

This must be our starting point if we wish to gain such for Christ, we must gladly recognize this, lay hold of it, as Paul would have done, as a door for the entrance of our Christian faith—as a foundation whereon to build the Christian fabric. We are learning to see in every religion one of the divers manners in which God has at sundry times spoken to men—one of the channels through which men have been seeking the Lord, if happily they might find Him. We are learning to see in all the widely varying faiths of the ages and the races of man stages in the self-revelation of God, steps in the religious education and development of mankind. We are learning to see in heathen religions no less than in the Jewish, schoolmasters to bring men to Christ.

The study then of other faiths besides and beside our own finds ample vindication in the conviction that, in every religion there is truth, that mankind wants, truth of God.

But we have another strong reason for the study of other religions to-day; not because of the truth that is in them, but because of the too great light and the too much truth that it has become customary in some quarters to attribute to them. The way in which the advocates of Christianity for a long time ignored other faiths, refused to look into them, regarded them with a haughty contempt and infallible superiority, and that too often in culpable and woeful ig-

norance of what they were and what they taught produced a reaction—a most natural reaction. We need not wonder that in fair thoughtful minds the sense of justice and of truth, to say nothing of charity, was aggrieved—and as is frequently the case, circumstances were completely altered the danger was reversed—the danger began to arise, not from the ignoring but from the unduly magnifying of the heathen religions. The tendency arose to place some of these religions not only on the same plane with Christianity but on a higher pinnacle. Voices have been heard, and in these days of such widespread literature, heard, by thousands, claiming a superiority for the sacred books of the Brahmans over the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and a moral superiority for Buddha and Confucius over the Apostles of the New Testament and even Christ Himself. When we find one of our foremost English scholars writing such a poem as "The Light of Asia," amounting almost to a deification of Buddha, whilst we know at the same time that he would refuse to admit the Divinity of Christ—when we find him averring that more than a third of mankind owe their moral and religious ideas to Buddha, and when he further tells us that Buddha's personality cannot but appear the highest, greatest holiest, most beneficent, with one exception, in the history of thought—when he claims for Buddhism not only the reverence due to great antiquity.