

THE PRAISE OF HYPOCRISY.

AN ESSAY IN CASUISTRY.

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There is some soul of goodness in things evil,
Would man observingly distil it out. (Shakespeare.)

A lie is useless to the gods, but useful to men,—on occasion. (Plato.)

.....For so to interpose a little ease
Let your frail thoughts dally with false surmise. (Milton.)

Give the devil his due. (Proverb.)

INTRODUCTION.

WE are told in philosophy that nothing altogether bad exists, or can exist: some good may be found in everything. Yet we have been accustomed to give blame only, with no kind word, to the hypocrite,—especially if he be not of our set or sect. We summarily quote Jesus and Mohammed and Dante, and condemn the hypocrite to the lowest hell and the severest penalties.

As a matter of fact, however, it may be doubted that we have so much feeling about hypocrisy as we suppose we have. Ruskin, in *Seven Lamps*, remarks that “We resent calumny, hypocrisy, treachery, because they harm us, not because they are untrue. Take the detraction and mischief from the untruth, and we are little offended by it; turn it into praise, and we may be pleased by it.”

Can it be that our moral judgment is thus variable according to circumstances? that we do sometimes approve what we on other occasions condemn? Especially can it be true that our complaisant condemnation of hypocrisy is itself open to suspicion, is itself not entirely genuine?

Most observing people will, I think, agree in some measure with the distinguished critic who has been mentioned, for they recognise the weakness of human nature. Yet many are probably

not aware that advanced ethical philosophers have lately gone quite beyond Ruskin in this direction, and declare not only that we do sometimes approve hypocrisy, but also that we are right in approving it.

Such a declaration would not, until modern times, have been publicly made nor soberly considered. In our zeal against the hypocrite we could give him no thought except how we might soonest bring him to punishment. Of late, however, with the advance of modern intelligence and the "rapid strides" of science, we have had some experience in surprises, and may be prepared for almost any paradox.

I venture therefore to ask the reader patiently to consider the following propositions: first, that hypocrisy is extensively practised among the best of people; and second, that it is often unavoidable, practically necessary, and of great utility. More briefly:

1. The Hypocrisy of the Good.
2. The Good of Hypocrisy.

These propositions are supported in the words and deeds of many, and in the consideration of them we shall gradually approach the New Wisdom.

I. THE HYPOCRISY OF THE GOOD.

We all practise and approve certain harmless forms of pretense, whatever we may think of the many other forms and grades. Plato,¹ in a fine passage, often imitated and elaborated by later writers, remarks how "we customarily gloss over the defects of our friends, with fair words and pet names. One with a snub nose is called naïve; another's beak is said to have a royal look; and one that has neither snub nor beak has the grace of regularity; the dark visage is strong, and the pale is spirituelle; and so love triumphs over small obstacles; and life is made sweeter." Indeed it would often seem that we value our friend more because of some defect. Is it that the blemish gives some distinction and an added interest; or, does love grow stronger by having some obstacle to overcome? Perhaps it has in its disposition a certain perversity, or wilfulness not unbeautiful, as the proverbial mother loves best her *unfortunate* child. At any rate we have a habit of praising our own, and magnifying our attainments and our set. Now, to speak exactly, it cannot be that all "our countries" are best, and "our boys" bravest, and "our daughters" fairest; yet most of us think

¹ *Republic*, Bk. IV., 475; cf. Lucretius, *De R. N.*, Bk. IV., 1160 and Molière's *Misanthrope*, Act II, Sc. V, near the end, etc.

so, each of his own. And if any unsentimental Gradgrind insists on the literal truth and attempts to "set us right," he becomes offensive—so dear to us is our prerogative of deceiving ourselves. Moreover the self-deception has no small utility for happiness and for stimulus; it has a vast cheering and sustaining power. Call it if you please an untrue faith, yet is a real faith and the source of many blessings.

The extent of false pretension in our general life is not commonly observed. Yet all read novels, and some read nothing else; and we praise the author for his power to produce an illusion; we like to have him deceive us, and make us think his story a true one. The quantity of such books is so overwhelming that a certain tendency has arisen among critics to confine the word "literature" to fiction, as if nothing true could deserve the name literature. And the end is not yet, the fiction habit is growing. I know one authoress who, in private talk, even asserts her imaginations for facts, and resents any suggestion that she is "romancing." On one occasion, being challenged, she retorted with feeling: "The story is invented, to be sure, but it is truer than any history that ever was written."

Poetry also boasts that it transcends the fact. The eye of the poet rolls with "fine phrensy"; it has not the precision of exact science; and we praise him for it. So does all art exceed the literal, and pretend to what is not strictly true.

And we are fortunate that it is so. For, in general, our faculties find their highest activities and largest freedom and range when they get away from the limitations of the literal, and soar into the regions of the ideal, the imagined, the untrue. It is by striving after the unattained, and even the unattainable, that our nature gains a greater power and a finer quality. Yet strangely enough, people are so much in the habit of supposing that what is printed or said or even thought, is true, that they incline to believe that some of the most transcendental and far-away fiction, if it be only beautiful or in some manner attractive, is the most real and veracious, "true in a higher sense," "truer than history," and so on.

The fact is not merely that the poet "draws a long bow" and imagines incidents that did not occur and objects that are not real; he also affects sentiments that he does not feel. Is Tennyson always sincere? I cannot believe it; he is occasionally posing for effect, or is merely filling out his metre as best he can. About Wordsworth, and the lesser ones, there can be no question. And what is said of the English poets is perhaps still more true of the

French; and in the German writers, Ruskin says, though with some exaggeration, "you can hardly find so much as a sentence without affectation."

The fiction habit is not confined to novelists and poets. Some time ago I read a book on philosophy written by one who is perhaps the chief of his kind in Germany. In a certain part of the book he carries on an elaborate process of reasoning, states each proposition with care, precisely and confidently, and brings up to a necessary conclusion. As I read, I said to myself, "A fine piece of logic; with what a sure tread does he walk these dizzy heights! Now at last, after many disappointments, I have come to the land of the real and certain, here I may rest in something assured,"—when to my surprise he added a note as follows: "At least, if this is not true I have provoked thought by *saying* it is true."—I confess a shock to my system. What, a philosopher, a "lover of wisdom," among the triflers? It was even so.

But I had learned that philosophy is like gymnastics, in which you go through the forms of doing work, but are not working; you are only exercising the muscles. So you go through the forms of reasoning, and assert with confidence and arrive at "necessary conclusions," which the uninitiated suppose to be real convictions. In truth, however, the philosophers also are romancing. It does not seem to be given to all of them to know that they are false—they only know the others are—but now and then they betray more or less consciousness of the fact in themselves. They are only writing logical fiction.—Their works should perhaps be regarded as "literature."

It is said that Germany has gone further than any other nation; in that country the critics have discovered the essential falsity of *all* reasonings. They have been driven to this conclusion by observing how often, age after age, their wisest have built up a theory, only to have it torn down again; and seeing on closer observation that our faculties have in many cases deceived us as to the nature of things, how do we know that they have not deceived us all the time. Indeed the alleged "facts" of nature are only as we seem to see them, only our ways of looking at things, only fictions of the mind. This is the doctrine of universal fiction. Things only *pretend to be* anyhow. Nature is the universal hypocrite. The old philosophers were right: "All is illusion." The Hymn Book is right:

This world is all a fleeting show,
For man's delusion given.

There is, however, one small comfort in this, one straw to clutch at: for, at last, we have found the truth, namely, that nothing is true. At last we have the right conception of things, namely, there isn't any right conception of things; and, for all we know, there aren't any things.

There is also some convenience in this state of affairs. For if all opinions are erroneous, then we may well give up our laborious search after *true* opinions—that will make life easier for some of us who fondly thought we could find the truth, by much labor—give up also our supreme effort to defend those cherished convictions for which our fathers died, and for which we were almost willing to die, even the creeds which they and we have too highly valued. Let us practise the Teutonic wisdom. How much larger satisfaction we may thus get out of life! Knowing that no convictions are right or obligatory, we can now take any we please; we can have a new set every morning as our fancy dictates, and not be narrowly confined to one creed or “platform” or set of principles. We can change several times a day, just as we dress for dinner. This privilege of an advanced stage of civilisation was denied our fathers; but we may avail ourselves of it in full. It would appear that some in Church and State are already indulging in the new luxury; when one opinion does not suit the occasion of convenience or profit, they forthwith select another that does.

