

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_bib-sacra\\_01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php)

# THE BIBLIOTHECA SACRA

---

ARTICLE I.

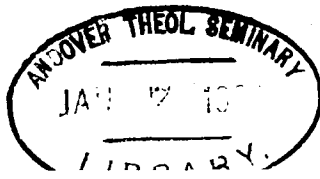
HUXLEY, AND PHILLIPS BROOKS.<sup>1</sup>

BY PROFESSOR WILLIAM NEWTON CLARKE, D.D.

THE last months of the nineteenth century witnessed the publication of two great biographies,—“The Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley,” by Leonard Huxley, his son, and “The Life of Phillips Brooks,” by Professor Allen. No two biographies could more fitly have seen the light just as the old century was expiring. They are great in themselves, rich in material, sympathetic and strong in execution, worthy of their subjects; and they are great in significance, as representative of great movements and tendencies in the century that is past. Each of the two men was a leader of vast effectiveness, picturesque as well as strong, who left a powerful impress upon his time, and each stands for a view of life that is to-day of the first importance. Taken together, the two biographies bring out in the acutest form the great religious contrast and question of the present age. I can propose nothing more helpful than a study of these men as their biographies present them, and of some of the sharp issues that are raised by

<sup>1</sup>An address delivered before the Oberlin Theological Seminary, and before the Alumni of Colgate University, in 1901.

VOL. LIX. No. 233. I



the twofold story. It is true that I am not competent to discuss the two men in view of all that they have done. Only a skilled scientist could do justice to Huxley, and only a great master in religion to Brooks. If I limit myself to the biographies and what they suggest, even thus the field is far too large for the time at my disposal. But let me do what I can toward setting before you the men and their meaning.

Very impressive are the two men as a pair of prominent figures in their century. Huxley was born in 1825, Brooks in 1835. Huxley's first large work was done in the fifties, Brooks's in the sixties. Brooks died in 1893, Huxley in 1895. Both were intense and furious workers, laboring to the uttermost, and the two broke in health at about the same age; Brooks dying at once, however, while Huxley lingered for years in comparative feebleness. Their activity covered the period of greatest transformation in the nineteenth century. On two continents of the world, in two continents of thought, the two men labored simultaneously, in the thick of the time when new things were pressing in to be known and estimated and life was finding new significance. They met more than once,—in London,—once as guests of James Russell Lowell. Huxley talked, but Brooks was silent. The meeting was pleasant, but no special contact was established between the two. Perhaps Brooks could have understood Huxley better than Huxley could have understood Brooks, but the two men stood apart, each a prominent figure in his own world of thought and life. Each looked into the other's world, as he must, and dealt with questions thence arising, in what manner we shall see; but neither ever really lived in the world of the other.

Huxley was born for science. His father was a teacher, though not a remarkably intelligent man, or specially helpful to the son. His mother was a keen, clear-sighted wo-

man, quick and strong in her intellectual processes. As for early education, he came under no systematic educational influence whatever, until he entered upon the study of medicine. This he did at the age of seventeen, and now he met his first good teacher. He was precocious: he had already been keenly interested in metaphysical questions, had taught himself something of two or three languages, and had begun to think of science. From sheer want of company he did his own thinking; but probably he would have done that in any case, for his mind was his own from the first, and he was as bold as he was insatiable. Before he had quite reached his medical degree, at the age of twenty-one, he found the way into the work for which he was born. Like Darwin, he began his real career on a British government vessel, fitted out for a long cruise in the interests of science. The subjects to be explored were Geography, Geology, and Natural History; and in the waters of the antipodes, about Australia and New Guinea, he spent four years of close work, amid the infinite abundance of tropical life, engaged in careful observation and record-making. In this labor he struck the keynote of his life,—observation strict and searching, and honest interpretation following it. Long afterward some amateur critic in natural science ventured into newspaper discussion with Huxley, and, after doing what he could but far less than he thought he was doing, sarcastically inquired what he should do in order to understand the subject better. "Get a cockroach and dissect it," was Huxley's unsympathetic answer. Work, investigation, examination of facts, careful, patient, thorough, candid, without presuppositions, intended to discover the very thing that is and set it in its true place among other things that are,—this was the aim of the man from youth to age, and to this his life was wholly and unswervingly devoted.

