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THREE PRINCIPLES VINDICATED.

BY GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.

"Be wisely worldly, but not worldly wise."
—Francis Quarles.

1. *Of material means as conditions of welfare in this world.*—Theology works by "spiritual" means, Secularism by material means. Christians and Secularists both intend raising the character of the people, but their methods are very different. Christians are now beginning to employ material agencies for the elevation of life, which science, and not theology, has brought under their notice. But the Christian does not trust these agencies, the Secularist does, in whose mind the secular is sacred. Spiritual means can never be depended upon for food, raiment, art, or national defence.

Why morality has made so little way under Christianity, has been owing to men's attention being diverted from noticing the material results of conduct and being led to believe that Spiritualism could ensure human welfare.

The Archbishop of York (Dr. Magee), a clear-headed and candid prelate, surprised his contemporaries (at the Diocesan Conference, Leicester, October 19, 1889) by declaring that "Christianity made no claim to rearrange the economic relations of man in the state, or in society. He hoped he would be understood when he said plainly that it was his firm belief that any Christian state, carrying out in all its relations, the Sermon on the Mount, could not exist for a week. It was perfectly clear that a state could not continue to exist upon what were commonly called Christian principles."

From the first, Secularism had based its claims to be regarded on the fact that only the rich could afford to be Christian, and the poor must look to other principles for deliverance.

Material means are those which are calculable, which are under the control and command of man, and can be tested by human experience. No definition of Secularism shows its distinctiveness which omits to specify *material* means as its method of procedure.

But for the theological blasphemy of nature, representing it as the unintelligent tool of God, the Secular

would have ennobled common life long ago. Sir Godfrey Kneller said, "He never looked on a bad picture but he carried away in his mind a dirty tint." Secularism would efface the dirty tints of life which Christianity has prayed over, but not removed.

2. *Of the providence of science.*—Men are limited in power, and oft in peril, and those who are taught to trust the supernatural are betrayed to their own destruction. We are told we should work as though there were no help in heaven, and pray as though there were no help in ourselves. Since, however, praying saves no ship, arrests no disease, and does not pay the tax-gatherer, it is better to work at once and without the digression of sinking prayer-buckets into empty wells, and spending life in drawing nothing up. The one word illuminating secular life is *self-help*. The Secularist vexes not the ear of heaven by mendicant supplications. His is the only religion that gives heaven no trouble.

3. *Of goodness as fitness for this world or another.*—Goodness is the service of others with a view to their advantage. There is no higher human merit. Human welfare is the sanction of morality. The measure of a good action is its conduciveness to progress. The utilitarian test of generous rightness in motive may be open to objection,—there is no test which is not,—but the utilitarian rule is one comprehensible by every mind. It is the only rule which makes knowledge necessary, and becomes more luminous as knowledge increases. A fool may be a believer,¹ but not a utilitarian who seeks his ground of action in the largest field of relevant facts his mind is able to survey.

Utility in morals is measuring the good of one by its agreement with the good of many. Large ideas are when a man measures the good of his parish by the good of the town, the good of the town by the good of the county, the good of the county by the good of the country, the good of the country by the good of the continent, the good of the continent by the cosmopolitanism of the world.

Truth and solicitude for the social welfare of others are the proper concern of a soul worth saving. Only minds with goodness in them have the desert of future

¹The *Guardian* told us about 1887 that the Bishop of Exeter confirmed five idiots.

existence. Minds without veracity and generosity die. The elements of death are in the selfish already. They could not live in a better world if they were admitted.

In a noble passage in his sermon on "Citizenship" the Rev. Stopford Brooks said: "There are thousands of my fellow-citizens, men, and women, and children, who are living in conditions in which they have no true means of becoming healthy in body, trained in mind, or comforted by beauty. Life is as hard for them as it is easy for me. I cannot help them by giving them money, one by one, but I can help them by making the condition of their life easier by a good government of the city in which they live. And even if the charge on my property for this purpose increases for a time, year by year, till the work is done, that charge I will gladly pay. It shall be my ethics, *my religion*, my patriotism, my citizenship to do it."¹ The great preacher whose words are here cited,—like Theodore Parker, the Jupiter of the pulpit in his day, as Wendell Phillips described him to me,—is not a Secularist, but he expresses here the religion of a Secularist, if such a person can be supposed to have a religion.

A theological creed which the base may hold, and usually do, has none of the merit of deeds of service to humanity, which only the good intentionally perform. Conscience is the sense of right with regard to others, it is a sense of duty towards others which tells us that we should do justice to them; and if not able to do it individually, to endeavor to get it done by others. At St. Peter's Gate there can be no passport so safe as this. He was not far wrong who, when asked where heaven lay, answered: "On the other side of a good action."

