

institutions, the time must come when the theological also will become too narrow in its range for the demands of the race, and too dogmatic in its tone for that more liberal, general, comprehensive religion of the future.

We are invited also to mark the universality of this beautiful law of progressive development in nature, in literature, in the fine and in the useful arts, in human laws and institutions. In nature, for example, they tell us that the great trunk and spreading limbs of the oak were once wrapped up in the little heart of the acorn. In the fine arts, take music as an illustration. The musical scale is exceedingly limited, and yet out of those few, simple primary notes what marvelous progress has been made as the ages have run on! What a development from the time when Hudal struck his corded shell, to all the marvels of the modern oratorio and opera; from the first song sung by old Arcadian shepherds down to the symphonies of Beethoven and the superb compositions of Wagner! So, too, in the sciences. Take mathematics, for example: the foundations were very small out of which the whole science of mathematics is developed. A better illustration, perhaps, is law. The old principles were exceedingly few and simple, and in many nations they were unformulated, though they existed at a time to which "the memory of man runneth not back to the contrary," and yet what marvelous developments have sprung out of these general principles of law! From them have sprung all the codes, and institutes, and pandects of the earliest civilizations, as well as the law of England itself, adapted to the common exigencies of life, and the great equity law, mitigating the rigors of the sterner common law; together with admiralty, criminal, ecclesiastical, commercial and international law, and all the codes and all the institutions by which society seeks to protect itself. What a growth, and what a development!

Now, when, by a grand natural transition, we pass from human to divine law, another question is asked: Why should

not this be progressive also? Why should the canon of Scripture, as we now have it, be the completion of God's revelation to the world, and why should revelation be the exception to that law which regulates and prompts all other growths? All this is plausible enough, and yet, my friends, how easy it is to detect the sophism that underlies the whole argument!

Those who reason thus overlook, in the first place, one great distinction—a distinction which ought always to be sharply made between the apparent and the real progress of man. Perhaps some of you recollect that Canon Liddon, in one of his University lectures, has said that the true progress of man is the progress of man's self, apart from all organization, apart from all the outward appliances and embellishments of life, apart from everything that is external to him. But he goes on to say that those who eulogize modern progress confine their attention to what man does to promote his convenience and comfort. Vast political reforms, vast national enterprises, great accumulations of capital, sanitary law, the inventions that economize labor—these are progress; and yet, my friends, how plain it is that all this progress may go on while man himself is utterly debased and selfish! How absurd it is to mark the progress of a man by that which a man manipulates and moulds and makes subservient to his use! There is no progress to the individual except as he is impelled upward and onward by divine force until he succeeds in expressing within himself and developing everything that is pure and noble. But, my friends, the fact is, however gratifying it may be, that every man comes in this world with a debased nature; therefore every man needs regeneration; and, therefore again, if the Bible establishes the principles by which the individual soul may be regenerated, if it can regenerate one soul, all souls of that generation may also receive this life-giving power; and the book that establishes the principles that regenerate one age of the world