

and will continue to do so. The grip in the count- ing about an era of a greater awaken- ing in New York, the chief wealth producers have been handi- capping the country for twenty years by a peasant pro- mation devoted to

can be administered successfully and guided into broader channels of economic good than can be done by individ- uals acting alone. But this does not mean the final burying of the individual and the despotic reign of unrestrained socialism, as contended for by certain socialistic political reformers.

"LAWLESSNESS" IN IRELAND.

For a year or more the leading Eng- lish journals have been harping on the blood-curdling cruelty shown in persist- ently driving cattle from grazing lands in the west of Ireland as a protest against the employment for grazing pur- poses of the land which the people need- ed for farms. It would almost seem that these writers thought a good fat or a more desirable tenant of the soil than a half-consumptive human being, for they have repeatedly affirmed that where grazing can be made to pay and farming can not, the farmer must move off the land and go—anywhere, to the poorhouse, to America, to wherever he can, and make room for the grazier. A strange distortion of the facts, which calls to mind the story of the man who, to escape a creditor, fled to the poorhouse, to America, to wherever he could, and make room for the grazier. A strange distortion of the facts, which calls to mind the story of the man who, to escape a creditor, fled to the poorhouse, to America, to wherever he could, and make room for the grazier.

"He drove over the other day, a huge tract of Irish country devoted to sheep and cattle, and from that tract of coun- try, some sixty years ago, eleven thou- sand families had been driven. They heard a great deal about cattle drives to-day. They heard very little about the human drive that took place in these ghastly years. That great drive in the late forties and the early fifties changed the whole face of Ireland; and they had now, whether they liked it or not, great portions of the country devoted to cattle. And even when they were transferring the land now, in the en- deavor to undo this, they found every effort blocked and impeded by the habit that had been engendered in the people, of trusting to grass and not to tillage; and land given to the people for the purpose of altering this whole system was all often sublet, a small portion of it tilled and a great part of it given over to cattle. It would be a long and weary work before the mischief that was done in the late forties and early fifties was undone. It would require infinite patience, in- finite sympathy, and a good deal of courage upon the part of those who governed the country and who guided the people to undo that system, and to put Ireland in the position that Ire- land ought to be in. Ireland was an agricultural country in the first place, and these industries at best could only be subsidiary to the great industry that the land provided for the people of Ire- land.—Antigonish Gasket.

THE CHURCH OF THE PEOPLE.

An English clergyman, who has been spending some time in this country, gives the following as the result of his observations in America:

"I have noticed during my stay in America that church influence among the masses is on the wane. It is rapidly decreasing. This is because it has got away from the people. It regards more than human life, orthodoxy more than the living. It is too con- ventional, and, I must add, too respect- able. Churches now are mostly gorge- ous mansions built over the remains of Christianity.

"What the Church must do to live is to win back the workingmen it has lost. It must realize that in the Bible there are quite as many references to men as to what He did for their souls. Take the churches here in New York. They are moving up town. They are leaving the downtown with its down- population of the poor and suffering. They are club houses with the word 'Christ' over the door. Only the rich go to them.

"I understand that there are a large number of clergymen here to-day. I want to say to your clergymen of the city of New York that it does not mat- ter what you have in your church; if you have not a great church, your church cannot exist. Unless that is kept burning the whole Christian church is doomed. Be- gin at once. If you can win the city of New York for health, righteousness and God you have solved the great problem of the church to-day. It should do it. It must take its stand in the forefront of human welfare in the struggle against disease and for the bodies of men as well as their souls, or all is lost."

The Republican of Cedar Rapids, Ia., commenting on these assertions, says:

We believe that these observations are eminently fair and warranted by the facts. A western clergyman, who recently had somewhat of an opportunity to examine into conditions in this same city of New York, declared that he was impressed by these same condi- tions which called forth the criticism of the visiting clergyman. He also tells of a contrast that came under his no- tice. One Sunday morning he went to the great Catholic cathedral in New York city, St. Patrick's. It occupies a position uptown. It is true, in the very heart of Manhattan. Nevertheless, this clergyman saw coming into that cathedral what he described as "every- body." The rich and the poor, the proud and the meek, the fortunate and the unfortunate, all met together on a common level. Somewhat the Catholic Church has managed to maintain de- mocracy. It does not talk about it as much as the Protestant churches have, but it asserts it by its practice. It has something for everybody. It appeals to the masses of mankind in a way that Protestant churches do not seem to be able to appeal to them. The minister referred to said that after his experi-

ence in that Catholic Church it seemed to him as though the Protestant churches that he visited were filled with people who were evidently satisfied with themselves and with conditions as they were with them. The poor and the unfortunate were conspicuous only by their utter absence.