If, as Dr. James Martineau says, "there is a thought of God in the thing that is true, and a will of God in that which is right," secularism, caring for truth and duty, cannot be far wrong. Thus, it has a reasonable regard for the contingencies of another life should it supervene. Reasoned opinions rely for justification upon intelligent conviction, and a well informed sincerity.

The Secularist, without the assumption of an infallible creed, is without the timorous indefiniteness of a credless believer. He does not disown the creed because theologians have promulgated Jew-bound, unalterable articles of faith. The Secularist has a creed as definite as science, and as flexible as progress, increasing as the horizon of truth is enlarged. His creed is a confession of his belief. There is more unity of opinion among self-thinkers than is supposed. They all maintain the necessity of independent opinion, for they all exercise it. They all believe in the

moral rightfulness of independent thought, or they are guilty for propagating it. They all agree as to the right of publishing well-considered thought, otherwise thinking would be of little use. They all approve of free criticism, for there could be no reliance on thought which did not use, or could not bear that. All agree as to the equal action of opinion, without which opinion would be fruitless and action a monopoly. All agree that truth is the object of free thought, for many have died to gain it. All agree that scrutiny is the pathway to truth, for they have all passed along it. They all attach importance to the good of this life, teaching this as the first service to humanity. All are of one opinion as to the efficacy of material means in promoting human improvement, for they alone are distinguished by vindicating their use. All hold that morals are effectively commended by reason, for all self-thinkers have taught so. All believe that God, if he exists, is the God of the honest, and that he respects conscience more than creeds, for all free thinkers have died in this faith. Independent thinkers from Socrates to Herbert Spencer and Huxley¹ have all agreed:

In the necessity of free thought.
In the rightfulness of it.
In the adequacy of it.
In the considerate publicity of it.
In the fair criticism of it.
In the equal action of conviction.
In the recognition of this life, and
In the material control of it.

The Secularist, like Karpos the gardener, may say of his creed, "Its points are few and simple." They are: to be a good citizen, a good husband, a good father, and a good workman. I go no further," said Karpos, "but pray God to take it all in good part and have mercy on my soul."²

How Secularism Arose.

"We must neither lead nor leave men to mistake falsehood for truth. Not to undeceive is to deceive."—*Archbishop Whately*.

BEING one of the social missionaries in the propaganda of Robert Owen, I was like H. Viewssiew, a writer of those days, a "student of realities." It soon became clear to me, as to others, that men are much influenced for good or evil, by their environments. The word was unused then, "circumstances" was the term employed. Then as now there were numerous persons everywhere to be met with who explained everything on supernatural principles with all the confidence of infinite knowledge. Not having this advan-

¹ See *Biographical Dictionary of Free Thinkers of All Ages and Nations*, by J. M. Wheeler, and *Four Hundred Years of Free Thought from Columbus to Ingersoll*, by Samuel Porter Putnam, containing upwards of 1,000 biographies.

² Dialogues between Karpos the gardener and Bashaw Tucton, by Voltaire.

¹ Preached in reference to the London County Council election, March, 1892.

tage, I profited as well as I could by such observation as was in my power to make. I could see that material laws counted for something in the world. This led me to the conclusion that the duty of watching the ways of nature was incumbent on all who would find true conditions of human betterment, or new reasons for morality—both very much needed. To this end the name of Secularism was given to certain principles which had for their object human improvement by material means, regarding science as the providence of man and justifying morality by considerations which pertain to this life alone.

The rise and development (if I may use so fine a term) of these views may be traced in the following records.

1. "Materialism will be advanced as the only sound basis of rational thought and practice." (Prospectus of the *Movement*, 1843, written by me.)

2. In the book for which five prizes were awarded to me, being lectures of the Manchester Order of Odd-fellows. These Degree Addresses (1846) were written on the principle that morality, apart from theology, could be based on human reason and experience.

3. The *Reasoner* restricts itself to the known, to the present, and seeks to realise the life that is. (Preface to the *Reasoner*, 1846.)

4. A series of papers were commenced in the *Reasoner* entitled the "Moral Remains of the Bible," one object of which was to show that those who no longer held the Bible as an infallible book, might still value it wherein it was ethically excellent. (*Reasoner*, Vol. V., No. 106, p. 17, 1848.)

5. "To teach men to see that the sum of all knowledge and duty is *secular* and that it pertains to this world alone." (*Reasoner*, Nov. 19, 1851. Article, "Truths to Teach," p. 1.

This was the first time the word "Secular" was applied as a general test of principles of conduct apart from spiritual considerations.

