Substance and Shadow:

OR MORALITY AND RELIGION
IN THEIR RELATION TO
LIFE: AN ESSAY UPON
THE PHYSICS OF
CREATION.

BY

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THE INTRODUCTION.

The leading words of my title-page call for a precise definition, in order that the reader may clearly discern the aim of the discussion to which I invite his attention.

By morality I mean that sentiment of self-hood or property which every man not an idiot feels in his own body. It is a state of conscious freedom or rationality, exempting him from the further control of parents or guardians, and entitling him in his own estimation and that of his fellows, to the undivided ownership of his words and deeds. It is the basis of conscience in man, or what enables him to appropriate good and evil to himself, instead of ascribing the former as he may one day learn to do exclusively to celestial, the latter exclusively to infernal influence. The word is often viciously used as a synonyme of spiritual goodness, as when we say, “A is a very moral man,” meaning a just one; or, “B is a very immoral man,” meaning an unjust one. No man can be either good or evil, either just or unjust, but by virtue of his morality; i.e. unless he have selfhood or freedom entitling him to own his action. This is a conditio sine qua non. The action by which he
becomes pronounced either the one sort of man or the other could not be his action, and consequently could never afford a basis for his spiritual development, unless he possessed this original moral force, or strict neutrality with respect to heaven and hell; but would on the contrary be an effect in every case of overpowering spiritual influence. We should be very careful, therefore, not to confound the condition of an event with the event itself, as we do when we call the good man moral, and deny morality to the evil man. For if the good man alone be moral, while the evil man is immoral, then morality ceases to be any longer the distinctive badge of human nature itself, which separates it from all lower natures (so furnishing a platform for God's spiritual descent into it), and becomes the mere arbitrary endowment of certain persons. The error in question originates in, at least is greatly promoted by, our habit of calling the decalogue “the moral law.” As the law is instinct with an ineffable Divine sanctity, we get at last to think that the word which we so commonly couple with it partakes of right the same sanctity, and accordingly call only the man who obeys it moral, while he who disobeys it is immoral. In point of fact, however, morality means nothing more nor less than that state of natural neutrality or indifference to good and evil, to heaven and hell, which distinguishes man from all other existence, and endows him alone with selfhood or freedom. Thus the term properly designates our natural majority or manhood, what every man, as man, possesses in common with every other man.

By religion I mean — what is invariably meant by the term where the thing itself still exists — such a conscience on man's part of a forfeiture of the Divine favor, as perpetually urges him to make sacrifices of his ease, his convenience, his wealth, and if need be his life, in order to restore himself, if so it be possible, to that favor. This is religion in its literal form; natural religion; religion as it stands authenticated by the universal instincts of the race, before it has undergone a spiritual conversion into life, and while claiming still a purely ritual embodiment. It is however in this gross form the germ of all humane culture. Accordingly we sometimes use the term in an accommodated sense, i.e. to express the spiritual results with which religion is fraught rather than the mere carnal embodiment it first of all offers to such results. Thus the apostle James says: Pure and undefiled religion (i.e., religion viewed no longer as a letter, but as a spirit), is to visit the fatherless and the widow, and keep oneself unspotted from the world (i.e., has exclusive reference to the life). We also say proverbially, handsome is that handsome does; not meaning of course to stretch the word handsome out of its literal dimensions, but only by an intelligible metonymy of body for soul, or what is natural for what is spiritual, to express in a compendious way the superiority of moral to physical beauty. My reader will
always understand me, then, as using the word religion in its strictly literal signification, to indicate our ritual or ceremonious homage to the Divine name.

Now morality and religion, thus interpreted, are regarded on my title-page as concurring to promote the evolution of man's spiritual destiny on earth.

