

## CHAPTER X.

### *THE "FALL OF MAN" AND HISTORY.*

THE history of art, especially as shown by architecture, in the noblest monuments of the most enlightened nations of antiquity, gives abundant proofs of the upward tendency of man from the rudest and simplest beginnings. Many columns of early Egyptian temples or tombs are but bundles of Nile reeds slightly conventionalized in stone; the temples of Greece, including not only the earliest forms, but the Parthenon itself, while in parts showing an evolution out of Egyptian and Assyrian architecture, exhibit frequent reminiscences and even imitations of earlier constructions in wood; the mediæval cathedrals, while evolved out of Roman and Byzantine structures, constantly show unmistakable survivals of prehistoric construction.\*

So, too, general history has come in, illustrating the unknown from the known: the development of man in the prehistoric period from his development within historic times. Nothing is more evident from history than the fact that weaker bodies of men driven out by stronger do not necessarily relapse into barbarism, but frequently rise, even under the most unfavourable circumstances, to a civilization

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\* As to evolution in architecture, and especially of Greek forms and ornaments out of Egyptian and Assyrian, with survivals in stone architecture of forms obtained in Egypt when reeds were used, and in Greece when wood construction prevailed, see Fergusson's *Handbook of Architecture*, vol. i, pp. 100, 228, 233, and elsewhere; also Otfried Müller, *Ancient Art and its Remains*, English translation, London, 1852, pp. 219, *passim*. For a very brief but thorough statement, see A. Mangnard's paper in the *Proceedings of the American Oriental Society*, October, 1889, entitled *Reminiscences of Egypt in Doric Architecture*. On the general subject, see Hommel, *Babylonien*, ch. i, and Meyer, *Alterthum*, i, § 199.

equal or superior to that from which they have been banished. Out of very many examples showing this law of upward development, a few may be taken as typical. The Slavs, who sank so low under the pressure of stronger races that they gave the modern world a new word to express the most hopeless servitude, have developed powerful civilizations peculiar to themselves; the barbarian tribes who ages ago took refuge amid the sand-banks and morasses of Holland, have developed one of the world's leading centres of civilization; the wretched peasants who about the fifth century took refuge from invading hordes among the lagoons and mud banks of Venetia, developed a power in art, arms, and politics which is among the wonders of human history; the Puritans, driven from the civilization of Great Britain to the unfavourable climate, soil, and circumstances of early New England,—the Huguenots, driven from France, a country admirably fitted for the highest growth of civilization, to various countries far less fitted for such growth,—the Irish peasantry, driven in vast numbers from their own island to other parts of the world on the whole less fitted to them—all are proofs that, as a rule, bodies of men once enlightened, when driven to unfavourable climates and brought under the most depressing circumstances, not only retain what enlightenment they have, but go on increasing it. Besides these, we have such cases as those of criminals banished to various penal colonies, from whose descendants has been developed a better morality; and of pirates, like those of the *Bounty*, whose descendants, in a remote Pacific island, became sober, steady citizens. Thousands of examples show the prevalence of this same rule—that men in masses do not forget the main gains of their civilization, and that, in spite of deteriorations, their tendency is upward.

Another class of historic facts also testifies in the most striking manner to this same upward tendency: the decline and destruction of various civilizations brilliant but hopelessly vitiated. These catastrophes are seen more and more to be but steps in this development. The crumbling away of the great ancient civilizations based upon despotism, whether the despotism of monarch, priest, or mob—the decline and fall of Roman civilization, for example, which, in

his most remarkable generalization, Guizot has shown to have been necessary to the development of the richer civilization of modern Europe; the terrible struggle and loss of the Crusades, which once appeared to be a mere catastrophe, but are now seen to have brought in, with the downfall of feudalism, the beginnings of the centralizing, civilizing monarchical period; the French Revolution, once thought a mere outburst of diabolic passion, but now seen to be an unduly delayed transition from the monarchical to the constitutional epoch: all show that even widespread deterioration and decline—often, indeed, the greatest political and moral catastrophes—so far from leading to a fall of mankind, tend in the long run to raise humanity to higher planes.

