

gress in the development of the human soul. I need only ask you to contemplate yourselves, body and soul; our very complex bodies having various attributes, our mind various attributes, our spirit various and manifold aspirations, yet bound together in one communion. How has this come about? It has come in the order of nature: first, an unintelligent infant; then a self-conscious child; then a being with varied powers and fecund activities; and ever a higher unity has been reached, as beneath our eyes the simple has passed into the complex existence. You, too, are one with the same great law which reaches through all organic and inorganic beings, from the beginning of time until time shall be no more; it is your privilege, consciously and willingly, to become one with that Spirit who fills the universe with the breath of His life. But there is this difference; when we speak of the progress of society or of organic progress, we speak of an unconscious progress; but in individual progress a man is, or may be, conscious of getting better or getting worse, his eyes are opened to see the good and the evil, he may ally himself with a power and a law which make for righteousness, or he may forbear, he may foster or blight his own progress.

Into what circle of Divine affinities art thou come, O my soul! to what principalities and powers, to what majesty and beneficence! God henceforward be thy friend, let the voice be heard that is even now whispering in thy ears, "This is the way, walk ye therein, when thou turnest to the right hand and when thou turnest to the left." "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come," the Master Himself is calling you to go up higher out of the dregs of your own carnality. He makes you sit down with Him in heavenly places, He enlightens your mind; you no longer see men as trees walking; you no more see through a glass darkly, you put away childish things; and rapt from the fickle and the frail you enter daily more and more into the joy of your Lord!

And now, my brethren, to conclude; the Law of Progress carries us on the wings of the spirit beyond the grave and gate of death and the barriers of things seen and temporal. When you have once realized the intelligence of God lifting up your intelligence, and His beneficence calling out your aspirations, and keeping your

love alive under unfavourable circumstances, can you ever lose the dream of an eternal life? Can you ever give up the immortality of the soul, and the individual consciousness of man after death? If you feel, although you have not got hold of God, He has got hold of you; do you think He will ever let you go? Shall any one pluck you out of His hand? Is there any question when the disintegration of the body takes place, and terminates the present mode of your existence, as to the permanence of *you* in your own individuality? I know you will point to the countless millions who have gone down to the dust, to the tribes of savages who seem never to have been the subject of any progress at all, to "the back-waters of civilization," or again to the thousands of promising and gifted men who have been cut off in the flower of their age. Do you suppose that with the superior intelligence we have seen to exist, and with the traces of a beneficence such as we may deem does exist—do you think that all these really have ceased to be? and that they have been called into life, been neglected or cared for, as the case may be; have withered here, or developed power and sublime consciousness of an infinite beyond, simply to be extinguished in the foulest corruption.

When the heart rises in prayer to God, there is an end of all such doubts, only the evil in the heart and in the world comes in and sweeps away the good influences; but when the good influences come back, you rise again out of the mists of doubt and disconsolation, because your mind has been taken possession of, and you can say breathing that divine air, "Lord, I am surrounded by an atmosphere of love, though it be also one of mystery; I cannot see clearly, through the dim telescope of the soul, those worlds on worlds that are beyond. Yet now Thou art with me—close beside me—encompassing me with a love most personal; in that love let me live and move and have being, content to be led like a child, not knowing whither I may go, yet content—able to say with the sublime indifference of the apostle, '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 even as He is pure."