In Australia he lost his heart, and found his life; and

after his return to England the burning question for some time was whether science would support a family. Science was very slow in welcoming this new devotee, but at length he found his work. It was no one thing at first, and it was never any one thing, in exclusive fashion, but it was physical science always, physical science and what it suggested. Lecturing, writing, care and reorganization of a great museum, administering scientific societies, serving on public scientific commissions, popular scientific education, introduction of sound methods in place of unsound, lending a hand to every progressive movement, battling what he judged to be false and standing up for truth and righteousness as he saw it,—such activities as these, with constant laboratory work, investigation, discovery, classification, verification, proof, and defense of conclusions, occupied his head and heart and hands through years of uttermost industry, and conveyed his contribution to his age. At thirty years old he questioned himself thus: "To smite all humbugs, however big; to give a nobler tone to science; to set an example of abstinence from petty personal controversies, and of toleration for everything but lying; to be indifferent as to whether the work is recognized as mine or not, so long as it is done;—are these my aims?" One who follows through the work of his life will feel that Huxley was not unfaithful to this vision of high character and worthy work.

He had a genius for unity, and was always putting this and that together. What first made him known among scientists was the discovery of certain homologies in the living world, where only difference had been discerned before. This was an unforeseen result of his years of labor in the comparatively unknown life of southern seas. He was a born classifier, and a habitual discoverer for lost things of their place in nature. Hence he was ready for Darwin's announcement of proof for the evolutionary meth-

od in the world; and though he never perfectly agreed with Darwin, he was from the very beginning a bold and formidable advocate of that unity in the universe which is covered by the name evolution. Darwin could not fight, but Huxley could, and did: he fought the battles of the doctrine everywhere, and some of the battle-scenes were highly dramatic. The second great book on the subject, next after Darwin's "Origin of Species," was Huxley's "Evidences as to Man's Place in Nature." He bore the reproach of the new doctrine, and assisted in its victory.

The personal characteristics of the man are not merely essential to his biography, they constitute a vital part of his scientific attitude. No man was ever more steadily himself. Huxley was the same, from his first days in science to his last. He appears in the biography as a man of sturdy will, of cheerful temperament, of sparkling wit and various humor, of warm affections, of broad interests. Mr. John Fiske has told us, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, how extraordinarily lovable he was, especially in the delightful atmosphere of his home. As to his intellectual attitude, it was simply and steadily that of an honest man. The greatest virtue in his esteem was truthfulness, and all shams were objects of his hatred and indignation. An honest opponent he never failed to respect, but a shifty one called down his wrath. There were great men whom he never forgave the sin of shiftiness in argument, of which he believed them guilty. Most honestly did he apply his honesty to himself. No work for him but careful work: no superficial examinations, no hasty inferences, no method but the strictest method. No presuppositions as to what an examination is to reveal. A scientist, he said, has no *a priori* assumptions, and would as willingly come to one conclusion as to another, the facts being decisive. "Science," he said, "seems to me to teach in the highest and strongest manner the great truth which is embodied in the

Christian conception of entire surrender to the will of God. Sit down before fact as a little child, be prepared to give up every preconceived notion, follow humbly wherever and to whatever abysses nature leads, or you shall learn nothing. I have only begun to learn content and peace of mind since I have resolved at all risks to do this." Accordingly with him it was a part of personal honor that the unexamined should be regarded as the unknown, and the unproven should be the unaccepted. His kind of proof, also, was the demonstrative and exact; where he could not obtain this he had no conclusions,—all waited for light. A generalization on too narrow a basis of facts was a sin when it was made in the face of light, and a thing to be avoided as sin in all cases. Probably a more honest scientist never faced a laboratory table. His moral sense entered too into his theory of life in general. He was a firm believer in morals as the highest human interest. He respected sincerity, and never tried to influence young students away from their sincere religious beliefs. He advocated the reading of the Bible in the schools of London when he was a member of the school-board, on the ground that the Bible was the great moral educator of the people who were concerned, and morality, he said, is the matter first to be considered.

