

dant note to mar its faultless harmony. It means an intellectual vision that flashes over all the heights and depths of being; a vision that sees the whole universe at a glance, and is free from the haze of the past, and the unrealized vacuity of the future. The realization of perfection, as thus conceived, is manifestly impossible for man.

Yet, is there not a sense in which the ideal of infinite perfection is not altogether unattainable? Nay, is there not a sense in which it is attainable just because it is infinite? The ideal of the Greek was a finite ideal. It consisted in the perfect flexibility, grace and symmetry of the body; in culture and refinement; and in simple devotion to one's own country. Such an ideal is not to be despised. It contains in germ the higher ideal of Christianity, for it is the glory of our religion that it has absorbed into itself all the higher elements of the ethnic religions, and expanded them to infinity. What the best minds of Greece conceived to be the true life of man Christianity accepts, but it gives to it a new and higher meaning. The Greek was not wrong in attaching importance to the perfection of the body, and in viewing physical training as essential to the production of the efficient citizen. He was not wrong in saying that knowledge and culture and refinement help to lift a man above the grossness of sense. Nor was he wrong in his devotion to the state. The weakness of Greek civilization lay rather in this, that it put culture in place of duty, the life of refinement for the life of the spirit; and therefore it never grasped the principle which enables man to be a "fellow-worker with God." Not every one has by nature a strong and healthy body, which he can train to flexibility and grace. Not every one can live the life of the scholar, or throw himself untrammelled into affairs of state. Therefore the civilization of Greece, with all its brilliancy, raised up an impassable barrier between the strong and the weak, the rich and the poor, the cultured and the uncultured, between master and slave, man and woman. The very same people that has bequeathed to the race faultless products of art, and that first taught the world the meaning of a political constitution, degraded the sacredness of womanhood, and desecrated humanity in "the slave, the scourge, the chain!" And all this arose from its finite ideal of human life—an ideal that was attainable, not by all men, but only by the few who were privileged in birth, in culture and in the possession of worldly goods. The wisdom of the Greek was, in St. Paul's language, "in word, not in power." Even the universal benevolence of later Stoicism, which in form seems so similar to the Christian idea of universal brotherhood, was in its spirit essentially different; for the Stoic was tainted with a personal pride in his own righteousness, and a haughty disdain of others. His cosmopolitanism arose rather from self-isolation, indifference and contempt than from love. Christianity, on the other hand, strikes at the roots of all self-righteousness, by presenting, as what the divine man in us demands, the standard of absolute perfection. Thus it breaks down the middle-wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, Greek and barbarian, bond and free. Whether free or in chains, a man may be the Lord's free man. The ideal is not to be found realized in the princes of this world,