

stead of help and sympathy, he got from certain quarters, where better things might have been expected, only sneers and taunts and criticisms. Such cruel words he declares were like "a sword in his bones." "While they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?" Nor was the experience of this man, of the olden days, singular in this respect: There are thousands in their grave today, who, humanly speaking, ought to have been alive still. They died of broken hearts. They were killed by unkind and cruel words. It is, alas, too true, that there are some dark, cold and cruel natures, hidden under the guise of the religion of the meek and lowly Nazarene. The great Scottish bard never uttered a truer word than when he said,

"Man's inhumanity to man, makes countless thousands mourn."

Now surely it is not necessary to insist that the religion of Christ is an intensely *human* religion. One of the striking characteristics of the Great Teacher was the way he humanized everything. As one has said, "His spirit was always pleasantly, sweetly and tenderly human." Even his statement of the very pith of his Gospel, the doctrine, method and plan of salvation, was the beautifully human parable of the Prodigal Son. Some men spiritualize their religion in such a way as to take all the spirit out of it. Indeed they seem to be in danger of *spiriting* it away altogether. But

when God came to make himself known to men, to touch their hearts and to redeem them, He came in human form. And if we are ever to do men good, if we are to bring God to them, we must humanize our religion, we must make it intensely human in its spirituality.

The Hon. N. P. Banks, an ex-Governor of Massachusetts, tells us that one day, in the sixties, he was working with a party of men on the banks of the Merrimack river. Suddenly they heard a cry for help. Looking in the direction whence it came, they saw a man, some distance down the river, struggling amongst the broken cakes of ice. None of them could for the moment determine his political complexion, religious opinions, or bodily color. But in the end he proved to be a Negro in the river. Of course, their first care was to rescue him. Twice, however, the victim slipped from the plank that was thrown to him. The third time it was evident to their inner hearts, that it was the Negro's last chance. So he thought himself, and as he again slipped from the board, he shouted, "For the love of God, gentlemen, give me hold of the wooden end of the plank this time." They had been holding the *icy* end of the plank to him all along. And is it not a fact that some Christians are constantly holding the icy end of the plank to their fellows, while they wonder that they do not take firm hold and hold on ;