

The Number

Mr Justice Clarke

Hobart

Tasmania

MS. CO. 91



c4/c36

22 East 10 St., N. York

2 Dec. 1905

My dear Hugh Clark,

Your letter about your son Conway reached me in Paris, where I was working hard on my 'Voyages and Pilgrimages' with Thos. Turner, who lives there, and is the only competent assistant (short hand and typewriting) I have ever found in this workaday world. I am not certain whether I wrote to you or not, but I suspended all work to put my son-in-law Sawyer in communication with your son (from whom also I received in Paris an excellent letter.) The probability is that I postponed writing to you until I had something to say which might interest you and dear Mr. Clark, - that is until I reached New York, which was Nov. 14. But Philip could only tell me that when Conway is ready he will do his best to get him a suitable place in N. York, and that you must already know, and indeed would have anticipated. I shall be glad to meet the youth, to whom I owe a debt of sympathy, and reminders of some worthy English Conways of old to whom his name will be ascribed should his maturer age find his father's old friends a doubtful association.

I sent you on my arrival a copy of my address given June 6 at the dedication of "Conway Hall" Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pa. A bust of my wrinkled self (bronze) made by Th. Spicer-Eimerson, presented by W. F. Havemeyer (Pres. of the Bank of N. America) has been set up in "Conway Hall" at the very time when a replica of the same bust was unveiled at South Place, London. What have I done to be set up by Methodist Prayers at Carlisle and with freethinkers' speeches in London? My brother Peter, head of a National Bank in Virginia, and pillar of the Methodist Church, writes me - "It's no use expecting to get rid of your Methodism. You can't. Don't try!" But meanwhile I tell Peter that the Methodists of today have run away from our old Methodism; they have repudiated the existence of the Adversary, and when they still believe in a Devil regard him as God's Devil, agent of providence. In my uncompromising denial of anything good or providential in evil I am nearer to Wesley and the early Methodists than any one of that church I know. And indeed I can see by the way in which the masses and their pulpits, - American and English, - regard the massacres and catastrophes of the East as part of the evolutionary progress of the world, that nobody agrees with me. Very well, - I can stand alone. I do not believe in the existence of any Satan or Abhiman, nor in any evil personality, but I should think it more rational to believe in a thousand Satans than to suppose that the agonies of the world and of nature ^{and the animals} proceed from the same source as the human spirit which is trying to heal those agonies. "I feel" said poor Oscar Wilde, "as if I would like to found an order for those who cannot believe." As for the collectivist Theism it is to me like a collector's sweethearts. The worshippers of Mumbo Jumbo is a theist as much as Martinique. I really in my heart love Martinique's Creator of good and bad or Spence's Cosmic Unknowable from which "all things proceed" - including Martinique and Bataavia earthquakes and volcanoes!

But my typewriter is at hand and I must go to work - for the night cometh when no man can work. So with tender recollections of you and Mr. Clark and your children (especially the daughter who was here) I am as always your friend Moncure D. Conway.