It cannot be allowed that the Germans are without responsibility for such applications of their theory. For we are taught to regard them as the pioneers who “open up” the land which by and by we are to occupy. At all events, they are very much in earnest about it, and they carry the same mood of mind into many of their affairs, even into those of the Church. There the religious critic has pulled his house down about his head. But mark the sequel; the critic, becoming accustomed to the ruins he has made, finds after a while that he likes them, and believes in ruins; he declares that he is more at home among them than any one can be in the best built and ordered house.

A significant application of the new philosophy occurred when Professor Büchner, becoming a materialist, found he could no longer profess the creed or doctrines required by the State Church of Germany. When he, therefore, in a straightforward manner gave up his ecclesiastical position, at great personal sacrifice, he was blamed for leaving the Church, even by some who held the same opinions that he held. For since all opinions whatsoever are only assumed, the Church opinions are as good as any, so long as they

yield as good a salary. "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players," and you might as well play one part as another, so it be profitable.

The historians tell us that the theatre originally grew out of the church; it was at first only a means of exhibiting to the eyes of the faithful, living pictures of the great events and personages of Bible times and scenes, and that kind of thing. And we must all recognise a certain fitness when the church becomes again a theatre or a means of displaying the convictions and practices of our fathers of honored memory.

It is fair to say, however, that some do not approve the German logic and order of things ecclesiastical. But my present topic is chiefly that pretension or hypocrisy exists. What forms of it may be approved and to what extent approved will be considered later.

Outside Germany much the same state of affairs may be found. We are credibly informed that intelligent Roman Catholics have an esoteric faith; that for instance the late Archbishop of Paris was a thorough rationalist, secretly rejecting the distinctive doctrines of his Church, doctrines of which, in the eyes of the people, he stood a champion. Presumably he regretted the duplicity, and had chosen it as the lesser of two evils. He might have come out openly and denounced all falsehood; but he knew that he would be worse misunderstood, beside doing no end of harm, in disturbing society already on the verge of madness.—But, not to explain but to declare the facts, let it be noted that he falsely pretended to believe the doctrines of the Church; he deceived the people.

Moreover, when some of his subordinates attempted to discipline Rénan for disturbing the popular faith, Rénan replied in an essay on *Intellectual and Moral Reforms*, and said in substance to the Church, "Leave us literary men alone, and we will leave you alone with the people,"—a proposition that Mazzini characterised as the most singular and immoral compromise that could enter the brain of a thinker.¹

Nor yet was Rénan a sinner above his kind; for it is recorded that with all his "singular immorality," he had left the Church because he could not endure its hypocrisy.

No one supposes that these things are true of Germany and France alone. Across the Channel and the ocean the same story is told. The diplomatic conscience and the far-reaching insincerity of Cardinal Manning have already become matters of history. Even

¹ quote Henry D. Lloyd.

Cardinal Newman was accused (by Kingsley) of "growing dishonesty"; and Huxley said of him: "After reading an hour or two in his books, I begin to lose sight of the distinction between truth and falsehood." More nearly in the Cardinal's own style, it has been said: "He practised the doctrine of reserve." That is, he withheld certain parts of his opinion, until such time as the people should be able to receive them without harm. Meanwhile, for the most part, he did and said what his Church required, knowing that his deed and word would be commonly understood to mean what was not in him to mean; he meanwhile making for the multitude no intelligible sign that he should be otherwise understood. In that communion so extensive are the ramifications of rationalism that the editor of the *New York Independent*¹ says: "We suppose unbelief in the essential doctrines of historic Christianity to be more prevalent in the educated circles of Catholicism than in any other Christian Church—barring the Unitarians."

The Congregationalist of July 20, 1901, has an article on "The Curse and Comfort of Creeds," which briefly exhibits the situation of the established Churches of Great Britain, and by comparison some of those in America. It says: "In the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland a few weeks ago, the subject of greatest interest was the Confession of Faith, and the power of the Church to modify it. The question as stated by Principal Story was, "Is the Church of Scotland fettered and tied hand and foot to the very forms and expressions of the seventeenth century?" . . . "After three hours of able and sometimes heated discussion the assembly practically decided that the Church has no power to modify, abridge, or extend, any article of the confession."—Dean Farrar lately said that "the Church of England is the only Church in Christendom which is so stereotyped in unprogressiveness as to retain the constant public recitation of a creed which dates back to the Dark Ages. . . . the damnatory clauses of which cannot be repeated by even the most bigoted, ignorant, and self-satisfied of priestly believers in their own shallow infallibility, without the insertion of immense mental reservations." And the editor adds: "Yet neither the Episcopal Church of England nor the Presbyterian Church of Scotland bows under a heavier theological burden than ecclesiastical bodies in America which insist on formal affirmation of statements of doctrine that have become obsolete and repudiated by the moral and intellectual sense of many who affirm them. The doctrine of mental reservation, which ministers of some

¹ Feb. 1900, pp. 329-330.

denominations and some of our own theological seminaries seem forced to adopt, is one of the most vicious of all heresies."

So far as *The Congregationalist* is correct in comparing American churches with the Established Church of England we may take the condition of the latter as a measure of the facts in America. But while using the English Church as a sample we shall not confine attention to that Church alone.

Years ago Emerson wrote, "The English Church has nothing left but possession. And when a bishop meets an intelligent layman with interrogation in his eyes, he has no recourse but to take a glass of wine with him." The wine being sufficient to change the subject, social intercourse was possible. Without artificial help that distinguished American of Puritanic antecedents had little sympathy with the Bishop; his conscience was perhaps too *inexperienced* for fairest judgment.

More recently Dr. Sunderland¹ made some study of English affairs and reported, among other things, that "The Established Church is an obstacle in the way of temperance reform. It is Conservative, Tory, and must carry elections to keep in power, therefore it takes sides with the liquor interests, gambling interests and so forth. Thus religion and morals have to be sacrificed to the necessity of keeping power in the hands of the Church." It may be true that foreigners and those not accustomed to large affairs are often scandalised by what is rightly but only partially described as the sacrifice of religion and morality; whereas if they had a broad and full knowledge of the complicated relations in which a great Church may find itself, their judgment would be more intelligent and just: they might perceive the wisdom of a Church taking sides with vice.

The philosopher Paulsen, a most competent observer, says² that "Intellectual veracity, sincerity in matters of thought and faith, consistency in thinking, is not one of the virtues encouraged by the Church." And Prof. Henry Sidgwick, of highest authority in moral science, writes on "The Ethics of Conformity"³ and says: "The student of history sees that hypocrisy and insincere conformity have always been the besetting vice of the religious, and a grave drawback to their moralising influence. Just as lying is the recognised vice of diplomats, chicanery of lawyers, and solemn quackery of physicians."

Pursuing the subject with similar ability and even more op-

¹ *Unitarian*, May, 1897, p. 216.

² Paulsen's *Ethics* (trans.), p. 682.

³ *International Journal of Ethics*. April, 1896.

portunity for observation, and with the authority of actual experience within the Church, the Reverend Hastings Rashdall¹ reaffirms substantially the statement of Professor Sidgwick; indeed he adds specifications, and sets forth the ambiguity of the relations of the Church in a still clearer light. His thorough-going discussion of the subject leaves few things to be desired; and so far as his Church is concerned, one need scarcely go outside his very words, so candid and unmistakable are they.

To begin with, he acknowledges that the plain truth is not always to be told, for while veracity is, of course, a good, and is indeed "an end in itself. . . . yet like other goods it may have to be sacrificed to a higher good." The only question he says, is to what extent does formal consent to what is not literally accepted, involve culpable untruthfulness?—Evidently untruthfulness is sometimes to be blamed and sometimes not. As examples of blameless untruthfulness he mentions "Dear Sir," with which one would not hesitate to begin a letter to his enemy, and "Right Reverend" with which he might address a letter to a man he despises. Such words merely express the custom of the language. They have by custom acquired a secondary meaning, which is not their literal and primitive meaning. In past times before they acquired the secondary meaning, it was manifestly improper to address an enemy as "Dear Sir"—and possibly our father sinned in this regard, but that is not our present business. In these times we use present-day language and in present-day meanings.

