

"It expelled cruelty; it curbed passion; it branded suicide; it punished and repressed an execrable infanticide; it drove the shameless impurities of heathendom into congenial darkness. There was hardly a class whose wrongs it did not remedy. It rescued the gladiator; it freed the slave; it protected the captive; it nursed the sick; it sheltered the orphan; it elevated the woman; it shrouded with a halo of sacred purity the tender years of the child. In every region of life its ameliorating influence was felt. It changed pity from vice into a virtue; it elevated poverty from a curse into a beatitude; it ennobled labour from a vulgarity into a dignity and a duty; it sanctified marriage from little more than a burthensome convention into little less than a sacrament; it revealed for the first time the angelic beauty of a purity of which men had despaired, and of a meekness at which they utterly scoffed; it created the very conception of charity, and broadened the limits of its obligations from the narrow circle of the neighbourhood to the widest horizon of the race."

When Queen Victoria was crowned in Westminster Abbey, three presents were made to her, first, the Sword of State, second, the Imperial Robe, and, lastly, the Bible, these words accompanying the gift: "Our Gracious Queen, we present you with this book, the most valuable thing the world affords. Here is wisdom; this is the royal law; these are the timely oracles of God. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this book; that keep and do the things contained in it. For these are the words of eternal life, able to make you wise and happy in this world, nay, wise unto salvation, and so happy for ever more, through faith which is in Christ Jesus, to whom be glory for ever. Amen." Words as true as they are beautiful!—and by no one have they been put to a fuller test than by the royal lady to whom they were addressed.

And, then, the amount of truth which the word of God reveals, is ample to cover the entire necessities of every human being. It has reproof for offenders, pardon for the penitent, strength for the weak, comfort for the sorrowing, counsel for the living, and support to the dying. It has a balm for every wound, and a precept for every situation. No one can be so placed as that he will not gain advantage from consulting the word of God, in reference to the duties which he owes. As Jesus said: its influence is as penetrating as the heaven,—its sentiments reach to the utmost bound of the moral and spiritual natures of those who devoutly and ardently study it; and they keep the heart and emotions healthy and pure.

In particular, the doctrines of grace, which are peculiar to the Gospel, are just what his situation demands: salvation as the free gift of God, offered in Christ Jesus, and brought to bear by the Holy Ghost. This is the covering which men need. Many would