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but now all is changed—the altar fire is quenched; and in the place where the cherubim and the glory were, there are reptiles and serpent passions holding their ceaseless carnival. The once holy heart has made itself deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; so much so, that the exposure in the light of God's countenance of a naked human soul—just as it is, a fallen apostate soul—would be a spectacle that man could not bear! Yet fallen as man is, even amidst conscious ruins, such are the remains of his aboriginal intellectual greatness, that he expects that he can save himself. He resolves to arise, and rouse his soul to re-assert its ancient claims, and seat itself where he thinks he has still forfeited rights. He looks to himself for the restoration of self. He forgets, like one of old, that he is shorn of all the elements of his strength, and that the experiment has been often but never successfully made.

If Adam in his innocence could not keep himself from falling, how will Adam in his ruin restore himself? Unfallen Adam, our great forefather, in his purity and meridian strength, thought that he could ascend to the height of God, and be as God, knowing good and evil. He failed, and plunged at once into a ruin; terrible as the height he aimed at. If, then, the unfallen Adam could put forth no wings that could carry him to God's dwelling place, and set him on a level with God,—surely the fallen Adam, with less strength, with less holiness, must try in vain to reach God's throne, or recover his lost place. It is to attempt to be himself a God,—to reach the throne he hopes to secure by his merits, and to retain the glory of the achievement, wholly and for ever to himself. This is futile. When man by any combination of his muscles, can lift himself from the earth, or when he can walk upon the untrodden sea, or soar to distant stars, and bring home the secrets of heretofore unexplored worlds,—when man can raise himself from the dead, and from his own grave by some inherent spring of life within him—then, and only then, will we listen to and weigh man's bidding; "Look unto me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth."