

THE REMOVING OF MOUNTAINS

very different from what we commonly call indignation. We should at once identify ourself with the beloved culprit, nor should we identify the culprit with what might be called our own lower self—an abject abstraction on which we are often instructed by the religious to wreak our wrath ; rather, we should find that the passion of love raised us above all thought of abstract sin ; the concrete object of our love would stand revealed as in need of our compassion. We should be eager to understand how the deed had become possible ; and it is only the superficial who imagine that this effort to sympathize as far as possible would not be a greater force for righteousness than easy blame. We should know instinctively that not by abuse or coercion or vengeance could the necessary change be effected, that something more costly than any of these would be needed to bring about the regenerative process that our love would inexorably require. This attitude of ours would not be thus analysed by us ; we should take it instinctively or, as is often said, blindly ; but we all know that, in such a case, just in so far as we were wise and loving our impulse would have behind it the power of social regeneration, which anger has not.

There was a good man whose son, mature and earnest-minded, one with him in friendship and labour, committed a crime. The magistrate, in condemning him, was filled with ' righteous indignation '. Do any of us think that the heartstricken father's state of mind would bear the same description ? Which of them, magistrate or father, felt most keenly the sin and shame ? Which was ready to do most to regenerate the criminal ? Which most nearly symbolized God ?

Among the sayings attributed to the Master, quite a large proportion tell us that the human soul can have no correspondence with its Divine environment while it is angry. Judging, condemning, or being angry—if these attitudes of mind make correspondence between the soul and God impossible, we cannot in such attitudes be imitating the Divine goodness. We are told to be perfect