

has never been comprehensively expounded as the family of God. ¹²

IV

It is not my intention to weary you or my readers with further illustrations of my thought of the way in which Christianity may be set forth harmoniously with the environment of our times, and in such fashion as will render a Forward Movement a real spiritual advance towards the goal longed for of all saints and men of good will. But I believe that the great words which name the primary Christian ideas will stand,—Redemption or Atonement, Justification, Sanctification, Eternal Life—albeit the content which we shall find in them will not be in all respects such as our fathers found. But changes have before been made more than once in respect of most of them. ¹³ Nor, may I point out, is there anything in this position inconsistent with the general conception of evolution. On the contrary the combination of continuity and of change such as is displayed in the history of doctrine is distinctly harmonious with it.

I desire now to turn to a more practical aspect of our subject. Does this general conception of Christianity thus most sketchily outlined, fit into the environment of our times? Does it meet and offer a principle of solution for our own peculiar problems? Is it thus good news, a veritable gospel?

To answer this question it will be necessary to glance at the outstanding features of our times.

(1) The rejection of absolute external authority in the realms of knowledge and of politics is certainly a marked

(12) Of course I am not claiming originality for this idea. I learned it forty years ago from Frederick Denderson Maurice, to whom the Church was "the Universal Society." In recent years the Church idea has been beautifully expounded by the late Professor Royce as "The Beloved Society."

(13) The most rudimentary knowledge of the history of the Doctrine of the Atonement proves this.