

THE WORLD PROBLEM

There is a spiritual, undefined influence, a universally developing new atmosphere, permeating all the peoples of the globe, which is giving a growing dislike to the self-seeking strenuousness of all civilizations, that curse of the world to-day, most and worst in proportion to the presence of nominal Christianity. Also a universal hunger for peace and brotherhood as the international common man awakes and unites. The unseen spirit of the Christ, wherever it can escape human institutionalisms and be free to give liberty to man, is the spirit of fundamental divinity, becoming more or less conscious in fundamental man, and is preparing the way for a coming universal spiritual-human life. It is the final stage of an æon, the long gestation period of a new era about to be born.

The one thing needed is an intelligent understanding of the facts and underlying laws of the spiritual world, so that man can intelligently co-operate with universal man and the universal forces of the divine. One difficulty to overcome is the almost universal confusion of soul and spirit. We have expressive technical terms for the world of the body, "physical," and of the soul, "psychical," but no term truly expressive of the spiritual has yet been made current. "Pneumatical," would be a parallel and appropriate term, if it were not already in common use as the material symbol of spirit; but in modern languages it has never risen to express the spiritual reality. The result is that the psychical and the spiritual have been confounded, to the practical exclusion of the spiritual. They differ as physical and psychical differ. "A psychical man does not accept the teaching of the Spirit of God. That teaching to him is foolishness, nor can he