



THE
QUARTERLY REVIEW,
OF THE
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
SOUTH.

Vol. VI.]

JANUARY 1852.

[No. 1.

ART. I.

ENGLISH INFIDELITY.

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The Progress of the Intellect, as exemplified in the religious development of the Greeks and Hebrews. By Robert William Mackay. In two volumes. London: John Chapman, 142 Strand. MDCCCL. Pp. 488; 520.

“I came not to send peace, but a sword,” was one of the most profound and memorable of those significant utterances that fell from the lips of Jesus Christ, when he lived on earth. It might seem, on anterior grounds, that a religion, whose basis was truth, whose spirit was love, and whose end was peace, could hardly fail to command at once, the assent and the affection of the world. But the facts of the case show, that such an anticipation has left out some important element in the calculation. Like the gunner, who has omitted the fact of gravitation, or the machinist, who has forgotten that

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of inertia, a calculation like this, has not estimated the ponderous and fearful fact of human depravity; a fact which, whilst it makes a religion necessary to man, also makes man averse to its reception, in the precise proportion of its purity and power. Hence, Christianity has ever been a militant element in the history of the world. And as this great antagonising principle of human depravity comes forth in each successive generation of the world, at once the fact demanding, and the fact resisting this renovating agency, it would seem, that each generation is required to purchase the blessing for itself, at the same price of struggling contest. As there is no royal road to science, so there would seem to be no mode of obtaining the blessings of a pure and pervading Christianity, but that of contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Hence, we find each age of the world, since the introduction of the Christian religion, presenting its own peculiar phase of hostility to the truth.

But peculiar as may be the form in which these attacks are thus periodically renewed, the substance is, in all the varieties of presentation, essentially the same. The weapons used by Paul, against the Jew of his day, needed only a burnishing and pointing, to fit them for the use of Justin Martyr against Trypho, or Origen against Celsus, in an early age of the church; or of Limborch, Leslie and M'Aul, in a later. The reader who is shocked at the vulgar ribaldries of a Paine, or puzzled by the learned plausibilities of a Strauss, is astonished to find their vaunted discoveries anticipated and answered in the questions and answers to the Greeks, ascribed to Justin, and in the pages of the earlier apologists; whilst the solemn babooneries and elaborate pedantries of Herbert of Cherbury, are reproduced in the pages of R. W. Mackay. If, therefore, we would understand the present, and prepare for the future, we must know something of the past. "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done, is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun." These remarks are especially true, in regard to the connection between England and this

country. So close and complete is the intercourse between us; so many the avenues of communication; and so deep the intellectual sympathy of the two nations, that the opinions and feelings of the one country, on great moral and religious questions, will at length become the property and characteristics of the other. The frequency with which the publications of the one country re-appear in the other, the ease with which importations are made, and the wide circulation in the United States of the republications of the four great English Quarterlies, make it almost certain, that the present type of infidelity in England, may be expected in due time, to be re-produced on this side of the Atlantic. An acquaintance, therefore, with the present posture and resources of English infidelity, may be useful in preparing ourselves for the contest, which sooner or later, in its advancing wave, must reach us. We have, therefore, thought it advisable to give our readers some acquaintance with the modern school of free thinkers in England, and for this purpose, have selected the work that is placed at the head of this paper, as one of the most favorable of its class, and presenting this "red republican" school of religionists, in the latest and best form of its development. Before describing its character and contents, however, we shall give some account of other notabilities of the same school, who are in nearer or remoter sympathy with the writer of this ponderous treatise.

The present form of English infidelity, is the result of several influences combined. The first is the old school of English deism. The production of this school was owing to, or at least affected by, two distinct influences, neither of which are yet extinct. The former of these was, the rational spirit engendered by the reformation. It is one of the terrible conditions of all great blessings, that they are liable, if unsanctified, to be transmuted into great curses. This is especially true of all religious blessings. They are "a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death." The reformation was a great awaking of the human soul, on every subject, but especially on that of religion. Freedom of thought was

proclaimed as a duty, and freedom of speech demanded as a privilege. The result of this emancipation, in minds unhallowed by God's spirit, was very natural. The antiquity of an opinion, or a system of opinions, instead of exciting veneration, aroused suspicion. Men began to confound age and dotage, and in the presumptuous exultation of their new freedom, to regard the venerable faith of their fathers as only the dreaming of an imbecile senility. Theories of freedom and rights, that were applicable only to man in his relation to the human, were applied to man in his relation to the Divine; and liberty was thought to be imperfect, as long as men could not believe as they pleased, as well as, do as they pleased. Hence, the authority of the Bible was questioned in the same spirit of reckless irreverence, with which the pretensions of priestcraft were trampled down; that spirit of humble and holy docility, which is the only proper attitude for the soul, in which to investigate a divine utterance, and without which, that utterance, in its "still small voice," is inaudible, as well as useless, was despised as timidity, and the result was the growth of a spirit of unbelief. God, who will not stoop to be arraigned at the bar of human pride, though he will ever bend to the lowliness of a suppliant humility, gave them up to the vanity of their own hearts, allowed them to surround themselves with sparks of their own kindling, and permitted them, like the men of Sodom, to grope in blindness for those heavenly visitants, whose mission they were so unwilling to obey, and so unable to comprehend.

Connected with this influence, was another, not less important from the opposite direction. The English church was never fully reformed. There always remained an element of worldliness and popery, which wrought like leaven in its mass, and tended to counteract the influence of the reformation. What the Methodists of latter days endeavored to do, was attempted by the Puritans of former days, with perhaps less signal and obvious success. In resistance to this effort after a purer reformation, there arose the spirit that

reached its highest types in Laud, and Strafford, but attained its triumphant success, only in the men and scenes that succeeded the restoration. Licentiousness of conduct demanded laxity of belief, and the spirit that was intolerant of the restraints of Puritanism, was equally intolerant of the restraints of the Bible. Religion became a sham with the clergy, and therefore a jest with the people, who could not be expected to believe the preaching of men, who evidently did not believe it themselves. God's unseparated remnant were among the hidden, weeping and despised ones of the land; and the only living representations of Christianity, were living hypocrisies and lies. Hence, partly from a general laxity of belief, a want of healthy tone in the soul, and partly from a want of some living witness for the truth of Christianity, unbelief assumed that form, that was termed "Deism." Herbert of Cherbury, wrote a book to disprove the possibility of revelation, or miracle, and with characteristic credulity, tells us that he published it because of a miracle, which revealed to him the will of God regarding it. Hobbes gave scientific form and utterance to the practical sentiment of the age, in his *Leviathan*. Blount and Tindal, Collins and Woolston, Morgan and Chubb, as they successively appeared, each became interpreter to those classes, whose minds and tastes were in harmony with their own; whilst Hume and Gibbon, Shaftesbury and Bolingbroke, threw around their sceptical mockings, the polish of rank, the brilliancy of wit, and the lustre of genius. These influences have been perpetuated and transmitted in various forms, and constitute one great element in the modern school of English infidelity.

