

tainly one among the many ways of doing it, and it is one of the surest ways. It was not, therefore, without reason, that Peter exhorted the early Christian converts to add to their faith virtue, not virtue in its more general sense, but *courage*.

Next in order may be specified *Ignorance and Knowledge*. Ignorance in regard to the fundamental principles, the doctrines and duties of religion, on the one hand, and a correct understanding of them, a readiness always "to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason for the hope that is in us, with meekness and fear," upon the other. It was truly said by one who uttered the words of experience as well as wisdom, "He that increaseth knowledge, increaseth strength." Ignorance may be obstinate in its errors, but it can accomplish nothing in aid of the truth. As a rock, descending upon the roof that shelters us, its tendency is not to uphold, but to crush. In Protestant communities at least, where men are accustomed to think and decide and act for themselves, in relation to all questions of faith and conscience, those churches are not apt to be the strongest in which the greatest amount of ignorance prevails. Fanaticism and every species of delusion here find their proper materials upon which to work. The natural results must inevitably follow. Weakness will come at last. The chaff will be blown away with the wind. The fire will burn among the stubble, consuming with it all that remains of the wheat; and that is the end.

Among other causes may be mentioned *Dissension and Concord*. Jesus affirmed that "a house divided against itself cannot stand." This is true in every application of the words; and it is especially true of divided churches