

The Open Court

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science, and the
Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea

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CHICAGO

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JOHN BERNARD STALLO.

Frontispiece to *The Open Court*.

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JAMES MARTINEAU.

BY MONCURE D. CONWAY.

WHEN Theodore Parker went silent, his congregation in Boston Music Hall listened to many different voices, but sometimes they heard that of which Carlyle said, "I hear but one voice and that comes from Concord." When Emerson was to give the Sunday discourse the Hall was crowded with the most cultured people in Boston and its suburbs, and some came from Salem, Lynn, Concord. The last sermon I heard in America before leaving for England, thirty-seven years ago, was from Emerson. Familiar as I was with his lyceum lectures they could not with all their charm prepare one for this inspiration, this fountain of spiritual power, this pathos that filled our eyes with tears. And this was the man who was lost to the pulpit because the Unitarian Church preferred the sacramental symbols of a broken body and shed blood in ancient Judæa to the living spirit rising above the dead symbols! Great as Emerson was in literature, his hereditary and natural place was in the pulpit, which his essays did indeed leaven, under whatever sectarian forms, but only along with more admixture of chaff than of honest meal.

With Emerson's wonderful sermon still ringing in my ears I voyaged to England, and the next sermon I heard was from James Martineau. His chapel (in Little Portland street) was a relic of a time when among dissenters there was a sort of cult of ugliness. Fine architecture and stained glass were decorations of the 'Scarlet Woman' whether Roman or Anglican. In the gloomy little chapel I waited until the man should appear whose "Endeavours after the Christian Life" had brought me help in my solitude, far away in Virginia and Maryland, when I was groping along my

thorny path out of the orthodox ministry. When Martineau presently ascended the pulpit I was impressed by his noble figure, but when his face shone upon us through the chapel gloom, when his voice so gracious and clear was heard, and his lowly simplicity witnessed the greatness of his thought, I said, this is Emerson again! It is Emerson not banished from his pulpit, but made into the Unitarian leader!

It is true that neither in this first sermon that I heard from him, nor in others, did Martineau work the miracle that we witnessed when Emerson occasionally re-ascended the pulpit. That cannot be done in a gown, beneath which wings must be folded. But this English minister was meeting the spiritual need and hunger of spirits finely touched to fine issues. In his audience, generally between 300 and 400, none but a few children (for most of these listened to him in a separate service) had come casually, or except by inward attraction. They did not come for God's sake, nor for any show of either conformity or non-conformity, but were individual minds taking to heart things generally conventionalised. There sat Sir Charles Lyell, who had substituted a scientific account of the earth's formation for that in Genesis, and who with his beautiful and intellectual lady kept abreast of religious studies; there was Miss Frances Power Cobbe, author of the ablest work on Intuitive Morals, and her friend Miss Lloyd; there was his own son Russell Martineau, the great Hebraist, whose veracity prevented his acceptance of a place among the Revisers of the Authorised Version (1881) because they had determined on the retention of certain admitted but sacred mistranslations; there were the students of the Unitarian Divinity College (now removed to Oxford) trained to become the teachers,—such as the present professors Estlin Carpenter and Drummond, and Charles Hargrove, of Leeds, where his "Mill Hill Pulpit" has become a rational and moral Sinai in rebuke of belligerent injustice, cruelty, and vengeance. But it would be a long catalogue that should name the distinguished men and women who found their nurture or their nourishment in that small chapel in its obscure little street, and who in the beauty and wisdom and exaltation of Martineau's discourse did not envy the cathedrals their splendid altars or arches or flaming windows. When, as time went on, I gradually knew more about the variety of minds gathered around the great preacher, and how widely different opinions were developed under his teaching, along with unity of sentiment, this impressed me as an especial sign of their teacher's art and genius. Buddha described the Great Law as the rain fall-

ing on the thirsty earth, where each grass-blade, each flower, each tree, drew up into itself that which was needed for its several growth and fruit.

Emerson remarked to me, when I was at Divinity College, that he had observed more progressiveness and enthusiasm in ministers



JAMES MARTINEAU.

who had come out of orthodoxy than in those born in Unitarian families. It is natural that those whose freedom has involved struggle and personal distress should carry a certain polemical heat into their ministry. But this is at some cost. Of this I was reminded by the remark of another great American, Dr. Oliver Wen-

dell Holmes. The last time I met him, and it was not long before his death, he said, "You and I have spent some of the best years of our lives merely clearing away the rubbish out of our path." The career of Martineau, born and trained among liberal thinkers, suggests that the better service may be done by those who have had no personal quarrel with the dogmas and superstitions they have to clear away from the paths of others. Less smoke mingles with the flame of their lamp. They speak from an elevation above the suspicion of animus or bias.

