

mowing down thousands of victims. We have no witch-maniacs now, consigning hundreds of poor wretches to a horrible death, for an imaginary and impossible crime; but we have our railway and joint-stock company manias, which send hundreds to the mad-house or the grave, in another fashion. We do not believe in ghosts in these enlightened times, unless they come rapping our tables and causing the parlour chairs to waltz. We have no spiritual fevers now, such as the Crusades; but Mormonism is drawing its recruits by thousands from all the countries of civilized Europe. A belief in Joseph Smith as a prophet is infinitely more contemptible and indicates a far lower mental and moral condition than a belief in Mahomet. The wonders of human folly repeat themselves, age after age, in varied forms: for man is still weak and ignorant, and there is ever some old stump of superstition to which we delight to tie ourselves. We smile at the beliefs and terrors of our forefathers; but many of these were respectable and wholesome compared with the "no-belief" in which multitudes are content to live, and the contempt for all religions which is gradually spreading, and shaking the very basis of morality.

There is yet another important view of this matter. When we speak of human progress, we really mean, not the whole human race, but the inhabitants of civilized Europe and America. It is idle to talk of progress in connection with the Chinese who are chained to the past, and to whom the idea of advance is an impiety; and these stationary Chinese constitute a third of the human race. The great bulk of the inhabitants of Africa are non-progressive; as the Negro is now so he appears to have been for thousands of years. Barker tells us that, in no instance, has the Negro evinced other than a retrogression, when once freed from restraint; that his natural instincts are a love of idleness and savagedom, and into these he relapses unless specially governed and forced to industry. He holds that the development of the Negro element stops short at a certain stage—that the promised fruit does not appear. The great traveller is, I think, unduly severe on the Negro, and perhaps overstates his case. If from the African we turn to the Asiatic races, though the first impulse towards civilization came from the east, yet, with the exception of Hindostan, it has relapsed into barbarism. There is really no progress among those stagnant Asiatic races. They have had changes innumerable; conquering dynasties have followed one another like waves of the ocean, but the East stands where it has always stood. Europe and America are the sole hope of humanity.

It is quite time now to take up the brief for the other side. I have tried to show, in the preceding pages, that in many departments, we have scarcely at all advanced beyond the achievements of the leading intellects of Greece and Rome; that within a period which embraces many centuries, the conditions of existence have not considerably improved; and that whatever may be the attainments of us moderns, there are so many drawbacks and flaws in our civilization—so many terrible evils flowing directly from it, and so much yet to be done, that there is, at all events, no room for boasting, but much need for