

Good things done in secret all hidden away,
Are the pearls that for ornament shine,
And their lustre will blend, in the pure light of
day.

With the gems that are truly divine.
For the clear light of truth on your labor will
gleam,

'Till it shines by its own perfect light ;
And new joy to your heart will be found in
each beam,

When you know 'tis a *tower of right*.

JULIA M. DUTTON.

GOD AND THE LIGHT WITHIN.

BY CHARLES M. STABLER.

Every person who is old enough to know the word "God" has in his mind some idea which this name represents ; yet there are comparatively few who attempt to expand the idea to an adequate conception of the Divine Being. Indeed with most of us it is probably true that we have one God in our imagination and another in our reason ; one God that we see with our "mind's eye," a being in the form of man, majestic and beautiful, seated on a throne in the heavens ; and another that we perceive through the understanding intangible, and all-pervading like the law of gravitation, yet containing in unlimited measure the qualities and attributes which constitute our ideals of good.

For all practical purposes it may be true that this visible tangible God of the imagination is adequate to our needs, especially if the visible form is viewed as the embodiment of all those qualities that are essential to our highest conception of good. Yet our reason, and a deeper penetration into the nature of spiritual as well as material forces, may lead us sooner or later to the feeling that this God of the imagination is only a graven image set up in the temple of the unreal heaven, and that when so viewed, we should not bow down to it nor worship it. If, when this state of mind is reached, we cannot form a more adequate conception of the Divine Being, we are in danger of drifting into atheism, for much of the so-called atheism in the

world is nothing more or less than the breaking of this graven image of the imagination.

There are two ways of escape from this result. One is to look, as it were, through the image to that which the image represents ; that is, to keep before our minds that, while we have endued this image with love, it is but a finite representation of an infinite love ; that, while we have given the image majesty, power and goodness, it is but a finite representation of an infinite majesty, power and goodness. And thus in proportion as we can expand our conception of the qualities which the image symbolizes, in like proportion will our ideas of God become adequate to our understanding, even though these ideas are seen through an image that we feel is in itself finite and inadequate.

The other method is to discard the image altogether. Remembering that God must of necessity be incapable of limitation to definite form, but is in all, through all and over all, we make no effort to give Him tangible or visible form and figure, such as the imagination can grasp, but contemplate His qualities and characteristics through symbols more appropriate to such an all pervading existence.

It may be true that this method is merely another form of conceiving God through the exercise of the imagination ; yet as it is an exercise of the imagination in lines parallel with those of reason, it leads to a conception more in accordance with reason, and therefore likely to prove more satisfying.

This method will best be understood by an attempt to apply it.

The conceptions we aim to form are of God's all-pervading and external existence, the infinite degree of all His attributes (power, wisdom, love, etc.), and His omnipresence as a personality throughout all creation. To attain these, we will advance through parallel conceptions : first of infinite time, then of infinite space, then of the infinite existence of matter as to space, time