



THE PROGRESS OF NATURE.

All nature dies and lives again;
The flowers that paint the field,
The trees that grace the mountain's
brow,
And boughs and blossoms yield,
Resign the honors of the form
At winter's stormy blast,
And leave the naked, leafless plain
A desolated waste.
Yet soon reviving plants and flowers
Anew shall deck the plain;
The woods shall hear the voice of
spring
And flourish green again.
So man, although he fades away,
Lives in another race
And each doth fill his little round
Of life, of time and space.

Selected.

Will Not Accept the Situation.

There is no more earnest opposition to the union of church and state in this country than by those Christians who are ably represented by the American Sentinel, a journal which is devoted almost wholly to the advocacy of complete Secularization of the state. It keeps a close watch on the movements of the National Reform Association and other organizations which are cooperating with it, declares their design and in every issue, shows what must be the inevitable effect of their success and appeals to the American people to resist these ecclesiastical encroachments on their constitutional rights and liberties. The Sentinel was quick to call the President to account before the bar of public opinion for his official recognition of Jesus Christ in his last Thanksgiving proclamation. It is stated that the president in commenting on these and other similar criticisms said that this is a "Christian nation" and that sooner or later "all will have to accept the situation" and "face the music." The sentinel remarks pertinently:

"Everybody knows that upon principle, and by express provision of the supreme law, the government of the United States was established not only without any recognition of religion, but with the exclusion of religion, and specifically the Christian religion. This was done, too, because of respect to the Christian religion—that the infinite spirit of eternal truth might move in its freedom, and purity, and power, and that there might be no encroachments upon the prerogatives of God.

"Thus America became to all the world, 'the classical land' of religious liberty. Therefore no step could ever be taken against this order of things in the Government, without attacking religious liberty:

nothing could ever be done toward governmental recognition of the Christian religion, without being against the plain word of Christ, as well as against the fundamental principles and the supreme law of the Government itself.

"Calmly and deliberately, and in the fear of Christ, we say that we will not have to accept that situation. We will not have to do it, simply because we will not do it. Not only this, but we are going to oppose it with all our might—not on the field of carnage nor with weapons of carnal warfare; but as our fathers did, in the field of public opinion, with 'the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God,' 'with sufferings and the Cross.' There are thousands of us now, and there are going to be thousands upon thousands of us before the contests is over, who will not 'accept the situation' 'who will not' face the music."

To Liberal Thinkers.

Rev. J. W. Chadwick in the Christian Register says that "religious indifference of cultivated people is a kind of spiritual breeding tank to furnish converts to that or some other equally irrational system of belief. Their children are as soft as putty in the hands of the first man who comes along with any strenuous conviction or colossal fad."

Mr. Chadwick says that the liberal thinker is very hard upon the orthodox believer because of his selfishness in addressing himself so exclusively to his individual salvation. "But," remarks Mr. Chadwick, "has the liberal thinker been less selfish with his conception of the church as intended only for his entertainment or advantage? The orthodox believer has spent untold treasures of gold and precious life to redeem the heathen world. Has the liberal thinker done as much to make others the sharers of the joy which he has found in the high thoughts and generous hopes and fair ideals which make up the sum of rational religion?"

Many liberal thinkers have contributed generously to diffuse knowledge of their principles, but there are too many, it must be confessed, who, satisfied with their own emancipation from the slavery of creeds, show little disposition to aid in the work of sending light to other minds. Men who have cherished convictions and believe that the truth should prevail, to be consist-

ent, should do what they can to advance their thought in the interests of intellectual freedom.—B. F. UNDERWOOD.

Spencer.

Says the Chicago Record: "Whether one subscribes to his doctrines or not, the feat lately accomplished by Herbert Spencer in the completion of the last volume of the Synthetic Philosophy compels admiration. The work is of epochal importance as a reflection of the trends of modern thought and as the fullest expression of the greatest philosopher of the age. It draws upon resources of information which are the most remote and inaccessible. It penetrates deeply into biology, economics, metaphysics, sociology and ethics and sums the deductions thus derived into a synthetic philosophy.

"Setting aside all the questions which are bound to come up for controversy among living thinkers, these very disputes are signs of the pregnant quality of Spencer's work and of his power as an instigator of thought. The feat which he has performed is a magnificent example of will power and endurance. To undertake and outline a work knowing that it cannot possibly be completed for many years, and that it will demand a life-time of unswerving application, is the conception of a man of the highest courage and determination.

"If Herbert Spencer had accomplished nothing else he would have lived to good purpose for the object lesson he has given in courageous application to an ideal."

When the Mohammedan, dies the popular belief is that two angels appear at his head holding a balance, says the Pittsburg "Dispatch." One part points to the east, the other to the west. In this the dead man's sins as well as his good deeds are weighed. Then his soul is transported over a deep abyss. If he has been a true believer his passage will be made easy by two accompanying angels. If otherwise, he will be obliged to halt many times on the way. There are seven stations in the abyss. At the first he is asked in what manner he has observed the religious rites prescribed by Mohammed; at the second he must tell if he has said his prayers regularly; at the third he enumerates his deeds of charity; at the fourth he must tell how he has observed the fasts and festivals; at the fifth he will be questioned as to his visits to Mecca; at the sixth

prove that he has attended to all his duties regularly and at the seventh prove that he has never neglected his family. For every sin some penalty is exacted.

In the Christian Statesman of December 19, 1896, Rev. J. N. Leiper, reporting the visit of the Anti-Saloon League to President Cleveland, a short time before, adds the following; and the italics are his own:—

"After this ceremony was over, the writer went back to the president, and in the presence of a few others, said: 'Mr President, I most earnestly thank you for the recognition of your Saviour and mine in your Thanksgiving proclamation.' I write this incident in order to give the president's reply, which deserves to be remembered by all citizens. After referring to the fact that he had been criticised for it by the Jews and some others, he remarked: '*We are a Christian nation, and we may as well face the music.*'"

That statement of the president's does certainly "deserve to be remembered by all citizens," and by all others in the country. Indeed, there is not much likelihood that they will have much opportunity to forget it. The real question is, will they "face the music?"—American Sentinel.

Secular Flashes.

For it is indeed the true characteristic of science, that she casts her net in search of results on every side, seizes upon every perceptible property of things, and subjects it to the hardest tests, no matter what finally comes of it.—Grimm.

The great business of life—even that which lies most immediately before us—will be more fully understood and more rationally performed, the better man knows the place he holds and the relation he bears to the plan of creation.—D. Page.

Like other religions, Christianity is a mixture of good and evil. The church has made more orphans than it has fed. It has never built asylums enough to hold the insane of its own making. It has shed more blood than light.—Ingersoll.

It is more honorable to the head, as well as to the heart, to be misled in our eagerness in the pursuit of truth, than to be safe from blundering by contempt of it.—S. T. Coleridge.

Kindness is the best medicine for the disease called crime.