Another influence has come from the literature and scepticism of France. That the French infidelity owes much, in its immediate agencies of production, to the English deism, is certainly true, but there were other and deeper causes at work, which gave it the fierce and terrible character which it bears, and which explain the nature of the influence, which reacted from it, on the infidelity of England. As the deism

of England was the partial result of a perversion of the reformation, the deism of France was the result of its rejection. The massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the banishments and murders that succeeded the revocation of the edict of Nantz, destroyed and exiled the best portion of the population of France. The reformation, like all great religious movements of that kind, appealed to the intelligent and industrial middle classes, the manufacturing and commercial part of the population, in whom the progressive principle of society is lodged, whilst the two extreme classes, the nobility and large land owners on the one side, and the agricultural and laboring poor on the other, in both which, for obvious reasons, the conservative principle of society is lodged, remained true to their instinctive mission, in adherence to the old religion. The safety of France then obviously lay in the retention of that class, in which was embodied the progressive principle, and so regulating that principle, that its development should reach by a healthy expansion, to the masses above and below. But with a blind and furious folly, this class was banished and destroyed, and thus a fatal gap effected in the social elements of France. The producing and growing class was almost annihilated, and like some vast surface that has been denuded of its soil by a deluge, society was compelled to await in barrenness, the formation of a new soil by slow abrasion and decomposition from the more unyielding elements above and below.

But disastrous as was the effect of this insane policy of France, on her social and political economics, its effect on her religion was yet more deplorable. The withdrawal of such an element from her population, was a withdrawal of vitality from her religious life, that left her church but a name to live whilst it was dead. Deprived of the stimulus to exertion, and the coercion to, at least, an outward decency, which the presence of such a body of dissenters must have furnished, the church of France became that bloated, putrid mass of corruption, that called forth the scorching wit of a Pascal, and the burning invective of an Arnauld

and St. Cyr, from her own communion. But all was in vain. The corruption of the priesthood became more and more audacious, until at length men ceased to retain any respect for those who had no respect for themselves; and gradually transferring their estimate of the church to the religion on which it was founded, they finally lost all confidence in a system, which, judging from the lives of its priesthood, had failed to command the confidence of those, who were supposed to know and understand it best. The priestly class naturally identified themselves most closely with the higher ranks, from which they had most to hope, and became indifferent to the lower, from which they had not yet learned that they had anything to fear. Thus the masses were allowed to grow up in irreligion and vice; whilst the few, who were mad with folly, greedily squandered their substance with the motto, which we now see to have been terribly prophetic, "*after us, the deluge.*" As a matter of course, it required neither the wit of Voltaire, nor the learning of D'Alembert, to show that this grinning and leering mask of mummery was not a religion from God, and having no other type before them, it was natural to reject Christianity as a whole, when the only form known to them had blazoned on its very front, the betrayal of its falsehood. Finding it then clinging to existing forms of civil tyranny, it was naturally associated with them, and the vengeance that was awaked by the one, was also poured on the other. The deluge did come, and with it, swept away at once, the altar and the throne, in one terrific torrent of fire and blood. Then came up before God, the inquisition of blood, for the fearful deeds of the past, and the terrible scenes of St. Bartholomew and the Sicilian Vespers, were expiated in the bloody gutters and slippery streets of Paris.

How different might the result have been, if the policy of France had been different, and the reformation allowed to have at least a tolerated existence in her borders. That great class which represented and embodied the progressive principle, would have presented a fertile seed-plot for the

principles of civil liberty, where they might have taken root in the soil of intelligence and virtue. The industrial development of this class, would have prevented, or greatly modified, that crushing poverty and cry for bread, which was the direct cause exciting the French revolution, and thus enabled these liberal principles to grow with that slow and safe expansion, which betokens a long and healthful existence. The principles of liberty would have been associated with those of the reformation, and hence those of a pure Christianity in France as they were in England; and when the struggle came, as come it must, Napoleon might have been a William of Orange, and Valmy, Leipsic and Waterloo been written on the same bright page with Naseby, Marston Moor, and the bloody banks of the Boyne.

But the crushing of the reformation in France, at once made a bloody revolution inevitable, and made that revolution to be infidel in its character, and thus arrayed the great struggle for liberty, which France began for the continent, against Christianity, instead of embracing it as an ally, and so gave its complexion to subsequent events. The impulse given by the French revolution, being necessarily felt in England, it naturally became there, what it was in France, an irreligious and anti-christian struggle. Hence, we have the peculiar feature of English infidelity, as an ally of English radicalism. The liberalism of France was infidel, for the reasons already stated, and in transplanting the one, there was a transfer of the other. We will not affirm that radicalism in politics, would not have generated, or at least united with, radicalism in religion, in virtue of their common sympathies, even had the course of events been otherwise in France. But we do affirm, that the English revolution had its character and success, from the reformation partly accepted; whilst the French revolution had its bloody hue from the reformation rejected; and that therefore, as we owe the former deism of England to the imperfect reform of the church, and its remaining leaven of popery, so we owe its later infidelity, in part, to the importation of French politics, that were tainted with

French infidelity, and that this also we owe remotely to the church of Rome. We do not affirm that Satan could not have found other instruments, had these been wanting; but we do affirm, that these were the instruments that he actually employed.

Connected with this political infection, there may have been also, an influence associated with French science, which became unchristian in the same general way. Churchmen became hostile to science, because they were too indolent or too stupid to master it; as a natural result, science became hostile to Christianity itself, as the actuating principle of the church, and instead of a Newton, a Boyle, and a Locke, France can but furnish us a Laplace, a Helvetius, and a Voltaire. In the transfer of the brilliant results of French science to the English mind, it is not surprising that there should be also an introduction of that virus of scepticism, with which so much of it was infected. The plague may be carried unseen and unsuspected, in the richest silks and costliest fabrics of the Levant, as readily as in the filthy and putrid rags of the lazaroni.

