

**A SUB-‘NOTE OF
INTERROGATION.’
I.-WHAT WILL BE OUR RELIGION
IN 1999?**

BY FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE

Monday, *May* 26, 1873. The eclipse of the sun has begun. 7³⁶ A.M.

The eclipse of the sun is at its full. 9²⁸ A.M.

The eclipse of the sun has ended. 9²⁴ A.M.

After this a dearth of great eclipses of the sun visible in this country succeeds for years.

On August 11 1999, at 12 minutes 20 seconds to 10 A.M., ‘local time,’ the next total solar eclipse in England is to occur, we are told.

SUPPOSING us to study the laws under which the Political and Moral World is governed as we study those under which the solar system, the Material World, is governed, could we arrive at something of the same certainty in predicting the future condition of human society? How it will be with Europe? How it will be with England? How it will be with anyone of our homes or institutions on August 11, 1999, at ten o’clock in the morning? (for would not be particular to a minute).¹

One thing is certain, that none who now live will then be living here.

[Perhaps by that time we may have sufficiently mastered the laws of moral evidence to say with equal certainty that everyone who now lives will then be living — Where?]

Another thing is certain, that everything, down to the minutest particular, is so governed, by laws “which can be seen in their effects,”² that not the most trifling action or feeling is left to

¹Castlereagh's estimate of ‘human foresight’ was ‘in politics and in war,’ for ‘seven or ten years.’

²Mr Froude on Calvinism.

chance, and that any who could see into the mind of the ‘All-Ordering Power,’ as manifested by His laws or thoughts, could of course predict history.

All will be Order, not chance.

But whether it be the Order of Disorder, so to speak, or the Order of Good Order, depends upon us.

And this is practically what we have to consider.

What will this world be on August 11, 1999?

What we have made it.

Signs of a Religious War Without Religion.

But there are not wanting signs that, before 1999, even it may be before 1899, great Revolutions may have occurred. And what would we not then give to have guided them in the right direction? Take only the state of religious — no, we mean ecclesiastical — things in France, Rome, and Germany: the deposition of the free-and-easy Voltairian, with all his unmatched services to his country, for the *ultra* Roman Catholic Marshal, and the *ultrissima* Roman Catholic, his wife; the new Pilgrimages, Miraculous Madonnas, the Roman Catholic majority in the theatre Royal, Versailles. Have you not the elements of an awful future? Awful not merely in the sense of terrible, but as big with the fate of awe-inspiring events?

Bismarck, the *ultrissimo* the other side, *ultor ultra*, Jupiter Ultor³ forced into a kind of conquest of Roman Catholic South Germany, the people all on his side, but not for any torrent of religious feeling, as in the Thirty Years’ War, only for a righteous longing after political unity and social freedom.

³Jupiter, not Mars Ultor. Mars was K.C.B.’d *Uttar* for avenging the death of by somebody after gaining Philippi. But that is not Bismarck’s way now.

France, it is just possible, forced to drift into the current in the opposite direction by her people, again from no religious motive, to interfere with Italy.

Papal Court gathering both men and money; the whole Italian Catholic world putting on its armour.

And when this is done, will not the end come? North Germany and Italy against all comers?

Then Spain: for how many hundred years under the clergy as her sole governors? Not a government to be got rid of by proclaiming and Federal-Republicizing.

Then Alsace and Lorraine: as French and Roman Catholic as ever, and perhaps arming to oust German and Protestant.

The struggle which began in the 4th century culminating at the end of the 19th.

And who believes that in all this there is any religion? It is like a Reformation without Reformers.

It is a godless God-service, pregnant with great results.

And before 1999 we may be left without a Religion.

And shall we remain Magazine-ing, while all this is going on?

Or are we to live alone because of this? *Negative* and solitary dissent is a mistake.

Every great reformer began by being a solitary dissenter; that is true.

Our Great Master Himself was a solitary dissenter to begin with.

But in every case it was a positive dissent; ending, not in a protest, but in a great reform.

The Indian's Estimate of our Religion.