Man's destiny on earth, as I am led to conceive it, consists in the realization of a perfect society, fellowship, or brotherhood among men, proceeding upon such a complete Divine subjugation in the bosom of the race, first of self-love to brotherly love, and then of both loves to universal love or the love of God, as will amount to a regenerate nature in man, by converting first his merely natural consciousness, which is one of comparative isolation and impotence, into a social consciousness, which is one of comparative omnipresence and omnipotence; and then and thereby exalting his moral freedom, which is a purely negative one, into an aesthetic or positive form: so making spontaneity and not will, delight and no longer obligation, the spring of his activity.

But morality and religion are further regarded on the title-page as bearing, in the evolution of the spiritual destiny of man on earth, the relation respectively of substance and shadow. It only remains that I explicate this point, in order to put in the reader's hands the clue to my entire thought.

A shadow is a phenomenon of vision pro-
duced by some body intercepting the light. Thus the shadow of the tree upon the lawn is an effect of the tree intercepting the sun's rays. My shadow on the wall is an effect of my body intercepting the rays of the candle, and so forth. Evidently then three things concur to constitute a shadow: 1. a light; 2. an opaque body which drinks up or refuses to transmit its rays; 3. a background or suitable plane of projection on which such refusal becomes stamped. Thus the shadow which anything casts is strictly proportionate to its power of absorbing the light, or appropriating it to itself: which is only saying, in other words, that the shadow of a thing is the exact measure of its finiteness or imperfection, i.e. of its destitution of true being. And this remark prepares us to ask what purpose the shadow serves, what intellectual use it renders.

Obviously the use or purpose of shadows is to attest finite substance, or separate between phenomenal and real existence. Real existence is that which exists in itself, being vitalized from within. Phenomenal existence is that which exists only by virtue of its implication in something not itself, being vitalized wholly from without. In short real existence is spiritual; phenomenal existence natural. So far as I am spiritual, that is, to all the extent of my aesthetic or spontaneous life, I am a real existence, possessing life in myself. So far as I am simply natural, that is, to all the extent of my instinctual and voluntary life, I am a phenome-
nal existence, deriving my life from without. My spiritual manhood consequently casts no shadow. Whatever I do spontaneously; whatever I do in obedience to the inspiration of Beauty; whatever I do, in short, from individual taste or attraction in opposition to the common instinct of self-preservation; is good and beautiful in itself, is positively or infinitely good, as being without any contrast or oppugnancy of evil. But my physical and moral existence never fails to project a shadow. Let me be as beautiful physically as Venus or Apollo, still I am not really or positively, but only actually or apparently, so; as by contrast with some opposite ugliness. Let me be morally as good as all saints and angels, it is yet not a good which is positive or stands by itself, but one which stands in the opposition of evil. In short, my beauty in the one case, and my goodness in the other, is finite; and like all finite existence claims its attendant and attesting shadow.

Clearly, then, the purpose of shadows is to attest finite or imperfect existence, existence which does not involve its own substance. The shadow which the tree casts upon the lawn, and that which my body projects upon the wall behind me, are a mute confession on the part of body and tree that they are purely finite and phenomenal existences: that while they sensibly appear to be in themselves, their being is yet in something very superior to themselves. Seek this tree a few years hence, and you will find no vestige of it remaining. Ask for this body a few months hence, possibly, and it will be indistinguishable from the dust of the earth. This is what the shadow invariably says: — that the substance which projects it is a mere appearance to the senses, not a reality to the philosophic understanding; and that if we would penetrate the world of realities we must transcend the realm of sense, the finite realm, and enter that of mind or spirit.

We now fairly discern the constitution of the shadow, and what is its rational scope and significance; and are thus prepared to interpret the greatest of shadows which we call Religion, and which falls everywhere across the page of human history darkening the face of day, turning the fairest promise of nature to blight, underling the most towering pride of morality by a subtle conscience of sin, and forbidding man to content himself with a righteousness, a peace and a power which shall be anything less than Divine.

