

THE HOPE OF THE WORLD.—It is getting to be a great hope of our time, that society is going to slide into something better by a course of natural progress — By the advance of education, by great public reforms, by courses of self-culture and philanthropic practice. We have a kind of new gospel that corresponds: a gospel which preaches not so much a faith in God's salvation as a faith in human nature — an attenuated, moralising gospel that proposes development, not regeneration; showing men how to grow better, how to cultivate their amiable instincts. How to be rational in their own light and govern themselves by their own power! Sometimes it is given as the true problem, how to reform the shape and reconstruct the style of their heads; and even this it is expected they will certainly be able to do! Alas that we are taken, or can be, with so great folly! How plain it is that no such gospel meets our wants! What can it do for us but turn us away, more and more fatally, from that gospel of the Son of God, which is our only hope? Man is a ruin, going after development, and progress, and philanthropy, and social culture, and, by this fire-fly glimmer, to make a day of glory! And this is the doctrine that proposes shortly to restore society, to settle the passion, regenerate the affection, re-glorify the thought, fill the aspiration of a desiring and disjoined world! As if any being but God had power to grapple with these human disorders; as if man, or society, crazed and maddened by the demoniacal frenzy of sin, were going to rebuild the state of order, and reconstruct the shattered harmony of nature, by such kind of desultory counsel and unsteady application as it can manage to enforce in its own cause: going to do this miracle by its science, its compacts, and self-executed reforms! As soon will the desolations of Karnac gather up their fragments and reconstruct the proportions out of which they have fallen. No, it is not progress, not reforms, that are wanted, as any principal thing. Nothing meets our case but to come unto God and be healed by him; to be born of God, and so, by his regenerate power, to be set in heaven's own order. He alone can rebuild the ruin, he alone set up the glorious temple of the mind; and those divine affinities in us that raven with immortal hunger—He alone can satisfy them in the bestowment of himself.—*Dr. Bushnell.*

TEARS.—There is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but of power. They are messages of overwhelming grief, of deep contrition, of unspeakable love. If there were wanting any argument to prove that man was not mortal, I would look for it in the strong convulsive emotion of the breast, when the soul has been agitated, when the fountains of feeling are rising, and when tears are gushing forth in crystal streams. Oh, speak not harshly of the stricken one weeping in silence! Break not the solemnity by rude laughter or intrusive footsteps. Despise not woman's tears; they are what make her an angel. Scoff not if the stern heart of manhood is sometimes melted into sympathetic tears; they are what help to elevate him above the brute. I love to see tears of affection. They are painful tokens, but still most holy. There is pleasure in tears, an awful pleasure. If there were none on earth to shed tears for me, I should be loth to live; and if no one might weep over my grave I could never die in peace.—*Dr. Johnson.*

In the olden time, when a mother decorated her child on the Sabbath, she said "As I have adorned thee outside, may God adorn thee inside." If she placed a Sunday wreath in her daughter's hair, she said, "May Jesus Christ thus place the crown of eternal life upon thee in Heaven."—*From the German.*

Prayer is the rustling of the wings of the angels that are on their way bringing us the boons of heaven. Have you heard prayer in your heart? You shall see the angel in your house. When the chariots that bring us blessings do rumble, their wheels do sound with prayer. We hear the prayer in our own spirits, and that prayer becomes the token of the coming blessings. Even as the cloud foreshadoweth rain, so prayer foreshadoweth the blessing; even as the green blade is the beginning of the harvest, so is prayer the prophecy of the blessing that is about to come.—*Spurgeon.*