What says in these years of England a chief of an Eastern religion? 'I saw Christ's hand in England, but I did not see Christ's heart.' and soul in England.' 'It was the hand of Christ outstretched for the purpose of doing good to England to the

world.' 'But where is Christian devotion? Where is He who went on the mountains to pray? Where is thadesire overcome with the all-conquering force of God — , 'is that daily communion with God?' He goes on to explain what he means by 'those devout men who could not live *except in prayer*,' is, who 'the reality,' or as we say, the Laws or Order, tried to discover the Order and Laws of the spiritual world as we see to-day the 'realities' (Laws), of the physical and moral world." [In this sense, are not the spiritual and moral worlds the same?] 'Men who wanted to prove everything upon the ground of direct, spiritual testimony' [we like that word; but does anyone now in England believe in moral or 'spiritual 'evidence as he does in physical evidence? Or if he means anything by 'direct spiritual testimony,' do we not suppose him bitten by madness of rappers and table-turners?] 'men who distended their hearts' [do any 'distend' their hearts now to grapple with the idea, the reality of God's Order?] 'opened the eyes of faith in order to see and worship the living Father as one infinite Spirit;' that is, as the Almighty Father of whose thoughts the Laws or Order of the physical and spiritual, or moral worlds are only the expressions.

See the Eastern's estimate of our Christianity:

'By Christianity I never mean a certain number of stereotyped dogmas and doctrines.' Does the Indian understand by this the Established Church and Orthodox Dissenters? 'By Christianity, I do not mean rites and ceremonies.' Does the Indian understand by this the Papal Church? 'No, true Christianity says there is no justification in works, nor in external rites, righteousness, justification and sanctification must be the results of spiritual conversion, must be worked out

by faith. That is true Christianity; that, I say, is true Hindooism, that is true Mohammedanism, that is true Zoroastrianism . . . Not if you are proud of ten thousand works of charity, not if you have inundated all London 'with outward institutions' . . . No. If you have faith in the living Father, and your whole heart has been converted and regenerated, then I you are for the kingdom of God. And England is still as far from the kingdom of heaven as you and I are. We are still far from that integrity and fullness of true *theistic life* (call it Christian life if you like); we are all yet far from that.

We *are* . What *is* ? What is it to be followers of Christ? Is it not to be full of what the Indian calls the 'true theistic life?' that is, to see God in everything, to find Him out in everything, in the Order or Laws as of His moral or spiritual, so of His political or social, and so of His physical worlds? — find out, one is tempted to use the homely word, what He is driving at? But is it not the 'sole thing of importance what 'God is driving at? To Christ God was everything, to us He seems nothing —, if not quite nothing. Or if He is anything, He is only the God of Sundays, and only the God of Sundays as far as going to 'what we call our prayers,' not the God of our week-days, our business and our play, our politics and our science, our home life and our social life, our House of , our Government, our Post Office and correspondence — an enormous item in these days — Foreign Office, and our India Office.

Our Indian goes on, after a hit at his 'Hindoo, Mohammedan, and Parsee friends,' let 'Christian missionaries' and 'Christian governments' 'admit the truth of this: that, not by preaching dogmas and doctrines, [can anything be more appropriate to the state of Europe now?]

— 'but by bringing the spirit of true devotion,' that is, finding out God's purpose in everything, firm faith and fervent communion with God, and on the other hand Christ's noble charity and untiring industry in the matters of doing good to others, must their work be done.

Then our friend gives us a hit for what he thinks our 'bigotry and superstition,' our 250 small narrow sects into 'which Christendom in England has been split up,' 'the fetters, the bonds of 'our' sectarian dogmatism'; he calls our 'sectarianism' the 'curse of the country.'

But he pays us a noble tribute when he says that, 'point out the defects of' English 'character' to 'English people, and they will receive your words, I assure you, with the utmost alacrity and cheerfulness. In fact, I was oftentimes amused to find that what I said against English people was received with cheers; and all my words, which were meant as a sort of encomium on the British people, fell flat on the audience. What does that show? Is that not a wonderful trait in the British character, that they are so honest, that they like to hear a foreigner say what is wrong in their character? What better proof can you have of the national honesty? Tell John Bull his faults, and he praises and admires you. Then, I say, England requires only to be enlightened in order to do justice' . . .