Thus, then, Anthropology and its handmaids, Ethnology, Philology, and History, have wrought out, beyond a doubt, proofs of the upward evolution of humanity since the appearance of man upon our planet.

Nor have these researches been confined to progress in man's material condition. Far more important evidences have been found of upward evolution in his family, social, moral, intellectual, and religious relations. The light thrown on this subject by such men as Lubbock, Tylor, Herbert Spencer, Buckle, Draper, Max Müller, and a multitude of others, despite mistakes, haltings, stumblings, and occasional following of delusive paths, is among the greatest glories of the century now ending. From all these investigators in their various fields, holding no brief for any system sacred or secular, but seeking truth as truth, comes the same general testimony of the evolution of higher out of lower. The process has been indeed slow and painful, but this does not prove that it may not become more rapid and less fruitful in sorrow as humanity goes on.\*

While, then, it is not denied that many instances of retrogression can be found, the consenting voice of unbiased investigators in all lands has declared more and more that the beginnings of our race must have been low and brutal, and that the tendency has been upward. To combat this

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\* As to the good effects of migration, see Waitz, *Introduction to Anthropology*, London, 1863, p. 345.

conclusion by examples of decline and deterioration here and there has become impossible: as well try to prove that, because in the Mississippi there are eddies in which the currents flow northward, there is no main stream flowing southward; or that, because trees decay and fall, there is no law of upward growth from germ to trunk, branches, foliage, and fruit.

A very striking evidence that the theological theory had become untenable was seen when its main supporter in the scientific field, Von Martius, in the full ripeness of his powers, publicly declared his conversion to the scientific view.

Yet, while the tendency of enlightened human thought in recent times is unmistakable, the struggle against the older view is not yet ended. The bitterness of the Abbé Hamard in France has been carried to similar and even greater extremes among sundry Protestant bodies in Europe and America. The simple truth of history makes it a necessity, unpleasant though it be, to chronicle two typical examples in the United States.

In the year 1875 a leader in American industrial enterprise endowed at the capital of a Southern State a university which bore his name. It was given into the hands of one of the religious sects most powerful in that region, and a bishop of that sect became its president. To its chair of Geology was called Alexander Winchell, a scholar who had already won eminence as a teacher and writer in that field, a professor greatly beloved and respected in the two universities with which he had been connected, and a member of the sect which the institution of learning above referred to represented.

But his relations to this Southern institution were destined to be brief. That his lectures at the Vanderbilt University were learned, attractive, and stimulating, even his enemies were forced to admit; but he was soon found to believe that there had been men earlier than the period assigned to Adam, and even that all the human race are not descended from Adam. His desire was to reconcile science and Scripture, and he was now treated by a Methodist Episcopal Bishop in Tennessee just as, two centuries before, La Peyrère had been treated, for a similar effort, by a Roman

Catholic vicar-general in Belgium. The publication of a series of articles on the subject, contributed by the professor to a Northern religious newspaper at its own request, brought matters to a climax; for, the articles having fallen under the notice of a leading Southwestern organ of the denomination controlling the Vanderbilt University, the result was a most bitter denunciation of Prof. Winchell and of his views. Shortly afterward the professor was told by Bishop McTyeire that "our people are of the opinion that such views are contrary to the plan of redemption," and was requested by the bishop to quietly resign his chair. To this the professor made the fitting reply: "If the board of trustees have the manliness to dismiss me for cause, and declare the cause, I prefer that they should do it. No power on earth could persuade me to resign."

"We do not propose," said the bishop, with quite gratuitous suggestiveness, "to treat you as the Inquisition treated Galileo."

"But what you propose is the same thing," rejoined Dr. Winchell. "It is ecclesiastical proscription for an opinion which must be settled by scientific evidence."