It is true, as the English clergyman says, that the Church that does not win the masses of mankind is lost. How to win them is the great problem that con- fronts Protestantism to-day. There can be no question about it. It is the same everywhere. New York city is no ex- ception.—Intermountain Catholic.

HOME AND MOTHERS-IN-LAW.

The recent judicial pronouncement from Jersey City, on the subject of "Mothers-In-Law," fell like a lurid bomb-shell from yellow-journal head- lines, on many a happy family and home. "Home is not a home where there is a mother-in-law," read the astonishing decision. Surely it will astound many an orphaned young wife and mother upon whose inexperience and delicate health her new duties press too heavily, and whose domestic staff and prop- erty and devoted presence of the widowed mother on the husband's side—to learn that if a husband installs his mother in his home it is not such a home as the wife must accept, and that such conduct on the part of the husband is the abandonment of the wife.

Undoubtedly, circumstances alter cases, and if a mother-in-law on which is destructive of the family happiness or domestic peace, the matter should be adjusted in favor of the rights and privileges of the couple whom God hath joined together, and whose life is before them. Even such adjustment, however, admits of due charity for the appeal of per- hance Jewish maternity, loving her own "not wisely but too well," and of pathetic widowhood's dependent age.

But against the exceptional mother-in-law who is really a disturbing ele- ment in the family-life, set the rule of the thousands of heartstones whose varied interests she guards and serves with such selfless and tireless devotion and unselfish industry that she proves an omnipresent angel of peace and good- will, of message and mission of help- ful word and saving deed, and say if our usage and literature, our comic songs and verse, our press and public, should not blush in shame for its time dishon- ored, heartless, witless gibe and slur and calumny for a class whose mother- in-law should make it sacred from irre- verence and insult, at least, and whose deserts of love and gratitude and honor are fully substituted by innate obloquy!

The state mother-in-law joke of stage vulgarity should be hissed down. The mother-in-law jest of the heartless should be dishonored socially. The mother-in-law prejudices that has wrecked the happiness of many a home, and saddened the old age, broken the heart of many a sweet old life, should brand its holder as self-convinced of a meanness and smallness of nature ostracizing him or her from decent human ranks.

Think of the long, weary, illnesses through which "mother" nursed each and all, in unselfish, sleepless, tender devotion. Think of the endless stitches put in by the willing hands for every one of the family-circle—of her humble filling of gaps in lacking domestic ser- vice, of her abnegation of personal claim and pleasure!

At best, age is sad in a sorrow's crown of sorrow in remembering happier things. Such compensation as life still holds is God's measure of mercy, and we be- lieve that that grudge and deny it. If it were only for all that "G-and-ma" means in each home of wedded love and parental happiness to the "little child leading," let the "mother" alike of hus- band and of wife, be unto both, dear and sacred, and both in public and private life consign the mother-in-law slur to "mere oblivion."—N.Y. Freeman's Journal.

THE CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY.

OF ST. THOMAS TAKES EXCEPTION TO "QUESTIONS ON THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON," WHICH ARE WIDELY PUBLISHED.

To the Editor of The Times: Sir,—In your issue of last Saturday, in the weekly installment for 31st Jan., of "Questions on the Sunday School Lesson," by Rev. Dr. Linseott, some questions are propounded which constitute an attack on the Catholic Church and even calculated to bring contempt upon the clergy of all denom- inations. This society seeks to con- sider and attacks none of these "Sunday School Questions" are widely published, we simply request an opportunity of defence in the same public manner. We quote the ques- tions objected to in their order:

Que. 1.—Acts iv, v. 13.—Why did these priests, who were God's appoint- ment for carrying on His Church oppose Peter and John, seeing they were in the same service.

Comment.—Art thou a master in Israel, doctor, and dost not know that those Jewish priests were no longer God's appointees, but were in opposi- tion to, and not in the service of, that Jesus Whom Peter and John served?

