

man can make himself familiar with this New England theology, its origin and history, without entertaining a profound respect for the piety and ability of many of those men whose names are intimately associated with it, however much and earnestly he may dissent from the peculiar views which they adopted.

ARTICLE III.

LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE OF THEODORE PARKER.¹

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NEWTON, an English painter of celebrity in the last generation, paid a professional visit to the United States, extending through several months. Much of this time was spent in Boston. On his return to England a London cockney undertook to condole with him on his long exile from good society. "Sir," was the indignant reply of the artist, "I met such people in Boston *every day* as I should be glad to meet here *occasionally*." The compliment was a generous one from an Englishman, but strictly just, as any one familiar with Boston society at the close of the last century can testify. The recent Memoirs of Choate and Prescott and Parker indicate that Boston has lost none of its celebrity in our generation. They moved in different social circles. They rarely met each other in private life, nor did they have mutual friends. But each of them had a large circle of friends of generous aims and high culture, in whose companionship they sought mental refreshment and stimulus. Three such men in a single city (in which Webster and Everett and Wendell Phillips were contemporaries) silence the sneers of foreign critics that American life is too young and

¹ Life and Correspondence of Theodore Parker, Minister of the Twenty-eighth Congregational Society, Boston. By John Weiss. New York: D. Appleton and Co. 1864.

raw to nurture scholars of broad learning and ripe wisdom. We may challenge England to name from the living citizens of its great metropolis, or from the recent dead, three men of equal enthusiasm and conscientiousness in study, and as intimately connected with the life of their age.

Mr. Parker claims precedence among the three in mental and moral greatness. We should not have conceded this in his life-time, but the new light thrown upon his character by the correspondence published in these volumes constrains us to make the award. Mr. Choate had more genius; a keener insight, by intuition, into men and books; an imagination of imperial sweep; a subtile magnetism, flowing from heart or brain, to take individuals captive, or sway bodies of men at will; but with the gifts of genius he had more of its eccentricities and faults, a lower type of conscience, less sincerity of character, more selfish aims, and less sympathy with his race and the philanthropic movements of the age. Mr. Prescott was more exact in scholarship, more amiable in character, more humane in judgment, a more genial and lovable man; but, in spite of uniform cheerfulness in misfortune, and a devotion to literature under discouragements which would have chilled the enthusiasm of ordinary men, there was much of the Sybarite in his life, a cliquish narrowness in friendships, and an indifference to social and moral reforms which forbid the highest praise. Mr. Parker united the enthusiasm of the scholar with the unselfishness of the reformer. He touched life at every point, and sympathized with it everywhere. There was scarcely a department of knowledge his curiosity did not explore, nor a sphere of life into which his love of man did not lead him. He was a scholar of generous aims and large attainments, but the scholar was subordinate to the man; and if his mischievous theology is put out of sight, our generation furnishes no better type of the vigorous and many-sided life of New England, or of its broad philanthropies than Theodore Parker.

We wish it were possible to give honest praise to the

biographer. But we cannot. He seems vainer than Boswell, in playing the satellite to a great man; but has none of the true hero-worship which makes Boswell's *Life of Johnson* the best biography in the English language. He is evidently thinking quite as much of himself as of his hero, and uses Mr. Parker as a kite to hang a long string of gay-colored and worthless bobs on, for the admiration of the public. The reader is divided between pity at his ignorance of men, and contempt for his superciliousness; and is tempted to use, on almost every page, the criticism of the impatient Scotch hearer: "Prick him, prick him; he's unco' windy."

The arrangement of the volumes is bad, rejecting the chronological order in the general plan and in the separate chapters. He apologizes for this course by the plea that Mr. Parker's life was of extraordinary richness, and there was danger of confusing the subjects in which he was interested. But this plea only indicates a mechanical view of biography. What readers want is the unity of the man; they care nothing about a unity of subjects. They wish to see the natural development of Mr. Parker's personality and life. Amateurs often make artificial divisions in science, as a fancied help to study, but the great masters teach that the simplest classification conforms to the divine order in creation. The best biographers follow the divine order in Providence, and unfold the natural growth of the man in knowledge and character and influence.

His spirit is bad, with little reverence or humility or charity. He shows neither depth of manhood to comprehend Mr. Parker, nor breadth to understand his opponents; and a mixture of flippancy and abuse seems to constitute his ideal of earnestness. Mr. Parker indulged in great freedom of criticism in his familiar correspondence, but in the last year of life begged all his friends, "to erase from my letters everything which would wound the feelings of any one, should it meet an eye it was not meant for. In the flush and fun of letter-writing I may have said what would

one day give needless pain, should some *prying* eye see it, and some busy tongue prattle thereof" (II. 264). It is commonly taken for granted that a biographer will pay a decent regard to the wishes of a departed friend. But Mr. Weiss has "the prying eye" and "the busy tongue" which Mr. Parker deprecated, and has inserted scores of allusions to living men which a refined feeling would instinctively omit. These are great blemishes in the volume, and will keep open running sores which time and the grave ought to have healed.

Mr. Weiss's style is often inconceivably bad, a sort of amalgam of Hervey's floridness and Rousseau's garrulosity and Jean Paul's pyrotechnic flights. Its effect is the worse from the contrast with Mr. Parker's simplicity and directness. In passing from one to the other a pure taste is shocked, as if the daub of a village painter were hung by the side of a work from one of the great masters.

It may occur to many a reader to ask if the spirit of the biographer is not a natural result of Mr. Parker's teachings. Mr. Parker himself was trained in a different school, and his many virtues sprung from a better stock. But a want of reverence for the Bible was his chief vice, and the flower has run to seed in Mr. Weiss, in a want of reverence for everything good and noble, and a dim insight into the character of earnest men whose views differ from his own. If the tree is known by its fruits, and Mr. Weiss is a legitimate shoot from Mr. Parker's system, we may comfort ourselves that the system will be short-lived; it will soon consist only of broken branches, which men cast into the fire and they are burned. It is a relief to pass from the biographer to the subject of his work.

Theodore Parker was born at Lexington, Mass., Aug. 24, 1810, and was the youngest of eleven children, all but one of whom he outlived. He was descended from a hardy stock, vigorous in frame, of great tenacity of life and strongly marked individualism of character. Most of his ancestors, on both sides, lived beyond eighty years, but consumption entered his father's family, as he thought, from

the location of their house near a large and spongy meadow, and the mother and nine of the eleven children were victims to this disease. Some of the male ancestry on the father's side were noted as independent thinkers and energetic citizens, filling important positions in social life. One was at the siege of Louisburg. Another commanded the company fired on by the British on Lexington Common, and was at Bunker Hill, though prevented by ill health from taking any part in the battle. One only in the whole line of his father's ancestry, so far as is known, was connected with the church, and he through the influence of a pious wife. His hostility to the church, therefore, may be regarded as an inherited trait.

