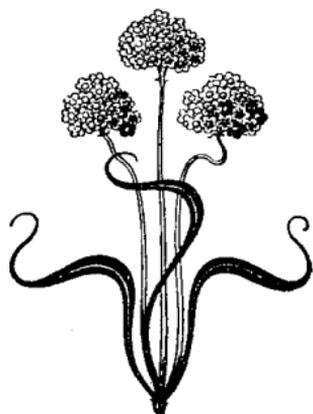


SOME RELIGIOUS VIEWS

FOUR PAPERS
READ BEFORE THE
CHICAGO LITERARY CLUB
MONDAY EVENING
DECEMBER 5, 1904



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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS



FREDERIC WOODMAN ROOT



INTRODUCTORY REMARKS



EXCEPT in cases where self-interest disturbs the equilibrium of a man's judgment, it is hard to see how one of ordinary intelligence can express himself intolerantly of the religious beliefs of another when these are honestly held and uprightly lived.

If I condemn you for such beliefs, I say to you practically this: "Your mental and moral development are very immature as compared with mine; your intelligence is less than mine, your capacity smaller, your fiber coarser, and your aims lower. It is your evident and unquestionable duty to recognize my superior judgment regarding your ideals and associations."

In view of what is generally known of the miracles of creation, the marvels of mind, of immensity, infinity, eternity, of

the infinitesimal part that individual man plays in it all, and the impossibility of his grasping the whole of Truth, it is incredible that one man can openly assume that attitude toward another, even though in his heart he believes himself entitled to do so.

Of course we may hold loyally to our ideas of truth, and if these seem especially luminous to us we may endeavor, considerately, to throw light on the pathway of others who hold divergent views.

And there are widely divergent views upon the subject before us this evening. Hall Caine, in the Sunday Tribune, says that God uses sin to further his ends; also that suffering is a good thing; as without it certain virtues could not appear; and that suffering must always endure as a strengthener of the spiritual fiber.

Parson Charles Wagner is more comforting; he says: "The most ingenuous hope is nearer the truth than the most rational despair." Views from other sources are now in order; and I have the pleasure of introducing four of our members who are to present some of these.

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