

long as He reigns?" This was an argument addressed, though on different grounds, to the earlier followers of Calvin; and magnificently they answered it out of their sombre faith. "Do right," they said, "because it is the will of God that men should live righteously. Though what you do or do not do make no difference in your welfare or in that of others, though you cannot save yourself or others from the death to which you or they may be foreordained, do right because it is the will of God."

Not less magnificent in its faith, but nobler, more reasonable, more inspiring, is the answer made whenever men believe that God gives to them His spirit, and calls upon them to take part in His work. Do what is right. Fill out your life in all directions, because what you do and what you are is necessary to the perfect fulfilment of God's kingdom. God reigns, indeed; but He reigns, not merely over you, but through you. The passenger shut down between decks, trusting to the staunchness of the vessel, the wisdom of her officers, awaits, with a certain confidence, the issue of the storm. But it is a different, a more vital confidence that is felt by the engineer at his post, the quartermaster at the wheel. It is the same ship that carries them, the same captain in command; but they know that upon their discipline, their obedience, their promptness, their faithfulness, depends also the safety of the ship. "My Father worketh even until now," says Jesus; "and I work."

"And I work." It is the utterance of every life that is conscious of its free birth, of its individual manhood or womanhood, of its duties and privileges, conscious of its worth and dignity, its strength, its opportunity. "My Father worketh until now." They are the words of this same free, individual, living, working, human soul, conscious that back of all its

own present limitations is the fulness of God, that where men and women are weak He is strong, that where their patience fails He endures, that when time is wanting to them, His eternity shall suffice. "The Lord reigneth."

The more one comes to realize how strong is the individuality in every life, how different and distinct, underneath all similarities and likenesses, every man or woman is from each and every other man and woman, the more one is led to believe that each of us has his or her work to do, his or her opportunity to improve, his or her gift to exercise, just as individual, just as distinct and peculiar, as are their own personalities. As no one else is exactly like you, so no one else can do your work for you. So long as that work is not done by you, it remains undone; and life is, to that extent, less rich and complete. No matter how feeble your individual strength, or how poor and few the resources at your command, you have opportunities peculiar to you, gifts distinct from others; and, if that one talent of yours is kept wrapped in the napkin, it is no excuse for you that others are stronger and more gifted. Their gifts and strength are for their work, not for yours. They cannot do it for you, God cannot.

Take the problems that a man's nature brings to him,—the development of its powers, the supplying of its lacks, the government of its passions, the direction of its ambitions and desires. Outside influences will indeed tend to help or hinder in the wisest and best solution of these problems: inheritances, friendships, circumstances, will tend to forward or to retard the growth of the character, the strength and fineness of the personality; but these influences are, after all, only so much food offered to the man's own will. It is for him to take or to reject, to decide whether he is to be nourished or starve, to grow or to