The story of Huxley's agnosticism is simply the story of his honesty. To his own great loss, "not proven" was his verdict concerning God and the soul, eternity and religion. To him, of course, not proven meant not available. He tells the origin of the word "agnostic," of which he was the inventor. In the Metaphysical Society, of London, he encountered men of all sorts of belief, who seemed to him to have this one thing in common, that they thought the problem of existence had been solved. It is true that they were by no means agreed as to what the right solution was, but each man thought that there

was one: each had his gnosis, his theory, his interpretation of the universal mystery. Huxley had none, and could not discover that there was one to be had; and so, over against these gnostics, or knowers, he called himself an agnostic, or one who does not know the universal meaning or expect that it will be known. The name was not a confession of universal ignorance, or a declaration that nothing can be known, as some have professed to understand it, for no one ever believed more thoroughly than Huxley in the attainableness of sound knowledge. It denoted simply his consistent refusal to affirm the undemonstrated, applied in the realm of God and religion. With him it was a word of honesty, which described him as he was, and as with his views of evidence he had to be. It makes a profoundly pathetic story, this story of life within the limits that were prescribed by his agnosticism,—limits that he could not pass, and yet across which his normal soul would sometimes look, not without longing. Of this I shall speak again. It is touching to remember, though we decline to read into it meanings larger than he meant, that upon his tombstone there were inscribed, by his own direction, three lines from a poem written by his wife,—

“Be not afraid, ye waiting hearts that weep;  
For still He giveth His beloved sleep,  
And if an endless sleep He wills, so best,”—

and that the *He* is written with a capital.

As Huxley was born for science, so one may say that Phillips Brooks was born for religion. His ancestry led that way. The Brookses were practical people of the common life, strong in sound morals and by no means unreligious. The Phillipses were more highly educated people, given to the professions, enterprising in church and state, serious, vigorous, religious. Phillips Brooks's mother was one of the most religious of the religious,—intense, conscientious, self-sacrificing, rapturous. All her mater-



nity, which was of the most eager and self-lavishing kind, and all her religiousness, blended into a single passion toward her children. Few men have ever known such mother-love as embraced this son, so long as his mother lived. A high-minded, sensible father and a high-souled, fervent mother gave him birth.

Unlike Huxley, Phillips Brooks received the best education that his environment afforded. He was not precocious. He passed through Harvard without doing wonders. He would have chosen to be a teacher, but an ill-starred experience turned him aside from that. It was by unforeseen ways that he was led into that work apart from which he would never have been himself. Under an impulse that was an unconscious ripening of all the past, he found himself in a small theological seminary, where there was one inspiring teacher, and scarcely any other inspiring thing. In the three years that he spent there his first conscious and well-directed work was done. The seminary was so little absorbing that he took his own way, and it was the way of reading. His reading was enormous in amount and very wide in range. He sought to lay hold upon the best that the human mind has done, and to make it his own.

Here his ideal was unlike Huxley's. Huxley once wrote, "The student to whose wants the mediæval university was adjusted looked to the past and sought book-learning, while the modern looks to the future and seeks the knowledge of things. . . . The modern knows that the only source of real knowledge lies in the application of scientific methods to the ascertainment of the facts of existence; that the unascertained is infinitely greater than the ascertained, and that the chief business is not so much to make scholars as to train pioneers." So Huxley thought that what man has done may well be neglected in favor of what man may do. For past achievements he cared little, save as they

were either warnings or guides for present use. Brooks, however, turned with all the strength of his being to the study of man and what man has done. His field was the human. Human interest was the very stuff of which his life was made, and it was by human interest that his studies were dominated. It was on topics of conspicuous human interest that he read so insatiably, and in his reading he was seeking to appropriate the worthiest product of human thought. He read, he considered, he weighed, he sought for insight, he endeavored to think justly the great thoughts of humanity, and to learn to do justice to humanity in his thoughts.

This was the key to the life of Phillips Brooks,—he was a student of man, and a servant of man. Whatever any one else might choose as a field of thought and effort, he was the man of humanity. To know and understand the human, to know existence in the light of human relations, to serve mankind by ministering to it the good that it needs in the higher ranges of its life,—these were his aims and choices, this was his consecration. His early reading lay in the field of life, and his reflections, of which he made constant record from first to last, were reflections upon life and the soul. He was not indifferent to the world of science, but in the world of philosophy he was somewhat more at home, and in life itself most of all. This preparatory work was a true preliminary to his career in the Christian ministry, where for a third of a century he served mankind as a minister of Jesus Christ.

