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**Art. I.—THE FORMATION OF OUR STANDARDS.\***

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“ON Saturday last, the Assembly of Divines began at Westminster, according to the ordinance of both the Houses of Parliament, where Dr. Twist of Newbery, in the County of Berks, their Prolocutor, preached on John xiv : 18—‘I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you,’ a text pertinent to these times of sorrow and anguish and misery, to raise up the drooping spirits of the people of God who lie under the pressure of popish wars and combustions.” In these simple and somewhat sad words, the parliamentary newspaper of the time records

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\* Minutes of the Sessions of the WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY OF DIVINES while engaged in preparing their *Directory for Church Government, Confession of Faith, and Catechisms* (Nov. 1644 to March, 1649), from transcripts of the originals, procured by a Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Edited by PROF. MITCHELL and REV. JOHN STRUTHERS. William Blackwood & Sons, London. [A noteworthy volume, and which, by its notes, preface, introduction, and index of names (there should be by all means, also, an index of topics), is made doubly valuable. I wish it might be reprinted, and so brought within the reach of every member of Pan-Presbyterianism.]

One thing is evident: if the grand department of English in our colleges is ever to become what it ought to become—a prominent factor in the very highest culture—and if the method upon which we are teaching it is ever to rise to the scientific and practical, then must the lovers of English and higher education address themselves with becoming ardor to the work before them. If our methods are wrong, we are to correct them. If, being right, they cannot be applied, a way must be opened for their application. The teaching of English is applied philosophy. We submit that the model instructor in English and all other branches is a philosopher, and not a pedagogue or pedant, an expositor of generic and germinal principles and not an official censor of recitations.

It is to Plato and Socrates that we are to resort as examples, and not to Diogenes or Cato.

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### Art. X.—HOW A PASTOR WOULD MEET INFIDELITY.

By Rev. EPHER WHITAKER, Southold, L. I.

THE present phases of infidelity in this country are mainly three, viz.: materialism, spiritualism, and secularism. We name them in the reverse order of their destructiveness to the souls of men in our own day and land.

Materialism proposes to convert star-dust into life and plants and animals and man by physical forces only; also to generate ideas of virtue, duty, right, and wrong, moral obligation, by external excitement of the senses and consequent impressions of the brain; to turn thought into material motion and the movements of matter into thought.

But it is needless to master all the details and consequences of the theories of Lamarck and Oken and Vogt, in order to understand their main positions as materialists. So with Comte, Mill, Spencer, as well as Häckel, Büchner, Cope, Chapman, and others. And whoever accepts their doctrines must reject those of Moses, Isaiah, Paul, and John, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

One way of dealing with this phase of infidelity is to show that materialists do not agree as to the facts which their theories include. Take, for example, life and its origin. Some hold with the assertion of Lamarck, made at the beginning of this century, that "life is only a physical phenomenon." Others accept Spencer's *dictum*, that life is "the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations." We can understand that. For there is the stove with the self-regulating damper, and we can see the continuous adjustment of the internal relations of the fires to the external relations of the temperature. That, according to Spencer, is life.

Some maintain that "the evolution of life" includes its origin, and others attribute this to creation. Thus, Mr. Darwin speaks of "life with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms, or into one," but Dr. Chapman says there are "no vital forces which are not convertible into physical ones;" and Prof. Barker has undertaken to prove "the correlation of vital and physical forces," and he has undoubtedly proved the inadequacy of his own logic.

Some say that spontaneous generation takes place at the present time, and that the "mind is the impression of the brain derived from the external world through the medium of the senses," and "if a Newton could be developed from an ancient Briton, or his living representative, an Australian, an Australian could be developed from an ape." Others say, produce your ape developed into an Australian or ancient Briton. And not seeing him brought into view, they deny that mind is only impressions of the brain. They also reject the evidence adduced in support of spontaneous generation. They do not admit that the origin of a living being is parallel to the origin of a crystal. They say, with Prof. Tyndall, that notions of natural evolution "represent an absurdity too monstrous to be entertained by any sane mind."