Perhaps in this quality England differs more than in any other from French, Germans, Italians, Spaniards. And perhaps from this very quality she may be destined to strike out the honest, true, God-like-not Godless-God-service (for we are always, ly or unconsciously, carrying out God's plans), for all her brethren of man- .

Our Indian religious founder ends: 'Now are the grand and glorious days of Reformation at hand; the kingdom of heaven, methinks, is drawing nigh.' 'Sleep

not, humbly I beg and beseech you.'

But whether the 'glorious days of reformation' are drawing nigh for Europe, or whether Europe is simply to be shattered into two hostile camps, the German Empire and Italy against the Roman Catholic host, England standing by, or rather rushing by, as to her business in a state of restless, ceaseless activity — as to her spiritual interests in a Magazine-y state, depends, does it not? upon whether we discover and live by the laws of God's Moral World, or whether we content ourselves with leaving such things to criticism and chance.

Again, listen to our Eastern preacher: 'Say not that indolence and apathy, hypocrisy and inaction, characterise' — shall we insert European Roman Catholicism and Protestant Reformation at the present day? — 'but rather say from this time forward there shall not be compromise or sleep, apathy, hypocrisy, or inaction.' And also, 'the voice of Civilisation is "Onward, forward, and heavenward;" and let our motto from this night be "Onward, forward, and heavenward."'

Or shall it be backward, to idolatry, superstition, and bigotry; or stand still at stupidity, indifference, and hardening routine, the rotten garment of a dead creed; or earthward, to engrossing, adulterating shop-keeping and shopping; and to trifling or sensual amusements?

This depends upon us.

What will this world be on August 11, 1999?

What we have made it.

And what in 1999 shall we wish to have been doing now? And what shall we wish *not* to have been doing now?

What of all the things that we do, or say, or think, will it have signified that we should have done, or said, or thought,

then? And what will it *not* have signified?

Will crime, will pauperism will the Established Churches, the views of God's government, be the same then as now? Will the views of family life, of social life, of the duties of social life, be the same then as now? Will the distribution of riches, and poverty, of land, the relative importance and civilisation of nations, of old countries and colonies, be the same then as now?

Will religion consist then, as now, not in whether a man is 'just, and true, and merciful;' whether the man seeks to know God, and what He is, and what He wishes us to do; whether the man seeks to be a fellow-worker with God, and for this purpose to find out God's plans; but whether the man 'had believed what he was told to believe?' had gone to church 'for what he called his prayers,' and 'had duly paid the fees to the ⁴ temple?'

What 1999 will be, whether all these things are the same then as now or worse, or better, depends, of course, in its proportion upon what we are doing now, or upon what we are *not* doing now.

What shall we then wish to have been doing now? Is the question. Is it reading or writing mere articles (of the 'day' one cannot say, or even of the hour) of the Minute and the Boy — not 'The Hour and the Man,' — in weekly and daily papers? Is it criticism — the most trifling criticism of the most important of all subjects, Religion — God? Speaking of Him not so seriously as we should of the Royal Academy; frittering away our time, and what is much worse, frittering away ourselves in what are called 'social duties,' or 'family duties,' 'which too often mean what the famous 'Jack' meant by helping Tom to do — what? — to do 'nothing, Sir.' While, on the other hand, the vast

⁴ Mr. Froude on Calvinism.

majority of our fellow-creatures are forcibly absorbed in the great low problem of 'bread and beer,' without one intellectual, one spiritual, one civilising influence in their lives.

Or is it working, solving by real personal work the great questions or rather problems which, as they are solved or unsolved, *will make* 1999 what it *will be*? Such as de-pauperisation, legislation, making religion and God a real personal presence among us, not a belief in a creed, a going to a room or church 'for what we call our prayers.'⁵

Religion, sermons, consist now either in telling us to believe what we are 'told to believe,' and to attend the 'means of grace,' 'as by law established;' never enquiring whether there be not other 'means of grace.' Or else, in telling us to practise certain so-called religious or social virtues in that 'state of life' (or state of mind), 'to which it has pleased God to call us,' leaving life just as it is, taking for granted that *that* 'state of life' is the one *we are born into*.

But, in 1999, shall we not wish to have worked out what life, family life, social life, political life, *should* be? And not to have taken for granted that family life, social life, political life are to be as they are, and we to get as much enjoyment out of them as we can?