The work of Brooks was done in two cities, Philadelphia and Boston. Only in cities could he have worked, for he was a city man, to whom the city was indispensable. He could not long be content in the country: he must be in the rush of men. Nature was circumference, man was center. In his travels, architecture was more to him than mountains: human use appealed to him as inanimate

grandeur could not. He lived in a crowd, he held himself at the service of men, he was incomparably accessible to such as he could help, he gave himself without reserve, he poured out vitality without stint wherever he felt that men had need of him. In his two homes his human interest took two forms. In Philadelphia he took part in every human interest that came appealing. He was an active reformer. Into the defense of the nation in the civil war he threw the whole force of his being. He gave his witness against slavery, and gloried when it was no more. He braved unpopularity to secure rights for negroes in street-cars. He helped all sorts of local reforms. But in Boston he withdrew as rapidly as he could from outside reformatory activities, and devoted himself wholly to religious interests. Still it was all for man, but now it was for man in the spirit, man in the life of the soul, man in religion. To quicken and deepen the life of men with God, and to suffuse all human existence with the glow of the glory of God in Christ, this was now his sole aim, held with increasing singleness as the years went by. Thus he moved toward a climax. Up to the highest life of man his zeal and consecration moved, until in his ripest years he was pouring himself out in splendid sacrifice for the helping of the human in its fellowship with the divine. By the same action he was the servant of man and of God.

This was no abnormal movement of human interest; rather is all human interest that stops short of this incomplete. This is the right human interest, the interest that discerns the soul of man, and seeks to find a place for the soul in the order of existence. Man is a spirit, and the demands of his spiritual life are not only the supreme demands of his existence, but the most immediate and urgent also. What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world but lose his own soul? if he win everything below, but lose his way in the higher realms of the spirit, and

find no success or welfare for his own highest part? To care aright for man is to care for him in this region. When I said that Brooks's field was the human, I meant that it was the true human, the human in its highest life and fellowship. It was the field of man with God, and God with man. For the two fields of God and man, if such they seem, are one. Human interest is divine interest too. The problems of God and the soul arise together, and are solved together, if either be solved at all. The very reality of the soul and the reality of God are discerned together if they are discerned in power. All reconciling and restful thought must deal with both, and all deep satisfaction for man must be found in the knowledge both of the soul and of its God.

Huxley was not indifferent to that aspect or department of life in which men of religion have believed that they had found God. No man can be permanently indifferent to it if he really thinks, or if he feelingly encounters the great experiences of life. Least of all could this aspect of existence pass unnoticed by such a man as Huxley,—a man so far-searching in intellectual interest, so honest in thought and warm in affection, and so in love with knowledge. He encountered the great experiences: he well knew struggle and weakness, love and loss, limitation and desire. Through family ties he was bound more closely than Brooks to the common human lot. Grief forced upon him the questions of the soul, and experience kept the significance of life before him.

He cared sincerely for these things, and yet in the region where rise the questions of God and the soul Huxley had neither enthusiastic beliefs nor even accepted certainties. He had his firm and enthusiastic moral convictions, but in what is known as the field of religion he was blank. This is no accusation from without, it is what he always said. It was just here that he was agnostic. The sudden

death at four years old of his first child brought him a letter of sympathy and religious suggestion from Charles Kingsley; and in reply to this he gave utterance to his innermost heart as he had told it to no one but his wife. This letter of Huxley, with one or two later ones addressed to the same friend, has been much quoted since the biography appeared. These are letters of a genuine agnostic, as the word was by himself defined,—as one who does not imagine that any key to the meaning of existence is in his hand or within his reach. Whether there is in the universe a substratum of being, distinct from phenomena, corresponding to what men mean when they speak of God, he regards as a question concerning which absolutely no convincing evidence exists. He is not a wilful rejecter of God, but an unconvinced inquirer about him. “I have never had the least sympathy,” he says, “with the *a priori* reasons against orthodoxy, and I have by nature and disposition the greatest possible antipathy to all the atheistic and infidel school. Nevertheless I know that I am, in spite of myself, exactly what the Christian world call, and so far as I can see are justified in calling, atheist and infidel.” The order of the world is rational, and observation and experience have assured him that it is characterized by strict and certain justice: sin gravitates to sorrow, and righteousness to welfare. Yet the rationality and righteousness which he so profoundly feels to be present in the world he does not feel himself justified in attributing to a personal rational and righteous One. That there is personal quality at all in the administration of the world, he considers absolutely undemonstrable. That there is a Father invisible, loving men and helping them in spirit, of course he does not see. That the administration of the world, if such it can be called, knows anything of love, or is touched with tenderness, or takes any notice of human beings in the stress of their troubles or the perils of their

