

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 music and song, all these will have their sphere; but what we most need is a deep and solemn sense of our relations to God and the great hereafter, together with a hopeful view of the marvellous redemptive influences of Him who turned the water into wine and raised Lazarus from the grave. It is, I fear, becoming more a question with men, even in Christian lands, whether there be any God or any hereafter, and while philosophic and scholarly minds are dealing in their own way with such sad negations, it remains for Christian people to exemplify, and with augmented earnestness, the practical graces of the Gospel, causing them to see that there is no power to heal and bless like the religion of the Cross. The unhappy misconceptions which have prevailed as to the nature of Christianity will gradually, we trust, disappear. Already there are many signs of a closer approximation to the true idea and spirit of the Gospel, and with this approximation will come an increase of power over all forms of evil. That the world will accept certain sectarian types of ecclesiastical teaching is not probable, and it is not desirable; but the elementary principles of the Gospel, the faith, the hope, the charity of the Gospel, these must finally prevail; or, if not, then, indeed, the world is no cosmos or rational order, but only chaos and a kind of sham world—in fact a devil's world and not at all God's world. But to such a faith, or no-faith, it is not possible for men generally to come. Always in the great heart of man lives and burns a moral and rational ideal of things, and this, along with the inward sadness and unrest of humanity heaving and moaning like the sea, will ever draw the world onward, with an indestructible faith and hope, toward the Infinite God and some indescribable glory yet to be revealed. Always we shall see visions of some grand celestial city, with its pearly gates, its jasper walls, its golden streets, its crystal river, its tree bearing all manner of fruits, and its leaves for the healing of the nations.