To dare to offer some petty suggestions as to the conduct of everyday on the way to 1999, seems like gratuitously setting out to imitate the mountain which brought forth mice.

Nevertheless, here are a few mice:

I

1. Speeches, Articles, Sermons, _ seem always to be made for happy people, at least for tolerably successful people, those

who have not to construct or alter their lives, sometimes to begin again life 'right from the bottom;' but only to make themselves and others as happy as possible *in* lives. It seems taken for granted that life is on the best possible footing, that life is to be as it is, in families, in institutions, in schools, colleges, and universities, and among the 'masses' as they are called, as if they were *Saurian strata*.

And we are only told that we are not to be vain, selfish, ambitious therein, not to think of ourselves, but to consider others, that our 'conversation' is to be 'in heaven,' and not in the earth's opinion or in vanity or egotism..

But we *must* 'think of ourselves,' if we cannot do anything well or do the thing that we *are* doing well.

It is not *all* 'vanity' or 'egotism,' this thinking about ourselves. A person who does well what he is doing, or who aspires to nothing better or more difficult than what he is doing, needs not to think of himself.

But what of him who does not, or who tries at something higher?

2. Neither is thought taken or advice given for this: sympathy in good work is an essential of wellbeing. So much has this been felt to be the case that one Church has invented a whole system of Saints, Angels, guardian Angels, 'Communion of Saints, to supply the sympathy which it is too evident does not generally exist here, though, perhaps, it is felt less and less that it does *not*, owing to our being more and more taken up with material wants or material enjoyments.

But, says one, (for anyone may feel he has it not, though few may now feel its want; 'sympathy in work is an essential of well-being. I have none. I used to batter myself about, because, having none, I longed for it. What am I to do?')

⁵ St. Clement. Quoted by Mr. Froude.

It is much better to acknowledge a legitimate want, and that you suffer from it.

But then this is *so*, that you cannot help thinking of yourself!

All solicitude, repentance, every plan of self-improvement is in fact thinking of yourself; and very poor creatures we should be if we had none of these things.

[A disciple of one of the best of 'Saints' and founders said: 'Do not go and put yourself in a doubtful 'situation when you are in a safe place. Now what I can being in a safe place is when you are rent with solitudes, and sorrows, and when you bear the weight of weariness according to God's pleasure 'and for His sake.']

3. Neither is thought taken or advice given for this:

Conversation is not only for 'vanity,' or amusement, but for persuasion, for teaching, teaching sometimes inmost important things.

A conscientious person,⁶ 'speaking the truth in love,' *m u s t* 'think of himself,' of his success or failure in such cases, and not at all on the 'score of' vanity' or 'sensitiveness.' Sometimes, indeed, he may have *sacrificed* his 'vanity' or 'sensitiveness,' or 'the world's opinion' to do or say the thing which nevertheless recalls to him 'the busy restless image of self,' which he would so fain forget — recalls it by his very desire to examine whether he has done or said the thing aright, or could do it better.

If we were more anxious about 'right and duty,' it is said, we should be above all this.

But it is sometimes for right and duty's

⁶ There are not a few who feel like poor Archbishop Darboy of Paris, when in prison under the Commune: 'Shoot me here where I am; but no more interviews — no more interrogations. I am not fit for them.'

sake that we leave the easy path where we *need* not think of ourselves; where we are easily enjoying (I will not call it happiness), perhaps praised and flattered 'with the world's approbation,' and go into a path for us so difficult as to involve continual doubt, care, reflection, even if not heart-rending anxiety. And how can these things be in imperfect mortals without thinking of ourselves? Imperfection, struggling with difficulty, in the path to perfection, is almost equivalent to failure and mistake, while gathering experience. And how can experience be free from self-reflection? In short, a conscientious person must often give up the self-complacency of conscience in the very path of conscience and of Christ, and must often think of the world's opinion in the very path of deserting the world's opinion.

Never dispute with anybody who wishes to contradict you, says a most reasonable saint. For even if you are victorious, yours is the loss. Quite true: nevertheless, often in the path of right and duty, we must contend, not with anybody, but with everybody, and be contradicted by everybody. And we are thus compelled to think of ourselves and of the 'world's opinion' in the very act of disregarding ourselves and the world's opinion.