The same kind of change has been going on in relation to the ritual and the creed. And "as the custom of departure from the literal meaning of creeds grows, there is less and less guilt in untruthful subscribing." This custom has so far extended that, "be the guilt more or less," "There are few clergymen whose private belief corresponds to the letter of the formula to which they express adhesion." "Many hold those doctrines which are specifically condemned in the Thirty-nine Articles." And "among the most numerous section of the clergy. . . . nothing can exceed the contempt with which the Thirty-nine Articles are commonly treated." At the same time it is confessed that "the candidate for ordination must solemnly assent to the Thirty-nine Articles, and say that he believes the doctrine of the Church of England as contained therein is agreeable to the word of God." Let me interrupt by putting the last two quotations together and observing that the "liberal" candidate is required to say on the most solemn oc-

¹ *International Journal of Ethics*. Jan., 1897.

casation that "he assents to that which is utterly contemptible, and he believes the doctrine of his Church as therein contained is agreeable to the word of God."

Some people would, however, find it difficult to admire a man who would accept the situation by which he would be called upon to make such statements; though all might perhaps admire the candor of Mr. Rashdall in plainly setting forth the facts and defending them.

But I read on and find that in judging whether a candidate for ordination sufficiently agrees with the Church to justify his serving it, the question is whether he is able "to throw the expression of his own devotional feeling with any naturalness into the forms provided by the Church of England." Mr. Rashdall does not tell us how well a man may serve a Church, who is able to throw the expression of his devotional feeling into, for instance, the form which is most contemptible of all things; and how much real devotional feeling he has if he consents to such an expression of it; and how much honor he confers upon the Church and upon God by associating them with that kind of thing. It may be said, however, that such a man has a notable virtue: he exhibits to a rare degree the divine quality of humility or self-abasement. Artemus Ward in time of war was so altruistic that he was willing to sacrifice all his wife's relations to his country. And the polite Chinaman is said to sign himself "your humble pig," and to answer your kindly inquiries about his honorable family by saying that the "miserable dogs are well." But the English Churchman must exceed all this, he must not only associate himself and his most sacred feelings with what is utterly contemptible, he must even subject his Church and his God to the same humiliation. Moreover, herein something of the value of the Church may be seen. For it is doubtful whether outside the communion and apart from its sanctifying grace any such degree of humility has ever been attained by man.

Again I read on. "The candidate must also publicly declare that he does unfeignedly believe all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, though of course no one supposes that he means it, even when he says 'unfeignedly.'" Mr. Rashdall laments that such is the case, and confesses that when "authorised teachers of morality and religion make untrue statements, there is a shock to public morality." To the simple minded, this of Mr. Rashdall is in itself a shock; for they are apt to suppose that the Church is on the side of morals all the time, as it once was, according to history, when if it shocked anything it shocked immorality.

Hence they need to be told over and over again that in an elaborated civilisation the Church must often oppose good morals, and for a while stand definitely on the side of vice and sin, to defend and propagate the same.

Further particulars set the facts in a still clearer light. For we have not yet observed *what it is* that a man may unfeignedly believe about the Old and New Testament. "Nothing could be more explicit" according to Mr. Rashdall; "the candidate says that he believes in the actual truth of the contents of the Bible," and "the Church of England holds that the three creeds ought thoroughly to be received and believed," yet he knows that the Bible contains many contradictions and errors. And as for creeds and that sort of thing we quote Dr. Momerie¹ that "there is every possible diversity of opinion and practice in the Church." "A recent judicial decision has declared that a clergyman is within his rights even if he accuses the inspired authors of wilful and deliberate dishonesty."

It would seem then that not only may an English clergyman hold and teach that St. Paul was wilfully and deliberately dishonest, but he may (and in many cases must) practice that variety of inspiration himself, and descend to the same level with the Apostle. Nor is this quite all. An American bishop² has recently written a letter to *The Churchman*, asserting that the "clergy are not bound even to believe the statements they make in the prayers of the Church service, which they offer to the God of truth."

We conclude then that one may be false to man, and false to God, and yet be a true member of the true Church; at least, so the authorities tell us.

It would be unjust, however, to leave these statements alone to indicate the condition of the Church in the respect contemplated. For there are important signs of improvement. One of them is in the changed form of subscription required of the clergy. Before 1865 the clergyman was required to say: "I declare my unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything prescribed by and in the Book of common Prayer." He now says in more general terms: "I assent to the Thirty-nine Articles of religion and the Book of Common Prayer, and I believe the doctrine of the Church of England as therein set forth to be agreeable to the Word of God." The cause of the change was that in 1862 the Dean of Westminster made a great argument in which he showed that "though all the clergy had signed according to law, yet none could honestly do so."

¹ *Forum*, May, 1891, p. 305.

² *Nineteenth Century* Sept., 1899, p. 517.

This means of course that they were all dishonest and insincere in their profession of faith. Now, under the present and less definite form of subscription, it must be allowed that they are less insincere than before. So much improvement is to be noted.

Especially let it be observed that, in one part of their statement, at present they are only required to solemnly affirm what is not so; they need not always double up the falsehood by adding "unfeigned." This is surely an advance from requiring a double or second degree of insincerity, to requiring only the first degree.

An outsider would suggest that there were at least two ways out of the dilemma, one, so to modify the Articles that an honest and intelligent man *could* sign them, and another, to require no subscription at all. But no, they would still require every clergyman to be dishonest; the authorities insisted on that, though they would not require him to say at the same time that he is honest. And so it remains to this day.

If any uninstructed man, chancing to read the above, has been asking why does one need to subject himself to even the first degree of insincerity: why not endeavor to serve God and man *outside* the English Church, and so be free from its requirements, I must reply that such a question shows by its very form and substance that it comes from one who does not understand the situation. He has not considered certain necessities or proprieties which govern the case. A single illustration will suffice: On the occasion of the death of Spurgeon, so justly distinguished for his sincerity and eloquence, *The Churchman* said very truly, "The pulpits of America and England have recently sounded forth much that is gorgeous and convincing, and have echoed the best examples of sermons from Chrysostom to Phillips Brooks, but this century has not heard a voice raised for Christ with so complete a mastery of Scripture thought and language as was exhibited by Spurgeon." Yet it is to be noted that with all his character and unparalleled "mastery of Scripture thought and language" Spurgeon would not have been allowed to preach in any pulpit of the order represented by *The Churchman*. To take an extreme case, any veriest hypocrite and mumbling ignoramus, on whom the hands of a bishop had been laid, would be preferred, both by the Church and by God, as preacher and agent of grace unto men. Did not Christ himself say "Among those born of woman none is greater than John the Baptist, yet he that is least in the kingdom of Heaven is greater than he?" So after all, even great ones, outside the

Church, count for little. On this subject there are several other potent considerations to be noted under the next topic.

But why multiply words? It is confessed that many deceptions are practiced; they are acknowledged in language as plain as any scoffer could desire, and as plain as any believer could need. I shall merely summarise the facts in the words of various, competent observers.

Dr. Percival writes: "It is not too much to say that Protestantism as a positive religious belief is dying out, and that its professors are for the most part able to continue in the ministry only through some device of casuistry, which in any other case would be considered by themselves, and it *is* in their case by almost any one else, dishonest and dishonorable."

President Eliot, commenting on the decay of conscience in religion, says (if popular report be correct): "The original relations of the Church and the World have been reversed," and "The morality and regard for truth in ordinary business firms is superior to that of the Church. . . . A business corporation would discharge an employee who should make statements with mental reservations." Yet it is also true that the same business men, who are so well aware of the value of honesty in commerce, do not only themselves practice a larger liberty in their church, with respect to truth telling, but also they expect their minister to sign a statement he knows to be untrue and to make a formal contract he does not intend to fulfil.

