

River, and of the good things of the Willamette Valley. We might thus personify Mount Hood, but we all know that it exists and acts under immutable laws, and that prayers to it to change its action would be ridiculously absurd. We neither know nor can conceive of any limit to this process of immutable correlation;—a prayer therefore to the whole Cosmos is as absurd as if made to the Sun, or to Mount Hood, or to any of its parts.

But can there not be a Supreme Creator and Ruler of the world or cosmos, existing before and outside of it and of its infinite correlations? Let some one show something that is not a part of these cosmic correlations, and show how a LIMIT to them is conceivable. For until that can be done, all prayers or peace offerings to a God outside of an INFINITE WORLD, are to the inconceivable; and if made to a God identical with or within the world, they are simply to the World or cosmos itself, which is only an infinity of correlations under immutable laws. If these laws and correlations are personified and spoken of as a "Personal God," it is simply a figure of speech, and has no more validity than our personification of Mount Hood, or Coleridge's personification of Mount Blanc and "God" in his splendid cosmic poem in the Vale of Chamouny. We must decline to be the victims of our own rhetoric, either as to mountains, rivers or cosmic "gods." But that is just the way the human race, in its ignorance of the infinite laws of immutable correlation, have been victimized hitherto. Many languages have no neuter gender, children never have; and in the childhood of the races no one had. Everything was moved by a personified spirit in or about it. The whole cosmos was thus personified a God, and after bloody ages they defined him thus:—"God is a spirit [ghost,] infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth." Science tells us the higher truth, that God is not a "Spirit or Holy Ghost," or spook at all, for there are no such things; but if we must use the word God as a reality, its scientific definition must stand thus: "God is THE WORLD, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in its being, continuance and power, but ever-changing in its facts, processes and phenomena, according to immutable laws."

It results from this definition, and Science in fact so reveals, that this world of laws, processes and facts is neither human nor inhuman, moral nor immoral, good nor bad, in regard to the human race, but is the infinite, unvarying order of things, out of which our race has grown, and upon which it rests, and must work out its "lot and fate". But this man does by and in a "struggle for existence" in which

HIS WILL, put into active effect, is the ONE and ONLY factor by which the order of the world about him can be changed according to and under the said immutable laws, for his special benefit. It is simply childish, therefore, and sacreligious to Man and even unworthy of the World, to keep on praying to THE IMMUTABLE as though it could do anything specially for our benefit, for our asking or vows, or in payment for our penances or sacrifices, as was fully believed of old.

As to all this childishness what should we do? As was emphatically said by the apostle Paul (1 Cor. 13:11), "When I was a child I spake as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became A MAN I PUT AWAY childish things."

Now in view of the law of religious evolution as laid down to the Pilgrims by Robinson, and acted upon by the apostle Paul in regard to the old Jewish faith, what are we compelled to say of these proclamations of our president and governor, under the light of science? Why, that they are simply childish; that their authors have sadly "come to a period in religion"; that they have committed a sin against evolution, which, if any can be, is under science "the unpardonable sin"; for there is no mutable god to "repent himself," and to reverse the consequences of human error or ignorance or hypocrisy. These proclamations are simply exhibitions of a theology that is now extinct except as a specimen of superstition, and presents a total misapprehension of the world as it is now known to our people; and is a misrepresentation of a majority of the people of the United States and of Oregon. Out of our seventy millions not twenty millions are under this superstition—probably not more than fifteen millions. And yet because of no co-operative organization of Liberal and Scientific people, this superstition lords it, not only over a large majority of the people, but compels the public officials to publicly avow their belief in this supernatural prayer superstition. Thus our president boasts of all of the great things, and the "abundant prosperity" that God has accomplished by his administration, and urges the people to put up "fervent prayers for a CONTINUANCE of the divine guidance", thus assuming, with coolness unspeakable, that he is now under "divine guidance", and that if we happen to differ from him we are repudiating the guidance of God and flying in God's face!

Do you ask what harm is done by this childish superstition and official imposition and vanity? The answer must be: Much and in many ways.

