A Religion without a God.

Auguste Comte, a French Philosopher of the age, has discovered a religion, or invented one, that altogether dispenses with a Deity. He seems to think that a religion which teaches us to serve an omnipotent personal God is unreasonable, since such a God needs no one's service. He, therefore adopts a religion whose great object is to serve the human race, as forming a collective existence without assignable beginning or end.

In order rightly to serve Humanity Comte holds that a very high morality must be observed. He insists that there must be total self-abnegation; and that we must not only love our neighbor as ourselves, but more than ourselves—or rather not love ourselves at all. He even insists that no pleasure to oneself is innocent except so far as it is necessary to bodily or mental vigor. He denies that any one should eat or drink beyond the mere necessities of the body.

Along with benevolence to our race, he demands mercy towards all sentient things—especially towards the nobler animals, as the horse, the dog.

He can not even imagine a

religion without an object of worship; but M. Comte escapes this difficulty by proposing to worship Humanity. Nor does he dispense with prayer. But prayer, as understood by him, does not mean asking; it is a mere outpouring of the feelings. It is to be addressed to no one.

According to M. Comte, the honors to collective Humanity should be confined to public celebration. In order to this he would have priests to officiate in this sort of worship. His religion consists of nine sacraments and many rites and ceremonies. But the details of them are too ridiculous to be named.

Wonder if Mons. Comte expects to have any proselytes?

See the thing at large in the Westminster Review for July 1865, p. 1.

Comte quarreled with his wife and friends, was insane a year or two, prayed daily, prayed off to his dead sweet heart, ate but twice a day; as frugal as a monk, a piece of dry bread was his dessert, daily read "Imitation of Christ", Dante, & Homer, was born 1798, died in 1857. He was irritable, petulant, religious. The Edinburgh Review of April 1868, p. 163.

A Puzzle.

I take the substance of the following from Herbert Spencer's "First Principles:"

Philosophur. This thing, motion, is a curious thing. In regard to it our sight often deceives us.

Novice. I see nothing strange in it. Nor do I think that my sight can deceive me.

P. Let us suppose, then, that you are in the prow of a ship on the equator, which is sailing westward at the rate of five miles an hour. You walk from the prow to the stern at the same rate of speeding; are you, when thus walking, moving to the East or the West?

N. Neither. I am remaining in the same point of space — just as a horse on the wheel of a tread-mill.

P. So it would seem. But let us consider. The surface of the earth on the equator rolls eastward about 1000 miles an hour, carrying you and the ship, too, about that fast to the East. What say you now?

N. I believe that, for once, I have been mistaken. In such a case, I suppose I would be going rapidly to the East in whatever direction I walked on the ship, or in what direction soever the ship sailed on the sea. This is beyond all doubt.

P. So, indeed, it would seem. But let us not be too confident that we are

right. It is pretty certain that in the earth's diurnal motion it rolls from West to East about 1000 miles an hour; but it is equally certain that, in its orbit round the sun, it rolls 68000 miles an hour to the West. What do you say now?

N. That's a fact. I forgot that. Well we are entirely right at last. The result must infallibly be that if the Earth's diurnal motion carries me East 1000 miles an hour; and if its annual or orbital motion carries me 68000 miles an hour, to the West, I am travelling 67000 miles an hour to the West.

P. Let us not be over confident. It is now a well established fact that the Earth has still another motion. Astronomers know that that the whole Solar System, including the Sun, the Earth, and all the other planets, is moving towards the constellation of Hercules with inconceivable velocity, and rolling in a vast orbit, the circumference of which is utterly unknown, and the centre of which is but vaguely conjectured. Nor can the Astronomers tell us whether this motion of the Earth and whole Solar System is up or down, or East, or west, or north or South. What say you now?

N. Say! What can I say? I am done guessing. Whether in a ship or out of it, I have no more idea than the man in the moon, which way I am moving, or whether I am moving at all, or where I am, or whether I am any where.

Rambles among words.

Minister. This word formerly did and properly does mean a chief servant. But now, in its customary use, it as often means a master. The British ministry are really the British rulers. A chief magistrate is now often called a minister. Judges, Marshals, Sheriffs are frequently called ministers of justice. Even clergymen are called ministers of the gospel; yet they oftener rule than serve their flock. So the Pope calls himself servus servorum.

Pastor. This term is now always applied to preachers who have the care of churches. In this sense, it is used figuratively. Literally, it means a shepherd. I think the figurative use of it is, at this day, in bad taste. For if we extend the figure a little, we shall catch a low idea. A shepherd or pastor must have a flock of sheep. There never was a pastor without such flocks. The one necessarily supposes the other. If the preacher is a pastor, his church are sheep. I don't like to be called or deemed a sheep. Moreover, a flock of sheep includes lambs, ewes, wethers and rams — not very appropriate terms to apply to decent Christians.

Besides, the figure is lame and degrades the church members. The shepherd or pastor is a human being; but sheep are brutes. The figure supposes, therefore, a difference between the pastor and his congregation which is unjust and untrue.

Rambles among Words.

Un. This prefix usually changes totally the sense of the word to which it is prefixed — as: like and unlike — wise and unwise — do and undo. Yet in a few instances, the meaning of the word, with or without it, is exactly the same — as in the verbs loose and unloose, and the words till & until

Don & doff. These words seem to be mere abbreviations of the phrases, "do on", "do off"

&. This character is nothing but the Latin et, formerly written thus &.

Grandeur — Sublimity. Grandeur, from the Latin grandis, French grand, is greatness — originally greatness in size. Sublimity, from the Latin sublimis, also means greatness — originally greatness in height. Grandeur is applied both to art and nature; but natural objects only are sublime objects. Thus, the pyramids are grand but not sublime; the Rocky Mountains are both grand and sublime. It has been said that the sublime implies more powerful emotions, more elevated feelings than the grand. Grandeur is hardly applicable to style, though sometimes so applied; a sublime style is a common and accurate expression.