The reader recalls the constitution of the shadow, namely, that it is always an effect of some opaque body intercepting the rays of light. Thus the shadow which the tree projects upon the lawn is an effect of the tree intercepting the sun's rays; and the shadow of my person on the wall an effect of my body intercepting the rays of the lamp. In like manner precisely this stupendous shadow designated by the name of Religion, is an effect produced by our moral consciousness intercepting the rays of the Divine Truth as they shine forth from
man's social destiny. The three elements which determine its constitution as a shadow are thus distributed: History being the sole field of its projection; Morality the opaque substance which alone projects it; and the Social principle, the principle of a perfect society fellowship or brotherhood among men, being the great Divine light, of whose obscuration by morality religion has always been at once the shadow and the scourge. So much definition seems due by way of preface in vindication of the title of my book, or in order to apprise my reader that I regard Religion and Morality as respectively shadow and substance in their relation to the social development of the race. Society — fellowship — equality — fraternity, whatever name you give it, is the central sun of human destiny, originating all its motion, and determining the pathway of its progress towards infinite Love and Wisdom. Morality and Religion together constitute the subject-earth of self-love which revolves about this centre, now in light now in shade; morality being the illuminated side of that love, religion its obscured side; the one constituting the splendor of its day, the other the darkness of its night. Morality is the summer lusthoid and luxuriance of self-love, clothing its mineral ribs with vegetable grace, permeating its rigid trunk with sap, decorating its gnarled limbs with foliage, glorifying every reluctant virgin bud and every modest wifely blossom into rich ripe motherly fruit. Religion is the icy winter which blights this summer fertility, which arrests the ascent of its vivifying sap, and humbles its superb life to the ground, in the interests of a spring that shall be perennial, and of autumns bursting with imperishable fruit. In other words, religion has no substantive force. Her sole errand on earth has been to dog the footsteps of morality, to humble the pride of self-hood which man derives from nature, and so soften his interiors to the reception of Divine Truth, as that truth stands fulfilled in the organization of human equality or fellowship. The backbone of morality has long been providentially broken. The moral force men once had, the power of controlling natural appetite and passion, has abated, and in its place has come a sense of God's presence in Nature, and the aspiration to realize in life the infinite Beauty which she reveals. Almost no one is now strong by himself, strong against the floods of natural arrogance and cupidity which are sure to assail him, but only by association with others. Scarcely any one resists the temptation to which he is naturally prone on religious grounds, or from a sentiment of reverence to the Divine name, but only on social grounds or from a sentiment of what is due to good-fellowship. The failure to see this great change in human nature, and to organize it betimes in appropriate institutions, is what keeps us in this state of public and private demoralization, which has at last resulted in the downfall of our political edifice. See what thorough-paced unconscious scoundrels we have long had for politicians. Observe how apt
our men in office are to lend themselves to atrocious jobbery; how incessantly public and private trusts are betrayed; how our clergy in such large numbers habitually emasculate and stultify the gospel, in order to adapt it to the dainty ears of the fierce worldlings who underpin their ecclesiastical consequence; how ostentation, unbridled luxury of every sort, and the shameless apery of foreign class-pretension, even down to the decorating our imported servants with imported liveries, are corrupting us from our original democratic simplicity; how rapidly immodesty, dissipation, insolence, and the most unblushing egotism are vulgarizing the manners, hardening the visages, and hopelessly blasting the hereditary remains of innocence of our rich young men and women; — and who can doubt that Jeff Davis, Joe Smith, filibuster Walker, secretary Floyd, James Buchanan, and all the other dismal signs and portents of our current political and religious life, have been only so many providential scourges sent to devastate and consume a world long ripe for the Divine judgment?

