

mony borne to him by the town clerk of Ephesus. Read intelligently his epistles and the controversies into which he was forced, if you would understand his method. Again, I ask, what hindered James and John from having the spirit of Jesus? Not only the spirit of self-love evoked by the conduct of the Samaritans, but a misunderstanding on their part of Holy Scripture. They quoted a text from the Old Testament, and considered that conclusive. But the truths in Revelation are not all on one and the same plane, like the pictures that a man paints who has no knowledge of perspective. Truths in Scripture are not all alike absolutely and universally binding. They may be true relatively to particular times, countries, occasions, circumstances, but not true universally. We can learn from them without feeling that they are for us. Thus the ecclesiastical, the civil, the criminal, the Sabbath, the marriage and other laws, given by God to the Jews are not binding on us, save in so far as the spirit of Christ teaches us that they are suitable for our circumstances, too. In one word, we are not under Moses, but under Christ. We must regard Scripture from

THE RIGHT POINT OF VIEW.

It is not a mechanism but an organism. It can be understood, therefore, only from its heart. Christ is the heart, and whatsoever is offered to His spirit is not binding on us. Only as we understand Him, do we understand the Word. Unless we understand Him, we shall have crude views of the Word, and narrow and distorted views of life. Holy Scripture is not a catechism or collection of dogmas. That is a common but most mistaken conception of the Word. Our creeds and confessions show that that would be our ideal of a revelation from God to man. Holy Scripture is a history. In order to understand it thoroughly, we must understand universal history. Therefore it has never yet been fully understood. We must possess, too, something of the historic imagination. We must make due allowances for the times and seasons, for the ways in which the revelation was made, and the necessary limitations of the organs of revelation. Only thus can we ever approximately understand its full significance and beauty. Revelation took the form of

A LONG HISTORICAL MOVEMENT,

delivered in its course by all the natural forces of the times, and also by a special force—that of the Spirit of the living God—

penetrating and guiding the movement to a wise and loving, predetermined end. Evidently, then, Scripture is understood fully only when seen, not as recording isolated facts, but in its relation to universal history. We cannot isolate the religion of God from the Providence of God without incalculable loss. And we must include within our view the whole grand sweep of His Providence. The glory of Christianity consists in this, that it is able to include, and include by the process of gradual assimilation, all the truth and power that there is in every other religion. "Truth," said one of the wisest of men, "is that which includes and harmonizes all opinions. Whenever we agree there is a foundation of reality. Where we differ we are all wrong." The great proof that Christianity is the absolute religion is that it has come in contact with every other, and that it

STANDS THE DIVINE TEST

of the survival of the fittest. It came in contact with the religion of old Egypt and learned from it something, and has survived; and is still the religion of the greatest nations on earth, thousands of years after the glory of Egypt departed. It came in contact with the religions of the surrounding nations of Canaan and Phœnicia, and learned something from them. They perished. It came in contact during the exile with Maydeism, the purest of the old ethnic religions, and learned something from what Zoroaster had taught and Cyrus believed. Maydeism survives only among a few Parsees, the merchant-princes of Bombay. Christianity came in contact next with the religions, the literature and philosophy of Greece and Rome, and learned much from those great sources of wisdom. They, too, perished as religions, and it survived, taking up unto itself their treasures of thought, and teaching us in consequence lessons with regard to patriotism, to friendship and other virtues still needed by us. Then it came in contact with our brave Teutonic and Scandinavian ancestors, and it learned from them lessons of chivalry, of respect and reverence for women and of

THE SANCTITIES OF HOME.

that filled it out with added power and beauty. In a word, all other religions perished and Christianity survived. But mark! it gained something from each and all of them.

So, too, Christianity now is coming in contact with the great esoteric religions of the East—Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism—the faiths that have given light and leading