

III. CHRISTIANITY TRANSFORMED SOCIETY BY EXEMPLIFYING THE TRUE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN :

1. *It made every Christian the guardian of his brother's welfare.* By serving others he can most acceptably respond to the redeeming love of Christ. (1) It is his duty to make every man a sharer in his own spiritual heritage. (2) To help those less fortunate than himself. (3) To warn the tempted, strengthen the weak, and reclaim the fallen.

2. *It caused new interest to be taken in the suffering and the poor.* (1) Charity in the proper sense is the child of Christianity. (2) All hospitals and asylums are fruits of the Christian spirit. (3) Even the criminal classes are now recognized to have claims to good treatment and ceaseless efforts for their reformation.

3. *It changed the legal and social status of the slave.* (1) It did not preach a crusade against slavery, but it everywhere recognized the slave as a man. (2) It gradually mitigated the severity of slave laws, and very much bettered his condition wherever it had influence. (3) The growth of the Christian spirit finally made slavery impossible in every Christian land.

4. *It gave a new emphasis to the social rights of the freeman.* (1) His right to an equitable share of the profits of his labor. (2) His right to the utmost opportunity possible for developing all his faculties. (3) His right to enjoy the social and political privileges which ought to be common to all.

5. *It has lifted some of the lowest tribes to a fair position of civilization and morality.* As examples, the natives of the Fiji Islands and of the New Hebrides, as well as a number of African tribes, might be mentioned.

IV. CHRISTIANITY HAS CIVILIZED THE RELATIONS OF NATIONS :

1. *It created the modern obligations of one nation to serve another.* (1) It furnishes the clearest evidence of the unity and solidarity of the race, so that the injury of one nation is the injury of all. (2) Therefore the strong are bound to help the weak and the civilized to develop the savage. (3) The citizens of one nation must be protected in another and the interests of justice in all nations furthered.

2. *Its spirit is profoundly opposed to war and has done much to soften its horrors.* (1) Prisoners of war are now generally well treated, instead of being tortured and massacred. (2) The persons of ambassadors, heralds, and of women and children are now always held inviolate. Generally before bombardment warning is given that the weak and defenceless may be removed. (3) It is now generally held that all differences between civilized peoples ought to be settled by arbitration.

3. *It has given to the world a new hope of the unification and progress of the race.* (1) There was a constant, haunting fear of anarchy in ancient times. Nations had prospered through force; by force they might be overthrown. (2) In contrast to this every Christian always believed that Christianity would be finally victorious, and that its victory would be an unspeakable blessing to the world. (3) The vision of universal peace and holy brotherhood, although still unrealized, seems much nearer realization than ever before. Some may say "Many of these things are the results of advancing civilization." It may be asked in reply "What are the forces underneath civilization and what causes it to advance?"

The first Christian Emperor may claim the honor of the first edict which condemned the act and amusement of shedding human blood; but this benevolent law expressed the wishes of the prince, without reforming an inveterate abuse which degraded a civilized nation below the condition of savage cannibals. Several hundred, perhaps several thousand, victims were annually slaughtered in the great cities of the empire, and the month of December, more peculiarly devoted to the combats of gladiators, still exhibited to the eyes of the Roman people a grateful spectacle of blood and cruelty. Amid the general joy of the victory of Pollentia, a Christian poet exhorted the emperor to extirpate by his authority the horrid custom which had so long resisted the voice of humanity and religion. The pathetic representations of Prudentius were less effectual than the generous boldness of Telemachus, an Asiatic monk, whose death was more useful to mankind than his life. The Romans were provoked by the interruption of their pleasures, and the rash monk, who had descended into the arena to separate the gladiators, was overwhelmed under a shower of stones. But the madness of the people soon subsided; they respected the memory of Telemachus, who had deserved the honors of martyrdom, and they submitted, without a murmur, to the laws of Honorius, which abolished forever the human sacrifices of the amphitheatre.—Gibbon,