Rambles Among Words.

Avocation. It is strange that of late years this word is used as synonomous with vocation, though literally and formerly its opposite in meaning. Vocation literally means one's calling or business— avocation literally means the act of calling from, the business of calling aside. The one is from the Latin vocatio; the other the Latin preposition a and vocatio, literally from a vocation.

? It is certain that our interrogation point was originally the letter q, when it was written thus: Q. And the letter was thus used as the initial of the word Question. So now the point? indicates that the sentence preceding it is interrogative. Formerly, it was put at beginning of the sentence, not at its end as now.

" " The quotation marks were originally nothing but the letter cc, which stood for cited or citation.

Beghardi. It seems that about the 13th century, there was a class of praying brethren among the Franciscan monks, who were called Beg-hard-i. Was it because they were hard beggars of alms, or because they begged hard in prayer? See Neander's Ch. History, 2d

Rambles Among Words.

Consent & Assent. These words differ in this that the former is the act of the will; the latter, the act of the judgment. We consent to a request; we assent to a proposition.

Circumstance. This word is from circum and sto, Latin— to stand around— Literally things standing around. The common phrase— "surrounding circumstances"— is therfore tautological. The word is often used in the singular, but perhaps never accurately; for how can a single thing stand around any other thing? The word surroundings, as a noun, is growing into use. Whenever usage will justify its adoption, it will be preferable to the term circumstance, as being a plainer word and Anglo Saxon.

Surround. Properly this word must not be confounded with inclose, encircle, or envelope. A city is surrounded by a wall— a garden is inclosed by a fence, a brow or head be encircled by a wreath— the earth is enveloped by the atmosphere.

Rather. In Milton's day, this word was the comparitive of Rathe— Thus, rathe, rather, rathest.

Rambles among Words.

Its. The genitive its is a new word. It is not found in our bible. Its for it is, is always wrong. We should say 'tis or it is

Extemporaneous. Cowper proposed to adopt this word as meaning "out of doors."

Starvation. This word is of American coining. It is not in the old English dictionaries. Websters dictionary first introduced it into England.

Carriage. Formerly this word did not mean a thing in which we are carried, but a thing which we carry, a bundle, a budget. So it is used in Acts 21, 15

Aephew. This word, in the time of James 1, meant lineal descendants. So it is used in 1 Tim. V. 4.

Brat. This was once a very dignified word. 300 years ago, Abrahams children were called Abraham's brats— "O Abrahams brats! O brood of blessed seed!" Gascoigne

Rambles among Words.

Dan. In old English meant Mister. It is perhaps from the Spanish Don. Chaucer, it is I think, who says "Dan Abraham." "Dan Moses."

Jupiter, Jove, Juno. Cicero, in his work on the nature of the Gods, tells us that Jupiter is derived from juvans pater— a "helping father— that Jove is from the Latin Juvando— "helping"— and that Juno is also a juvando— "helping."

Elohim, Jehovah.— According to Bishop Colenso, these names which we translate God, Lord, mean respectively "The Tremendous," "The self-existent."

Neptune. Cicero, in his work concerning the Nature of the Gods, says that this word "is derived a nando, from swimming, the first letter being a little changed."

Sol— the Sun— the same writer says this term "is so named, either because he is solus [alone] or because he observes all the stars"

Rambles among Words.

Luna- the moon- is so called a lucendo, from shining. Cicero De Natura Deorum.

Blanket. This word comes from the name of one Thomas Blanket, who in 1340, was the first manufacturer of blankets. He lived in Bristol.

Worsted. It was first made in the town of Worsted in England. Hence its name.

Sign- Signature. In the mediæval ages, writings were authenticated by adding the sign of the cross- signum crucis. Hence sign & signature are derived. North British Review, June 1848, p. 271.

Proverb.- "Pro- publicly- verbum, a word." London Quarterly. July 1868, p. 113.

Books. ☞ See note 11

Burlingame. our minis.to to China, says "the Chinese have more books, ency-clopedias, pamphlets, magazines &c. than any other people. This princi-pal encyclopedia embraces 5000 volumes."

The celebrated Catholic Maxim.

In ipsa item Catholica Ecclesia magnopere curandum est, ut id teneamus, quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus, creditum est, hoc est enim vere proprieque catholicum.

I forget where I found the above; but Vincentius Lirinensis, who wrote about A.D. 434, in his Commonitory, expresses it thus: "Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est", vera fides est.

The Mariner's Compass.

It is well known that on land the magnetic needle varies in different places, and at different times in the same place. But its variations on ships are far greater. Let two ships be even lying still side by side with their prows in the same direction, and the same compass will not point in the same direction on the one as on the other. The reason is that portions of every ship attract the needle and produce a variation. Even wooden ships will do this, and they do it more in some localities on the sea than on others. The cause is that the iron stanchions, bolts, and bars in the wooden ship affect the magnetic needle and thus produce the variation. Soft iron produces this effect much more than hard iron or steel. In certain places on the seas, the polar attraction of the earth is much weaker than at others, and the attraction of the iron in a ship renders the variation of the compass proportionally greater. The difficulty of these variations arising from the attraction of iron in a wooden ship, has been nearly overcome by placing an equal quantity of iron all round the compass on ship board, so that the attraction on every side is neutralized, and then the needle points truly.

