

and kneeling, one of them enquired what church they were in. On being told that it was not their own, they both left immediately. Like these Germans in a strange church, we are constantly bowing and kneeling and fawning, and for what purpose, we know not. Through our own impersonality we live as strangers to each other and die as fugitives; the real man being almost suffocated with the fumes of conformity is hid from our view.

This conformity is the cause of social despotism and hypocrisy. If we will not conform, we are persecuted and ostracised from society. A person whose mind is too magnanimous to be trammelled by the arbitrary rules of society is looked upon by the smaller minded conformists as a clown or heretic. What right has etiquette or religion to dictate to you or me how to converse or worship? How others should converse and worship, is not how you or I should converse or worship.

Were it not for conformity there would be little hypocrisy. A person wishing to conform with the world joins a popular church. He being of a different temperament, the church is no more fit for him than the Hottentot religion. What is the result? He is almost unconsciously and continually going through with the most contemptible forms of hypocrisy. Could we but know the thoughts of a congregation at worship! I have often looked around the church endeavoring to read the thoughts that seemed to be stamped on the brows of the indifferent. There is the large and corpulent Mr. B., bowed in humble prayer. It seems plain that his thoughts are all lodged in a fat turkey which he expects to have for dinner. There is Mrs. C., arrayed in costly attire, also bowed in humble prayer. It appears evident that her thoughts are lodged in her fashionable bonnet.

They say there is nothing so bad but what has its good. Conformity and fashion will no doubt result in good with the poor down trodden negro. As black is a fashionable color for the clothes, it may

also be a fashionable color for the complexion. Instead of using lily-white, the young ladies—and maybe, gentleman—will use lamp black. The negro will then no more be scorned, but will then be looked upon with an envious eye.

Each person has a law within himself, and it is only by conforming to this law and observing its workings that we can become grand and noble beings. Why do legislatures make our civil laws? Why does the church dictate the moral and spiritual law? If every one should conform to and strictly watch the law within him, we would have little need of tyrannical legislation and despotic religious creeds. There is no law, either civil, moral or religious, that will make a man like him who strictly guards the gates of his own soul; and he himself only is fit to guard these gates. Though he should deputize the whole clergy and the infallible Pope as guards, it would be of no avail. As well might he set them to guarding the gates of heaven and hell.

When we cannot gather knowledge at our quiet homes, we repair to the college or university, thinking its shades will lend us a charm. When its curriculum has become exhausted, we journey to foreign climes in search of greater charms. But how we are deceived! We return to our homes and find that we are no wiser than many who never entered college or saw a foreign land. Whether we go to college, or Europe, or remain at home, we must be self-made or never made. Why not solve the problem by sitting quietly down at home? Can the college atmosphere, or the ruins of antiquity, aid us in our learning? It is as if our very manhood and inward law were repulsive, and we were endeavoring to evade them by conforming to the fickle world.

Let us not conform to man, but to Nature. For

"The rounded world is fair to see,  
 Nine times folded in mystery;  
 Though baffled seers can not impart  
 The secret of its laboring heart,  
 Throb thine with Nature's throbbing breast,  
 And all is clear from east to west.