

lieve in God only as far as his belief is like Christ's doctrine, — Christ's own doctrine, I mean, not creeds of any kind, whether Roman, Anglican, or Calvinistic.

Now, were we without Christianity this day, existence would be without worth, and our souls without the means of life. "Now nearly six thousand years," we should say, "has the world — a heathen world then — has the world gone on, and no God ever been heard of, except such idols as human fear has made. Right is violated, and justice outraged with impunity; crime prospers; and amid the world's chicaneries, the unscrupulous is the only safe path. The very names of rectitude and purity are derided; and, indeed, are they anything more than words? I may think so, but others think differently; and why are my ideas to be trusted, rather than those of other men? and are not mine superstitions merely? or, how can I tell that what is right with me is right with God also? nay, may not my actions under the mistaken name of righteousness be the very worst of offences against him? or, after all, is God to be offended? A handful of animated dust sin against the Majesty of Heaven! An infinite God heed the thoughts formed within the narrow circumference of a human brain!" And thus unbelief would reason on, as indeed it does now; for God, when excluded from any concern in human life, is thought of simply as a mighty force, driving the currents of existence through the veins of nature; and when no longer conceived of as a God of justice, love, and truth, his intelligence is very soon doubted, and the Deity is degraded into mere mechanism, framed of itself many ages ago, by chance. But men cannot disbelieve God permanently; no nation, no one age, ever did; for, in their utter-