Can any of us have dwelt half a century in this world, and not feel, if we have others depending upon us: And I have lived twice the time or more of these young things, have had twice, perhaps a hundred times, their experience, and have I no more truth to tell them, no more help to give them, than this? Not till we can say: 'The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me,' can conscientious people who have others depending on them for a life's guidance have any confidence in their own words.

And how is this to be attained? Only by

being always with the thought of God, not with our own thoughts; not repeating over and over to ourselves our own thoughts and plans, but asking: What is His plan? What will He bring out of plan? What will He bring out of this? Asking: What in 1999 will have been the thing that we in 1999 should have wished to have done in 1873, to tell not only upon 1873, but upon 1899 and 1999 ?

But this requires a very different ‘agonizing’ from what we see in workshops, in drawing-rooms, in Churches, in schools, in Hyde Park, or even in the House of Commons, or the Cabinet; though one would have thought it a very inspiring thing to legislate, and so form the lives, in as far as they can be formed by legislation, of millions of our fellow beings.

4. To do what we have to do ‘for the work’s sake only,’ to be grieved at failure only because it is failure in the work, we are most truly told. But then we must know *how* to do the work; we must study how not to make a failure, if we are not to fail in God’s work as in all work. There is a higher thing than to be grieved only at one’s failure in God’s work, and that is, to strain every faculty not to make a failure, to give all one’s powers to succeed in that work, as men do to succeed in making a fortune.

Failure is essential on the road to success. But it never seems to be thought that it is more difficult to discover the ways of creating the kingdom of heaven on earth, than to discover the ways of the Solar System. Yet no one would ever think of recommending the study of Astronomy to be pursued in the weak, pretentious, sententious manner that we are preached to about pursuing Life. Yet Life is a harder study than Astronomy, if we are really to succeed in it, really to succeed in bringing about a little corner of the kingdom of

heaven.

We are never lectured about the study of anything else in the wild, wishy-washy, womanish terms that we are preached to about *life*. And this is thought Christian: as if Christ had not been the boldest preacher that ever was about reforming life.

‘Whosoever will save his life shall lose it.’

‘If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off.’

‘He has married a wife and therefore he cannot come’ — in sad irony, as if he ought not to bring her with him ! — or rather, as if he ought not to have ‘married a wife’ for fellow service in God’s work!

‘Who is my mother? And who are my brethren? Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.’

‘If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.’

II

This is what the best morality teaches us now :—

1. ‘If we lived habitually above ourselves,’ it is most truly said, ‘we might hope to attain that self-control which is the source of freedom.’

Freedom is indeed not doing as we like, not everybody following his or her own way (even if that were possible), but ‘self-control.’ Self-control, plus a control or command of our subject, gives ‘freedom,’ but a person who has no control over any subject, or right use of any faculties, cannot have freedom. It all comes to the same thing, viz., the necessity of doing what we do well, of what we do being what is well to do, if we are to attain what is commonly called ‘humility,’ disregard of self, useful care for others, efficient service

of God and of our brethren.

2. The kingdom of heaven is within, but we must also make it *without*.

There is no public opinion yet, it has to be created, as to not committing blunders for want of knowledge. Good intentions are supposed enough; yet, blunders, organised blunders, do more mischief than crimes. Carelessness, indifference, want of thought, when it is organised indifference, as in a family, as in a college or university, as in an institution, as in a great government office, as in social or political life. Yes, indeed, organised carelessness is more hurtful even than actual sin, as every day we may have cause to find out.

To study how to do good work as a matter of life and death, to 'agonize' so as to obtain practical wisdom. To do it, there is little or no public opinion enforcing this, condemning the want of it.

Until you can create such a public opinion, little good will be done, except by accident or accidental individuals. But when we have such a public opinion we shall not be far from having a 'kingdom of heaven' externally even here.

For this is :— Creating a 'kingdom of heaven' *without*.

A 'kingdom of heaven' within only — in this modern world, at least (as Christ put it, the truth was perfect) — a kingdom of heaven within only and not without, is:

The good intention *sans* wisdom, *sans* labour, *sans* 'agonising' to create it *without*.