The only possible explanation of the existing crisis in human affairs, everywhere indeed, compatible with the Divine sovereignty, is, that the moral force in man no longer subserves the great spiritual uses which once sanctified and sweetened it; that the mission which was once Divinely given it of nurturing men for the skies has been revoked and put in more competent hands. This to my judgment is as plain as any-thing can well be. The moral force was never anything but a scaffolding for God’s spiritual house in the soul; it was never designed to give permanent substance but only temporary form to God’s finished work in human nature; and when accordingly it ceases to look upon itself in this subordinate plight, and insists upon being treated not as the scaffolding but as the house, not as the mould but as the substance to be moulded, not as the matrix but as the gem, in short, not as an accessory but as a principal, it loses even this justification and becomes a positive nuisance. The social sentiment, the sense of a living organic unity among men, is accordingly fast absorbing it or taking it up into its own higher circulation, whence it will be reproduced in every regenerate aesthetic form. Art is the resurgent form of human activity. The artist or producer is the only regenerate image of God in nature, the only living revelation of the Lord on earth. Society itself will erelong release her every subject from that responsibility to his own material interests which has hitherto degraded human life to the ground, and by providing for his honest and orderly physical subsistence, leave his heart and mind and hand free to the only inspiration they spontaneously acknowledge, — that of infinite Goodness, Truth, and Beauty. This most profound and intimate life of God in our nature is grooving its way to more and more vivid consciousness in us every day; and the consequence is that we see the proud old Pagan ideal of moral virtue, a virtue which inheres in
the subject himself as finitely constituted or differentiated from all other men, giving place to the humble and harmless Christian ideal of a purely spiritual virtue in man, a virtue which inheres in him only as he becomes infinitely constituted, or united with all other men, by the unlimited indwelling of God in his nature. The Pagan goodness proceeds upon self-denial, and hence implies merit. The Christian goodness proceeds upon the frankest and fullest possible self-assertion, and hence implies boundless humility or gratitude. “After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.”

As the shadow obeys the law of the substance, so religion is bound to undergo a proportionate modification with that of morality. This is why religion in the old virile sense of the word has disappeared from sight, and become replaced by a feeble Unitarian sentimentality. The old religion involved a conscience of the profoundest antagonism between God and the worshipper, which utterly refused to be placated by anything short of an unconditional pledge of the utmost Divine mercy. The ancient believer felt himself sheerly unable to love God, or do anything else towards his salvation, were it only the lifting of a finger. To un-love was his only true loving, to un-learn his only true learning, to un-do his only true doing. The modern religionist is at once amused and amazed at these curious archaeological beginnings of his own history. He feels towards them as a virtuoso does towards what is decidedly rococo in fashion, and not seldom bestows a word of munificent Pharisaic patronage upon them, such as the opulent Mr. Ruskin dispenses to uncouth specimens of early religious Art. He has not the slightest conception of himself as a spiritual form inwardly enlivened by all God’s peace and innocence. On the contrary, he feels himself to be a strictly moral or self-possessed being, vivified exclusively by his own action, or the relations he voluntarily assumes with respect to human and Divine law. The modern believer aspires to be a saint; the ancient one abhorred to be anything but a sinner. The former looks back accordingly to some fancied era of what he calls conversion; i. e. when he passed from death to life. The latter was blissfully content to forget himself, and looked forward exclusively to his Lord’s promised spiritual advent in all the forms of a redeemed nature. The one is an absolutely changed man, no longer to be confounded with the world, and meet for the Divine approbation. The other is a totally unchanged one, only more dependent than he ever was before upon the unmitigated Divine mercy. The one feels sure of going to heaven if the Lord observes the distinctions which his own grace ordains in human character. The other feels sure of going to hell unless the Lord is blessedly indifferent to those distinctions.

