

be heard amid the din, and where no time is left for working out the problems of abstract philosophy.

It is, indeed, one of the marvels of human nature that the spirit of pride and ambition should continue to flourish and hold sway even among the wisest and most thoughtful of men. The preacher who has devoted his life to the subject of religion, and has for a generation pointed out the vanities of life and held up the future as the only goal which should engage men's thought; who has taught the folly of human pride, the emptiness of worldly achievement, and striven to fasten the attention of men upon the supreme idea of eternity, accepts a call to a larger, wealthier and more important church, by an instinct chiefly worldly, which cycles of pious reflection are powerless to withstand. And yet, in truth, there are a thousand incidents in the life of every intelligent person which emphasize the paltry character of earthly achievement. Every day we see our associates passing away. One by one our friends lie down to rest with aims unattained and purposes unfulfilled. And still we wed ourselves inexorably to the things of time, the troubles of the world, all heedless of the lessons about us. Is it not strange, and yet, withal, for the world's comfort, well?

In the restless drama of life there are times, while the scenes are shifting, for reflection, and these are the only hope for the survival of the spiritual, as opposed to the material, in human life. Who that has stood by the bedside of some dying friend, and witnessed the ebbing away of the life-tide, seen the mute appeal of those glassy eyes from which the light is fading, and heard the groan of agony with which he gave up his last breath, has not felt all the ambition of life pass out of him, and solemnly concluded that, though all we ever dreamed or hoped for were achieved, it would count for little when the death drops were gathering upon the aching brow,

and the closing eye should look its last upon the things of time? What shall we do then? What thought intervenes to prevent this merciless philosophy from destroying the whole fabric of human effort, and leaving a world without incentive to action, motive for energy or impulse to achievement? If this life be all, of little moment is it that the few hundred millions of beings who are aimlessly battling in a purposeless struggle upon this round globe, should be annihilated or resolved back into their native dust. To solve the problem it is not necessary to mumble any creed, nor accept the authority of any book or teacher. Profound reflection upon this tremendous theme will bring the clear revelation that no heart can give its assent to any such dreary limit. Those great impulses of the soul—faith, hope, love—triumphant over the baser and less worthy passions, take hold of the conscious self with such overwhelming force and power, that it would give the lie to every instinct, every mental conception upon which judgment is formed, to say that these were for a day and after "life's fitful fever" is ended, they should die with the mere framework which formed their tabernacle. All that constitutes the majesty of a soul, all that prompts to heroic action, all that inspires to lofty aims, all that sheds beauty and sweetness upon human exertion, is found in a sense of relationship to another unseen and profoundly mysterious life, in which the higher impulses can have a sphere commensurate with the intense yearnings which could find no adequate fruition within the compass of this life. The subtle judgments of the brain and the changeless promptings of the soul, alike establish the conviction that the supreme condition of that other life is virtue, because in this it is the only condition of permanent happiness, or, indeed, of permanence itself. Whatever is not right, just, and true, passes away. All triumphs except those of virtue are but mockery. Shal-