Parental qualities re-appeared in the child. His father had a fondness for "metaphysics, psychology, and all departments of intellectual and moral philosophy, excelled in the mathematics," was a good talker, and full of frivolity and fun. He was an independent thinker, and had an utter hatred of Paley and Jonathan Edwards, and of Calvinists generally. Of his mother he says: "She was eminently a religious woman. I have known few in whom the religious instincts were so active and so profound, and who seemed to me to enjoy so completely the life of God in the soul of man. To her the Deity was an omnipresent Father, filling every point of space with his beautiful and loving presence. She took a deep and still delight in silent prayer. Of course it was chiefly the more spiritual parts of the Old and New Testaments that formed her favorite reading; the dark theology of the times seems not to have blackened her soul at all." The germ of the future man may be seen in the child, in a strange blending of opposite qualities, found in no other character we can recall in history, but inherited from his parents, or impressed in early years by parental training and example. We see in him the inordinate love of reading and talking of the father, the disbelief of the miracles, the hatred of Calvinism, and independence of the church, combined with the religiousness of the mother, and her unshaken

faith in a God immanent in nature. The unbelief ingrained by the father repelled him from the dominant faith of New England; the natural piety learned from the mother kept him from the gulf of atheism or pantheism, into which some of the finest intellects of the age have plunged.

His life in childhood was pleasant and healthful. Labor on the farm taught him industry. Walks in the fields and woods developed habits of observation. Frequent visits of uncles and aunts and cousins kept the affections in exercise; and the evening readings of the father quickened thought and strengthened memory. He knew little of regular school life, but was training in one of the best of schools. He says of his childhood:

“By father and mother, yes, even by brothers and sisters, great and unceasing care was taken to secure power of observation, that the senses might grasp their natural objects; of voluntary attention, fixed, continuous, and exact, which, despite of appearances, sees the fact just as it is, no more, no less; of memory, that holds all things firm as gravitation, and yet, like that, keeps them unmixed, not confusing the most delicate outline, and reproduces them at will, complete in the whole and perfect in each part; much stress was laid, also, on judgment and inventive imagination I was taught self-reliance, intellectual, moral, and of many another form; to investigate all things with my own eyes, and carefully to form opinions for myself.

“As my relatives and neighbors were all hard-working people, living in one of the most laborious communities in the world, I did not fail to learn the great lesson of personal industry, and to acquire power to work — to begin early, to continue long, with strong and rapid stroke. The discipline and habit of bodily toil were quite easily transferred to thought, and I learned early to apply my mind with exact, active, and long-continued attention.”

His later life seems to have grown as naturally from the inherited traits and home discipline as the oak unfolds from the acorn.

He was a self-made man, like Franklin, and possessed many of the sturdy elements of character which made the printer-boy a philosopher and statesman. His school advantages were meagre: "eleven weeks each winter from 1817 to 1827, and two summer-terms from 1817 to 1819, and one quarter at the Lexington Academy, that was all." But the home reading and study made good all deficiencies. He says: "Homer and Plutarch I read before I was eight; Rollin's Ancient History about the same time; and lots of histories, with all the poetry I could find, before ten. I took to metaphysics about eleven or twelve. Father and mother always read the books first, and examined me in every book I read. If I could not give a good account of it, I must not have another till I could satisfy the rigorous demands of father."

At the age of seventeen his school-days ended, and he began to spend the winter in teaching, working on the farm for his father during the summer. At twenty, taking counsel with no one, he left home in the morning, and returning late in the evening, went to his father's bedside. "Father," said he, "I entered Harvard College to-day." The old man, in alarm, replied: "Why, Theodore, you know I cannot support you there." "I know that, father; I mean to stay at home and keep up with my class." He did it; for the lessons of self-reliance were early learned. Preparation for college had been made in his own room in late evening and early morning hours, and the whole college curriculum was gone over in the same way, after the day's hard work was ended, or before it had begun. The following winter he spent at home; the next year he taught in a private school in Boston, paying his father eleven dollars a month to hire another hand in his place; for two years succeeding, he had a flourishing school in Watertown. During the whole period of teaching, he gave ten hours a day to private study, and having gone far beyond the course prescribed at Harvard, he might have received a degree, but the college laws were inexorable in demanding the fees of instruction. and the

young man, rich in energy and learning, was poor in money and friends.

In 1834 he entered the Divinity School at Cambridge, and his insatiate greed for knowledge ran riot in the Harvard libraries. Sleep and exercise were held of small account, and reading and study occupied from twelve to seventeen hours a day. No severe taste guided his choice of books; he devoured everything that came in his way. The range of study proves its miscellaneous character and want of thoroughness; in the languages alone, he dabbled in "Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, Icelandic, Chaldaic, Arabic, Persian, Swedish, Anglo-Saxon, and Ethiopic." Harvard thought him a prodigy. He taught Hebrew to the Junior class, during Dr. Palfrey's absence in New Orleans, and Professor Willard is said to have consulted him on nice points in Hebrew and Arabic syntax. Outside labors too were numerous. He had private students in the town, taught Hebrew to a class in college, and was editor and chief contributor to a magazine called the "Scriptural Interpreter," whose bold attacks on the accepted beliefs alarmed the leaders of Boston Unitarianism.

It would have required a shrewd observer to predict his future eminence at this period. His genius was too erratic for healthy growth. His knowledge was large but undigested; it lay heavy on him, cumbering his mental movements. He was a good debater, but a poor writer and sermonizer; and the sharp criticisms of Professor Ware drove him often to tears, sometimes to despair. His irreverence was incurable. In a debate before the Professor, he called Paul "old Paul," and when admonished of the fault, changed the form to "the gentleman from Tarsus." It may be doubted if his divinity course was of much service in the way of mental discipline. Untiring energy was in him, and marvelous endurance, and greed for all kinds of knowledge; but no mastery of himself or his attainments. The chewing of the cud and digestion came later. His journal, however, contains some trenchant criticisms on the Christian Fathers, which he could not have improved in late

Study over, he looked for a field to work in. The openings were numerous, at Barnstable, Greenfield, Waltham, Concord, Leominster, but he accepted a call to West Roxbury, and was ordained June 21, 1837, having been married to Miss Lydia Cabot in the previous April. The parish was small, the labors light; and he gave himself with avidity to a wide range of study. The general plan was to allot five days to study, and Saturday to the writing of both sermons. For several years his life had few noteworthy events. His sermons attracted no special attention, and there was little life or enthusiasm among his people. He joined a club in Boston under the leadership of Dr. Channing, of which Dr. Follen, Dr. Hedge, George Ripley, Wendell Phillips, and others were members. They discussed religious and social topics with great freedom, and it was evident that young Theodore was drifting away from the old Unitarian anchorage. He gradually confessed a loss of faith in inspiration, in prophecy and miracles, and at last in the perfect character and authority of Jesus; and began to be looked on with suspicion by his clerical neighbors, and shut out of their pulpits. But there were no signs of coming greatness, and he might, perhaps, have grown to old age and gone to his grave in this quiet country parish, without knowledge of the power that was in him, if a sudden crisis had not put him to his mettle, and developed all his manhood.

