

occasion of revolutions in the world of opinions, which have overthrown whole systems which had long been looked upon as sacred and well-nigh infallible. This, it must be admitted, has sometimes led to deplorable evils; but I think it must be conceded that the evils have been far more than compensated for by the good which has resulted from it. Society is a progressive thing; and, as a natural consequence, many of the customs and notions which at one time prevail, shall at another become obsolete, and their places be supplied by others better adapted to the tastes and circumstances peculiar to the age. Indeed any attempt to confine an intelligent community within the limits of the customs and ideas of their forefathers, would be found by those who should try it, to be not less fruitless than it would be foolish. I do not say that sound principles—principles whose bone and sinew are truth—shall ever pass away, or even change. These, like their Divine Author, are the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, and must remain immovable through all the changes and desolations of time. But the history of nations furnishes ample proof that not only customs and opinions, but even whole systems of various kinds, which in their day exerted mighty influence, have been found, like the human body, to become frail through the lapse of years, and having accomplished as an hireling their day, they have been dissolved and laid in the tomb of oblivion, except in so far as their names serve to swell the record of the things which *have been*. Where are all the inventions and institutions of ancient Egypt, Greece, or Rome, or any of the great nations of the olden times? They have long ago perished, and their hoary monuments which speak to us of their grandeur and power, are unconscious prophecies of the appalling change and ruin, which will, sooner or later, come upon every institution, which is not animated by the immortal principles of divine truth and wisdom.

There are at the present time not a few sceptics who would fain persuade us that the truth which I have just stated, must be applied to the Bible—that it, too, has had its day and is now behind the times—that society has gotten ahead of the Bible. If it were indeed true “that society has gotten ahead of the Bible,” then all we could say would be, that society has been guilty of a piece of flagrantly bad manners—that it has done what it had no right to do, and, certainly deserves no praise for its conduct in this matter.

These persons tell us, forsooth, that they have no particular fault to find with the Bible. They confess that it is a very good book; that its influence upon the human family, along the ages, has been, on the whole,