

its enterprise and progress. He is himself ambitious to attain to excellence, to achieve success in some department of thought or labor. He sees that poverty is attended by many deprivations and great disadvantages, while wealth gives to its possessor leisure and comfort, distinction and influence. Adapting himself to the conditions which he finds in the world, by every means that the customs and usages of society permit, he strives to add to his earthly possessions. During the day his mind is on business, not on God, or heaven, or hell. From the cares and perplexities of the office or shop, or the labor of the field, he seeks relief not in communing with God, but in the society of his wife and children, in the companionship of congenial friends, in the columns of the daily papers, among his books, or in some of the amusements of the day.

He feels pride and pleasure in his home. He makes it pleasant and attractive. He surrounds it with shade trees and fountains and flowers. The latest and freshest literature, the papers and magazines of the day; volumes of poetry and fiction, as well as the more substantial books of history, philosophy and science, works of *virtu* and art, music—all that can please the eye and ear, and minister to the love of the beautiful are made to adorn, enrich, and refine his home. To his wife and children he is thoroughly devoted. He treats his wife not as a subordinate, but as an equal, a companion, a friend. The thought that he may love his family too much never enters his mind. The notion that his affection as a husband and father, by linking him too strongly to this world, and diverting his mind from God or Jesus or Heaven, is liable to result in the loss of his soul—such a notion never for a moment disturbs him. When he looks upon his wife or sees the smiling happy faces of his children, he is disturbed by no apprehension, that in a few years, some of them, perhaps all, will be writhing in hell.

He maintains his own rights while granting freely to others all they can justly claim. He sees that habitually granting to others more than they are entitled to, encourages them in their extortion, and injures the cause of morality. He defends his person and his property, even if the defence requires, unfortunately, the sacrifice of the life of his assailant. He allows no man to smite him on the cheek, or to take his coat (without permission). Yet he resorts to violence only when it is absolutely necessary, and deems it wrong to cherish revenge or practice the old precepts of retaliation. If wronged he seeks redress; but except in extreme cases calling for instant action, and personal violence, he endeavors to obtain justice by an appeal to the laws of his country.

He hates tyranny and oppression, and resists them by violence if necessary. He admires the brave spirits of the past who have inspired their countrymen to rise in rebellion against oppressive governments, and led them through the fire and blood of revolutions to victory and freedom. He is in sympathy with every people that is struggling for liberty, and would gladly see every nation free, though the heads of all the tyrants of earth should roll in the dust. He loves liberty for himself, and desires it for his fellow men of every clime. He ascribes his misfortunes and those of his fellow men to natural causes. He never thinks of attributing them to the agency of a devil or of demons. To remove these evils, he makes use of natural, secular means.

His confidence is in human effort wisely directed. He trusts not in prayers, but in the ingenuity, skill and power of man in subjecting the forces of nature to his will, and making them subservient to his ends. All through life, he looks to human effort and to natural methods. He never expects miraculous aid.

For human improvement he looks to those movements which tend to diminish poverty and give the people better homes, better clothing, and better food; which remove the temptations and inducements to criminal acts and vicious indulgences; which encourage temperance, diffuse knowledge, and enable men and women to better, every way, their earthly condition. He sees that the dogmas and creeds of theologians fail to improve the condition of man, and so attaches but little, if any, importance to them as a means of reform, as a factor of progress.

In estimating a man's worth, he considers his character, not his

creed. If he has dealings with an individual, his standing in business circles is of more importance than his standing in the church. Experience has taught him that a man may have a great deal of religious faith, and but very little honesty, that he may be very prompt at church and very noisy at the prayer meeting, and yet extremely slow to pay his honest debts, and quick to cheat his neighbor whenever opportunity offers itself. So he has learned to judge men by their conduct and not by the frequency or form of their prayers, nor by the interest they manifest in religion. Such are some of the prominent traits of a character which has the approval and commendation of the enlightened judgment of the present age. The individual who possesses these traits and whose life corresponds with the principles mentioned, has the confidence and respect of all, without regard to party or sect. The virtues to which I have alluded, or many of them, are by a perversion of language, called *Christian* virtues, and the character in which these excellencies are embodied is spoken of by the people as a *Christian* character, the word *Christian* being used as a synonym for true, good, virtuous, etc.

But how opposite to the character I have imperfectly portrayed, is a *Christian* character as presented in the New Testament, or implied by the alleged teachings and example of Jesus and his apostles.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth." "Blessed be ye poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God." But woe unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation." Jesus had not where to lay his head. The apostles had nothing save one garment, a staff and a pair of sandals. The young man who had, so far as it appears, led an unexceptionable life, was not received among the disciples, because he declined to dispose of all his property. The immediate followers of Jesus "sold all their possessions and goods, and parted them to all as every man had need." Let worldly men engage in worldly pursuits. It is the *Christian's* business to seek the Kingdom of God. As Strauss observes "Christianity in common with Buddhism teaches a thorough cult of poverty and mendicancy." The *Christian*, whether bond or free, thinks resistance on the part of slaves, and all efforts to destroy servitude impious and wicked. He reads the Old Testament command to the Jews to buy bondmen and bondwomen. He nowhere reads in the New Testament that slavery is wrong. On the contrary he reads "Let as many servants as are under the yoke, count their masters worthy of all honor." "Servants be ye subject to your masters with all fear." The great apostle of the Gentiles returned a fugitive slave to his master with a letter which, while it asked for kind treatment, contained no hint that slavery was wrong. The slave system continued in the Roman Empire more than a thousand years after Christianity appeared, and there were more slaves in *Christian* Rome than in Pagan Rome.

The *Christian* never resists tyranny. Jesus says "Resist not evil." Paul writes "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; the powers that be, are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." "Christ also suffered leaving us an example that we should follow his steps," wrote Peter. "Being persecuted we suffer it," said Paul to the Corinthians. The *Christian* therefore submits to the rod of the tyrant, and the lash of the master, believing submission a virtue.

Woman he believes is man's inferior. "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." "For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man." "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as Christ is head of the church. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let their wives be to their husbands in everything." Woman is forbidden to teach "For Adam was first formed, then Eve, and Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression." Once marriage was a duty the *Christian* believes, and is even now allowable; but the ideal state is celibacy. It is better to marry than to do worse. In heaven there will be no marrying, nor giving in marriage.