On the other hand, Mr. Darwin avers that man does come through the monkey from some far remote animal greatly inferior to the monkey. While Mr. Wallace, another advocate of the theory of natural selection, declared that this will not account for the development of man, and appeals to the differences between savage men and the brutes in respect to their brains, their hair, their voices, and other features. He says he does not know how Mr. Huxley passes from those vital phenomena which consist only of movements of particles of matter to those other phenomena which we term thought, sensation, or consciousness."

Thus it is easy to set the materialists at war with each other, while we take little part in the contest.

There is another way of dealing with them, for they are generally over-rated, and their arrogance often passes for superiority. It may be sometimes well to show that they build their pyramid top downward; that their generalizations are far too broad for their facts; that their principles require them to keep close to their physics, and not to introduce, as they do, speculative and metaphysical elements into their work. And it is not a hard task to make it manifest, "that speculation is exceedingly dizzy and dim-eyed among the leaders of this phase of infidelity, and that nowhere else does logic more pitably limp and stumble than among them. For one illustration, see Huxley with his "*Physical Basis of Life*" in the light of Sterling's "*As Regards Protoplasm*."

It may be occasionally not amiss to point out that the various schools of nescience and false relativity carefully ignore what every sound and thoughtful mind well knows. For the tendency of materialism unceasingly is to deny that we know anything more than sensation gives us, and to affirm that soul and body are identical, or at least that mind is no more than a function of the body, and can not be known to have an independent existence and its own laws; that it is impossible to know any one who "is a spirit, infinite, eternal, unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth;" that it is unreasonable to worship the unknown and unknowable, to have any regard for it in our daily conduct, to cherish any hope or fear respecting it, or in respect to any existence of our own beyond the duration of our mortal bodies.

Now, in opposition to all this, it may be needful to show that we know our own minds as well as we know our own bodies or our own homes, or any other thing, and that we know the Creator and Ruler of the world, so far as his works manifest his existence and character, as well as we know the founder and ruler of any kingdom among men by his works.

The best way to deal with this phase of infidelity is to expose its narrowness, its ignorance, its self-conceit, and its baseness; to emphasize that superior part of man which the materialists keep out of view, to appeal to the spiritual part, to magnify the moral powers, to explain the moral contrast between man and the brute creation; to exalt the uniqueness and grandeur of his conscience; the nobility of his desire for immortality; the benign influence of the expectation of an eternity of holiness in the worship and service and love of the infinitely holy and benevolent God. The way to do this has been

shown by Dr. Henry B. Smith in his review of the "*New Faith of Strauss.*" \*

But there is a spiritualism, as well as a materialism, which avowedly or virtually rejects the Bible, and it is far more pervasive and destructive, because more attractive to the people.

There is a reason for the popular choice, according to the well-known utterances of Lord Bacon, namely: "I had rather believe all the fables of the legend, and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind." Materialism is cold and repulsive. It is heartless and hopeless. Spiritualism affords scope for the aspirations of the imaginative, and gratifies the sentiment of the fanciful. It clasps the heart in bereavement, and directs the grief which materialism cannot even touch. When death invades the families of John W. Edmonds, Robert Dale Owen, the chief mourners, in their anguish, fly not for sympathy and support to the grim and desperate negative of "the dirt philosophy." They may be impelled to a false spiritualism, but to spiritualism of some kind they will go.

We must prevent men from going astray by teaching them that Christ is the resurrection and the life. He came from heaven to bring life and immortality to light through the gospel; the heart of the infinitely tender God is in him, so that he is touched with the feeling of our infirmities; his ear is open to the moan of the smitten one; he bears our griefs and carries our sorrows; he has atoned for our sins, and gone to prepare a place for us in his Father's house of many mansions; and all who trust him, even the thief who died upon the cross, pass by death immediately into paradise with the Lord. We must make known how this has been the safe and sweet haven of peace, through all the Christian ages, for the soul tossed by the storms and billows of this world, where we cannot say there is no more sea. We must intimate that God has revealed in his word all that divine wisdom and love deem needful for our use, in order to prepare us for an eternity of bliss, and that Christ holds in his own hand the keys of death and of the world unseen—that world without end, to which we hasten.

