A DEFEANCE OF SPIRITUALISM.

[By Cyprian B. Lynn, in the Banner of Light.]

Looking over some back numbers of Mr. Abbott's paper, we came across a most delightful following sentence in a column headed "Voices from the Dead." It reads:

"Your efforts to awaken Spiritualists out of their dreary dream life, to bring them back to active individual life, is the work we are engaged in, and not to be slumbering under the lullaby of spirit songs, which is the case with many, though, that you should touch off their chord, and show them plainly the danger of giving up their brain and body to the "dead" and the "body.""

We marvel that Mr. Abbott should put such a paragraph in his paper. A general reader will infer that the editor of The Index endorses the wakening statements therein made. We think differently, however.

Mr. Abbott is surrounded by intelligent Spiritualists of the highest grade, liberal friends and zealous supporters; and when he lectures, the houses are crowded, and yet, in fact, his audiences would be very small, were it not for the presence of this class, who believe all that he readily conveys.

It is from principle that our people rally to attend Mr. Abbott's lectures, rather than his name. He does not touch upon the themes that especially interest Spiritualists, viz.: spirit communication, the planes of life in the hereafter, the bringing back of the spirit, the body, the mind, or the supermundanum, etc. He is silent where spiritual lecturers stress their deepest draughts of inspiration. And the ground he does go over, most of the aforesaid be-thoughts of the spirit communication class, he rests by, and goes on.

They love to hear Mr. Abbott talk concerning radicalism; they applaudit to the echo his notes upon slumber and, in reality, they are among his most appreciative auditors. And why? Because, having heard Mr. Abbott talk concerning radicalism, they are now prepared to see the beauty of his critical and analytical essays relative to religious progress in its various forms; and they notice, in those lectures, those ideas which are just bouncing out into free thought are not calked, but reason is applied thereto; and then secure the Index editor prepares his essays, or to note hour right as is in light, or in light. He is in the dead spirit that would have wit death than life, or upon unanswerable in argument. All this is lost by him, though the process is a bold thought, outside of the old routine, by a speaker, and he is filled with delight, because he is called to the_stand for this life, of all that, for he is in the dead spirit that would have wit death than life, or upon the unanswerable in argument. All this is lost by him, though the process is a bold thought, outside of the old routine, by a speaker, and he is filled with delight, because he is called to the_stand.
Religion and Science.

On a few points made by Mr. M'Clinthock in his thoughtful article in last week's Index, we have something to say as briefly as possible.

1. Religion he defines as "the belief which binds the finite to the Infinite." This conception of the finite and the Infinite as standing over against each other, separated by a chasm of which religion is the bridge, must yield, we believe, to a higher conception. No such external and mechanical connection will satisfy the demand of modern thought for the recognition of a self-subsistent reality in the universe. Instead of attaching man to God as a sort of satellite revolving about its primary in a far outlying orbit, modern religion seeks to bring him into harmony with himself and universal Nature, and thus to realize, the true interior relation which ought to subsist between him and the Infinite. Not two tied together, but the part finding its true place in the Whole,—that is the thought struggling to realize itself in the modern consciousness. It is the hard, numerical dualism of the popular religion which is making so many atheists.

2. But our friend doubts if a "really intelligent and thorough atheist can be found." If atheism be disbelief of Infinite Wisdom and Goodness (which Mr. M'Clinthock makes essential elements in his idea of God) as anywhere existing in the universe, then we have found many such. Infinite Power in Nature few, if any, deny; and thousands believe it to be an utterly blind, unconscious, material Necessity. Would he not call that atheism? Yet justice forbids our withholding the epithet "intelligent" from such persons.

3. In reply to our statement—"We think science will ultimately justify this belief in God,"—Mr. M'Clinthock asks: "Why not say, we think science does justify this belief?" With regard to a kindred statement—"To say that science must teach a belief in God would be indeed to dogmatize,"—he asks: Would it be any more to dogmatize to say that science teaches in a way in which it would be to say, in reference to the solar system, that science teaches that the sun is the centre, etc.?" The simple fact is that science, as such, at the present day, does not even entertain the question whether God exists or not; and it would be untrue to say that she now teaches his existence. By accepting the universally established method of science, and applying it to this question which science ignores, we are satisfied that science herself will in her own time come to an affirmative solution of it. Logic, in our opinion, leads that way. But there is to be a battle over that question such as the world has never yet seen. Let us abide it without fear. Out of every such furnace seven times heated comes at last the pure gold of truth.

Is Christianity a supernatural revelation of God?—that question is now agitated in millions of minds and has been and will be, in the negative, than must come the profounder question,—"is there any God to be revealed?" In the absence of all universally recognized authority save that of reason rightly used, science will be compelled to study that momentous question as she alone can study it, and give to it at last such answer as shall proceed from the most highly trained intelligence of man. But while we have sought to anticipate, as best we may, the irresistible decision of science, we should count it inexcusable arrogance to say that our verdict is necessarily here. This distinction between the ultimate verdict of science and the present opinions of individual students of science is so fundamental, nay, so elementary, that its apparent incomprehensibility shows how little the true scientific spirit has been diffused among the people. Free men have no object more vital than that of diffusing it everywhere, for it is the very spirit of freedom itself.

4. "The idea of God," says Theodore Parker, "is a fact given by man's nature, and not an invention or device of ours." Mr. M'Clinthock accepts this position. He starts from the existence of God as the central truth on which all other truths depend, and thinks we err by beginning at "the merely moral, human end, working up to Deity as a desirable possible ultimatum." Now it is a truth, hardly to be called into question at the present day, that the idea of God has a history, a development, with forms and images, and gradually becoming more refined and elevated. As held today by philosophical thinkers, it is the most sublime and complex of all ideas. Now this truth that it has a history shows that it has been formed by the activity of man's mind, not given a form of his nature. It is not an original datum of consciousness. The way it has been arrived at is the way of inference and generalization,—conjecturing the unknown, from the known, correcting the trite crude conjectures by larger experience and riper reflection, getting rid of childish fears and imaginings and by the disputing out of a sage's dream the sublimest idea of the civilized man. What is this but beginning at the "human end," and "working up" towards God? Is it not the highest object of human life thus to work? Why should it not be the highest object of human thought as well? Has any one yet learned the perfect truth? Why not accept cheerfully our manifest necessity of going from low to high, and from high to higher, in our thought as in our life? True it is that we start from the "human end," nor do we know any other end to start from. Out of ignorance into wiser ignorance, out of vice into virtue, out of slavery into freedom, out of superstition into religion—that is the road humanity is still travelling; and we are not ashamed of the route. The only shame is that of lying down by the road, and falling asleep.

The "reign of Deity" that we want is earnest thought and hard work and uncomparably better, it is not the voice of the People as a paragraph criticizing Spiritualism. Has he never rejected the other sufficient reason for praising Spiritualism? It is the people who write that column, not we; and we print it in very much sharper criticisms on our own opinions. Mr. Lynn thinks he has been "all over the ground" of Free Religion. With perfect good-nature, we would suggest that there is something in that field you have not reached if he fails to understand the free spirit of the Index, and its willingness to let people speak for themselves. We assume responsibility for nothing we have not personally written. Mr.
Lynn writes with kindness, which we would reciprocate; and we are sorry he should be so "sad" because we treat nothing, even our own most cherished beliefs, as above criticism. A few errors of fact in the article we leave uncorrected. In justice to our own correspondent, we ought to add that his "voice" does not appear so "feebly" to us as to Mr. Lynn. We think it utters much wholesome truth.

LETTERS FROM W. H. CHANNING.

I am sure the readers of The INDEX will be glad to see the following letter from Mr. Wm. H. Channing, who writes from England of things that are interesting all thoughtful minds, not only there but here. The first part of the letter is taken up with some details with regard to the circulation of the Annual Report of the Free Religious Association in England. This part is omitted as not of so general interest.

W. J. P.

... In mentioning Mr. Voysey, I refer to one of the most remarkable events in the ecclesiastical history of the year. For, as you now know, the High Chancellorial trial has brought the Judges of the Privy Council, he was convicted of heresy. This decision will prove to be, not the conclusion of a controversy, but the beginning of one, which may yet rend the already shattered structure of the Established Church into fragments. For immediately following the condemnation of Mr. Voysey, as the representative of the Broad Churchmen, came the condemnation of Mr. Mac-Connachie and Mr. Purchas, as representatives of the High Churchmen, or Ritualists. It needs only to catch some ultra-Calvinistic Low-Churchmen, some "Evangelical"—and there are many such ready to exchange with Spurgeon or Newman Hall—and three-cornered battle will be fairly joined. For it is very certain that neither the Broad-Churchmen nor the High-Churchmen will acknowledge a defeat. For the moment, of course, there may be slight seeming concessions of conformity. But each of these movements has only added force over a wider range, till the cyclone of compromising counter-currents envelopes the nation.

Indeed, the atmosphere of speculative and religious thought in Great Britain now is overclouded and tempest-tost. The discussions in the London School Board, led by Huxley on the liberal side and by Lord Sandon and several orthodox clergymen on the conservative side, over the "Use of the Bible in the Public Schools," and the far fiercer discussions in the two Houses of Convocation as to the presence of a Unitarian among the translators of the revised edition of the Scriptures at Princeton and Westminster Cathedral, which all the revisers were invited to attend,—headed by Bishop Wilberforce in behalf of the hierarchy, and by Dean Stanley in behalf of free Churchmen,—are but slight signs of the swift coming evenscal. The real centre of the storm is the grand military despotism in the political agency in the development of the universe, including, of course, humanity,—which gathers around Darwin's "Origin of Species." His last book, on "The Descent of Man," especially, is the centre of the centre thus far; and the very pivot whereon the vortex whirls will finally be found to be whether "the im-

perious word ought in the conscience merely implies the consciousness of the existence of a persistent instinct, either innate or partly acquired, serving man as a guide, although liable to be disproved." And when the suggestion of this question as to the moral order of the universe, and man's relation to this order as a person and as a member of society, is fairly begun upon the focal point, that in the development of the universe man is a being specifically characterized by a consciousness of Ought, there can be, for one I think, small doubt as to this. The Natural Science will find itself led by an irresistible logic, through the successive stages of latent Atheism—Necesext as to the unknown Persistent Force—the recognition of unitary and universal Force in varied evolution, the new form of Paulism,—up to the clear re-assertion of Personality and spiritual philosophy thence outgrowing, and finally to a new outbreak of Theism, as a living communion in conscious love, thought, and joyful concert of action with the Person of persons, the Living God. The result of this tremendous disturbance in the air-currents of Christendom will be, I predict, a sublime revival of Religious Life, like a serene heaven above a renovated earth.