A man may too, according to Darwin, inherit from his ancestors characteristics which they had to acquire. Old David Martineau the Huguenot, who founded the race of Martineaus in England, layman and surgeon as he was, had yet enough enthusiasm for his Protestantism and his Calvinism to leave his home and country rather than surrender his principles to the French persecutors, and he endowed his descendants with the courage and self-truthfulness which led them to migrate from Calvinism, and next from orthodoxy. So that James Martineau's personal conflict with orthodoxy preceded his birth, while the force represented in it was not lost but transmitted to James, to Harriet, to the admirable artist Martineau, to Sir Robert Martineau who did so much for the culture and welfare of Birmingham.

At Norwich they point out to strangers the old home of the Martineaus. The Huguenot and his son Philip were surgeons of high rank in science and both are represented in the *Philosophical Transactions* by memoirs on professional points of importance. James Martineau also aspired to a scientific, though not to a surgical or medical, career. Yet one may say that it was the healing instinct in him that prevailed when he abandoned in youth the studies of a civil engineer to deal with the mental and moral diseases of his time.

And what operations did this gentlest of physicians perform during his long life! The England into which he was born was one now almost incredible. When Martineau was a studious boy in his fifteenth year, already well taught in the free and tolerant religion which Quakerism and Unitarianism had made the very atmosphere of Norwich, churchmen and dissenters had united to suppress the publication and circulation of theistic literature. The traditions of England being on the side of liberty of printing, these theological persecutors had to avail themselves of a moral disguise: they utilised the Society for the Suppression of Vice. On the ground that denial of the divine inspiration and authority of the Bible was

an attack on public morals, two particularly moral books were fixed on for prosecution, and in 1819 Richard Carlisle was sent to pass nine years in prison for publishing them, and his wife and even their shop boys imprisoned for selling them. The two books were Paine's *Age of Reason* and Palmer's *Principles of Nature*. Any one who reads those works will know that they are not only morally clean but written mainly in defense of a higher standard of morality than biblical authority admits or sanctions. Now, both of the books are traceable to the heretical atmosphere for which Norwich was historically celebrated and which included the neighboring town of Thetford, where Paine was born. And Palmer, the scholarly American clergyman, converted by the *Age of Reason*, affirmed in his *Principles of Nature* ideas that startlingly anticipate the philosophy of Martineau. The books for which publishers and booksellers were imprisoned simply raise the "inner light" of conscience and reason above the scriptures of barbarous ages, as it was raised in the two Quaker meeting-houses of Norwich and others in Norfolk, and also by Martineau's masters, Carpenter and Wellbeloved, and it must have been a shock to these liberal thinkers that such a persecution could occur. The outrage was more grievous because the prosecutors arraigned liberal criticism as immorality, and worst of all, many London Unitarians, panic-stricken by the fear of being associated with Paine's principles, joined in the persecution.

Young Martineau, conservative in temperament and no doubt also by training, probably had little interest in Paine's political theories, but the peril to free inquiry and printing, its punishment as both vice and crime, involving the best men he had ever known could not fail to stir him deeply. All around him eminent clergymen of all denominations were proving the necessity of suppressing such books by clear warrant of "Holy Writ." The learned laymen were largely deists, but they united with the superstitious masses because the Paine and Palmer propaganda was permeated by opposition to kingcraft as well as priestcraft. This bifold radicalism had become a sort of religion and enthusiasm, and the lurid afterglow of the French Revolution was still visible enough to intimidate even liberal minds.

It must have required a passionate love of truth, and also faith in the people's right to truth, for this handsome young aristocrat to leave his scientific plan and devote himself to the exploration of that Bible to which religious liberty was sacrificed. For the duty of a thinker to utter the truth publicly was a rare doctrine at that time. Intellectual men held the true ethics to be suppression of

