

An Outspoken Christian Educator.

BY J. C. EPOKORIDGE, D. D.

It is easy to see that now and then there may come into the faculties of our Christian colleges a man of skeptical tendencies. Every one understands what we mean by Christian colleges. They are institutions of learning established and fostered by men of positive, decided religious convictions. Most of them were founded that they might be seats of learning, to which young men, called of God to the work of the ministry, might receive the discipline and culture necessary to fit them for their sacred calling. No college can flourish unless the influence which pervades and controls its faculty and students is largely religious. We are told that "in one great institution in a sister state, where the experiment of no religion has been attempted, the numbers have fallen from 700 to 400, because so many had chosen some faith adverse to the faith of their fathers."

Such being the well-known character of our colleges, the teacher (it matters not by what means) who succeeds in securing a place in the department of instruction in a Christian college while he is an avowed infidel (using the word infidel as it is commonly understood in the Christian world), and openly or secretly gives expression to his skeptical sentiments is unworthy the name of an honorable man and is guilty of a meanness which brands him as no gentleman. Up to the measure of his influence and his ability, he seeks to subvert the purpose for which the college was founded. As far as he can, he makes it cease to be a Christian institution. He poisons, instead of nourishing. He betrays one of the most sacred trusts that is ever committed to mortal hands. That there is a class of men, imbued with the sentiments put forth by the materialistic school of philosophy, who would be glad to obtain positions as professors and instructors in our institutions of learning can not be questioned. It is refreshing to notice that there are men who occupy high places as educators who do not hesitate to express themselves in no doubtful language on this subject. In the inaugural discourse of President Hamlin, delivered at Middlebury, Vt., July 6th, 1881, we find the following, which deserves to receive the widest possible circulation in all sections of our country. The thoughts expressed are not those of a novice, but of one who has had large experience as an educator and knows well what he is saying. In the discourse alluded to the new president of Middlebury College is referring to the several departments of instruction that are represented in the institution, and has reached the fifth, that of psychology and ethics, "now," as he justly remarks, "the battle-ground of two widely divergent schools of modern thought—the materialistic and spiritualistic or institutional." The following in commendation to the notice of all lovers of sound Christian learning.

"The materialistic school, led by such men as Spencer, Baird, Huxley, Tyndall, claims to be, *par excellence*, scientific. It is really speculative and theological. Denying all intuition of truth, or truth as necessary and unchangeable, and making the mind a complex of sensations, it enters at once upon a theological warfare, in order to relegate all religion to the unknown and the unknowable. They kindly and piously permit God possibly to exist, if you please; but deny that he can be known or that he can reveal himself to the finite. Theism, atheism, and pantheism are declared to be, when rigorously analyzed, alike unknowable and unthinkable. A divine revelation, a supernatural religion, miracles, prayer, and all that are held to be absurdities, and whoever defends them is unscientific. Thus, leaving the true domain of science,

they rush directly into theology and speculation, and claim to rule the whole region of theologic thought. Instead of being called scientists, they should rather be called speculative theologians. The unscientific insolence has probably reached its culmination in our colleges and institutions of learning and is now on the wane. All who profess allegiance to this school are neither pantheists nor atheists, but its influence always has an atheistic trend.

"If this college or any other college should tolerate this teaching, it would so far cease to be a Christian college, and would so far become a theologic seminary of the narrowest and bitterest kind, scoffing at all theology but agnosticism, or the religion of beastly ignorance. I can say boldly that this college believes in the existence of mind as distinct from matter, in personality, in human freedom and responsibility, in the intuitions of unchangeable and eternal truth, in a universe, in the reign of law and design, and in the existence of a lawgiver and designer, who is God over all blessed forever."

"If, as trustees, you allow other teaching, you will undermine the foundation of the college. Should I swerve from this philosophy, which makes man a person, not a thing; which makes him besides his bodily organism a spiritual intelligence, and not a mere complex of sensations; which makes him free and self-determined, self-directed, and not a machine, driven by the present motive; which makes him responsible to God and destined to immortality, it will be your most solemn duty to displace me at once, as false to my covenant with you and a base subverter of the designs of the founders of this college."

Certainly, that "trumpet" gives no "uncertain sound," and, if any man "creeps in unawares" into the faculty of Middlebury College who is an agnostic or a materialist, his bed will not be a very comfortable one. We make no plea for intolerance or persecution for opinion's sake; but when a man knows that the views which he cherishes and teaches are utterly subversive of the Christian foundations, on which all, especially our New England colleges, have been built, has no right to seek for a place in their departments of instruction. The world is very wide. Let him seek the avenues for the communication of his infidel sentiments in the public press or on the platforms of the public lecturer. He will not find it difficult to obtain an audience—at least, for a time—although it is our honest conviction that even unsanctified human nature so cries out after the spiritual and the supernatural that such an audience will grow "beautifully less," until it tapers away, at last, to zero.—*Independent.*

"Ah, dear," sighed Miss Fitzroy, as she yawned wearily, "there isn't anything to occupy one's mind now. I've made toilet cushions and tidies, and embroidered slippers and painted majolica jugs, until I am weary of life. I believe I'll go down into the kitchen and watch Jane make bread. I suppose I ought to know how many pints of yeast it takes to a loaf." And she penetrated the business part of the house, only to find out that bread was "raised" from the baker's cart.—*New Haven Register.*

—Walt Whitman, after visiting Long Branch and Rockaway, is now at West Hills, his birthplace, on Long Island, after an absence of over thirty years. There he spends a good part of every day either riding through the beautiful regions of Huntington or Cold Spring, or on the ancient homesteads or burial places of his ancestors on both sides for many generations.

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