Twenty-four hours later Dr. Winchell was informed that his chair had been abolished, and its duties, with its salary, added to those of a colleague; the public were given to understand that the reasons were purely economic; the banished scholar was heaped with official compliments, evidently in hope that he would keep silence.

Such was not Dr. Winchell's view. In a frank letter to the leading journal of the university town he stated the whole matter. The intolerance-hating press of the country, religious and secular, did not hold its peace. In vain the authorities of the university waited for the storm to blow over. It was evident, at last, that a defence must be made, and a local organ of the sect, which under the editorship of a fellow-professor had always treated Dr. Winchell's views with the luminous inaccuracy which usually characterizes a professor's ideas of a rival's teachings, assumed the task. In the articles which followed, the usual scientific hypotheses as to the creation were declared to be "absurd," "vague, and unintelligible," "preposterous and gratuitous." This new

champion stated that "the objections drawn from the fossiliferous strata and the like are met by reference to the analogy of Adam and Eve, who presented the phenomena of adults when they were but a day old, and by the Flood of Noah and other cataclysms, which, with the constant change of Nature, are sufficient to account for the phenomena in question"!

Under inspiration of this sort the Tennessee Conference of the religious body in control of the university had already, in October, 1878, given utterance to its opinion of unsanctified science as follows: "This is an age in which scientific atheism, having divested itself of the habiliments that most adorn and dignify humanity, walks abroad in shameless denudation. The arrogant and impertinent claims of this 'science, falsely so called,' have been so boisterous and persistent, that the unthinking mass have been sadly deluded; but our university alone has had the courage to lay its young but vigorous hand upon the mane of untamed Speculation and say, 'We will have no more of this.'"

It is a consolation to know how the result, thus devoutly sought, has been achieved; for in the "ode" sung at the laying of the corner-stone of a new theological building of the same university, in May, 1880, we read:

"Science and Revelation here  
In perfect harmony appear,  
Guiding young feet along the road  
Through grace and Nature up to God."

It is also pleasing to know that, while an institution calling itself a university thus violated the fundamental principles on which any institution worthy of the name must be based, another institution which has the glory of being the first in the entire North to begin something like a university organization—the State University of Michigan—recalled Dr. Winchell at once to his former professorship, and honoured itself by maintaining him in that position, where, unhampered, he was thereafter able to utter his views in the midst of the largest body of students on the American continent.

Disgraceful as this history was to the men who drove

out Dr. Winchell, they but succeeded, as various similar bodies of men making similar efforts have done, in advancing their supposed victim to higher position and more commanding influence.\*

A few years after this suppression of earnest Christian thought at an institution of learning in the western part of our Southern States, there appeared a similar attempt in sundry seaboard States of the South.

As far back as the year 1857 the Presbyterian Synod of Mississippi passed the following resolution:

"Whereas, We live in an age in which the most insidious attacks are made on revealed religion through the natural sciences, and as it behooves the Church at all times to have men capable of defending the faith once delivered to the saints;

"Resolved, That this presbytery recommend the endowment of a professorship of Natural Science as connected with revealed religion in one or more of our theological seminaries."

Pursuant to this resolution such a chair was established in the theological seminary at Columbia, S. C., and James Woodrow was appointed professor. Dr. Woodrow seems to have been admirably fitted for the position—a devoted Christian man, accepting the Presbyterian standards of faith in which he had been brought up, and at the same time giving every effort to acquaint himself with the methods and conclusions of science. To great natural endowments he added constant labours to arrive at the truth in this field. Visiting Europe, he made the acquaintance of many of the