I might multiply these contrasts to any length, but my desire is only briefly to indicate how very near and intimate God’s spiritual approxi-
mation to our nature must have become, in order to justify those hopes of the purely natural heart towards him. It is impossible to go to the Church in ——, and observe how skilfully and yet unconsciously the gifted minister of that parish appeals to all that is most selfish and most worldly in the bosoms of his hearers, in order to build them up a fragrant temple for the Divine indwelling, without feeling one's heart melt with adoration of the Infinite Love which is taking to itself at last the riches of the earth, and making the kingdoms of this world also forever its own. In short, both the world and the church from having been very dense are becoming almost transparent masks of God's inefable designs of mercy to universal man, and are helping along in their blind delirious way the speedy advent of a scientific human society or brotherhood upon earth. If accordingly my reader discover as he conceives in the progress of my book any animus of hostility either to the polite or the religious world, he will do me the justice to believe that such appearance is only the negative or literal aspect of a love, which on its positive or spiritual side embraces universal man.

Let me indeed insist on this justice. It is evident enough throughout my book, of course, that I assail ritual or professional religion with undissembled good-will; yet it is quite equally evident, I hope, that I never for a moment do so in the interest of irreligion, but exclusively in the interest of its own imprisoned spirit.

Daily I visit this sepulchre in which the Lord lay buried. I find the spiced linen garments in which he was embalmed reverently exhibited, and the napkin that was about his sacred head tenderly folded away and cherished; but no familiar feature of his vanished form remains; he is indeed no longer there but risen. All that was late so helpless in him has become glorified and triumphant; all that was late so human and finite has become Divine and infinite. I find, in other words, any amount of literal or personal homage addressed to Christ in the church; but never a glance that I can discern of spiritual recognition. And yet this alone is real and living; all the rest is dramatic and dead. Let us call him Lord! Lord! as much as we please, and lift up the devoutest possible eyes to some imaginary throne he is supposed to occupy in the super-celestial solitudes; we are utterly inexcusable for so doing, since if we believe his own most pointed and memorable counsels, (Matthew xxv. 31–46,) he is no longer to be found spiritually isolated from, but only most intimately associated with, the business and bosom of universal man: that is to say, only wherever there is hunger to be filled, thirst to be slaked, homeless want to be housed, nakedness to be clad, sickness to be relieved, prison-doors to be opened.

No doubt the church will answer that a man's soul is worth more to him than all the world beside; that God busies himself with the spiritual interests of humanity rather than its material
interests. Unquestionably. But how if He cannot deal directly with its spiritual interests without impairing them? How if His only safe way of dealing with them, is to do so indirectly, that is, by means of its material interests? Of course no reasonable man can doubt that God's real and primary delight is to appease the spiritual wants, and assuage the spiritual woes of humanity, which are accurately symbolized under these images of mere material destitution and distress. But then we must recollect that He is utterly unable to effect these ends save by the mediation of his own truth, or in so far as our private individual commerce with him has been organized upon, and energized by, a previous recognition of his boundless presence and operation in human nature itself. God's private mercies to us, in other words, do not prejudice, but on the contrary irresistibly exact or presuppose, this grander public operation of His, this stupendous work of redemption which he has practised in our very nature itself, as the basis of their own vitality. Let me elucidate this proposition a little.

Whatever be the Lord's unmistakable goodwill towards the spiritual or immortal conjunction of every individual soul of man with himself, it is nevertheless evident that such a result to be permanent can never be forced, but must conciliate in every case the legitimate instincts of the soul, which are freedom and rationality. If God would have my love and have it eternally, he must exhibit his perfect worthiness to be loved in such a way as to take captive my heart and understanding. Now as naturally constituted, or when left to myself, I am a being of consummate selfishness and covetousness. I unconsciously exalt myself above all mankind, and would grasp, if that were possible, the riches of the universe. It were obvious and unmixed deviltry simply to condemn this natural make of mine, or turn it over to ruthless punishment. It is, on the other hand, unmixed divinity to condescend to these natural limitations, to come down to the level and breathe the atmosphere of these overpowering lusts, to live in the daily and hourly intimacy of their illusions, their insanities, their ferocities and impurities, until at length by patiently separating what is relatively good in them from what is relatively evil, and then subjecting the latter to the unlimited service of the former, the two warring elements become bound together in the unity of a new or regenerate natural personality, in which interest will spontaneously effect what principle has hitherto vainly enjoined; or self-love accomplish with ease what benevolence has only been able hitherto weakly to dream of accomplishing. If now we appeal to the word of God, which is Christian doctrine, this is precisely what God does; and if we appeal to his work, which is the history of Christendom, the response is equally full and clear. Revelation and History both alike proclaim with unmistakable emphasis that God chooses the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, the weak things to confound
the mighty, and base things and things which men despise, yea and things which are not, hath God chosen, to bring to nought established things, in order that no flesh should exalt itself in his presence.