Some have made more general statements, not confining the indictment to the single count of unverity, but including the range of immoral character. Thomas Erskine of Linlathan lamented that in morals the Church has fallen behind the World.

Mr. Ferguson (apparently a churchmember), in *The Religion of Democracy* says: "The Church as it is to day is not merely a cumberer of the ground; it is an obstacle to faith, a preventer of goodness, it scatters the conscience and paralyses the will."

Indictments still more severe have been published, especially by the enemies of the Church; but of more significance are the careful and conservative statements of its friends, such as are quoted above. That they *are* conservative, though to some they may be very astonishing, will appear when we observe that no one of them accuses *all sects* nor *all individuals* of any sect, neither declares that any large number are *intentional* deceivers nor conscious hypocrites. Quite to the contrary, they recognise, as every sane

mind must, that the Church has been a great cause of what is best in civilisation, and is the hope of times to come. Moreover, within every sect and denomination, there have been and are upright, sincere, and worthy men, even saints, before whom we bow with all reverence that may be paid to mortal man. It is rather that these men are somewhat in the position of President Lincoln. He could not even join a Church, because he felt so keenly the limitations of creed and custom. Yet it is recorded that in the days of our nation's distress he prayed: "God bless all the Churches. And blessed be God who in this our great trial giveth us the Churches." So these great and good men, without and within the Church, love it and believe in it. And because they perceive that that which they love and believe in is now in danger, they have dared to speak of the source of the danger (as they suppose) in all its terrors.

Meanwhile, also, and on the other hand, some have confessed (for self and others) to the practice of hypocrisy in various measures and grades, and have defended the same. To the several forms of that defence I now turn.

II. THE GOOD OF HYPOCRISY.

Hypocrisy has been defended partly on the basis of general principles, of which some are philosophical and in the nature of things. It is well known that a dark background is necessary to a bright picture; and we cannot fully appreciate our blessings or joys except by contrast with pains and evils. That is, at least some of the exaltation of righteousness and heaven is conditioned on humiliating experience in the dust of sin and sorrow. In other words and in short: Hell is necessary to Heaven—which indeed might be inferred from their both being in God's universe and parts of his divine plan of Providence. As the poet says, "the joy that is sweetest lurks in stings of remorse": we cannot have sweetest joy unless we pass to it from the remorse of sin.

It is to be feared that some have overlooked the great doctrine of the *utility of sin*. If so, it is not by fault of the Church; for that institution has taught and practised the doctrine for a thousand years. Some examples have already been quoted; and in order to have any adequate view of the utilities, we must go further into the same region of thought and practice.

Dr. Hopkins taught that sin (overruled) is an advantage to the universe. Dr. Charles Hodge, of equal celebrity, says plainly that sin and other evils have "contributed to the highest glory of

God and the welfare of men." With these, the liberal theologians have agreed. Theodore Parker said, "Every fall is a fall upward." M. J. Savage says, "The first sin of man was his greatest step upward;" and another declares that "The murder of Christ by the Jews was the greatest boon that ever came to the human race."

Similarly any number of distinguished theologians might be quoted. For they have long known that sin is really a blessing, though some have felt it wise not to say so, fearing that a full knowledge of the fact might be abused. It was doubtless well for a while that we be left in ignorance of this important truth. The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now he calls on all to behold the facts, through the Prophets whom He has appointed in the Church.

This general principle, the divine law under which we are placed, is recognised in the Prayer Book: we are "set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our natures we cannot always stand upright." For if we "cannot," we are under necessity.

The Roman Missal gives a fuller statement, declaring both necessity and the blessing of it: "O surely necessary sin of Adam, which has been blotted out by the death of Christ. O blessed guilt, which has deserved to have such and so great Redeemer." Bishop Ken versified the beautiful thought and burst into song:

"What Adam did amiss
Turns to our endless bliss;
O happy sin, which to atone,
Drew filial God to leave his throne."¹

A still more definite expression (none the less true for being in quite a different style) may be quoted: "Sin is like the measles. Every person is born with a constitutional liability to them; and this imperfection can be eliminated only by having the disease. Every parent rejoices when the child gets safely through, and can have the loathsome disease no more. So the Father in Heaven watches tenderly over his suffering children through the terrible crisis of wickedness and crime in the loathsome but inevitable disease of sin, and rejoices as one after another they get through it to suffer its attack no more." This seems to be true of one sin after another, as it is of one physical disease after another. It does not seem that we ever escape from the liability to some such attack. For there is a divine provision for the increase of evil as we

¹ Harris's *God, Creator and Lord of All*, I., 236.

advance in grade of being. The poet Burns plowing his field turned up the nest of a mouse and thus ruined the present happiness of a fellow-creature. This incident evoked the poet's tender sympathy, but he wrote :

"Still thou art blest compared with me;
The present only toucheth thee.
But och! I backward cast my e'e
On prospects drear!
An' forward, tho I can na see,
I guess and fear."

So it is the sublime privilege of each higher order of being to suffer the greater pain and commit the deeper sin. The whole range of such possibilities are within the reach of human nature, which in its various grades extends from people too stupid for any except the most manifest moral distinctions, who cannot sin except in the least degree, unto those most highly wrought natures who perceive morals everywhere, and who often by reason of offences are torn with remorse and shame throughout a life of exquisite misery. It is ever true, according to St. Paul, that as light and intelligence advance, "the law has come in beside, that the trespass might still more abound."

In another aspect the divine appointment is manifest. And here again Mr. Rashdall is eminently clear and candid. He says, in substance, of the Thirty-nine Articles: "Article XIII asserts that works not of faith in Christ are of the nature of sin; which means that Socrates is damned. And the clergy formally assent to this. Yet 'the people whom it is necessary to consider are not deceived'; though many, for example, nursery-maids and worldly-minded men, are deceived. And this is evil." "Yet it would be a far greater evil...that the ministry should be recruited from those who do believe that Socrates is damned."—Thus we see how it is necessary for a clergyman of that Church to say that Socrates is damned; and it is better to say and not believe it than to say it and believe it.

Now I submit that as between these two alternatives, this judgment is correct. Moreover, these being the only alternatives present to the mind, which is incapable of conceiving that one might join some other church or no church, Mr. Rashdall shows that, for him and his kind, some degree of hypocrisy is necessary. They are foreordained hypocrites.

Still another constraint is laid on those of the Church. The prevailing theology was formulated professedly in opposition to

science and reason. Judged by the standards of philosophy it was and is artificial and fictitious; and the defense of it *must* be sophistical, in the nature of the case. And as one becomes gradually aware of the fraud, the continued defense of it must be dishonest, and more and more so as intelligence grows, until human nature can no longer stand the strain of the incongruity, and rebels, and declares for a simple, clear, candid, and rational faith. Now as a matter of fact most people are somewhere in the transitional state. How is it possible for them to be other than hypocrites?

Men have also felt the call of *duty* to assume a virtue even though they have it not. When we have hated our neighbor, how easy has it been to discover that he was a sinner, and deserved punishment. And any one could see that to undertake the offender's discipline would be only justice; nay, duty; yea, piety. Therefore, we as faithful servants of God have been obliged to give the man a drubbing, receiving in our conscience the divine approval, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Again, our neighbor has had much land and gold; and was manifestly misusing them, wasting them, besides endangering his immortal soul in the process. We have seen that something ought to be done to save the man's soul, not to speak of the property which ought to be put to a better use than tempting its owner to destruction. Somebody ought to interfere. Then we have reasoned with ourselves and prayed, and remembering that we are our brother's keeper and must answer *duty* for him in the great Judgment Day, we have at length consented to take his land and gold and administer them for him. Perhaps at the same time our nature rebels against our act, and sympathy goes out for the man. We know he will not understand our motive; he will fight for his own as he calls it. And in the struggle we may have to kill him. But we must do our duty, and leave the consequences to God. And we shall yet receive our reward; for, having been found "faithful in those few things, we shall be placed over many, and shall enter into the joy of the Lord."

