

and most dangerous recesses with the message of salvation. Let not the people of other places lift up their eyes and hands to heaven, and thank God that they were not as those of Paris or Chicago, and set down these awful plagues wholly to the account of their pre-eminence in wickedness. "Suppose ye that these were sinners above all, because they suffered such things? I tell you, nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." "Therefore judge nothing until the Lord come." Of Tyrus and Babylon it was clearly revealed that the judgment fell on them because of their obdurate sin. God has not told us this of the places desolated to-day. If their burning be a token of His wrath, their speedy restoration shows that "in the midst of wrath He remembers mercy."

So far as these conflagrations are the work of man, it is certainly one of the most ominous signs of the times, that in the midst of our advanced civilization, the progress of the age, popular enlightenment, and the increase of liberty, and in the nineteenth century of Christianity, such a spirit as that which animates the *Commune* and the *Internationale*, and as ever and anon breaks out among "the dangerous classes" of the cities of the Old and of the New World, should be found not only to exist, but to give proof of thorough and wide-spread organization, and of more formidable power; that there should be "a great gulf fixed" between *Capital and Labour*. There is but one real solution of this great social problem. Political economy and legislation may palliate the symptoms, but they cannot reach the inner seat of the disorders. The power of Christ's religion, pervading high and low, will alone bind together all ranks and conditions of men.

A very striking illustration is furnished by the Chicago fire of the saying, "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" It is said that the story of a lamp being carried into a stable, and kicked over by a cow, is not true; yet it remains a fact that from almost as small a beginning the all-devouring flame sprung up, and went on its mission of destruction. What a rebuke to those *a priori* dogmatists, who say that "they cannot believe" that such immense and lasting consequences should flow from certain little causes! Some laugh at the idea of the eating of the fruit of a tree involving the ruin of the human race; and others, at the sin of a moment being followed by an eternal penalty. Would not these self-confident philosophers have argued that it was impossible that a benevolent God should permit the destruction of a great city from a fire in a shanty? The principle of Butler's great argument from the "Analogy of Christianity with the Constitution and Course of Nature" applies to such an instance, with irresistible force. It is altogether in the line of the Divine government that "great effects from little causes spring."

A most impressive lesson is taught us of the helplessness of man, when the great forces of nature are awakened in full power. Professor Huxley, in one of his so-called "Lay Sermons," argues that such a fire as the Great Fire of London (1660) would be an impossibility in our day, with all our scientific appliances. But see Chicago, built on the margin of an inland ocean, with water works the wonder of the continent, erected at the cost of unstinted millions! The wild