This crisis was the ordination of Mr. Shackford at South Boston, May 19, 1841, when Mr. Parker preached his famous sermon on "The Transient and Permanent in Christianity." It was not a powerful discourse, nor original, being borrowed almost entirely from Strauss. It contained no greater heresies than he had been accustomed to preach. But orthodox ministers took advantage of it to press their opponents to the wall. They asserted that the doctrine of the sermon, followed out to its logical results, left no room for supernatural elements in the Bible, or in the person of Christ, and asked if the leaders of Unitarianism were willing to accept this platform. The Unitarian camp was in a far-

ment. The old leaders repudiated the heresies of the young preacher. They tacitly withdrew fellowship, refused to exchange pulpits, and at length, by formal vote, shut him out from the Unitarian fold. In their extreme irritation at the trouble he had occasioned, they went further and determined to crush him socially. He was tabooed in public circles, and shunned on the streets by old friends. Respectable publishers declined to print his sermons or books, and his name was crossed from the list of lyceum lecturers. The ostracism felt confident of its power to crush a single man who had made himself odious to the public.

This was the turning-point of his life, and the way opened to greatness. As internal convulsions upheave a mountain range, and lay bare to the miner strata of coal and precious ore which might have remained hid deep in the earth's bosom, so this social ostracism brought to the surface a latent manhood, and made available for practical use stores of learning and character yet undeveloped. He was forced into celebrity, and compelled to maintain a position before the public. Sent into exile by the leaders of public opinion, he had no choice but to bow to their decree, or win his way to public favor by sheer ability and merit.

No opponent in looking back on that struggle can withhold admiration from his indomitable pluck. The martyr courage was in him, worthy of a better cause, and the gristle of youth hardened at once into the bone of manhood. The hills of New Hampshire were not firmer than he. A great change passed over him. The secluded student rushed into life before the public. The companion of scholars became a leader of the people. He determined to acquire a popular style of address, the power of gaining the ear of the masses and moving them. Looking forward to a life of conflict, and thinking he might be driven from the pulpit, he formed this purpose: "I will study seven or eight months in the year, and four or five months I will go about and preach lectures in city and glen, by the road-side and field-side, or wherever men and women can be found. I will go eastward and west-

ward, and southward and northward; and if this New England orthodoxy does not come to the ground, then it shall be because it has more truth in it than I have ever found." A Luther could not have been more resolute.

But the necessity was not laid on him. His church withstood the popular clamor. Prominent Unitarian laymen in Boston united to give him a hearing, and invited him to deliver a course of lectures in the Masonic Temple. He declined at first, but afterwards consented, and put into the lectures all his mental and vital force. They drew large audiences, stirred the public mind, were published, and widely read. A similar course was delivered the following winter, and repeated in neighboring towns. His little church became a centre of attraction, and strangers from miles about flocked to its pews, hitherto empty. The excitement of his new position kept mind and heart at highest tension, and the conglomerate acquisitions of early years were fused into a unique mass, and made available for instant use. But even his iron frame could not endure the perpetual strain, and, in the autumn of 1843, he was compelled to ask leave of absence from his parish, to spend a year of recreation in Europe.

Few men travel to such good purpose. Nothing escaped his sharp observation. Scenery, national and local peculiarities, social institutions, men, buildings, libraries, paintings, sculpture, agriculture, universities, social habits, attracted eager attention, and received wise comment. His letters and journals are racy and instructive, crowded with shrewd thought and humorous allusions, and never tedious or commonplace. We have never read a pleasanter correspondence.

He returned in the fall of 1844, recruited in health, and with a more resolute purpose to hold the field against all opponents. The Unitarian rancor against him did not abate. He determined to meet it at its fountain-head, and accepted an invitation from a number of gentlemen to form a new parish in Boston. He commenced his labors with the

Twenty-eighth Congregational Society, Jan. 4, 1846, preaching in the Melodeon till Nov. 21, 1852, when the Society removed to the Music Hall, just built, and continued their pastor till death.

In its outward aspects the movement was a brilliant success. The Melodeon or Music Hall could not seat the crowd that flocked to the new preacher. The pulpit of the Twenty-eighth Congregational Society was one of the lions of Boston. Strangers, of evangelical faith, were curious to hear the apostle of unbelief. The sermons preached on Sunday were published in the week, and found an audience in distant states. It became a centre of influence on the moral and social questions of the day. Impressible young men and women gathered there, to be beguiled from their faith in the Bible, and make shipwreck of character and life. Men in middle life came, to lose all fear of a judgment as a restraint upon their passions or their worldliness. Possibly old men strayed thither, whose lives had been darkened by scepticism and immorality, who were won to faith in virtue, and to reverence for God. One may charitably hope that some good was done, as a counterpoise to the evil which no finite mind can measure. But, whether for good or evil, it can hardly be questioned that Mr. Parker, for a series of years, exerted a wider influence than any man in New England, or any preacher in the land. Henry Ward Beecher, perhaps, has had a greater popularity, and addressed larger audiences, but his influence has never been so positive or sharply defined.

His position was not won by the power of his religious teaching. It was due to his generous sympathies, his love for man, and his unrelenting hatred to oppression and social wrongs. The poor never appealed for help in vain. The friendless wanderer was cheered by kind words and wise counsel. The fallen woman was not spurned. The trembling fugitive found shelter and sympathy and defence. If Mr. Parker's theology was vague, his philanthropy was sublime. He was indifferent to fatigue, or expense, or odium

in behalf of the hunted slave, for whose return to bonds the laws of the land were perverted, and its great men leagued with the oppressor. He will be remembered by future generations, not for his theology, which is narrow and incomplete; nor for his philosophy, which is strangely deficient in idealism and spiritual depth, and cannot outlast his age; nor for his learning, which will be talked of as among the doubtful traditions of the past; but his memory will be fragrant as a zealous preacher of "the higher law" in the state, when some preachers of a better faith denounced it; as a champion of the helpless, when many evangelical men, like the priest and Levite, passed by on the other side; as an uncompromising foe to slavery, when statesman, divine, and merchant joined in the cry: "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." It was a proof of manhood, that he was incorruptible, when thousands bowed to Baal. To his persistent efforts for the rescue of Craft, Sims, Shadrach, and Burns; to his anathemas against the oppressor; to his indignant appeals to justice and right, New England is largely indebted for that education of the conscience, and that unflinching moral courage which prepared her to act a leading part in the suppression of the rebellion.

The amount of work done by Mr. Parker was prodigious. Lecturing sixty or eighty times a year, preaching every Sabbath, maintaining an extensive correspondence, reading more than most men of leisure, and writing more than most men of letters, visiting in an extensive parish, and receiving visits at all hours from all sorts of persons, were more than any organism of flesh and blood could bear, and it is not surprising that his iron frame suddenly gave way under the intolerable pressure. Even his amazing vitality was exhausted; consumption, the fatal family disease, set in, and when it was too late to retrieve his error he gave up toil and went abroad to die. But his cheerfulness did not abate, nor his hope fail, nor his indomitable will lose its vigor. Travelling as a worn-out invalid, he formed plans of study that a scholar in vigorous health might shrink from, and did

hard days' work in London and Rome that few travellers would care to undertake. He hoped and struggled for recovery till the last, but the vital powers, exhausted by long abuse, could not rally; slowly and surely disease claimed its victim, and he died, without pain, in Florence, May 10, 1860, not having quite completed his fiftieth year.