Still again, how many times was our neighbor in some error of opinion or creed, to the peril of his soul? And we have had to set him right. Yet very likely he was obstinate and would not be set right, and persisted in differing from us. And so, the best we could do was to make an example of him for the benefit of others; that they at least might be warned in time. Of course in so serious a matter there must be no half-way measures; sympathy has no place where immortal welfare is concerned; and therefore the few should

suffer even the most manifest and fearful punishments, in order to save the many; hence our painful duty to bring heretics to the stake or other public and impressive penalty.

Such were the reasoning and practice of the past—not entirely unheard of in the present,—about which I have two remarks; first, that in all this we have often (not always) reasoned as well as we could, and have acted on our conscience. Was not Calvin on his conscience when he (for he was responsible) burned Servetus? History records in unmistakable terms that we verily thought we did God service. And secondly, at the same time, we have usually been hypocrites: we have affected a piety which was really foreign to us. So essentially mingled are sincerity and hypocrisy. One is necessary to the other. Let both grow together until the harvest.

They say hypocrisy is the tribute vice pays to virtue. Is it not meet that vice should pay tribute? There are many ways in which evil may be made to serve the good.

How often in the Church, as in society, we are obliged to profess that which is ambiguous or even what is known to be false. Dr. Rashdall says dubious morality is no bar, “Nothing but the clearest categorical imperative ought to prevent a person, otherwise attracted to the task, from accepting or retaining the Orders of the English Church.” And again speaking of those clergy who, while they affirm their belief in the Thirty-nine Articles, yet hold doctrines specifically condemned in them, and treat the Articles with the utmost contempt, he says, “I have not a word to say against this.”¹

When occasionally, some have contemplated the possibility of leaving the Church, they have usually been convinced by adequate considerations that such an act would do more harm than to remain where they are and as they are. They have good authority for so doing. When Matthew Arnold out-grew the Church, he still defended its existence, defended the “Establishment”; and when certain others of the Church who had come to believe as he did wrote him for advice he answered, “Stay where you are, and try to bring the Church along with you into the new light.”

They indeed have the *highest* authority for doing so. The *Outlook* reminds us that “Jesus Christ never withdrew from the Jewish Church. His last sermons were preached in the Jewish Temple. Paul never withdrew from the Jewish Church. Up to the time of his death he remained a Jew. Apparently he never went into a city

¹Pp. 142-143.

where there was a Jewish synagogue, that he did not avail himself of his privilege as a rabbi to go into the synagogue and preach a doctrine more subversive of the rabbinical doctrine of his time than any liberalism is of the orthodoxy of our day."

When a principle is sanctioned by divine law and example, there is less occasion to quote what is human, yet as a matter of fact men have often felt themselves bound by human law to outgrown creeds. As I have before quoted from *The Congregationalist*, the Church of Scotland thinks it "has no power to modify, abridge, or extend any article of the Confession." The Andover professors were, until recently, in a similar predicament, they were bound to publicly profess to "maintain and inculcate the creed...every article of which should forever remain, entirely, and identically the same, without the least alteration, addition, or diminution."

In England the law of the State has even more remarkable relations to the subject. On occasion of a recent confirmation of a bishop, the officiating Vicar General, according to custom invited "all opposers" to state any objection they might have to the confirmation. Whereupon one John Keusit arose and stated objections. To say that surprise and consternation resulted, is to tamely characterise the consequences. The matter was grave enough to be brought to the attention of the Lord Chief Justice, who decided that such objections are disorderly. It does not appear that the Vicar General will cease to invite opponents to make objections, but that you must not suppose him to mean what he says, on peril of the law. According to the report, we are to understand from the Chief Justice that men have so long been unaccustomed to take an ecclesiastic at his word, that it has now become a crime to do so.

By the way, this was not the worst of the Keusit affair. The younger man of that name was arrested in Liverpool for disturbing the peace. He, a layman, was charged with having "preached more than a hundred times." And "the worst thing they alleged against him," says *The Churchman*, was that he quoted from the Prayer Book, Article XXXI, saying that "masses are blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits." This was declared to be "most provoking language." "He had no right to say such things in public," according to the magistrate. For such offenses Mr. Keusit was condemned as a disturber of the peace, and was sent to jail for three months. In vain did twenty thousand men hold a meeting and protest against the action of the magistrate; in vain did a hundred thousand sign a petition to the Home Secretary for the

prisoner's release. And now an excited mob of Church people or their sympathisers have attacked Mr. Keusit, senior and wounded him, wherefore he has died. No, religion is not always a farce or a comedy; it is sometimes a tragedy.

But it is not merely in metaphysics and the laws of God and of man that the new wisdom is manifest. The same principle may be derived from the practical necessities and experience of the Church. *As things now are*, various forms of deceit are practically unavoidable, both in the Church and in society. Of course, if we were now for the first time making a Church, and were not limited by the past, by tradition and habits, and all the complicated associations of custom and sentiment, and what not, we should be free. In choosing the statement of our creed, we should have no ambiguity, no irrational doctrine, and no occasion for false pretense. But as the facts are, our case is quite otherwise; we are born into an advanced civilisation, the Church fully established in law and in certain relations of creed and custom, each part of it entrenched in the faith and hope of many people. Now, we are not *responsible* for all these facts, but we *are limited* by them; and wisdom will take human nature as it is and institutions as they are, and make the best of them.

That is to say, when we come into this world, we find the Church in possession. It has an immense accumulation of power, financial, social, sentimental, and so on, altogether a tremendous power, practically controlling the whole situation. To throw away the accumulated riches and grace of the Church, would be to lose all opportunity, betray our new ideas, and turn over all power to the stupid reactionaries. We can't get a hearing for any cause we have at heart, nor have any standing in society, such as will furnish large opportunity for usefulness, unless we are in the communion. And who are we, that we should set up the whimsies of our individualism against the Church of the saints and of God! If one would do anything in the world, let him take the great, practically the only, means of doing it: the almost omnipotent machinery of the Church. Against so powerful, well organised, and scientific a foe as the Devil and his legions, the old-fashioned individual warfare is vain and out of date. We must join the regular army, submit to its methods, advance and retreat according to command, give ourselves body and soul and conscience to the service.

This does not mean, of course, that we must *always* be hypocrites. Ordinarily we are not called upon to profess a doctrine falsely, at least in our own words.—“But in the words of a book

we may and often must." We must say the prescribed ritual even though we thereby say what we know to be untrue. By the authority of the Church the falsehood becomes sanctified, and thus a lie becomes a part of the worship of God.

Neither is it held that *all men* must be hypocrites, for manifestly the moral needs of human nature are such that there must be some examples of the ideal life with a perfectly clear conscience and clear head; in order that toward the ideal, we may ever be moving so fast as we may. Such an ideal is Jesus, for all time. In him we see that to which we may some day attain.

In short it is only that we must exercise common sense and see things as they are. Thus we see, in the story of Jesus, not only the ideal human being, we also see what becomes of the ideal. For as soon as the Pharisees were persuaded that he would make no compromise, *they put him to death*. This lesson from the story of our Lord, we are apt to overlook: If we would remain among men long enough to do any great work, we must not take extreme positions; we must adapt ourselves to circumstances. Let each one therefore wisely choose his path, remembering that "it is also noble to *live* for men."

Nor is it meant that this is a new doctrine or practice of the Church. In fact the wise have so thought and done from near the earliest Christian history.

Cardinal Newman has quoted with approval Clement of Alexandria, rightly esteemed by all parties as one of the chiefest of saints: "He both thinks and speaks the truth except when careful treatment is necessary, and then, as a physician for the good of his patient, he will lie, or utter a lie, as the Sophists say. Nothing however but the good of his neighbor would lead him to do this; he gives himself for the Church." And when he gives himself wholly to the Church, of course he gives his conscience to the Church.—Or will some one hold the absurd opinion that the conscience is too good to give to the Church!

Following this principle the Christians were accustomed to do little "pious frauds," such as to touch up the reports of saintly miracles, for the very worthy purpose of convincing the pagans and saving souls. Nay more, they even taught that God himself had practised deception, in the same cause, when he drove a sharp bargain with the Devil, even cheating him in a kind of business transaction by which he bought back his title to mankind which Satan had acquired by inducing them to sin.—Such was the common doctrine of the Atonement, among the great of early times.

