

God did not intend man to follow a blind guide. He made him a rational being—a free agent, with power and privilege to choose the right or the wrong, and to do the right or the wrong. His happiness present and future depends upon his choice and action. It is useless to attempt to search out the unknowable. The profitable question is, "What are we, and what are our capabilities?" Our physical life does not vary much from the physical life around us. The functions of mere animal life are everywhere similar. The same laws of growth exist, similar passions, propensities and dispositions are found as in the physical life of man. Man is an epitome of all other forms of life. But of all animals man alone has a spiritual life, he is endowed with a power to check and control these natural passions and propensities, and it is in the use of this divine controlling principle that his happiness here and hereafter depends. Whatever of vice, disorder or trouble comes to him it has its origin in an undue indulgence of some one or more of these passions or propensities with which man is endowed. Men have attributed all wrong and sin to an enemy outside of them, popularly called the devil. This is maintained chiefly because it has come down to us from the superstition of the past ages. But there is sufficient cause for all crime in the world without attributing it to any such agency. If we examine closely we will find that it has its origin in the excessive indulgence of some of man's physical propensities. Let us take up a few for example.

God has implanted in man a desire called thirst. It demands sufficient and proper nutriment. When its cravings are felt they must be satisfied. We know the demand is right and just. It is the necessity of the body crying out for something it requires. If we deny it the proper fluid it suffers. If we withhold altogether it dies. It is a known fact that man can survive longer upon water alone, than upon solid food

alone. So we see it is needful to satisfy its cravings by supplying the proper nutriment. But out of an abuse of thirst there has come to many the habit of using intoxicants, and no evil has caused so much suffering and misery in the world as the partaking of alcoholics. There is not the least necessity for its use. It is only a perversion, caused by improper indulgence, of a right and God-given appetite.

Take the propensity of acquisitiveness, or the desire to obtain money. It is right and necessary that we should follow the vocations we are fitted for, that we should be diligent in business, that we may get as a reward for it such comforts for life and home that we cannot make ourselves. But when we allow it to induce us to seek to obtain the property of others, without rendering to them a just equivalent, it becomes an evil, and we call it covetousness. When we allow it to so far influence us as to take advantage of those with whom we deal, to exchange without rendering a just equivalent, it is wrong, and brings in its train a group of evils, such as speculating in money in chance adventures, betting at the horse-ring, gambling with cards, gold, stock or grain. From it men become defaulters, embezzlers, by trying to get suddenly rich. Who can picture the misery that comes into the homes of such? And yet it all comes from no other agency than that which lies within the man.

So with pride. A certain amount of it is right. Each should respect himself sufficiently to demean himself properly before his fellowmen, to not become an object of disgust or curiosity. But when he thinks himself better than another by some accident of birth, or because he has better talents, it leads to a train of disorders that has been mighty and potent in its influence for sin and crime in the world. By it man has bound the chains upon his fellowman and enslaved him. It is that that is rocking to-day the thrones