Que. 2.—Are professional teachers of religion naturally jealous, when others begin to teach, and are making it a success?

Comment.—Yes, doctor, and justly so, if they can show their commission to "speak as having authority." So also are governors, judges, physicians, and other duly appointed men, quite reasonably jealous of self-appointed governors, judges and physicians, no matter whether they "make a success" of it or not.

Comment.—That He was a "jealous God," as a teacher, do you set the young against their legitimate pastors and thus promote religious anarchy?

Que. 3.—Have priests and preachers in the past been quick or slow to see God's new revelations of truth, whether in science or theology?

Comment.—Priests and presumably preachers, do not claim a commission to teach the sciences, except indeed the

science of the Gospel of Christ, still one could give an exceedingly long list of Catholic priests who have been notable contributors to progress in the realm of science and invention. What about Catholics who were burned for the faith at Tyburn?

Que. 5.—"What made the Roman Catholics burn the Protestants?"

Comment.—You assume here, doctor, that Catholics (with possibly the ex- ception of the case of Calvin and Ser- retus) are answerable for the physical persecutions and intolerant writings of past ages. Let us see what leading non-Catholic historians of high repute have testified:

"The adherents of the Church of Rome have never failed to cast two re- proaches on those who left them: that the reform was brought about by intemperate and calumnious abuse, by outrages of an excited populace, or by the tyranny of princes; the other that, after stimulating the most ignorant to reject this authority of the Church it instantly withdrew that liberty of judg- ment, and devoted all who presumed to swerve from the line drawn by law, to violent obloquy or sometimes to bonds and death. These reproaches, it may be a shame for us to own, can be uttered and cannot be refuted."—Hallam.

"It is true enough that each party abused the other, and that many keen, severe, false and malicious things were put forth by the Roman party; but for senseless, unprovoked and scurrilous rail- ing and ribaldry, and for the most of- fensive personalities, for the reckless imputation of the worst motives and most odious vices; in short, for all that was calculated to render an opponent hateful in the eyes of those who were no parties to the matter of dispute, the Puritan party went far beyond their adversaries. I do not want to defend the Roman writers. . . . but it really appears to me only simple truth to say that, whether from good or bad motives, they did in fact abstain from that fierce, truculent, and abusive language, and that loathsome ribaldry, which character- ized the style of too many of the Puritan writers."—Maitland ("The Reformation," pp. 47, 48, Ed. 1849).

That asylum of Papists (the settle- ment of Maryland founded by Catholics and presided over by the Catholic Lord Baltimore) was the spot where in a remote corner of the world the mild for- bearing of a proprietary adopted the religious freedom as the basis of his State. The Roman Catholics who were oppressed by the laws of England were sure to find a peaceful asylum; and that loathsome ribaldry, which character- ized the style of too many of the Puritan writers."—Maitland ("The Reformation," pp. 47, 48, Ed. 1849).

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Yours, etc.,
The Catholic Truth Society of St. Thomas.

ATHEISM, SIN OF THE AGE.

Intermountain Catholic.

The age of faith is virtually gone, and infidelity, which was the marked charac- teristic of past ages as distinct from faith, has in this age developed into pure atheism. It has for its defenders some of the brightest intellects and profound- est thinkers of the day. The unbeliev- ing world defend their incredulity from two points:

First, taking the Bible from a Protest- ant standpoint, namely, with the un- restricted right of private judgment, they interpret certain passages and show that such texts as interpreted by or for them bind too much the human conscience, and are not in conformity with the spirit of the age. Therefore, they conclude, they should be rejected, as should the author who is God. A second class, among whom may be ranked some of our most brilliant scholars, say that logically, or through reason, we cannot arrive at the knowl- edge of God, and therefore justify their existence. All admit the work of creation, that is, the existence of the world, and of heavenly bodies, but at the same time confess their own inability to account for their origin. Whilst the only possible theories, which their own depth of thought as philosophers could suggest, they reject at the same time the creative act of God. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," they say, "is the beginning of the world." Herbert Spencer, a profound philosopher and in his day a leader in the world of thought, admits in his work entitled "First Principles of a New Philosophy," "that with regard to the origin of the universe or cosmos three verily intelligible suppositions may be made. First the universe is self-existent, secondly the universe is self-created, third the universe is created by an external agency."