But much as English infidelity may be indebted to these sources, there is a third which, later in its date, has been stronger in its influence, than either of the others, in moulding the present form of sceptical opinion. There has always been a repulsion between the gay and lively French intellect, and the solid, and sometimes stolid mind of the strong and practical islanders. The earnest and serious thinkers of Germany, presented deeper and stronger points of contact and sympathy with the Anglo-Saxon, than the brisk and restless Gaul. But for many years the limited intercourse between the countries, and the barrier of language, prevented the establishment of a complete connection of sympathy, in either thought or emotion. Meanwhile, a change, most portentous and profound, was passing over the cultivated intellect of Germany. The reformation had obtained for Germany, the inestimable boon of freedom in thinking, and speaking on the subject of religion. But like freedom in civil matters, its

value depended on the spirit and purpose with which it was used. As long as it was employed under the direction of a holy and reverent heart, it was a blessing of priceless value ; but when wielded by a proud and godless spirit, it became like a torrent without a channel ; a wide-spread and desolating evil. Whilst therefore, the piety of the reformation remained warm and active, its effect was to advance the cause of sound education and Biblical literature, and thus advance the cause of Christianity. But the reformation was arrested in Germany, before it had leavened the political condition of the country, and given that freedom of civil institutions, which is necessary to the right enjoyment of religious liberty. Hence, that scope for action and educated intellect, which a freer set of political institutions would have given in thought and speech, on every subject, was wanting, and many of the most important and absorbing fields of investigation, were closed up to the mind of Germany. Debarred thus from the healthful and vigorous exercise of practical life, the force of the German mind, was turned in the direction of speculative thinking, with a corresponding energy. Intellect that was unhallowed and irreverent, which, in other countries, would have been employed on political topics, was there turned to the higher and more perilous regions of speculative philosophy and theology, and fearlessly rushed in, "where angels dread to gaze." Now, had the piety of the German church been warm and living, it might have fused and transformed these elements into its own nature. But unhappily the fire burnt low on the altar, the early and fervent spirit of the reformation had cooled, and there was not reactive energy enough in the church, either to throw off, or to transform these frigid and earthy masses that were piled upon it. Hence, the piety of the church was congealed into a hard and icy rationalism, and the impiety of the world into a daring and godless pantheism. With that unshrinking consistency, that characterises the German mind, the ungodliness of the heart was embodied first, in systems of metaphysics, and then in systems of hermeneutics, until the infidelity of

France has been left in a long and lagging distance. The idea of God is rejected, and sought to be banished as the source of all existing evil, and man taught that there is no God but himself, and that atheism is the only true road to liberty, equality and happiness. The mind of Germany was thus prepared gradually for the reception of such a work as that of Strauss. Had free scope been allowed to active thought on all other subjects, the mass of ungodly intellect that was precipitated upon the subject of religion, would have been diverted elsewhere; or had there been sufficient vitality in the church, to keep the general mind up to a healthful standard of religious emotion, the result would have been very different, and the *Leben Jesu*, instead of poisoning a whole continent, would have dropped as harmless as the equally able *Wolfenbüttel Fragments*. But the whole German mind was in a morbid state, like the body of a man whose blood is incurably poisoned, and Strauss only made the puncture, through which the internal virus broke forth into a spreading and noisome ulcer. It was only needful then, that this spiritual leprosy should be transported to the English mind, in a form capable of being received. Unhappily, the profundity of German learning, and the brilliancy of German literature, furnished a motive to bring the mind of the two nations into spiritual connection, which speedily established a mode, by which the thoughts of the one were transferred to the other. Coleridge, Taylor of Norwich, De Quincey, and others of minor note, all labored to bring about this community of thought, and all contributed more or less to the result. But the great internunciator between the sea-girt and the cloud-girt people, was THOMAS CARLYLE.

It is not our purpose to enter into any extended criticism on the character or writings of Carlyle, as this would require an article rather than a paragraph, for its discussion. But we believe, that there is perhaps, no living man who has had more to do with the present condition of scepticism in England, than the author of "*Sartor Resartus*," and "*Heroes and Hero-Worship*." Bold, earnest and sincere, his indignant

invective against the hollowness and sham, that so much abound in church and state throughout England, found a quick and powerful response in the hearts of the young and ardent, and made them listen eagerly to his weird and sybilline words. He saw and felt that something was wrong, and gave utterance to this feeling, in tones that could not be neglected, and hence, he was supposed to know in what way this wrong could be made right. But here he failed, and this failure has wrought, we fear, disastrous results. A mere iconoclast, he has shattered the shrine in breaking down the idol image, and instead of cleansing the altar, has well nigh overturned it. We cannot go at length into his views, although his creed is not a very long one. No writer of our day has preserved a more unbroken consistency in the development of his views. From the wild article, termed "Characteristics," which broke off his connection with the *Edinburgh Review*, and from *Sartor Resartus*, which embodies his entire moral life, down to the spasmodic howlings of the *Latter-day Pamphlets*, he has reiterated the same system of belief in all variety of forms. His God is force; his worship, earnestness; his apostles, heroes; his religion, work; his unpardonable sin, a sham; and his revelation, the gospel according to Goëthe, Richter and Carlyle. To establish such a creed as this, it was of course necessary to set aside the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. This, accordingly he did, early in his career, in his article on Voltaire, and his *Sartor Resartus*. He first familiarised the public mind with the distinction between Christianity, and the records in which Christianity is taught, regarding the one as Divine and inspired, whilst the other were human, fallible and imperfect. This distinction, so convenient to those who wish to retain the comforts of the Christian hope, and discard the restraints of the Christian life, has become the platform on which unbelief has at last rallied and taken its final stand. Unable to resist the gigantic mass of testimony, that proves the religion of Christ to be from God; yet unwilling to submit to the claims that this religion makes upon their faith

