

Yet this seems to be the case. Doctrinal teaching in any true sense of the term is neglected and a mysticism offered in its place. For this is what it means, and one of the writers mentioned above has boldly claimed for the mystic heights of knowledge denied to ordinary mortals, or obtained only by toilsome climbing while the mystic soars on wings of—what? They claim that the Apostle John belongs to this class. If so, they certainly have some good company, and none will care to deny that some people of mystical tendency exhibit the highest type of christian character. All of which may be very cheering to the mystic, but what of those ordinary mortals who are not gifted with this mystical vision?

And is there not an element of danger in this mysticism itself? Let us hear the opinion of Phillips Brooks. He says:—"Mysticism, which at its best, is a very high and thorough action of the whole nature in apprehending spiritual truth, is always degenerating in sentimentalism. But it is dangerous to-day, because it so frankly claims for itself that it is religion. Disowning doctrine and depreciating law it asserts that religion belongs to feeling, and that there is no truth but love" Does not this express the situation, and if so, to what extent may this movement not go? The arrogance and narrow-mindedness of ultra-orthodoxy was bad, but is sentimentalism likely to be any better? Is mysticism not as liable to degenerate as doctrine, and in its dogmatic state will it not produce results equally as bad? Doctrines that for many throbbed with life and hope, have when held only by tradition, become dead as mummies, lifeless themselves, and chilling the life out of those who held them. It is not surprising that popular writers from Scott down have held such doctrines up to ridicule and contempt. Contrasted with these, mysticism at its best carrying us up to the very throne of God and uniting us to the great heart of humanity seems incomparably better. But do we not see already mysticism degenerating into sentimentalism, sentimentalism passing into elaborate formalism, and formalism resulting in spiritual decay? Is not the great spread of ritualism a direct result of this sentimentalism, and is not the end thereof death? Even love itself may degenerate into "soul affinity," free love or other