

Sept 12th

- "Come and do business for eternity" says a Camp-meeting poster, and it struck the right note. Religion with the masses is a kind of business transaction in which they drive sharp bargains with God, and seek to cheat the devil out of his due. It is not so much love of God that moves them as fear for the safety of their own bacon. They invest in heavenly securities because they expect dividends by and by. It is a matter of worldly prudence and nothing more.

25. Frequent light rains, growing a little heavier lately. But the ground still very dry. Many springs and wells failing. Have written three articles since 1st of July, [crossed out: ?] on myself, on Science and Theology, and on my Kentucky trip, besides working a good deal over two other articles.

28 Rains growing heavier. A pretty heavy fall last night. One more trial and these will be a down pour indeed. A visit from Joel Benton yesterday and last night.

29. Another downpour last night; heavier and heavier.

Oct 2nd Bright and cool; a light frost last night. Spent nearly the whole day in the woods.

7 One of the loveliest of October days. How jubilant the birds in the morning; Every day now is a holiday with them. How the robins call and scream and rush about; the thin sweet whistle of the white-throated sparrow here and there like children that can't keep in.

- Dreamed of father and mother again last night.

Oct 10. Loveliest of October days.

- all gold by day and all silver by night. Peace, peace; how the [~~crossed out: ?~~] golden air broods and sleeps!

Aaron Johns came Friday eve and stayed till this morning. All day yesterday we [~~crossed out: sat~~] sauntered about, or sat in the luminous shade of the maples. The shade of the trees and of the woods now is lighted up by the sun upon the brilliant foliage; the shadows glow. Aaron left me sad as usual. His coming brings other days, brings our camp life beside the delicious trout brooks, and all that goes with a free life in the woods. It brings twenty years of the past. My comrade, my soldier! I have a kind of attachment for

him that I have for no other man.

- Julian and I go walking to the woods. How ripe the foliage is getting. The warm weather hastens its ripening, just as it does that of fruit, apples, or pears, or peaches. [~~crossed out: ?~~] What a glow in the old cedar lane, the sumacs all aflame, the witch hazel in bloom and its cool perfume upon the air. Looking down this lane into a field green and tender with rye, how the eye lingers upon it, loth to turn away. Some leaves of the sumac are not merely brilliant, they have such a rich mellow tone; we can hardly leave them to wither.

11 The fifth of the lovely days. Leaves gently falling; the grass springing as in May. A hunt for wild bees in afternoon - found a swarm in a hemlock tree near the creek.

12 Another day of enchantment, a bugle-horn across the river in Roger's woods brings the golden age again. It seems peculiarly in keeping with the peace and haze and splendor of the day.

16 At Lake Mohonk for past three days, invited to be present at the Indian Conference, an enjoyable time. Met President Gates of Rutgers College; like him much, a genuine fellow; has

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a quality which only those born and bred in the country ever have. Pres. Oilman, also of Johns Hopkins; like him, but a man of less force than Gates. Met Elaine Goodale; a very sweet and attractive face, serious, thoughtful, self-conscious, genuine. Expect great things from that girl.

Oct 23 Bright, sharp, dry days, all color and light. Spend the day in the woods.

Mrs. B. in P since the 13th. Julian comes up on the boat to visit me and stays all night.

- The greatest evils, the most gigantic wickednesses of the world Christianity has not yet removed, hardly abated at all. War: Christian nations still go to war. If two men fight out their differences and one kills the other, Christianity is greatly shocked, but not so with nations. Why is this? (Worth thinking about) Is it because masses of men are more subject to destiny or fate than individuals? The other great evil which Christianity has not cured is intemperance. Another is worldliness. Undoubtedly the modern nations are vastly



more engrossed in temporary or worldly affairs than were the ancients. The ancients lived to ask, to war, to play, to religion much more than we of today.

- Principal Tulloch praises Coleridge's attempts to give a philosophical or metaphysical basis to Christianity - the atonement, original sin, the plan of salvation. I would as soon try to find a metaphysical basis for the man in the moon. Is there not something in the nature of things or in the laws of the mind that points to the fact that the Gladstone [crossed out: ?] government should be defeated in 1886?

Which is the oldest, the mind and soul of man, or the birth of Christ and the plan of salvation? Christianity, like all historical events has its reasons, its cause, its natural philosophy, but the human mind was not shaped with reference to it, but vice versa. The Hudson river does not flow here to afford nature communication between New York and Albany, or to give all us dwellers on its banks a fair prospect. We are here because that is there.

