

you not emerged from your seclusion and shewn them light and help and comfort. You stand condemned in your selfish heedlessness! What is the earthly use of your perfect thinking while man perishes unaided, untaught, incapable probably of even understanding your theories if you came to him?

2. Because a personal God has disappeared from our firmament. God has been replaced by an abstraction, an unknown, a consciousness, any high sounding name which conveys no meaning. What of the personal God who so loved the world? Who blotteth out our transgressions and will not remember our sins? What of that personal converse with God which is a deep reality and strong comfort to the souls who seek and come to know Him; which on the bed of sickness reaches out the hand to Him and is strengthened, which in the hour of bereavement looks up through the streaming tears and sees His Holy face?

What of that love of Christ which passeth knowledge, which sustained his brethren under the gladiator's sword, which gave nerve to the virgin under the lion's cruel paw, which inspired Howard in his loathsome prison searchings, and Damien in his leprous lazar house, and Brebœuf in the small-pox smitten wigwam, and Patteson under the murderous club, and Gordon in his death-watch at Khartoum? How do your clammy delineations of duty look by the side of *this devotion*.

Kindled by the flame of love to Christ. Even the self-abnegation of Gautama was lit at the torch of love, though it were only the love of humanity! But here is the love of Christ—which constraineth us!

And what of the free grace and mercy of the God all pure and that cannot abide iniquity, looking down on the lamentable failure of the men of this earth, hating their sin, yet yearning over the sinner! Hear His voice: "I will pardon their iniquities! I will heal their backslidings. Before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear!" I will love him freely. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased!*

Ah, my friends, these are interesting speculations, and nothing more—good enough to while away an evening, but totally inadequate to blot out the sins of the world. We listen to them, and their glamour fascinates us for a while, but with sober thought, and a due consideration of the state of things, and they vanish from the thinking that really guides like dew before the sun. We are tempted by apparent promise, but fulfilment is long—and one touch of that pierced hand lifts us up, and one sight of that thorn-crowned brow melts us—and the thrill of His gracious voice vibrates through our every fibre and personal love conquers.

"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"Her sins which are many are forgiven; for she loved much."

"FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH, BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE."

Gentlemen, it is impossible to speak without emotion on such mighty and deeply touching themes. And we recognize as we handle them, that they wait to us here on earth, a breath of the Divine. Tennyson has voiced what must eventually be again the universal confession of mankind.

"Strong Son of God, immortal love,
Whom we, that have not seen Thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust.
Thou madest man, he knows not why;
He thiukts he was not made to die,
And Thou hast made Him; Thou art just.

Our little systems have their day,
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but broken lights of Thee;
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they!"

And a greater than Tennyson, one whose voice rings out to us across many centuries, has made a more perfect appeal, which both soothes and satisfies:

"DOMINE, IN TE SPERAVI
NE CONFUNDAS IN AETERNUM!"