

hope of society lies in building it on a foundation that is contrary to every law of human nature. So likewise is this faculty darkness, when individuals use it to find excuses for idleness, restlessness and disdain for the ordinary obligations of life.

When men like Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Balfour, though immersed in political affairs, devote their trained intellects to the cause of religion, we all seem to feel the light of their thought. But, on the other hand, when we note writers of a different type, well read, ever brilliant, setting forth doctrines which undermine man's trust in God and in faith, who are the very *torquemadas* of infidelity, we do not impugn their motives, but we see how strong reasoning powers may propagate darkness.

MISCONCEPTION OF RELIGION.—But again, the light within us is darkness when religion is misconceived and misrepresented. We are to remember that religion is a larger term than Christianity. Nicodemus was religious, as was the devout centurion, before they became Christians. So we have no right to say that Mohammedans, Buddhists and multitudes of reverent rationalists are not religious. Of course we hold that the follower of Jesus is pre-eminently so. However kindled, whether by the working of a necessary law of our being, or by tradition and early education, a light springs up in the soul that points to God, to the duty of worship and to the possibility of a future life. This light has been increased by reflection, as in eastern lands, and by revelation and reflection, as in the west. Moreover, it ought still to grow through experience and study. But, alas! it may be perverted, it may be misapprehended and misapplied. When such is the case it becomes darkness, and the more there is of it the greater the darkness. To illustrate: We are specially interested to-day in the attitude of Mohammedanism towards Christianity. From the beginning that creed has sought the extermination of our faith and has never restrained its barbarous cruelties. Now the streets of Constantinople run red with blood. A Turk stands with a dripping spear over a murdered woman. The world looks on and exclaims, "That is religion! No, I prefer none of it." I answer, yes, but the light has become darkness. So, too, with the exception of a few Protestants here and there, the church stands aloof, more afraid to do something impolitic than to be guilty of inhuman apathy, and the great mass of unbelievers exclaim, "and this is religion!" It is another case of the traveller fallen among thieves. The Levite and the Priest, State and Church, pass that way and no good Samaritan has yet paused and poured in oil and wine. This sad tragedy does not prove the unreality of religion, only the conversion of its light into darkness.

And how great is the darkness? Who can estimate it? Our Lord uses a form of speech that at once suggests superlativeness, incomparableness, excessiveness. It is as though He said it is greater than any other kind of darkness and more impregnable. When men have never learned and are seeking the day, though their state is sad, it is hopeful. They are in a fair way to a better condition. But when men are wrong, believing themselves right, irrational, believing themselves rational, wise when unwise, and thinking themselves truly religious, when they are falsely religious, the difficulty of saving them is immense. It is harder to overcome miseducation than no education, and more difficult to counteract the errors of religion than to overcome the evils of no religion. When dogmatism, when vanity, pride and self-confidence are allied on behalf of a position, it becomes next to impossible to storm it, and capture it by assault. These are entrenchments not readily taken. Consider how traditions, habit, associations, intellectual pride and love of consistency keep you from changing ground, and then think if you are in darkness how great, how hopeless, how impregnable that darkness must be.

THE COLLATION.—When are students so happy as when they are seated before a table loaded—not with books? This fact was demonstrated at the annual collation held on Wednesday afternoon.

Shortly after 4 o'clock nearly 300 guests, including many ladies, sat down to an elaborate repast, which had been prepared for the occasion. The tables, which were arranged in six rows, with a long head table, were tastefully decorated with flowers and ornamental dishes.