

or rule by which to measure our actions ; and if the ultimates are matter and force, and not goodness and truth and justice,—the attributes or qualities of a person,—then might is Right, and barbarism is the highest condition of mankind. All these speculations are affecting, even to unsettling, the faith in which many have been educated. Their effects are seen in our social and political life, in the affairs of business and commerce. Selfishness is the ruling motive, as we might expect, when the opinion gains currency that life begins and ends with matter, that all is dust and ashes. Self, in such circumstances, becomes the highest object of worship, and obligation to anything but the civil law there is none. This phase of thought is full of danger to Church and State, to the individual and to society. Never was it more incumbent on Christian teachers to urge those who accept the great doctrines of Scripture, to hold them firmly, to prize them as of unspeakable value.

It may be asked, why should we not accept the latest results of thought and research in preference to the teaching of men who lived many centuries ago ? It is admitted that the thought of the world is progressing, that the intellectual horizon is widening year by year, is it not reasonable to expect, then, that we, who are the heirs of all the ages, have attained to more accurate conceptions concerning the worth of those fundamental ideas of Scripture which have so long held sway over a large portion of mankind ? In all departments of thought is it not the case that truths once tenaciously held, have been superseded by new conclusions reached in the search after knowledge, why should not the same result take place in regard to the doctrines taught in Scripture ? Is the teaching of Scripture a finality ? Are its declarations authoritative ? Must they be accepted as ultimate, absolute truth, with which the revelations of Science and philosophy must square or be rejected ? That is precisely the position we assign to Scripture. It contains eternal truth spoken by an Infinite wisdom through the lips of men. Its great ideas are true for all time. Philosophies may rise and fall, scientific creeds may fascinate and delight and then be cast aside as incapable of verification, but the word of God abideth for ever. It survives the wreck of themes and systems.

Must reason, then, bow before the authority of Scripture and accept its teaching without question ? Must we exercise a blind faith in its contents ? Are we to submit to its commands and injunctions without testing their reasonableness and their righteousness ? Is it an oracle to which we must listen without daring to challenge its truth ?