But the case iron ships, now so common, is much worse. These utterly distract the magnetic needle, so that it turns sometimes

The Mariner's Compass.

almost the fourth of a circle from its true pointing. No complete remedy to this has been discovered; and great disasters have sometimes been the consequence. It seems that, though, as a general rule, the softest iron becomes the most intensely magnetic, yet no two parcels of iron are exactly alike in this respect. And, what is equally remarkable, the necessary hammering in putting the parts of an iron ship together magnetizes intensely the whole fabric. The difficulty in iron ships has been attempted to be remedied, by ascertaining the variation of the compass before sailing, on each ship, and then making the proper allowance in navigating her. But this is a very imperfect remedy; for the extent of the variation depends much on the course the ship is sailing, and also on the calmness or roughness of the sea. Besides, it seems that in every iron ship there are what are called a permanent and a sub-permanent magnetism. The latter is very great in new ships, but gradually wears out. As it was beaten in in by hammers, it is beaten out by waves. And so its influence on the compass is constantly varying till it all disappears; the influence of the permanent magnetism always remains. The consequence is that no ascertaining of the variation of the compass on an iron ship at one time and place is a safe guide in a future time, another place, or in stormy seas.

It is also remarkable that those iron ships which are built with their prows south, are less troubled in this way than such are built with their prows north. See an articles on this subject in the London Quarterly, Oct 1865, p. 179.

Woman.

In the opinion of St. Chrysostom, woman is "a natural temptation, a desirable calamity, a domestic peril, a deadly fascination, and a painful ill." Westminster Review, Oct. 1865, p. 156.

Homer represents Ulysses as telling how Atrides spoke to him of woman and his wife, thus:

O woman, woman! when to ill thy mind
Is bent, all hell contains no fouler fiend:
And such was mine, who basely plunged her sword
Thro' the fond bosom where she reigned adored.
Alas! hoped, the toils of war overcome,
To meet soft quiet and repose at home:
Delusive hope! Oh, wife! the deeds disgrace
The perjured sex, and blacken all the race;
And should posterity one virtuous find
Name Clytemnestra, they will curse the kind.
Odyssey, Book 11. v. 531 to 540.

Lord Bacon has somewhere written substantially as follows:

In youth, women are our preceptors; in manhood, our companions; in old age, our nurses, and in all ages our friends.

"Love your wife like yourself, honor her more than yourself. Whosoever lives unmarried, lives without joy,

without comfort, without blessing. Beware a step in choosing a wife. If thy wife is small, bend down to her, and whisper in her ear. He who forsakes the love of his youth, God's altar weeps for him. He who sees his wife die before him, has been present at the destruction of the sanctuary itself — around him the world grows dark. It is woman alone through God's blessings are vouchsafed to a house. She teaches the children, speeds the husband to the place of worship and instruction, welcomes him when he returns, keeps the house godly and pure. And God's blessing rests upon all those things." Talmud, cited in London Quarterly Oct. 1867, p. 243

Homer, in the Odyssey, Book 11, makes the ghost of Atrides to say:

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To meet soft quiet and repose at home:
Delusive hope! O wife! thy deeds disgrace
The perjured sex and blacken all the race;
And should posterity one virtuous find,
Name Clytemnestra, they will curse the kind.

Woman.

Quid calamo levius? Pulvis. Quid pulvere? Ventus.
Quid vento? Mulier. Quid muliere? Nihil.

Free translation.

Dust is lighter than a feather;
And the wind more light than either:
But a woman's fickle mind
More light than feather, dust, or wind.
Westminster Review, July, 1868, p. 126.

Plato, in his Republic, is a "Woman's Rights man. He holds the women ought to act with the men both in war and government.

Curious ecclesiastical items.

1 "Church music is supposed to have been first introduced by Gregory the Great, A.D. 602." Salalad for the Social, p. 324.
But see 2 Neander, 318, 319 & note 2.

2 It seems that meeting houses, or churches were not used by Christians till the 3rd century. 1. Neander's Church History, 291.

3 Image worship in churches, it seems, was first introduced about the last of the 3rd. Century. So they came in the train of fashionable church music. 1. Neander. 293.

4 Infant baptism was not introduced into the church till about A.D. 200. Neander. 311, 312.

5. No 1. above is doubtful.

6. The use of the organ began in the French Catholic Churches. 3 Neander, 128, n. 4.

7. It seems that the early Christians, like the Methodists, received members first on probation. The Council of Elvira fixed the probationary period at 2 years. 1 Neander, 305.

Sumptuary Laws.

Tertullian, in his "Apology for the Christians" ch. 6, says that the ancient Romans allowed not above a noble—$1.48—to be spent on an entertainment, and but one hen, and that not a crammed one, for a supper. A senator was not allowed to have ten pounds of silver plate. And a woman was allowed to have no more gold about her than her wedding ring on her finger.

Theaters.

The Ancient Romans "levelled theaters to the ground, as seminaries only of lewdness and immorality." Tertullian's Apology for the Christians, ch. 6

Remarkable facts relating to the occurrence in the bible of the names of the Deity— God & Lord— Elohim & Jehovah.

In the first chap. of Genesis, the term God— Elohim— occurs about 28 times; and the name Lord— Jehovah does not occur at all. Nor does it occur till the 4th verse of chap. 2.

Chap.	God	Lord
2	14 times—	Lord 11
3	11	4
4	1	7
5	4	1
6	8	4
7	2	3
8	3	2
9	8	1
10	0	1
11	0	4
12	0	6
13	0	6
14	0	0
15	2	7
16	1	6
17	9	1
18	0	15
19	2	7
20	5	2
21	12	3
22	4	11
23	0	0
24	7	16

Genesis

Chap.	God	Lord
25	1	3
26	0	6
27	2	3
28	9	3
29	0	3
30	7	3
31	11	1
32	5	1
33	2	0
34	0	0
35	11	0
36	0	0
37	0	0
38	0	0
39	0	7
40	1	0
41	9	0
42	2	0
43	5	1
44	3	0
45	4	0
46	4	0
47	0	0
48	6	0
49	2	1
50	4	0
	205	144

Exodus

Ch.	God	Lord
1	3	0
2	4	0
3	17	7
4	7	19
5	4	8
6	4	13
7	1	12
8	6	28
9	3	21
10	7	17
11	0	6
12	0	16
13	4	13
14	1	17
15	3	17
16	2	21
17	1	9
18	11	6
19	3	17
20	10	8
21	1	0
22	0	0
23	2	2
24	3	11
25	0	11
26	0	11
27	0	1
28	0	1
29	3	8

Exodus

Ch.	God	Lord
30	0	11
31	2	5
32	4	13
33	0	9
34	6	15
35	1	10
36	0	4
37	0	0
38	0	1
39	0	9
40	0	14
	93.	369

Leviticus.