But our supreme peril comes from another quarter; and to name the most destructive phase of infidelity—for the want of a better word—we call it secularism. This brushes away all science, philosophy, religion, which hinders the gratification of lust. It is worldly, sensual, devilish. It appears in the form of the most delicate voluptuousness, and also in the form of the most besotted sensuality. If it seems to worship man more, it is only to make this inferior god more obedient

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\* See *Presbyterian Quarterly*, April 1874.

to the demands of its supreme deity, namely, pleasure. Perhaps, the most expressive symbols of its devotions are the dance and the wine-cup, the fast horse and the swift yacht, the Black Crook and the White Fawn. It scorns the word of God, and mocks the Most Holy One. It tramples upon his Sabbath, and is, indeed, too eager in the pursuit of voluptuousness and sensual indulgence to hear the warning: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting."

There never was a time when men were more enslaved to this present evil world than multitudes have been for these last years. Wonderful is their energy in the attainment of their low and transient objects! Prometheus chained to the rock was not more firmly held to it, than many of these men are bound fast to their business or their pleasure. Speak to them of immortal rest, or of sin, holiness, heaven, hell. They smile inwardly at your simplicity, perhaps; but more likely, with all the soul which they possess, they scorn you as a dreamer, a visionary.

From this phase of infidelity comes the greatest danger to that which is most excellent and holy.

It asks no scientific theories, no wise-drawn philosophies, to justify it. For it rejects the word of God and his claims to man's worship and service, just because it will satiate the lust of gluttony and drunkenness, the rage of impurity, the idolatry of covetousness, the arrogance of pride, the ambition of power, or the voluptuousness of fashion.

This madness for sordid and momentary gratifications degrades all that is most worthy in man; binds him down to selfishness; fits him, in this world—

"To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty;"

and, in the world to come, to share the hell of the lost soul who fared sumptuously every day in this life, but finds no alleviation of his pain in the place of torment.

There is no power on earth, and but one in heaven, that can do it. We must turn upon it the light and the heat of the Sun of righteousness. We must bring it under his omnipotent power, so that not only ice, but rock, will melt, and nothing be "hid from the heat" thereof. In a word, we must dissolve it in the almighty flames of divine love.

In this way we must stand up for God's word, and not conform to this world, but transform it into the likeness of the Perfect One, so that we may be able to say, "Now, thanks be unto God, which always

causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life."

#### Art. XI.—PALMER'S LIFE OF THORNWELL.

Whittet & Shepperson, of Richmond, Va., issue, in a style uniform with four elegant octavo volumes of his works previously published, *The Life and Letters of James Henley Thornwell, D.D., LL.D., ex-President of the South Carolina College, late Professor of Theology in the Theological Seminary at Columbia, South Carolina*, by B. M. PALMER, D. D., LL.D., Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, New Orleans, La.

It is rare that any volume of biography is as fortunate as this, alike in its distinguished subject and author—and, therefore, as to its wealth of matter and felicity of style. Dr. Palmer, at once the admiring pupil, friend, and coadjutor of Dr. Thornwell, in intense sympathy with his spirit, doctrine, and policy in the great matters in which he became the foremost leader, was, if not his equal, *facile princeps* among all next below him. He has, therefore, in many important respects, succeeded to his leadership in the Southern Presbyterian Church, and in the great influence exerted by that body upon the public opinion and policy of the South. His pen is only less powerful than that of the subject whose life and traits it depicts in a manner so masterly and appreciative, so loving and reverent, that even his occasional exaggerations interest without offending. Dr. Palmer had a subject not unworthy of such laborious and enthusiastic delineation, not merely as a personal memorial of him, but on account of the great public interests which Dr. Thornwell touched and shaped and in ways as manifold as his gifts were versatile. For, whatever his infirmities, he was, every inch of him, a "public soul."

Born in 1812, in poverty and obscurity, his mother, who was a woman of strong mind and devoted piety, belonging to the Baptist Church, early imbued his mind with those Calvinistic principles of which he was through life an able expounder and champion. Early left an orphan, his extraordinary gifts were then discovered by gentlemen who bore the expenses of his education till his graduation at an early age, from the college of South Carolina, of which he afterward became a distinguished Professor and President.