

## EVOLUTION OF PROVIDENCE.

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Providence never gives bread to the hungry. He gives the wheat or the maize; man must make the flour and the loaf. The only bread-maker in the universe is man. Providence never clothes the naked. He gives the wool on the sheep's back; man furnishes the shears and loom and needle. The only cloth-maker in the universe is man. Providence never warms those who are cold. He gives the fuel in the forest of timber and the mine of coal; man must excavate the blast, must use axe and saw, must evolve from the fuel by an immense effort the heat which is vital to civilization and to life. The true Prometheus or fire-bringer is man. The agents of the Divine Good-will are not the priest, the saint, the devotee, absorbed in their selfish scramble for an imaginary heaven, but the farmer, the fisherman, the laborer, the scientist, the reformer, the inventor, the producer. They are though, perhaps unconsciously, working with the Creative Power to repair the waste and blunders of ignorance, to diminish the evils that infest the creation, and to evolve at last the perfect Providence. God and man are in one likeness and image. They are partners in the world's work. The one originates, the other manifests. The one creates, the other reveals. The Infinite is mysteriously involved in the finite. God and his kingdom are within you.

Jesus saw with the vision of the Spirit an absolute providential care enclosing the world. So far as He could reach man, He was that Providence—feeding the hungry, healing the sick, consoling those in sorrow or despair, and lifting up the fallen. In all this He was the type of what each member of the family of man shall one day do and be when all our wills freely admit the passage of the

Father's will, just as the clearest glass transmits the light of day. Then His providential love shall come to perfect fruitage through us. Even now each man or woman is an imperfect Providence to others. Said Job, "I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had no helper. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame; I was a father to the poor, and the cause I knew not I searched out." Of every one who seeks to live a true and sincere life, some of these words may be said.

Man co-operates with the divine design and helps on the movement of the creative purpose, atom by atom, as he strives to mend and guide humanity, to mitigate somewhat of its sorrows, to lessen its woes, to soften its vices, and to strive for its well being. To the extent of his efforts, his sympathy, his practical work, each man or woman can become a Providence to others. The father is a Providence to his family, the mother to her children, friend to friend, employer to employed. Every generous act, every consoling word, every friendly or kindly look is a Providence. To be helpful to others is to be in very deed a Providence. The process of evolution will go on, broadening with the years. Providence, from age to age, will organize itself more and more effectively in human institutions and human hearts. You and I can help on that work. The Infinite Father will not refuse to use our efforts, our sympathies, and the little atom of Providence that we have evolved to forward His mighty work. You and I may work with Him in our daily life, in house, or field, or shop, patiently faithful, and so assist the growth of the heavenly kingdom. All the Providence we mature shall bless others while we live, and at our death we leave it added to the common stock of human kind for no atom of the