It is not easy to define Mr. Parker's religious views or position. His scholarship, from its wide range, was wanting in accuracy and exactness; and his thinking, from its rapidity and breadth, was equally deficient in precision and completeness. He often contradicts himself. The views of to-day are modified or discarded to-morrow. He formed no system of theology, and had he lived twenty years longer and completed the great works in philosophy and religion he had planned, it is doubtful if they would have possessed any true unity.

He was no atheist, but had a profound horror of the tendencies of this form of unbelief. His spirit was catholic to fellowship disciples of the most ultra schools in religion and morals, but he publicly disclaimed sympathy with the followers of Tom Paine, and declared his antipathy to the principles and the character of that champion of atheism.

He disclaimed also any affinity with pantheism, and his sharp realism criticized remorselessly Mr. Emerson's poetic dreams. But he glides unconsciously into pantheistic thought and language. The following is a specimen:

"God is the soul of man, and gives us all the life we have. Reason is not personal, but is a great plane which cuts the centre of all souls—the larger the soul the greater portion of the one and indivisible God is intercepted thereby. The life of God is in my soul: it is vain that you tell me of a God out of me. The *senses* wish for such a God; they find him, for all they perceive is but the varied Deity. Light and beautiful forms are God to the eye, perfumes to the smell, and so of the rest."

This might easily pass for one of the "Orphic sayings" of Mr. Alcott.

He rejected the mythical theory of Strauss, arguing from well known laws of human nature that a real person must

always precede any marvellous accounts of such an one ; and that unless Christ had made an impression on his age as an extraordinary person no one would have cared to invent miraculous stories about him. The historical person, he claimed, must go before the ideal person, and be large enough to carry the mythology invented for him.

He rejected, too, the bald deism of Tindal and Herbert, and the English freethinkers, though he agreed with them in a denial of inspiration, miracles, and a special providence. His own views were peculiar. He says :

“ God created the world *out of himself*; so he is still in it, creating every day; not only working hitherto, but now likewise.”—Vol. I. p. 153.

“ I have dwelt often on what I call the immanency of God in matter and in spirit. His perpetual presence and activity in the world of matter and the world of spirit, the laws whereof are but the modes of his activity ; and the results, forms of his manifestation.”—Vol. I. p. 197.

There is ample room here for miracle, and special providence, and prayer ; and on this platform Mr. Parker might have accepted, with a child-like faith, all the supernatural elements in Christianity.

He seems to have cherished a firm belief in the general providence of God. It was a cardinal point in his theology. The following passages are explicit :

“ A part of the decision of these great questions rests with me ; a part upon something exterior to myself — upon Providence.”—Vol. I. p. 74.

“ How much of our life rests upon accident, as it seems — Providence, as it is. Men would not see it ; God knows it all.”—Vol. I. p. 312.

“ The ways of the All-wise Father you and I cannot scrutinize ; we are only to submit. We feel that they are right, we know that they are good, and lead to a higher and nobler end than we had dared to propose to ourselves.”—Vol. I. p. 354.

He prayed often, with apparent simplicity and devoutness, like Luther and the old reformers. The following are specimens of the petitions recorded in his journals :

“ O God, wilt thou help me to become more pure in heart, more holy, and better able to restrain all impetuous desires and unholy passions ; may I put down every high thought that would exalt itself against the perfect law of God ! Help me in the intercourse of life to discharge my duties

with a more Christian-like fidelity ; to love thee the more, and those with whom I am to deal."—Vol. I. p. 86.

"Father, help me to live better ; more useful, more acceptable to thee. As the years go by me, may I grow in manliness and all noble qualities. Teach me truth, justice, love, and trust. Let me not be idle nor unfaithful. Give me a clean and holy life, and may each year bring me nearer to the measure of a man."—Vol. I. p. 56.

"I took Eichhorn's Introduction to the New Testament and prayed (kneeling) that I might not be led astray by one whom some called an infidel, while I sought after truth."

It is very noteworthy, however, that the recorded prayers are never offered in the name of Jesus, and that, as life advances, they grow less simple and earnest, and resemble more the utterance of an ecstatic frame than the petition of a yearning heart. One who has learned to wrestle with God, like Jacob, and to kindle the affections to a holy glow by closet communion, will feel sad at Mr. Parker's recipe for stirring devotional feeling:

"I have had a little time to gather up myself for the coming Sunday. I don't like to rush from a week of hard work into the prayers and hymns of the Sunday without a little breathing time of devotion, so I walk about the study, and hum over bits of hymns, or recall various little tender emotions, and feel the beating of that great Heart of the universe which warms us all with the life that never dies. I don't know that these are not the richest hours of my life ; certainly they have always been the happiest."—Vol. I. p. 309.

This reads more like a leaf from Spinoza than from Paul or John.

It is instructive to trace the growth of unbelief in his mind, following an inevitable law of progress, and diverging more widely from the orthodox belief, till he rejected every distinctive doctrine of Christianity. In the Divinity School, he wrote to his nephew :

"I believe in one God, who will reward the good and punish the wicked, both in this life and in the next. This punishment *may be* eternal.

"I believe the books of the Old and New Testaments to have been written by men inspired of God for certain purposes, but I do not think them inspired *at all times*. I believe that Christ was the Son of God, born in a miraculous manner, that he came to preach a better religion, by which men may be saved."—Vol. I. p. 66.

This is a stronger creed than was received by most Unitarian ministers at that time. He saw no moral difficulty in the extirpation of the Canaanites :

"If nations are, by the divine permission, visited by earthquakes and pestilences, why may not the sword be employed for similar purposes?"—Vol. I. p. 79.

He believed in the miracles :

"Dr. Dewey gave us the Dudleian Lecture this year. It was the best, perhaps, I have ever heard. He removed the presumption against miracles. The objections were not only met, but overturned."—Vol. I. p. 82.

But doubts soon began to trouble him, doubts relating to the prophecies, the miracles, to inspiration, and to the character of Christ :

"I am in a good deal of doubt upon the subject of the prophecies relating to the Messiah. Sometimes I doubt that an inspired prophecy was ever uttered concerning him."—Vol. I. p. 82.

In his first year at West Roxbury he writes :

"I wish some wise man would write a book on 'Vulgar Errors,' and show up the absurdity of some things commonly believed on the authority of the old Jews. To be plain, I mean the Old Testament miracles, prophecies, dreams, miraculous births, etc."—Vol. I. p. 102.

Doubts of inspiration soon follow :

"A man may have just as bright revelations in his own heart as Moses or David or Paul; I might say, as Jesus; but I do not think any man has ever had such a God-consciousness as he."—Vol. I. p. 110.