To create a religiously high true public opinion *is* — is it not? — to create a 'kingdom of heaven,' *without* — that is, externally in this world.

There was a young man once, rich in all the gifts of nature and of fortune, or, as he said himself, with 'means, time, and inclination,' who was not satisfied with merely embellishing a happy home with

good manners — with taking the world as it is, as the phrase runs. He was so convinced of the necessity of creating a kingdom of heaven without, of the little that is done towards this among the great mass of people that, again to use his own words, he felt he 'should be a thief and a murderer,' if he 'withheld what he so evidently owed.' He accordingly went to live in the East End of London, to study the people first, in order to know how to help them.

This is his striking evidence:— 'The people create' (not the kingdom of heaven, but) 'their destitution and their disease.' He saw 'the habitual condition of this mass of humanity — its uniform mean level, the absence of anything more civilising than a grinding organ to raise the ideas beyond the daily bread and beer, the utter want of education, the complete indifference to religion, with the fruits of all this, viz., improvidence, dirt, and their secondaries, crime and disease.' But he was not satisfied with coolly saying: It is the people's own fault. He saw the necessity, and set about the work of altering the circumstances, the 'state of life,' in order to bring about a kingdom of heaven. He is particularly clear in his views. He says that 'moderate frugality and providence' would bring 'the destitution and disease of this city within quite manageable limits — that this 'amount of change,' viz., to 'bodily ease and advancement in life,' will be within two generations. 'Good laws,' he says, 'energetically enforced, with compulsory education, supplemented by gratuitous individual exertion,' 'will certainly' give 'the mass so much of industry and morality,' as is 'conducive' to this 'bodily ease and advancement in life.' Is he satisfied?

No: he adds: 'Unfortunately, this amount of change may be effected without

the least improvement in the spiritual condition of the people.'

Were 'the best disposed in the West,' who have 'means, time, and inclination,' to go and live in the East End, as ⁷ he did, where, as he says, 'there are hardly any residents with enough leisure to give much time,' what a work for them!

But then they must know *how to do it*.

[We hear that the Shah of Persia is now owned by Baron Reuter — the kingdom of Persia leased to a telegraphist. This is the most curious sign of the Age-material' progress apparently eating us up. For the Telegraph-monger to own the 'King of Kings,' who thinks himself the 'Asylum of the World,' the Son of the Sun, is as if Pickford owned the Pope.]

3. 'To practise, to feel' these so-called 'dreams,' 'to make them our own,' this is, we are truly told, not far from the kingdom of heaven upon earth.'

But we must also make them not only our own, but others' own.

The kingdom of heaven is within; but no one laboured like Christ to make it *without*. He actually recommended people to *leave* their own lives to do this, so much was he penetrated by the conviction, filled by the enthusiasm, that we MUST ALTER the 'state of life,' (NOT conform to it — no, oh, thrice, ten times, no; a hundred times, no,) into which we are born, in order to *bring about* a 'kingdom of heaven.'

Never was anything less like remaining within good intentions than Christ's teaching, than Christ's example.

And when we remember what a tender nature He was of, His providing on the Cross a home for His mother, and so many other incidents, then we see that the call of God was there, that He was right, that we

⁷This man is dead: but, 'being dead, yet speaketh.

must go forth into the world to bring about the kingdom of heaven.

HIS was not Roman Catholic mysticism at all.

'Myself is so different from myself,' under different circumstances. We must *make* these circumstances for others and for ourselves — these circumstances which shall *make* ourselves different from our low, mean, selfish selves, which shall raise us to 'live habitually above ourselves.'

'It is no use praying for rain, if the wind is in that quarter,' said the observant country clerk.

'It is no use praying for' Parliament, if the wise and earnest leaders are not, who know what they want, and are able to show the way to what they want; if these are the days of superficial discussion when every body, even the Cabinet, is like a periodical and a magazine, that is, 'getting up' out of reading a subject, whether a pauper or an iron-clad, whether a soldier or a, colony, it does not matter — as people get up leading or periodical 'articles — and calling *this* Administration.

If we *did* the things people now prate about, write about, speechify, debate, report about, that *would* be Administration.

