracy has stood in the way of the harmonious development of American life. What literature we have is almost exclusively of Puritan origin; and when it smells of the soil it is narrow and provincial, and when it is the echo of European schools of thought it is tame and feeble. Theodore Parker, for instance, who is looked upon as one of the most liberal and cultivated minds of New England, is hard and fanatical, and almost wholly lacking in the sweetness and light which are essential elements of culture. His skeptical and rationalistic temper leaves him as deficient in totality as though he were one of the original Pilgrim Fathers. And in Mr. Emerson, who is generally supposed to come nearer the ideal of culture than any other American, there is a whimsicalness, a lack of sanity, and a mannerism, both of thought and expression, which are wholly at variance with completeness of character. We must not, however, be unfair to New England, which has been and still is the home of American culture, and though it be not the highest

it is the best we have. The South has never shown any love of intellectual excellence for its own sake. Its great men are politicians, partisan leaders; and some of the most famous, as Henry Clay, for instance, without liberal education. The West, in the public opinion, is only another name for coarseness and vulgarity; and it was hardly to be expected that a generation which had to fell the forest and drain the prairie should find leisure or opportunity for higher culture. Let us then receive with equanimity and good nature the criticism which finds us so greatly deficient in knowledge and refinement. Our ability to do this is of itself encouraging. The era in which it was possible to think that whatever is American is excellent has fortunately passed, and a greater familiarity with the history, the literature, and the manners of other nations has taken the freshness from our self-conceit. The sweet uses of adversity too have taught us most admirable lessons. Every man may have a vote, and every child may go to school, and the time may still be out of joint; the increase of national wealth need not protect the multitude from poverty and suffering, and the growth of intelligence may coexist with the decay of morals and the loss of faith.

"It is not fatal to Americans," says Mr. Arnold, "to have no religious establishments, and no effective centres of high culture; but it is fatal to them to be told by their flatterers, and to believe, that they are the most intelligent people in the world, when of intelligence in the true and fruitful sense of the word, they even singularly, as we have seen, come short."

Admitting all, even the worst that can be said of us on this point, our very enemies must nevertheless concede that the preparations for a higher culture have been made by us and exist under altogether favorable conditions. Great fault may be justly found with our whole educational mechanism. The colleges and universities are doubtless imperfect enough and often obstacles to the development of intelligence. But the remedy is in our hands.

Our wealth and industrialism place within easy reach whatever can be accomplished by money, and there are no difficulties which may not be overcome by earnest faith in the ideal which culture presents. The important question for us is whether this ideal ought to excite our admiration and love. A very great number of sincere and enlightened men, representing conflicting tendencies and opposite schools of thought, look upon the ideal of culture as false and hurtful to the best interests of man; and the objections which they urge are numerous and weighty. The masses of mankind, they say, have neither the opportunity nor the desire for culture; and this is fortunate, for devotion to this ideal has an unmistakable tendency to diminish zeal for the general welfare. The

men of culture hold themselves aloof from the crowd and take no interest in the practical questions of the day. They live in a dreamland of poesy, and in the consciousness of their inability to help forward any good cause content themselves with criticism which unsettles convictions and weakens the zest for action. They preach loud enough that the end of life is an act and not a thought, and yet both their example and their teaching tend to obscure all the ways of life in which men are accustomed to labor. Goethe writes poetry and preserves his philosophic serenity in the midst of the appalling calamities of his country, of which he seems to be altogether oblivious. Mr. Carlyle, through half a century, chides his fellow-men, accepts neither faith nor science, neither acts himself nor points out to others how they may labor to good purpose. Mr. Arnold frankly admits that he has no desire to see men of culture intrusted with power, and were he consulted by his countrymen on questions of actual moment he could only repeat the precept of Socrates, "Know thyself." When France lay crushed and bleeding at the feet of Germany, M. Renan withdrew to a quiet retreat to compose Platonic dialogues, in which he gives expression to his contempt for the crowd and his distrust of all the popular movements of the age. Culture thus seems to produce a skeptical and fickle habit of mind which is incompatible with strong and abiding convictions, and consequently destructive of resolution and enthusiasm, without which man cannot accomplish any great purpose in life; and Mr. Frederic Harrison may not be wholly mistaken in thinking that the men of culture are the only class of responsible beings in the community who cannot with safety be intrusted with power. This he says of England, and without reference to America, where this class can hardly be said to exist at all; and the apprehension of their getting into power need not, therefore, be a cause of anxiety to our statesmen, whose mental resources, even as things are, seem to be not more than sufficient to meet the demands which are made upon them. The believers in culture, it is further urged, are propagandists of a cosmopolitan and non-national spirit, which undermines patriotism, directs attention to an impossible ideal, and disenchant men of their inherited character, which, whatever may be its faults, is the essential basis of virtue and excellence. The education derived from the national genius, like that of the family, cannot be supplied by any other agency, and the cosmopolitanism which ignores this must necessarily tend to create a temper like that of the ideal Epicurean, who is described as indifferent to public affairs and the fate of empires, and not subject to any such weakness as pity for the poor or jealousy of the rich. In this view then culture is destructive of patriotism.

Other objections are urged against its ethical character. Cul-

ture, it is said, is only a refined epicureanism. Its aim is to educate man so as to fit him for the enjoyment of the greatest possible pleasure. It shrinks from vice, not because it is evil, but because it is gross and disgusting. The men of culture, like the ancient Greeks, are without the sense of sin, and consequently at best have but a conventional morality.