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Nov 1st A bright delicious day after a whole week of cloud and rain So mild that the last katy-did languidly [crossed out: rasps] scrapes her much-worn fiddle. The wooded hills are russet and bronze, with emerald rye fields at their base.

5 Bright mild days continue. Rarely see finer November weather.

- Accepting the orthodox view of things, is simply a question whether we shall take man and his history out of nature, out of the ordinary course of events, and introduce an exceptional, incalculable element. We cannot do this upon grounds of experience

because if experience proves anything, it proves that man and his life are not exceptions; he is subject to all the laws of nature just as the other animals are; they make no exception in his behalf; he is completely under the dominion of physical or universal conditions in life and in death. The Christian doctrines as held by the Church break completely and absolutely with the whole system of natural human knowledge. Christianity hinges upon the fall of man, and original sin, and what can be more fanciful or unreal than this notion? What foundation have they? None. Unless a man knows

Christ in some mystical unique way, he is damned to all eternity. We all know Christ through our reason, our consciences, our religious impulses, our purely human faculties and attributes, just as we know Buddha, or Socrates, but that is not enough. He must be known in a way that has no parallel or illustration in the rest of our knowledge; in short, in a way that completely breaks with all of our knowledge. His life and death are supposed to have some mysterious efficacy in saving the race of man from impending damnation; not an efficacy that can be grasped and explained, and made

to harmonize with the rest of our knowledge, as we can grasp and explain the efficacy of the life of any good and great man in elevating the race, but in some way not communicable or capable of being stated in terms of natural human speech. Sin, as a thing apart from our conduct, or life, or as other than the result of violated law, is incapable of apprehension; it is a pure fiction. So is regeneration incomprehensible, except as the result of ceasing to do evil, and learning to do good. Good is what agrees with our moral and physical constitution and bad is the opposite. In fact the

doctrinal part of Christianity as usually held, no more joins on to and becomes a part of our natural knowledge, than astrology harmonizes with astronomy. The two cannot be made to fuse or mix at all. It all had its growth in pre-scientific ages; it is an inheritance of the past as much as a belief in witchcraft and the evil eye. It did not break with human knowledge then; it was in keeping with the element of the marvellous and the exceptional of which human knowledge was then so largely made up. There was no science then, no conception of law and order in the universe, but the course of events, both human and

natural, were subject to perpetual change and interruption by the interference of outside powers or beings. Natural law was not, but in its stead supernatural beings. The whole conception of Christianity was the work of this state of mind. But this state of mind is gone and we cannot bring it back if we wanted to. It still lingers in the following of the Catholic Church, and here and there among the women in the other churches; but to the typical man of today it is no longer possible. It is no longer possible for him to believe in miracles, or in any doctrines which suspend or supersede the grounds of



human knowledge, or the ordinary workings of the human faculties. The process by which anything can become known to man is pretty well established; that there is or may be a new or peculiar process outside of reason and observation, is what the man of today can no longer believe. Undoubtedly Religion knows things in a more intimate and personal way that science does, but science can understand how this is so. The person in whose mind has been awakened a deep love of Christ comes to know Christ in a way that some outside observer does not; that is to say, his spirit takes hold

of the Christ-idea and is or may be modified by it to an extent the other is not. An emotional process is more vital and potent than a rational process. The "knowledge" thus gained is no more truly knowledge, in fact, it [crossed out: may be] is likely to be less correct and reliable than the knowledge gained by [crossed out: reason and observat] a disinterested exercise of reason and observation, because our sympathies, our love blinds us, but it is more potent knowledge - it is not merely conviction, but it is attraction and influence. But this is true not of Christ merely; it is true of every man or thing. If the flower or the bird awakens no emotion in the naturalist, will he ever

sentiment, all emotion; he stated nothing as a fact, as a dogma, [~~crossed out: except~~] but spoke always in parables. When the people clamored for a literal or an exact statement or some sign or proof, he either turned away from them or else gave them a more oracular statement than before. How vague even his allusions to his own death and resurrection, if such allusions they were.

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The two conceptions of God which have prevailed in the world, namely, as a person or being outside of nature (objective), and as a force identical with nature (subjective) are the work of these two types of mind.