God 39
Lord 201

Numbers

God 22 mostly in the story of Balaam
Lord, 292 times

Deuteronomy

God— 310
Lord— 458
The usual phrases in this book are "The Lord thy God" "The Lord our God"

Joshua.

God 65
Lord 189

Judges

God 48
Lord 148

Ruth

God 3
Lord 17

1 Samuel
God 85
Lord, 282.

2 Samuel
God, 59
Lord, 119

1 Kings
God 52
Lord, 163

2 Kings
God 71
Lord, 200

1 Chronicles
God, 103
Lord, 145.

2 Chronicles
God, 171
Lord, 336.

Ezra
God, 91
Lord, 31

Nehemiah
God, 65
Lord, 17

Esther contains none of the names of the Deity.

Job
God, 99.
Lord, 30.

Psalms.
From 1 to 41
God, 357 times.
Lord, 256 times
From 41 to 87
God, 255 times.
Lord, 56 times.
From 87 to the Last
God, 74 times.
Lord, 369 times
In all
God, 386 times.
Lord, 681 times

Proverbs
God, 7 times.
Lord, 62 Times.

Ecclesiastes
God, 36 times
Lord not once.

Canticles- contains no reference to the Deity by name or otherwise.

Isaiah
God, 117 times
Lord, 410 times

Jeremiah
God 120 times.
Lord, 502 times

Lamentations
God 1 time
Lord, 20 times

Ezekiel
God, 245 times
Lord 325 times
Lord God very frequent

Daniel
God 45 times
Lord 17 times

Hosea
God 30 times
Lord 29 times.

Joel
God 10 times Lord 24 times.

Amos.
God 29 times- Lord 65 times.

Obadiah
God once- Lord 5 times.

Jonah
God 10 times- Lord 22 times.

Micah
God 10 times- Lord 35 times.

Nahum
God once- Lord 10 times.

Habakkuk
God, 4 times- Lord 10 times

Zephania
God 5 times- Lord 30 times.

Haggai
God 3 times- Lord 29 times

Zechariah
God 11 times- Lord 104 times

Malachi
God 7 times
Lord 42 times.

Bible Names of the Deity.

Thus it appears that the name Elohim, translated God, appears in the Old Testament about 2687 times: and that term Jehovah, translated Lord, appears about 5585 times.

These figures are probably not perfectly accurate; for I have gone over the Old Testament but once to get them. But I suppose that they are nearly enough correct for any practical purpose.

The whole matter is rather one of curiosity, than of any practical value. Yet possibly some of the following inferences may fairly arise in regard to it:

1. It seems that however these two names of the Deity may agree or differ in literal meaning, the name Jehovah was the favorite name among the Jews, it being used in their Scriptures more than twice as often as the name Elohim.

2. When we consider that till the 4th verse of the 2nd chapter of Genesis the term Jehovah does not occur, and the term Elohim occurs 28 times; and that this portion of Genesis includes a complete account of the creation, is there not a probability that it was not written by the same person who wrote the residue of that book?

Bible Names of the Deity.

3. God is represented in Ex. 6-2,3 as saying I am the Lord; and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob by the name of God Almighty; but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them. Yet throughout the book of Genesis, we find ~~that~~ these patriarchs familiarly using the name Lord-Jehovah. Is there not plainly some mistake here?

4. When the name of the Deity occurs in the genitive or vocative case, I think the term God is oftener used than in other cases.

5. It is said that Proverbs and Ecclesiastes were both written by Solomon. In Proverbs the name Lord is used 62 times and God only 7 times; and in Ecclesiastes, the name God is employed 36 times, and that of Lord does not occur once. In view of this, is it likely that the same man wrote both these books?

6. In Esther and Canticles, no reference at all is made to the Deity either by name or otherwise. It is absurd therefore to deem them in any sense religious books.

Resemblances between Stories sacred & profane.

II.

Et post aliquot dies revertens, ut acciperet eam, declinavit ut videret cadaver leonis, et ecce examen apum in ore leonis erat favus mellis.
Vulgate – Judges, 14–8.

Quatuor eximios præstanti corporis taurus
Dueit, et intacta totidem cervice juvencas.
Post ubi nona suos Aurora induxerat ortus,
Inferias Orphei mittit, lucumque revisit.
Hic vero, subitum ac dictu mirabile monstrum!
Adspicient liquefacta boum per viscera toto
Stridere apes utero, et ruptis effervere costis,
Immensasque trahi nubes, jamque arbore summâ
Confluere, et lentis uvam demittere ramis.
Virgil Georgic 4 – lines 530 to 560.

III

And behold there was a man which had his hand withered – Then said he to the man, stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole like as the other. Mat. 12–10-13.

When he had Thus spoken, he spat on The ground, and made clay of The spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said to him, Go wash in the pool of Siloam – He went

his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.
John 9 – 6, 7.

A man of mean condition had lost his sight by a defluxion on his eyes. He presented himself before Vespasian, and falling prostrate on the ground, implored the Emperor to administer a cure for his blindness. – The request was that the emperor, with his spittle, would condescend to moisten the poor man's face, and the balls of his eyes. Another who had lost the use of his hand, begged that he would tread on the part affected. [Serapis had so ordered.] In the presence of a prodigious multitude – he advanced with an air of serenity, and hazarded the experiment. The paralytic hand recovered, and the blind man saw the light of the sun. By living witnesses who were actually on the spot, both events are confirmed at this hour, when deceit and flattery can hope for no reward.
Tacitus Hist. Book 4 – Cap. 81.

