

**ASPECTS OF HUMANITY,
BROKENLY MIRRORED IN
THE EVER-SWELLING
CURRENT OF HUMAN SPEECH**

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Aspects of humanity, brokenly mirrored in the ever-swelling current of human speech by
Richard Randolph

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RICHARD RANDOLPH

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HUMANITY,

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"The volume of creation unfolds its pages, written in the only language which hath
gone forth to the ends of the earth unaffected by the confusion of Babel."

FRANCIS BACON.

"Believe steadfastly concerning the things that are invisible."—BUNYAN.

"Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers."—TENNYSON.

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TO STUDENTS

OF nature and of letters ; to those who hold that Truth, whatever it may be, is at least not a fiction, acknowledging it, on the contrary, to be an all-pervading reality ; who accordingly are ever ready to hail simplicity in variety as its unfailing characteristic, and as a sure way-mark in its progressive discovery ; but who, without hoping to avoid exertion and fatigue in the pursuit of their prize, are, nevertheless, not of that abortive school of philosophy which would degrade their vocation to an analogy with that of the mere sportsman, by making it chiefly honorable as "a gymnastic of the mind," and deciding that "speculative truth is subordinate to speculation itself;" to those, therefore, who will not be content with engaging in a chase in which the splendor of the result shall be exceeded by that of the skill which may be displayed in reaching it,

ARE THE FOLLOWING PAGES,

however simple, or however enigmatical, hopefully

SUBMITTED.

PREFATORY.

"From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."—*MATT.* xi. 12.

"He must increase, but I must decrease."—*JOHN* iii. 30.

CONCEIVING the Preface to be at the best but a lame or awkward afterthought to a literary performance, made requisite by deficiency in the body of the work or by inaptness in its representative title, I shall make no apology for the summary style which I may seem to adopt in commending the "Aspects of Humanity" to the reader's favorable notice, although the subject announced is obviously large, and its attempted exposition comparatively brief. I have indeed little to say respecting the piece as it now appears, beyond avowing thus openly that which I was slow to admit even to myself during the progress of its preparation—the fact, namely, that its character and import may be styled, essentially and predominantly, theological. The ready interest and the rash disgust which such an admission may possibly provoke in certain classes of readers, I deem it improper here to comment upon, although these contrasting liabilities are doubtless themes full of suggestion. I would simply maintain and illustrate the definite rank and value of the production under consideration, as the same may be tested by a compariso

with the above-cited Scripture texts—the utterances respectively of the Saviour of men, and of his great forerunner among the Jews.

The fairest, largest and fullest “aspect of humanity” I conceive to be that which involves the (virtual, at least, and ultimately manifest) emancipation of man from the dominion of *FORM*. Formal religion, formal law and formal custom, as evinced by superficial and restricted uniformities, although doubtless necessary to some extent as yet, and even hereafter until the end of the world in a still diminishing degree, are essentially means of external compulsion—mere goads and manacles which must be regarded as being either temporary substitutes, or else miserable counterfeits, of the impulse and guidance whereby the one Source of genuine life would outwardly manifest, through all events, his essential harmony. Under the Mosaic dispensation, the Divine sanction and beneficent dominion of formal prescription have been illustrated to the world in familiar and enduring history. But that law, we are assured, “made nothing perfect,” as “the bringing in of a better hope did.” To the dispensation of Jesus Christ, which may be regarded as having ever since been in gradual revelation (at least at certain eras in individual Christians, and at all eras in Christian communities), both already *COME*, and also still *COMING*, or, *TO COME*, the dispensation of the Baptist both *HAS BEEN* and is transitional from that of Moses. And as the transition is here a process rather of development or fulfillment than of radical or essential change, the transitional dispensation becomes remarkable as being in its nature confirmative, comprehensive, and fitly representative, of that preliminary one which it in no wise repealed or supplanted. As, then, the first authorized rule of temporary form culminated in the second, so, we are taught, the second (involving the first) shall still decrease, and doubtless finally vanish in the universal prevalence and unclouded triumph of vital religion—of the one underlying and eternal dispensation, which is both ancient and new to that spiritual experience whose

essential history is not modified by intervals of time. Form will then, indeed, not be lost, but will always remain as a pure and effectual vehicle of meaning. But it will always serve and never rule—it will always be spontaneous, never imposed. In the mean time, the remarkable declaration of the Saviour remains as a guarded but sufficient justification of the vanishing relics of that rule—as a profound and prophetic lesson to the coming ages, whose twofold design it is to temper with his charity the conflicting elements of conservation and RE-FORM.

I rejoice in the conviction that this doctrine of a spiritual energy and an attractive unity, by which the omnipresent Deity maintains and manifests his supremacy in the troubled scene of human events, and which ever prevail over and shall finally wholly supplant all dependence on mere form, is neither new nor very strange at this day. It remains for me to advert to the mode in which this simple and pure doctrine is here derived from the complicated activity and crude morality of common life. It is, as the reader may observe, by the recognized or assumed intervention of what are called MOTIVES that this “law of the Spirit of Life” is traced through its various modes of manifestation, as is also that antagonist “law of sin and death,” whose dangerous power and fragmentary affinities are realized in the submission of its votaries to the distracting influence which besets our inherited nature through the evanescent phenomena of the external and material world.

As the term MOTIVE is one which appears to have been hitherto not generally understood and applied with that precision of meaning which its importance especially demands, it is my wish to prepare the reader for accepting, or at least recognizing it, in the particular sense in which I have thought proper to employ it. With this view I cite the following strictures, by a former dignitary of the English Church Establishment, upon the customary use of the word, which, while directly bearing testimony to what has just now been said in