



### Only One Life.

'Tis not for man to trifle; life is brief,  
And sin is here.  
Our age is but the falling of a leaf,  
A dropping tear.  
We have no time to sport away the hours;  
All must be earnest in a world like ours.  
Not many lives, but only one have we;  
One, only one.  
How sacred should that one life ever be—  
Day after day filled up with blessed toil,  
Hour after hour still bringing in new  
spoil!

—Selected

### Rev. Barrows and the Hindoos.

Rev. J. Barrows says: "The failure of Hindooism to furnish peace and moral healing to the individual and regeneration to its millions of votaries is becoming apparent to the Hindoos themselves. The reforming sects are an emphatic announcement of this social and religious failure."

The individual among the Hindoos has as much "peace" and moral healing" as does the individual among christians and as for general "regeneration" there are no nations on earth more in need of it than the christian nations. In what Pagan nation can be found more drunkenness, prostitution, abnormal vice, cheating, bribing, stealing, murdering, municipal corruption, robbing the people by legislative and judicial methods and destroying human life in war than have for centuries disgraced the nations of christendom. The fact that there are "reforming sect" in India shows that the moral and progressive spirit exists there and is allowed to assert itself. In christendom for hundreds of years church and state combined to crush out every "reforming sect" that appeared and to suppress every movement for the emancipation of the people from civil and religious despotism, and now reform is possible only where the power of the church has been limited and public opinion has been modified by the progress of freethought and science, which everywhere go hand in hand.

Says Rev. J. H. Barrows: "The claim that the Christian religion is essentially universal, was meant to be so from the beginning and is sure to cover and dominate the earth is very disturbing to the Hindoo pride, and arouses his dissent much more violently than the claim that Christianity is true. Hindoos believe that they can absorb everything that is true and remain loyal to Hindooism!"

Hindooism, that is philosophical Hindooism, does not need to absorb Christianity for it has already all that can be called truth in the

christian system.

Rev. Barrows says: "The Hindoo spirit today is strangely stirred and restless, and there never was a more favorable time for a large reinforcement of the various departments of Christian work."

The reinforcement is needed at home, and needed badly. Belief in the supernatural religion of christianity, in the miracles, in the fall of man, in salvation by Christ's blood, in the superhuman character of Christ, in a personal Devil, in everlasting punishment, in the divine inspiration and authority of the Bible—belief in these is steadily declining in the church and outside the church, in the pulpit as well as in the pew. In such a condition, when great tracts in our cities are churchless, when church continues to exist, especially for the wealthy and fashionable classes, because of their social and esthetic features, and their exclusiveness, rather than because of any interest in the doctrines mentioned above, Christianity is in a fine condition to attempt the work of converting India whose heathen teachers are among us trying to show the superiority as well as the sufficiency of their faith!

Rev. J. H. Barrows presents some of the "mental differences" of the Hindoo mind in the form of the following inquiries which, he says, are those most frequently put in private or public:

"Is faith in the historic Christ essential to salvation? If so, what became of those who lived before the advent of Christ or who have never heard of him? How can the sacrifice of Christ's mere body atone for the sins of the soul? Is not God omnipresent in stones and animals, and if so what evil is there in so-called idolatry? Is man an isolated creation at a particular time and on this earth? Why should there be only one Savior? Why should not man come to God directly, without the intervention of a mediator? Do you not believe in the ultimate salvation of all souls? If not, is not your Christianity inferior to Hindooism, which provides for the final salvation of all? Why should a religion which claims to be universal have originated so late in history? What are the characteristic differences between Hindoos and Americans? Will Christianity make progress against a religion so highly eclectic as Hindooism? Is not material improvement an impediment to religious improvement? Have we not the highest conception

of God, since with us he is not only father, but husband, brother, mother, friend? Had Christianity ever to contend with a religion which had a sound philosophy for a basis? Can a religion resting on historic foundation be as permanent and satisfactory as a religion resting on ideas? Is there salvation for those of us who have heard of the historic Christ, but to whom he is not so attractive as our own saints and sages? Why should we study the bible when we have not yet mastered our own scriptures? Does not the Almighty give to every man that religion which he sees is best fitted for him."

B. F. UNDERWOOD.

### The Church and Truth.

To compel a man to desert the standard of reason, the church does not entirely rely on the threat of eternal pain to be endured in another world, but holds out the reward of everlasting joy.

To those who believe it promises the endless ecstasies of heaven. If it cannot frighten it will bribe. It relies on fear and hope.

A religion, to command the respect of intelligent men, should rest on a foundation of established facts. It should appeal, not to passion, not to hope and fear, but to the judgment. It should ask that all the faculties of the mind, all the senses, should assemble and take counsel together, and that its claims be passed upon and tested without prejudice, without fear, in the calm of perfect candor.

But the church cries: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Without this belief there is no salvation. Salvation is the reward for belief.

Belief is, and forever must be, the result of evidence. A promised reward is not evidence. It sheds no intellectual light. It establishes no fact, answers no objection, and dissipates no doubt.

Is it honest to offer a reward for belief?

The man who gives money to a judge or juror for a decision or verdict is guilty of a crime. Why? Because he induces the judge, the juror, to decide, not according to the law, to the facts, the right, but according to the bribe.

The bribe is not evidence.

So the promise of Christ to reward those who will believe is a bribe. It is an attempt to make a promise take the place of evidence. He who says that he believes, and does this for the sake of reward,

corrupts his soul.

Suppose I should say that at the centre of the earth there is a diamond one hundred miles in diameter, and that I would give \$10,000 to any man who would believe my statement. Could such a promise be regarded as evidence?

Intelligent people would not ask for rewards, but reasons. Only hypocrites would ask for the money.

Yet, according to the New Testament, Christ offers a reward to those who would believe, and this promised reward was to take the place of evidence. When Christ made this promise he forgot, ignored, or held in contempt the rectitude of a brave, free and natural soul.

The declaration that salvation is the reward for belief is inconsistent with mental freedom, and could have been made by no man who thought that evidence sustained the slightest relation to belief.

Every sermon in which men have been told that they could save their souls by believing has been an injury. Such sermons dull the moral sense, and subvert the true conception of virtue and duty.

The true man, when asked to believe, asks for evidence. The true man, who asks another to believe, offers evidence.

But this is not all.

In spite of the threat of eternal pain—of the promise of everlasting joy, unbelievers increased, and the churches took another step.

The churches said to the unbelievers, the heretics: "Although our God will punish you forever in another world—in his prison—the doors of which open only to receive, we, unless you believe, will torment you now."

And then the members of these churches, led by priests, popes, and clergymen, sought out their unbelieving neighbors—chained them in dungeons, stretched them on racks, crushed their bones, cut out their tongues, extinguished their eyes, flayed them alive, and consumed their poor bodies in flames.

All this was done because these Christian savages believed in the dogma of eternal pain—because they believed that heaven was the reward for belief. So believing, they were the enemies of free thought and speech; they cared nothing for conscience, nothing for the veracity of a soul—nothing for the manner of a man.

R. G. INGERSOLL.