

tables showing how our shipping is increasing or diminishing, as compared with that of other nations or cities; or attempts are made to show how in this country or in that our manufacturers and merchants are gaining or losing ground. Even our political combinations are affected by the self same spirit, and parties and candidates are accepted or rejected according to their views on trade questions affecting their constituency. In private life the same spirit is displayed. We must live in the same style and ape all the novelties introduced by those whom we consider to be our equals. Foolish extravagances are thus caused, and many hours of care and worry are in store for us, accompanied by severe suffering on the part of our families and our dependents. This vain striving creates most of our social evils. Bargain hunting is the inevitable result, and "sweating," with all its attendant horrors, is created to crush the life out of helpless fellow-beings who have to say, "my poverty but not my will consents." In this age of material comfort no excuse can be found for the grinding down of the honest poor. This would indeed be a happy world if professing Christians obeyed the great law of self-sacrifice. Is it a mere dream to trust that a time will come when greater emphasis will be laid on the practical fulfilment of the law of love and less stress on the empty parade of the religion whose animating principle it is supposed to be?

No thoughtful mind can suppose that things will remain long as they at present exist. The times are out of joint, for we stand between the old and the new. The old is breaking up. The new is as yet unformed. The result is chaos. A Babel of sounds echo around us. Men turn into devious and obscure pathways in the hope that somewhere they will find rest. In this life hope always flutters between the dim wave and the sky, and even in man's extremity we know and feel assured that out of the turmoil and strife order will one day arise. The spirit of God will brood again over the waters and the light will be divided from the darkness.

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In some of the weekly journals recently received from Britain there seems to be raging a controversy as to whether written or extempore sermons have the most effect in leading men to higher things. Arguments pro and con have been advanced on both sides, and yet the question seems hard to settle. In Scotland not so very long ago the man who ventured to look even at a scrap of paper in the pulpit would have been considered worse than a heathen man and a publican, but a change seems to have taken place in the minds of the people, and many of the celebrated preachers, who draw large audiences, use the "paper" without any let or hindrance on the part of their hearers. Certainly it stands to reason that of all the sermons preached from our pulpits on