The scepticism grows bolder and strikes deeper :

"The inspiration of Jesus could not differ *in kind* from that of Socrates, only *in degree*. He had much inspiration; Socrates, little. So far as a man is true, virtuous, religious, so far he is *inspired*, no farther. This inspiration comes by the use of the proper faculties."—Vol. I. p. 115.

The authority of the Bible, as a whole, was gone, but he still held to the authority of Christ as a divine teacher, till the reading of Strauss loosed him from this last hold on supernatural Christianity. He was reluctant to part with the beautiful faith of his childhood, but it slowly faded away, as the twilight melts into darkness. He first surrendered the authority of Christ's office :

"I think Jesus Christ is to be revered and obeyed *solely* for the intellectual, moral, and religious truth which he brought to light by his doc-

trines and life. If sentences of his did not seem to be true, I should reject them."—Vol. I. p. 139.

Faith in the perfection of Christ's teachings remained after faith in the divine birth and mission was lost:

"For my own part, I cannot conceive of a being more good and holy and beautiful and true than Jesus of Nazareth. His words judge the world. The higher we think, the holier we live, the more we find in them, the more we admire in him."—Vol. I.

"In his own department of morality, religion, a divine life, perfect goodness, I think he was true, perfect, and complete. We can see no limitation to his perfection in this respect. He was all that man can be of goodness and religion. He was all of God there can be in a perfectly good and religious man."—Vol. I. pp. 446, 447.

But unbelief is relentless in its demands, and when one begins to sink in its quicksands, he cannot stay himself, but is slowly submerged in its depths. Having rejected the supernatural birth of Christ, it was inevitable that he would ultimately reject the authority of his teachings and the perfection of his character. Strong expressions soon appear on both these points:

"I think Jesus a religious genius, as Homer a poetical genius. I can't say there never will be a greater man in morality and religion, though I can conceive of none now. Who knows what is possible for man? If Jesus had lived now, I think he would have been greater; yes, if he had lived to be forty, fifty, sixty, or seventy years old: why not? I think him *human*, not *superhuman*, the manliest of men."—Vol. I. p. 355.

"I do not know that he did not teach some errors along with the truth. I care not if he did. It is by his truths that I know him. *That God has yet greater men in store I doubt not.*"—Vol. I. p. 429.

He soon goes further, and declares that Christ was limited and erring, like other men:

"I think a careful study of the Gospels will force us to the conclusion that he was sometimes mistaken. When he was a boy I suppose he stumbled in learning to walk; miscalled the letters in learning to read; got wrong conclusions in his thoughts. When he reached the age of thirty, he must have made mistakes in his intellectual processes, and in his moral and religious processes."—Vol. I. p. 399.

In this connection he adds that Jesus believed in eternal punishment, and *therefore* held great errors. The doctrine

of eternal punishment he rejected with bitter scorn, for the final salvation of all men was essential to his idea of the divine perfection; but in this idea of perfection the important attributes of holiness and justice were left out.

"Whoso does his possible best, never fails in *Leben*, but straight out of the deeps of misery and worldly ruin rises in his proper motion up to heaven. Even to the wickedest, I think life is no absolute failure."—Vol. I. p. 307.

"I doubt not many go out of brothels and jails, and from the gallows, with more merit than I have, and will take a higher place at last in heaven; for they have far better worn their birth and breeding than I have mine."—Vol. I. p. 355.

"So I doubt not that from the jail, the brothel, the gallows, from the murderer's den, from the kidnapper's office, from the hypocrite's pulpit, by many a long and winding slope, the soul shall go up into God's highest heaven; for though human charity fail, there is One whose love knows no beginning and no end."—Vol. I. p. 424.

Every doctrine peculiar to the Christian system was thus in turn rejected—inspiration, miracles, retribution, the divine mission of Christ, atonement, regeneration, and mediation. With such a destructive criticism, blotting out from his faith those truths which make Christianity the great moral power of the world, it is an interesting question: What gave him such an influence over his generation? In what lay this Samson's secret strength? The answers to these questions are both curious and instructive.

His influence, we think, did not grow out of his scepticism, but of his faith; not from his rejection of Christianity, but from his theism. He had little in common with Hume and Gibbon and the English unbelievers, or with Paulus and Strauss and the German rationalists. Their scepticism began in a dislike for some of the peculiar truths of the gospel, and ended in religious indifference and moral apathy. Mr. Parker's scepticism seemed to take its rise in his peculiar views of the divine perfection and God's uniform nearness to man. They denied that God would ever stoop to man, or the Infinite reveal himself to the finite, and rejected *a priori* the credibility of the Bible or of any professed reve-

lation. Mr. Parker believed that God was always condescending to men, eternally immanent in the race, revealing himself ever to pious souls; and he rejected Christianity because it seemed to limit the revelation to a few favored men in a past age. He was more of a Mohammedan than a Christian, and this faith in a living, ever-present God, governing the world and inspiring human life, was a mighty power with him, as with Mohammed, to elevate his aims, and give him mastery over men of weaker faith. This faith, though deficient in all the Christian elements, had in it something of the sublime energy which sustained Moses when "he endured as seeing him who is invisible."

In this faith in a loving and present God lay much of his strength. It gave the warp to his sermons. It is the golden thread running through all his correspondence. It sustained him when friends forsook, and good men denounced, and the world hated, him. Some of his utterances are worthy of the best Christian reformers :

"Duty, freedom, truth, a divine life, what are they? Trifles, no doubt, to the monk Tetzal, to the Leos and Bembos, and to other sleek persons, new and old. But to a heart that swells with religion, like the Atlantic pressed by the wings of the wind, they are the real things of God, for which all poor temporalities of fame, ease, and life are to be cast to the winds. He that feareth God, when was he not a prey? He must take his life in his hand and become a stranger to men."

"The human will is strong and excellent; but not the strongest and most excellent. When perfectly coincident with the will of God, I suppose we are not conscious of any personal will. Then the infinite glory flows through us, and we are blessed."

"I must confess that the chiefest of all my delights is still the religious. This is the lowest down, the inwardest of them all; it is likewise highest up. What delight have I in the consciousness of God, the certainty of his protection, of his infinite love! God loves me as my natural mother never did nor could, nor can even now, with the added beatitudes of well nigh two score years in heaven."

"I have unspeakably more delight in religion, more consolation in any private grief, personal or domestic, more satisfaction in looking on the present, or for the future, than ever before, when I trembled at an imperfect God."

This strong and cheerful theism gave him an influence

over some whose lives were gloomy through a universal scepticism. They were attracted to him by his sarcasms against the Christianity of the age, and were won unconsciously by his teachings to faith in God and in virtue.

His personal qualities were strongly marked, and gave him power over men. He was every inch a man, with an independence "to stand in a minority of one" (Vol. I. p. 351), and a courage to face a world in a good cause; an honesty that scorned disguises, and thought not of consequences in speaking truth and doing right; an earnestness that gathered strength from obstacles or failure; a faith in man that saw elements of good in the most vicious, and looked for the reign of righteousness on earth; and a self-confidence that in its coolness and daring was often sublime.

