

in the way of improvement, it is true. The Lord knows that, as well as you or I, and He is busy with it still. It requires renovation and replenishment, expansion and invigoration. It requires to be sifted and set in order: "And His fan is in His hand." It demands repairs, and there is adjusted, and there is advancing, a time of "the restitution of all things." It is still to be enlarged, and you may discern of the Creator, as of any builder, that He strews and sorts His materials upon the ground of time. There is a reconstruction under the constitution. There is a correlation of forces, that can remodel all in all. The world is, here and there, a disordered world, distempered and distraught, but it is in process of redemption, recovery, regeneration. The earth is not a ruin, after all; nor are the ages vain; nor are the centuries idle; nor are the periods barren. These times are not lost times, nor are these days evil days. Matters mercantile, commercial, political and social have their own confusions. In themselves they show prognostics as precarious as the weather in the clouds. Sages and seers, in their signal service, may issue bulletins of their forebodings. There are such periods as oppressing anarchies, and crank communisms. It is true that the social pressures are unequal, and may come to their upheavals—lateral or perpendicular. Things are in such disordered heaps, after all, because they are so redundant; as apples lie loosely in their heaps upon an orchard ground before they can be packed and shipped. Wealth and land-holdings lie in piles that should be dispensed and distributed more wisely and widely. Prices climb up too high, and values mount until they take a fall that hurts them, but does them good, at last; as tumblers teach rash, reckless urchins how to climb with caution. Times may be somewhat hard upon the speculators, the fanciers, the millionaires, the misers, the paupers, and the ministers; but the mechanics and the farmers keep the country comfortable and the land at rest, and this renders society too social to leave

any room for socialism. Government abides. Law and order settle it with liberty. Production is the safe protection. The nation stands. The school-houses ring with the children's eager, gladsome notes, and ring out the old rings of bigotry and ignorance that had usurped them.

The Church of Christ still lives, Christianity, that has been reported in some quarters wounded, dead, and dying, is too busy now to think of dying, and concludes it best to grow. Upon the whole, take it for all in all, and, as one might say, things being as they are, religion holds its own, and revelation sits there, smiling on its bustling critics. "He that sitteth in the heavens seems to laugh." The Lord appears to have these things in derision. And the memorials of our fathers are allowed to stand; even their gravestones, inscribed with hope, linger still. Look you well; there is not a man, woman, or child in this city, this day, who will not have a pleasant and a satisfying meal; not a boy in our orphan asylum, not a prisoner in that penitentiary, not a wild-eyed captive in that lunatic retreat, not a tramp on the wayside, not a pauper in the poor-house—not a human soul, who shall not have a treat to-day. And we wait the hour to come when there shall not be under God's firmament—there *need* not be—a human being on the breadth of the whole territory, a human heart in all the world, that may not have a life, a liberty, a hope, a joy, a home, a fellowship in the goodness of the Most High God, in the largeness and the love of the redeeming and restoring Mediator, Immanuel, God with us. "Go thy way, eat the fat and drink the sweet, and send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared; neither be ye sorry, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." Even so; the joy of the earth is the joy of the Lord. The charm of good here is that future good is on its way. The joy of the Lord is to be understood as His anticipative triumph, now constituting the beatific vision of His glory, and so manifested to them that trust in Him.

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