

\_Demop\_. But this deception is a *\_conditio sine qua non\_*. If religion admitted that it was merely the allegorical meaning in its doctrines that was true, it would be deprived of all efficacy, and such rigorous treatment would put an end to its invaluable and beneficial influence on the morals and feelings of mankind. Instead of insisting on that with pedantic obstinacy, look at its great achievements in a practical way both as regards morality and feelings, as a guide to conduct, as a support and consolation to suffering humanity in life and death. How greatly you should guard against rousing suspicion in the masses by theoretical wrangling, and thereby finally taking from them what is an inexhaustible source of consolation and comfort to them; which in their hard lot they need very much more than we do: for this reason alone, religion ought not to be attacked.

\_Phil\_. With this argument Luther could have been beaten out of the field when he attacked the selling of indulgences; for the letters of indulgence have furnished many a man with irreparable consolation and perfect tranquillity, so that he joyfully passed away with perfect confidence in the little packet of them which he firmly held in his hand as he lay dying, convinced that in them he had so many cards of admission into all the nine heavens. What is the use of grounds of consolation and peacefulness over which is constantly hanging the Damocles-sword of deception? The truth, my friend, the truth alone holds good, and remains constant and faithful; it is the only solid consolation; it is the indestructible diamond.