

PS 1262

.C6 G6





GODWARD

A

RECORD OF RELIGIOUS PROGRESS

BY

PAUL CARUS

God leadeth down to Hell and bringeth
up again.—Tobit, xiii. 2.

CHICAGO

THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY

LONDON AGENTS:

KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRUEBNER & CO.

1898

FS1262
.C6 G6

13588

COPYRIGHT, 1898
By THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING CO.
CHICAGO



TWO COPIES RECEIVED.

47337

Aug. 10. 98

2nd COPY,
1898.

Preface.



FROM my childhood I was devout and pious; my faith was as resolute as that of Simon whom, for his firmness, Christ called the rock of His church. When growing up I decided to devote myself as a missionary to the cause of Christianity. But alas! on inquiring into the foundations of the fortress which I was going to defend, I found the entire structure undermined. My despair turned into sadness, my exasperation into irony; I grew an unbeliever and scorned Christianity. Yet in the depths of my soul I still remained thoroughly religious; I soon aroused myself and gathered together the fragments of the wreck I had suffered, for my heart still clung to its lost treasures. Thus I began to formulate in strictly scientific terms a religion that should be


based, not upon belief, but upon the well-ascertained experiences of the human race alone ; and to my surprise I found that the main truths of the old faith remained the same,—only what I had received in my childhood in the garb of parables, as allegories and symbols, I now learned to formulate with scientific precision. The letter was gone,—gone beyond the hope of ever being redeemed,—but the spirit remained. The sentiment and the moral aspiration were upon the whole the same ; but what I had seen formerly as through a glass darkly I now saw face to face. Thus I returned through a period of negativism and unbelief to a new position of affirmation, which, broader in its scope and resting on a solider foundation, comprised under an evolutionary aspect the truths of both former positions.

Nothing of the scientific rigor of criticism which characterizes the period of negation has been surrendered, and yet all the hopes contained in the religious faith of my childhood have found their fulfilment.

How many are the hearts that investigate like

me! How many are they, who having turned doubters, have ever since remained agnostics and never even attempted to regain a position of affirmation! They have criticised and condemned. Having taken offence at the errors of the letter in its literal significance, they have rejected with the letter the spirit!

These poems and the conditions under which they were written at different periods of life are not artificial products of a poetic imagination, but genuine, instantaneous photographs of the soul's attitude in successive stages of its religious development. May they prove helpful to others who are travelling on the same path!



Confidence in God.

THE WORLD is void of rest
And stormy as the seas
Whose waves so turbulent
Are moved by every breeze ;
They swell, they break, they roar
And never are at ease.

But midst the foamy surge
There towers a mighty rock ;
The billows dash around ;
Yet, though they storm and mock,
The rock withstands their scorn,
Not moved by any shock.

Thus in this turbid world
Firm stands God's Name and Word.
My heart knew not of rest ;
Through storm and mist it erred,
Until it refuge found
Here, like a frightened bird.

Here is security,
Here truth and hope and peace.
Then let the billows roar
And let the surge increase :
Here, on the rock we find
From all distress release.

The troubles of this life
With firmness I defy.
My soul and heart rely
On God, and, when I die,
He will my faith and hope
With fulness justify.

The Blind Man.

The existence of God is self-evident like daylight.

A MADMAN in the street
Cries out "There is no light!"
The wretch lacks in himself
The faculty of sight.

He is not blind by birth ;
He longed some years ago
By reason to conceive
Light and its fiery glow.

His eyes were sharp and clear,
Nothing in them was ill :
He saw God's lustrous sun,
And yet he doubted still.

He peered into the glare
Of brightest solar light,
Until his eyes had lost
The faculty of sight.

No peradventure now
His unbelief can stay
For blindness deeply veils
The glamour of the day.

Despairingly he cries,
“ Ah, who can now resist
The truth so manifest
That light does not exist !

“ And even if you prove
That there exists some light,
I won't believe ; I have
Experienced, I am right.”

Thus rushing through the streets
He ceases not to bawl,
“ The sun does not exist ;
There is no light at all.”

The Friar.

