

out of sight, leaving multitudes of poor, helpless sufferers uncared for, all former alleviations having in some mysterious manner been withdrawn. What a scene of human misery, unaided and unblessed, lay in almost every land, with a future dark and cheerless as the grave.

The magnitude of that midnight withdrawal was increased when I discovered that every missionary organization upon the face of the earth, and all the redeeming machinery and forces of the nineteenth century had also disappeared, and not a fragment of the old order of things remained to light up a single square mile of the appalling, unbroken heathen gloom which had been left behind. The voice of Christian prayer was stilled the world around, every consolation gone from myriads of rooms of the sick and the dying, from millions of the aged, the sorely pressed by life's deep mystery and sorrows—the light had gone out and no other dawn had risen upon their darkened lives.

But what amazed and saddened me more than all else was the degeneration that had come to multitudes of men and women who had been lights in the Church and in the world. Their characters were suddenly and strangely deformed, for out of them every Christian hope, impulse, idea and motive had been completely eliminated, and they were left moral paupers in this changed and poorer world.

When the full extent of the loss which had been entailed by the vanishing from earth of the Christian faith was realized, it was found that from the whole infinitely varied and magnificent fabric of the age the best and noblest possessions and powers had passed away in that great departure, and a depleted and ruined world was all that remained. The religious conceptions of many millions, as they related to sin, to God, to man, to duty, and the future, had entirely disappeared, and it seemed as if by one fell swoop men had been thrown backward to the pagan superstitions of 1900 years ago, and that the customs and cruelties and degradations of that old Roman world had been suddenly revived. Human life had been changed, and changed immeasurably for the worse; childhood was once more under the domination of heathen influences, and the woman side of humanity had passed into its ancient humiliations, privations and nameless sorrows.

The material, social, intellectual, moral and religious environment of nearly half of the inhabitants of the globe had met with a disaster which no words I could command would fully express. Progress, even its poorer aspects, had been visibly arrested; the larger part of the educational institutions upon the earth had also been swept away, and justice, liberty, human rights, and the