the truth. Thomas Carlyle told me that when he came to London he went to hear W. J. Fox preach at South Place Chapel and was shocked at hearing him discussing important problems before people not competent to judge of such matters. He also said that when Strauss published his *Leben Jesu* its views were such as were already held by various men of his acquaintance, but none would have ever thought of publishing them. Carlyle did not approve of Strauss' publishing his book; Tennyson, who substantially agreed with Martineau's views regretted their publication; and even Matthew Arnold in the first steps of his career censured Colenso for not writing his Biblical criticisms in Latin. With regard to Tennyson it should be said that his favor for exclusively esoteric expression of sceptical ideas was due to his tenderness for beliefs in which many found consolation. This Martineau recognised, but wrote, "I cannot see that we are intrusted with any right of suppression when once profoundly convinced of a truth not yet within others' reach." This letter was written to Tennyson's son after the poet's death, and one may form some estimate from this and the other opinions cited how strong was ethical obstruction to the proclamation of truth when Martineau's ministerial career began. Indeed I believe that he may be credited with being the first scholar of high social position who entered on a ministry quite uncommitted to any sect and absolutely consecrated to the search for truth. This was a new departure, and though he was made a Unitarian leader Unitarianism had to come to him, not he to it, and had to follow him.

In fact, I should say that Martineau possessed a very rare kind of genius,—a genius for truth in itself, which is very different from what theologians call "the truth." Through all the creeds and scriptures labelled "the truth," and over the ruins of systems, Martineau followed in every footprint of the ever-advancing spirit of truth. Many years ago, in a small assembly of liberal ministers when I was present, Martineau did away with every vestige of the Messianic theory of Jesus. After the discussion that followed he answered the criticisms of his statement, and finally said, "One argument I must decline to consider, that is the argument from consequences. How our customary phrases, prayer-books, hymns, may be affected by recognition of facts, or whatever may be the practical consequences of ascertained truth, are considerations not pertinent to an inquiry for truth." I may not have the exact words but I have the substance of what Martineau said, for this and the grand calmness with which he affirmed the law, inspired a discourse I gave soon after, printed with the title "Consequences."

I remarked in him a special antipathy to superstition probably derived from his memory of the time when Bibliolatry demanded human sacrifices,—and indeed not merely sacrifices of human liberty, for two deists died of their imprisonment, and the health of all suffered. After returning from India I was mentioning scenes in the religious festivals there, and their resemblance to some in Europe, when he remarked that he had always avoided places where he was likely to witness rites of superstition, as anything of that kind was so repugnant as even to afflict him.

The subscription to articles necessary to enter the English Universities was recognised by most liberal thinkers as a mere form, but Martineau could not be persuaded to sign them, and pursued his studies at the school of Dr. Carpenter in Bristol, and at Manchester College (Unitarian) in London, and then went over to Germany. He returned to England with a better equipment, even in a scholastic sense, than any Oxonian of his time. About sixty years ago the English clergy began to wake up to the terrible fact that a Unitarian minister had arisen who surpassed them all in philosophical culture, in biblical criticism, in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, also in eloquence, and further that his character and life were in notable contrast with clerical arrogance and cant: Notably unambitious, and with a humility that disarmed intolerance, Martineau felt his vocation to be that of ministry to individual minds and hearts in their doubts and sorrows. But he realised also that his studies and knowledge imposed on him the duty of revising the dogmatic fictions, and correcting the biblical errors, prevailing around him, and doing too much practical harm and injustice to claim the tenderness demanded by Tennyson for consolatory illusions. That dogma and superstition now plead *ad misericordiam* is largely the work of Martineau's persistent criticisms. And yet he took little pains to circulate them, none to popularise them. He wrote articles in the Unitarian *Monthly Repository*, and in the later *Prospective Review*, his chapel was attended by thinkers, and he gave lectures in the Unitarian Divinity College; and it was mainly through these public teachers of his training that the waves of Martineau's influence widened out.

That his long ministry should have been represented by so few publications (*Endeavours after the Christian Life*, *The Rationale of Religious Inquiry*, a collection of his articles, and a few printed sermons) has puzzled those who knew how assiduous he was. My own belief is that Martineau had the habit of a student, that he was continually making discoveries and revising his views, and had

