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## THE CONSTANCY OF RELIGION

Honesty, Fidelity, Kindliness and Love are Unchangeable.

Doctrine of Total Depravity Changed to a Belief in the Sonship With God—Golden Beliefs.

[George H. Hepworth.] Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.—St. John, xiv., 27.

The essence of religion is always the same, but theology is subject to constant change.

Honesty, kindness, fidelity and love are today just what they were to the newly born souls in the Garden of Eden, and resignation, self-sacrifice, faith in God, are just what they were in the Garden of Gethsemane. Time has not altered their complexion, neither has it decreased our appreciation of them. They are the same yesterday, today and forever. Human hearts are what they have always been, but human minds are constantly passing from lower to higher levels of truth, climbing the spiral staircase of greater knowledge and looking out on a wider horizon.

In nothing is this made more clear than in the soul's relation to God. Our fathers feared him, but we have learned to love him. They trembled in his presence, while we rejoice. Their religion was like a sky filled with thunder heads, every now and then a flash of forked lightning shaking the earth with its menace, awful in grandeur, magnificent as an exhibition of power, but rousing a fear of the present and the future which deadened affection. There was a dirge-like element in it which was strangely unattractive.

We admire our fathers for their sterling and stern qualities of character, but it would be impossible for us to kneel by their side and worship the God they so reverently adored. Time has wrought beneficent changes in our spiritual outlook, and what we believe in, we are willing to give up. There is something more friendly, more fatherly, more motherly in our conception of Deity, and therefore it is nearer to the truth.

There are two matters in which we have made a decided advance. We have changed the doctrine of total depravity into a belief in our sonship with God. No funeral procession ever moved more willingly to the cemetery where lie our buried fathers than we did when we paid our last respects to that dogma. The world was frightened by it while it reigned, and one dared not look toward heaven without expecting to hear the thunders of gloomy Sinai. We were simply a multitude of shipwrecked mariners, whose only deserts were to sink beneath the waves, but light came. The Gospel broke through the clouds on a second reading, and shone with inspiring effulgence. Children and heirs! Loved of the Father with a love not to be expressed. We woke to a new life, fear fled, and we were drawn upward with a strange feeling that God's invisible hand was downstretched to lift us over our sorrows and sins into penitence and holiness. The heavens were filled with music, and we began the upward march with joy in our hearts. Love flooded the world and wrought a miracle of development and growth. Religion became a perpetual peace and hope and trust, for a year of love will do more for the soul than a cycle of fear. The earth blossomed anew, and as the Christ cried "Let there be light," we bent in a reverent worship never known before. The Bible has become a fresh revelation and the new heart is warmed to good deeds and noble endeavor by the consciousness that the Father wants us and we must find our way to the home which awaits us.

The second change in our thoughts is our conception of the other life. The picturesque and spectacular in the old theology have given way to an immortality which robs death of its black garments and gives it a white robe instead. The harps in the early picture have disappeared, and we look forward to a life of activity; a life in which our affections are left intact; a life so close to God that we shall grow as the wheat grows in the sunshine and dew, and so close to earth that along the well trodden highway we may bring back the sweet influences of the upper world to bless this one. There is no high barrier whose gates are bolted, but an open door, through which the thoughts of the living may travel upward and through which the glories of the other life may come to flood our human households with helpfulness.

These beliefs are golden. They are priceless. We live anew, we breathe a purer air, enjoy a larger faith. Our vision takes a wider view, as one who climbs from the narrow valley to the mountain top. Religion becomes a diviner reality than ever. It is easier to bear with resignation the ills of the flesh, for the spirit is unconquered, and soars in its sorrow to the source of all strength and wisdom. The Father was

never so near his children as now, and life was never so radiant or so glorious. We have at last looked into the face of the risen Lord, and read his word with lips that have been touched by angel fingers. We can do our work with good cheer, can bow in deeper reverence, and bear with patience, for voices are calling us which we have never heard before, and beyond the tomb is the light of another and a brighter day.

## THE POETS.

### AVE ATQUE VALE.

Praise we the dead! where once his grave Received to peace the Saxon King, Do honor to the wise and brave, And let the world-wide nation sing The memory of a thousand years— Then hush! and think of others' tears!

Beyond the western sea they fall From eyes that yet with joy behold The kindly ancestor of all, The glory of the years of old; But, o'er the Atlantic water-ways, A mist of sorrow dims their gaze.

Again, within his city's bound, Truth-teller Alfred stands in fame— Beyond the sea, a mournful sound Re-echoes to the glad acclaim: We listen to the passing-bell— True child of Washington, farewell!

Up with our hearts! and over sea Swift be the word of friendship sped— "You praise our hero-king, and we Lament with you your patriot dead; In sorrow's name, one boon we crave— Lay England's wreath upon his grave!" Winchester, Sept. 30. —E. D. A. M.

