

of her brother; children are esteemed because of God's image in their souls; a new ideal exalts business as having a spiritual as well as a bodily, a social as well as an individual significance, money ceases to be a private monopoly, by becoming a divine trust and a social function; and the Christian society which takes the place of heathenism and Judaism means Christian fellowship and Christian co-operation in order to give universality to the Kingdom of God.

The process of Christian development must necessarily be gradual. Its achievements are religious, ethical, educational, not by external mandate or force. This was taught at the beginning by the leaven which works internally till the whole lump is leavened, and by the seed that organically unfolds its power till it bears the perfect fruit. Not by magic, but only by the law of gradual evolution, could the new ideas of Christianity become the individuals' personality and the essence of society. It required time to clothe in flesh and flood the spirit which Christ introduced. The realization in a limited sphere was specially striking, so long as his own life and that of his disciples exerted the most direct influence. Then the lowly were exalted, the weak made strong, the poor provided for, because all things were common. Men and women became cheerful martyrs; their suffering and heroism were the pain and glory of all believers, and their blood cemented the members of the Church. But for ages, and even now, Christianity hovers over the nations as an unrealized social ideal. Christian and heathen forms have been amalgamated, the attempt to serve God and Mammon has characterized the Christian ages, the weak have often been trampled upon, and the Church has both sanctioned and practised slavery, just as it has been the promoter of other abominations. Often the social leaven of the world has more deeply affected the Church than that Church has determined the social character of its environment.

We hide nothing; yet the complaint of the slowness of Christian social progress, and even of actual retrogression, is usually based on a glaring, though, almost universal, misapprehension. It is thought that Christian society ought to grow throughout the ages as a continuous organism as knowledge and grace grow in the individual—as if intellect and ethics and religion could be pushed onward and upward from generation to generation, each beginning in its new progressive march where the other ended. Instead of this uninterrupted movement, like a continuous stream which deepens, broadens and increases its volume as it flows, each generation begins, not where the preceding one left off, but at the very beginning. Each one of the new generations start with the alphabet in morals and spirituality; regeneration and faith and love are never transmitted from parents to children, but are personal achievements. Therefore the Christian society of an age is not a summit to which the past ages have pushed that society, and in which all past social progress culminates, but a product of the age itself, dependent on personal effort and as the use of past achievements. If a son may be inferior to his father, why may not the social status of an age? Nevertheless, taking Christian society throughout the ages, we are warranted in affirming that its progress has been great. It has grown in extent, spreading its influence from Jerusalem till now it embraces all continents and all peoples. There has been internal as well as external, intensive as well as extensive growth. Even worldly society has absorbed Christian ideas, and the very love which Christianity makes so prominent in theory is used by sceptics to attack the Church as loveless. Horrors once common are universally denounced, and the demands for public morality have been raised. For the Church and for society we now have a standard of temperance, and virtue, and humanity which were formerly unknown. Never was there so much inquiry into the teaching and spirit and life of Christ, and never were such great efforts made to introduce the lessons learned into all human relations.

Our theme has peculiar significance for our times. Ours is pre-eminently the age in which society is coming to itself, and insists on inaugurating a new social era. Sociology, social psychology, social ethics, social politics, and the social problem are new studies, and

all teem with burning questions. A Christian sociology of absorbing interest and unsurpassed importance is developing. Christian social thoughts and ideals are in demand, and the introduction of Christian social energies is recognized as an imperative need. The Church is unfolding its social powers so that religion means the salvation of the soul, but also, as it did with Jesus, the feeding of the hungry, the clothing of the naked, the healing of the sick, the visiting of the prisoners, and relief, comfort and help for body and soul in every possible way. The Inner Mission in Germany, the most comprehensive scheme of spiritual and benevolent work in Christ's name, is evidence that Christianity is alive to the vast social demands of the day. The world is to be redeemed through missions; states, institutions and organizations are to be leavened by Christianity; Laveleye thinks that even socialism strikes its roots in Christian principles; and it is clear that a new epoch of Christian socialization is at hand, a epoch for the most comprehensive and most perfect application of Christian truth to all social classes and all social relations.

In the character of Christian social progress in its spiritual means, and in its heavenly end we behold a divine power warring with man, and yet assimilating human affection and energy. This power, manifest in what Christianity has done for society and is now doing, is, perhaps, still more evident in the exhaustless energy of Christian truth and grace and faith and love, all of which push forward to greater social achievements and to the more perfect realization of the social ideas which Christ gave to the world.

THE CHILD MARTYR.

BY E. PAYSON HAMMOND.

I have been surprised to notice how many children have suffered death rather than deny Jesus. In England I saw a book filled with stories of children who had given up their lives rather than deny the Saviour who died on the Cross for us. I want to tell you about one of these young martyrs. In Antioch, where the disciples were first called Christians, a deacon from the church of Caesarea was called to endure cruel torture to force him to deny his Lord. While he was being tortured he still declared his faith, saying, "There is but one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." His body was almost torn to pieces. The cruel Emperor Galerius seemed to enjoy looking upon him in his suffering. At length this martyr said to his tormentors, "Ask any Christian child whether it is better to worship one God, the maker of heaven and earth, and one Saviour who had died for us and is able to bring us to God, or to worship the gods many and lords many whom the Romans serve." There stood by a Roman mother who had brought her little boy, nine years of age, that he might witness the suffering of this martyr from Caesarea. The question was asked the child. He quickly replied, "God is one, and Christ is one with the Father." The prosecutor was filled with fresh rage, and he cried out, "O base and wicked Christian, thou hast taught this child to answer thus." Then, turning to the boy, he said, more mildly, "Child, who taught thee to thus speak? How did you learn this faith?" The boy looked lovingly into his mother's face, and said, "It was God that taught it to my dear mother, and she taught me that Jesus Christ loved little children, and so I learned to love Him for His first love for me."

"Let us see now what the love of Christ can do for you," cried the cruel judge, and at a sign from him the officers, who stood by with their rods after the fashion of the Romans, quickly seized the poor boy, and made ready to torture him.

"What can the love of Christ do for him now?" asked the judge, as the blood streamed from the tender flesh of the child. "It helps him," answered the mother, "to bear what the Master endured for him, when He died on the Cross."

Again they smote the child, and every blow seemed to torture the agonised mother as much as the child. As the blows, faster and heavier, were laid upon the bleeding boy, they asked, "What can the love of Christ do for him now?"

Tears fell from heathen eyes as that Roman mother replied, "It teaches him to forgive his tormentors."

The boy watched his mother's eye, and no doubt thought of the suffering of his Lord and Saviour, and when