

wholly lost to view ; but as he leaves the valley and ascends the mountain the all revealing rays of light seem to chase away the mists ; moment by moment the prospect brightens, and, the summit gained at last, in a flood of golden sunlight he sees nature as it is. So in the valley of its childhood, surrounded by fogs of ignorance, superstition and fear, mankind has dimly seen, and often falsely interpreted, its glimpses of eternal truth revealed by struggling rays of the divine, but borne through the centuries by successive steps up the great mountain of unending progress, each height attained opens in clearer light new horizons to the view, and man constantly approaches the all wise and perfect understanding.

A principle is verified in the history of every great religious movement. Its formative period is one of growth, the soul intensely active, and looking to the eternal source alone, seeks after and receives new truth and higher interpretations of spiritual laws. But later comes a period in which its gaze turns backward to the revelation of the past, which, formulated in a code or law, in time receives that reverence too often the unmerited possession of age, and becomes a check upon development and a chain to fetter the soul to the thought of a by-gone era.

Hence, it is of vital importance that our Bible be studied in the light of the higher criticism of to day. In this vast storehouse of experience is the life-history of a race whose peculiar genius was the development of the purest monotheism the world has yet known. Through the visions of its seers, the warning voice of its prophets, the song of its poet, the great Jehovah speaks ; but oft-timesthere are mingled,—sounds distinctly human which tell of Israel's childhood and her narrow and uncertain view.

We teach this Book as we would no other, selecting passages and parts of chapters which we deem in accord with our views, and explaining by

spiritualizing words, which mean *just what they say* ; when if we had faith in God, hence in reason his high gift to man, I say if we had faith in God and reason, and in that principle we profess to cherish, "the light within," we would study it in the order of its growth, as revealed by modern scholarship, and in its evolution find a stronger argument for the existence of the Deity and his ceaseless revelations to the soul of man than any verse or collection of verses can portray ; but if with minds blinded by prejudice, or sight obscured by superstitious reverence, we accept without discrimination both the false and the true, we forge the chains which bind us to an outgrown dogma, miss its great lesson of unending growth, and drive from Christendom *more honest* souls.

Much would be accomplished in many of our First day Schools by better classification, and through the recognition of this pedagogical law, that the same truth is not food for children of all ages. *The Great Spirit has disclosed to each condition as much of truth as it could comprehend.* To the infant races the simplest laws were given, and led through these to higher planes, new and deeper visions were unfolded. In the child we see the type of the race. *His narrowed horizon* shuts from view the truth we fain would teach, until a simpler lesson lifts him to that height from which it can be seen.

The work for our smallest classes should be that most easily comprehended. Stories from the *Old Testament*, interspersed with lessons drawn from daily life, and illustrated by means of those indispensable adjuncts to all school work—the blackboard and crayon—might prove helpful to the very little ones. From *Old Testament* stories they might pass to *New Testament* biography. In both the earnest teacher will find abundant opportunity to call the child's attention to the voice within his soul, and at the same time to encourage free expression through