### OUR IDEALS ARE THE SEEDS OF DESTINY

Each clock-tick tells the world a man is born To take his place in Time's infinitude; To start, aglow, his race, in Life's bright morn;

To close his eyes in Death's cold solitude. O, teach him right, that, when his sands have run, He may look back upon the paths he trod,

To know they were illumed by Honor's sun, And consecrated to the will of God.

Riches and honor are what men desire— Let them be gained by methods well employed; Rather a humble cot, a plain log fire, Than wealth unfairly won and never enjoyed!

Meet every man as if he were a brother— Since Time's first breath, two things have stood like stone: Compassion for the troubles of another, And courage in the battles with our own.

Seek not vast lore, but know a little well— Not many lives, but only one have we; Let Truth and Wisdom lead its too brief spell And paint the vision of eternity!

An empty purse is bad, an empty mind Is worse—but never own an empty heart; In Perseverance court the favoring wind That brings contentment in Toil's busy mart.

Eternity never won a moment lost; He serves the best who true to all will be; Seek but the truth, whatever be the cost; The hope of man is opportunity.

Climb not too fast Life's ladder—first of all Push deep your roots, then you can well sustain The rays of sunlight that upon you fall, The hours of toil, the pang of passing pain.

Birth never yet foretolden destiny, No wind-swept vessel twice the same wake led; And in the time of Time we plainly see The debts of life are owing to the dead. —Robert Mackay.

## AROUND THE LAMP.

### OPPORTUNITY.

This I beheld, or dreamed it in a dream: There spread a cloud of dust along a plain, And underneath the cloud, or in it, raged A furious battle, and men yelled, and swords

Shooked upon swords and shields. A prince's banner Wavered, then staggered backward, hemmed by foes.

A craven hung along the battle's edge, And thought: "Had I a sword of keener steel— That blue blade that the king's son bears— But this

Blunt thing!" He snapt and flung it from his hand, And, lowering, crept away and left the field.

Then came the king's son, wounded, sore bested, And weaponless, and saw the broken sword, Hit-buried in the dry and trodden sand, And ran and snatched it, and with battle-shout

Lifted afresh he hewed his enemy down, And saved a great cause that heroic day. —E. R. Sill.

### Plea for Individuality.

[Boston Home Journal.] Whatever we have to be thankful for in these days no student of history can fail to notice the marked decline in individuality. Of course, there is always danger in comparing one epoch with another that we shall magnify the good of the past and minimize the good of the present. Nevertheless, there are cases in which the facts are fairly clear. Such is the case in the matter of individuality. The concentrated life of the day is against individuality, and we certainly look to the future for a large number of striking characters. All men seem to run in one mold and are slaves to convention. Look about in the various fields of human endeavor. How many will you find in any one calling who stand out from their fellows? Take the newspaper world for example. Not so many years ago such men as Horace Greeley seemed the rule. Their leading articles bore the unmistakable impress of their own minds. With very few exceptions the leading articles in the press today are devoid of personality. Few know who the writers are and even fewer care to know. In almost any walk of life it is the same. Such a situation is by no means desirable, and society inevitably suffers. The individual withers and the certain result must be that the world will wither. We need at the present day men who know their own minds, who are willing and even eager to speak what they believe to be the truth. Men and women are needed who will go into the world and stand up and not with a lurking suspicion that their neighbors may think them odd sticks. For only as there is individual progress can society progress. There is no road to the higher civilization of which some dream.

### The Blessings of Health.

Health, invaluable treasure!—thou givest fresh lustre to the beams of the sun, and fresh radiance to the skies of heaven! Thou bestowest a more balmy odor on the breath of morning, and deepenest the richness of that tincture which flows over the rose. Ah! health, thou source of pleasure, and vivifying soul of every felicity beneath the moon! for thee and thy inspiring influence (exclaims the valiant warrior) I would travel, and even with a lurking suspicion that their neighbors may think them odd sticks. For only as there is individual progress can society progress. There is no road to the higher civilization of which some dream.

"Hygeia, hail! I'll drink at thy pure spring. Where Temperance and Exercise preside; And while life's dearest boon thy hand-maid brings, Though from the wine-press flow the purple tide; The sparkling goblet from my lips I'll fling— Scorning the gifts by luxury supplied; Hail! then, Hygeia, hail! thee, goddess, I adore, For, blessed with health, I'm rich— though scanty be my store."

### About Pain-Killers.

When Sir James Simpson first used an anæsthetic, the pious ministers of his time objected that by aiding his sisters in their hour of trial he was setting at naught Genesis, iii., 15. His retort was as happy as it was conclusive. He referred the indignant divines to the previous chapter, to the account of the first surgical operation recorded in Holy Writ. There they found the words: "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he took of the rib which he had taken out of the side of Adam, and closed up the flesh there. Then the Lord God said: 'Behold, Adam is as one of us, to know good and evil.' And of the rib which I had taken from Adam, I have built a woman, as one of Adam's ribs, to be joined to him, so that they shall be one flesh. And Adam was left alone, and it was not good. And the Lord God said: 'I will send thee a helper, like unto thee.' 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