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\* For Dr. Winchell's original statements, see *Adamites and Pre-Adamites*, Syracuse, N. Y., 1878. For the first important denunciation of his views, see the *St. Louis Christian Advocate*, May 22, 1878. For the conversation with Bishop McTyeire, see Dr. Winchell's own account in the *Nashville American*, June 16, 1878. For the curious reply from Dr. Winchell's colleague, see the *Nashville Christian Advocate*, July 12, 1878; and for the further development of the matter, see the *Nashville American* of July 19, 1878. For the further course of the attack in the denominational organ of Dr. Winchell's oppressors, see the *Nashville Christian Advocate*, April 26, 1879. For the oratorical declaration of the Tennessee Conference upon the matter, see the *Nashville American*, October 15, 1878; and for the "ode" regarding the "harmony of science and revelation" as supported at the university, see the same journal for May 2, 1880.

foremost scientific investigators, became a student in university lecture rooms and laboratories, an interested hearer in scientific conventions, and a correspondent of leading men of science at home and abroad. As a result, he came to the conclusion that the hypothesis of evolution is the only one which explains various leading facts in natural science. This he taught, and he also taught that such a view is not incompatible with a true view of the sacred Scriptures.

In 1882 and 1883 the board of directors of the theological seminary, in fear that "scepticism in the world is using alleged discoveries in science to impugn the Word of God," requested Prof. Woodrow to state his views in regard to evolution. The professor complied with this request in a very powerful address, which was published and widely circulated, to such effect that the board of directors shortly afterward passed resolutions declaring the theory of evolution as defined by Prof. Woodrow not inconsistent with perfect soundness in the faith.

In the year 1884 alarm regarding Dr. Woodrow's teachings began to show itself in larger proportions, and a minority report was introduced into the Synod of South Carolina declaring that "the synod is called upon to decide not upon the question whether the said views of Dr. Woodrow contradict the Bible in its highest and absolute sense, but upon the question whether they contradict the interpretation of the Bible by the Presbyterian Church in the United States."

Perhaps a more self-condemnatory statement was never presented, for it clearly recognized, as a basis for intolerance, at least a possible difference between "the interpretation of the Bible by the Presbyterian Church" and the teachings of "the Bible in its highest and absolute sense."

This hostile movement became so strong that, in spite of the favourable action of the directors of the seminary, and against the efforts of a broad-minded minority in the representative bodies having ultimate charge of the institution, the delegates from the various synods raised a storm of orthodoxy and drove Dr. Woodrow from his post. Happily, he was at the same time professor in the University of South Carolina in the same city of Columbia, and from his chair in that institution he continued to teach natural science with

the approval of the great majority of thinking men in that region; hence, the only effect of the attempt to crush him was, that his position was made higher, respect for him deeper, and his reputation wider.

In spite of attempts by the more orthodox to prevent students of the theological seminary from attending his lectures at the university, they persisted in hearing him; indeed, the reputation of heresy seemed to enhance his influence.

It should be borne in mind that the professor thus treated had been one of the most respected and beloved university instructors in the South during more than a quarter of a century, and that he was turned out of his position with no opportunity for careful defence, and, indeed, without even the formality of a trial. Well did an eminent but thoughtful divine of the Southern Presbyterian Church declare that "the method of procedure to destroy evolution by the majority in the Church is vicious and suicidal," and that "logical dynamite has been used to put out a supposed fire in the upper stories of our house, and all the family in the house at that." Wisely, too, did he refer to the majority as "sowing in the fields of the Church the thorns of its errors, and cumbering its path with the *débris* and ruin of its own folly."

To these recent cases may be added the expulsion of Prof. Toy from teaching under ecclesiastical control at Louisville, and his election to a far more influential chair at Harvard University; the driving out from the American College at Beyrout of the young professors who accepted evolution as probable, and the rise of one of them, Mr. Nimr, to a far more commanding position than that which he left—the control of three leading journals at Cairo; the driving out of Robertson Smith from his position at Edinburgh, and his reception into the far more important and influential professorship at the English University of Cambridge; and multitudes of similar cases. From the days when Henry Dunster, the first President of Harvard College, was driven from his presidency, as Cotton Mather said, for "falling into the briars of Antipedobaptism" until now, the same spirit is shown in all such attempts. In each we have generally, on one side, a body of older theologians, who since their youth have learned nothing and forgotten nothing, sundry pro-

fessors who do not wish to rewrite their lectures, and a mass of unthinking ecclesiastical persons of little or no importance save in making up a retrograde majority in an ecclesiastical tribunal; on the other side we have as generally the thinking, open-minded, devoted men who have listened to the revelation of their own time as well as of times past, and who are evidently thinking the future thought of the world.

