

A SPIRITUALIST GIVES HIS VIEWS ON RELIGION.

I believe in Rational Christianity, pure and simple, or Christian morality, as was taught by Christ; in contradistinction to the adulterated clerical Christianity now so prevalent, and which has almost elbowed the Christianity of Christ out of the world, whereby superstition and foolish rites and ceremonies are substituted in the room of pure morality, true virtue, and genuine religion.

I believe the Christianity of Christ to be "Peace on Earth, good-will to man," the love of God and our neighbour, universal charity and benevolence, and the golden rule of "doing to others as we would have them to do unto us," and not in the incomprehensible creeds and unintelligible dogmas of popular theology.

I believe in a God of perfect justice, who rewards the good in exact proportion to their merits, and proportionately punishes the wicked; such punishments being corrective and purifying: "whatsoever a man sows so shall he reap."

That the favour of God and happiness are to be procured by repentance and amendment, by personal not by vicarious agency.

That well-matured reason and conscience are the best guides to be depended on, and, if we neglect or renounce their directions and admonitions, we lay ourselves open to all manner of delusion and priestcraft, hateful to God and destructive to mankind.

That instead of stereotyped creeds, blind zeal, and religious persecution for "righteousness sake," we should promote love, peace, temperance, gratitude, charity, and universal benevolence; so as to reduce religion to that plain, simple system of aiming to attain that abstract perfection as taught by Christ who said "Be ye perfect."

The principles to promote these are few and easy:—

1st.—There is a God, an Almighty Creator, to Whom all existence belongs and is subject, and Who ought to be worshipped by all mankind.

2nd.—That, by His immutable laws, the good are rewarded and the wicked punished here and hereafter.

3rd.—That repentance and reformation are required to obtain the one and escape the other.

4th.—That true religion is that which was stated by Christ, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and strength, and thy neighbour as thyself."

To love God is to love all "Good," as truth, justice, charity, and every good work; to love truth is to love the "God of Truth," &c.

I do not believe in the orthodox views of the atonement, that Christ came to reconcile God to us, but rather that he came to reconcile us to God.

I do not believe in the necessity of his having to be crucified, and to take upon himself the sins of all before man could be saved; if such were the case, how infinitely grateful we ought to be to those orthodox Jews who cruelly put him to death in order that we might be saved.

Neither do I believe in the orthodoxy of the present day, which says, "there are three Gods all equal," and yet so unequal that one God is ever interceding and endeavouring to appease the wrath of another God! If so, one must be in the wrong!

I believe in the absolute perfection of a Divine Creator, and who does not thus require to be changed in order that endless punishment may be averted for temporary sins. I believe that God is love, and that His "mercy," and not his chastisement, "endureth for ever."

I do not believe in "original sin," and that man was pre-ordained to be its victim; nor in the destruction of unbaptised infants as the Roman and Anglican priests tell us. I prefer Christ's doctrine; he says, "Of such is the kingdom of Heaven."

I do not believe in that best friend of priestcraft—a personal devil, and who is said to be more mighty than the Almighty in obtaining the greatest number of immortal souls, thus having power to thwart God's providence,—nor in a material hell-fire, which is ever consuming those souls.

I do not believe "in three Gods, yet one God," which the Church of England says we must believe or, "without doubt, perish everlasting." Its creeds are to me downright blasphemy.

I do not believe that the Bible was "divinely inspired" from beginning to end, and was all written by the "finger of God."

I believe that the Bible was made for man, not man for the Bible, that it is an historical, moral, and spiritual teacher, not altogether correct, but containing many truths and many errors; a compilation of diffe-

rent works by different authors, written at different periods, and by the most learned and wise men of their day; but that neither they nor their works are infallible, as the sciences of geology and astronomy, and even their own contradictions, prove.

That men in after ages collected and bound together such of these books as they thought proper, and called them the Bible, and that these self-same human beings, at the Council of Nice, &c., rejected such other books as they thought of less worthy note; that these men were also as learned and wise as the times would permit, but not infallible, and possibly not altogether without prejudice or partiality.

I believe real Christianity to be absolute religion, which thinks and works; goodness towards men, and piety towards God; undogmatic, unsectarian, liberal, broad, and free, preached with faith, and applied to life, being good, and doing good.

There is but one real religion, which we need only open our eyes to see, and which requires neither creeds nor catechisms to discern; only live it in love to God and man, and we are blessed by Him who liveth for ever in spite of all that priests and their dupes may say to the contrary; for, thank God, they are not to be our judges, otherwise few would escape.

CAN BE OBTAINED OF

MR. J. WILLIAMS,

AT HIS

Spiritual and Free Thought Book Depot,

BENSON'S ARCADE,

SANDHURST.

PRICE SIXPENCE A DOZEN COPIES.