

THE NEED OF THE WORLD.

BY THE LATE REV. DR. NELLES.

IF I were called upon to state, in brief, what is the need of our time, I should not hesitate to say, the enforcement of the Gospel of Christ on its spiritual and practical side; in this I would include a simplification of some Christian creeds, and the throwing overboard of a good deal of rubbish which was, perhaps, never of much service, and is of decided disservice in the present day. In fact in making Christianity a practical power over the earth it will be necessary to keep close to the teaching and spirit of the New Testament, which requires a firm and emphatic repudiation of a good deal which has passed and still passes for Gospel.

The scepticism of our time and of past time has been very much occasioned and fostered by erroneous conceptions of God and religion. It would be very hard to be a Christian if this meant the approval of the ecclesiastical system of the Church of Rome, or the cruel dogmas of Augustine, and Edwards, and Calvin. A protest is still to be lifted against types of theology which make theology incredible, and the world a hideous enigma. But if, on the other hand, we get some reasonable and humane conception of God and the Gospel, then it is the Gospel above all things that the world needs, and needs in a pervading and practical way.

The age is remarkable for restless activity in all directions, and amid the vigorous and varied play of forces, mental and physical, there is required especially the one higher and better force, which is embodied in Christ and His Gospel. It is here that we find God's method for bringing the world into loving obedience to Himself. The good work has gone on apace through the ages, but amid many sad perversions and retrogressions. The eddies run hither and thither, but onward still rolls the great river; in a circuitous course, but with ever-increasing volume.

Just now the masses are lifting their heads in a most ominous way. There is a blind instinct of want. There is an equal instinct of dormant energy. Democracy is becoming dominant, or, at least, conscious of its power of domination. Only one thing can save the world from violence and chaos, and that is the enthronement in all hearts of the law of Christ, speculations, dogmas, forms, discoveries, inventions, works of art, strains of