Aristophanes was not more pagan than Goethe, who is the typical representative of the new religion. He it is who taught that to be beautiful is higher than to be good; and his denial of sin is implied in the doctrine that repentance is wrong. He assumes that there is no objective standard of right and wrong. Man is a law unto himself, and the pursuit of perfection is the effort to bring all his faculties into free and unhindered play. That which I feel to be true is true for me; that which I feel to be good is good for me; and therefore creeds and dogmas, whether religious or philosophic, cease to have either life or meaning as soon as the time-spirit has flown from them. The web of life is woven of necessity and chance; we must yield to destiny and seek to make the most of chance. Happiness is to be sought not in the fulfilment of duty, but in the sweetness and light, which are the results of the complete and harmonious development of our nature. "Woe be to every kind of education," says Goethe, "which destroys the means of obtaining true culture, and points our attention to the end instead of securing our happiness on the way." The philosophy of culture is then, it would appear, only another form of utilitarianism, and tacitly assumes that greatest happiness-principle, against which it so loudly protests.

It, in fact, looks upon this life as alone real and enjoyable, and considers him a madman, who troubles himself here in the hope of attaining blessedness hereafter. Morality consequently is nothing absolute, and whatever secures our "happiness on the way" is good. The point sought to be made is this: that, as culture results intellectually in universal criticism and doubt, so it morally ends in unlimited indulgence. The vulgar herd, finding no delight in the refined and studied pleasures of the cultivated, will have no other way of showing its appreciation of their theories than by wallowing in Epicurus's sty. And this, indeed, is the history of culture amongst all peoples. We know from Aristophanes what was the moral condition of the age of Pericles; and he ascribes the frightful degeneracy from the standard of conduct which made the men who fought and won at Marathon, to what he most aptly calls the "new education," or in the language of our time, modern culture. The same story is repeated in Rome. Virtue and public spirit flourished in the midst of poverty and rustic manners; but when conquered Greece with the silken

chords of culture led her captors captive, together with letters and refinement every kind of corruption was introduced into the state; and the Latin classics almost universally attribute the ruin of their country to this cause. Sallust considers a taste for painting as a vice no less than drunkenness; and Horace abounds in praise of the rigid virtue and simple ways of the fathers. And in modern times the age of Leo X. was an era of moral degeneracy, and that of Louis XIV. was immediately followed by the most humiliating and disgraceful epoch in French history; while in England, culture, as represented by the court of Charles II. fostered the most loathsome and hideous sensuality. Germany's culture period, too, is one of moral paralysis, and it is not surprising that it should have created the philosophy of hate and despair as taught by Schopenhauer and Von Hartmann. Goethe himself may inspire admiration and enthusiasm, but not respect.

It is further urged that this historical relationship between culture and licentiousness is founded in the nature of things; that polite literature and the elegant arts necessarily tend to create frivolous and effeminate habits of thought and feeling, because they separate the sentiment from the deed, whereas the end of feeling is to impel us to act. To luxuriate therefore in fine sentiments, noble thoughts, and the elegancies of style, and to rest in this indulgence is of itself immoral. The springs of action are thereby perverted from their proper use, and a character is developed like that of novel readers who weep over the misfortunes of imaginary heroes, and spurn the wretched from their door. The lovers of culture themselves recognize the evil and the danger, and hence they vociferously preach the necessity of action; but in vain, as their own example shows. They give us fine theories, but have no hope of realizing them; which is not surprising, for the habit of considering things from every point of view, and of weighing all that can be said for and against every opinion, begets a sophisticated and hesitating disposition, which as a matter of course renders action distasteful, and moreover warps the practical judgment and unfits it for deciding upon any right course of conduct. A dreamer is not a man of action, and the work of the world is not done by critics.

St. Paul's examples of men who wrought great things by faith may be generalized and applied universally. All heroic conduct springs from the confidence which comes of faith. Knowledge does not suffice; for what will be the outcome of a given series of human acts cannot be known, and must therefore be taken on trust. Men who perform grandly see what ought to be done and move forward; that is, they trust their intuitions, and not the analysis of a critical survey of the situation. At the battle of

Lodi, Napoleon said the bridge must be taken; his officers declared it impregnable; he unsheathed his sword and passed over it behind the fleeing enemy. Culture is diletantism. It may fill up an idle hour, but is as impotent to lead the world as millinery. In fact Mr. Arnold himself seems to perceive that it is just here that the special weakness of the new philosophy is revealed. The men of culture have failed conspicuously in conduct. They are unable even to subdue "the great faults of our animality." "They have failed in morality, and morality is indispensable." He insists again and again upon the paramount importance of conduct, and for the development of this ethical character he trusts to religion and not to culture. Hence though for him God is only "the stream of tendency," he will not give up the Bible. He throws aside indeed the whole dogmatic basis upon which the Bible rests, and yet would still seem to think that it is possible to preserve its moral teaching; and this leads us to another objection which is urged by the opponents of culture, viz., that it is irreligious. That this objection is not unfounded appears plainly to follow from what has already been said; for if culture fatally ends in universal criticism and immorality it is obviously in open conflict with religion. There is, it is true, an apparent similarity in their aims and ideals. Both propose perfection as the end to be sought for, and both place this perfection in an inward spiritual state, and not in any outward condition; and neither therefore looks upon material progress with the complacency which is so natural to the mere worldling. A deeper view however will discover the latent antagonism. The perfection at which culture aims is purely natural and has reference to this life alone. It loves excellence rather than virtue and is enamoured of beauty rather than of goodness. Religion emphasizes the evil of sin; culture its grossness. The thoughts of the religious are with God, while the lovers of culture are occupied with themselves, and hence humility is the attitude of the one and pride of the other. Self-denial is accepted by culture only as a means to higher and purer pleasure; by religion it is inculcated as the proof of love. Culture believes in this life only; religion in the life to come. And finally culture looks upon itself as an end; but in the eyes of religion it can be at best merely a means.