- The two types of mind, the objective and subjective the mind that looks out, and the mind that looks in, can never harmonize or come to an agreement. One calls the other hard and matter-of-fact: one visionary and

unreal. Religion is subjective, an emotion, a feeling, an aspiration of the soul; science is objective and rests upon demonstration. When the objective or reasoning mind turns to religion, it makes creeds and dogmas, and seeks to prove the literal truth of the Bible. The subjective mind hates creeds and formulas and seeks to live in the spirit. This order of mind says, "Religion cannot be incarnated and settled once for all in forms and creeds and worship. It is a continual growth in every living heart - a new light to every seeing eye." Such men as Frederick Robinson, Bishop Ewing, and the man whom the General Assembly of Scotland deposed, Campbell, Scott, [Erskine?]

belonged to the subjective order of minds. They were impatient of the hard limitations of [crossed out: se] the Calvinistic theology. As a religious teacher, Carlyle was intensely subjective. But such men as Whately, Pusey, and all frames and clinchers of theological systems are objective, and seek to satisfy the reason and the understanding. The most subjective of all religious teachers was Christ. Look inward and not outward was always the burden of his teaching. Search the spirit. The kingdom of heaven is within you. How he turned away from the more exact objective inquirers, and gathered about him the simple and the credulous.

F. Robinson said that divine truth was of the nature of poetry, "to be felt and not proved." How Christ would be amazed at the hard inflexible systems of theology that have been built up out of his mystical utterances. Objective certainties, or sciences, we cannot have in religion; the dogmas of the Church, the 39 articles, the Westminster Chatecism, do not rest upon proof, but upon assumption. God gave no creed or article of faith to Moses, but commands that had reference to conduct, to concrete social and individual life. "The idea that theology is a fixed science" says Principal Tulloch, "with hard and fast

proportions partaking of the nature of infallibility, is a [crossed out: supposition] superstition which cannot face the light of modern criticism." But the Christian world is bound to regard theology as a fixed science and its doctrines as objectively true. One is asked to believe certain statements of alleged facts before the Church will admit one to fellowship. But the truth of religion can no more be demonstrated to the understanding, than the truth of poetry can be demonstrated. Religion is a subjective phenomenon. It is a quality of your spirit or it is nothing. The kingdom of heaven is within you. Except ye become

as little children etc. It is not a conclusion of the reason, but a feeling of the heart. Heaven and immortality are now and here in this life, or they are nowhere. We see and touch God now or never. Heaven and hell have no objective reality. Immortality is not a continuation of concrete individual life, because continuation implies time; and there is no time in heaven or in the spirit. We shall not live in this sense; we shall not live at all. Where were you and I a century ago? Just where we will be a century hence, nowhere. Time and place know us not. [crossed out: but somewhat]



Principal Tulloch evidently belongs to the subjective order of religious teachers. John Stuart Mill, he says, accuses God of being the author of Hell, but this is a poor fallacy as well as a gross caricature, since the "worst hell is that which man makes for himself." This is practically denying the mechanical, objective hell of the popular theology which Mill had in mind. He would doubtless deny the popular or objective heaven too.

If religion is a thing akin to poetry or music, and has reference to our present life, and present enjoyment like these, and not merely a definite scheme or course of conduct to escape some future

threatened doom, then we all want it and can believe in it, but all cannot have it, because we all have not the religious faculty or instinct. It was thus with the Greek or with the Hebrew; why not with us. But we have found in it a reason for ignoring or belittling this life, this world, and for winning as by a game of dice with the devil, a better world to come.

The religious feeling or instinct is best employed, when it works inward in the blood and gives a serious, truthful, earnest tinge to life, an impression of deep loyalty to truth and virtue; and concerns itself not at all about cheating the devil out of his dice. How it tinges the great Greek poets

how it tinges Wordsworths poetry; not his Church of England for this was but something tacked on to his mind and in no sense a part of it. Byron had no religion in this sense. Shakespeare but little. Pope but little. Tennyson has more. Arnold has more. Religion as a feeling as a quality of the spirit, and not as a ritual or a creed, is a vital and ever present thing in all first class minds. Emerson had it. Whittier has it. Lowell not much, and our lesser poets not at all. Bryant had it, but much of the so called religious poetry is destitute of it. Milton always had it, when he kept his anglicism in abeyance.