and practice, they have treated it, as their prototypes treated its Lord ; put on it a crown, given it a sceptre, and rendered it a homage ; but a crown that lacerates, a sceptre that mocks, and a homage that insults more deeply than the most open hostility. This distinction, which is but the counterpart of that higher-law doctrine in civil life, which pays homage to a government as sovereign, and yet disregards its constitution and laws, owes very much to the writings of Carlyle. The deep love, which his early Scotch training fixed uneradicably in his heart, to the Divine and the Holy ; the genuine sympathy of his high-hearted enthusiasm, with so much that is in Christianity ; the fiery earnestness with which he urged his views ; the strange and uncouth, yet fascinating garb in which he clothed his thoughts ; and the real uprightness and honesty of his nature, most of which he owed to his Christian birth and training, all contributed to give force to his rejection of the plenary authority of the Scriptural records. Many were willing to receive his teachings on this point, and carry them to their logical results, who lacked both his inherited religiousness, his earnestness and his honesty, that served to counterbalance his errors. Thus, in connection with Coleridge's "Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit," the way was prepared to receive the calumnies of Strauss, the babblings of De Wette, and the sophistries of Parker, all spurning their hostility against the massive and venerable bulwarks of Revelation.

But the influence of Carlyle has operated in another direction. No writer of our day has poured forth more fierce and scornful invective, upon the existing forms of Christianity, than this modern Diogenes. Seeing so many shams and shadows about him, he concludes that there is no such thing as reality in modern religion, and denounces all existing coin, because of his discovery of some counterfeits. Hence, he vents his fiery anathemas against the church, in all her forms, and does his utmost to bring all organized Christianity into contempt. Now, as he proposes no definite reform, but confines himself to vague and sweeping attacks, the effect of

his denunciation must be equivalent to the deadliest infidelity. The religion that professes to love Christianity, and yet seeks to break down all existing forms of church organization, is like the affection that loves the soul so tenderly, that it tries to kill the body. The vase that contains some precious unguent, may be encrusted and defiled; but if in our love for the fragrant contents, we shatter, instead of cleansing the vessel, we shall but see those contents first endure a yet deeper defilement, and then exhale totally away. In so far, therefore, as Carlyle has breathed his fierce radicalism against the Christian church, into the mind of young England, has he contributed to give vigor and nerve to the crusade of modern infidelity. In these several respects, therefore, we regard the influence of this extraordinary man, to be inseparably connected with the existing scepticism of England.

Another set of influences in the same direction, have come forth from the English church itself. Simultaneously, and connected with the facts just adverted to, there arose in the English church, the Puseyitic movement, the philosophical principle underlying which is traditionalism. This principle, of course, rejects the plenary and infallible authority of the scriptures, and adds to, or substitutes for it, the voice of the church. This is, however, but a restricted form of rationalism, for it is after all but an appeal to human reason, as we find it pronouncing itself, in this mode of utterance, as the arbiter of truth. It brings the Bible to the bar of the reason of the church, instead of bringing it as the rationalist does, to the bar of the reason of universal man, or to the enlightened reason of each individual. It is not, therefore, to be wondered, if some should suppose that the reason of the church, in the dark ages of the fifth or fifteenth century, could not be, in the nature of the case, any better qualified to judge for the reason of the nineteenth century, than it was to judge for itself; and that if the one was qualified by the law of development to be an arbiter of truth, *a fortiori*, we must expect the same or higher qualifications in the other. Hence, the fountain of traditionalism that broke out from

beneath the unreformed elements in the Anglican church, soon separated itself into two distinct tendencies, one in the direction of Rome, the other in the direction of Germany. The Germanic tendency was accelerated by several adventitious circumstances. History began to be studied on new principles, and the sceptical criticism of the Niebuhr style of investigation, which has been naturalized in England by Arnold, Thirlwall and Grote, was applied, in defiance of the obvious differences in the cases, to the historical records of Christianity. Metaphysical philosophy received a new impulse from the continent, and found itself trammelled by the inflexible authority of a written revelation. Biblical criticism also importing most of its apparatus from Germany, instead of obtaining instruments with which to gather in the more thoroughly, the fragrant riches of the green pastures of the word, introduced those which ploughed up and tore in pieces, the level greenness of its broad and beautiful sward. These influences soon raised up that wing of the Anglican church, in which we see the towering forms of a Whately, a Hampden, a Hare, and an Arnold, who stand at the point of divergence in the direction of disastrous error, and are looking anxiously and with a mournful sympathy, towards the remoter points of the line, where their bewildered brethren are stumbling and groping on the dark mountains, and shrieking for light. All along this line we trace wanderers, over whose aberrations an angel might drop a tear of sorrow; so noble is the erring spirit, so gloomy and mournful the error.

Among the most interesting of these names, is that of JOHN STERLING, whose biography by Carlyle has recently been issued. He was a gentle and gifted child of genius, whose heart was ever true to the faith, which his head was too false to receive, and the discipline of whose life was arrested, before it had developed his soul into that sunny brightness of belief, to which he was gradually approaching, through sore and gloomy strugglings. In early life a sceptic,

he was brought by Coleridge's influence, to a Christian faith, and under its impulse, entered the ministry. He labored for a few months at Herstmonceux, and abandoned the ministry, because of ill health, and passed under a cloud of unbelief, from whose deep shadow he was beginning to pass, when he entered the deeper shadows of the dark valley. His published writings embrace a variety of topics, and show a mind of rare versatility of powers. His influence, however, has mainly been claimed for the side of unbelief, and we fear will rest more completely there now, since the publication of his life by Carlyle, which is designed to bring out his history in these very respects, wherein it was rather concealed by his first biographer and friend Dr. Hare. Like Arnold, he retained his connection with the English church until his death, and like him, many will copy the side of his nature that was left in shadow, rather than that which was turned to the light, and use his name to further sentiments which he would have rejected with horror and loathing. His life was a transition period, whose cycle was not completed until it passed away from our sight, in the darkness of the grave.

Another name belonging to the same class, is that of **JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE**. Born in Seville, Spain, and trained up in the church of Rome, he entered the priesthood of that church, but was soon disgusted with its mummeries, and abandoned it in a state of mind, that was little better than atheism. After some years in political life, he became a clergyman of the church of England, and even offered himself, in a romantic sentiment, as a missionary. But doubt and wavering soon came over him; he questioned one point after another, until he past first into Unitarianism, and then to downright Deism, and died in gloom and almost despair. Like the bird that left the ark, his soul wandered over a dark, lonely and shoreless waste, until it dropped weary and exhausted into the voiceless and fathomless abyss. These struggles of his mind were not known, until the publication of his life, by **J. H. Thom**, the Unitarian pastor in Liverpool,

under whose ministry he sat for the last seven years of his life. Since that, he has been ranked with the school of unbelievers, and his name arrayed against the truth.