career, he sees no evidence and can obtain no conviction. As to the immortality of man, there are no means of disproving it, but neither is there any reason for believing it. That we desire immortality is to him less than no proof that we have it; it should rather be a warning against believing in immortality because we wish it to be true, a course which a scientist's judgment and conscience will not allow to him. Of ethical appeal on the ground of immortality with its rewards and punishment, he feels no need, having ethical forces enough in the present life to govern him in good living. Of the existence of a soul in man, as something different from the bodily life and capable of persisting after death, he knows nothing: his own personality in such conditions he is unable to conceive. Thus he is wholly, honestly, and consistently agnostic as to those matters on which men of religion, like his correspondent Kingsley, make strong affirmations. He truly does not know, and he will maintain his integrity against all influences, and not lie by saying that he knows. Grief over his dead child shall not break his purpose to affirm only what he is sure of. He would believe in immortality if he had evidence of it, but without evidence what is a man to do? Nevertheless he is no materialist. "My fundamental axiom of speculative philosophy is that materialism and spiritualism are opposite poles of the same absurdity—the absurdity of imagining that we know anything about either spirit or matter." And in all this he says that he is not alone. "Understand that all the younger men of science whom I know are essentially of my way of thinking. I know not a scoffer or an irreligious or an immoral man among them, but they all regard orthodoxy as you do Brahmanism."

Thus a great realm of human experience was to Huxley absolutely a blank. He did not despise it, or argue against it, or condemn it as worthless: he simply could not find it.

In his judgment there was no standing-ground for such experience. It was a non-existent world, and a world with no prospect of attaining to legitimate existence.

Here breaks upon us the full contrast between the two men whom we are placing in comparison. In the realm that to Huxley was non-existent for want of evidence, Brooks lived and moved and had his being. Turn to that world for a moment, and hear the voice of one who finds it most real, and dwells at home in its spiritual atmosphere. Quotation is the quickest way to show what Phillips Brooks found there. "I knew all about God before you told me," said little blind, deaf, dumb Helen Keller to me one day, 'only I did not know his name.' It was a perfect expression of the innateness of the divine idea in the human mind, of the belonging of the human soul to God." Of religion he says, "It comes directly from the soul of God laid immediately upon and pressing itself into the soul of every one of his children. It is the gift of the total nature of God to the total nature of man. Therefore it can utter itself only through the total human life, which is the personal life." In a more personal strain, speaking of his own experience, he says again, "Less and less, I think, grows the consciousness of seeking God. Greater and greater grows the certainty that he is seeking us and giving himself to us to the complete measure of our present capacity. That is love, not that we loved him, but that he loved us. . . . There is such a thing as putting ourselves in the way of God's overflowing love and letting it break upon us till the response of love comes, not by struggle, not even by deliberation, but by necessity, as the echo comes when the sound strikes the rock." What language is this, for affirmation of infinite but tangible realities discovered in that world which Huxley found blank and bare!

I do not know that these are the best passages to quote for illustration of Brooks's mind concerning religion. Very

likely they are not, for there are hundreds more to the same effect; but I wanted only a little sample out of the abundance. In this region moved year after year the thought and utterance of the man, and the action of his life. He lived in religion. There he found a splendid freedom, and his ample powers struck out in generous activity. He did not look into religion and into God as a bird may look from its nest into the open sky. He rose into religion and into God, and was there sustained. To him God was the greatest and most certain of realities. Christ has revealed God, and shown what manner of God he is, and to this man Christ stood for God: Christ in the infinite beauty and power of his character meant the meaning of God to him. God meant Christ, and Christ meant God; and under either name he had before him the reality which he felt to be the glory of this world and of all worlds. Accordingly his key-words were such as God, Christ, the soul, personality, love, life. The key-word of his later ministry was life. In those glorious years of spiritual power he used to say that he had only one text and one sermon, and the one text was, "I am come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly." The soul's experience of inexhaustible, overflowing life in fellowship with the living God, this was his one theme, and this experience he helped multitudes to make their own.

What a contrast is this!—one man living a full and glorious life in the realm of religion, and the other absolutely without evidence that such a realm exists. One spirit strikes out successfully for flight upon a strong sustaining air, where the calculations of the other show nothing stronger than a vacuum. When such a contrast as this appears, we are compelled to say that one of the two men must have been right, and the other wrong. One may have been acting in accordance with truth, that is, with things as they are, but both cannot. Only one can have been



justified in his position by the essential realities of existence. There was an element for the real support of Brooks's life in the spirit, or there was not. Huxley said there was not, Brooks said there was. If Brooks was right, Huxley was suffering limitations that robbed him of his birthright. If Huxley was right, Brooks, by all sound reason, was impossible. There is no need of affirming atheism and materialism out and out, in order to render Brooks and his life impossible. Such agnosticism as Huxley's will answer just as well. If one cannot legitimately affirm anything concerning the reality of God, the soul, and the eternal life, then the satisfaction, enthusiasm, exultation of Brooks in view of them was plainly quite unjustified, and can never be worthily entertained by a right-thinking man. If all men thought as Huxley thought, no man could ever live as Brooks lived. This Huxley knew. Brooks's faith had room for the science which was Huxley's life, but Huxley's agnosticism would utterly paralyze the religious action in which Brooks had his very being. Religion is real in one view of the case, and impossible in the other.