a dread of imprisoning either himself or others in any philosophical finality. I doubt if he was quite conscious of the authority carried by any quotation of his opinion, but he never entrenched himself, and if any one brought him a new view he never seemed to consider at all whether it was in conflict with some published statement of his own. As an instance of the persistence of this student habit into his old age I may mention an incident. A good many years ago I consulted Martineau about the age of the fourth gospel, and his opinion was that it was about the year 170. In 1894 I was conversing with him and he recurred to that answer—many years past—and said he had been much interested in some views set forth by the Rev. Charles Hargrove in a course of lectures at University Hall on the fourth gospel. Mr. Hargrove had given strong reasons for his belief that the fourth gospel was a joint work, and contained matter of different dates, the whole being of earlier composition than its publication. I had myself heard several of Mr. Hargrove's lectures (they have never been printed) and was much impressed by them. Martineau could not go out in the evenings and heard none of them, but no doubt received from the Rev. Philip Wicksteed (his successor in the chapel) the notes which I saw him writing. He (Martineau) had been re-reading the fourth gospel with this new light and was no longer ready to confirm his previous opinion. It struck me as very picturesque to see this scholar in his ninetieth year eager as in youth for more light, absolutely free from pride of opinion, and glad to receive instruction from one of his old pupils brought to him by another. For both Hargrove and Wicksteed had been students in Manchester New College under Martineau.

In 1880 Renan came to London to give the Hibbert lectures. They were given in his faultless French, and at their conclusion Martineau, who at seventy-five had the fire of early years, delivered to the French scholar an address (in English) admirable in taste and thought. We saw on that platform of St. George's Hall the ex-priest from France and the descendant of the Huguenot hunted out of France two centuries before, meeting eye to eye, clasping hands, and that too was picturesque. But that which especially impressed me was the literary relationship between the addresses of the two men. The unique charm of Martineau's style is its essentially French character. Its clearness, simplicity, ease, self-restraint, and its way of taking the reader into personal confidence, are French, and not found in any other contemporary English writer—unless it be Thackeray, who resided so long in Paris.

My reader may partly gather even from these brief notes what had gone through the centuries to the making of that almost ideal preacher to whom we used to listen. But on one Sunday after returning from the pulpit to the vestry, he fainted. Some doctor alarmed the family, and declared Martineau must resign the pulpit altogether. It was a medical blunder, and a disaster to himself. "It has been my life," he said mournfully to Miss Cobbe. And it was the life of others. The most important light-house on a perilous coast had fallen, never to be rebuilt, and the paths of voyage must all be changed. He might have gone on training the moral and intellectual leaders in London for twenty years longer, and we should still have been able to gather from his sermons, college lectures, and manuscripts the substance of the large works published since his retirement from the pulpit.

In reading the three large works of Martineau,—published after he was eighty,—the conviction is continually forced on me that his greatness is in those perceptions of truth which utter themselves in negations, and are all the more fervid and authentic because not accompanied by any general system. It is this quasi-empirical character of the sermon, appealing to the sentiment and the present intelligence without exciting the hesitations that confront generalisations, which give it an advantage over systematised theories. Behind every negation there is necessarily an affirmation; if one denies that $2+2=5$ it is in the strength of $2+2=4$; but when in things not mathematically certain the affirmations underlying negations are utilised for the construction of a philosophy or a theology they do not fit into each other like miraculously carved stones of Solomon's temple.

Martineau's *Types of Ethical Theory*, published in his eightieth year, his *Study of Religion*, published in his eighty-fifth year, and nearly half of the marvellous work of his eighty-sixth year, *The Seat of Authority in Religion*, are records of the intellectual pilgrimage of a learned thinker through the nineteenth century. As such they merit profound study. But in his constructive summing up he appears to me to have created rather than solved problems. Thus with regard to the existence of evil, he starts from the point of Paine and Palmer: natural evil is the result of the forces of material nature; matter was not created out of nothing, but always existed, and the deity is not responsible for the catastrophes wrought thereby. That was the old deism, but Martineau carries it into the theistic age, evolved out of pantheism, and shrinks from leaving such a large part of nature out of the divine government. "I think

of a cause as needing something else to work, i. e., some condition present with it." The term "Almighty" is "warranted only if it is content to cover *all the might there is*, and must not be understood to mean *mighty for absolutely all things*." (*Study*, Vol. I, pp. 400, 405.)

In one of these italicised phrases the deity is relieved of responsibility for the evils in nature but in the other it is re-imposed on him. If he has "all the might there is" his might is in earthquake, volcano, pestilence, despotism. Similar ambiguity appears in Martineau's treatment of moral evil. "Notwithstanding the supreme causality of God, it is rigorously true that only in a very restricted sense can he be held the author of moral evil. He is no doubt the source of its possibility." It is admitted that if God foreknows everything then everything is predetermined, otherwise he could not foreknow it. But Martineau holds that Omniscience has limited itself with regard to the details of human action, and provided "simply that no one of the open possibilities should remain in the dark and pass unreckoned, and that they should all, in their working out, be compatible with the ruling purposes of God, not defeating their aim, but only varying the track."