6. "Giving an account of ourselves in the whole extent of opinion, we should use the word *Secularist* as best indicating that province of human duty which belongs to this life." (*Reasoner*, Dec. 3, 1851, p. 34.

This was the first time the word "Secularist" appeared in literature as descriptive of a new way of thinking.

7. "Mr. Holyoake, editor of the *Reasoner*, will lay before the meeting [then proposed] the present position of Secularism in the provinces." (*Reasoner*, Dec. 10, 1851, p. 62.)

This was the first time the word "Secularism" appeared in the press.

The meeting above mentioned was held December 29, 1851, at which the statement made might be taken

as an epitome of this book. (See *Reasoner*, No. 294, Vol. 12, p. 129. 1852.)

8. A letter on the "Future of Secularism" appeared in the *Reasoner*. (*Reasoner*, Feb. 4, 1852, p. 187.)

This was the first time Secularism was written upon as a movement. The term was the heading of a letter by Charles Frederick Nicholls.

9. "One public purpose is to obtain the repeal of all acts of Parliament which interfere with Secular practice." (Article, "Nature of Secular Societies," *Reasoner*, No. 325, p. 146, Aug. 18, 1852.)

This is exactly the attitude Secularism takes with regard to the Bible and to Christianity. It rejects such parts of the Scriptures, or of Christianity, or Acts of Parliament, as conflict with or obstruct ethical truth. We do not seek the repeal of all Acts of Parliament, but only of such as interfere with Secular progress.

10. "The friends of 'Secular Education' [the Manchester Association was then so known] are not Secularists. They do not pretend to be so, they do not even wish to be so regarded, they merely use the word Secular as an adjective, as applied to a mode of instruction. We apply it to the *nature* of all knowledge. We use the noun Secularist. No one else has done it. With others the term Secular is merely a descriptive, with us the term is used as a subject. With others it is a branch of knowledge, with us it is the primary business of life, the name of the province of speculation to which we confine ourselves.¹ When so used in these pages the word "Secularism" or "Secularist" is employed to mark the distinction.

A Bolton clergyman reported in the *Bolton Guardian* that Mr. Holyoake had announced as the first subject of Lectures, "Why do the Clergy Avoid Discussion and the Secularists Seek it?" (*Reasoner*, No. 328, p. 294, Vol. 12, 1852.

These citations from my own writings are sufficient to show the origin and nature of Secularism. Such views were widely accepted by Liberal thinkers of the day, as an improvement and extension of free thought advocacy. Societies were formed, halls were given a Secular name, and conferences were held to organise adherents of the new opinion. The first was held in the Secular Institute, Manchester (Oct. 3, 1852). Delegates were sent from Societies in Ashton-under-Lyne, Bolton, Blackburn, Bradford, Burnley, Bury, Glasgow, Keighley, Leigh, London, Manchester, Miles Platting, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Oldham, Over Darwen, Paisley, Preston, Rochdale, Stafford, Sheffield, Stockport, Todmorden.

Among the delegates were many well known, long

¹See article "The Seculars—the Propriety of Their Name," by G. J. Holyoake. *Reasoner*, p. 177, Sep. 1, 1852.

known, and some still known—James Charlton (now the famous manager of the Chicago and Alton Railway), Abram Greenwood (now the cashier of the Co-operative Wholesale Bank of Manchester), William Mallalieu of Todmorden (familarly known as the "Millionaire" of the original Rochdale Pioneers), Dr. Hiram Uttley of Burnley, John Crank of Stockport, Thomas Hayes, then of Miles Platting, now manager of the Crumpsall Biscuit Works of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, Joseph Place of Nottingham, James Motherwell of Paisley, Dr. Henry Travis (socialist writer on Owen's system), Samuel Ingham of Manchester, J. R. Cooper of Manchester, and the present writer.

THE DEVIL-CONCEPTION IN PROTESTANT COUNTRIES

LUTHER'S NOTION OF THE DEVIL.

THE Reformation, although in many respects a great progress, changed little the belief in the Devil. Luther was, in his demonology, a real child of his time ; he saw the Devil everywhere, he struggled with him constantly, and overcame him by his confidence in God. He sang of him :

" And were this world with devils filled
That threaten to undo us ;
We will not fear, for God hath will'd
His truth to triumph through us.

Our ancient vicious foe
Still seeks to work his woe.
His craft and power are great
And armed with cruel hate.
On earth is not his equal.

The Prince of this world
His banner has unfurled ;
But he can harm none
For he is all undone ;
One little word defeats him."

The Devil was to Luther a real, living power, a concrete personality, and he used to characterise him as the good Lord's hangman, and the instrument of his anger and punishment.¹ God needs the Devil for a servant and utilises his malignity for the procreation of the good (x, 1259).