I have encountered this great practical question in reading the two biographies. It has come before me as a question of life and death. To me, I am not ashamed to say, a world without religion would be a world of death. You may call me too timid if you will, and remind me that I am shrinking from a condition that some men of excellent motives have not considered terrible at all. But I cannot help it,—it is with a horror of great darkness that I think of a world in which the paralysis of an accepted agnosticism has fallen upon the religious energies of mankind. I have asked myself what it would be to try to live the life of religion in Huxley's world, and I have been impressed by the impossibility of even the attempt. I have looked upon the noble figure of Phillips Brooks as he moved among men, radiating a holy light and warmth on every

side, nourishing the worthiest vitality of his generation by influence and example, and doing all this by himself living a life of strong endeavor and rich peace in fellowship with the God whom Jesus Christ made known to him; and I have asked myself what manner of world this would be to live in, if such a life were absolutely without just ground of being. It is very true that an honest man desires to see things as they are, and that if the real world is constructed hopelessly inhospitable to religion it is well that we all should know it, that we may school ourselves down to it. Nevertheless it was the shadow of the great darkness that I saw in reading the Life of Huxley, honest, fascinating and useful though Huxley was; and I rejoiced in the returning of the gladsome light when I turned from one biography to the other, and beheld Phillips Brooks living in God with the strength of a strong man and the freedom of an immortal spirit. The contrast of light and darkness that I beheld is the contrast of our age, and the question is the question of to-day. Was Huxley living without his birthright, or had Brooks no right to be?

On the face of it, it seems a rather serious indictment of a view of life that it would render Phillips Brooks impossible. If some one proposed a view of life according to which there was no legitimate place for the existence of science, or of Huxley as a man of science, we should look him twice in the face before we were sure that he was serious. We should say at once that there is something lacking in a view of life that makes no room for Huxley. But Brooks, it seems, may be out of the question. A view of life may be calmly maintained as the only tenable one, according to which such living as his is condemned as no part of true and well-grounded human living. It is not as if this view of life merely corrected errors in religion, simplified it, or offered it a better life. No, it is religion itself that must go, not only in the case of Brooks but in all his

kind; not only religious life in poorer and darker minds, where ignorance and superstition reign, but religious life in the largest minds and the purest hearts,—in Kingsley, to whom Huxley wrote, in Tennyson, in Cromwell, in Pascal, in Luther, in Paul, in Augustine, in Jesus Christ himself. Huxley was clear-eyed enough to see this. He calls attention to “the impassable gulf between the anthropomorphism, however refined, of theology, and the passionless impersonality of the unknown and unknowable which science shows everywhere underlying the thin veil of phenomena.” To substitute for God the passionless impersonality of the unknown and unknowable is to abolish the religious life, and render impossible such men as Phillips Brooks. This, I say, seems on the face of it a rather severe indictment of a view of life. Religion is a large element, to be blotted out as illegitimate. It certainly seems more probable that Huxley was living without his birthright, than that Brooks and all his kind are really and properly impossible.

So deep and radical a contrast must have had its causes in the two men. Can we find them? Can these two views of life held by Brooks and Huxley be accounted for in them? Yes. There is no difficulty, I think, in perceiving how they came to be held. Various causes may have contributed, but not many need to be called in. Of the two men before us, one was a student of man, while the other was a student of life below man. One found his data, his method, and his idea of evidence in the human world; the personal realm, the region of the spirit; the other, in the infra-human world, the impersonal realm, the region of physical existence. Each lived in his own world and followed its ways; hence there came wide difference in their conceptions concerning man and what there may be above him. The explanation, I need not say, is of the deepest interest to us all, because the same two worlds are

still offering their suggestions, and judgment between them has constantly to be passed.

