

produce protracted mental agony. This being the case, we can easily imagine a possible tendency to doubt the infinite kindness and love of that God who deals with us in such a mysterious manner. And as a matter of fact this is a form of scepticism which we frequently observe. We have known people to have been animated with sentiments of harshness and vindictiveness towards the Divine Being, because their condition and circumstances were not according to their liking, and because they were visited with trials which seemed to ignore their tenderest affections. And it must be admitted that what has occasioned unconcealed and aggressive antagonism on the part of some has caused perplexity to the very best of men. It is oftentimes quite impossible to understand why a blessing that was enjoyed in the spirit of gratitude should be taken away; or why an affectionate relationship that was productive of so much happiness should be disturbed; or why a life that was consecrated to God and humanity should be cut short in the midst of its usefulness. These are problems which we are not wise enough to solve. They confront us as mysteries, and we do not possess the key of knowledge to lead us to a full comprehension of their meaning and purpose. But still we are not in absolute ignorance concerning these things. While we must be content to wait in patience until the grander revelations of the eternal world unfold the philosophy of human experience in all its varied details, God has given us a very considerable revelation already.

What, then, is the revealed purpose of life? What is God's design in dealing with us? In manipulating and arranging our surroundings and circumstances and affairs, what is His object? Is His main design that we should have a real good time and live in a perpetual round of enjoyment? No; that is not the divine aim which attaches to us at all. It is something infinitely higher and better. What God contemplates and esteems most highly is the building up of a holy life; the development of moral and spiritual manhood and womanhood: the increase of love to God, and the perfection of truth in Him. Christian character, a heart and life kept unspotted from the world, *that* is the most valuable thing in the possession of man; that is the highest possible object of human ambition and attainment; better than pleasure in unlimited quantity; better than all the earthly joys of all mankind concentrated into one life; better than riches in endless profusion; better than influence and prestige and social eminence; better than anything else within the wide circle of human aspiration. Christian character is something