

of the world had sunk out of sight, leaving multitudes of poor helpless sufferers uncared for, all former alleviations having in some mysterious manner been withdrawn.

What a scene of human misery, unaided and unblessed, lay in almost every land, with a future dark and cheerless as the grave !

The magnitude of that midnight withdrawal was increased when I discovered that every missionary organization upon the face of the earth and all the redeeming machinery of the nineteenth century had also disappeared, and not a fragment of the old order of things remained to light up a square mile of the appalling, unbroken heathen gloom which had been left behind. The voice of Christian prayer was stilled the world around, every consolation gone from myriads of rooms of the sick and dying, from millions of the aged, the sorely pressed by life's deep mystery and sorrow ; the light had gone out and no other dawn had arisen upon their darkened lives.

But what amazed and saddened me more was the degeneration that had come to multitudes of men and women who had been lights in the Church and in the world. Their characters were suddenly and strangely deformed, for out of them every Christian hope, impulse, idea and motive had been completely eliminated, and they were left like so many moral paupers in this bankrupt world. When the full extent of the loss which had been entailed by the vanishing from earth of the Christian faith was realized, it was found that the whole infinitely varied and magnificent fabric of the age, the best and noblest possessions and powers had passed away in that great departure and a depleted and ruined world was all that remained.

The material, social, intellectual, moral and religious environment of nearly half the inhabitants of the globe had met with disaster which no words I could command would fully express. Progress, even in its poorest aspects, had been visibly arrested ; the larger part of the educational institutions upon the earth had also been swept away, and justice, liberty, human rights and the deeper significance of human existence were now largely terms emptied of the meaning with which they had been charged by the Gospel of the Son of God. Grim shadows had suddenly fallen upon the colossal graves in which were buried the objects which were distinctly Christian, and they wrapped their gloomy folds over many other interests affecting human society and human life.

It seemed to me that out of the past eighteen hundred years all that had been done in Christ's name and by His Spirit and truth and power had also passed away ; and, behold the brightest things of time, the