

THE MAN-MADE GOD.

BY CHARLES SLOAN REID.

WHEN heathen gods had tumbled, as mankind's conceit arose,
And Heaven's earthly-imaged band had passed into repose
That all the hosts Elysian into one should be combined,
A spirit God, invisible, yet with a form defined—
No longer reigned in thought the type of grotesque moulded delf—
The God that man created was the image of himself.

And in the limitations of the finite human mind
The grasp of hateless Godhood no suitable hold could find;
The sum of mortal weaknesses, of jealousies and spite,
Of greed and petty rancor, and the lust of vengeful might
Defined the worshiped Being as half demon and half elf—
The God that man created in the image of himself.

Endowed with traits thus fitting, man's ally his God became,
To ape from Heaven man's passions to glorify His name.
From some remote retreat supposed to lie beyond the stars,
He sanctifies man's avarice and justifies his wars;
He sanctions wholesale murder and revenge for looted pelf—
The God that man created in the image of himself.

Invoked on any pretext of mankind's religious zeal,
He qualifies false prophets to destroy the common weal,
He serves the mad fanatic, and the lunatic of dreams,
And glories in the slaughter that befouls the peaceful streams.
As soulless as the figure that adorns the heathen's shelf
Is God that man created in the image of himself.