As it is not my purpose to enter a plea on behalf of culture I shall be at no pains to attempt an answer in detail to all these objections. That many of them at least are not captious, but are based upon real views of the subject I am ready to admit; and nevertheless the case of those who dispute the validity of the inference which is drawn, is, as I take it, not desperate. To those who urge that culture is cosmopolitan and weakens the spirit of patriotism, the reply may be made that an exaggerated nationalism

has been the cause of numberless woes to the human race. This is the stronghold of war and of all the train of evils which follow in its wake; this is the source of that restrictive legislation which has interfered with free trade and built barriers in the way of progress; this is the foment of that fatal prejudice which has nurtured a narrow conceit that shuts the rational mind of each country against the world's experience. Nor must it be forgotten that in this respect the influence of culture is in harmony with that of the Catholic Church, which is cosmopolitan and non-national.

The Christian doctrine of the brotherhood of all men, and of one world-wide spiritual kingdom in which all may receive the rights of citizenship, would seem to point towards a social state in which differences of race and country, if not obliterated, will at least remain comparatively inoperative. Again, the great battles of the Church with heresy have nearly all been waged against those who were striving to compress a Catholic religion into a national mould. That the men of culture would make but sorry statesmen or leaders of party we may grant. But a poet is not found fault with because he is not a metaphysician, nor is a general criticized for lack of taste in the fine arts. It is quite as important surely that there should be calm and enlightened thinkers as that there should be sturdy and indefatigable workers; and precisely where men are busiest with their temporal projects and mechanical contrivances, it is well that there should be found those who assume a loftier tone and point to higher aims. Every supreme mind, like the loftiest mountain peaks, rises into a region, where it dwells, far above the storm-cloud, in serene solitude; and, therefore, is it said that genius is melancholy. The most perfect culture also partakes of this loneliness, and is ill at ease in the crowd; but this only serves to enhance the value of the criticism which it pronounces upon the common ways and aims of men. He who, free from the passion and blinding dust of the conflict, surveys the field from an eminence, sees many things which are hidden from the eyes of the combatants. It is the fault of the eager rivalry of busy life that it leaves no time for calm reflection, and hence active workers grow narrow and would bend the universe to their little schemes. The salvation of society is made to depend upon the crotchet of a politician or upon the opening up of a new market for some article of commerce, or it is held to be within the competency of a school system to bring on the millennium. It is certainly of the first importance that men be fed, and clothed, and governed; but, as Goethe says, "the useful encourages itself, for the crowd produce it and none can dispense with it; the beautiful needs encouragement, for few can create it, and it is required by many." If the men of culture do not act they at least furnish the means of activity to others.

The old alchemists were no better than dreamers and idlers, but to them we are indebted for our physical science. It is easier to act than to think; and hence the world abounds in busy men, whereas a real thinker is hardly to be met with. Should we then employ all our efforts to stimulate an activity which is already feverish, and do nothing to encourage wider and profounder habits of thought? To take the lowest view, it will hardly be denied that the power to think correctly is useful. Idealists are often laughed at in their own day; but the dreams of the present not unfrequently become the recognized principles of action of the future. The common man, of course, living in the present, is impatient to see his labors bear immediate fruit; and a vulgar generation attaches little value to the good which can be enjoyed only by those who come after it; but without self-denial neither wisdom nor virtue can exist, and to aim at the reward which comes of right conduct is the certain way to disappointment. The charge that culture has an immoral tendency is more serious, and possibly not so easily set aside, for history seems to bear out the assertion that ages of luxury and refinement have been invariably remarkable for licentiousness of manners. It is plain, however, that the vices as well as the virtues of a civilized people differ from those of barbarians. The highway robber is generally no sybarite. Civilization brings large bodies of men together in cities, encourages industry, protects wealth, creates classes that abound in opulence and leisure, and it consequently offers opportunities for the indulgence of effeminate and luxurious habits. The spirit of an age of refinement is humane and merciful. Its tastes are nice and its pleasures attractive. The tempers of men are softened, and war itself smooths its rugged front, and is waged without vindictive cruelty. The weak are protected, the orphan is cared for, and the poor find sympathy. The man of culture sins by over-refinement, the vulgar man by excess in indulgence. Savages and barbarians are not epicures, but they are the slaves of gluttony and drunkenness to a greater extent than the civilized races. Again, venality and bribery will not be common in an age in which the ambitious and covetous find it easier to attain their ends by violence. It must be borne in mind too that the literature of an age of culture generally becomes classic, and hence the vices of those ages are made immortal while the memory of the crimes of barbarians perishes. And there is ever a spirit of restlessness and discontent in an epoch of refinement, which causes men to yield more readily to the natural propensity to depreciate the present and unduly exalt the past; and it so happens that its vices are precisely those which lend themselves most effectively to the purpose of the satirist. The misleading power of literature in this respect is painfully evident to Catho-

lics, who have so often been its victims. A few examples of cruelty and licentiousness are fastened upon, and are so perverted as to be made to appear to be the law to which they are only exceptions.

To consider the subject then apart from the question as to the relation which exists between religious faith and morality, and this is the view we now take of it, it does not appear that a state of culture is more favorable to vice than barbarism. It would seem on the contrary that knowledge, refinement, and industry tend to make men virtuous. If we hear less of the crimes of savage and barbarous peoples it is not because they do not abound, but because they are not recorded, or when recorded repel us, since a cultivated mind can find no pleasure in reading of rapine, and murder, and brutish orgies; whereas, unfortunately, such is the weakness of man, when sin loses its grossness, it seems even to those who are not depraved to lose something of its evil. Why a Catholic should be anxious to extenuate the faults of barbarians is not evident, for it has ever been the aim of the enemies of the Church to make her responsible for the crimes of the barbarous populations which she was leading to purer modes of life and higher thoughts.

