

the bush beside him aglow with celestial fervour. Elisha when beset by the Syrian host saw about him the horses and chariots of fire. The ancient Psalmist and Shepherd as out upon the hills he watched his sheep, had a vision of the Lord as his Shepherd leading him by quiet waters and into green pastures. Devout old Simeon beheld in the child Jesus the Lord's anointed. Paul on the Damascus road saw the celestial light, heard the celestial voice and felt the marvellous joy. John in the Isle of Patmos had a vision of the new heaven and the new earth, the holy city the new Jerusalem coming down from God out of Heaven and heard the celestial words: "The tabernacle of God is with men." Such was the privilege of the Shepherds on the Palestinian plain when the angel of the Lord appeared and with an innumerable host sang the song of society redeemed. It is said that Jesus was often spirit-away. Once he was seen transfigured and the glory of his presence, so changed, made pious men fear—so unearthly was the sight. The burden of the Bible from the beginning to the close is the vision of the ideal, the spiritual. And what gives it its unique place in history is this, its idealism. It stands or falls by the reality of the spiritual, the reality of the faculty of faith. I do not affirm or deny the literalness of the visions that are recorded of these holy men of old. But this we must believe: that to them there was another world than that which communicates itself to the senses; that they perpetuated the spirit of childhood into maturity and in their day saw glorious things in heaven and earth and walked as heirs of large privileges and splendid joys. And the yearnings and record experience of mankind everywhere and at all times make a favourable commentary on the reality of faith. The Greeks placed a Deity in every grove and stream. Their vision of the spiritual was crude enough but nevertheless vision they had. The Hindoo climbs his tree and reclines among the branches thereof waiting to be absorbed into the universal presence. He, too, with all his religious limitations has the conviction that there is some other than the world of sense and of time—the world he touches and sees. The North American Indian and the South