

world's wonder. Men admiring them heaped lands, riches, boons of all sorts upon them, but the former studies of scripture were neglected, the salt had lost its savor, the first love departed. For it is the misfortune of institutions which are merely human inventions that after a while they over-live themselves. Having contributed all which they were capable of contributing to the church's good or the world's, they henceforth cumber the ground which once they have profitted. But what history thus demonstrates the evils which followed social organizations enlightened by the word of God, other facts in the same history show the dangers which attended the mere spiritual theories of the mystics in their departure from the truth. They looked inwardly and made religion to consist of ecstatic sensations and intellectual illumination. The leaders commenced with more or less biblical light and then drifted from the revealed word as the source of true knowledge whilst their followers departed still further. Such was the experience in the 13th century, when the "Brethren of the Free Spirit" emancipated themselves not merely from the yoke of Rome, but from the obligations of the moral law. The German mystic of later times exalted the intellectual powers to an undue prominence, as the transcendentalists of modern times reject the revealed word unless it accords with the verifying powers upon which they base their perception of truth. Thus, by the experience of history, we are forced to the conviction that the knowledge to be derived from revelation is the greatest safeguard against the errors which have marked past ages, and that in the future the same revelation can alone secure us a deliverance from similar departures. If it be true that history repeats itself, and the history of Christianity is no exception to the rule, then we have the strongest reasons why the Word of God, the word that giveth light, the word that sanctifies, the word that is truth,