If only the barbarians do not meanwhile succeed in their infernal feat of unoccupying the volcanoes of the hills! I and deliberate may if, because with solemn earnestness of feeling, as well as with calm scientific conviction, I am sure that men and nations, and ages of men and nations, are free to make or mar, to crush or crown beauty their own destiny. Never so little as now in the light of latest science, confirming all tradition, it is pardonable to be a Fatalist. Not as the finest outgrowth of the universe on this planet, man is a Free Sovereign; a nation yet more Free, or still, if humanity, or permissively Free and Sovereign,—under the law of liberty of the one All Good and True. So, bright as in many ways is the promise of our time, yet the barbarians are free to blast this opening paradise, if permitted by their fellows. And this hideous war, the wickedest of all kindreds, not yet before fairly considered, has really let loose hell for a season. And I do not pretend to predict the result. At the outbreak of hostilities, like so many onlookers, I was deceived by the apparently generous uprising of the German people to defend their homes from invasion. And seeing how justly the corrupt dynasty of Napoleon III. deserved to be ground to dust, while the French people by their subsequent connivance merited the humiliation of its fall, one submitted with awe and sorrow to the spectacle of the appalling judgment. But as gradually it became plain that the German military caste, with Bismarck and his cohort of intriguers, had prepared a battle to spring this mine, and as the whole outside of Europe recognized with a shudder that the real meaning of the cruel strife was to rear a vast central military despotism upon the fragments of ruined France, one became heart-sick at the hideous crime against the Humanity that was the birthright of our Conscience, Ideal Hopes, and Spiritual Aims of the whole age. If the countrymen of Lessing, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, of Wieland, Klopstock, Goethe, Jean Paul and Novalis, of the greatest historians, critics, theologians, scientific discoverers, and artists of our race in this generation, can thus consent to see the capped crater of the French Revolution deliberately reopened, where can we look with trust? I cannot pretend to answer. The future of Europe does look very black to me. This war has left apart one fissure. Presently another great war will cause another crevice to yawn. Beneath all widens, to devour, the livid abyss of a wide-spread Social War, that threatens to swallow all existing governments, college halls, and churches in one fiery chaos.

Here is the alternative for Europe and for Christendom,—either a grand integral revival of Religion, Philosophy, Science, Art, Industry and Polity, by a new consciousness of man's relations to the living laws of the Living God, a revival which must be truly unitary and universal, or a dissolution of existing civilized societies into their elementary forces. I still hope for the former. But the experiences of the last dreadful year have taught me to trust in Human Freedom as never before,—but only when that Freedom is spiritualized, purified, refined, illuminated by the sovereign will of God dwelling in Humanity.

With hearty fraternal and friendly best wishes for yourself and our brethren, I am, Very sincerely,

W. H. CHANNING.

COUNTERS AND CULTURE.

The Rev. Dr. Deems, an enterprising minister of New York, with a keen eye to business, and a shrewdness of clerical speculation that would make a minister of the profession, is reported to have said, in lecture, under the title of "Money-Makers," delivered in his church, that store-keeping was superior to academic training as a means of mental culture. The opinion of Dr. Deems on such a subject may or may not be entitled to consideration. The statement is important as indicating the ground that ministers who aim at popularity permit themselves to be forced upon. Dr. Deems is not the only "sensational" preacher who discredits culture and prefers the discipline of trade to the discipline of thought.

The doctrine is quite congenial to an age of money-makers, and can at least fairly pretend to attract the money-changers to the temple, which purutes a counter for an altar; unless, indeed, it makes them prefer their shops, where the discipline is acquired, to the temple where it is only recommended. But to the friends of intellectual culture, to all who have a sense of the value of national training, the doctrine is to the last degree discouraging.

That a reaction should succeed the long doctrine to theology, and the persistent scholasticism of sects of learning, is very natural. But we must pay this tribute to theological training, that it maintained the intellect on a high level of activity and kept alive our interest in momentsious questions. It delivered people from the tyranny of mercenary pursuits, and saved them from precisely the sharpness, shrewdness, quick-wittedness, the mechanical aptness and swiftness of self-interested calculations that is fostered by the very worthy and necessary yet somewhat uninteresting system of keeping the money-box in order.

Theology is out of favor. Philosophatic attainments are voted a humbug and a nuisance. But is there no alternative between the rational atmosphere of the once popular studies and the close air of the shop? Is there no such thing as philosophy, no such thing as science, no such thing as literature,