That our spiritual fathers and the Church in general took some liberty with morals has not been commonly known; for people have not been willing to see the manifest evidence; because the fact seemed to reflect on the character of the saints. But now that we know the merits of deceit, we need no longer be restrained by such considerations.

Yet there was a certain fitness in our refusal to give honest heed to the evidence. For as the early fathers lied about the miracles, so we, the sons, show our lineage, and are loyal, and in a manner faithful to their memory, by refusing to be quite candid on our part: we "walk backward and cover our fathers' shame." And the ruse has been remarkably successful; we have usually deceived self and others, and so have triumphantly declared the blamelessness of the early saints. But we were hypocrites in doing it, as they were in doing what we refuse to admit.

Rashdall's candor seldom fails him: he says plainly,¹ the Church has tried hypocrisy and found it beneficial, so beneficial as to justify continuing the practice, and extending it.

Of some of the extensions I shall speak later, but just to illustrate how a round-about method may be the most effective we may recall evidence, collected some years ago, that churches in nearly all denominations have increased attendance by resorting to suppers, and dances, and light opera, negro minstrels, and so forth. Their zeal and effort in these affairs may be judged by a single example. They tell of one Sunday-school girl who was able to kick a tambourine held as high as her head. Who would have thought beforehand that such performances would have been a means of grace? But of that we have the most positive evidence; for many sinners who could not otherwise have been persuaded to enter the sacred walls were found on the anxious seat.

Let the good work go on; let all necessary duplicity and indirection be adopted. The Church can still profit by its ancient methods. Its ministers have rightly exhorted us, saying: Join the Church, try to believe, profess to believe, and at length you will come to believe;" for the false profession tends to make itself true. "I believe in order that I may understand." "Faith that for Christ's sake we are forgiven" (antedating the fact, and therefore not yet true) has saved many a soul; and has indeed been assigned by some theologians as the necessary condition of salvation. That is, not only may one be saved by falsehood; he can't be saved without it.

¹ Pp. 144, 157-159.

Consider also what jumble of absurdities can be found in some revivals and conference meetings, where many souls are saved. President Jordan has pointed out that "what is called 'conversion' is often a species of insanity, being, (as it is) allied to epilepsy and hysterics." Then also the sentiments of the meeting are often affected—on the indistinct theory that one ought to feel them, and will feel them by professing and trying to feel them.

One great illustration of the principle is, in that the Church from earliest times has been accustomed to "talk up" optimism, in spite of hard facts; and by its cheering word has contributed greatly to destroy the power of evil, and to make optimism to be true. Hear the bold Prophet of ancient days: "I have been young and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread." Of course he *had* seen the righteous forsaken and his seed begging bread, if he had seen anything. But he comforted many by speaking as he did; and ever since his day, the Church has repeated the pious falsehood. And who can estimate the courage it has given, the hearts it has healed, the hopes it has sustained, the graces it has added to our Christian civilisation and character.

Similarly another prophet, in order to defend the justice of the divinely-appointed course of the world in the life of man, said: "Know that the woes of men are the work of their own hands." This assertion too has come down to modern times. I lately heard a preacher of one of the most advanced sects, say with power that "every man gets just what he deserves, no more, no less." This he repeated with varying phrase, and heaped superlatives upon it, such as sermons are made of. But observe what his words mean. They mean, for instance, that Jesus deserved to be hung on the cross, to be betrayed by Judas, and all through the ages to be sold out by sinners in high places who choose to call themselves Christians; and finally he deserves this last humiliation: that the hypocrites, against whom he struggled unto death, in hope that he might defeat them after death, should now come forward, monopolise his name, claim his heritage, and administer his estate.

So speak the prophets, old or new, because their word relieves human woe and makes life more endurable; and so rule the lords of the later Church, because in present circumstances the way of hypocrisy is the only practical way to the kingdom of sincerity, truth, and righteousness. If I mistake not, an old proverb reads: "Tell a lie, and shame the Devil."

What is that we hear of certain of our neighbors, (very estim-

able people too) who are saying to those that claim to be ill: "You have made a mistake; the fact is you have no body, you are not sick, it is all in your imagination, you are well, get up and go about your business." And in many cases, it is reported, they do as they are commanded. It is even asserted that the curative power of falsehood extends on some occasions to the changing of bodily structures.

None can deny this tremendous power unto salvation (spiritual, if not physical) that has arisen from these, and many like, false conceptions and assertions. Taking all things into account, may we not say that faith in false gods and false faith in the true God have saved more souls than the true faith in the true God? Anyhow we might so infer from the "two-and-seventy warring sects," each declaring that the other seventy-one are false.

In order to maintain these important principles, and the more effectively to establish this manner of thinking and doing, the great Churches have founded a discipline—in plain terms, a School of Hypocrisy. They have wisely provided a course of training which extends from childhood to old age. From the first the child is accustomed to things unreal and fictitious as if they were real and true, to guesses and affectations as if they were genuine knowledge, and to declaring its acceptance of unintelligible statements. The teachers and books provided for the young and those for the instruction of the heathen are often more conservative than those intended for adults and the more intelligent. Thus the beginners in the better life are habituated to the phrases of the older theology, before they can assert their individuality. While the mind is in a plastic state, the conventional ideas are impressed upon it and made as nearly as possible a part of the very substance of the growing mind. At the same time they are by ingenious devices fastened to the affections. Thus the mind, when it comes to maturity, is bound by so many ties of family and society and financial advantage, and surrounded by such a multitude of suggestions and leadings, that it is ordinarily held as in a vice to the parental Church and its forms.

All through life there are occasions of powerful sentiment, joy or grief, when exact thought is not prominent, and such occasions may be used still further to habituate the people to phrases ambiguous. For example, we are not accustomed to think much when we sing or listen to singing. Standing by a piano, the words being set to music, we say many things which in ordinary speech we should blush to repeat; some of which it would not be good man-

ners or good morals to repeat. Especially in the dim religious light of a beautiful Church, and prompted by sublime harmony and by the example of others, our own voice half concealed by the organ and the other half unheard by our neighbor because he is singing also, we declare our chief joy and our heart's delight is in those things, which if we were out doors and speaking in plain prose, face to face with an honest man, we should not dare to say for a moment. But the Church is kind and does not too often recall to us what we have said. Yet it is also wise and so, quietly, provides that the hymns shall abound in phrases which once had a literal meaning, and towards which we are now insensibly led when we repeat them. Thus it insinuates into our mind certain doctrines and sentiments, of which we should resent any plain statement.

In all this we do not forget that St. Paul would "sing with the understanding." Indeed we quite agree with him—and have defined the understanding. Ruskin the fanatic entirely *misunderstood* when he wrote: "The chief purpose of music is to say a thing that you mean in the strongest and clearest way; and men should never be taught to sing what they do not mean."

The great leaders of the Church,—and they were truly great—have put forth their splendid energies of thought, conscience, imagination, and inspiration, as teachers in their school. Sermons without number, books, systems of theology, a most impressive church service uniting the prestige of authority, the eloquence of the orator, the fascination of art, have combined to mould human nature into the forms approved. The intention was and is to affect the whole nature, and it may be illustrated in both thought and morals. In order to defend their doctrines the Church fathers have been obliged to caricature reason and declare the caricature to be the real article; they have resorted to all the subterfuges of logic; they have abundantly illustrated all the fallacies of the mind and invented new evasions and perversions and legerdemain, and declared all these to be peculiarly divine and sanctified, and necessary to salvation. Not that the inventors were usually conscious of the fraud, they simply thought of religion as a sacred thing which must be defended and promulgated, and then seized upon the readiest defence that occurred to them, and they gave to it all their power of mind and soul. To make surer the result that men should so think, the Church addressed them on all sides. To attract and persuade, it has adorned itself with the works of transcendent genius in fine art, music, and poetry; it has dignified itself with learning and philosophy, with pomp and circumstance, with lofty preten-

sions and divine prerogatives; it has presented the motives of social and personal advantage in this world, and of endless bliss in the world to come. To compel assent to the creed, it has launched anathemas and threats of eternal torment, with wrack and torture and all the resources of civil government and the Inquisition, and with the multiplied and exquisite terrors of superstition. And lest these have not done their perfect work, it has, in latter days especially, founded great universities and colleges and seminaries, not free to discover the truth whatever it be, but bound by law and self-interest to teach a definite doctrine forever. In order to keep its doctrines in the minds of the people and allow no change, it has established societies, organisations, and newspapers, under instructions not to report the facts without prejudice, but to conceal what may make against sectarian creed and interest, and exalt and magnify what may advance them.