Resemblances of stories sacred & profane.

III.

Moses. "And when she could no longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink; and his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him" &c. Ex. 2 – 3, 4

Romulus & Remus. "The children were ordered to be thrown into the stream of the river. It happens that the Tiber, overflowing its banks, formed itself into stagnant pools. They exposed the boys in the nearest pool – The retiring flood left on dry ground the trough in which they were exposed – A she wolf, or Faustulus, a shepherdess, saved and suckled them." &c.

Livy. B. 1 – Sec. 4

Resemblances of stories sacred and profane.

IV.

The story of the priest, whose wife played the whore, given in the 19, 20, 21 chapters of Judges, is too long for insertion. She was whored to death by the Benjamites. For this the other tribes made war on the Benjaminites, killed 18,000 of their men, and as it seems all their women, and took an oath not to give any of their women as wives to the 600 straggling Benjaminites who were not slain. But these men, by collusion with the other tribes, stole wives from them at a feast at Shiloh.

The Sabine rape was similar. The story is that under Romulus, the Romans were at one time very scarce of women. In vain he sent ambassadors to other tribes to get wives for his men. He then appointed solemn games in honor of Neptune, and invited the neighboring tribes – especially the Sabines – to attend them. The Sabines – men & women – came en masse. In the midst of the celebration, each Roman youth seized a Sabine girl, and bore her off for a wife.

In both these cases, the men got wives by force and fraud at a religious festival, and all parties subsequently acquiesced in it. See Livy, B. 1. Chap. 9, 10.

Resemblances of Stories Sacred & profane.

V.

"And it came to pass as they still went on and talked, that behold there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." 2 Kings, 2 – 11.

Romulus. "One day while holding an assembly in the plain – a sudden storm arose accompanied with violent thunder and lightning. The king was enveloped in a thick cloud, and was never more seen upon earth" – then the multitude cried, "A Deity! the Son of a Deity"!

Livy. Book 1 – Cap. 16.

VI.

"And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount; and Moses was in the mount 40 days and 40 nights."
Ex. 24 – 18.

"There was a grove, in the centre of which was a dark cave. Thither it was Numa's custom frequently to repair unattended, to meet, as he pretended, the goddess Egeria.

Livy, Book 1 – Cap. 21.

Resemblances of Stories Sacred and profane.

VII.

The story of the duel between David and Goliath – 1 Sam. Cap. 17 – very much resembles the account of the duel between Titus Manlius and a gigantic Gaul, as given in Livy, Book 7 – Cap. 9, 10

VIII.

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom – it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."
Dan. 2 – 44.

"The multitude relied upon an ancient prophecy – that at this very juncture – i.e. the siege of Jerusalem – the power of the East would prevail over the nations, and a race of men would go forth from Judea to extend their dominion over the rest of the world."
Tacitus, Book 5 – Cap. 13.

IX.

The story of Abraham offering Isaac his son as a sacrifice, and of the substition in his place of a ram caught in a thicket— Gen. 19-13— is too well known to need repetition— And the same is true as to the tragedy of Jephtha's daughter.

In the tragedy of Euripides, entitled "Iphigenia in Aulus", a like story appears. Agamemnon is there said to have been ordered by an oracle, while on his way to Troy, to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia, to Diana. When the knife was about to be applied to her throat, the goddess snatched her away alive, and substited in her place a stag.
Bohn's Euripides, vol. 1, p 355.

Cicero gives this story a different turn. But he justly condemns every such act as a "horrible crime."
Cicero De Officiis, B. 3, Cap. 25.

On the other hand, it is more than probable that, though the Laws of Moses did not enjoin human sacrifices yet it permitted and even commanded them in case where a previous vow to that effect, as in the case of Jephtha, had been made. Lev. 27— 28, 29

X.

Whoever will compare the Jewish ceremonies and ritual, found in the Pentateuch, with the Egyptian superstitions and rites, as given in Herodotus, will be struck with the similarity of them, so much as perhaps to suspect that Moses may have in some cases borrowed from the Egyptians. See Euterpe § 37 &c of Herodotus.

They both circumcised— offered sacrifices on altars— paid great regard to cleanliness— required the beasts for sacrifice to be without blemish— transfer their sins to the heads of beasts— Eat part of the thing sacrificed— make libations of wine— become unclean by contact with foreigners— are rendered unclean by coition— "consider the pig to be an impure beast"— hate swineherds— and have many other resembling rites.

XI.

Every one is familiar with the story in Luke 16— 19 to 31, about the rich man and Lazarus, and of the description of Hades or hell therein. That description represents the place of torment as in sight of "Abraham's bosom," or Paradise,

but as being "afar off." & the way impassable.

Josephus, in his discourse concerning Hades, represents it very similarly. He says that at the entrance, the wicked take the left hand way and enter into torment, but the righteous take the right hand road into a place of great delight. And that "this place we call Abraham's Bosom." and he says the wicked see the just at a distance, but "a chaos deep and large is fixed between them, insomuch that a just man that hath compassion upon them cannot be admitted, nor can one that is unjust, if he were bold enough to attempt it, pass over it."

Josephus could not have written many years after Luke. Virgil who wrote about the same age, in his description of the descent of Eneas into Hades, tells the story, in many respects, similarly to Luke and Josephus.

But Homer who wrote his Odyssey many centuries before Christ, and who in the 11th book of that immortal poem, relates the descent of Ulysses into that same Hades, describes it very much as it was afterwards described in Luke, Josephus & Virgil.

It is true that Homer & Virgil adorn their description of the "dreary regions of the dead" with fancies very much more poetic than those of Luke and Josephus. But whoever reads and compares them all can not fail to see that they all are describing the one identical Hades; & and will find it difficult to deny that all these Stories have a common origin, though he may be unable to see what that origin is.

