

always spring from a firm grasp of truth. It is the loose holding of truth, and the consequent absence of strong motives, that is the cause of the drifting of the majority of Christian lives to-day. On the contrary the man who has settled beliefs, in whom conviction has laid hold upon the inner springs of activity, is a man whose every act will exhibit a directness of aim and an intensity of purpose that can spring from no other source.

What but a belief in the doctrine that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," could impel a Carey to leave the quiet of an English home for the jungles and the fevers of India?

What but a firm belief in gospel truth could inspire Latimer with such courage that he gave his body to be burned in order that the blaze of his funeral pile might light the candle of gospel truth throughout England, or could nerve the arm of Cranmer as he held his hand in the flames to punish it for weakness in signing the recantation.

And even in our day, when the fires of persecution have been extinguished and when error has clothed itself in the garb of orthodoxy, there is nothing that can induce the Christian to face modern heresy, to risk the loss of popularity, and to submit to be charged with narrowness and bigotry, but a firm confidence that his creed is drawn from the sources of eternal truth.

Another essential quality of high Christian character is stability. There are men whose convictions are strong and whose lives are therefore earnest and purposeful, who yet for lack of continuity of purpose never accomplish results at all commensurate with their abilities. Their earnestness is being constantly misdirected; their purposes are "as variable as the shade by the light quivering aspen made." These are men who have not sufficiently guarded the sources of their beliefs. They have allowed themselves to formulate a creed upon other grounds than those of evidence and consciousness, and as the basis of their belief is as unstable as water, so also is their character. Now as a matter of fact, few properly constituted minds can help trying to find some reasonable explanation of the circumstances of their lives, the matters of their experience and the ground of their hopes for the future. Some sort of system of doctrine is forming itself in "the cobwebbed, gloomy intellect of even the most