1. Every effort of heart, mind or will, and every dollar expended upon or for that "GOD" is a ROBBERY OF MAN. The labor and money lav-

ished away in building and sustaining churches and Theological prayer-buildings, if applied to HUMAN PURPOSES would realize the "Earthly Paradise" within our own life time. Millions upon millions of dollars are thus worse than thrown away every year. The human race is simply paralyzed and impoverished, in its ignorance, by this stupid and wicked superstition; and is thus, and thus only, kept in misery. For our great officials to make themselves and us parties to this ruinous folly is a wrong and an outrage unspeakable! We can only charitably suppose that they have never considered the consequences.

They are simply under the spell and influence of an old custom of appointing a "Thanksgiving," and do it without any consideration of the changes which Science has made in our knowledge and in public opinion during the last 300 years. The slightest regard of modern considerations would compel them to "honor this custom by breach instead of observance." There is no constitution nor law which compels them to this unspeakable folly. A few moments' thought upon the fundamental law of Science, would show them that not all of the prayers of the whole human race through all ages could change a drop of water, a breath of wind, the shade of a hair, or a cell of Garfield's body, in the slightest degree. Why then spend millions on millions for the absolutely impossible. Why degrade ourselves for nothing?

2. This official prayer and Thanksgiving business also turns our people into deluded expectant slave-dependents upon an imaginary Deity, who will, as they imagine, in some way, take care of them in a coelestial heaven. This delusion breaks down and destroys their MAINSPRING OF CHARACTER and of energy in caring for this world. The loss of our church-building-labor and money is bad, but the loss of our earthly heart and hope for a heaven here is worse. "It makes cowards of us all!" No man or woman can be free who is dependent upon the will of another, whether god, or devil or man; or who mistakes the order of the world to be the manifestation of a Will to be placated by prostration, prayer and sacrifice. This evil is the greatest possible, but is only appreciated by those who have succeeded in becoming Liberals—i. e., emancipated—thus getting "out into the clear." The time is soon coming when thousands will wonder at the supineness with which they prostrated their souls and bowed before an imagined celestial despot—which imagination has ever been the father of all earthly despots and despotism.

For these reasons, while we respect you, President Hosmer, as our Superintendent and Professor in

COSMOLOGY, we respectfully decline to follow the recommendation of our President and Governor, and to extend your Department over the exercise of "fervent prayers" to any supposed "Almighty God", whether considered as a "spook" or as the Infinite Cosmos itself.

PRESIDENT HOSMER: "You need not worry; there will be no prayer section in my Department."

Well then, let us pass on to the next, the second grand department, BIOLOGY, which in our Liberal University is presided over by Prof. Leonard. The religious and supernatural values of microbes, plants and animals may not now detain us long, but it was not always so. Few things in history are more surprising than the part that tree and animal worship have played in human affairs. Rome was founded by the sight of a flock of vultures, was saved by the cackle of geese, and always had an eagle to lead her armies, and did nothing without augury. The serpent and the tree brought about the "fall of man", and Egypt worshipped her sacred bulls, India her sacred cows, Siam her sacred white elephants, China her dragons, and so to the end of the chapter. It was the wooden horse that took Troy; and the serpent was the only symbol and only conqueror of eternity. Divine and animal action were one, until science came!

Yet how are the mighty fallen! We now have to go to the far East to find prayers and sacrifices to sacred animals in these days. There was always some mystery of metempsychosis, or of something supernatural about them—but that is mostly gone now. "Show how thy bull genders," says Carlyle, "or be forever silent." Well any modern biologist can make that showing without much trouble, and indeed of the whole biological "mystery" from A to Z. What Science explains passes into the domain of causal-correlation, and the supernatural dwells only in the unknown. Oken, Gœthe, Lamark, Darwin, Huxley, and Haeckel have explained the vital processes and actions, and their Gods have moved on! Even Bryant would now hardly find anything of "divine guidance" in his poetic "water-fowl." But very fortunately we have learned by "artificial selection," and kind "euthenasia" to put our fowls of water and land, especially on Thanksgiving day, to a better use than to let them administer to our superstition as divine guides or interpreters.

Thus all living things shall have our care, use, protection and love, but for which they would soon pass out of existence, but never more our prayers. They most pathetically depend upon and pray to us.

Now turn to our diagram and look at my Department in our