

theories since the first day of philosophy to this hour, and beyond words—mere words—no body can give an informing perfect definition of being!

Coming to the matters that concern us more.—What is sin? Whence comes it? How came we to be subject to its defiling pollutions and withering curse? By “nature;” by our coming into existence and that by the will and act of God without knowledge or consent on our part? And what is that God in Christ reconciling the world to Himself not imputing to men their trespasses; the everlasting one cabined in the contracted life of the creature of a day; the maker and ruler of all in that Jesus “meek and lowly of heart;” unsullied purity allying sinners to Himself, “not ashamed to call us brethren;” the life of we who live in anguish and dying? And why, since God loved us, and God is love, was salvation for us sinners procurable only by the sacrifice of the Holy One and the Just? We may speak, and explain, and think, and think about these matters. But they are “wonderful passing knowledge.” We call them “mysteries.” But what is mystery other than the limitation of mind belonging to our present childhood state. If we could understand them they would be no mysteries. Mystery is not an external veil over so many objects; that is but a figure of speech; the reality of the figure—the veil—is the *incapacity of the soul* in its child-state to comprehend God and its own surroundings.

Like the infant that nestles in the soft warm mother's breast—though it knows not what mother is,—that obtains the life, the comfort, the pleasure there, tho' it cannot form an idea of where it is, and what its own gratifications are; that comes to know the mother's face and the eyes that beam upon it in love, and the arms that enfold and fondle it, but just as the presence of some incomprehensible sweetness, and refuge, and repose;—so is it with the child of God, with the spiritually taught and experienced Christian man to whom Christ is all; getting to the bottom of words and descriptive terms, getting into the heart and inner sense of divine revealings, he just lies on the bosom of almighty, all wise, holy beneficence—feels in Christ

the (incarnate) love of God around his soul, and the consciousness of rest, refuge, safety, joy, in a love of God that passeth understanding.

Here “we see as in a glass darkly, then face to face.” Here as to things of God and our relation to God, and other things unseen and eternal, we speak as a child, we understand as a child, we think as a child. We reach our manhood in this respect and put away childish things only when the light of yonder world breaks upon our eyes and its life vibrates in our being. “It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is, and every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself as He is pure.” A child-life, a dream-life is the life that now is, but the sinful man that has gone to Christ for the living water and who abides in him can say “as for me I will behold thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.”

With this thought that we are but as little children sensibly affecting us at the present moment, there arises at once cause for serious review of our practical actings with one another in connection with our apprehensions and our confessions of God's truth. The Bible is a lamp for all; and besides the written Book we have the promise of the guiding Spirit of God to illuminate the page and the mind of the reader, and to lead us into all truth. Yet numberless are the variations of thought about the meaning of Scripture, as might have been expected if the fact had been kept in view that as to intellectual and moral faculty we are as children, by whom Bible revealings and all other revealings are imperfectly discerned. It is the fact, and it could not be otherwise, if we inquire and hold by our convictions, that different conceptions of what is the mind of the Spirit, of what is the accurate purport of this and that divine communication are formed by honest inquirers, and differing formulæ or expressions of truth and duty are put forth and adhered to. What is more to be deplored is that these differences so frequently conduct to sinful alienation and to contentions about forms, modes of worship, church polity, and such like, which in