We have seen Huxley devoting himself simply, honestly, and conscientiously, to physical science. He was a naturalist, a biologist, a palæontologist, an explorer of the living world past and present. His method was the strictest. Loose work he abhorred; evidence must stand the closest physical testing; inferences must wait for precision in the data. Although he looked reverently and obediently upon nature as the sum of decisive facts, still it was true that he looked down upon his field. He had to look down upon it, for it was below him. Nowhere within it did personality exist, or personal relations require to be considered. Mental activity in human ranges was not included within the matters that came before him. He was interested in tracing the evolution of mind in the animal world, and so far as his scientific studies led him to consider mind in man, it was by this avenue, from below, that he approached it. It was through exact examination of life below man that Huxley's methods were developed and his tendencies of thought were established. Nay, his work was mainly upon the lower forms of the life that is inferior to man; and it was wrought largely by examination of creatures dead. It was a dissected cockroach that was to give light to the correspondent who sat in darkness. Give light it could, of course, but only so far as a dissected cockroach can be illuminant,—and there might be regions which it could not sufficiently light up. Without early training or predisposition of the religious kind, Huxley came into practice of close investigation, in the realm of existence that contains no developed personality and suggests no personal relations. The result, in his thinking, corresponded to the conditions. It is true that as for himself, living in the world of men, of course he knew what men know by experience of actual meanings, and lived in

love, purity, and fidelity according to worthy human standards. But when he speculated upon the meaning of existence, the limitations of his method and his world were upon him. That man was to be estimated in the same manner as the world below him seemed to him both natural and necessary. The analogies of the lower world came up to govern his thoughts about the human.

In ethics, it is true, he came to another thought, and it is interesting to wonder what might have happened if he had lived long enough to be led to another step in the same direction. Concerning the practical relations of men among themselves, he perceived that man is not altogether like his inferiors; and in the famous Romanes Lecture of 1893 he maintained that the self-regarding method which made animal evolution successful was not adapted to render human life successful. If only he had followed out this hint! But in what we call the spiritual relations of man he never found anything certified to him by the methods of science, and therefore could not affirm that anything certain enough to be acted upon existed there. The man of natural science, working mainly in the world below man, discovered nothing above man, and failed even to find what man has commonly regarded as the highest in himself. All this is nothing strange, it is the fruit of the method.

We have seen Brooks, too, devoting himself enthusiastically and conscientiously to human life. He loved human life, he studied it, lived in the thick of it, gloried in it as the swimmer glories in the waves, gave himself to knowing it, helping it, making it perfect. While Huxley was interpreting existence in terms of the cosmic order, he was reading it in terms of the life, relations, and experience of the soul. I do not know but that Brooks was as truly an expert in human life as Huxley was in life below the human. Personality, not included in Huxley's field,

was the very center of his. For him the universe meant what the universe means in view of man the spirit. Consequently his formative and dominant thoughts were not those of Huxley. In Huxley's world the suggestive and ruling thoughts were such as order, structure, development: in Brooks's world they were such as love, trust, righteousness, aspiration, purity, spiritual motive. Huxley would learn by experiment, Brooks by experience. Upon the spiritual ideas and methods the structure of existence took form in the mind of Brooks, and he believed in the reality of a world where boundless scope exists for experience of the soul in the great spiritual acts and qualities. The existence that he believed to be real contained within itself eternal love and goodness, as well as gravitation and chemical affinity. A real basis in the eternal order for upward-reaching love and confidence, a solid foundation for those experiences which make life most significant and precious, he firmly believed to exist. He believed that the universe will accommodate man its inhabitant; it has room for his higher faculties and actions, as well as for his lower. The world of man must have a God, and only the world of a good God would contain man. By the methods of the non-personal cosmic order, Huxley was sure that no God could be found. By the methods of the personal life, Brooks was sure that he had found God and had the right to glory in him.

Now I am not suggesting that Huxley was wrong in using his method. He was not wrong, he was right. But the question remains whether his method is right for all uses. Does it apply to everything? or is there room in some regions for another method? The question is not whether physical science has a right in the world, but whether physical science has a right to the world. Can we learn below man all that we need for understanding man and for looking above him? Is there, or is there not,

a mode of obtaining sound convictions respecting realities in the realm of the spirit, which investigation in the world below the spirit does not provide? Is it true, or is it not true, that the world of personal life is the world in view of which existence must receive its best interpretation? Is it or is it not the fact that only when man is considered can the riddle of existence even begin to be solved? Is the animal world or the human world our Rosetta stone for translation of the language of the universe?

