

they are? It is easy enough; if we look at the authorities to see whence these differences of creeds and opinions arise, we may readily understand why these differ so much. * * * But we shall find that, despite these there is no difference of opinion among men when it comes to great principles,—the attributes of God, by which He reveals himself to his children. There is not found any controversy as to what constitutes justice and love, mercy and charity, and all those great Divine gifts to man which constitute him God-like, or of Divine creation,—the breath of Divine life which was breathed into his soul. So when we come to the tender affections of his nature, we do not find any dispute as to what pity is, what sympathy one for another in their weakness is, or what charity is, which is pouring out of its abundance and riches in giving to the poor and needy. There is no difference of opinion in regard to all these; they have been found to be the same in all ages. How beautiful it has been! How tender the sentiment poured into the breast of the mourner! That He ever will comfort them that mourn; that He ever will be with them that are sorrowful, the true-hearted. He will not suffer the waves of affliction nor the floods to overflow them. We find these sentiments to be universal.

He causeth His sun to shine on the just and the unjust. His judgments are not as erring man's; we see how abundantly His favors are bestowed upon all. When affliction does come, when any great accident occurs, when fatality is among the people, when there are mourners abundant upon the earth, as have been peculiarly so of latter years, it is not needful to assume them to be the just judgments of an angry God; we need not view them in that light, for they are as much the natural results of causes as anything in outward nature, as all the great movements of the universe are in accordance with Divine laws.

They are coming to be referred to

the operation of these laws rather than to be the assumption of special and partial Providences. "I do as sert eternal Providence, and justify the ways of God to man." This saying of the poet impressed me when I was very young, and I have no doubt there are many now who have ceased to pray, or put up petitions for special favors in relation to outward gifts, or outward things. I remember many years ago reciting the lines of Cowper, a poet whom the world has not appreciated:

"Perhaps she (the world) owes her sunshine
and her rain,
Her blooming spring and plenteous harvest,
To the prayer he (the good man) makes,"

I was stopped by Edward Stabler, who said, "No, I would not repeat it, for I do not like the blooming spring and plenteous harvest to be attributed to the prayers of the good man. We must look to natural causes for natural effects." I was young then, but it impressed me so that I have never forgotten it.

The more we seek truth—the more we look at this subject with an eye and heart to "God teaching His people himself," the more we shall discover that we owe much of our present belief to our traditions. We need to be shocked; Christendom needs to be shocked. While there are those who still adhere to the doctrine of human depravity, and all the speculations concerning rewards and punishments hereafter, it needs that *we* be shocked, as some of the past generations were shocked by the utterances of Elias Hicks. Well was it for that age that they had a John Woodman, and many others. Well was it for the age in which George Fox and his contemporaries lived—those sons of thunder. Well was it that they roused the people of their day on the subjects of unconditional election and reprobation, predestination, the trinitarian idea, and many other dogmas of the sects, which were regarded as sacred. Well was it for the people that they had those teachers who could go before them and utter the