In no cases, perhaps, were these dualizing tendencies of the English church more signally illustrated, than in the brothers FROUDE and NEWMAN. A few years ago, the memoirs of Froude were published as a sort of first instalment of the lives of the saints, from the new school of Puseyism, and read by all right thinking men, with mingled feelings of compassion, contempt and sorrow. It reminded one of the diary of Laud, so puerile was its superstition, and so abject its bigotry. In a few years after, a brother of this mournful victim of ghostly trammels, came out in a work, not inaptly termed the "Nemesis of Faith," in which he describes the working of his mind, under those circumstances which led his brother to Puseyism, but himself to scepticism. It is deeply tinctured with Carlylism, though rather more querulous and anile in its tone, than the rugged utterances of the burly Scot. But it has had its influence on some minds, and will have on yet more, which are placed in the same circumstances with the author.

The name of JOHN HENRY NEWMAN has become so well known to the world, in connection with the Romeward tendencies of the English church, that few are ignorant of his character or career, which has ended naturally in the church of Rome. His younger brother, FRANCIS WILLIAM NEWMAN, with some of the same mental characteristics, and under the same influences, has taken the opposite direction, and in his "History of the Hebrew Monarchy;" "The Soul, her Sorrows and Aspirations;" and "Phases of Faith, or Passages from the History of my Creed;" especially the two latter, has traced his departure from the faith once delivered to the saints. It would almost seem, as if God designed to set up a warning memorial against the peril and falsehood of the common principles from which the brothers started, and which have led them to results so widely and diametrically opposite, yet re-

sults which, wide as they are asunder, are but the opposite poles of the same common error. Another individual belonging to the same class, is **FREDERICK FOXTON**, author of "Popular Christianity; its transition state and probable development," the character of which may be judged from what is designed by the London Spectator to be a commendatory remark when it declares that its prototype is found in Theodore Parker's Discourse on Religion. All these works come forth from Oxford, and show the other side of Puseyism, and the development of its principles in one direction, which is as really logical and natural, as Popery is their development in the other.

Another of this class is **NEWENHAM TRAVERS**, the successor of **W. J. Fox** in the Unitarian Chapel, South Place, Finsbury, London. He was a clergyman in the Church of England until about two years ago, when he was struck with this cold plague of the soul, and fell into a state of chilling and gloomy doubt. These doubts he confided, under seal of secrecy, to a clerical friend, who without any effort to reclaim the unhappy wanderer, reported him to his diocesan, by whom he was in due time forbidden to preach. Failing to meet that judicious counsel and sympathy in the church which he needed, he turned to the doubters, where at least he was sure of a welcome. **W. J. Fox** being about to exchange the pulpit for the political arena, recommended him as his successor, and although he broke down with embarrassment and terror in his first sermon before such an audience as usually assembled to hear **Fox**, he succeeded in his subsequent efforts in giving satisfaction, and was elected as his successor. He is not a man whose influence will be equal to his acute and eloquent predecessor, and is interesting mainly as showing the under current, which like the cold stream of air from the Blowing Cave, is setting outward from the Puseyised English Church.

Another of these converts is **EDMUND LARKEN**, Editor of "*The Leader*," who was also at one time a clergyman in the established Church, but imbibing the doctrines of Socialism,

and becoming infected with the modern French doctrines, openly ranked himself with the Rationalists, and promises to do them no small service. Within a little more than a year, he has started "*The Leader*," a weekly newspaper, to advocate these views, and is associated with Thornton Hunt, eldest son of the poet, in its editorial department. It numbers among its contributors, some of the best writers for the Westminster, and cannot fail to have its influence in disseminating this poison. We ought, perhaps, also to add to this list, CHARLES KINGSLEY, author of "*Alton Locke*," "*Yeast, a problem*," the "*Saints Tragedy*," and a volume of Sermons, besides other publications, and F. D. Maurice, Professor of Divinity in King's College, London, and the author of several works whose aim and tendency are identical with Alton Locke. He still remains in the Church of England, but is launched on this outward current, and his writings at least tend in the same general direction, even should he not follow Larken, Travers and White. And to those who have read the articles in Kitto's Cyclopædia on the Creation, Deluge, Sabbath, &c., the list will also require the addition of the name of BADEN POWELL, Savilian Professor of Geometry in Oxford. We cannot, however, enlarge on this point, having said enough to show the nature and depth of the influence that is setting out like some great arctic current from the frozen regions of the English establishment, and threatening a breaking up at no distant day, of that icy concretion of formalism, thus undermined from so many different directions.

It is of course to be expected that the dissenting bodies could hardly escape the influences that have produced such results in the establishment. Accordingly we find that some of the ablest actors in this great movement, are from this source. First in influence and in time stands WILLIAM J. FOX, formerly pastor of a Unitarian chapel, but now Member of Parliament from Oldham. He was an English Independent, and in early life a weaver. He was placed after a preparatory

education at Homerton College, under the tuition of Dr. John Pye Smith. They who have read his Scripture and Geology, will not wonder, that whilst the venerable tutor remained an humble Christian, some of the principles of interpretation sanctioned by him, should, in such a mind as that of Fox, germinate into Rationalism. Accordingly he soon joined the Unitarians, and after remaining with them a number of years, he plunged into downright Deism, and is now far out on the lonely and wintry sea of unbelief. He is a man of great vigor of intellect, and during the height of his popularity as a preacher, attracted one of the most intellectual congregations in London, embracing such men as Brougham, Talfourd, Macauley, Shiel, and others of the first note in England. He has published some sermons and lectures to the working classes, which display a strong but perverted mind. Having during his ministry discussed in his pulpit all the great social questions of the day, he has naturally forsaken the pulpit for the forum, and is now figuring in Parliament. He is head and shoulders above every other leader of this great Rebellion, and stands with Carlyle in the fore front of the gloomy and glaring ranks that are arraying against the truth. He is however near his threescore and ten, and has not probably a very long career to run.