This, I need not say, is no mere question of two men and their points of view: it is the question of our age. Physical science is offering its terms and standards for the expression and measurement of all that is. I recently read a commendation of the doctrine of conditional human immortality, on the ground that it was in perfect harmony with biological truth. It was assumed, apparently, that biological truth is truth enough to meet the case, and that we may justly infer our destiny from the destiny of other creatures that have breathed the atmosphere of our planet. So we often find ourselves invited to judge human questions in the light, or the darkness, of non-human considerations; and when we demur, and venture to propose the human as the test for judging the human, the spiritual for testing the spiritual, we are told that nothing is certainly known about the spiritual apart from the physical, and the tests that we know to be valid are those of the laboratory and others like them. Yet even now religion, willing to save its life, claims a hearing, and sound philosophy joins with it. Judge a tree by its fruit, and by its ripe fruit. Understand an evolving system in view of its highest part. Read the meaning of the world with, not without, the human. When the cosmic system has attained to the production of personal beings, then personal facts and relations are the elements supreme, and the elements indispensable for understanding of the system. The best spiritual experi-

ence of man is better evidence as to the significance of man and the reality of God than all that can be learned outside the human realm. So declares religion, claiming its right to live. Our two men in the lesson of their contrast are a parable for the world. The question between them is a vital question. If, as Huxley seemed to think, studies from the realm of nature below man are to decide all questions of the soul, religion is impossible, save through ignorance or self-delusion; but if the nature of the soul itself is first to be consulted as to the questions of the soul, then the scientifically wise are living without their birthright of religion and of God, and are blind to the truth that they have a birthright. This is the dilemma of our day, before which no thoughtful man can long stand uncommitted.

It is well that we discern the real dividing question of our time, and it was my purpose in the choice of a subject to-day to call attention to it. These two great biographies were my opportunity. We are always talking as if the great question of our time were some question of theology, but it is not,—it is the question of religion. It is the question whether there is a legitimate and available place for religion in human life or not. This question is raised, as we have seen to-day, by the searching and honest study of the non-human world upon scientific methods. For religion the question of the day is really a question of life and death. Some one may think this the needless cry of an alarmist; and indeed I do not imagine that religion is about to die. Nevertheless it is not well to deceive ourselves as to the case with which we have to deal. Huxley was right in affirming that his method, consistently used as the one by which all facts of existence should be interpreted, rendered confident belief in God impossible. It did this for him, and it will do the same for any of us. Moreover, the question of life and death that is thus raised by the favorite intellectual operations of the age is reinforced



by all that is materialistic and unspiritual in the temper and practices of the time. How much there is of this I must not stay to tell, but there is enough to keep religion far more on the defensive than it ought to be. The vital issue of our day is whether religion has a legitimate and effective hold on existence. Have we a right to religion? and if we have a right to it, can we keep it alive? Compared with this great issue the current questions in theology are but minor matters, and the points on which Christian denominations are divided are almost infinitesimal.

Whether we teach theology, or study it, or make use of it in preaching, or have simply the common Christian interest in it, there are certain things that we can do and stand for, and that we ought to do and stand for. In this last moment let me put some of them in few words, in the form of exhortation.

1. Insist upon the right of the soul to know its God. Hold fast to the birthright. Claim the heavenly liberty, the freedom of sons with the Father. Rise to fellowship with him so real that no doubt can rob you of your spiritual inheritance. Encourage all men to think of knowledge and faith toward God as indeed a birthright, which no sound knowledge in other fields will ever justly require them to surrender.

2. Hold fast that the universe can be understood only in the light of the highest that it contains, and that hence the life of the personal spirit is the true interpreter. Claim and hold that the eternal realities of existence are such as will give true support to the normal and characteristic life of man, the highest being in the world. Find thus a good foundation for that freedom with the Father which it is your life to possess.

3. Construct your theology, if you have a theology to construct, on the basis of personality and personal relations. Simplify it to meet the demands of this idea.

Make it straightforward, clear, uncompromising, in its omissions as well as its assertions, holding firmly and holding only what pertains to personal relations between God and men. If this makes a short theology, it will make one that stands close to true religion.

4. Steadily put the warfare of religion at the front, before all warfares of theology. Try to make the Christian people feel that the warfare of religion for its life is really on, and seek the unity of all forces that belong on the religious side. Deprecate divisions, avoid strifes among friends, and pray and labor for efficient unity among those who stand for the essential faith.