A FRIAR, still in youth,
Enters the abbot's cell ;
He modestly begins
His misery to tell
In hope confession will
Insurgent doubts dispel :
" Despite my fasts and prayer
With me no peace doth dwell."

The old man kindly looks
In his repentant face.
Quoth he, " Thou must believe
In God and in His grace !"
" Ah, father, that I could
These thronging doubts efface,
And simply as a child
The hope of Christ embrace.

My conscience nevermore
From sin can find release.
The more I ponder them,
The more my doubts increase,

Oh, to have faith in God !

Oh, that this pain would cease !
Alas ! Is there no truth,
And holdeth life no peace ? ”

Old tomes on musty shelves
Are ranged the cloister round.
Their authors anxiously
Had sought truth's depths to sound,
In vain ! The mystery
Is none the less profound.
Now, through the books, methinks,
Compassion did resound.

The abbot wistfully
Gazed on him in his pain.
A silence long and sad
Did all his heart explain ;
But in his thoughtful eyes
Was writ this doleful strain :
“ Thou look'st for peace and truth
In this our world in vain.”

The Gospel.

I HEARD in Christmas time,
Mingled with merry chime
Of bells, Gospel proclaim
The Saviour's holy name ;
Who, by the Father sent,
Victoriously went
Into this wretched life
To carry out our strife ;
Whose blessed blood redeems
From sin and Satan's schemes.
I heard the Christmas bell,
I heard the Gospel well,
My eye grew dark and dim.
The song of Cherubim
I sadly listened to —
Oh, would that it were true !

Defiance.

Difficile est parodiam non scribere.

LIFT up your eyes, ye heads of brass ;
Ye skulls of iron, yield !
For superstition soon will pass,
Critique is in the field.

Critique is like the morning star
Which ushers in the day,
Shines on the march and guides from far
Truth's champions in the fray.

Then fear not, faint not, halt not now,
The cause of Truth is strong.
To Truth shall every creature bow
And sing the triumph song.

Illumined are the heads of brass,
The skulls of iron yield ;
For superstition soon will pass :
The Truth must win the field.

Pantbeism.

WHO has created with a power almighty
The golden stars there in the skies?
Who orders them with such a lustrous
splendor
At their appointed time to rise?

Who did assign their spheres to all the
planets
And this our earth, who has it wrought?—
No Deity, created by our Fancy,
Produced these worlds all out of naught.

No one has made by spell the earth and
heavens,
No wizardlike magician god,
Whose government is a continued marvel,
Whose wilful deeds are queer and odd.

The laws of Nature are not like ukases,
That human monarchs may proclaim.
No supernatural exterior ruler
Has shaped the world in wondrous frame.

Law dwells within as features uniformal :
 There's naught beyond and naught be-
 hind ;
And from within the sentient soul-life
 blossoms
 Developing the human mind

There is no Matter as a crude material ;
 Nor Force abstractly does exist.
Both are united like man's soul and body !
 And through each other they subsist.

For Universe is the eternal Cosmos
 Not governed by a god or elf ;
Its life springs forth from its own vital
 sources,
 And self-creating moves itself !

A New Religion.

✓ THE Creeds of old are crumbling ;
And were their revelation
The only hope in living
Life would be desolation.
But lo! a new religion
Bursts from the germs decaying ;
A new faith in our bosoms
Is growing, light-displaying.

Great truths with broader outlook
New missions have created.
By purified Religion
Our souls are elevated.
New aims, new hopes, new doctrines,
Old prophecies fulfilling !
And through our hearts is rapture
Of progress warmly thrilling.

We do not combat freedom
Of art, nor that of science.

Nay, both with our religion
Are joined in firm alliance.
Though high, our aspiration
Is yet concrete and real.
To render life more noble
Is our sublime ideal.

Of this denomination
Are they, in life's confusion,
Who further human progress
And sweep away illusion ;
Who have ideals dearer
Than self and self-existence,
And love them, although knowing
Their vast, enormous distance.