Luther's belief in the Devil was not only very realistic but also almost childishly ingenuous. When at work he was prepared for his incessant interference, and when going to rest he expected to be disturbed by him. Luther was not afraid of him, yet the efforts he made in conquering the Evil One are sufficient evidence that he regarded him as very powerful. He protested he would go to Worms though every tile on the roofs of the city were a Devil ; he saw the fiend

grinning at him while he translated the Bible, and threw the inkstand at his Satanic Majesty.¹

By and by the familiarity between Luther and the Devil increased : " Early this morning," Luther tells us in his *Tischreden*, " when I awoke the fiend came and began disputing with me. ' Thou art a great sinner,' said he. I replied, ' Canst not tell me something new, Satan ? ' "

Luther was inclined to believe in the Devil's power of assisting wizards and witches in their evil designs. Following St. Augustine's authority he conceded the possibility of *incubi* and *succubæ*, because Satan loves to decoy young girls in the shape of handsome young men. He also accepted the superstition of changelings and declared that witches should suffer death ; but when once confronted with a real case, he insisted, when his counsel was sought, on the most scrupulous circumspection. He wrote to the judge :

" I request you to explore everything with exactness so as to leave no trace of fraud . . . for I have experienced so many deceits, frauds, artifices, lies, treacheries, etc., that I can scarcely make up my mind to believe. Therefore see and convince yourself to your own satisfaction, lest you be mistaken and I may be mistaken through you."²

Although it is true that Luther's views of the Devil were as childish as those of his contemporaries, it would be rash to denounce the Reformation for having accomplished no progress and having done nothing to suppress the barbarous superstitions of demonology. Luther's God-conception was purer and nobler than the God-conception of the leading churchmen and popes of his time, and thus his faith, in spite of its crudities, led, after all, to purer conceptions which were destined gradually to overcome the old traditional dualism.

Luther demanded that Christ must not only be recognised as the Saviour of mankind, but that every man should be able to say, " He has come to save me personally and individually." Luther thus carried the religious life into the very hearts of men and declared that there was no salvation in ceremonies, absolutions, or sacraments ; unless one had individually, in one's own nature and being, vanquished the temptations of Satan. The most dangerous idols are, according to Luther, the pulpit and the altar, for sacraments and ceremonies cannot save. They are symbols instituted to assist us. Those who believe that ceremonies possess any power of their own are still under

¹ The story has been doubted, yet, considering the character of Luther, it is not only possible but probable. If Luther did not throw the inkstand at the Devil, the anecdote is, to say the least, *ben trovato* ; it characterises excellently his attitude toward Satan.

² *Angeli Annales Marchiæ Brandenburgicæ*, p. 326 (quoted by Soldan, p. 302). The original reads : " Rogo te, omnia velis certissime explorare, ne subit aliquid doli . . . Nam ego tot fucis, dolis, technis, mendacis, artibus, etc., hactenus sum exagitatus ut cogar difficilis esse ad credendum. . . . Quare vide et prospice tibi quoque ne fallare et ego per te fallar.

¹ Walch, *Tischreden*, v, 839 ; v, 1109 ; viii, 1234 ; x, 1257 ; xii, 481, and 2043.

the influence of the pagan notion that evils can be averted by sacrifices and exorcisms.

LUTHER'S SUCCESSORS.

While Luther instinctively abhorred persecutions of any kind, he still retained those beliefs which were the ultimate cause of witch prosecution. We must, therefore, not be astonished to see even in Protestant countries a revival of the horrors which had been inaugurated by the Inquisition.

The most curious work of Protestant demonology is the *Theatrum Diabolorum* by Sigmund Feyerabend, a voluminous collection of the orthodox views of Luther's followers concerning the existence, power, nature, and demeanor of devils.

Luther's belief in the Devil was crude, but he was even here morally great, strong in his religious sentiment, and serious in his demand that every one personally should honestly wage a war with the powers of evil, and that no church, no intercession of saints, no formulas or rituals had any saving power. Luther's followers retain all the crudities of their master and to some extent his moral seriousness, but they fall below the manliness of his spirit.