These three hypotheses are the only ones which Herbert Spencer's great mind could suggest for the existence of the world, and not of one of the ablest representatives of what may be termed atheistic science. He has been able to suggest a fourth hypothesis, the self-rejected origin of the universe. But Spencer rejected his own three verily intelli- gible suppositions, that is, first, he said it could not be self-existent, be- cause that would imply a contradiction, an effect without a cause, or endowing matter with the attribute of infinity, the greatest absurdity conceivable. In re- fecting the first hypothesis Mr. Spencer was logically and philosophically con- sistent with his profound knowledge. Equally so was he consistent in reject- ing his second supposition, namely that the universe is self-created, because that theory would upset the long estab- lished principle, "from nothing, nothing is made." But "the universe is created by an external agency," by an omni- potent power? It is because their sci- entific discoveries have demonstrated that there is no God? No such claim is made. In fact, the ablest representa- tives of the school to which Herbert Spencer belonged, admit that it is

beyond the domain of science to prove or disprove the existence of God. John Fiske, lecturing at Harvard College makes this admission when referring to God and religion: "We are now in a region where absolute demonstration, in the scientific sense, is impossible. It is beyond the power of science to prove that a personal God either exists or does not exist." A personal God, in the Catho- lic sense, or as understood in the old law, is superfluous, because an im- personal God is no God, and as under- stood by those who use the term is simply nature, or some invisible infinite power that is inseparable from this mundane sphere, which is pure pantheism. But why deny God the creator of heaven, earth and all things visible and invisible? Because, say they, your arguments advanced to prove the existence of a personal God are not logically conclu- sive to our minds. Even so why con- clude that an omnipotent infinite being, the creator of all things, in whom most of our sciences have firmly believed, does not exist. According to their admission science can advance no argument against the existence of God, belief in his existence is co-eval and co-existent with the history of the human race. It is in possession. Then the mere fact that the proofs advanced by Christian theologians do not convince unbelievers does not justify them in concluding that God does not exist. Possession, according to the old adage, is nine points of the law. Belief in God is prior to a denial of his existence. In the atheist then rests the burden of proof that God does not exist. But "it is beyond the power of science to prove that a personal God does not exist." Atheists in their view on God and religion stand on the same ground as the sceptic who would deny that there ever existed a Julius Caesar, a Napoleon or a Washington. All philosophers and scientists both ancient and modern, with theories which would rule God out of the universe, refuted their own past theories as un- philosophical and unscientific when they admitted their inability to prove what "the fool said in his heart. There is no God." This disposes of all objections drawn from pretended science against God as the creator of all things. It places the burden of proof on the atheist who in the name of science, phi- losophy and numerous otherologies claim exemption from all proofs as did the atheist and astronomer Lalande, whose only argument against the exist- ence of God was: "I have never seen God at the end of my telescope." The great astronomer evidently forgot that in their astronomical investigations he was in the harmony of a Supreme Infinite Being who created all these and was the first cause of such perfect harmony and the denial of Whom would mean that astronomy would have no existence as a science. "Heaven and earth," sang the Psalmist, "proclaim the glory of God."

All modern scientific theories are based on atheistic principles, which deny the creative act of God, or that He is Lord and Master of the universe. It is the living issue of the day and they who cling to the ancient faith are counted as "behind the age." It matters not that atheism is in posses- sion and cannot be logically or philo- sophically disposed of by any arguments except the smokes of the unbelievers. Like the ancient Gentiles after their separation from the synagogue, are degressing instead of progressing in this materialistic age; and who in their various attempts of moral, social and political reform prove miserable failures because they deny God an in- finitely just judge.

DEATH OF GREAT JESUIT PRIEST.

THE LATE REV. WILLIAM O'BRIEN PAR- DOW WAS A REMARKABLE MAN.

The Rev. William O'Brien Pardow, the famous Jesuit preacher, regarded as one of the ablest pulpit orators and most forceful and fearless thinkers in the Church in this country, died last Saturday morning at St. Vincent's Hos- pital, New York City, of pneumonia. Father Pardow had been ill only since the preceding Sunday, when he con- tracted a cold. He continued most of his work until Friday morning, however, when his condition became so serious that he was removed to the hospital. From that time he weakened perceptibly until the end. The news of his death shocked New York, where he was well known to all classes of people. He was in Cleveland three or four years ago, when he conducted the annual retreat for the clergy of the diocese.