His nature had also a tender side, not often seen in union with such rugged strength. There lay in his heart a yearning for love, like a woman's; an exuberant love for others, ever going out after objects to fasten on, leading him to keep playthings in his closet for children who visited him, and to carry sweetmeats in his journeys to attract little strangers; a sympathy that looked into burdened hearts, and knew instinctively the word or look suitable to comfort; and an interest in life that embraced all classes. No one who recognizes in him such masculine and feminine qualities of character can wonder that he became a leader in his generation.

His mental health and intense activity were due, in large measure, to his physical organism. Its vitality was prodigious, impelling to work as a steam-engine with its fires kindled. It loathed repose. It gave strength to the will, aspiration to the intellect, and a full tide of sympathy to the heart. It inspired a positiveness which made weaker men look to him for support, and kindled a fervor which drew others as by a magnetic spell. He could not be an idler, nor a hermit, nor an imitator. His organism dictated the place he must fill in the world as an ambitious leader of men.

His love for the pulpit was wonderful. Not Knox nor Whitefield loved it more, or discerned more clearly its vast influence. He studied for it with enthusiasm, and made all his acquisitions tributary to its success. He lived for it, and drew from every element in his richly-endowed nature something to add to its power. He was not satisfied unless every Sabbath made a mark upon his hearers. His mind teemed with subjects; and plans for future sermons four years ahead were carefully drawn out. The idleness of vacation fretted him, and he exulted when working-time came again. The exile from his beloved pulpit gave him more distress than sickness; and in foreign travel for health, the return of Sunday carried his thoughts back to the flock he had so long fed, now bereaved of their shepherd. If all ministers of a better faith loved the pulpit as well, and were as enthusiastic in magnifying their office, there would be fewer complaints that preaching in our day has lost much of its power.

Mr. Ticknor, in his Memoir of Mr. Prescott, ascribes the charm of the historian's style to the personality infused into it by his peculiar habit of writing. He was accustomed to compose mentally, thirty and sixty pages at a time; to carry it for days in his mind, turning it over and over, trying it by the canons of a severe taste, adding, omitting, improving, and at last transferring to paper. By such an elaboration in the brain it was transfused with the author's own life, and a subtle magnetism pervaded it to attract others. The peculiar vitality of Mr. Parker infused a similar life into his style. It is a style of wonderful power for popular oratory. Destitute wholly of the higher qualities of imagination and spiritual insight; never reaching to the profounder depths of the soul; its stern realism, and pictorial skill, and playful humor, and pungent satire, and homely facts, give it an effectiveness rarely equalled. It is never cumbered with learning, though always enriched by it; nor sinuous or tangled, like the webs which many scholars love to spin. It is the transparent vehicle of thought. It

borrowed little majesty from the Latin elements of the language, but delights in the short, strong, Anglo-Saxon words, which go straight to the mark, as the rifle-ball to the bull's eye.

We presume few people, outside of his parish, gave Mr. Parker credit for attention to pastoral duties. These volumes present him in a new light in this sphere, though we doubt if a few facts are not woven together to make a false impression. But if the reports of a few friends are trustworthy, he excelled in visits to the sick-room, and in words of consolation in the house of the dead. Other duties were cheerfully laid aside to obey such calls, and his death was hastened by a journey when an invalid, thirty miles into the country on a stormy day, to officiate at a funeral, rather than disappoint friends who looked to him for comfort.

It would be pleasant to dwell on his broad literary sympathies, and his criticisms of men and books, which are acute, and generally fair and just, and indicate a capacity for admiration of men like Jonathan Edwards and Dr. Judson, whose opinions were antipodal to his own; and on his correspondence, which for freshness, and breadth, and insight into men, institutions, and current questions, is unsurpassed in English literature. But we must hasten to a more important point — to an inquiry into the reasons of his failure to find the truth. How could a man of intense earnestness, combined with honesty, fall into scepticism? Why did one of sincere religious aspirations and humane sympathies reject Christianity? The causes, we think, are simple and intelligible, and may be easily stated.

Mr. Parker grew up from childhood, with imperfect and distorted views of the divine character. The God he worshipped was not the God of the Bible, nor the God revealed in nature and the human conscience. Neither father nor mother taught him *the holiness* of God; this attribute was not made prominent in the preaching he heard, nor in the books he read, nor was it believed in the society he frequented. The visions into heaven given to Isaiah and John,

where saints and angels trembled and veiled their faces in the sacredness of the divine presence, and cried without ceasing: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts," never shone on his soul. He had no apprehension of such a style of worship, and no sympathy with those who paid it. His correspondence and sermons teem with fine passages on the power, wisdom, and love of God; we cannot recall a passage treating of the divine holiness. This attribute, so prominent in the Bible, so indispensable to completeness of view of the character and government of God, dropped out of Mr. Parker's theology, and the loss was fatal to his teachings and his life. It made inevitable great errors, for it rendered him incapable of apprehending the nature and guilt of sin, the penalties of the divine law, and the atoning work of Christ. It prepared the way for his hatred of Calvinism, and his incurable habit of misrepresenting the teachers of an evangelical faith. Some of the finest intellects in this country and in Europe, by a failure to understand the national character of our government, and to accept the black man's claim to brotherhood through the unity of the human race, have been blinded to the fundamental crime of secession and the guilt of rebellion. By a higher necessity, ignorance of the divine holiness, like Mr. Parker's, must vitiate all views of the divine government, and lead naturally to a rejection of the Bible, which exalts holiness to supremacy, and makes it underlie and direct even the love of God.

The evangelical believer will search these volumes in vain to discover evidence of personal conviction of sin, or of profound inward discontent and wrestlings, which he meets in the letters and journals of Augustine and Luther and Edwards. The only trace of such feelings belongs to early boyhood. He says at that period:

"I can scarcely think without a shudder of the terrible effect the doctrine of eternal damnation had on me. How many, many hours have I wept with terror as I laid on my bed and prayed, till, between praying and weeping, sleep gave me repose. . . . For years, say from seven to ten, I said my prayers with much devotion, I think, and then continued to repeat: 'Lord, forgive my sins,' till sleep came on me."—Vol. I. p. 20

It is not easy to believe that an inquirer for truth was left to grope alone, and fall into grave errors, without the aid of the Holy Spirit promised to sincere seekers. How far these early impressions, profound and penetrating the whole nature, were the work of the Spirit; and how far they were revived at a later day, under the preaching of Dr. Beecher, which he attended for months; or at a still later period, in the great revival of 1857 and 1858, must be left to the revelations of the final judgment. They indicate, at least, that he had a day of grace, which unimproved, left him in spiritual blindness, and enforce the Saviour's warning: "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you."

Mr. Parker seems to have been quite as ignorant of his own infirmities as of the divine holiness. The latter defect may have given rise to the former. He had no profound sense of the evil lurking in his nature, no clear insight into the deceitfulness of his heart. He denied, with a sarcastic humor, Paul's analysis of human nature, in its relation to himself. "I know," he says, "there is much health in me, and in 'my body,' even now, when it really is not worth much, there dwelleth many a good thing, spite of consumption and St. Paul." He was perversely blind to his prominent faults, and could not be persuaded by his most intimate friends that he ever indulged in sarcasm. To their expostulations he replies:

"My dear friend, I never wrote a line with any ill-will or sarcastic humor towards man or maid. I should not dare write with such a feeling."

