

ity and universality of the religious element in man. He perceives the fundamental character of religion ; in the analysis of its forms psychologically, he perceives how it permeates humanity. Thus as a thinker and a philosophical student of the human soul, he gains a fundamental conviction which is of immense importance to him in practical work.

But there is a still more practical result, for, as he organizes and arranges the religious facts and forces of the soul, he is preparing himself to enter into mental sympathy with the religious nature of his brother man wherever he finds him. He possesses the secret, the deepest, most hidden secret of the religious nature of him whom he hopes to win for Christ. Beneath the form he knows how to lay hold of the feeling, the thought, the inmost aspiration. He understands the contents of the religious consciousness, the attitude of the spirit. How many mistakes he may avoid, into which those before him have fallen by their ignorance and want of adaptability !

Third, in the highest sphere of Comparative Religion the results may be thought to be much less practical and useful. This is not so certain. That which is farthest from the surface is nearest the centre. It may be thought to be of doubtful utility that the missionary student should trace the doctrine of "sin" in its presence throughout all religions or could formulate in a single comprehensive statement the meaning of sacrifice as it has appeared in the world's religions. But, after all, this superficial judgment is far from being true. From the point of view of the missionary's personality a thorough comprehension of comparative theology gives him large sympathy with truth in various forms, a conception of the greatness of religion, and, above all, a securely founded appreciation of the immense supremacy of the Christian faith. He is enabled easily to distinguish the points of union and the elements of difference between various forms of the same religious truth, on the one side, or, on the other side, what seem to be similar statements of religious truths essentially different. How necessary this is in his relation to some of the oldest and most widespread religious systems outside Christianity. Take the doctrine of "self-sacrifice" as it appears in primitive Buddhism. To the untrained reader the similar language in which Christianity and Buddhism clothe their thoughts upon this subject is liable to be confusing, but when one has gone deeper into the comparison than mere words will carry him, he is able to see that there is a world of difference between the selfishness of Buddhist self-sacrifice and the self-abnegation of the genuine Christian.

And we even go so far as to say that it is not mere subjective benefit that the missionary derives from these high themes. His work is made more effective and far-reaching thereby. This statement may not be so clear in relation to the lower forms of heathenism. Yet it is certain that only by