But after all has been said, it must be confessed that the history of culture does not justify us in thinking that it is able to create a pure and genuine morality. At best it but throws the cloak of decency over the ulcer which it is powerless to heal. Ascetic writers tell us that in order to successfully combat sin we must have a real abhorrence of it, and this culture lacks. With it virtue is a point of good taste and vice want of breeding; and it does not hate the evil, but fears the shame and confusion of detection. This, I say, is the ethical character of historical culture, and I now proceed to examine whether it is a defect inherent in the nature of culture, or an accident attributable to the conditions under which it has been developed.

Culture, in the modern sense of the word, and considered apart from the influence of Christianity, is derived from Athens, the city of mind and the world's first university. No people has ever equalled the Athenian in mental versatility, grace, penetration, and originality. Goethe's proverb—"That to think is difficult, to act easy"—seems to be untrue in their case. Thought was as natural and as easy to them as to breathe, and there is hardly an intellectual or poetical conception in modern literature which may not be found in germ at least even in the comparatively small portion of their writings that have come down to us; and their language is still the most perfect instrument of thought known to men. They were, and to a great extent still are, the teachers of Europe in philosophy, eloquence, poetry, and art, and they have, therefore, necessarily exerted whether for good or evil a vast ethical influence. Now

to the Greek virtue and beauty are identical. His religion is the worship of the beautiful; and the good are the fair, the harmonious, the musical. The very name which he gave to the universe indicated that it revealed itself to his mind primarily under the aspect of harmony and proportion; and hence for conscience he substituted taste, a kind of exquisite sense of the graceful and the decorous, and his religion embodied itself in art. His sacred books were poems, his temples, which were models of grace and symmetry, were opened to the heavens and bathed in the cheerful light of day, and when he offered sacrifice and prayer he was crowned with flowers and quaffed the golden wine with song and dance. In his maturity he is only a handsome youth in whose veins the current of life is full and strong. He walks in a perennial spring, and the flowers bloom wherever he goes, and the air trills with the matin songs of birds. He lives in a world of delights and dreads nothing but death. He has no thought of sin, the very gods love what he loves and think no wrong. And when he praises virtue it is because it is noble, and beautiful, and full of pleasant sweetness. It is a fine figure, graceful and fair as a statue of Pentelic marble chiselled by the hand of Phidias. Unfortunately a theory based upon the assumption that to do right is to do only what is pleasant, will not fit into a world which has been wrenched from its original harmony. The sense of the beautiful was soon sunk in sensuous voluptuousness, and Athens has left us nothing to admire except her genius. And yet the ideal of life which her great minds have traced out for us is so noble, so generous, that we are hardly surprised that its winning grace and brightness should create a kind of worship in the sensitive souls of poets and artists, and thus impress ineffaceably its own fair features upon the culture of all succeeding ages. But as this ideal is without moral force and the seriousness of character which is thence derived, it is, like many fairest things, frail and unsuited to the stern work of a world where self-conquest is the price of victory. There is want of correspondence between the inward strength and the outward form, and in thinking of this noble dream of genius we can but repeat the poet's lament for Italy:

"Italia! oh Italia, thou who hast
The fatal gift of beauty, which became
A funeral dower of present woes and past,
On thy sweet brow is sorrow ploughed by shame."

Culture is akin to poetry, but life is mostly prose and must rest upon a more substantial basis. Is it not possible, then, we ask, to bring to the help of this fine and artistic ideal of human perfection some force, not its own, from which it may derive the strength not

to yield to the fatality of its natural bent? In other words, can religion, whose dominant idea is morality, be brought into friendly relationship with culture, the ruling thought of which is beauty, or to use the accepted phrase, sweetness and light? In introducing the present examination I stated that there need be no antagonism between true religion and true culture, and I now find that I am called upon to defend or else to withdraw this affirmation. Deny thyself, is the word of Christ: Think of living, is the precept of culture; and certainly the self-indulgent and pleasure-seeking life of the Greek is the very opposite of the ideal which is presented to the Christian. The one looks upon this earth as a garden of delight; the other has no abiding city here, but passes as a pilgrim, who in the midst of gay scenes is restless, for his thoughts are with those he loves in the far-off home. The Greek rests in nature and worships it; the Christian looks through nature to God, and places it beneath his feet. To the one the cross is foolishness; to the other it is the power and wisdom of God. That culture is not Christianity needs no proof. Its whole history is characterized by the absence of that moral earnestness which is the very soul of religious faith, and it therefore lacks an element which is the chief constituent of human perfection. If culture is not Christianity, is Christianity culture; or is it also partial and without the power to create a full-developed humanity? This is the charge that Mr. Arnold, while frankly confessing the shortcomings of culture, brings against religion, which, he thinks, takes a narrow view of man, and is destined finally to be transformed and governed by the Hellenic idea of beauty and of a human nature perfect on all its sides. His criticisms on this subject, which are aimed chiefly at the Protestant theory of Christianity, are sprightly and entertaining. The Pilgrim Fathers, he says, and their standard of perfection are rightly judged "when we figure to ourselves Shakespeare or Virgil—*souls* in whom sweetness and light and all that in human nature is most humane, were eminent—accompanying them on their voyage, and think what intolerable company Shakespeare and Virgil would have found them." The ideal of the Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion is, he says, "a life of jealousy of the Establishment, disputes, tea-meetings, openings of chapels, sermons;" which is doubtless dreary enough, and the very contrary of what one would naturally look for in a religion of love, whose divine Founder came to bring peace to men. Mr. Arnold probably never heard of "donation parties," in which a whole congregation descend upon a helpless minister with bean sacks, tin pans, and slippers, in the full belief that they are creating in him an inward sense of sweetness and light; nor of "sociables," which receive their name from defect of the quality implied; nor of "temperance

anniversaries," when model wives invite their friends and neighbors to tea and lemonade, that they may again recount the unspeakable woes that come of having husbands who have not taken the pledge, though he may possibly have something of this in his mind when he declares that Americans are Philistines, but a livelier sort of Philistine than the British.