A MUCH-QUOTED PREACHER.

Father Pardow was not an orator in the popular sense. He was a preacher who always had something timely to say and who said it with such force, point, and non-respect of persons that his ser- mons and lectures attracted large and varied audiences whenever announced. He was so often and so widely quoted in the secular press in his pronouncements on topics of current interest that he be- came one of the most widely known Catholic priests in the United States.

Father Pardow was rector of the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola in New York. At the time of his death he was over sixty years of age. He was one of the smallest priests in New York, standing scarcely five feet three inches, and his figure was as slender as a boy's. But one had scarcely to look at him to see that here was the possessor of a com- mending intellect. In his later years he was almost bald, and the absence of hair revealed all the more clearly a head that was almost Websterian, its chief fea- tures being the extraordinary capacity of the skull just over the temples. His features were finely chiselled and clas- sical, indicating him to be the aristocrat that he was. His eyes were dark and full, and his face possessed a pallor that was deemed to alter.

In the pulpit Father Pardow spoke slowly and extemporaneously, except for the use of a few notes which he had scribbled upon small slips of cardboard and which he slowly tore into fragments, one by one, as he passed the various di- visions of his discourse. He possessed a voice whose strength was out of all pro- portion to the size of his body. It was

both deep and sweet and its least inten- sification could be heard to the farthest cor- ner of St. Patrick's Cathedral, where he often preached.

AN OMNIVOROUS READER.

Father Pardow was not only an orator. He was also a scholar of great attain- ments. An omnivorous reader, he prided himself on the accuracy of diction, lay- ing much stress upon the finest shades of the words, a characteristic that not in- frequently was impressed upon those who tried to report his sermons. While he was attached to St. Francis Xavier's College he frequently would read until 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning, though the rising hour was 6. He seemed to be able to do with as little sleep as Napo- leon himself. He looked as if a zephyr would blow him away, yet he prided him- self on the strength of his constitution and his ability to endure fatigue, occa- sionally reminding his friends that his physique was like that of Pope Leo, who lived thirty years longer than a good many people expected him to do.

When a number of women prominent in the Catholic Church organized the "Daughters of the Faith," Father Par- dow became their spiritual adviser, and it was in that capacity that he delivered many of the lectures that subsequently attracted attention. In one of them, discussing the subject of marriage and divorce, he said: "It has been said that the evil of divorce has eaten out all the moral force from our land. The respon- sibility of the upper classes cannot there- fore be too much insisted upon. As water runs down hill by its own weight, so the breaking of the divine law among the Four hundred will soon reach the masses. If society men and women will frown upon divorce and subject the married divorcees to social ostracism an almost universal alleviation of this curse would be secured."

Father Pardow was at one time Pro- vincial of the Jesuits of the New York province. He was born in New York in 1847 and attended the College of St. Francis Xavier, where he graduated in 1864. He joined the Jesuits shortly after and made his studies in Montreal, at Woodstock, in France and England. He was president of St. Francis Xavier's College for four years and was appointed to his last post only last year.

In the last fifteen years he had lectured extensively throughout this country and in England, France and Jamaica. In March, 1893, a series of sermons which he delivered at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City on the general subject, "The Catholic Church and the Age," caused considerable dis- cussion.

Perhaps the sermon that created most discussion was on "The Revolt of Science from the Catholic Church." In this sermon he denied that the Church ceased to abide liberty of thought.

"The only person," said he, "with complete liberty of thought is the un- tutored savage. He can think the moon made of green cheese if he so desires and that the stars are pinholes in the blue paper of heaven. Then science comes to him and says dogmatically that he is either a fool or an idiot unless he consents to fetter his mind with the conclusions of science. Yet science is opposed to the Church because she is dogmatic. There is nothing in the Church so much invites as fair investigation, but investigation which starts in with a preconceived opinion is merely wasting time. The Pope has thrown open the vast treasures of the Vatican and virtually says: 'Study these manu- scripts and if you find anything there to the discredit of the present or past, popes blazen it forth.' But your preconceptions must be facts, not conjectures." Cannot God reveal things to the world that can be accept- ed as truths just as well as Huxley, Tyndall and Darwin? If He has done so, should not His truths be accepted dogmatically?