This alone is why I love God, if indeed I do at all love Him. I hate Him with a cordial hatred — of this at least I am very sure — for his alleged incommunicable infinitude, for that cold and solitary grandeur which my natural reason ascribes to Him, and which entitles Him, according to the same authority, to exact the endless servile homage of us poor worms of the dust. For all this difference between God and me as affirmed by my natural deism, — which is my reason unillumined by revelation, — my crushed and outraged affections writhe with unspeakable animosity towards him. It is only when I read the gospel of his utter condescension to my soul and festering nature, and discern the lucent lines of his providence in the world illustrating and authenticating every word and tone of that gospel, — it is only, in other words, when I see how sheerly impersonal and creative his love is, i.e., how incapable of regarding itself and how irresistibly communicative of its own blessedness to whatsoever is not itself, to whatsoever is most hostile and repugnant to itself, that my soul catches her first glimpse of the uncreated holiness, and heart and head and hand conspire in helpless, speechless, motionless adoration.

In short, no one can love God simply by wishing to love Him, still less by feeling it a duty to love Him. At this rate one could never love his fellow-man even, but would come at last infallibly to hate him. In other words, love is never voluntary but always spontaneous. Its objective or unconscious element invariably controls its subjective or conscious one. I love my wife or child not by any force of my own, but by virtue altogether of a force which their innocence and sweetness lend me. It is their natural or cultivated grace which empowers me to love; abstract this, and I should be impotent as a clod. So also I can never love God by any force of my own. His absolute worth indeed makes it even more impossible for me to love Him, than my wife's or child's relative imperfection makes it impossible for me to love them: namely, by removing Him spiritually to such a distance from me as to make hatred rather than love towards Him, an instinctive dictate of my own self-respect. If then I can never hope to love God by my own force, He himself must enable me to love Him. How shall He do this without overpowering my conscious freedom or rationality? Why simply by taking upon Himself the conditions of my nature, or coming to know experimentally how irresistibly prone the finite mind is by the mere fact of its finiteness to lie, to steal, to commit adultery and murder, in order that, being thus tempted like as we are, yet without sin—being thus touched with a feeling of our infirmities, and yet rigidly self-debarred from the actual disorder in which they are sure to terminate with
ual impotence and self-distrust, but all simply to jump from a grossly absurd fear of God's personal enmity to us grounded on our moral delinquencies, or perhaps our purely ritual uncleanness, into a more grossly absurd hope of His personal complacency towards us, based upon some inward mystical change which He himself has arbitrarily wrought in us. Thus viewed, religion no longer witnesses to the truth of God's immutable perfection, but only to the capricious operation of His spirit ordaining certain differences in human character, whereby one man becomes avouched in his proper person an heir of heaven, another stigmatized as a child of hell. Look at the social consequences of this most real but unrecognized spiritual buffoonery, how inevitably it depresses all that is sweet and modest and unexacting in manners, and forces into conspicuous whatever is forward, ungenerous, and despotic. Look at any of our ecclesiastical coteries, and observe how torpid grows the proper spiritual or human force of its members, while every shabbiest pattern of a formalist is radiant, twittering, and alert with preternatural activity. No doubt very many of the clergy are personally superior to their office, and feel their instinctual modesty outraged by the spirit of servility and adulation which it appears to have the faculty of eliciting on the part of their adherents. But how can they help themselves? Professional religion means the claim of a private sanctity, of a strictly personal and individual worth in God's sight, by which the subject is eternally differenced from other men; and the clergy are the protagonists or defenders each in his sect of this debased state of the public mind, so that to be personally flattered and cockered and excused and apologized for out of all reasonable shape of manhood, by precisely the style of people whose opinions they least value, seems above all things their just official Nemesis or retribution.