Prominent also in this class is GEORGE DAWSON of Birmingham, formerly a Baptist minister, now preacher or weekly lecturer to the Church of the Saviour, where fifteen hundred "Brummagen cockneys" assemble stately to hear the chatterings of this daw. He is a mere mouth piece of Carlyle's, and translates the rough and stormy words of the Ecclefechan prophet, into the piping tones of Cockneyese, and with much adroitness and assurance peddles the translation over the land in the form of lectures and sermons. He is a sort of running pump, or intellectual hydrant through which the great reservoir of Carlyle is discharged in one fluent, ceaseless, and watery stream of dilution. Like his feathered namesake however, under similar circumstances, he is scarcely acknowl-

edged either by those whom he has left, or by those to whom he would attach himself, under cover of this borrowed plumage.

In the same general class, but superior in some respects perhaps to Dawson, is **JOSEPH BARKER**, formerly a Methodist minister, then a Unitarian, and within a few years an adherent of this new school of unbelief. He disseminates his sentiments through a weekly journal, and cheap editions of such works as Parker's Discourse on Religion, and thus reaches very many of the middle and lower classes.

Superior to both these in intellect and perhaps in influence, is **THOMAS COOPER**, once a local preacher in the Methodist Church, but imprisoned for his active participation in the Chartist riots of 1842. During his imprisonment he wrote a poem, which on its publication after his enlargement, attracted no small attention and praise. Encouraged by this he has turned his attention to literary pursuits, and, by popular lectures, a course of which he delivered on Strauss' Life of Jesus, he dilutes the poison of unbelief to the taste of the lower and working classes. He belongs to the radical and destructive wing of the Reformers, and is sowing seed which may have a very bloody and terrible harvest.

In this same general class, but immeasurably above them in reverence and conservative feeling, is **J. D. MORELL**, an Independent, and a pupil of Dr. Wardlaw, author of the "History of the Philosophy of the 19th Century," "Lectures on the Philosophical tendencies of the Age," and the "Philosophy of Religion." In the latter work especially, he takes ground which is essentially Rationalistic, and really abandons the whole field to the enemy. Having however discussed his theory of inspiration at length a year ago, we need only advert to him in passing, as one of those who yet look towards the shore, fancying that the shore has somehow left its position and is leaving them at anchor in their moorings, whilst in point of fact, they have slipped their cables unconsciously, and are drifting backwards far out to the wide and trackless deep.

Another important section of this movement has come from the ranks of Unitarianism. First in this cohort is JAMES MARTINEAU, preacher to a large and wealthy congregation in Liverpool, and one of the Editors of the *Prospective Review*. He has not yet gone as far as his masculine sister Harriet, but has outgrown all real faith in a historical Christianity.

His *animus* may be learned from a sentence in an article in the *Westminster*, referred to him as its author, in which speaking of a vicarious atonement, he says, that "to accept the offer of such a doctrine, would be unworthy of a noble heart; for he who would not rather be damned, than escape through the sufferings of innocence and sanctity, is so far from the qualifications of a saint, that he has not even the magnanimity of Milton's fiends." He has published two series of discourses entitled "Endeavors after the Christian Life," which embody the early phases of his belief, and "The Rationale of Religious Inquiry; or the question stated of Reason, the Bible, and the Church: with a critical letter on Rationalism, Miracles, and the authority of Scripture, by the late Rev. Joseph Blanco White," which we presume embodies the later and darker phases of his creed, as his soul is gradually passing into the deep shadow of that eclipse from which he may only emerge to pass into the blackness of darkness for ever. In the same general category, though not so low in unbelief as Martineau, we must rank CHARLES WICKSTEED of Leeds, and JOHN JAMES TAYLER of Manchester; both of them Editors of the *Prospective Review*, and Unitarian ministers.

MISS HARRIET MARTINEAU, after descending from one deep to another, has at last reached a lowest deep that is bottomless, in which she can sink on *ad infinitum*, for in her last publication she avows herself an atheist and a materialist. In her "Letters on the Laws of Man's Nature and Development" to Henry George Atkinson, she avows her disbelief in God and immortality, with an exultation which seems strange to those who have not yet seen the glory and privilege of being a brute. This *reductio ad absurdum* of these tenets we hope may open the eyes of some before they topple into

the same awful and fathomless abyss. Even the Westminster, that can swallow a camel without wincing, provided it comes laden with wares from Germany, rather boggles at this monster, and raises a voice of feeble and faltering protest. It however may in the end be found, that it is not easy to jump but half-way down a precipice, however desirous we may be of stopping there; and that the *in medio tutissimus*, like other adages has its limitations, beyond which it is not either safe or true as a rule of faith or practice.

There is another class of minds that are outside of these, and occupy that circle of theological speculation that blends with literature. This is a wide and inviting field on which we cannot enter at length now, but we cannot avoid noticing it in passing. Many of the most prominent names in English literature at this moment, are not only tinctured with these views, but infuse them stealthily into their writings. Leigh Hunt in his Autobiography, recently republished in this country, openly avows himself in favor of this "new reformation," as he terms it, and sketches out his conceptions of the Church of the future; a dream not unlike the Theophilanthropism of France, in which, when they found that religion was a necessity to human society, they tried to get up a substitute for Christianity. But the sentimental Church of English Infidelity, like that of France, will be very much like the erection of gas works to take the place of the sun. In spite of the brilliancy of bracket and pendant, the world will at last prefer the light that comes from heaven, and the so-called reformation of this century, like that of the last, will but prove that the foolishness of God, is wiser than man. To this class also belong William and Mary Howitt, quiet, gentle, Quaker people, who do not think that religion is really worth the trouble of writing much about it, and content themselves with staying at home on Sunday to read Tennyson instead of the Bible, and writing pretty stories about German and English life. Their influence is negative, and yet we may add very positive in favor of the nihilism with which many wish to supplant Christianity. Tennyson

also must be placed in the same general category. There is so much that is really beautiful and Christian in his poetry, that it is with reluctance that we put him in this place. But no one who has carefully read his later works, especially that magnificent cenotaph "In Memoriam," which he erected to the shade of the gifted Hallam, can fail to perceive his sentiments, through the studied obscurity which he throws around them. He has expressed his policy in LII. of the "In Memoriam," in language too significant to be misunderstood.

"Hold then the good : define it well :

For fear divine philosophy

Should push beyond her mark, and be

Procuress to the Lords of Hell."

