

ping off the truth to make it fit the theories they have constructed, or without a single qualm they will distort fact or stretch a point until it coincide with the doctrine they have accepted. Many great questions have beset this generation, questions far exceeding in complexity those which have puzzled past ages—questions that in their origin seem to reach back until they are fairly lost sight of in the tangled net-work of secondary causes, and to branch out in all directions, until, upon careful examination, interests that seemed the most remote, are found to be affected by them. There is the land question I have referred to, which was once, and is by some still, thought to be a very simple one; there is the real or apparent conflict between capital and labour, the causes of commercial depression, the problem of the honourable conciliation of race antipathies and the eventual union of opposing factions, and many other kindred questions. In their discussion, what is more needed than dispassionate moderation? Are we not too eager to form strong opinions on broad questions like these? There is a sort of satisfaction in having made up one's mind, though, too frequently, when it is made up, the subject is treated as one with which reason has no longer anything to do, and rash invective takes its place. It is not by hasty conclusions and impulsive action that lasting reforms now seem to be brought about. Questions that would formerly have been determined by revolution are now determined by evolution, the gradual development and adaptation of law to an increasingly complex social life, and it is not by frantic appeals to the populace, but by the steady enlightenment of the masses, that abuses will be checked and the way made clear for the ultimate triumph of the true principles of democracy.

I hope I will not be understood as advocating a temporizing policy. The men who accomplish anything worthy are the men of strong conviction, and when I quote these myths, which are so evidently intended to indicate the faith of mediocrity or moderation, I do so merely against the impetuosity and intolerance which so often mar the discussion of such problems. It is the furthest possible from my intentions to plead for the middle course where moral principle is involved. These are gordian knots which are never to be untied by compromise, or by that doctrine too much preached and still more practised—that whatever may be comprised in the term "exigencies" may justify departure from rectitude. Such gordian knots are to be severed by sharp and stern decision, if we would aspire to conquer, or even to have dominion of ourselves. Even where principle is involved, has there not, in the past, been too much aggressiveness and hostility where, without any sacrifice of firmness, there might have been consideration and courtesy? How many of earth's bitter quarrels might have been avoided if moderation had pervaded all counsels? We frequently hear the question asked—"Is civilization not a failure?" and this because human nature is still often violent and deceitful. Ought the question not rather to be—"Is mankind civilized?" As men progress toward the common goal of civilization, they must, of necessity, be drawn nearer together and understand each other

better. As they understand each other better there is the less chance of conflict, and one of the most hopeful aspects of our times is the movement toward unity in so many departments of life. Men are understanding that it is the points of community, and not the points of antagonism, that are to be emphasized if harmony is ever to be attained. No brighter example of this could be found than the manner in which the various Protestant churches are approaching the subject of organic union, and whether, after full consideration by the gifted and devoted men to whom it has been for the time committed, corporate union be found absolutely desirable or not, the fact remains that a generous, a noble, and an inspiring sentiment has been declared to the world.

But I am trespassing upon your kind indulgence. The periods of such myths as I have been speaking about have long ago passed away, and new forces govern the world. The half-opened scroll of history held by the fabled muse Clio, has, through the centuries, been unfolding without her aid. Cadmus is said to have introduced an alphabet into Greece; Gutenberg and Caxton introduced printing to the world. The ancient Prometheus is said to have stolen fire from heaven for the benefit of man; Franklin has snatched the electric spark, once known but as the fire that played in the heavens, girdled the world, annihilated distance, and brought mankind together. The myriad mythical divinities of the old days live only in the poetry which created them, while the cross, that was an emblem of ignominy, has, through the ages, been emblazoned on the gorgeous trappings of crusader, has crowned the stately domes of earth, and become the symbol of Faith—one of the three later graces, far excelling in their refusal of beauty the fabled graces of antiquity.

In the beginning of winter, in the early morning, after a night of frost, I crossed the lake when the thin and brittle ice formation was broken by the rising waves and grated harshly on the prows as we slowly moved from the shore. The white, cold mist arose from the waters dark as Erebus, seen here and there between the ever-shifting ice, which ground itself into rude crystals with a dismal, hissing noise that made one shudder. It was the early morning. In the evening, after a day of warm sunshine, I returned. No ice grated on our keel as we launched away toward the west. Not a cold crystal was seen on all the surface of the lake, now ablaze with the reflected glory of the changing sunset. As the amber clouds in the occident deepened into purple, they outlined the distant belfry, from which came over the placid waters, with the soft radiance of evening, the mellow cadences of the vesper chimes.

As I looked upon that sunset glory, with its promises of a still brighter day, I thought of the dim past as humanity's morning, with its chill, harsh, changing surface, its cruel grinding of violence and oppression, its brittle instability, the clashing of its inharmonious sounds, and rising anon from its bosom the dim, curling vapours, in which played the mere phantoms of truth.

But now the frozen surface of society is free, and a calm reigns where turbulence was then; the mists