

necessities—but are themselves involuntary products in the inevitable line of sequences. Thus human responsibility vanishes, and any true discrimination between right and wrong is impossible. To be sure, you may classify certain acts under one head as wrong, and certain other acts under another head as right, if you like; but logically, you are bound to abstain from attaching any idea of merit to the one class and of demerit to the other, and especially to have no feeling of approbation or disapprobation with regard to either. It is irrational either to commend things or to complain of things which are both provided to take place according to an irresistible law of evolution. A follower of M. Comte,—John Fiske of Harvard, for example, may feel indignation when injustice happens to be visited upon himself, or may deprecate wretchedness consequent upon sin, (a word, by the way, which Positivism abjures); but surely both his indignation and his deprecation are as illogical as according to his system, they are utterly fruitless.

It is to be hoped, however, that without much argument the American people will have too much common sense, and too vital religious yearnings ever to embrace a system in which the soul figures as an animated and transient machine, and the Creator is banished remorselessly from his throne and the universe.

KEEPING ON THE ROCK.

How much danger there is in these days that the things temporal, which fill our ears with their din, and dazzle our eyes with their flare, may make us blind and deaf to the things that are eternal and that do not come with observation. The disasters by flood and fire,—how they come day after day, filling columns of the daily papers with the details of suffering and sorrow! The sowing and the reaping, the endless making of things,—how they crowd and jostle and push one another. Tales of sedition and war, and business failure, and comets, and all manner of lying and deceit in trade and friendship,—how they make one wish things would stand still awhile until people could get their breath, and everybody have time to think a little a little and do better.

Amidst so much confusion there is need for Christians to set their banner high above the turmoil, and to inscribe thereon the central truth of the gospel, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life." With this in sight, passing events will become clothed with divine significance. Seed-time and harvest, flood and fire will remind us of the teachings of the Master, and of the great day that shall try every man's work. We shall learn to estimate things more nearly at their true value, when we regard them in the light of their influence upon immortal destinies. We shall see how abiding and how rich are the fruits of the Spirit in our hearts, when we compare them with blessings that perish with the using. Daily communion with God, perfect trustfulness in His goodness and love, an upspringing and an outgoing of the soul after all that is pure and lovely and of good report—of what transcendent worth are these! "Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them."—*Examiner and Chronicle*.