

which knows nothing of the pangs of the new birth as its commencement, and nothing of the desperate struggle with the devil, day by day, making us long for resurrection-deliverance, for the binding of the adversary, and for the Lord's arrival. It is a *second-rate* religion,—a religion in which there is no largeness, no grandeur, no potency, no noble-mindedness, no elevation, no self-devotedness, no all-constraining love. It is a *hollow* religion, with a fair exterior, but an aching heart,—a heart unsatisfied, a soul not at rest, a conscience not at peace with God; a religion marked, it may be, by activity and excitement, but betraying all the while the consciousness of a wound hidden and unhealed within, and hence unable to animate to lofty doings, or supply the strength needed for such doings. It is a *feeble* religion, lacking the sinews and bones of hardier times,—very different from the indomitable, much-enduring, storm-braving religion, not merely of apostolic days, but even of the Reformation. It is an *uncertain* religion, that is to say, it is not rooted in *certainty*; it is not the overflowing of a soul assured of pardon, and rejoicing in the filial relationship between itself and God. Hence there is no liberty of service, for the question of personal acceptance is still an unsettled thing; there is a working *for* pardon but not *from* pardon. Hence all is bondage, heaviness, irksomeness. There is a speaking for God, but it is with a faltering tongue; there is a laboring for God, but it is with fettered hands; there is a moving in the way of His commandments, but it is with a heavy drag upon our limbs. Hence the inefficient, uninfluential character of our religion. It does not tell on others, for it has not yet fully told upon ourselves. It falls short of its mark, for the arm that drew the bow is paralyzed."