

**MORAL  
PARADOXES  
OF ST. PAUL**

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Moral paradoxes of St. Paul by W. L. Watkinson

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OF

## ST. PAUL

BY

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TO THE  
REV. FREDERIC W. MACDONALD  
WHOSE RARE GIFTS I ADMIRE  
AND WHOSE FRIENDSHIP I PRIZE

## PREFACE

To the author it appears that the repeated attacks made on Christianity as guilty of doing injustice to human nature require from time to time some answer. And just now a review of the subject is not unseasonable. The popularity of a scorner like Nietzsche is a sign of the times, and on this special matter calls for criticism. True, much of his writing smells unpleasantly of the "ever stronger doses of chloral, and of that fatal Eastern drug given him by the Dutch gentleman from Java" to which his sympathetic biographers tell us he was addicted; yet the literary merit of his writing invests with plausibility his wild theories, and secures for him in certain quarters considerable attention and admiration.

The main point of his polemic against the Christian faith is not only that it impoverishes life, but that it is the greatest enemy of all that is fundamental in life. The philosopher's view



of morals, and especially of Christian ethics, is thus stated by one of his disciples: "In the name of morality we are called upon to crush out, or at any rate to fight bitterly against that which lies at the very root of life, against that which conditions life. This in itself, and if it were alone, would suffice to condemn morality." All systems of accepted morality are regarded as pernicious, and the Christian code, being supremely austere, is denounced as specially fatal to the strength and glory of humanity. The design of the present volume is to show that the faith of Christ does no violence whatever to the integrity of our nature, but, on the contrary, handsomely justifies the passions, and richly supplies the light and power requisite for their development and discipline. We maintain that revelation recognizes our life in its wholeness, fullness, intensity. "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly," was the declaration of our Lord. He came that all the possibilities of life might be realized for His every individual disciple, that all might know life in its beauty, plenitude, and power.

But our impulses and appetites are not to be left to unchecked expression. Henry Thoreau, noticing that the women of his day appeared demure and subdued, remarked that they looked "as if they were going for the doctor." Whereupon Emerson asks, "Has our Christianity saddled and bridled us?" However the serious aspect of the American woman might be accounted for, this is just what Christianity *has* done. When Jesus rode into Jerusalem upon "a colt whereon no man ever yet sat," He furnished a symbol of the genius of His faith which provides the sovereign discipline that enables human nature to reach its ideal perfection. Nietzsche prefers to see the ideal man in Mazeppa bound to a wild horse. The whole argument of this type of reasoners, that we are wronged by the Christian restraint of passion, is just as logical as it would be to argue that our fire stations are a menace to our fire-sides.

We ought not, however, to be above learning from our enemies. Much of the contents of Nietzsche is little better than the babble of

Bedlam ; yet it may not be altogether in vain that he emphasizes the validity of passions of which the saints justly stand in awe, but to which perhaps they sometimes do less than justice.