He holds these new doctrines esoterically, and only hints them in his poetry, knowing that the seed will take root where he most desires it to grow. With him also must we class Bailey, the author of "Festus," who in that wild and wonderful poem, confesses himself "an Omnist," a believer in all religions, which of course is just equivalent to confessing himself a believer in none. Mill, Grote, Thackeray, and we fear Macauley, sympathise strongly with this school of thinking, and the first two at least, very distinctly avow this sympathy. The literary organ of this class, which is most known in this country is the *Westminster Review*. This pernicious journal, which, through Scott's republication, has been circulated widely through this country, and unsuspectingly admitted into Christian families, has always been an enemy to vital Christianity. Every number for years past, has had an infidel article from Martineau, Fox, or some writer of the same stamp, which was thus surreptitiously the vehicle of carrying poison to minds that would have rejected it in the form of avowed scepticism. It has recently, we understand, passed into the hands of Chapman, the great infidel publisher of London, and is to be under the editorial supervision of John Stuart Mill, and of course, under these new auspices, will be openly and avowedly antichristian. We are glad that it has at length run up the black flag, for

now we trust that its piratical attacks on the truth may be avoided by many who were deceived by the colors under which it sailed. We regret that our limits compel us to touch lightly on this branch of our theme, and hope that some one whose leisure and reading will qualify him for the task, may be induced to take up this topic and lay bare in detail, the sceptical elements that are infused into the modern literature of England, that our youth may at least be warned, and not be allowed to imbibe the poison unconsciously, from the pages of authors who are spoken of with unqualified commendation, even by religious newspapers and periodicals. In such a survey, of course, must also be included a set of influences which we can barely allude to, but which are by no means the least potent; we mean the opposition of science, falsely so called. Infidelity is busy in suborning science to give testimony against the truth, and although like the witnesses hired to testify against Him who was the embodied truth, their witnessings do not agree, yet, as in that case, where there is a foregone sentence of condemnation already passed in the heart, it is easy to obtain a pretext to raise the cry of "crucify him! crucify him." Such a survey as this, if made by such a pen as Hugh Miller's, would present a rich treat, for we may say of many of these pseudo-philosophers as the witty Charles II. said of Vossius, "really this is a strange man, he can believe every thing but the Bible."

The sketch which we have given of this movement, hasty and imperfect as it is, will show that it is not one to be either neglected or despised. That the church of God is safe, we firmly believe, for it is founded upon a rock which neither earth nor hell can uproot or shatter. But that a storm of fierce and terrible power is ere long to assail that church, we believe to be indicated at once by the page of prophecy and the signs of the times. The days are looming up to our vision that were long ago described when there shall be "signs in the sun and the moon, and on the earth distress of nations and perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, and men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after the things that are

to come upon the earth ;” and when the beast and the false prophet shall summon their armies to go down into that dark and terrible valley of slaughter, where the last great contest in this mighty campaign of six thousand years shall be decided. In these musterings of unbelief from so many sources, we see the gathering of the squadrons that are to descend to that dread and fearful scene, whose distant picturing reddens the canvass of the Revelation. In what form it shall come, no human wisdom can predict, but come it shall, for thus it is written. And whatever interpretation we may give of the beast and false prophet, it is a startling fact that Popery and Infidelity are gradually approximating in their principles and sympathies, and showing obvious indications of a Herod-and-Pilate union against the cause of Christ. Let any man read Newman’s “Theory of Development,” and the theory of development sustained by Mackay, or even by Morell, on the rationalistic ground: or read the “Battle of the Churches” in the Westminster for January 1851, and he will be startled at the trifling shade of difference between the fundamental principle of infidelity, and that on which the Romish church is placed by her profoundest and ablest defenders. The same fact is manifest in the latest developments of the Positive Philosophy of Comte, in which, although an avowed atheist, he proposes actually to organize his infidelity into a church, after the model of the Church of Rome. The facts we have presented in regard to Oxford, the case of Brownson in this country, and other considerations, show the strength of the sympathy that exists between these two great forms of anti-Christ. At this moment there is a stronger sympathy between Popery and Infidelity, than between either and Evangelical Christianity; and there is nothing in their principles to prevent an union of their forces to crush this common enemy, if such an effort were feasible. Hence it is time that the Protestant churches had begun to awake to this common danger, and present a broader and more unbroken front to its approach. That the infidel crisis through which Germany has passed, and through which

England's passing must reach us, is as certain as the westward course of the sun. The agencies are already at work, and the Parkers, Emersons, Garrisons, Greeleys and others are busy in plying them, and in diffusing broad-cast the seeds of ruin. Swarms of emigrants whom the reaction of 1849-'50 has driven out from Europe are scattered over our country diffusing the principles of Socialism, Red Republicanism and Infidelity, wherever they obtain a lodgment. As in England, these doctrines are linked with plausible theories of human rights, and social reforms, whose showy sophisms allure the shallow into the adoption of principles totally subversive of the fundamental authority of the Bible. Thus a soil is preparing for the reception of their creed, of what is magniloquently termed the Church of the future, a soil which unless preoccupied with better seed, will as certainly give root to this, as the earth untilled, gives root and growth to thorns and briars. Hence if we would be ready for our master's work, we must gird ourselves to meet this danger which is assuredly coming upon us, with the certain influx of English and German modes of thought, which every year is diffusing more widely through our country.

But there is nothing in this survey to excite any alarm in any Christian's heart. In many respects, the infidelity of the present, is identical in its principles with all the infidelity of the past. Wherein it differs, it takes ground nearer the truth. Its first phase in the early ages, admitted the miracles of Christ, as did Porphyry and the Toldoth Jeshu of the Jews, but ascribed them to Satanic agency. This ground being untenable, the next great position was, that all was imposture, facts and records, as was contended by the early Deists. This was abandoned, and it was next contended by the early Rationalism, that the facts recorded were not miraculous at all, but only common events magnified in the relation of them. This also is abandoned, and a higher position assumed that all is true; facts and records, but not the highest truth. Christianity is a noble, divine, and holy thing, but not the noblest or holiest development of the divine for which we are to