"I feel willing to stand up, before man or God, and declare that I am not conscious of having written one line with any unchristian feeling. I say to you that after writing some of those sentences for which I am most commonly abused, I have been obliged to pause, then throw myself on a couch, and get relief in tears."

He could not discern any unkind feelings in himself towards others, though crediting them with a liberal measure of bitterness, and making it a common boast that he was "the best hated and abused man in the land." If charity to enemies had been as conspicuous in life as in his journals

and correspondence, he would have furnished to moralists a fine illustration for the Saviour's precept: "Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you." His claim to magnanimity is a large one:

"I fear it will always be the fashion of the Boston Association to speak ill of me until the dust returns to the earth as it was. For myself I care not. *It never made me feel the smallest unkindness towards them. It has sometimes saved them from more severe strictures, for I do not like to speak hard against men that try to injure me, lest a little of the old Adam should appear in my own heart.*"—Vol. I. p. 256.

"I have but one resource, and that is, to overcome evil with good, much evil with more good, old evil with new good. Sometimes when I receive a fresh insult it makes my blood rise for a moment; then it is over, and I seek, if possible, to do some good *secretly* to the person. *It takes away the grief of a wound amazingly.*"—Vol. I. p. 260.

It falls to few men to attain such success in doing good secretly. He had little credit for thinking kindly of enemies or showing favors to them; nor is it probable that he broke the Saviour's command in letting his left hand know what his right hand was doing. One ought not to sin against charity in judging his fellow men, but the highest authority has said: "A tree is known by its fruits." A sweet fountain cannot send forth bitter waters. No American in our day, Wendell Phillips excepted, has dipped his pen in more bitter gall than Theodore Parker, or assailed with more rancor statesmen, scholars, and clergymen from whom he differed. The fact is undeniable: the letters, and journals in these volumes are a sufficient proof. How then are we to interpret his earnest disclaimers of ill-will and sarcasm? The most charitable judge is forced to one of two conclusions: either he was a shameless hypocrite, claiming to possess feelings which he knew had no existence, or he was profoundly ignorant of himself, and therefore an incompetent judge of others. We are willing to accept the latter alternative, and to find in this moral obtuseness a sufficient clue to his spiritual unbelief. It is a curious fact in the psychology of unbelief that M^r Martineau and

Mr. Weiss, with Mr. Parker's writings in their hands, deny that he ever indulged in sarcasm.

Another illustration of self-ignorance is found in his bold words : " I am destitute of all ambition." Jefferson Davis or Robert Toombs might disclaim it as readily as he ; and the language suggests unpleasant memories of the *'umble-ness* of Uriah Heep, with a suspicion of insincerity lurking behind the words.

The failure of Mr. Parker to discover religious truth was inevitable from his vicious method of inquiry. A wrong road must lead astray, and, in spite of his inability to understand his own moral nature, he trusted in consciousness as the only safe guide to truth, and the ultimate authority. It was the final court of appeal. He says :

" My head is not more natural to my body, has not more grown with it, than my religion out of my soul and with it. With me, religion was not carpentry, something built up of dry wood from without, but it was growth, growth of a germ in my soul."—Vol. I. p. 80.

Believers in human depravity, in the alienation of the natural heart from God, will need no argument to prove that any man must fail to discover the whole truth who seeks for it in an imperfect consciousness, distorted by sin. The whole truth is not there, and the search must fail. Those who deny original depravity will concede that the ultimate truth is to be sought in the consciousness of the race, not of a single man. The accidents of birth and training and bodily organism, habits of life, and reading, and social influences, are so many prisms to refract the pure light from heaven. Every man has peculiar mental and moral biases which make him an unfit representative of the race ; and no one would select Mr. Parker as a proper representative. The quiet lake reflects in its clear waters the outlines of the sky and of the overhanging foliage. Ruffled waters give no true picture. So profound thinkers, who are secluded from busy life and its distracting cares, may trace in their calm hearts the outlines of a divine life reflected. Mr. Parker mingled too freely in the storms of life to attempt the

task. The personality that gave him such prodigious power over others, was a barrier to the discovery of truth. He could not go out of himself, or look with clear vision into human hearts. It was not in his power to understand or state fairly the views of others. When he attempted it, it became broad caricature. We will not charge him with dishonesty; the fault lay in temperament and habit. His intense personality colored everything he heard or read; and apprehended truths very differently at different times, in harmony with its changing moods. A simple illustration will show our meaning: When he wished to exalt the character of Christ, and present him as a perfect religious teacher, he denied that He taught the doctrine of future punishment (Vol. I. p. 458). When his object changed, and he wished to prove that Christ was fallible, and could not be followed as a Master having the absolute truth, he maintained that this doctrine was an important part of his teachings (Vol. I. p. 400). Few men could be honest in asserting both opinions; and it is not surprising that he incurred the charge of insincerity. We give him credit for honesty, and lay the blame on his intense dogmatism, which transmuted any truth or fact to suit the whim of the moment, and made him incapable of a calm inquiry after universal truth. That strong personality, growing out of his wonderful vital organism, which made him a leader in society, doomed him to gyrate around the orbit of his own consciousness, without power to cross the charmed circle. He appealed, indeed, to the consciousness of mankind, but it was his own consciousness expanded and transferred. And when, after the study of a life-time, he set up a god for the race to worship, it was still Theodore Parker, endued with infinite attributes, and exalted to the throne of the universe.

This personality made him a dictator declaring the truth, not an inquirer searching for it. He did not kneel in prayer, imploring to be led into truth; he claimed the power to teach it with more completeness than Jesus of Nazareth. He cared not to inquire what are the facts of nature and

consciousness; from his conceptions of an infinite God he deduced *what the facts ought to be*. He did not read the Bible to accept its teachings; he read it as a master, to correct its errors. Such an arrogant self-confidence is always dangerous; but when it was too blind to discover personal faults, like ambition and love of sarcasm and bitterness to enemies, it was proved to be unworthy of confidence. A man ignorant of himself cannot be trusted to teach others.

It is a curious fact, however, that a stern fidelity to his method of inquiry would have changed his theological system and laid a groundwork for justice and future retribution in the divine government. He found in his own consciousness qualities which he refused to transfer to God. He eulogized John Quincy Adams for his sense of justice, and wrote to a friend:

"As you say, he had more justice than kindness, and kindness is the more popular element; *but justice is far the more excellent*."—Vol. I. p. 458.

One of his escapades in the Divinity School is noteworthy:

"Once he quarrelled with a friend who was reading 'Philip Van Artevelde' with him, and who could not bear the execution of Otto and Gilbert Matthew, at the close of the first part of that drama. 'It is a great blemish,' said his friend. 'Artevelde should have shown magnificent with mercy!' 'No,' said Theodore, 'it is just, it is good, it is Christian.' 'It is downright murder,' said the friend. 'Then get out of my room,' cried Theodore in wrath, because the measure meted to two villains was not recognized."

