

God's interposition, is one of *intellectual, moral and spiritual* NIGHT.

1. Darkness of *ignorance*. Even highest culture may leave sublimest realities unknown. Athenian wisdom went side by side with ignorance of God. "The unknown God." And so of immortality, even *Plato* could but muse and surmise. Godlessness leads to intellectual apostasy. The most brilliant minds have crowned folly with wisdom's diadem, and said in their heart, "There is *no God*." Systems of philosophy have left God out, as Humboldt did from his "*Cosmos*."

2. Darkness of *idolatry*.

Ps. cxv : 8 : "They that make them are *LIKE UNTO THEM*." Idols are helpless, dumb, stupid, powerless ; the effect of idolatry is to bring idolaters into similar condition. This is illustrated by the history of Polytheism. Men began by worshiping grandest objects—sun, moon, fire ; then silver and gold representations of men, etc. ; then wood, stone, down even to gree-gree and *fetich*.

Idolatry opposed to *religion*. (See Paul on Mars Hill.) Opposed even to *REASON*. It is itself consummate *FOLLY*.

Isa. xlv : 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. A man manufactures a deity out of the log, part of which he uses to *warm his body* and *roast his food* !

The African takes mud, makes an idol, bakes it in the sun, stands it up against a tree, and *WORSHIPS* mud that would be regarded filth on one's garments.

This is not only so among the more degraded. The children of Israel made a golden calf at Sinai, afterward at *Bethel* and *Dan*.

The late King of Siam was an educated man, an astronomer, etc., yet he gilded an image of Buddha daily, made of cast-iron, the same material from which his cooking utensils were made—the "*RESIDUE* & *GOD*."

This is only a type of the intellectual, moral and spiritual degradation of heathen people. They become

indifferent to *VICE*, even to *nakedness*. But it is not the indifference of innocence, but of iniquity and abandonment.

Atheists in Siam have no hope but of a higher transmigration. The soul may go into the *white ant* or *red ant*, *buffalo* or *elephant*. Priests in temples preach to Siamese in *Chaldee*, a language none understand.

The annual license for gambling-houses in Bangkok is several hundred thousand dollars, and gambling saloons numbered by thousands.

3. The darkness of moral estrangement and alienation. "*Evil*, be thou my *good*," is the last expression of iniquity. This is the very shadow of *death* : when a man is left to consume himself by his own *vices*.

If these lost souls were in the pit of perdition, it would be too late ; but they are not yet hopelessly, remedilessly lost. Some of them "have seen a *great light*" ; have received *knowledge* of *GOD* and of *SELF*. *Life* and *immortality* have been brought to *LIGHT*, and with *light* has come *warmth* : *LOVE*, *life*.

It is not enough to *see* the light—as men have walked in darkness, they must, when they see the light, *walk* in it.

Thousands who see in the light, yet strangely grope in the darkness ; outwardly dwelling in land of the light of life, they still actually live in the *death-shade* ! All history demonstrates that no mere intellectual progress can prevent spiritual death.

The Canaanites seem to have been the principal *inventors*, yet among them wickedness appears to have conspicuously abounded. The two civilizations moved side by side, thus early in history demonstrating that no *intellectual* activity could insure the elevation or prevent the degradation of the race, independent of religion.

He who said "Let light be, and light was," and dispersed the deep darkness when as yet light was not born, repeats that grand miracle in a *moral sphere*. (2 Cor. iv : 6.)