Thinkers who muse and ponder,
Instructors theoretic ;
And poets whose ideas
Are radiantly prophetic ;
The warrior, who for Freedom
Fights and for Freedom dieth ;
The great, whose noble fortune
With their souls' greatness vieth ;

The hand, who with heart's trouble
For wife and children toileth ;
The man who doth his duty
E'en if his fate him foileth ;
And he, who kindly comforts
The sick, who gladly shareth
His bread with his poor neighbor,
Our badge and symbol beareth.

Light and Truth.

LIGHT is the symbol of truth and as
Deity proves everlasting ;
But our daylight on earth passingly fadeth
away.

Truth in itself is eternal ; we rightly revere
it as holy ;
But in the spirit of man quite problematic
is Truth.

Sonnets.

1. Reflection.

ALAS! Reflection cruelly destroys
Our Fancy's dreamy castles built in
air,

Which, though not real, are so lovely fair!
Imagination luringly decoys

Into her paradise with glistening toys,
Until Reflection roughly comes to tear
Those fair illusions;—and she leaves us
bare,

Leaves us deprived of all our childhood
joys.

Yet she arouses from fictitious dreams!

If the destruction of our idols bitter,
If very ruthless, pitiless it seems:

Yet is it salutary; the false glitter
Is only lost; for life we are much fitter,
Since Fancy's fogs are cleared by Reason's
beams.

2. Idols.

THE charming fairy-tales, which gently
soothe

Our childhood's easy griefs, must melt
away ;

And sad Reality will soon dismay
The bright phantasmal Idols of our youth.

But from them our Ideals spring, in sooth.

The childish frolic shall the man display.

As fruit grows, whilst the blossom must
decay,

Thus from romantic errors springs the
truth.

But when the creed of Christianity

Breaks down, it merely is the husk,
which shows

The evil fate of transient vanity.

Out of the bursting germ the fruit-tree
grows,

And Idols of religion will disclose
The high Ideal of Humanity.

3. The Stars.

YE golden stars in silent holy night
The day breaks ; and in mighty com-
petition

Your brilliance dims mid rapid demoli-
tion.

Ye and your splendor, beautiful and bright,

Ye fade away in his victorious light.

Thus dies romance ; poetic superstition
Of darker ages suffers abolition.

In light ye die, light-bearers of the night.

And yet ye are not dead, ye golden stars ;

Ye are still living in the brighter ray ;

'Tis not your light the glorious sunshine
mars ;

It is your mere appearance. True, your
beauty

Is lost, a sacrifice of faithful duty ;

But beauty rises new in dawn of day.

4. The Ideal.

BE not afraid lest in this world the Ideal
Should disappear, or like a flower
fade ;

For she is not mere Fancy's fickle shade.
She is a glowing presence, true and real.

Still firmly an alliance hymeneal
Joins her to Human Progress, as a maid
Is wedded to a hero, whom his blade
Protects ; thus faithfully he shields the
Ideal.

Wondrously from this bridal union springs
The life which, breathing through the
human race,
In ardent youth shines forth from every
face.

It lends to the inventor fancy's wings,
And stirs the poet's heart, who gayly sings
The Ideal's beauty and the Ideal's grace.

Godward.

NEARER, my God, to thee,
Nearer alway ;
E'en though thou other be
Than prophets say ;
Other thou art, but higher,
Bidding our souls aspire,
Godward alway.

Doubt comes from God, in sooth,
Though conquering creeds ;
Doubt prompts our search for truth
And higher leads.
Who on doubt's path ne'er trod,
Ne'er saw the face of God ;
Doubt truthward speeds.

Science the burning bush
Where God doth dwell !
Truth and its onward rush
Nothing can quell.
God is the truth that guides,
Heaven where love abides ;
Sin's curse is Hell.

God the eternal cause
Of truth and right ;
Oneness of cosmic laws,
Reason's true light.
God, though nowhere confined,
Yet in the human mind
Showeth his might.

God is man's truthward call,
Noblest desire.
He's in life cosmical,
Love's holy fire.
Thou who art All in All
God superpersonal,
Lead thou us higher.

BK

SD-145







**DOBBS BROS.
LIBRARY BINDING**

**JAN 73
ST. AUGUSTINE**



**FLA.
32084**

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 015 785 565 7