It is no use bringing about 'Army Reorganisation,' or abolishing 'purchase,' (making the Crown outwit the House of Lords), if our control or supply system cannot march 30,000 men thirty miles with friendly farmers in our own country; if this annual autumn campaigning is not real campaigning, with supplies not coming across the 'enemy's' lines; if all the subsidiary services are not to be called out to co-operate, really to co-operate, as in time of war, in actual campaigning combination, to ensure, really to ensure, the exercise, and thereby the proper selection for promotion of officers in executing these combinations.

Otherwise 're-organisation' is only a much-abused word.

It is no use preaching about the 'kingdom of heaven within' to undergraduates, if a great 'ancestral' college, the seat of political and noble men's sons, is a seat of carelessness, idleness, conviviality, practical jokes, even if nothing worse.

It is no use talking about the 'kingdom of heaven within,' if our home is a nest of jarring or thoughtless elements, every member trying to do as he or she likes, even though without much harm — to get all they can of pleasure or amusement out of this poor earth, giving nothing back. Everyone of us has known how the finest moral natures, in this home life have been trampled out, have existed uselessly. Unable to raise others to *their* standard, their very virtues, their humility and unselfishness, have turned against them, have dragged *them* down to others' standards.

The kingdom of heaven within and not without, is too much of the doctrine of Roman Catholic or other modern mystics, or Euthyphros,⁸ or Ecclesiastics, who never propose any kingdom of heaven without, except that there should be more prayers organised. This is exactly the doctrine of modern religious women. They would never create a kingdom of heaven without, would never 'contribute to the re-constitution of society,' [a phrase borrowed, somewhat reluctantly, from a (not) admirable Communist philosopher]. In some sense, our teaching of universal 'toleration,' of 'charity,' rather than teaching that we must search out the truth, 'with groanings that cannot be uttered,' is an *obstacle* to 'progress,' by making the present state of things beautiful.

4. Is there not danger that we may

⁸ Euthyphro said that 'piety' was: To do as I do.

run altogether into

- a. Universal toleration,
- b. Universal criticism ?

And though this seems a paradox, is it one?

For a. in eclecticism people lose discrimination; discrimination of truth, of character, discrimination between the merits of various ways of life or various circumstances, discrimination between what is mere criticism, and what is creation or progress towards creation.

There are some who see no difference between Sidney Herbert and other war ministers; between Sir Robert Peel and other premiers. There are some who see little difference between St. Paul and a Saturday Reviewer.

There are some who see no difference between Christ Church and Balliol Colleges. Or, if they do, they think indifference and carelessness better than what they are pleased to call a 'hot bed of rationalism and infidelity.'

There are some who see little difference between a Luther and a Pere Hyacinthe: a Savonarola and a Dr. Dollinger.

There are some who see no difference between the mutual flattery of clever men of a college or members of a family; and the real, honest sympathy and co-operation in the real honest search after truth.

There are some who see no difference between a Positivist and a John Stuart Mill — oh! Too soon taken from us — he 'should have died hereafter,' — when shall we see again that true' liberality, which would *wish* to be defeated in the cause of truth ? — when shall we see again that Passion of Reason or Reason of Passion — impassioned Reason and reasonable Passion-wise, but 'thrilling with emotion to his fingers' ends' — passionate in the cause of Truth alone, Sancta Sophia? — Had

there been' a goddess called the 'Passion of Reason,' *he* would not have considered the gender humiliating, but have asked: Why did the Greeks make Wisdom a Woman? There are none like him — none to come after him. [It seems equally impossible to pass over the death of such a man without a note, or with such a note as this.] But we must *on*.

And *b*. Does it not follow from such want of the discriminating power that criticism is rife, very rife indeed? That people scarcely can speak of others, except by speaking ill of them? So that whoever is rightly disgusted by this can hardly let others be spoken of at all in his presence. Also, that there is scarcely anything between stupid praise or bitter criticism and no discrimination as to the ideal lying hid in each man's character, as to the work he can do in life.

Yet there must be an ideal in God's mind for each man, woman, and child, for the work he, she, or it is put here to do.

