

consciousness. We all prize highly an old song, an old violin, and an old friend. They gain sweetness as they pass along the course of time. And it is surely an indication of weakness and inordinate self-esteem to set the thinking of one little brain over against all the intellectual efforts of the millions of past centuries. It may be desirable and possible for the reformers of our day to push forward the line of discovery and progress far beyond its present limits, but in doing so it is well to mark where our predecessors left off, to give them credit for what they were, and what they did, and to avoid the dishonesty of claiming as our own what rightly belongs to them. Besides, if they were so incorrigibly stupid as to deserve nothing but contempt, we are their lineal descendants, and probably retain some traces of our ancestry. The truth is that while we have made strides in physical science, they surpassed our best efforts in other departments. In oratory, poetry, music, sculpture and painting we are chiefly copyists; and the jurists, historians, philosophers, moralists, theologians, statesmen and warriors of other days are not doomed to oblivion as having their glory eclipsed by the brilliancy of our achievements.

Contempt of the past assumes its worst form when directed against Divine Truth and Biblical Institutions. This shows a lack of appreciation of the grandest thoughts on record—the thoughts of God—and of the agencies that do most to advance and conserve the highest interests of man. We need not deny, in maintaining this position, that Socrates, Plato, Seneca and Cicero and our modern Solons and physicists have had lofty conceptions of truth on a certain plane, but their thinking, according to their own confession, left very much undetermined, and Moses, David, Paul and Jesus Christ discoursed luminously on themes of which these sages of the schools were profoundly ignorant. Unaided reason struggled for centuries to solve the deepest intellectual and ethical problems, and its conclusions were obscure and self-contradictory. The world by wisdom knew not God, and man's future destiny and true aim in life remained an enigma. But when holy men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, they shed a clear light upon these mysteries, and gave forth practical deliverances which are decisive and infallible. In the Decalogue illustrated by the sermon on the mount, in the whole Word of God, and especially in the life and lessons of His Incarnate Son, we have what for intellectual and moral culture is vastly superior to all that has been produced by mere human reason. This is the verdict of universal