Father Pardow's was a rugged, uncon- promising character, perpetually com- bating what he believed to be the moral responsibility of the well to do. Another trait that distinguished him was his liking for hard work. He was never happy unless he had something to do. He was an easy, accessible man and was consulted by throngs of people every day. Men and women of every station of life, old and young came to him in the little reception room for ad- vice and comfort in their daily affairs. No matter what might be the need, Father Pardow had counsel ready for them. Only the Sunday before he was stricken with the illness that cost him his life, Father Pardow preached to an immense congregation on the Italian earthquake, administering a stinging rebuke to those whom the calamity caused to question the wisdom and mercy of God.

"We hear people say of poor Italy and the suffering through which she has passed during the few weeks that have just gone," he said, "that it is impos- sible to reconcile the sorrow that has been brought to her people with the love of God. They say, 'Can He be a good and kind Father and know about and permit these things to be?'"

"The people who express these doubts are, of course, those who say that it is impossible for God to work miracles; so the inconsistency of their position is apparent."

"Have you said to these people, 'Are you judging the Lord?' To such a ques- tion they will reply, 'Yes.' Well, there is one principle to be judged—that he must know both sides of the case. Do you know the Lord's side? No. You have never heard it, and you never will hear it or know it until the day of judg- ment. How do you know that those souls, knowing that their life was over, turned to God even as the Holy St. Sim- on turned to God and said, 'The fulfill- ment of His promise and promise to His people? It doesn't take long to turn to

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God. It is but one act of love to turn toward Him."

THE SOCIALISM CRAZE.

Antigonish Gasket.

We are entirely in agreement with the editor of the Catholic Fortnightly Review and the distinguished prelate whom he quotes in the following para- graph:

The only way to combat the atheistic and materialistic Socialism into which so many of our good people are unfortu- nately drifting, is by snatching from it its underlying truth and by propagating the principles of that genuine Socialism which alone can save society from perdition. Yet this is the conviction of the greatest and best Catholic scholars who have studied the question. "All this," asks Bishop Spalding, after enumerating a number of the chief demands of modern Socialism. "Is not all this, in part at least, a result of the teaching and example of Christ himself, who came to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the infirm and to bring relief to the overburdened, and who thus gave the impulse which has finally developed into our humanitarian faith, hope, and love? A large number of Socialists, it is true, are atheists and materialists, but the earnest desire to discover some means whereby justice may be done the people, whereby they may be relieved from their poverty and misery, and the resulting vice and crime, is in intimate harmony with the gentle and loving spirit of Him who passed no sorrow by." (Socialism and Labor, pp. 8, 9.)

ASKED FOR EARTHQUAKE.

BLASPHEMY OF ITALIAN LIBERAL EDITOR PRECEDED HIS DESTRUCTION IN THE RECENT SICILIAN DISASTER.

A ghastly note on the Sicilian disaster comes from Catania, where, although the office, the editor, and the staff of the comic paper, Il Telefono, were destroyed at Messina, some copies of the issue appearing on Christmas eve are in exist- ence. It contains a parody on the hymn then being sung throughout the city in the churches—and when an Italian goes to work to parody a hymn he sets his wit no limits. How poorly the wit fares even without limits may be judged by the conclusion of the Italian hymn, in which the "Bambino," the Christ-Child, is implored to send an earthquake—a tutti un terremoto. The London Daily Chronicle says: "It is much to the credit of the clerical papers that they do not make capital out of this revolting parody, do not point a moral or adorn a tale with this horrible coincidence. In- stead, as the singers of the hymn, in- asmuch as the composers of the parody, were in fact immortally crushed they do not improve the occasion. But it is im- possible to prevent an impression of chastized blasphemy among the simpler of the survivors."

Nearness of God.

We are too much in the habit of think- ing of God as if He were very far off, high in the heaven above us, and having little to do with our humble daily affairs on earth. We forget that in Him we live and move and have our being. That the welfare of every immortal soul is His immediate and intimate concern. That He is near enough to help us in our perplexities as well as in our tempta- tions, if we will only ask Him. By the very constitution of our being, though He is so near, He cannot help us unless we ask Him.

"Speak to Him thou, for He hears, and spirit with spirit can meet. Closer still than breathing and nearer than hands and feet."

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