But does a supreme cause escape responsibility by blindfolding itself? It is the nature of these possibilities, all planned, that makes the moral dilemma of Theism, as much as predetermination of details. For instance that the worst people are able not only to wrong themselves but to cruelly and permanently injure others, the innocent and helpless.

At times Martineau appears to forget that there is no problem, strictly speaking, about evil at all, either physical or moral, except through the importation of the idea of a personal creative power responsible for both the moral order within us, and the un-moral order without us.

In his *apologia* for deity, in respect of the sin and suffering in the world, Martineau's subtle elaboration so restricts the divine responsibility for terrestrial affairs that one now and then pauses to ask the utility of such a rarefied and remote causality. A king summoned the sculptor to carve something pretty on his favorite bow; nothing could be more marvellous than the hunting-scene sculptured, but on the first attempt to shoot with it the bow broke to pieces. In Martineau's picture of the benefits of suffering, and the advantages of a moral freedom which involves the possibility of sin, he has hardly considered the fragile substance worked on. The struggle for life, he says, "accomplishes the maximum of good

with the minimum of evil." But the terrified and trembling mouse with which a cat plays before devouring it, presents a gratuitous torture. In fact, the neat generalisation breaks in Martineau's own hand when he comes to consider human anguish, for his veracity forces him to admit that on average human nature pain does not have an improving but a hardening effect; it is only the choice spirits that are ennobled by it. Thus it seems that to him that hath is given while from him that hath not is taken away even that which he hath,—his comfort,—without any moral compensation at all! But have the great souls been made greater by pain and sorrow? Shakespeare, Goethe, Franklin, Darwin, Emerson, Martineau himself, were prosperous and happy men. But apart from that—granting that pain and disease have all the best effects ever attributed to them—the real problem is not touched at all. The dilemma is that an omnipotent power, *ex hypothesi* unrestricted in its choice of means, should not have secured all best effects without the anguish and the sin. And is free agency so valuable as all that? It is just here Martineau's elaborately-carved theory breaks in his hands at last. "If," he says, concerning the benefits of suffering and the freedom to sin,—“If you ask me why they are not given us *gratis*, I hold my peace, till you have shown me whether that would have been better for anything but our ease; and whether, in case of such gift, the *thanks* would have followed.”

But what is the matter with “ease,” that it should be despised in a world weary and heavy laden, where all great energies are engaged in securing it in heart and home, for self, for the suffering, for the toil-driven millions? And what sort of deity would be one so egoistic as to weigh his craving for *thanks* against the happiness of his creatures?

Let me hasten to say that if Martineau's theology lays itself open to criticisms like these, it is because of his very untheological veracity of mind. He does not intentionally suppress facts or arguments that oppose him, though he may not have always kept quite abreast of the ethical philosophy of the last thirty years. And let me also warn those who have not read the large works to which I have referred, that brevity has compelled me to compress such references to an extent that leaves out of view the literally great value of the volumes. They contain finest estimates of the greatest philosophers and of their theories, from Plato to our own time, written in a style so lucid and charming that his fellow-pilgrims through the ages of thought are refreshed and sustained along paths usually found flinty and dusty. He may not carry us any nearer to

the philosophic goal, perhaps because the goal is in Utopia, but to us who remember the great preacher there are immortal pages that recall the wonderful sermons,—sermons that at times enabled me to understand that young Athenian who exclaimed in the grove, “O Socrates, to listen to these discourses of thine is in itself a sufficient end of existence !”

And after all it was these wonderful sermons, continued through fifty years, influencing the most cultured circle in London, which changed the intellectual and spiritual atmosphere not merely of the metropolis but of the seats of learning ; insomuch that Martineau himself, honored at Oxford with special *éclat*, was a monumental evidence that the bigotry and intolerance amid which his ministry began had passed away.

