

his stores, while he of one idea and a loose habit of expression goes fluently on, so, narrowness of vision may beget strong convictions, where breadth, and candour, and conscientious thinking lead to moderation, or even indecision. Hesitancy and even doubt in such a case may be the offspring of intenser loyalty to truth, and a loftier faith in truth than is possible to any strength of conviction, the result of one-sided investigation. Nor is this view in necessary antagonism with the undeniable fact that the men of unfaltering convictions have ever been the men of mighty action, leading the vanguard, often the forlorn hope of soul freedom and enduring progress. For it is equally well known that the apostles of deadly error and spiritual despotism have often been fired by zeal quite as fervent and convictions no less unswerving. The great deliverances wrought in the world by the former must then be counterbalanced by the pernicious power of the latter; and further, it is manifest that that very good has resulted, not from the strength of their convictions, but from the fact that that strength happened to be enlisted in the cause of truth and right. And it would be an interesting subject of inquiry did space permit, to what extent the discovery of that right and that truth in whose defence and propagation the men of action have won enduring renown, has been due to the patient thought of more impartial and evenly balanced minds. We plead not for less honest zeal in action, but for more of it in investigation; in other words for profounder reverence for and more absolute faith in the truth: It does require a sublime loyalty to truth sometimes to deliver one from the temptation to burke inquiry and close the door in the face of suspicion, in respect to the soundness of cherished opinions.

An interesting question suggests itself here as to what would be the result upon human thought and belief of a perfect freedom from pride, prejudice and passion, and all the other distorting influences which now so largely affect men's understandings. The infallible Teacher has said, "If thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light." The principle enunciated is broad, and the picture it suggests a heavenly one. And yet who does not shrink from the thought of a mental world of absolute uniformity? It would be as unendurable as a physical one of water, prairie and woodland, laid out in squares in drear and dismal and unending sameness. Doubtless our fears would prove more than baseless in view of the boundless heights and depths, and the infinite many sidedness of truth. But