Feyerabend's *Theatrum Diabolorum*, "which," as the title says, "is a useful and sensible book," contains a great number of essays written by such prominent little authorities as Jodocus Hockerus Osna-burgensis, Hermannus Hamelmannus, Andreas Musculus, Andreas Fabricius Chemnicensis, Ludovicus Milichius, and others. The Reverend Hocker explains in forty-eight chapters almost all possible problems connected with devils whose number in Chapter VIII. is, according to Borrhau, calculated to be not less than 2,665,866,746,664. Others describe special kinds of devils, such as the devil of blasphemy, VI; the dance-devil, VII; the servants' devil, VIII; the hunting devil, IX; the drink-devil, X; the wedlock devil, XI; devil of unchastity, XII; the miser's devil, XIII; the devil of tyranny, XIV; the laziness devil, XV; the pride devil, XVI; pantaloons devil, XVII; the gambling devil, XVIII; the courtier's devil (represented in a drama of five acts, the scene being at the court of Darius), XIX; and the pestilence devil, XX. The author of this last chapter, the Rev. Hermann Strack, concludes by saying: "When we can obtain medicine let us not have a contempt for God's valuable gifts, but withal let us always and all the time rest our confidence and main comfort upon the only God."

Almost all these treatises, poor though they may be as literary, theological, or pastoral exhortations, yet show the rationalistic tendency of discovering the devil in the vices of man, and this method became more and more established until in these latter days Satan himself was boldly and directly by Protestant theo-

logians declared to be a mere abstract idea, and a personification of evil. Yet this step was not taken at once and mankind had to pass first through a long period of wavering opinions, of conflicting propositions, uncertainties, venomous controversies, and anxious research for the truth.

SHAKESPEARE'S IDEA OF THE DEVIL.

The Protestant Devil became somewhat more cultured than the Catholic Devil, for the advancement noticeable in the civilisation of Protestant countries extended also to him. Says Mephistopheles in Faust:

"Culture which smooth the whole world licks
Also unto the Devil sticks."

To note the progress, let us compare Wyntoun who wrote early in the fifteenth century and Shakespeare. Wyntoun's witches are ugly, old hags, Shakespeare's are, although by no means beautiful, yet interesting and poetical; they are "so withered and so wild in their attire that look not like the inhabitants o' th' earth and yet are on it." It is a poetical fiction representing temptation. And in this same sense the very word Devil is frequently used by Shakespeare. We are told, "'tis the eye of childhood that fears a painted Devil," and one fiend, as we read in Shakespeare, is the invisible spirit of wine. "The Devil," we read in Hamlet, "hath power to assume a pleasing shape." And the meaning of this sentence is plainly psychological, as we learn from another passage in which Polonius says to his daughter:

"With devotion's visage
And pious action we do sugar o'er
The Devil himself."

MILTON'S SATAN.

The Protestant Devil as a poetical figure received his finishing touches from Milton. And Milton's Devil acquires a nobility of soul, moral strength, independence, and manliness which none of his ancestors possessed, neither Satan, nor Azazel, nor his proud cousins the Egyptian Typhon and the Persian Ahriman. The best characterisation of Milton's Satan is given by Taine. Taine ridicules Milton's description of Adam and Eve, who talk like a married couple of the poet's days. "I listen, and hear an English household, two reasoners of the period—Colonel Hutchinson and his wife. Heavens! Dress them! Folk so cultivated should have invented first of all a pair of trousers." The picture of the Good Lord is still more severely criticised. He says: "What a contrast between God and Satan!" Taine continues:

"Milton's Jehovah is a grave king, who maintains a suitable state, something like Charles I.

"Goethe's God, half abstraction, half legend, source of calm oracles, a vision just beheld after a pyramid of ecstatic strophes, greatly excels this Miltonic God, a business man, a schoolmaster,

a man for show! I honor him too much in giving him these titles. He deserves a worse name.

"He also talks like a drill-sergeant. 'Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold.' He makes quips as clumsy as those of Harrison, the former butcher turned officer. What a heaven! It is enough to disgust one with Paradise; one would rather enter Charles the First's troop of lackeys, or Cromwell's Ironsides. We have orders of the day, a hierarchy, exact submission, extra-duties, disputes, regulated ceremonials, prostrations, etiquette, furnished arms, arsenals, depots of chariots and ammunition."

How different is the abode of Satan. Taine says:

"The finest thing in connexion with this Paradise is hell.

"Dante's hell is but a hall of tortures, whose cells, one below another, descend to the deepest wells."

Milton's hell is the asylum of independence; it may be dreary but it is the home of liberty that scorns abject servility. Milton describes the place as follows:

"'Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,'
Said then the lost Archangel, "this the seat
That we must change for heaven? this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he,
Who now is Sovran, can dispose and bid
What shall be right: farthest from him is best,
Whom reason has equal'd, force hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,
Where joy for ever dwells! Hail, horrors; hail,
Infernal world! and thou, profoundest hell,
Receive thy new possessor; one who brings
A mind not to be changed by place or time.
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be; all but less than he
Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
We shall be free; the Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy; will not drive us hence:
Here we may reign secure; and in my choice
To reign is worth ambition, though in hell:
Better to reign in hell, than serve in heaven."

It has been frequently remarked that Milton's Satan is the hero of *Paradise Lost*, and, indeed, he appears as the most sympathetic figure in the greatest religious epic of English literature. His pride is not without self-respect which we cannot help admiring; Satan exclaims:

"Is there no place
Left for repentance, none for pardon left?
None left but by submission: and
That word disdain forbids me. . . ."

And how noble appears Milton's Satan! Milton personifies in Satan the spirit of the English Revolution; Milton's Satan represents the honor and independence of the nation asserted in the face of an incapable government. Satan's appearance shows strength and dignity:

"He above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tower."

And his character is distinguished by love of liberty. Taine describes him as follows:

"The ridiculous Devil of the Middle Ages, a horned enchanter, a dirty jester, a petty and mischievous ape, band-leader to a rabble of old women, has become a giant and a hero.

"Though feebler in force, he remains superior in nobility, since he prefers suffering independence to happy servility, and welcomes his defeat and his torments as a glory, a liberty, and a joy."

The Devil naturally acquires noble features which make him less diabolical and more divine in the measure that the God-conception of an age becomes the embodiment of the conservatism of the ruling classes. When the name and idea of God are misapplied to represent stagnation, our clergy ought not to be astonished to see Satan change places with God. A new sect of Devil-worshippers might arise and aspire for advancement and progress in the name of Satan. Protestantism, however, decried centuries ago as the work of the Devil, has gained so much influence now that it became itself a great conservative power in the world, and that its noble aspirations were first attributed to the influence of the Devil is only preserved in verse and fable.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF GOD.

To the Editor of The Open Court:

It is always very unpleasant to me to be obliged to disagree, yet duty often leads where the harmony of the mind is marred. My aim is (and doubtless yours is, too) to get upon a basis of truth which no logic can touch. There are no antagonisms to truth; hereby we know when truth is spoken. After a careful study of your writings I cannot help saying that there is, to me, something which destroys the harmony of the whole, and I attribute this fact to the fact that you appear to be afraid of letting go the religious supposition of the responsibility of man in that sense. You seem to think that people who embrace science will need to be spurred to moral action, and that people of all sects can adapt themselves to the principles of science. Now, science is only for those who are naturally moral; who cannot perform an immoral act by reason of their complete, moral organisation. They are people who cannot, who have no desire to do evil, no more than a good tree can bring forth evil fruit; hence science teaches particularly how God reigns and evolves, not that mankind of one generation are the prime factors of the development of the next. The God of science is not the same as in religion, an idle looker-on; He is the prime mover of all things. Religion is an adaptation of God according to the principles of mechanics. Its place is first (throwing all the responsibility upon man), because preponderance of power is necessary on that side until man is delivered from the power of the law of sin. Hells and devils have played their parts for this purpose, too. For this reason man has needed error,—things that are not have been taught as though they really were. But pure science must be free from all such ideas; not "one jot or tittle" of error can be carried over into its pure domain. Where good people are, there is no need of telling them that they can "make or mar." After stating that all things are controlled by universal law, it seems a contradiction to me to say that a good man can "make or mar." After we have said that the earth is governed by law in its revolutions, we know that nothing can mar its action. It is the same with good people,—they must be good, they cannot be bad, evil repels them.

"Every law of nature is a power which can be adapted to our wants only when we adapt ourselves to it." Now, it is a fact that man cannot adapt himself to any law of nature, only so far as nature, or God, has adapted him to it; same as nature adapts the grass to erection against gravity; hence I would say that every law of nature is a power which adapts matter in one condition to the needs of matter in another. We have fallen so into the habit of exalting man unduly that it is hard to break away. But reason will never be clear until we do. It is the function of science to clear reason and to show principles free from contradictions. In my former communication I used the term atheistical, because I do not find in all your writings God at the base and all the way through, and because you said we are our own saviours. They wear a Buddhistic aspect to my mind; hence my criticism. Pure science must preach God the Saviour, not man. Heredity is helpless to cause progress. An ocean-steamer could never have been built if there had not been something more, in its generation, than the knowledge of a rude canoe. The first skiff builder could not transmit more than he knew. God adapted him to make a rude canoe. By more involution of intelligence God adapted other men years after to build a better boat, and so on up to our finished floating ocean palace. The moral line of development is the same. Immorality cannot transmit morality. Moral involution must equal moral evolution,—God being the source. If there is any language similar to the above in any of your works, I would be very much pleased to find it. Man is simply an auxiliary adapted by God to the work which he is to perform. He cannot do any more, neither can he do any less, than is in the combination of which he is a factor, to produce a result of any kind. This is why so little is accomplished when we desire so much. Grass cannot grow without sunshine and rain,—these are gifts of God. The gospel of Jesus was the power of God unto salvation,—God was exalted then, not man. The Catholic Church reversed the order by reason of its weakness, and made it (the Gospel) the will of man unto damnation. It made man responsible instead of God. God was in that change,—it was a necessary one, because the preponderance of power must be on the weaker side. But science must reverse the order again, because many people are now fit to embrace the truth. The Gospel of Jesus shows that God is responsible, because His kingdom is within, or among us, and the heaven will work until all is leavened,—not man will work until all is leavened. I am simply complying with the invitation in the "Religion of Science" to criticize. If I do not make a point in the article sent for publication, you have the privilege to show me my error. I feel justified in making the criticism on the ground that truth must be authority in the future, and that all assertions must be corroborated by evidence. It cannot be shown that we are our own saviours, or that one generation is utterly dependent upon another.