"And the work," he says, "which we collective children of God do, our grand centre of life, our *city*, which we have builded for us to dwell in, is London! London, with its unutterable external hideousness, and with its internal canker of *publice egestas, privatim opulentia*—to use the words which Sallust puts into Cato's mouth about Rome,—unequalled in the world! The word, again, which we children of God speak, the voice which most hits our collective thought, the newspaper with the largest circulation in England, nay, with the largest circulation in the whole world, is the *Daily Telegraph!*" which is the English New York *Herald* or Chicago *Times*. Real Protestantism, Mr. Arnold thinks, is not merely lacking in sweetness and light, but is positively hideous and grotesque; and he very justly remarks that there are things in which defect of beauty is defect of truth. "Behavior," he says, "is not intelligible, does not account for itself to the mind and show the reason for its existing, unless it is beautiful. The same with discourse, the same with song, the same with worship, all of them modes in which man proves his activity and expresses himself. To think that when one produces in these what is mean or vulgar or hideous, one can be permitted to plead that one has that within which passes show; to suppose that what benefits and satisfies one part of our nature can make allowable either discourse like Mr. Murphy's, or poetry like the hymns we all hear, or places of worship like the chapels we all see,—this it is abhorrent to the nature of Hellenism to concede." Again: "Instead of our 'one thing needful' justifying in us vulgarity, hideousness, ignorance, violence,—our vulgarity, hideousness, ignorance, violence are really so many touchstones which try our one thing needful, and which prove that in the state, at any rate, in which we ourselves have it, it is not all we want."

That all this is not applicable to the Catholic Church is plain, and is implied in the traditional objections which Protestants make to our worship, and may also be inferred from the graceful tribute which Mr. Arnold pays to a man in whom the humblest and most trusting faith is united in sweet accord with the most perfect culture of this age. "And who," he asks, "will estimate how much the currents of feeling created by Dr. Newman's movements, the keen desire for beauty and sweetness which it nourished, the deep aversion it manifested to the hardness and vulgarity of middle-class

liberalism, the strong light it turned on the hideous and grotesque illusions of middle-class Protestantism, who will estimate how much all these contributed to swell the tide of secret dissatisfaction which has mined the ground under the self-confident liberalism of the last thirty years, and has prepared the way for its sudden collapse and supersession?" "Catholic worship," says Mr. Arnold, "is likely, however modified, to survive as the general worship of Christians, because it is the worship which, in a sphere where poetry is permissible and natural, unites the most of the elements of poetry." This, however, is only the æsthetic side of culture, and when the clever and sprightly critic whom I have been quoting views the subject from an intellectual standpoint, he takes up an altogether different position towards the Church, though he does not fall in with the vulgar prejudice which assumes that Protestantism has an intellectual superiority over Catholicism. On the contrary he finds such pretensions quite illusory. "For Hellenism," he says, "for the thinking side in man as distinguished from the acting side, the attitude of mind of Protestantism towards the Bible in no respect differs from the attitude of mind of Catholicism towards the Church." And again: "A free play of individual thought is at least as much impeded by membership of a small congregation as by membership of a great Church. Thinking by batches of fifties is to the full as fatal to free thought as thinking by batches of thousands." That men who accept the Old and the New Testament as literally God's word, should take on airs and look with pity upon the ignorance and credulity of Catholics who hold such articles of faith as the communion of saints and the absolving power of the priesthood, is a palmary example of the ridiculous absurdities into which the victims of a shallow conceit are betrayed. In Mr. Arnold's opinion then between æsthetic culture and the Church there is no antagonism, while moral culture can be attained only through religion; and towards intellectual culture Catholicism and Protestantism stand in a like unfriendly attitude. The advantage is on the side of the Church, and if there is any hope of an alliance between culture and religion, we must, it would seem, look to her to bring it about. If the thought of such an alliance is not to be entertained, then the more fairminded among the lovers of culture will themselves confess that it should perish rather than religion, which alone gives to the human heart hope and the promise of a future. The critical school holds that the solution of the difficulty is to be found in the abandonment of dogmatic faith, and the objection to the Church which it urges is not that it teaches this or that article of belief, but that it insists upon the necessity of believing in any doctrine whatever; and this is Mr. Arnold's meaning when he declares that we can neither do without Christianity

nor with it as it is. We cannot do without it, for upon it rests conduct, which is three-fourths of human life, and it is moreover a something incomparably beneficent; "the greatest and happiest stroke ever yet made for human perfection." To lose Christianity would be to lose all hope: it is indispensable; but the old grounds upon which men were accustomed to rest their belief in it are, so this critic at least, thinks, no longer solid, but have been undermined by the time-spirit. The Christian religion, to be plain, postulates the existence of a personal God, and Mr. Arnold holds that this is a pure assumption which cannot possibly be verified; and Celsus, he thinks, was therefore right when he charged the Christians with want of intellectual seriousness. He recognizes nothing but a "stream of tendency," a something not ourselves, which, as he believes, makes for what he imagines to be righteousness, and he seriously proposes to save the Bible and Christianity by floating them on this "stream of tendency;" and in the midst of such solemn trifling he takes occasion to read Christians a lesson on their lack of intellectual seriousness. To maintain that all we know of God is that there is a power or law or modality, not ourselves, and that what we call right conduct is in accordance with this law, is only a way of saying that God is unknowable; and Mr. Arnold himself has pointed out the absurdity of attempting to found a religion upon such a conception. "No man," he says, "could ever have cared anything about God in so far as he is simply unknowable. 'The unknowable is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble,' is what would occur to no man to think or say." Not less preposterous is it to imagine that men, who doubt the existence of a personal God, will still be able to read the Bible with reverence or profit.