The same is true in general of the description of Hades by Socrates as given by Plato in his Phaedo.

XII.

Moses is represented as commanding "If an ox gore a man or a woman that they die: then the ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten." Ex. 21-28

Plato says, "If a beast of burden or any other animal shall kill any person" — "let them destroy the condemned animal, and cast it beyond the borders." The Laws- B. 9- c. 12.

Resemblances of Stories sacred & profane.

XIII.

And it came to pass that on the 8th day they came to circumcise the child, and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. And his mother answered and said, "Not so"; but he shall be called John. And they said unto her "There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. And they made signs to his father how he would have him called. And he asked for a writing table, and wrote saying his name is John. And they marvelled all. Luke 1— 59 to.

Abdol Motalleb, the grandfather of Mohamed, "the 7th day after the birth of the child, gave a great entertainment, to which he invited the principal men of the Koreish, who, after the repast was over, desired him to give the infant a name. Immediately Motalleb replied, "I name this child Mohamed." The Koreish grandees at once expressed their surprise that he did not call his grandson, according to the custom, by a name which had

belonged to some one of the family. But he persisted in the selection he had made, saying, "May the most high glorify in heaven whom he has created on earth," alluding to the name Mohamed, which signifies praised, or glorified.

Bush's Life of Mohamed. 10 Family Library, 36.

XIV.

And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon, that the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones, than they which the children of Israel slew with the sword." Josh. 10-11.

"The Roman army was in danger of perishing by thirst, but a sudden storm drenched them with rain, while it discharged fire and hail on their enemies, and the Romans gained a great victory. All the authorities which speak of the battle speak also of the miracle." It happened under M. Aurelius Antoninus, A.D. 174. See his life in the translation of his works, p. 16, by Geo. Long.

In support of this story in the life of Aurelius, a letter by him is given in 1 Reeves' Apologies, 132 in which Aurelius states the same fact of the prayers of his Christian soldiers bringing rain, as he expresses it, "a shower of refreshing water to us, and of fiery hail to our enemies." The genuineness of this letter, however, has been questioned. But be this as it may, Tertullian, who was born A.D. 160, in his "Apologetick for the Christians," ch. 5, says of Aurelius, "if you will look into his letters, you will find him there testifying that his army in Germany, being just upon perishing with thirst, some Christian soldiers who happened to be in his troops did, by the powers of prayer, fetch down a prodigious shower to the relief of the whole army." But Tertullian says not a word about fire and hail, which it would have been strange for him to omit, had he known of it, and strange that he should have been ignorant of it, if the fact was so.

XV.

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." 2 Pet. 3_10.

"Not only do men pass away, and the mountains and seas disappear under the pressure of an inexorable fate; but a day will come when the world, approaching the time of its great renewal, shall be itself extinguished, when stars shall encounter stars, when every form and orderly variety of light shall blaze and consume in the fire of one universal conflagration." Seneca's Consolation to Marcia. Westminster Review of July 1867. p. 33.

XVI.

"He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul." Prov. 8_36

"He who does wrong, does wrong against himself. He who acts unjustly, acts unjustly to himself — because he makes himself bad."

Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. 9_4

XVII.

How often tythes, or tenths, are mentioned in the law of Moses, is well known. It is curious that the thing should always be a tenth — Why not sometimes a ninth or a twelfth?

But it is more curious to find the same thing in many other religions. Pliny, in his natural history, B. 12, ch. 14, mentions a law in Arabia which obliged every merchant to offer the 10th of his frankincense to the god Sabis. Justin says that the Carthaginians sent the 10th of their spoils, taken in the Sicilian war to Hercules of Tyre. The Ethiopians paid

tithes to their god Assaleimus. The Roman general Sylla dedicated a tenth of all his estate to Hercules; and so did Crassus. See their Lives in Plutarch. Selden, in his history of tithes, cap. 3, mentions numerous other instances, in many nations, of the same kind. To this day, in many parts of Europe — especially in England — tithes are exacted. The English law books are full of laws regulating tithes.

XVIII.

"Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour +++ And behold the vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom: and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose." Mat. 27–45, 51, 52.

The Sun reveals the secrets of the sky,
And who dares give the source of light the lie?
The change of empires he oft declares,
Fierce tumults, hidden treasons, open wars;
He first the fate of Caesar did foretel,
And pitied Rome, when Rome in Caesar fell:
In iron clouds concealed the public light,

And impious mortals feared eternal night.
+ + + + + + + + + + + + + + +
Dire earthquakes rent the solid Alps below,
And from their summits shook the eternal snow;
Pale spectres in the close of night were seen,
And voices heard of more than mortal men.
Dryden's Virgil.

XIX.

"And he knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born son". Mat. 1–25.

Plato, it is said by Diogenes, was the son of Apollo by a woman, who "was kept pure from all matrimonial intercourse until her accouchement". See Strauss' Life of Jesus. Vol. 1, § 22.

XX.

"Speak not evil one of another." James, 4–11.
Let no one speak evil of another." Plato–Laws, B. II. c. 13.

XXI

All things whatsoever, ye would that men should do unto you; do ye even so to them. Mat. 7–12
"Do not with others what you would not have others do with you." Confucius
L. H. 322

The infinite benevolence of the Deity.

To-day I heard a sermon on this subject. The preacher undertook to prove it true by the works of creation. There is no animal organization said he which does not, in its very structure, indicate a design to promote the animal's well being. This, I suppose, is true. But to prove the point from the works of nature, ought not the harmony of all animals in their relations with each other to be such as uniformly to promote the well being of everyone of them? And is this the case? The preacher said it is; and he took the case of a poisonous serpent as an illustration. He inquired why infinite benevolence gave unpoisoned fangs to the adder? The answer was that Divine benevolence gave these to the adder for the purpose of self defense. This was the only explanation given. Paley had given it before; and the preacher had borrowed it from Paley.