But may we not be pretty sure that by 1899 or 1999 either, Pere Hyacinthe and Dr. Dollinger will not have reformed the Church; that Bismarck will not have assisted Religion by expelling the Jesuits; that the French will not have given France a Government or a Constitution, at least through ousting of M. Thiel's; that Christ Church College will not have brought Oxford to philosophy, statemanship, or real learning, at least under the present *regime*; that Reviewing will not have made one discoverer of truth or of the ways and plans of God, nor even one earnest seeker after the ways and plans of God; that present politics will not have re-organised Army, or Navy, or Church; or abolished crime or pauperism; that present preaching which takes so very small a part, aspires after so very small apart of the reorganisation of *life*, will not have re-

organised life by 1999 ?

Discussion now-a-days almost precludes consideration — it leaves no time for thought. Criticism precludes real judgment. It is not mere discussion, the busy-body discussion not people discussing a subject who know nothing and have thought out nothing about it, or only what they have gleaned by reading different articles of opposite periodicals — which brings any contribution to the real knowledge of the subject, which does any good. That is discussion, not of sense, but of nonsense. The only discussion which can be of any use is that between persons who have thought out something about the subject, who bring some contribution of individual thought or of personal knowledge to the common stock. What a valuable rule it would be, for every half-hour spent in discussion, spend two previous half-hours in thought! Discussion will not govern the world, nor even a single home in it.

Language, said Talleyrand, was given us to conceal our thoughts. Even that is better than what we see now, when language seems to be given us to conceal our want of thoughts.

III

Did a voice come 'crying in the wilderness' now, what would it cry? In this wilderness, not of 'monkeys,' but of critics, would it not cry: Create and do not criticise? Goethe's idea of a devil — 'der Geist der stets verneint' — was: the spirit of criticism without earnestness, which is always negative, never creates — which neither hates what is bad nor loves what is good — criticism without results.

And the German tale indicates the same: The student rising by earnest effort to a certain height; then, what comes to kill

the enthusiasm which bore him up? Criticism without depth! He becomes a clever common-place critic of that towards which he once so earnestly struggled upwards — the insight into God's plans of moral government, which are leading us on to perfection in eternity — for perfection equals eternity; that is, the idea of perfection, of progress towards perfection includes the idea of eternity — is the same, in fact — since we see very well that no one attains perfection here; and *he must* be but a stupid creator who grants, nay arranges for a little progress, and then cuts it short. As St. Anselm and Descartes found a formula for the evidence of the existence of God, so a formula, perhaps, might be found — might it not? For evidence. Of the existence of eternity in God's idea of perfection.

But criticism has no sympathy with nor insight into the ways of God, the higher ways of man. It has no idea of understanding the 'Welt-Ordnung,' the plans or laws of the Almighty Father. It makes a great show of enquiry and of power; but there is nothing behind, nothing within, nothing with the principle of life in it, it is all temporary, negative, unreal. It interrupts us when we are beginning to find out something of the ways and thoughts and purposes of God, and volunteers a thought or way of its own.

May we finish with another parable? Criticism has stripped Religion of many superstitions, has killed innumerable parasites which choked her vigour, truth and beauty — has cleared away historical or traditional rubbish, or rather what was not historical, with mistranslations, interpolations, and all the rest of it — has cured Religion of many ugly excrescences. But has it advanced us one step nearer in the study of God's real character, the

character which makes us love? Has it taught us the knowledge of the Perfect Being? And is not the love of a Perfect Being the essence of all Religion? May it not rather have killed Religion with the cure of superstition? Here is my parable : — A famous French physician exclaimed when his patient died: 'Il est mort guéri.'

Let us not have to say: Religion is cured, but dead. Let us not think when we have stripped or cured Astronomy, Science, History, above all Religion, of their superstitions, errors, vain traditions, excrescences, that this is all.

Sometimes it had almost been better if we could not go on to the discovery of truth, that we had let feeling, though mixed with error, alone. *True truth* must always inspire a higher feeling than truth mixed with error. But then truth must be found. Up then, and 'Onward, Forward and Heavenward,' as our Hindoo reformer says.

Let us press on so that 1999 shall have as much more truth than 1873 as it should have; much more advance of truth than 1873 has over 1746; for truth should advance by geometrical, not arithmetical progression, or rather by progress which cannot be measured or fettered by numbers.