In 1891 I visited my old friend Francis William Newman at Weston-super-Mare. He was travelling on towards his ninetieth year, but his faculties were bright, and he was deep in those recollections which were presently embodied in his publication concerning his brother, the Cardinal, then recently deceased. During the day we walked a good deal, and he gave me his memories of the sufferings he and others had to undergo, the humiliations and alienations, in their early pursuit of religious truth. After a description of the intolerant Oxford of his time Newman took down from a shelf in his library Martineau's *Seat of Authority in Religion* and read aloud the following :

“As I look back on the foregoing discussions, a conclusion is forced upon me on which I cannot dwell without pain and dismay ; viz., that Christianity, as defined or understood in all the Churches which formulate it, has been mainly evolved from what is transient and perishable in its sources ; from what is unhistorical in its traditions, mythological in its preconceptions, and misapprehended in the oracles of its prophets. From the fable of Eden to the imagination of the last trumpet, the whole story of the Divine order of the world is dislocated and deformed. The blight of birth-sin with its involuntary perdition : the scheme of expiatory redemption with its vicarious salvation ; the incarnation, with its low postulates of the relation between God and man, and its unworkable doctrine of two natures in one person ; the official transmission of grace through material elements in the keeping of a consecrated corporation ; the second coming of Christ to summon the dead and part the sheep from the goats at the general judgment :—are all the growths of a mythical literature, or Messianic dreams, or Pharisaic theology, or sacramental superstition, or popular apotheosis. And so nearly do these vain imaginations personify the creeds that not a moral or spiritual element finds entrance there except ‘the forgiveness of sins.’ To consecrate and diffuse, under the name of ‘Christianity,’ a theory of the world's economy thus made up of illusions from obsolete stages of civilisation, immense resources, material and moral, are expended, with effect no less deplorable in the province of religion than would be, in that of science, hierarchies and missions for propagating the Ptolemaic astronomy, and

inculcating the rules of necromancy and exorcism. The spreading alienation of the intellectual classes of European society from Christendom, and the detention of the rest in their spiritual culture at a level not much above that of the Salvation Army, are social phenomena which ought to bring home a very solemn appeal to the conscience of stationary Churches. For their long arrear of debt to the intelligence of mankind they adroitly seek to make amends by elaborate beauty of ritual art. The apology soothes for a time,—but it will not last for ever."

While the aged Professor Newman read this he used a magnifying glass, and through it his eye glowed and almost flamed. Laying down the book he exclaimed, "And now the man that wrote that has been made Doctor of Laws by the University of Oxford!"

That honorary degree conferred on Martineau was the triumph of the Broad Church, but all the courage of his admiring friends, Professor Jowett and Dean Stanley, could not prevent the evasiveness of making the degree L.L.D. instead of Doctor of Divinity. It was proved, however, that along with the development of a Martineau outside the English Church there had been developed inside it a clergyman equally liberal. Such was Jowett. Martineau himself told me that when he went on to receive his degree he was the guest of Jowett, the other guests being George Henry Lewes and his wife, "George Eliot." One day, said Martineau, when I was alone with Professor Jowett, he said to me, "I am disappointed in George Eliot: She merely denies the authority of the Bible, and there stops!"

When the Rev. Stopford Brooke, the most brilliant preacher in the English Church in London, having adopted Unitarian views, announced his determination to leave the Church, Dean Stanley tried to dissuade him. Knowing the Dean's love of Martineau, Stopford Brooke said to him,—“Could James Martineau be made Archbishop of Canterbury?” “No,” answered the Dean. “Then,” said Stopford Brooke, “the Church is no place for me!”

This incident was related to me by Stopford Brooke himself, in a conversation in which I maintained that it was a mistake for clergymen who had entered the Church honestly to resign on becoming un-orthodox. They ought not so to relieve the Church of its responsibilities, but to proclaim their heresy boldly and compel the Church either to expel them or to admit that its pulpit is open to heretics. Were every clergyman who becomes un-orthodox to force on the national Church the alternatives of a prosecution for heresy or its toleration, the religious genius of England which steadily abandons its Church would return to it, the recital of its creeds be made optional, and an evolution follow that must either

fossilise the Canterbury throne or fill it with some spiritual descendant of James Martineau.

Perhaps it is the most significant thing connected with Martineau's death that the orthodox clergy and ministers should be eagerly claiming him as their own. He was less orthodox than the men sent to prison in the earlier part of the century, but he held to a certain species of Christianity: he clung to the last to a Christ who was the perfect man, and the revelation of the Father by his life and spirit. It was a sort of evolution of the fourth-gospel Christ, as he had quite given up the miracle-worker of the synoptics. That after all his negations of Bible authority and of the creeds the orthodox should claim him indicates their sore need of an eminent scholar, whose opinion is not merely professional, to advocate even a relic of Christianity. That a great and learned man, unbiassed by position or salary, should believe that Christ was in some special sense a providential man, and the typical man, has become so rare a phenomenon that all the orthodox sects clutch at it, rejoice over it, and are thus really calling to the Unitarians, "Give us of your oil, for our lamps have gone out!"