To me, it is surprising that learned clergymen should satisfy themselves with so fallacious a reason. There are several grounds on which it is obvious such reasoning is utterly unsatisfactory. Let us state them.

Infinite Benevolence of the Deity.

In the first place, the adders fangs are in fact of no value to him as a means of defense. Can he defend himself by this means successfully against the attack of a sturdy boy with a long pole in his hand? Who ever heard of any body who made an attack on a serpent, being bitten by the serpent? Who, that undertakes to kill a rattlesnake, goes near enough to him to be in danger of his fangs? But will it be said that these fangs were intended as a defense of the serpents against other irrational animals? What irrational animals attack snakes? Very few, I think. Dogs sometimes do. Perhaps some carnivorous birds do. Be it so. But is there any known instance of a serpent successfully defending himself, or even biting any man, beast, or bird that made an attack on him, so as to render self defence necessary? Till such an instance can be produced the argument must fail. And no one instance would make it good. To make these poisonous fangs a valuable matter of defense, they would have to be frequently effective. What would we think of a pistol as a weapon of defence, if no instance could be shown in which any person had successfully repelled an attack by means of a pistol?

Infinite Benevolence of the Deity.

In the second place, the poisonous fangs of the serpent, so far from being a defense from attacks, are the very cause of attacks on the serpent race, and put them all in much greater peril than they would be without these fangs. The whole race of man hate and destroy the serpent race precisely because of these very fangs; and there is reason to think that the canine race do so too. The toad is as ugly a creature as the serpent, but he is much safer from the attacks either of dogs or men, though he possesses neither poisonous fangs nor any other defensive weapon. His harmlessness is his security. Since then the great peril to the snake is the fact that he has poisonous fangs, could the Deity have given him these weapons as a defense, when he knew they would imperil the snake's life ten times more than it would be imperiled without them?

In the third place, the fangs of the serpent are very seldom used in his defense, but are constantly used aggressively. We never hear of a snake biting any person or thing that attacks him. His fangs are only effectual in

Infinite Benevolence of the Deity.

attacking the innocent victim unaware of his presence. All the snake bites that were perhaps ever heard of, have happened in this way. The fiery flying serpents that bit the Israelites in the wilderness were not attacked by the followers of Moses, but were themselves the assailants. And undoubtedly this is generally, if not always so, in the case of what we call a snake bite. Some rational beings often pervert the gifts of the Deity to evil uses; but the irrational creatures, never. These are ruled by instinct. They follow the laws of their nature. If, therefore, serpents' fangs are, in fact, seldom or never effectually used in self defence, and constantly in aggressions on the unoffending passer by, they must be supposed in so doing to be following the laws of their nature impressed on them by their creator. And if so, their poisonous fangs were not benevolently given to them for self defense.

In the fourth place, benevolence is equity and equity is equality. If God gave the serpent his poisonous fangs for his protection, why did he not give some such protection to the toad? The serpent can protect himself from danger by escape much better than the toad.

Infinite Benevolence of the Deity.

Yet the toad has no weapon of defense whatever. Serpents attack and swallow the toad; and the toad has no kind of defence against him. Does this look like that sort of fairness which characterizes benevolence?

In analagous cases we meet the same inequalities. If infinite benevolence gave to the wasp and the hornet stings to protect them from attack, how comes it that the same benevolence denied such weapons of defense to so many other flies? Who can tell?

We have something very analogous to this in the vegetable kingdom. Some trees and shrubs are guarded and protected by thorns; others not so. It is remarkable that most of the thorny trees and shrubs bear fruit. What benevolent purpose do these thorns subserve? Are they designed to protect the fruit? To protect it against what or whom? Was it the object to protect it against man, or beast, or bird? Why? The fruit is of no use to the tree. Was it not made for man, and beast and bird? Then if this was the object, why are the apple and

Infinite Benevolence of the Deity.

peach tree without thorns, and the plum and haw tree full of them? Why are the blackberry and the raspberry shrubs thorny and the currant bush and the grape vine thornless? For what benevolent purpose were all these thorns, them, made? If to protect the fruit, they were made in vain; for man and beast and bird take the fruit in spite of the thorns — only they get scratched sometimes by these thorns. But what benevolence is there in so arranging these thorny that they will scratch somebody? And, according to such divines as Paley, what benevolent purpose does or can any thorn or brier subserve? I can see none.

It appears to me therefore that if we consider these things, as well as many others like them, with reference to the present state, they are utterly unaccountable on the hypothesis of the infinite benevolence of the Creator. For not only the poison of serpents, and the stings of hornets and wasps, and the whole race of thorns and briers, but all poisonous plants useless for food and medicine, malaria, and many other things, considered solely with reference to our present state of being, so far from fur-

Infinite Benevolence of the Deity.

wishing any evidence of the infinite benevolence of the Creator, would, even to a wise and good man, rather furnish evidence against it.

Possibly, if we take into the consideration a future life and man's immortality, the conclusion might be other-wise. For a benevolent Creator may have deemed it best for man that, in his temporary and probationary abode in this world, he should be subjected here to hardships and perils, the better to fit him for eternal happiness hereafter. And this seems so plausible that I would be satisfied with it, if the reasoning were applicable to the irrational animals. But it is not. Nobody believes that these will exist in another state of being; and yet many of them are subjected to such hardships and sufferings as apparently argue the want of infinite benevolence towards them.

The wiser view, then, seems to be that we should humbly admit that these things, and indeed many other things in nature, are

Infinite Benevolence of the Deity.

~~to us~~ wholly inscrutable to our vision and unaccountable by our reason. The presumptuous divine may attempt to explain all the mysteries of nature; for he has nobody to contradict him. But a wise man will rather suspend his judgment, and humbly admit his ignorance.

All theists agree that the Deity is infinite. If, then, he is benevolent at all, his benevolence must be infinite. For an infinite Being can not have finite attributes.

Human Sacrifices.

