

his word, to gauge the genuineness of his acts, we simply ignore him as man and turn in disgust from him. Uprightness, in fact, is the very essence of honor, the first and only lien upon our confidence. Behold this man, he is one having will-power and even prepossessing manners, but he is deceitful, has a lying lip and a treacherous heart, he is ever ready to betray his conscience, and, an occasion presenting itself, he will even betray a bosom friend. Undoubtedly such man is a miserable character. However great may his other qualities of mind be, conscience being deficient in him, they are entombed in the gloom of his heart, for lacking conscience he lacks everything. But what is conscience, and what part does it play in a man's life? CONSCIENCE is an interior master, whose voice is never stilled; a sentinel on guard night and day, neither moved by fear, nor overcome by fatigue. Conscience is a supernatural instinct, a voice immortal and celestial, a never-erring guide of man, finite and ignorant, though intelligent and free; an infallible judge of good and evil drawing man nigh unto God. Conscience it is that gives excellence to man's nature and morality to his actions. The functions of conscience are three-fold: (a) A faithful admonitor. (b) A powerful curb. (c) An effectual incentive. A faithful admonitor it is, and, like a never-failing semaphore, it forestalls danger and indicates the right route to follow. A powerful curb it is: offering her strong arm to one treading on the brink of moral precipices, restraining the onrush of one's most ardent passions, thus warding off disastrous downfalls and irreparable ruins. An effectual incentive it is: waking man up from his torpidness, conscience wrests man from his instinct of apathy, sends vibrating through his heart an electrical spark that brings into play those reserves of energy always productive of great deeds. Conscience, moreover, galls the lazy and indolent, gives a vigorous pull at the rein of him who goes astray, and sets him on the right road; it gives spurs to him who flags, that he may spring onward with more alacrity. Some there are in whose breast conscience has been blunted, weakened, if not destroyed, because it has been stifled, ravished and trampled under foot. Such persons are despicable, not solely because high and noble sentiments have left their souls tenantless, but because that lamentable atrophy of conscience is the outcome of reiterated misgivings. On the other hand, thanks to heaven, men there are—few, alas!—whose conscience, fully alive and sound, have kept intact the refinement of feelings; such bear the primordial mark of an