JOHN MADDOCK.

To the Editor of *The Open Court*:

Possibly some one has already called your attention to an interesting analogue to the sermon of Rev. G. T. Smith referred to by you on page 4803 (Feb. 6). It has but just come under my notice, and I am sufficiently struck by it to ask, if you find time, to look at the recent book by Rev. J. P. Coyle, *The Spirit in Literature and Life*, at page 50.¹ Dr. Coyle, I am sure, speaks for the now dominant school of thought in the Christian Church of all creeds, and certainly, if that be so, there is room for you to modify your view as to the *strangeness* of Dr. Smith's sermon, and perhaps as to what really is the theology of the Church of to-day in its essential features.

Besides this, may I not venture to suggest that you seem to

¹ I would also refer you to Genung's *Epic of the Inner Life*, passim, especially pp. 45 ff., 190 ff.

have failed wholly to comprehend the meaning of the term "responsibility" as used in Mr. Smith's sermon? I think a reading of Dr. Coyle's remarks on the same subject would help you to understand that Mr. Smith's thought (as Dr. Coyle's) is far removed from the idea contained in the following sentence near the end of your article, "He . . . will no longer throw the *responsibility of his misfortunes* on others, be they gods or men." I see, in fact, no connexion between the two. Mr. Smith and Dr. Coyle agree in presenting simply the idea that a true conception of such a God as can be accepted as the source of ethical judgement, must embrace the thought of this being absolutely *bound to do right*, i. e. of this "responsibility" to be as good as he requires others to be. Of course, the thought is far-reaching, and disastrous to much old-school theology, but you will find few Christian thinkers of to-day who will not join you in hailing such a disaster!

W. I. FLETCHER.

In reply to Mr. Fletcher we would say that the word *responsibility* may be defined in a sense in which we would not hesitate to say that God is responsible for all the happenings in the world. God is not responsible in so far as no one can call him to account or blame him, or say that he is guilty of an accident in special cases. However, the constitution of the cosmos is of a definite character, and all that exists is thereby conditioned. Defining "God" as the determinant of the *suchness* of existence, we may say God is responsible in the sense that all things are determined by the character of the universe.

But when we declare that God is the all-conditioning feature of existence, we do by no means imply that wherever God manifests Himself in conscious beings, such as men, He would (as Mr. Maddock claims) in every single incarnation be irresponsible. On the contrary, God's responsibility here appears in all its tremendous importance. God, if regarded *in abstracto* as the all-life with its cosmic order, is that which conditions all; and the same law that makes steam-engines possible is the reason of an explosion. Who will praise him for the one and blame him for the other? He remains the same in both. If we speak of God's responsibility, we should bear in mind that we mean something else than the responsibility of a man entrusted with the performance of certain duties.

Mr. Maddock imagines that I am "afraid of letting go the religious supposition of the irresponsibility of man." There is no fear of that kind in me, whatever. I simply endeavor to describe things as they are. I am not blind to the fact that God is in all, and that God (in the sense defined above) is responsible for all that exists, in so far as he gives character to life in every form. But I am also aware that man's deeds have consequences, and thus within the limited sphere of his influence man can make or mar. The deeds of man are indeed a factor in the development of life; and man's consciousness of the importance of his deeds is also of importance, for it will stimulate him to make the best of it.

That the idea of responsibility is not a mere makeshift will appear when we consider two men of the same character in the same position. Both have the idea that all their deeds are determined by law, and that they are such as they are according to the circumstances which produced their character. But suppose the one imagines that for that very reason he is irresponsible, that is to say, can not be held to account, while the other comes to the opposite conclusion and feels that he is responsible and can be held to account. He knows that his deeds will have according to law definite results. If he chooses that which pleases him best at the moment, he may afterwards have to blame himself for not having done the right thing; and this consideration is the sentiment of responsibility.