That this is the true function of religion, a leaven working in the life, and not a formula stored away in the reason, admits of no doubt. Voltaire had no religion. Tom Paine more. Goethe had much, but Carlyle more; Schiller and Richter more. Plutarch was full of it, as are nearly all the antique authors. Victor Hugo had it, Darwin had it, Mr Moody has it. Ingersoll I should say has very little. Newman is full of it but in most theological treatises it is absent [crossed out: from]. Lincoln was a truly religious man. Beecher is not. It is by no means common among

the clergy. The biblical writers are the most full of it of all others. Indeed here [~~crossed out: it~~] is its great deep, its primordial ocean. There is no religion in Swift - he is thoroughly a worldly mind; there is more in Johnson, but not much here, not much in either of these writers I mean that appeals to the conscience, or touches it. Not a scintilla in such poets as Swinburne or Rosetti. Indeed none of the new poets in England or America possess [~~crossed out: any~~] that deep high seriousness which goes with the religious sense. There is more in Gilder than in any of his friends.

The type of the religious mind has always been in the world and always will

All attempts to give an objective reality to God, as the sun has an objective reality, will always meet with denial and opposition from many minds; or to give it to immortality or to any spiritual thing, because these things are inward and not outward; they are thoughts or aspirations of the soul, not verifiable, independent existences. A subjective reality they have, they may be as real to the soul as a rock is to the sense. The ideal is not the real, yet mankind is [crossed out: are] constantly seeking to exteriorize the ideal, to view the phenomenon of consciousness as an object of sense. They want a real God like a real king or president

a real heaven, a better land. They think and speak of these things in terms of our concrete experience, that is, conceive of them objectively, where as they lie in exactly the other direction. There is no moral and intelligent governor of the universe, in the concrete sense, but in the transcendental sense. God is a spirit, and spirit, Coleridge says, is the other side of matter. Spirit is nothing more to our present condition. When people [in pencil: persons] say there is no God and no heaven etc, they mean there is none that can be conceived of in the terms of our earthly knowledge. From this platform all of these things are invisible.

Nov 7. Sunday. The ground white with snow this morning - came like a thief in the night

8. The coldest snap of the season thus far. Distant hills still white, a raw windy day.

Nov 13. Snow and rain - a typical Nov. day.

- Mulford's "Republic of God", a book that seems as if written in a kind of dream - nothing clearly logical or wide awake in it. One fancies him mumbling these things in his sleep.

Blackies, "History of Aetheism". The style of this book suggests a man rushing through the house and slamming the doors. It is certainly a noisy style, a good deal of life in it, occasionally coarse



with something of the air of a smart flippant advocate.

23. Yesterday and the day before (Sunday) all sky and sunshine; to-day all gloom and fog and rain. Squarely the other extreme. Finished yesterday and sent off an article to the Forum, A Lay Sermon.

27. Thirty four years ago to-day my little sister Evaline died. I pause and think of her and of that long gone time.

Quite a touch of winter, but bright to-day.

- The religious jargon does not differ at all from other jargons, it means something to those who

use it, but it means nothing to an outsider. I do not at all doubt but that many good people have experiences what they call religion, but it is not a necessary or a universal experience; if it were we should all have it, and I seriously question its value, that is, as a stay to virtue or a stimulus to character. I do not find that those ~~people~~ persons are as a rule, any better than the others. The best man in a town or community is so irrespective of his religion.

Dec. 5 Very cold; down to 8 or 10 above. Had to get up last night at 3 a.m. to thaw out the pipes. A driving snow storm set in this morning from the north; very fine; promises to be severe.

Dec 7th The cold continues. Winter indeed has suddenly pounced upon us like a full grown lion. Last night his roaring kept me from sleep, and this morning his breath of frost and snow blinds the day. The river is nearly closed, as I catch glimpses of it through the driving snow, it looks like a mottled plain of white and drab. More rugged winter weather we never have.

17 After a break in winter and a few mild soft days, another cold snap with snow, but not severe; river still open.

A domestic storm for several

days and nights; only slept three or four hours last night for wifes tongue; all about Julian.

- A brute differs from a man in this: the brute has no subjective life, but objective life only; he never looks inward, but outward. The man looks inward as well, thinks about thinking, is conscious of himself etc; that is he has both objective and subjective life.