look. Here then infidelity has been brought to the very threshold of the truth. It stands sightless and unabashed, before that magnificent temple, that was reared by apostle, prophet and martyr, and denies its glorious symmetry, because it sees not these splendid proportions. Thus step by step it has been forced nearer to the truth, until now it confronts that truth with little more than a confession of absolute blindness. Let the serious infidels of our day, only see Christianity as Newton, Pascal and Bacon saw it, and as every regenerate soul sees it, and on their own principles, they will sit down at the feet of Jesus. But as Christianity is the same now that it was in Pascal's or Newton's day, all that is confessedly needed, is that the prayer of the prophet at Dothan be put up and answered, Lord open their eyes that they may see. What we need then, to postpone the terrible crisis of collision that impends, or to make it less fearful, is a more complete unfolding of the glory of Christianity as a theory and a doctrine; of the glory of Christianity as a practice and a life. We need but the awakening of the church from her apathy, to show that there dwells within her the shout of a king. We need, in a word, one great revival of religion, that like some mighty Pentecostal rush, shall wrap in its living flame the divided messengers of the ascended Lord; shall unloose their faltering tongues, and unseal their slumbering hearts, and cause them so to utter, in word and deed, this great salvation, that all shall hear in tones that they can understand, the wonderful works of God.

There are many other thoughts that suggest themselves to a reflecting mind on this fruitful topic, but the limited space left to us, demands that we turn to the work of Mr. Mackay, which we must glance at more slightly than we could otherwise desire.

It is perhaps the ablest exposition of this new creed, in some respects, which has been issued; for most of its former efforts have been in demolition rather than construction. The general idea of the book, is that the human intellect has had a gradual development of the religious element, especially

among the Greeks and Hebrews, and its object is to trace and describe that development. It is divided into ten sections. The first is termed "intellectual religion," and tries to show that neither the Greek nor Hebrew religion was of this character. It is coolly remarked, that "the religion of the Hebrews was peculiarly of that sensual and sentimental kind which it is almost impossible to keep within the bounds of a wholesome enthusiasm; that much of the devotional language of their sacred books must be placed to the account of their rudeness and ignorance." This will give a sufficient notion of the *animus* of the book, without any extended quotation. He then discusses ancient cosmogony, the metaphysical and moral ideas of God, as respectively developed among the Greeks and Hebrews; the theory of mediation in its various developments, and the different manifestations of Christianity. These topics are discussed with great industry and show of learning, and much really interesting matter is here collected. But we may say of most of the speculations here, as Leibnitz said of a book in his time; "what is new in it is not true, and what is true is not new." The doctrine of a primitive revelation which exists in some obscure form in the religion and literature of many nations, is one that has been maintained at large by many Christian writers. This doctrine covers all the truth that is in these elaborate volumes, and obtains an unintentional corroboration from these researches. It is shown, that the events recorded in the Old Testament are alluded to in the mythologies of most of the Eastern nations, and thus the facts which infidelity refused to receive from a Stillingfleet, a Bryant, a Gale or a Faber, she unconsciously establishes herself in attempting to support her own hypothetical fancies. Thus an unlooked for and undesigned corroboration is given to the Scripture narrative from a source whence it was least to be expected. The very pedantry and parade of quotation, which cumbers these pages to utter weariness, and make them so heavy and tedious, are in this respect advantageous, for they accumulate materials for a future and higher use. It is a huge lumber house and quarry

which we hope yet to see worked. Thus, as in so many other cases, the wickedness of man has been made unconsciously to do the work of God. There is however a flippant irreverence in handling the most awful themes, that makes the blood run cold and the heart recoil in sheer disgust. The feeling produced, is that mingled and puzzled state of mind with which one would have looked at a baboon in the Holy of Holies; if the baboon had been supposed to have a *soul*. At one time we are ready to smile, when we hear him say, that "the difficulties in reconciling Genesis with geology might have admitted an easier solution in the rules of prosody, and the arrangement of strophe, and antistrophe," and wonder how the harmony of the spheres would sound if scanned according to the *propria quæ maribus*. Then we are stirred with alternate sadness and indignation as we see the hallowed rites of Jehovah mingled with the bloody orgies of Moloch, and the high and sacred words of the Incarnate, bandied about with such simical grimace and chatter in blended confusion with the words of the heathen and the unbeliever. And then as we emerge from this tangled thicket of barren and thorny speculation, we ask ourselves mournfully, is this all that infidelity has to offer the human soul? Is this bewildering babble about Zeus, and Zoroaster, and Elohim, and Chronos, all that she has to tell us about the dread mysteries that press upon the soul in its sin? Has she nothing but these perverted fables, and these inane chattering about dead mythologies to tell us when we ask her, if a man die shall he live again? how shall a man be just with God? and what shall I do to be saved? Has she nothing to tell us of the loved and lost ones whose dust we have mournfully laid in the grave? Has she nothing to whisper in the ear of the poor, the lonely, the oppressed, and the aged, to assure them that these light afflictions which are but for a moment, shall work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory? Has she nothing to breathe into the heart of the dying, to kindle the eye and tip the tongue with the fire of holy rapture as he looks up to the city that

hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God? Alas! on these points she is dumb and blind; a poor sightless, voiceless, and hopeless thing, that stumbles on in her mightiest and tallest shape, like Mirabeau, into "the great unknown," or like Hobbes, to the dread "leap in the dark." O, it is with a feeling of unutterable relief that we turn from this dark and tangled thicket; this gloomy and horrible everglade of unbelief, to the sunny brightness of the green pastures, and soft flowing waters of the blessed Word. And it is with a new and gladdening feeling of grateful trust, that we turn away from this grim Druidic oracle, all shrouded in mystery and shade, to that meek and loving One who bare our griefs and carried our sorrows, and who can be tempted in all points like as we are, and yet be the sinless, almighty and omniscient One; and clasping his feet in our clinging confidence, exclaim, "Lord, to whom shall we go but unto thee; for thou only hast the words of eternal life."

ART. II.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

By JOHN CUSTIS DARBY, Esq., Lexington, Ky.

Who is this man, and whence his philosophy? He is the Carlyle of America, answer some. He is the great American thinker say others. He is the product of Cambridge philosophy and of Boston religion, say we. He talks about Egypt, and Socrates, and Plato for the one time; and about Montaigne, and Rousseau, and Voltaire, and Shakspeare, and Goethe for another time. The difference between him and the former, is this; they wrote by the light of the morning dawn; they were sincere men; they thought what they wrote; they produced the philosophy of their day; they had