Mr. Arnold's culturism is not original any more than Mr. Carlyle's mysticism. The one and the other are only English interpretations of German and French thought, and Mr. Arnold himself would be the first to acknowledge this; nay, he has confessed as much in the following words: "Now, as far as real thought is concerned, thought which affects the best reason and spirit of man, the scientific or the imaginative thought of the world, the only thought which deserves speaking of in this solemn way, America has up to the present time been hardly more than a province of England, and even now would not herself claim to be more than abreast of England; and of this only real human thought English thought itself is not just now, as we must all admit, the most significant factor." To get a satisfactory view of his position we must, therefore, pass over to the continent of Europe, with the understanding, however, that no attempt be made to reduce his views to a system. Lacordaire declared that, by the grace of God, he abhorred the

commonplace; and Mr. Arnold, probably without such grace, abhors all systems, whether mechanical, political, metaphysical, or theological. His chapters on "the God of Metaphysics," in which by a few simple etymologies and with perfect *gaieté de cœur* he dissipates into thin air the profoundest thought of the greatest minds who have ever lived, will doubtless be immortal as a curiosity of literature. He has no system, but he has a method, which is that of the modern critical school, which assumes as fundamental the celebrated maxim of Protagoras, "That man is the measure of all things." The eternal, the all-perfect does not exist except as a mode of thought, which is simply the effort of the thinker to posit himself as an absolute principle and to refer all things to himself. True and fruitful thought consequently is not that which is in accord with any definite and fixed object, but that which moves in harmony with the stream of tendency and is carried upon the outspread wings of the time-spirit. There is, in fact, no truth, but only opinions; no color, but only shades, and we must, therefore, abandon as utterly hopeless the effort to know things in themselves, and content ourselves with studying their evolutions; throw aside metaphysics and psychology as the childish toys of an infantine race, and take up in their stead history and criticism. The characteristic mark of the true critic is a disinterested curiosity, and that this word has in English only a bad and feminine sense Mr. Arnold thinks a grievance. The critic does not search for the truth which does not exist, but he seeks to supple his mind so that he may be able to see things on all sides, and remain an enlightened and impartial spectator of the dissolving views of a world which is only an eternal flux; and that his appreciation may be the keener he becomes a part of all that he beholds. He is a citizen of the universe and moves in calm indifference in all times and places, amongst all religions and philosophies. He, however, has an unmistakable penchant for religious discussions, as though after having denied the reality of God and the soul he were still haunted by their phantoms. He is capable, even as M. Renan, Ewald, and Mr. Arnold have shown, of a sort of poetical and sad devoutness, which, if it were not ridiculous, would be pathetic. He has no toleration for the unintelligent and vulgar rage against religion which is manifested by popular liberalism and atheism. When Professor Clifford breaks out into violent invectives and calls Christianity an awful plague, Mr. Arnold in a sweet and winning tone gives him a gentle rebuke, though his anger is not aroused in this instance as it was by Bishop Wilberforce, when he spoke of laboring for the honor and glory of God. "One reads it all," he says, "half sighing, half smiling, as the declamation of a clever and confident youth, with the hopeless inexperience, irredeemable by any

cleverness of his age. Only when one is young and headstrong can one thus prefer bravado to experience, can one stand by the Sea of Time, and instead of listening to the solemn and rhythmical beat of its waves, choose to fill the air with one's own whoopings to start the echo." His writings, in fact, he takes the trouble to inform us, have no other object than to save the Christian religion from its friends, who by teaching that it is inseparable from specific dogmas are placing it and themselves in fatal antagonism to the time-spirit and the critic, who is its prophet. In reality the essential thought of culturism, as conceived by the school from which Mr. Arnold has drawn his opinions, does not differ from that of mysticism or any of the other forms of modern pantheism. Its distinguishing characteristic is found not in its idea but in its temper. As an intellectual theory it is purely pantheistic. It regards the universe as its own final and efficient cause, and maintains that it is absurd to affirm the existence of any being distinct from the cosmos; and hence it teaches that God is not a person who knows and loves, but a "stream of tendency," a law, a modality; or, to take M. Renan's definition, the form under which we conceive the ideal, as space and time are the forms under which matter is made intelligible to us. God is only the category of the ideal, and when the German pantheists declare that man makes God, that man creates God in thinking of Him, they do not mean to blaspheme or to be smart, but merely pronounce a logical conclusion from their own theories. But when men who make God a modality, a form of thought, talk about saving the Bible and Christianity, we have a perfect right to turn away from them as solemn triflers in a matter which, least of all, admits of such proceeding. The idea then of culturism is pantheistic, which is the equivalent of atheistic; and as atheism is the negation of religion, any attempt to bring about an alliance between religion and culture, upon the intellectual basis offered by the critical school, is preposterous, for the simple reason that the hypothesis which this school accepts as true, makes religion impossible. When M. Renan and Mr. Arnold assure us that they do not seek to weaken the religious sentiment but to purify it, we can but liken them to a physician who in order to purge out the humors of the blood should think it necessary first to destroy life.

A religion of sweetness and light in a Godless world, which crushes beneath the iron wheel of fate the weak and the helpless, and has no favors except for the strong, is a piece of Mephistophelean irony, compared with which the pessimism of Schopenhauer is as soothing as the quiet landscape to one who flies from the feverish life of the noisy crowd. Is it not enough that these men are persuaded that there is no God and no soul? Why should they come to us proclaiming that the earth is only a charnel-house, and