19 Julian said this morning soon after waking up that he felt as if a great change was coming - "as if a great joy was passing away" - he is beginning to doubt the existence of Santa Claus! Poor boy! Such a discovery does leave a void.  
How

much deeper and more painful a void would have been left in the minds of our fathers, if they had suddenly made the discovery which their children have gradually made that their Santa Claus, the Great Dispenser of the gifts of life etc, was a delusion, a fiction, and that natural law brought all these things to pass. What a chill, what desolation would have possessed their credulous souls! What! No God with whom I can commune, to whom I can pray, whose presence I have so often felt near me, upon whose mercy and love I can throw myself in trial and in sickness and death! Fancy the state of orphanages

which such a discovery would bring about in the hearts of our fathers! Yet this discovery has come to so many of us, and ~~yet~~ we are not seriously disturbed; we go on with the ~~old~~ game of life with quite the old zest, and perhaps have less quaking at the ~~approach of death~~ thought of the termination of it than our fathers did. We fill up the void with something else; our minds, our spiritual wants adjust themselves to new conditions. The Great Santa Claus is gone, but the good things still come, only they come through unexpected channels, through means that are perfectly comprehensible, and much nearer to us, and much

more constant in our daily lives than we had supposed; they come naturally and not miraculously. [crossed out: The disem] God no longer sends the rain, or the snow, but they come by the operation of laws as regular in their workings as that which makes the clock strike, or the pendulum swing. The discovery that events so fall out may shock us at first; it takes away the charm of the personal element, the direct benefaction to us, and the charm of mystery. The imagination and the emotions are left cold and unresponsive. The rain would fall, and the spring return just the same if man

were not here. It is a terrible shock to our childish pride and egotism, to the filial and family feeling of man, which elects God into a father, solicitous about the good and the love of each member. The truth is the beneficence of God so transcends our conception of it under the symbol of fatherhood, that it seems quite the opposite, or a negative.

Shall we then consider this conception of a personal or anthropomorphic God, who makes man and his life, his chief concern, as belonging essentially to the childhood of the race? Why not? If we look upon the belief in faeries, in good and evil genii, of



demons, of witches, of sorcery, and of signs and wonders, as belonging to the childhood of the race; if these things go with ignorance and infancy as we know that they do, why not ~~[crossed out: the]~~ treat this other belief in a great man - God as belonging to the same category of delusions which the advance of science and civilization must dispell?

How well I know the feeling of that little Scottish boy I heard of who as he was passing through a wild and desolate place in the mountains with his parents on their first arrival in this new country, looked about on the

[in pencil: savage?] save and inhuman scene and [crossed out: said] asked timidly "Wither is there a God here?" How the wilder and more savage aspects of the huge globe do seem to kill or crush out this warm and intimate belief in a humane God, a God who we think, must be limited to the beautiful and the beneficent, as we are. When one looks out upon the tempestuous winter night, upon the inhuman fury and power of the frost and wind; or when he sees a storm at sea, or thinks of the eternal silence and death of the frigid zones, or of the waves and storms that buffet the sailors in the solitudes of Cape Horn, or on lonely and

shores, the billows forever tossing the storms forever stalking, ships and men swallowed up in a twinkling as if they were ants on a leaf - indeed when one sees how the great forces of the globe go careening on irrespective of man or his petty wants - how far off the idea of a personal God who is indeed a father to us, does seem. With me, it kills or overwhelms it entirely. The desolation of the sea drowns God; it makes shipwreck of faith. The utmost that man can arrive at is the certainty that there is a power not ourselves, out of which we have come, the power we call nature, a power that slowly works to higher

and more beneficent ends through man and which is careful of man through his own instrumentality but which outside of man knows and regards him not. It is only in later ages that man has been conservative of man. He has on the whole been his greatest enemy. Numbers could hardly reckon up the lives of his fellows he has taken

- The same evening Julian remarked with a sadness that went to my heart, "The world has told a great many lies if there is no Santa Claus; making pictures about him and telling so much about him in books."

25 Bright and sharp; ground covered with snow. A gloomy Xmas, a domestic earthquake - shock after shock, threatens to bring the roof down.

29 Earthquake shocks still continue, now mild, now severe. A fine skate on the river, ice like glass quite invisible it is so smooth and clear the sensation is like that of flying over the surface of the water. Julian with me with his first skates.

31 Snow yesterday and to-day. Ice all blotted out.

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Jany 1st Rain and gloom. Earthquake shocks still pretty severe. Trees all covered with ice and creaking in their icy harness. General health very good, less whirling of the head and fluttering of the heart than one year ago, and less of my other peculiar symptoms. But cold feet, the worst I have yet had. No weakness in muscles of arms or legs. Sleep nearly perfect, only if I miss fire the first hour in bed, it goes pretty hard.