Here we have survivals of that same oppression of thought by theology which has cost the modern world so dear; the system which forced great numbers of professors, under penalty of deprivation, to teach that the sun and planets revolve about the earth; that comets are fire-balls flung by an angry God at a wicked world; that insanity is diabolic possession; that anatomical investigation of the human frame is sin against the Holy Ghost; that chemistry leads to sorcery; that taking interest for money is forbidden by Scripture; that geology must conform to ancient Hebrew poetry. From the same source came in Austria the rule of the "Immaculate Oath," under which university professors, long before the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was defined by the Church, were obliged to swear to their belief in that dogma before they were permitted to teach even arithmetic or geometry; in England, the denunciation of inoculation against smallpox; in Scotland, the protests against using chloroform in childbirth as "vitiating the primal curse against woman"; in France, the use in clerical schools of a historical text-book from which Napoleon was left out; and, in America, the use of Catholic manuals in which the Inquisition is declared to have been a purely civil tribunal, or Protestant manuals in which the Puritans are shown to have been all that we could now wish they had been.

So, too, among multitudes of similar efforts abroad, we have during centuries the fettering of professors at English and Scotch universities by test oaths, subscriptions to articles, and catechisms without number. In our own country we have had in a vast multitude of denominational colleges, as the first qualification for a professorship, not ability in the subject to be taught, but fidelity to the particular shibboleth of the denomination controlling the college or university.

Happily, in these days such attempts generally defeat

themselves. The supposed victim is generally made a man of mark by persecution, and advanced to a higher and wider sphere of usefulness. In withstanding the march of scientific truth, any Conference, Synod, Board of Commissioners, Board of Trustees, or Faculty, is but as a nest of field-mice in the path of a steam plough.

The harm done to religion in these attempts is far greater than that done to science; for thereby suspicions are widely spread, especially among open-minded young men, that the accepted Christian system demands a concealment of truth, with the persecution of honest investigators, and therefore must be false. Well was it said in substance by President McCosh, of Princeton, that no more sure way of making unbelievers in Christianity among young men could be devised than preaching to them that the doctrines arrived at by the great scientific thinkers of this period are opposed to religion.

Yet it is but justice here to say that more and more there is evolving out of this past history of oppression a better spirit, which is making itself manifest with power in the leading religious bodies of the world. In the Church of Rome we have to-day such utterances as those of St. George Mi-vart, declaring that the Church must not attempt to interfere with science; that the Almighty in the Galileo case gave her a distinct warning that the priesthood of science must remain with the men of science. In the Anglican Church and its American daughter we have the acts and utterances of such men as Archbishop Tait, Bishop Temple, Dean Stanley, Dean Farrar, and many others, proving that the deepest religious thought is more and more tending to peace rather than warfare with science; and in the other churches, especially in America, while there is yet much to be desired, the welcome extended in many of them to Alexander Winchell, and the freedom given to views like his, augur well for a better state of things in the future.

From the science of Anthropology, when rightly viewed as a whole, has come the greatest aid to those who work to advance religion rather than to promote any particular system of theology; for Anthropology and its subsidiary sciences show more and more that man, since coming upon the

earth, has risen, from the period when he had little, if any, idea of a great power above him, through successive stages of fetichism, shamanism, and idolatry, toward better forms of belief, making him more and more accessible to nobler forms of religion. The same sciences show, too, within the historic period, the same tendency, and especially within the events covered by our sacred books, a progress from fetichism, of which so many evidences crop out in the early Jewish worship as shown in the Old Testament Scriptures, through polytheism, when Jehovah was but "a god above all gods," through the period when he was "a jealous God," capricious and cruel, until he is revealed in such inspired utterances as those of the nobler Psalms, the great passages in Isaiah, the sublime preaching of Micah, and, above all, through the ideal given to the world by Jesus of Nazareth.