in the same breath grow eloquent over the refreshing and refining influence which this discovery of theirs must have upon those who are able to appreciate its importance? To be just, however, I must leave Mr. Arnold to bear alone the burden of this officious piety. One must be an Englishman to be able to deny God and still continue to preach with all the unction of a Methodist exhorter. M. Renan is consistent, and therefore assumes a different tone. He is absolutely without zeal or the spirit of proselytism. He has nothing to say of the beneficent influence of sweetness and light; he seems rather disposed to think that when the whole truth is known existence may become unbearable; that the planets in which life is extinct are probably those in which criticism has achieved its work. He eschews controversy, and takes little interest in the questions which occupy the thoughts of men. His aims are purely speculative, and have no relevancy to contemporaneous events. He is an artist, seated on the brow of a hill, who sketches the landscape, but has nothing in common with the herds that graze upon the plain below. He is in fact a quietist, and from the eminence of his exceptional position surveys the world with a feeling akin to that which a spirit from some higher sphere might be supposed to have in contemplating the busy, fussy little ants that jostle one another on this mole-hill of an earth. God is only an idea; nature exists, but is immoral; good and evil are alike indifferent to her; and history, from an ethical point of view, is a permanent scandal. This is the final word of culture as revealed by M. Renan, and he naturally enough partakes of the Buddhist temper, to which annihilation appears to be the supreme good. And this is doubtless the mood which culture, as understood by the critical school, tends to produce. Its intellectual principle is pantheism, its ethical principle is the identity of the good and the beautiful, and historically it evolves itself either into the animalism of the senses or into the quietism of a fatalistic philosophy; and whichever form it assumes, it must inevitably fail to make reason and the will of God prevail.

But one may surely be a lover of culture without being forced to adopt the principles of M. Renan and Mr. Arnold; as one may be reasonable and yet hold to positive beliefs; as one may have taste without denying conscience.

Culture may indeed easily become the insidious foe of revealed religion, but it may also be its serviceable ally; and since in our day many of the most thoroughly trained and versatile minds are employed in the service of unbelief, it is certainly most desirable, and from a human point of view even necessary, that they be met by intellects of equal discipline and power. We are living in an epoch of transition. The decay of faith in the Protestant sects is

accelerated by the consciousness that their existence is a contradiction of the fundamental principle of Protestantism ; and among Catholics a widespread indifference, and new modes of thought created by the scientific developments of the age, have cooled the zeal and weakened the faith of many. The wavering of religious belief has unsettled all other things, so that nothing seems any longer to rest upon a firm and immovable basis. The new theories are in the air, and precautionary measures are ineffectual, at least with regard to society in general. There has never been a time in the world's history, in which the influence of literature was so all-pervading as at present, and this power is in great measure anonymous and irresponsible. Reviews and newspapers discuss everything and are read by everybody, so that any youth is prepared to pronounce you an authoritative judgment as to whether there is a God or a hell. The gravest and most sacred subjects are treated in a mock-serious tone which is worse than open blasphemy. The old Protestant controversy is as obsolete as the dress of the Pilgrim Fathers. Questions of grace, election, and free-will, have ceased to have any interest for men, who, insisting upon their right of private judgment and the supremacy of the individual mind, are puzzled to know whether God or the soul exists ; and the famous ministerial jousts, in which the doughty champions were wont to brandish their favorite texts like flaming swords, have lost their dramatic effect and are grown altogether tame in the eyes of a generation which hears every day that the Bible itself is but the fairy tale of an ignorant and superstitious age. Every true Protestant, from the necessities of his position, has made overtures to the enemies of Christianity, as the logical inference implied in the traditional Protestant warfare on the Church is that the religion of Christ is not supernatural and divine ; for if the Church is what Protestants have always said she is, then is historical Christianity but one of the world's superstitions, and of a kind with Buddhism, Paganism, and Mohammedanism. The old disputes will doubtless survive for a time, and individuals and even classes may be helped by them, but the real issue, so far as the active mind of the age is concerned, has already been transferred to quite other grounds, and it is the immediate and urgent duty of Catholics to fit themselves for the new conflict, which is not between the Church and the sects, but between the Church and infidelity. The argument is to be made fundamental and exhaustive. All philosophies and sciences are to be interrogated ; all literatures to be studied ; all forms of belief are to be analyzed ; all methods are to be used ; and the infinitely great and the infinitesimally small are to be required to give up their secret. The religious import of the sciences is precisely what lends to this study its mysterious charm. The physical

comfort which may be derived from a wider and truer acquaintance with nature is of minor importance. That which the philosopher and the man of the world are yearning to learn from all this eager and ceaseless peering into the forms and workings of matter, is whether or not any authentic response will be given to the eternal questionings of the human heart about God, the soul, and the life that is to be. This restlessness and skepticism is doubtless pathological. If men had faith, they would not be tormented by the feverish anxiety to surprise God in the mysteries which he has hidden from human eye; but they have no faith, and since it is impossible for the mind to remain indifferent to the infinite mystery which is everywhere in all that it sees and thinks, therefore do men who have ceased to believe, seek to satisfy by knowledge the inborn craving of the soul for some tidings from the inner truth of things. They will take nothing for granted, but make God himself questionable. And here at once we may perceive the arduousness of the task which is imposed upon those who are called to the defence of the faith in our day. The first step their adversaries take leads into the bottomless abyss of endless speculation and doubt. In the Protestant controversy there was the common and certain ground of the Written Word, to which in the confusion of debate it was possible to return to take bearings, while the deists of the last century agreed with their opponents in admitting the existence of God as indisputably evident to the natural reason. The argument that those who accept Christianity as a divinely revealed religion must necessarily accept the Church as its true and historical embodiment is comparatively simple, and is logical and conclusive against the Protestants, and the argument from analogy is irrefragable when used against the deist who affirms that God is the creator and ruler of the world; and hence the common saying that there is no resting-place between Catholicism and atheism. But the new phase of infidelity would make knowledge itself inconclusive in all matters where our concern is with the absolute truth of things. It denies that there is any such truth, or at least that it is discoverable by man. I find in all the current theories of unbelief the assumption that all that can be known is the relative, and that the highest conceivable philosophy is only phenomenology. With men who hold such opinions it is impossible to reason from fixed principles. The old methods fail to reach them. All the syllogisms that can be strung together can never compass a higher truth than that which is given in the original intuition, and if this does not attain to the reality underlying the phenomenon neither will our conclusions. The assumption that knowledge is only the perception of relations, makes all discussions as to what anything is in itself appear futile and childish. Hence the contempt of the