Were it not incredible, history would lead us to believe that many ancient nations and some modern ones have sacrificed human beings in the way of religious worship. And incredible as it is, there can be no doubt that it has sometimes been done.

All the Spanish historians of the Aborigines of America say the Mexicans practised the abomination. And Prescott sustains them. But Catholic bigotry led the Spaniards to exaggerate every thing against the Indians; and Prescott's only authorities are the Spanish priests and historians. On the other hand, the only native historian of the aborigines of Central America, Garcilaso, denies it. I would follow Garcilasso.

There is but too much reason to fear that this prodigious iniquity received some countenance from Abraham and his descendants.

In the case of Abraham himself — in Gen. 22 — he could not have believed that human sacrifices are wicked, or he never would have supposed that God commanded him to sacrifice Isaac. Paul indeed says that he was willing to sacrifice Isaac "accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead." Heb. 11-19. According to this, he must still have thought that a human

Human Sacrifices.

sacrifice, in that particular instance, would not be wicked, but pleasing to the Deity. And if that was his judgment in one instance, he could not, it would seem, have thought the thing very horrible in other instances.

The case of Jephtha's daughter, if the story concerning it in Judges II be allowed to be true, appears to be a case of a Jewish human sacrifice. And it is remarkable that no where in the old or new testament is this act of Jephtha condemned.

It is clear that the Law of Moses no where commanded human sacrifices, except under a previous vow. It is also clear that the Law of Moses does not forbid them. And it is equally clear that that law did command them in cases where any one had previously vowed them. The following passage from Lev. 27–28, 29 proves this assertion:

"No devoted thing that a man shall devote unto the Lord of all that he hath, both of man and beast, and of the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed: every devoted thing is holy unto the Lord. None devoted, which shall be devoted of men, shall be redeemed: but surely be put to death."

There is no escaping the conclusion that if a man devotes [i.e. vows to God to sacrifice

Human Sacrifices.

any human being, this text commands him to offer the sacrifice accordingly. One would think that Jephtha had this text in his mind on the occasion above referred to. It is remarkable that neither in the passage cited, nor any where else in the Bible, is this kind of vowing or devoting forbidden or even mentioned unfavorably. The party seems to have been left free to make the vow or not as he pleased; but then if he once made it, he must perform it.

Adam Clark has made a feeble attempt to show that this passage only applies to God's devoting the Canaanites and others to destruction! But the text has no reference to this. It is not speaking of what God devotes to destruction, but it is expressly addressed to man and concerns "devoted things that a man shall devote unto the Lord". And the whole chapter evidently treats of vows made by men to God, and of these only. Such an argument as Adam Clark makes on this point, would, if made by a lawyer in a court, be called pettifogging.

Still, as human sacrifice certainly did not belong to the Jewish ritual, and as we have no account of any Jewish priest ever offering or proposing a human sacrifice, it is perhaps fair to conclude that the stories about Abraham and Jephtha are fables and

Human Sacrifices.

that the passage referred to in Sec. 27 is unauthentic.

Whether the Romans ever offered human sacrifices, has been much disputed. It seems that Sir R. Peele & Lord Macaulay denied it. On the other hand Dr. Dollinger, a very learned German catholic & Lord Mahon affirm it. Lord Stanhope in his Miscellanies, agrees with Peele & Macaulay. But Dollinger is supported by Sir John Acton, Lactantius, Pliny, and Dean Milman. The very fact that in 95 B.C. the Roman Senate by a decree forbade human sacrifices, strongly supposes their prior existence. I fear that the weight of the evidence is in the affirmative of this question. See North British Review for Dec. 1867, pp. 146, 147.

Howitt, in the first vol. (pp. 267, 268, 269) of his History of the Supernatural, gives a horrid account of this crime. He says that all the Ancient nations and some modern ones, have offered human sacrifices.

According to St. Clement, Sacrifices of this sort were very common with the ancients. The Messenians on day sacrificed 300 men, of whom was their prisoner, the Spartan king. Clement exhortations. ch. 3.

Amazons.

That nations of women called Amazons, existed in the early ages of the world, is attested by many ancient writers. The story is that these women separated from men, lived independent of them, were powerful in war, and maintained orderly government. Herodotus mentions them in history, and says they conquered the Scythians, and invaded Attica. He says that they did sometimes marry. But that "no virgin among them was permitted to marry until she had killed an enemy." Herodotus IV. 110, 117 — IX. 27.

Plato in his Laws, B. 7, c. 11, says "Even at present I know that there are, so to say, countless myriads of women about Pontus, whom they call Sauromatides [another name for Amazons] on whom there has been enjoined an exercise in common with, and perhaps equal to, that of men not only upon horses, but in bows likewise, and in the rest of arms."

Other ancient writers say that they were a race of warriors who founded an empire on the river Thermadon in Asia Minor on the coast of the Euxine.

The name itself is from two words in the Greek literally meaning "without a breast"; because these women cut off their right breast that it might not incommode them in shooting arrows and in hurling the javelin!

Amazons.

The Greek and Latin poets, too, mention the Amazons.

But after all, the existence of such a nation is too incredible for belief, as it is a story too unnatural for credibility. In my opinion it is entirely fabulous.

The name was given to the great river of South America, because in the Spanish invasion of the adjacent country, the native women joined their husbands in repelling the invaders.

The Golden Rule.

Vulgar Christians assert that Jesus first promulgated this rule. But, to say nothing of Confucius, it seems that this rule was well known to the Jews before Christs ministry. "That grand dictum - 'do unto others as thou wouldst be done by' - inculcated by Hillel, the President, at whose death Jesus was ten years of age, not as any thing new, but as an old and well known dictum, that comprised the whole law." The Talmud and Christianity are alike as to moral duty. "The ethics in both are in their broad out lines, identical." London Quarterly, Oct. 1867, p. 230. Confucius seems the first who mentioned this rule.