

in the great cities of the East. The attractive spots, to the divine eye, were those which were crowded with the densest masses of human beings." *

Now if centralization was so vast a power for good or evil in Paul's day, it is even *more* so in our day, for reasons that will readily suggest themselves to the reader. If cities have been the strongholds of Satan in the past, so that God has swept them with the besom of His wrath, as with Sodom, Gomorrah, Babylon and Jerusalem, because there was no other way to maintain His religion on earth, they are fast becoming satanic strongholds at the present time, blighting and cursing the earth with their pestiferous influence.

4. *The policy of the church of modern times contravenes both the letter and the spirit of her Master's example and parting instructions.* The divine policy involved in the memorable words, BEGINNING AT JERUSALEM, is practically disregarded. Our great centers of life and power have been left to take care of themselves, after being drained of all available means to help others. The church has been more anxious to plant and foster feeble churches in sparsely settled rural districts, and in far-off heathendom, than to do it amidst the teeming populations of our cities. *There is more spiritual destitution prevalent to-day among a million of the dwellers in New York and Brooklyn than exists among a dozen whole States and Territories at the West!* And what is being done for this million of degraded sinners, who are our neighbors, in the way of providing churches, or of evangelizing efforts? Nothing—or next to nothing. There are single wards in the cities whose population exceeds that of whole states, in which there is scarcely a Protestant church or even mission chapel, or evangelizing agency of any kind. If such a state of things existed *out of the city* anywhere, the church would put on sackcloth, and the land ring with appeals. New York City, below 14th street, and the outlying wards of Brooklyn, into which a mighty tide of souls is pouring, present as dark an outlook for the future as many parts of heathendom itself.

And still the ministry here, and the church at large, for the most part, sleep over the volcano which is smoldering under us—over “the fermenting vat which lies hid and simmering” with the worst elements of society. It is easier to-day to plant a dozen new churches in districts or hamlets never heard of, or in India or China or Africa, than to plant and nourish into vigorous life one in either of these cities. We write from a painful knowledge of this subject, and on the basis of well-established facts. Forty years ago, when Brooklyn had just begun its rapid growth, the writer, with a few brethren, made a vigorous fight in the Presbytery of Brooklyn for a plan of church extension and evangelization, the fundamental principle of which was, *beginning*

*Prof. Austin Phelps, in Introduction to “Our Country.”