

Churchman, a fourth that he is a Wesleyan, a fifth that he is a Congregationalist, a sixth that he is a Baptist, a seventh that he is a Presbyterian.

Then, too, you are told now a-days, of one person that he is an Evangelical, of another that he is a High Churchman; this person is said to be a Tractarian, that person a Puseyite: one is pointed at as a "Romanizer," another as a "Germanizer." So too, we hear of Bible Christians, Primitive Methodists, Plymouth Brethren, and many others; to say nothing of those who pretend to more or less of some new or special Revelation, such as Mormons, or Irvingites.

Leave, if you will, England, Ireland, Wales, or Scotland, and go abroad; travel over the world, and what do you discover? In the United States of America alone, you would find above *thirty* different bodies of religionists, all calling themselves Christians. Elsewhere you meet with Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics, Lutherans, Moravians, Armenians, Nestorians, Copts, and others; and these, too, all claiming to be Christians, that is, to belong to the Church of Christ.

Now all this is very puzzling to plain people; yes, and it perplexes educated people too; they can't tell what to make of it: and another great misery that follows from this state of things is, that it hinders multitudes of heathens from becoming Christians, and leads very many who are not heathens to doubt whether there is any truth at all in Christianity. It is said, and with some show of truth—if the Christian religion comes from God, how is it that Christians do not agree among themselves? How comes it that one body of Christians is so unlike another? One says I must believe this, another says I must believe that. Is it likely, people ask, that if Christianity were *Divine*, God would suffer men to be so perplexed as to what is Christianity? And so, when those "who profess and call themselves Christians" offer to teach them their religion, a very common answer is—"First go and agree among yourselves *what* you are to teach, and then I promise to listen to you; till then I had better remain as I am, rather than be bewildered by such opposite teaching."

Now if matters were much *worse* than they are; if the divisions and oppositions among Christians were *far greater* than at present, it would not prove that what is called Christianity is not a Revelation from Almighty God. Differences, oppositions, contradictions among its professors, no more *prove* that it is not *Divine*, than misery, sickness, and death *prove* that God did not create the world or make man. A wise man, or a thoughtful man, would enquire whether there was any cause sufficient to account for the present condition of the world, and for the actual state of Christianity in the world. "The Bible, which he believes to be *God's Word*, would tell him, that wilfulness and disobedience had caused the one: it might not unnaturally

make him suspect that they too would lead to the other.

For indeed, if, as that same Bible tells us, the devil tempted man to wilfulness and disobedience, and takes pleasure in the misery which he thus has caused, it is not wonderful that he should also tempt Christians to wilfulness and disobedience, lest Christianity should cure the evils which the first man's sin has brought into the world. The fact is, that Satan, the enemy of God and of all good, has from the beginning done all he could to mar the work of God, and to spread evil throughout the world; and this fact is quite enough to account for all that is amiss, whether in the world or among Christians.

There is an end, then, to this objection, and therefore it may be put aside.

But the question asked is, "What are you?" It is a question which ought to have a common answer, and though it is quite true that it does not, it by no means follows that it cannot obtain it. Let us try, then, to find such an answer.

Now, if we wish to know how to describe anything we see around us—what name to give it—how to speak of it—we must first of all try to get some notion of its origin, its nature, or its history.

Supposing then, for example, a crowd of human beings came before us, consisting of people old and young, male and female, from different nations and countries in the world. Supposing too, that among that crowd were wise people and fools, giants and dwarfs, well made and deformed, sane and insane, blind, lame, deaf, dumb, diseased, and many others; people differing as much as possible in appearance and stature, and age, and voice, and manners; and then supposing further, that we were asked to give some common name to them all; could we much doubt what to call them? Should we not say, they are *Men*? Why should we say so? Simply because of their birth—they were born of woman. The Bible calls, and we call every one "Man that is born of a woman." So then, birth and parentage it is, that gives the same name now to man, and to all other animals, which was given them in the day when they were created.

But there is another birth and parentage, which men receive besides their natural birth and parentage; and this new or second birth was meant to give them a new nature, which should fit them to enter into a new community. 1800 years ago, *ONE*, Who being the Incarnate Son of God, was called Jesus Christ, spake thus to a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, "who had come to Him for instruction: He said, 'Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man [that is, any one] be born again, [that is, from above] he cannot see the kingdom of God.'" And when Nicodemus, not understanding the Son of God, asked Him, how any one could thus be born again, "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a