

again prayed to be spared, but was not ; and on the cross he cried that God had deserted him ; and finally, that still the vast majority of the human race at death descend into eternal torment. All this is so horrible a picture that the enlightened conscience of mankind rejects it with horror. With George Mivart, they would rather believe in no God at all, than in one who has woven such a system of widespread misery, and proposed such a feeble and inefficient scheme of relief - after deferring, too, any relief whatever for four thousand years. It is no wonder that eminent English churchmen, like Canon Farrar say, "We must revise our creeds."

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WHAT DOES GROWING IN GRACE MEAN?

The kingdom of heaven is like unto the leaven which, hidden in the meal works, develops, propagates itself and at last leavens the whole; it is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which from one of the smallest seeds becomes a mighty tree, all by the process we call growth. This is true of the kingdom of heaven, whether considered as a living power in the individual life or in society. "The kingdom of God is within you." At first Christ is simply an objective fact. Then he enters the heart that opens to him; he becomes, so to speak, domesticated and becomes "Christ in us, the hope of glory."

Jesus was himself complete, "full of grace and truth." It pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell. He is the Son of God, in whom the Father is well pleased. When he has "begun a good work in us" he has simply planted the germ of the new life which manifests itself in faith, hope and love. To grow in grace is simply to let his germ steadily develop, 'first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear' The Christian is God's farming or plantation, he is a

branch of the true vine whose root is in the eternal Father, and the function of each branch is to bear fruit. The Christian is vital in his relation to God, not mechanical or conventional. There is nothing else for him to do then but to grow. The Bible abounds in these vital similes—the seed, the growing wheat, the branch, the members of the human body—all expressing one great fact that a Christian is a growing personality, undergoing various processes, all of which—sunshine, storm, light and shade, food and fasting—are working to either for our good, that is, our growth in Christ likeness of soul.

One or two practical thoughts may well be emphasized. We do not grow in grace, or in Christ-likeness, which is the same thing, by theorizing or merely studying about the Christian life any more than we grow roses or strawberries by reading agricultural reports and papers and seed catalogues. We must plant and water and till the soil. To hear sermons and read the religious press is good; but there is more real knowledge and more growth in grace in one day's hard battling with our own passions than in a whole volume of sermons. The effort, extending over months and years, to practice the precepts of Jesus will reveal to one the perfect wisdom of Christ and show his own weakness, and so will open up the greatness of our topic—growing in grace.

To grow in grace is to rest in the Lord; to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord ; to lie down in peace and sleep ; to cease rebelling at His ways. It is also to press towards the mark, to keep the body under, to wrestle with spiritual foes, to wear the panoply of God, to go about doing good. In the end it is to 'be like Him,' to attain unto the perfect man, unto the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ.—*From the Methodist Herald.*

Learn what you can do, and do it with all the energy at your command.