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OUR NEW ERA.

Man is a social being as well as single. It is society that brings him into the world, rears him up to manhood, trains and prepares him for life's business and battle, ministers to his wants and welfare, soothes him in sorrow, nurses him in sickness, sings with him in joy, aids him in his varied struggles, smooths his dying pillow, and commits his mortal remains to their last resting place.

The forms and varieties of society are countless; but we are mainly concerned in such as God has appointed. We may be sure that as God makes and maintains man as a social being, he institutes and upholds no form of society but such as is eminently suitable and beneficial to us. Revelation presents three sorts of Divine society, that fill the page of human history and are ever replenishing and ruling the world. These three are the family, the nation and the church. It is very important that we should justly appreciate and distinguish them. The family is the **REPRODUCTIVE AND PREPARATIVE** society, that ushers humanity into the world and that educates and trains it, in childhood, for life's work and warfare. The nation and the church are the great **OPERATIVE** societies, for manhood and maturity;—the nation for what is physical or secular, the church for what is spiritual and divine. In infancy, God joins the secular and the sacred, in the hands and duties of the parents, for to them he commits both the religious and the physical education of their children; but in manhood and maturity, he separates the secular means and forms from the sacred, by providing a distinct society for each. It is clearly God's design and work to unite the temporal government and the spiritual government of childhood, by placing both in the same parental hands, by devolving on parents the supply of all their children's wants; but to separate these governments in the period of man's maturity, by creating the nation for secular supply and service, and the church for spiritual. The union of church and state is opposed to God's own social plans and arrangements; it confounds childhood and manhood;