Finally, these mighty forces, their sanctions increased by age, sacred association and miracle, made firm by habit repeated through generation after generation, have combined their strength, have secured control, and through heredity have transformed human nature into the likeness of error.

Developed under such processes for a thousand years, our faculties have become so warped and twisted that the false often seems to be true because it better fits our nature, as it now is. The vitiation is so profound that few people ever dream or can be made to suspect that anything is very wrong in their church, or in their own mind, that much of their "reasoning" is illogical and much of their "religion" is superstition. Thus when a few years ago, one who had really awakened to the facts, spoke faithfully and sorrowfully of the errors of the Church, a brother clergyman at once indignantly denied them and accused the speaker of "stabbing his mother in the back." Both men were perfectly honest, in the ordinary sense of the term; each said what he supposed to be true. But one was at a disadvantage, he was a blind man denying what the other saw and condemning him for seeing it. To the other and to all whose minds have escaped the bonds of the past, the facts are clear. And when the question arises, what are we going to do about it, the answer of many is that we accept the situation without wincing and boldly accept the necessary casuistry.

For a while, however, the weaker consciences will shrink and will need the support of vigorous protestations and professions of the high standards. Hear the word of the prophet of the Outlook: "We say therefore to every liberal minister in a conservative

church, stay where you are, and preach the truth as God gives you to see the truth, without fear or favor. Never conceal a conviction in order to keep your place, never pretend to believe what you do not sincerely entertain."

Of course he knows they are entitled to the Westminster Confession, the Thirty-nine Articles, the Andover Creed, and so on: and that many of them in order to keep their places and to be useful citizens in the Kingdom, will (and must) take advantage of fear and favor and concealment and pretence. The plain fact is the *Outlook* has too high a standard, except as an ideal and to keep up our courage. *Cry aloud and lift up*, while yet there is time. The Church *is* a holy institution and *must* be saved; and, I *will* believe; unquestioning faith is so comfortable, I will ask no questions, doubt was "all in the imagination," I *am* honest and sincere!

It is human nature. Dr. Rashdall himself seems a little nervous now and then, and endeavors to satisfy his conscience by vigorous proclamations of good principles. For instance he says: "In his sermon the minister should speak the truth, the whole truth—so far as he goes—and nothing but the truth."—Did his courage fail that he inserted "so far as he goes," and then wrote a long essay to mark the exceptions to the last phrase? Indeed, his whole essay might be summed up in the words which he quoted from the sacred formula of the witness-stand, adding the modifications according to his teaching: "*The minister should tell the truth (except when he may serve a higher end than truth), the whole truth (so far as he goes), and nothing but the truth (except such lies that are more useful than the truth).*" This, in short, is the new wisdom, though, strictly speaking, the newness is in the more general and candid recognition of the principles which, heretofore, unrecognised, have really controlled so much of our practice. And their fuller acceptance in the present day indicates a growing sense of their importance and utility.

But this is not all. The intellectual twist has caused a moral twist. The vitiating of reason induced a vitiating of conscience. The defence of error not only required bad logic but bad ethics. Theologians found themselves obliged to declare innocent things to be evil, and evil things to be good. They said the child born to-day is rightly blamable for Adam's sin and ought to be sent to hell for it. They even dared to teach that Christ was a sinner, and for his guilt, was punished on the cross. Yet more, with transcendental profanity, they represented the character of God in a form which Dr. Momerie declared to be "the very wickedest thought

that ever entered human brain," and then they pronounced this character to be the most reverend, adorable, beautiful, and lovely. To cap all, they defended their sacrilege in the name of authority, and piety, and faith.

To disarm conscience in its certain revolt against such hideous blasphemy, they promulgated the doctrine that morals and religion are separable; one is not necessary to the other, and might be even antagonistic. A man might be saved without morals or even against morals.

At least one Church has had revelations on the subject. The Virgin revealed to St. Birgitta that a Pope who is free from heresy, no matter how polluted by sin and vice, has absolute power over human souls to bind and lose. And all priests who are not heretics administer true sacraments, no matter how depraved they may be. An extreme case from history will bring the truth clearly before us. Recall then the story of Benvenuto Cellini, in whose life "atrocious crimes alternate with the ecstasies of rapturous and triumphant piety." In milder forms such incongruities are common in the conservative Churches of to-day, as when Spurgeon told his people (if the report be correct) that they would be damned all the more, for relying on morality as important in religion. Bishop Westcott lately addressed the clergy in the Cathedral, and urged them to apply religion to practical life among the people, with reference to trade, and amusements, and gambling. At the same time he apologised for doing so, because, he said, we shrink from bringing the great truths of our faith to bear on every day affairs. And in recognition of the common thought of religion as disconnected from life and morals, he said he knew they were very busy and hadn't time for practical things, but they might perhaps persuade others to do the work, involved, while they attended to religion!

I wonder if this clergy, in following his directions, used the same deference and delicacy toward the laity, and addressed a sinner after this fashion: "I beg pardon sir, but may I request that you should not steal, nor, if you please, devour widows' houses? I know you are very busy, and haven't the time to be honest, and do as you would be done by, and I shrink from making moral suggestions, but perhaps you will persuade others to observe the laws of morality, while you attend to the more important affairs of money-getting."

Booker Washington tells of a colored brother who was a member of the Church, but who "had to have a spree now and then."

After one unusually long absence he returned to the conference meeting, and in due time rose to make confession, "that he had been a great sinner; he had broken all the ten commandments, but he thanked the Lord that he had kept his religion."

* * *

Such are some of the characteristics of the school of ethics founded by the Church. But human contrivances cannot always succeed; some minds cannot be made to fit the patterns of antiquity. And lest they break away and be lost, the Churches have provided for admitting the laity to membership without entire doctrinal agreement with the standards; while the clergy themselves are held to the stricter requirements. This was originally a gracious concession to the laity, by which while uninstructed they might have faith by proxy, and so be allowed to enter the Church and have part in its saving grace. Yet there are found some so far incapable of gratitude as to complain of the arrangement. I quote one of them with reference to this very point.

He says in substance, "there are two standards in the Church. And since the severer one required of the clergy is, that for which the Church is likely to be judged by men, some of the laity are put in a false position where we stand for doctrines we do not believe; and we pay our money to support and extend what we do not believe."—He is quite right, they do in fact stand for such doctrines, they have their children taught the same doctrines, they "pay their money" to extend the same at home and in foreign lands; and in many ways they help to teach what they do not believe, and that which their clergy regard as "the most contemptible of all things."

At the same time we have the authority of Dr. Rashdall for saying that "the real injury to truth is in the practical acquiescence in and encouragement of beliefs which one does not hold." Another typical case is reported of a merchant who, when elected an elder, and asked to sign the Confession and pledge himself to dogmas that he had never believed or heard from the pulpit, felt the sting of hypocrisy, and realised that for years he had been, in effect, an advocate of a creed that he did not approve."

Rev. Mr. Crooker relates a typical case of a young man whose heart had been wounded by the minister, who in private confessed his disbelief in the dogmas which he required the young man to profess in public on joining the Church.

That such pathetic incidents occur there can be no denial. But what can be done? The clergyman was perhaps a little rash in disclosing the facts before the young man had been duly prepared.

Doubtless the chief fault was that the Church had failed to complete its work. It must more diligently practice the young in repeating the ritual and the creed, so that when necessary they can use words without meaning, or say one thing and mean another, or have two meanings, and easily move from one to another, without being offended; and so become accustomed to the shifty ways of men with whom they must afterwards associate. A child who is sufficiently drilled in such exercises is fitted for practical life. And so the Church tenderly leads the young.