In a spiritual point of view the clergy are most real martyrs to their perilous calling.

As to the attitude of the Divine mind towards the separatist or Pharisaic portion of the world, i.e., towards those who are identified with the outward profession of serving Him, the New Testament leaves no doubt on that subject, but ratifies every instinct of our proper humanity. The parables of the Prodigal Son and of the Publican and Pharisee praying, justify every prevision of common sense in the premises. Surely if I have a family of children the eldest of whom is alone legitimate, and therefore alone entitled to my name and estate, while all the younger children are bastards, and consequently destitute of all legal righteousness, I should be a worm and no man, if, while according to the former his fullest legal consideration, I did not bestow my tenderest and ripest affection and indulgence upon the latter. If my acknowledged heir, conceiving himself prejudiced by this action on my part, should grow angry and reproach me thereupon, saying, "Lo! these many years do I serve thee, neither have I
ever transgressed thy commandments, and yet thou hast never given me the slightest expression of thy heart's delight, such as thou art now lavishing upon those others who have wasted thy substance with riotous living:” this strain of remonstrance would only prove how essentially incompatible legal or literal heirship is with spiritual heirship; how infinitely short the most faultless moral righteousness falls of inward or spiritual innocence; but it would never prove me unrighteous. Nothing could be easier for me than to show my dissatisfied and envious offspring that I had at all events done him no injustice. I should say, “My son, I leave it to yourself to estimate the claim which the service you boast of exerts upon my heart, now that your shameless inhumanity to your less fortunate brethren reveals even to your own eyes the spirit which has always animated that service; a spirit of unlimited self-seeking, of low prudence or worldly conformity, befitting indeed the elder son (or head), but totally alien to the temper of the younger son (or heart). The service you render I am sure of at all times [son, thou art ever with me], because it is an interested service, prompted by your self-love alone. It is the homage of the proud self-righteous rapacious head, and though I have no power and no desire to balk its legal expectations [and all that I have is thine], it yet awakens in my bosom no emotion of pleasure, begets no throb of gratified paternal affection. It is the homage of the heart exclusively, the prodigal, unright-

eous, unexacting heart [I will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants] which opens up the responsive fountains of my heart, which satisfies the hunger and thirst of my paternal bosom, and irresistibly compels therefore every answering outward demonstration of my inmost pride and joy, of my exquisite spiritual delight and blessedness. You shall have accordingly your legal deserts to the utmost, all that you have bargained for; all that I outwardly possess shall be yours, while I bestow myself, all that I inwardly am, upon your humbler brethren.”

Thus much I feel called upon to say to the reader by way of forewarning, or in order that he may observe that I do not quarrel with the living spirit of religion, which glows in every breast of man where God's own spirit of humility, meekness, equality, fellowship, is cultivated and reproduced however feebly; but only with what the best men in history have always quarreled with, namely, its dead and putrid body which still goes unburied and taints God's wholesome air with its baleful exhalations. Religion disdains any longer a literal or ritual establishment. It claims a purely living and spiritual embodiment, such as flows from God's sanctifying presence and animating power in every form of spontaneous human action. It has no longer anything to do accordingly with churches or with clergy, with sabbaths or with
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sacraments, with papacy or with prelacy, with Calvin or Socinus; but only with a heart in its subject of unaffected love to all mankind, and unaffected fellowship consequently with every person and every thing however conventionally sacred or profane, that seeks to further that love by the earnest distaste disuse and undoing of whatsoever plainly withstands perverts or abuses it.

AN ESSAY

ON THE

PHYSICS OF CREATION.