Well indeed has an eminent divine of the Church of England in our own time called on Christians to rejoice over this evolution, "between the God of Samuel, who ordered infants to be slaughtered, and the God of the Psalmist, whose tender mercies are over all his works; between the God of the Patriarchs, who was always repenting, and the God of the Apostles, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning; between the God of the Old Testament, who walked in the garden in the cool of the day, and the God of the New Testament, whom no man hath seen nor can see; between the God of Leviticus, who was so particular about the sacrificial furniture and utensils, and the God of the Acts, who dwelleth not in temples made with hands; between the God who hardened Pharaoh's heart, and the God who will have all men to be saved; between the God of Exodus, who is merciful only to those who love him, and the God of Christ—the heavenly Father—who is kind unto the unthankful and the evil."

However overwhelming, then, the facts may be which Anthropology, History, and their kindred sciences may, in the interest of simple truth, establish against the theological doctrine of "the Fall"; however completely they may fossilize various dogmas, catechisms, creeds, confessions, "plans of salvation" and "schemes of redemption," which

have been evolved from the great minds of the theological period: science, so far from making inroads on religion, or even upon our Christian development of it, will strengthen all that is essential in it, giving new and nobler paths to man's highest aspirations. For the one great, legitimate, scientific conclusion of anthropology is, that, more and more, a better civilization of the world, despite all its survivals of savagery and barbarism, is developing men and women on whom the declarations of the nobler Psalms, of Isaiah, of Micah, the Sermon on the Mount, the first great commandment, and the second, which is like unto it, St. Paul's praise of charity and St. James's definition of "pure religion and undefiled," can take stronger hold for the more effective and more rapid uplifting of our race.\*

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\* For the resolution of the Presbyterian Synod of Mississippi in 1857, see Prof. Woodrow's speech before the Synod of South Carolina, October 27 and 28, 1884, p. 6. As to the action of the Board of Directors of the Theological Seminary of Columbia, see *ibid.* As to the minority report in the Synod of South Carolina, see *ibid.*, p. 24. For the pithy sentences regarding the conduct of the majority in the synods toward Dr. Woodrow, see the Rev. Mr. Flinn's article in the *Southern Presbyterian Review* for April, 1885, p. 272, and elsewhere. For the restrictions regarding the teaching of the Copernican theory and the true doctrine of comets in German universities, see various histories of astronomy, especially Mädler. For the immaculate oath (*Immaculaten-Eid*) as enforced upon the Austrian professors, see Luftkandl, *Die Josephinischen Ideen*. For the effort of the Church in France, after the restoration of the Bourbons, to teach a history of that country from which the name of Napoleon should be left out, see Father Loriquet's famous *Histoire de France à l'Usage de la Jeunesse*, Lyon, 1820, vol. ii; see especially table of contents at the end. The book bears on its title-page the well-known initials of the Jesuit motto, A. M. D. G. (*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*). For examples in England and Scotland, see various English histories, and especially Buckle's chapters on Scotland. For a longer collection of examples showing the suppression of anything like unfettered thought upon scientific subjects in American colleges, see *Inaugural Address at the Opening of Cornell University*, by the author of these chapters. For the citation regarding the evolution of better and nobler ideas of God, see *Church and Creed: Sermons preached in the Chapel of the Foundling Hospital, London*, by A. W. Momerie, M. A., LL. D., Professor of Logic and Metaphysics in King's College, London, London, 1890. For a very vigorous utterance on the other side, see a recent *charge* of the Bishop of Gloucester.