

And what has become of the favoured land and people and the royal city where Moses was legislator, where David was king ; where Joshua and Joab were the captains of the hosts ; where Samuel and Daniel were judges ; where Elijah and Jeremiah were prophets ; where the golden temple flung its radiance from Mount Zion far over the hills and valleys, rich in peaceful habitations and crowded with the flocks of the shepherd, and the fields and stores of the husbandman ? Must they perforce have gone down in anarchy, carnage, and conflagration ? Were the awful scenes of the captivities a national necessity ? "Christ rejected" is the one full and sufficient explanation of that calamity, that fathomless ruin. Let the traveller over the tombs of buried cities, and over the valleys and hills, blistered and blackened by the scourge of ceaseless war, bear witness.

And where are the republics of mediæval Europe—a Genoa, a Florence, a Venice, a Pisa, that gave the world a Dante, a Petrarch, a Raphael, a Michael Angelo, and a Christopher Columbus, all stars of the first magnitude ? With the Hanseatic League encircling the northern seas, and the Italian commonwealths ruling the Adriatic and Mediterranean with their merchantman and navies, dissolving the bands of the feudal system, and settling the bounds of states, there was as bright and brisk and brave a citizenship as the world had seen. Tradesmen, guilds, and merchant princes built capacious marts, sumptuous palaces, and established galleries of luxury, refinement, and art. It was the birth age of the university. But all went down, and humanity's hope seemed again buried in the crash and doom of the Eastern Empire, as a thousand years before sackcloth and blackness had covered the heaven, and

rocked and rent the earth in the catastrophe and fall of Rome. But the providences of God are deeper and broader and higher than even man's waywardness, misdirection, and suicidal iniquity. Humanity may not destroy itself till the last possibility is exhausted. The reserve forces, the redemptive and restorative agencies have more than once saved the day. The discovery of the American continents, the Copernican, and Newtonian revelations in the heavens, the invention of printing, the Protestant Reformation, the British revolution in the establishment of constitutional monarchy, the enthronement of commerce and practical science in the place of empty scholasticism and pompous chivalry, the substitution of primitive Christianity for a haughty and narrow ecclesiasticism, these, and similar movements and events lifted the race of man to a higher plane of action, and started Western Europe and the Americas on new highways of life, and in untried paths of progress and power.

What shall it be now ? Shall the United States and Britain be driven over the precipice, and down the gulf, with Babylon and Rome, to ruin and disgrace ? Or shall there be an enduring and ever-broadening and brightening civilization, according to the purpose of God for all the coming ages of time ? If history is worth anything, this surely depends on our readiness for the offers of divine Providence, our use of the precious, unprecedented opportunities.

*What is this invisible wonder,*

this creative and transforming efficacy which we call civilization ? Is it merely a harmonious sound ? Or is it a mighty voice, a word so flush of import and energy, so complete in itself that no word but the heaven energized word "Chris-