If the ideas of justice and punishment recognized in his own nature had been transferred to the divine character and government he might have escaped grave errors.

His philosophical views determined his religious heresies. His idea of God as immanent in matter and spirit made him incapable of discerning the evil or guilt of sin. It forced him unconsciously into pantheism or optimism. It led him to regard God as the source of all action and the spring of all thought. Disorder could not find its way into nature unless God designed to work some higher good by it.

Moral evil could not attach to spirit unless God created it as a part of a stupendous plan to whose perfection it was essential. He denied, therefore, the existence of a perfect free-will, a free-will capable of originating sin against the will of the Creator. For the same reason he denied the possibility of a devil :

“ If there be such a devil, then God must have made that devil. If God made such a devil absolutely evil, it could only have been out of evil in God himself. Then God could not be infinite in wisdom or in justice, or in love and holiness ; for a being perfectly wise, just, loving, and holy could not make a being perfectly unwise, unjust, unloving, and unholy. If God be absolutely perfect there can be no absolute evil in the world, no evil that does not come to serve a good purpose at the last. You and I stumbled in learning to use our legs in childhood, and got hurt in the fall ; we stumble in learning to use our higher powers, and got hurt by the error or the sin. But the stumble of the child and the sin of the man must have been foreseen by God, and are alike accidents in development, requiring no devil as the author of the child’s stumble or the man’s sin. You and I have outgrown the first form of mistake, and walk erect ; the little hurts we got in our falls made us take better heed. So shall we outgrow the moral stumbling, and the pain of our error and the smart of our sin will make us take better heed, and so the suffering be medicine.”—Vol. I. p. 400.

It was a false philosophy which thus eliminated guilt from sin, making it a mere “ accident of development,” and removed from punishment all idea of penalty, making it only “ healing medicine ” ; and asserted that “ all physical evils are means of progress, all errors unavoidable steps in man’s course to happiness ” Vol. I. p. 148.

Mr. Parker was wholly destitute of that humility which goes before true wisdom. God has been pleased to make this quality essential to the discovery of hidden truth. “ Whosoever receiveth not the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.” Humility holds the key which fits all complicated locks in the palace of truth, and speaks the “ sesame ” to which unseen doors open. “ He that exalteth himself shall be abased, but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” In such reverent humility he had no share. He could not understand its worth, and ridiculed it in others. His irreverence is painful to a man

of devout spirit. He alluded to the Bible with no more respect than to the Koran. He apologized, with a jest, for Catholic prayer to the saints: "The true God, I take it, would as lief be called St. Cecilia as Jehovah." The Lord's supper he openly ridiculed: "It is a heathenish rite, and means very little. Cast away the elements. Let all who will, come into a parlor, have a social religious meeting; eat bread and wine if you like, or curds and cream, and baked apples, if you will." Of the doubts of a struggling mind he says: "I have passed through the same stage, and regard it as I do the chicken-pox — something that must come, and which we are glad is well over, but which confines few persons for any length of time."

The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven will not reveal themselves to a spirit indulging in such mocking moods. When a finite man persuades himself that he stands on a higher plane of thought than prophets, patriarchs, and apostles; when he flatters himself that a greater religious revolution will spring from his teachings than from the labors of Luther; when he assumes to possess a higher wisdom than Jesus Christ, and to reject errors into which Jesus fell, — it will not be surprising if he is taken in his own craftiness, and finds truths hidden from him which are revealed to babes. So long as God fills the hungry with good things, and sends the rich in their own conceit away empty, men of Mr. Parker's spirit must fail utterly to discover "the truth as it is in Jesus."

His biography is to us a very sad one, and will teach important lessons to future generations. Such a brilliant combination of high gifts rarely falls to one man, and had they been united to a pure Christian faith would have made his name immortal, with the great leaders of the church and the race. A reader finds himself unconsciously wishing that certain controlling facts in Mr. Parker's life had been changed. If his mother had been rich in Christian faith as in natural piety; if his father had been a sturdy believer; if his childhood had been passed under a godly ministry;

if he had been thrown into intimate relations with evangelical scholars (it is singular how rarely he met such, and how kindly he speaks of them, as of Professors Stuart, Porter, and Woolsey); if a family of children had grown in his house, to draw out the tender and loving elements of a great heart; if he had not come into antagonism with the religious world at an early period of his ministry, and continued a gladiator till strength failed,—his whole life-history might have read quite otherwise.

But it was not so ordered. He was a religious outlaw, and hewed his way through opposition. No one will deny that he was a good fighter, and held the lists bravely against all comers, and wore his harness to the last. He did harm in his generation that a score of good men will not undo; and has gone to the tribunal of an omniscient God, who, understanding his character, his circumstances, and his motives, will award a righteous judgment.

We do not fear that his influence for evil will live. He was not a profound thinker, and his works hold no seeds of immortality. He had not the imagination or spiritual insight truths which reach into the unknown, and bring forth new for the guidance of the race. He was a man of his generation, with qualities fitting him pre-eminently for leadership. He did a noble work in the social reforms which have given character to the age, and for such service deserves high honor. This, we think, will be his memorial in future time, when his contributions to spiritual thought are forgotten. He aspired to do what greater men have attempted, to overthrow Christianity and establish a new religion. Celsus was as proud and self-confident; and so were Tindal, and Hume, and Voltair. They have gone to the grave, and their works are fast going to oblivion. A similar fate awaits the works of Mr. Parker. He claimed to be wiser than Jesus; but Jesus had a deeper insight into human nature, and provided better for its wants. His words will abide forever, the light and comfort of the race, confirmed by the experience of millions in the future, as they have been by

millions in the past. But with the personal presence of Mr. Parker, the chief element of his power over men has passed away, and in a little time his works may be known only, as the works of Celsus are known, by the few fragments preserved in the writings of the defenders of the faith.

ARTICLE IV.

THE SON OF GOD.

BY REV. W. S. TYLER, D.D., PROFESSOR IN AMHERST COLLEGE.

It has been well said, that there are only two great subjects of human thought and inquiry. One of these is man, and the other is God. These two subjects meet in Christ, who was both God and man united in one person.

Ellicott has remarked in his *Life of Christ*, that in the portraiture of our Lord, the first Gospel presents him to us mainly as the Messiah; the second, chiefly as the God-man; the third, as the Redeemer; and the fourth, as the only-begotten Son of God. This distinction may, perhaps, be just, if it is not too rigidly applied. Certainly it is very interesting to a curious mind, and not a little encouraging also to the faith of the believer, to remark the different points of view from which the several evangelists observe and contemplate Christ, and yet how manifestly they all describe the same person; how wonderfully some of them diverge from others in the general track which they pursue, and, at the same time, how certainly, whenever they come together, they do not come in collision, but harmonize in their representations.

The express design of the apostle John in writing his Gospel, as stated by himself (xx. 31), is that his readers might believe that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God. And in this Gospel he is called the Son of God more fre-