If one thus brought up should have scruples about making untrue professions in joining the Church (or anything else), he may leave the judgment with his bishop, and lay on him the responsibility of deciding, according to Mr. Rashdall. That is to say, when the young man cannot quite make up his mind whether, holding such opinions as he does, he can honestly join the Church, accept its casuistry, and say what it requires him to say, he is advised to throw on the bishop the responsibility of deciding the question. In other words: Give up religion and join the Church instead; or to the candidate for Orders; suspend conscience and receive ordination. "There are, however, some men so far out of sympathy with the Church that they ought not to become members. The strain on their conscience would render them unservicable."

But meanwhile, lest there be many such and lest conscience be quite clear, we rely again on the marvellous ritual which is skilfully adapted to the purpose of attracting and secretly shaping the mind, suffusing it with feeling, and exerting a kind of mesmeric power over its people. These forms of service are so pleasant that not a few even from other communions, finding that in these later days spirit and truth have departed from their Church, now instinctively fly to the ritual as the only thing left in religion.

How comparatively, unfortunate, the sects that have no such forms, and have also a less thoroughly organised polity, and therefore (as we are told) "must resort to much exhortation and frequent 'revivals' and many professions of loyalty and devotion and 'loud shoutings,' in order to hold the interest and attention among their people, and so stem the tide of rationalism and libertinism."

On the whole the methods of indirection are especially fitted to the situation in the Church of to-day. In a transition period (such as this) people cannot be expected to pass at once from the old ideas to the new. They must rather have their home in the safe retreat of the old, and make daily excursions into the new country, and become gradually acquainted with it, and return at

nightfall to the old fort. So the enterprising minister begins his service with a text from the Scriptures—that is right anyhow—, moves out into the land of reason with reckless courage, to the delight of all awakening intelligences, and at various intervals retreats to cover; or more boldly and swashingly traverses the new country for a considerable period, and only returns in the conclusion. How many sermons have we heard in which the up-to-date minister explains rationalistically even the miracles themselves, or more gingerly mentions that some have done so and adds that “since opinions are comparatively so unimportant in religion, we need not discuss that question.” But in the end he infallibly safeguards the interests of the Church by giving an undoubtedly orthodox exhortation.

According to the same general method, most of the theological thinking of the day is really a hunting for ambiguous expressions—not exactly “the art of concealing thought” as another has called it, but rather the art of putting two meanings into the same phrase, and deftly passing from one to the other without disclosing their essential antagonism. Sometimes this is done by masking both old and new so that they look alike, or by shuffling the old phrases in a new way, such that by change of relations in the sentence, quite new meanings are possible. Thus by one meaning, a really orthodox mind is satisfied, and by the other a really heterodox mind is satisfied; and the speaker does not get into trouble with either of them, and so keeps his place and wields the power of the Church.

Again, within a single mind undecided which way to turn in the midst of doubts, one mood which is conservative finds the old meaning, and another which inclines to science, and the new, and vivid, and real, finds the new theology. Thus the growing mind is held by the old and taught by the new; is led along and never lost to the Church. Whereas any plain statement of the content of the new theology would both lose the speaker his position, and stampede the doubtful hearers either into the worser hypocrisy of fully professing conservatism which they do not hold, or into the abyss of blank agnosticism.

Thus by an ethical sleight-of-hand, the powers are conserved, the Church is held together, the kingdom of truth is being enlarged (the forces of error themselves drafted into the service). It is great magic! They tell of a juggler who appeared in a crowd with a single bottle of wine under his arm and out of that one bottle he poured any variety of drink they called for. The people smacked their lips, each declaring he had the kind he ordered.

So your orthodox professor or preacher, though bound to maintain and teach an ultra conservative creed, without any change whatsoever, comes before the world :

“Have old Bourbon Orthodoxy?—Here it is, brought over from Geneva, Calvin’s own.

“Have Rationalism?—That’s it, newest and brashest stuff that’s made, moonshine.

“Have Agnosticism?—Taste that, isn’t that sweetness and light !

“Have Universalism?—There you are.” [Though there is an antidote for Universalism in that very bottle.]

So they all get their favorite refreshment, every man to his taste.

How skilful, and accommodating is the theology of the day ! Popular, too ; the books sell rapidly, for they often have not a little rhetorical art, and they use some scientific terms. *They are hand-books of hypocrisy!*¹

The old-fashioned jugglery was cheap compared with this. Here are not the coarse deceits of Egypt, nor the mystic rignarole of Chaldæa. The priests of those lands were sufficient in their day ; but they were novices compared with the moderns, bringing all their finely-trained faculties and the gathered resources of the Church and modern learning to the task of hypnotising an audience or a reader, giving their souls without reserve to their work, accepting every humiliation, condescending even to a confidence game hoping to outwit the Devil, willing to do evil that good may come, willing to be damned for the glory of God,—and very likely to be, one would think.

Such devotion cannot fail. The future of the Church is secure.

Against these principles of the modern Church, there stands out sharply the doctrine of the pagan Achilles : Hateful to me as the gates of hell is he that hideth one thing in his heart and uttereth another ; and of Mohammed : There are two things I abhor, the learned in his infidelities and the fool at his devotions ; and of Huxley : My aim is to smite all humbugs however big—and to set an example of—toleration for every thing but lying ; and again he wrote : “I have searched the grounds of my belief, and if wife and child, and name and fame were to be lost to me one after another, as a penalty, still I would not lie.” Time was, in the early stages of its evolution, when Christianity also stood for the ideal, and one

¹And we need much ; for in spite of what the Church has done we are still a little squeamish about lying and unhandy in practice.

of its great purposes was to antagonise the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy. So particular were they about it that Ananias the liar was struck down and his body buried forthwith; and Judas the betrayer hastened to punishment, having conscience enough left to go hang himself.

But in two thousand years, we of the Church have learned many things; and now in the advanced stages of evolution, Christianity stands for the practical and prudent. Not to-day can it be said that the children of this world are wiser than the children of light. Indeed we are no longer children; we have outgrown the needs, and the restraints and limitations of childhood. It is now clearly seen that Jesus and the pagans were too strict, conscience was rather undeveloped in those days (and in later days with some that are without benefit of clergy), and the rules of the Apostles must be relaxed.

It must be expected that the Churches will continue to have difficulty, with young men especially. On many sides we hear complaint that people are not joining the Church as once they did, and that bright-minded young men are not inclined to adopt the ministry as a profession. The fact is the young man is naturally attracted by the simple and strenuous moral principles of Achilles and Mohammed and Büchner and Huxley and Jesus—pagans and enthusiasts. But when the Church has had him in charge for a while and has done her perfect work, he abandons the state of nature and advances into the state of Grace.

Ruskin remarks that the will of God as represented in the Scriptures is impracticable: "His orders won't work, and He must be satisfied with a euphonious and respectful repetition of them. Their execution would be too dangerous under existing circumstances, which He certainly never contemplated. The laws of God are indeed ideal, but also poetical. Those of the Devil are the only practical ones. It was a fool that said in his heart there is no God. It was left for the modern wiseman of the Church to say there is a foolish one."

The Devil was wise from the beginning, and is so represented in that Garden-of-Eden story. Look the very facts in the face Eve was tempted to sin, but was afraid, for God had told her "in the day she ate thereof she should surely die." But the serpent knew better, and encouraged her, saying: "Thou shalt not surely die." And so it turned out; for she ate, and in fact they did not die. The snake was right, "for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof *your eyes shall be opened*, and ye shall be as gods know-

ing good and evil." And the Lord God confirmed Satan, for presently he too said: "Behold man has become like one of us to know good and evil."—Verily the Lord had not spoken more consistently than his clergy of later time: He had "adapted" his words: He had spoken with the wisdom of a Rashdall.

The Church has not always seen and appropriated all that there is in its own inspired records, and it has often been timid as Eve was in doing her part. But now its eyes are fully opened to the supreme value of sin; and its courage is confirmed.

"Contrary to Jesus?"—Not so; he promised to send us the Spirit who should lead us into all truth, and this is a part of it.

Blessed be lies and the father of them.

Sanctissime Diabole.

Ora pro nobis.