Responsibility, wherever it exists, is not an exception to the law of the determinateness of all actions and decisions, but for

that reason it is not a mere illusion. It is a real factor in the life of man, the presence or absence of which is of paramount importance.

There is a difference between "fatalism" and "determinism." The doctrine of fatalism declares that man's fate is foreordained whatever he may do, while determinism declares that man's fate is definitely and unequivocally determined not only by the circumstances alone in which man is, but also and especially, by his deeds. I am a determinist, and I believe it to be a matter of experience that a man who regards himself as a responsible being, i. e. he who knows that he can make or mar, will endeavor to be both energetic and circumspect, while he who holds himself irresponsible, the fatalist, who imagines that he cannot make or mar, will be indifferent or reckless.

There is a great difference between the state of being determined and the state of being compelled to do a certain thing. All compulsion is by external force or pressure; while determination is of one's own free choice, whenever it takes place according to one's own character. Man is not always compelled to follow a certain line of action, but he is under all circumstances, even where he has a free choice, determined by his own nature according to the conditions which affect him.

Mr. Maddock says "man has needed error," viz., the error of believing in his responsibility and in heaven and hell; but he needs error no longer. I would say that man needs truth not only now, but has always needed truth; yet being incapable of grasping the truth in its purity he formulated it first in allegories and symbols. The allegories of religion were useful not because the error of a literal belief was needed, but because the truth contained in the allegory was conducive to man's well-being and was the best that could be had at the time.

There is a truth in Mr. Maddock's expression that "pure science must preach God the Saviour," but we add that God can become our saviour only if the recognition of the saving truths be incarnated in our souls, and in this sense man must be his own saviour. In other words, God is the principle of salvation; yea, he is the path of salvation, but man must be his own saviour by discovering and walking on the path. And this, I would say, is the main idea of Christianity. Christianity is the gospel of salvation through the God-man. Man, accordingly, is not merely "an auxiliary adapted by God to the work which he is to perform," but he is God incarnate. He is the highest revelation and manifestation of God known to us. Thus, it is true that God is exalted in man and man by God.

Science is, as says Mr. Maddock, not only for those who are naturally moral. Science is for all. Those who are immoral will become moral if the truth of science will illumine not only their minds but also their hearts.

And now in conclusion, at Mr. Maddock's request, a few quotations from my own writings concerning the all-importance of the God-idea:

"Eliminate self and let man become an embodiment of truth, an incarnation of God." *The Monist*, Vol. IV., No. 3, App. p. 20.

"While science does not speak of God, it teaches God; for every law of nature is a part of God's being . . . The God of the Religion of Science is not a person . . . We should neither call God personal nor impersonal, but superpersonal." *Religion of Science*, pp. 22-23.

"Human reason is rational only in so far as it conforms with, as it reflects, as it describes the order of the cosmos, . . . the All, God, that which creates the mind." *The Monist*, Vol. II., p. 240.

"Any kind of theology which still recognises special creation-acts, or miracles, or breaks in evolution, we do not hesitate to say, is not yet free from paganism, for it still sticks to the religious conception of the medicine-man that God is a great magician. The God of the medicine-man lives in the realm of the unknown

and he appears in man's imagination where the light of science fails . . . Suppose there were or could be exceptions to the law of causation, to the conservation of matter and energy, or to the continuity of evolution would that not rather be a draw-back in nature? Are the patches on a coat better proof that it was made by a tailor than the whole coat? Should we call God to rescue only where science fails? . . . The God of science is the God of truth, and evidence of his existence is not found in the darkness of ignorance but in the light of knowledge. God's being is not recognised in the seeming exceptions to natural laws, but in the natural laws themselves. God's existence is not proved by our inability to trace here or there the order of cause and effect, as if a disorder in the world made it divine; on the contrary, the only rational ground of a faith in God is the irrefragable cosmic order of the universe. It is true that we have to give up the idea of a personal God, but is not a superpersonal God greater than the idol which we have made unto our own likeness?" *The Monist*, Vol. II., pp. 91-92.

"The God-idea is the basis of ethics. It matters little whether we use or avoid the name God, for the atheist has also a God-idea in his conception of that existence in which he lives and moves and has his being. This God-idea is always the ground from which we derive our rules of conduct; and whenever we change, not our terminology but our idea of God, we shall as a matter of consistency have to change our views of ethics also." *The Monist*, Vol. II., p. 582.

EDITOR.

¹See also *The Idea of God*, p. 23; *The Monist*, Vol. III., pp. 256-257 ff., Vol. IV., p. 415; Vol. V., p. 400 and 552; *Fundamental Problems, Primer of Philosophy*, and *The Soul of Man* contain several chapters on the subject; but the references are too numerous to quote.

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