

It is not leisure, wealth and ease which come to disport themselves as athletes in intellectual games. It is the hard hand of the worker, which his yet stronger will has taught to wield the pen; it is labour, gathering up with infinite care and sacrifice the fragments of time, stealing them, many a one, from rest and sleep and offering them up, like so many widows' mites, in the honest devotion of an effort at self-improvement.

For the whole of the enormous advance in the condition of the labouring man the basis was laid, once for all, by the Gospel. This was, in its original form and in its continuing purpose, the charter of human freedom, and the two modes by which it most conspicuously asserted itself in the arduous process of social regeneration were, first, the gradual elevation of woman, and next, the mitigation and eventual abolition of slavery.

I am of opinion that England will stand shorn of a chief part of her glory and pride if she shall be found to have separated herself, through the policy she pursues abroad, from the moral support which the general and fixed convictions of mankind afford. No, sir, let it not be so; let us recognize, and recognize with frankness, the equality of the weak with the strong, the principle of brotherhood among nations and of their sacred independence.

If you can take a human being in his youth, and if you can make him an accomplished man in natural philosophy, in mathematics, or in the knowledge necessary for the profession of a merchant, a lawyer, or a physician—yes, if you could endow him with the science and power of a Newton, and so send him forth—and if you had concealed from him, or, rather, had not given him a knowledge and love of the Christian faith, he would go forth into the world . . . but poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked with reference to everything that constitutes the true and sovereign purposes of our existence.

A life that is to be active ought to find refreshment in the midst of labours, nay, to draw refreshment from them. But this it cannot do unless the man can take up the varied employments of the world with something like a childlike freshness. It is that especial light of heaven, described by Wordsworth in his immortal ode, that light

“Which lies about us in our infancy,”

which attends the youth upon his way, but at length

“The man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.”

Its radiance still plays only about those few who strive earnestly to keep themselves unspotted from the world and are victors in the strife.

GLADSTONE'S TRIBUTE TO THE BIBLE.

“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” As they have lived and wrought, so they will live and work. From the teacher's chair and from the pastor's pulpit; in the humblest hymn that ever mounted to the ear of God from beneath a cottage roof, and in the rich melodious choir of the noblest cathedral, “their sound is gone out into all lands and their voices unto the ends of the world.” Not here alone, but in a thousand silent and unsuspected forms will they unweariedly prosecute their holy office. Who doubts that, times without number, particular portions of Scripture find their way to the human soul as embassies from on high, each with its own commission of comfort, of guidance, or of warning? What crisis, what trouble, what perplexity of life has failed or can fail to draw from this inexhaustible treasure-house its proper supply? What profession, what position is not daily and hourly enriched by these words which repetition never weakens, which carry with them the freshness of youth and immortality? When the solitary student opens all his heart to drink them in, they will reward his toil. And in forms yet more hidden and withdrawn, in the retirement of the chamber, in the stillness of the night season, upon the bed of sickness, and in the face of death, the Bible will be there, its several words how often winged with their several and special messages, to heal and to soothe, to uplift and uphold, to invigorate and stir. Nay, more perhaps than this; amid the crowds of the court, or the forum, or the street, or the marketplace, when every thought of every soul seems to be set upon the excitement of ambition, or of business, or of pleasure, there, too, even there, the still small voice of the Holy Bible will be heard, and the soul, aided by some blessed word, may find wings like a dove, may flee away and be at rest.