

## THE REMOVING OF MOUNTAINS

as God is perfect ; and we are also told that condemnation of the brother shuts us off from God.

There are, of course, passages in the Gospel records as we have them, and in other parts of the New Testament, which appear to exalt wrath and vengeance as righteous, as Divine. There are, however, many more passages that are inconsistent with the worship of what we call anger or indignation as a Divine attribute. This contradiction exists ; in recognizing it we must always remember the certainty that older ideas of God's character would to some degree influence the evangelistic writers. The distinctive and preponderating element in our Lord's teaching, as reported, is the clear-cut conception of God as dissociated from all agencies of destruction, enfeeblement, blindness or disease. Of such great importance did the distinction between manifestations of the Divine Spirit and manifestations of the diabolical spirit appear to Him that He spoke of confusion in this matter as a condition of soul that could frustrate salvation.

Then, again, there is the Cross. If the suffering of the Cross is the truest symbol of the protest of Deity against man's sin, are we wise to worship what we call ' righteous anger ' as a part of God, and imitate its functioning, or to suppose that sin is so slight a thing that anger or retribution could right the wrong ? In this age we have become conscious as never before of the unwisdom and inadequacy of the mood of indignation in dealing with sinners. If, then, we are wrong in attributing this mood to God, we lay ourselves open to a greater spiritual danger in worshipping and serving wrath as a Divine attribute.

At bottom it is a man's conception of God that is the most practical, the most vital, thing in his life. All else springs from it. And it is the conception of God that comes to us in Jesus Christ that is our salvation.

We stand to-day, assured by the holy annals of our religion that, had we faith, we should have been powerful enough to convert our world, not to one opinion or another, not to one practice or another, but to God.