

aims and results. Our sole object in this paper is to draw attention to some practical benefits for clergymen in studies of history, modern and ancient. The library of every minister should be made up with a full recognition of the value of historical studies in a selection from the many histories now at hand. History will be found to be a *commentary* on the Scriptures of great scope and insight. It is not too much to say that no man can take in the wholeness and depth of biblical teaching who is ignorant of the history of the *race*. It is this with which the Bible mainly deals—not with Italians, Germans, Englishmen and Americans, so much as with men. Nations and nationalities it recognizes certainly; holds them to account for national sins, and threatens divine judgments on nations and kingdoms that will not serve God. But it is with the human race as a race sprung from one head, under a common doom, to be saved through one redemption, that the Scriptures mainly concern themselves.

It may be asserted, then, with confidence that a study of human history will throw light on the scriptural teachings concerning mankind. No man can be conversant with it and have rose-colored views of human nature. He must see that it is just what the Bible has painted it to be, in its dark and terrible apostasy from God. His general conceptions will become concrete. It was wittily said by a clerical friend that the existence of such a moral monster as Nero or Napoleon is an *à priori* argument for a personal devil. No one can read the history of these men and not feel the force of the remark. If it be said that the ministry do not need to have their views on such a subject as human guilt deepened, it is replied that certain signs of the times certainly point in that direction. Does the modern pulpit lay any *great emphasis* on this doctrine of sin? Are the severer truths of eschatology not toned down in much modern preaching? Is the absolute necessity of regeneration held forth as it was a half century ago? On the other hand, it is said a modern newspaper will give the minister all the confirmation and illustration of Bible truth that is necessary. But this cannot be. It will leave him with only a superficial knowledge of a fact which cannot be circumscribed to any one time or nation. The study of history will give the minister a view of the innate corruption of human nature which is simply overpowering, because it is so continuous, so universal, so various, and of so fearful dimensions. The point made may be illustrated by an example. The defender of Protestantism thinks he is amply equipped for his work because of what he knows of the *present existing* Romanism. But in reality he should have been a student of Spanish and Italian history in the Middle Ages. Such a history as that of Mr. Symonds, in his "Age of the Despots," or any good history of the Spanish Inquisition, is worth quite as much as histories of the Reformation for the right understanding of what the Romish system is in its unchecked development and absolute

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