modern schools for metaphysics and the scholastic methods. The great practical difficulty, as I take it, in successfully controverting the new theories, lies in the fact that they represent modes of viewing things rather than states of mind. They are not held as conclusions from unanswerable arguments, but as a way of accounting for phenomena which is justified by the convergence of innumerable plausibilities towards a given line of thought. It is considered to be enough that they are in accord with the tendencies of the age, and in harmony with the great time-spirit, who, as these philosophers teach, has usurped the throne of the Eternal and Omnipotent God. A few words will suffice to sketch in general outline this system, and at the same time to show how widely it prevails. It is assumed that God is not or cannot be known to be, and as philosophy is phenomenology, it starts with matter in the state in which it is possible for the mind first to detect it. Space is filled with incandescent gas, star-dust, from which the sidereal systems are evolved. This view, for the correctness of which many arguments are adduced, receives additional weight from the study of our own planet, which, beginning as an incandescent mass, has during long ages been gradually cooling. When life first appears, it is in its lowest forms, and there is progression up to man. To this point it is maintained the astronomer and the geologist are able to conduct us. The zoologist now comes to trace the descent of man, as the geologist has followed the evolution of the globe, and Mr. Darwin and others find that he has been developed by natural processes from the lowest forms of life. The question of man's special endowments thus presents itself, and the psychologist attempts to show that thought is transformed sensation, and will transformed emotion, as man is a transformed animal.

The principle of evolution is applied to the history of language and of races in philology and ethnology, and these sciences are made auxiliary to the new theories. The sociologist next appears to unravel the infinitely complicated and intricate network of human relations, and to point out how this marvellous and entangled scheme is but the product of a few rudimentary instincts. And finally, the philosopher of history proposes to account for the whole life and all the achievements of the human race by the aid of fatalistic laws. Given the race, and its surroundings, and impulse, and he will offer you a mechanical rule by which you will be able to explain everything, religion, literature, and social institutions. It would, of course, be beside my present purpose to stop to point out the absurdities and the gaps in all this, but what I wish to call attention to is the fact that this is a way of looking at the universe, and that little or nothing is gained by insisting upon errors in detail or by showing that certain data of science are in accord with

revealed truth. The fault is radical and universal, and the only effective method of dealing with it is to be sought in a comprehensive philosophy, which starting from a true theory of knowledge will embrace the whole range of science, and by correcting the false interpretations of its data, will educate men and lead them to see that a theory of the universe which excludes God is not only unintelligible but destructive of the essential principles of reason. The intellectual difficulties with which the present generation of believers have to contend, as Dr. Newman is reported to have said, are greater than in any past age. It is not possible to laugh at our adversaries unless we are content to make ourselves ridiculous. In matters of this kind sarcasm and vituperation are not only out of place, but are no better than the language of the devil. Smart hits intended for the crowd fail of effect even with the masses.

That in the end, and after never so much science and theory, the perfect wisdom of humble and trusting faith will be made only the more evident is in no way doubtful; but in the meantime Catholics may not stand as idle lookers-on, and as though they had no part or concern in this mighty and painful conflict.

It was a principle with St. Ignatius of Loyola that a Christian should have the faith which hopes everything from God, and then act as though he expected nothing except from his own exertions.

No maxim could be more applicable to the emergency of which I am writing. I know that our blessed Lord is with his Church, and that he can turn our ignorance and supineness to the good of those who love him. I know that whatever we may do we are useless servants. The prayer of the humble is better than the thoughts of the learned, and a great saint is able to do a holier work than the most perfectly cultivated genius.

All this is indisputable, and one benefit to be hoped for from a higher culture would be the power to realize more truly what we are so ready to admit in theory. My words, if addressed to those devout and saintly souls who with unutterable groanings raise to God the voice of prayer which penetrates the heavens, would be an impertinence. It may well be that were it not for these just ones we should all perish. My thought is lower and is intended for those who, in the midst of a thousand imperfections, feel that they are better fitted to fight in the plain below than to lift up hands of supplication on the holy mount.

The issue indeed is in God's keeping, but we must strive to quit ourselves like men, and as though all depended upon our skill and courage. Without thorough training and mental discipline we shall only cumber the ground and block the way.

Now, the best culture of the intellect has for three centuries been

made impossible to Catholics who speak English, and even yet it can hardly be said to be within our reach. If we see fit, however, to make use of the means which are in our hands we can hasten the day when it will be attainable. To speak the truth frankly, the Catholics of the United States are in this respect the very last to show a disposition to take advantage of their providential opportunities. Ireland has its university, England has its university, Canada has its university, and we have nothing but the old Latin school, founded nearly a century ago. If Americans in general are justly chargeable with lack of culture, may not this charge be brought home with even greater force to American Catholics? What other proof of this is needed than our self-complacency? We speak of our numbers as though the kingdom of God consisted in numbers, and as though the increase of the Catholic population were not merely a part of a general and wider growth. We boast of our schools, and do not think it necessary to stop to inquire what they really are or what kind of education they give. We dwell with pride upon the number of churches which have been built, and the number of dioceses which have been organized, as if this were not a certain consequence of the influx and outspread of a vast Catholic population. We praise the devotedness and generosity of our Catholics as though this were not chiefly the blossoming of the faith of a people who have suddenly escaped into the open air of freedom from the bitter night of three centuries of martyrdom.

This self-complacent temper does not dispose men to take a wide and enlightened view of the wants of the Church. So long as we are content with a progress for which we deserve little credit, and which is often more apparent than real, there is small hope that any serious effort will be made to create a higher spiritual and intellectual life among our Catholic people.
