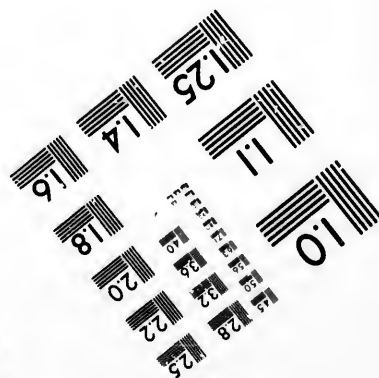
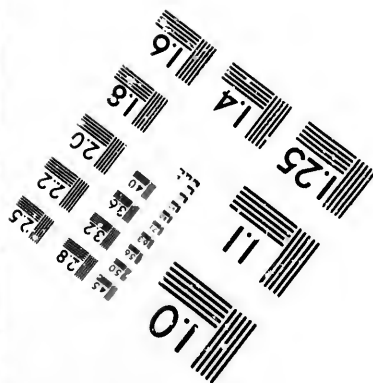
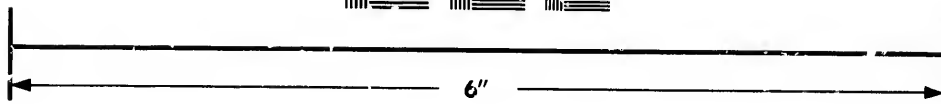
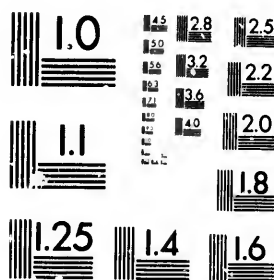


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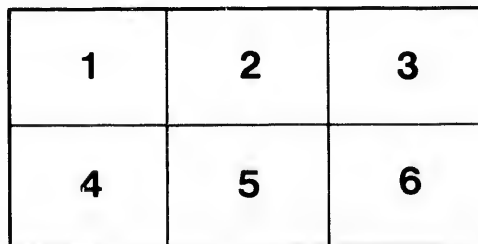
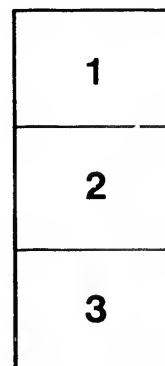
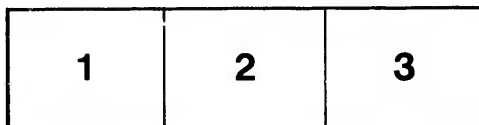
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# LECTURES AND SERMONS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

THEOLOGICAL UNION

OF THE

University of Victoria College.

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VOL. II, 1883-1887.

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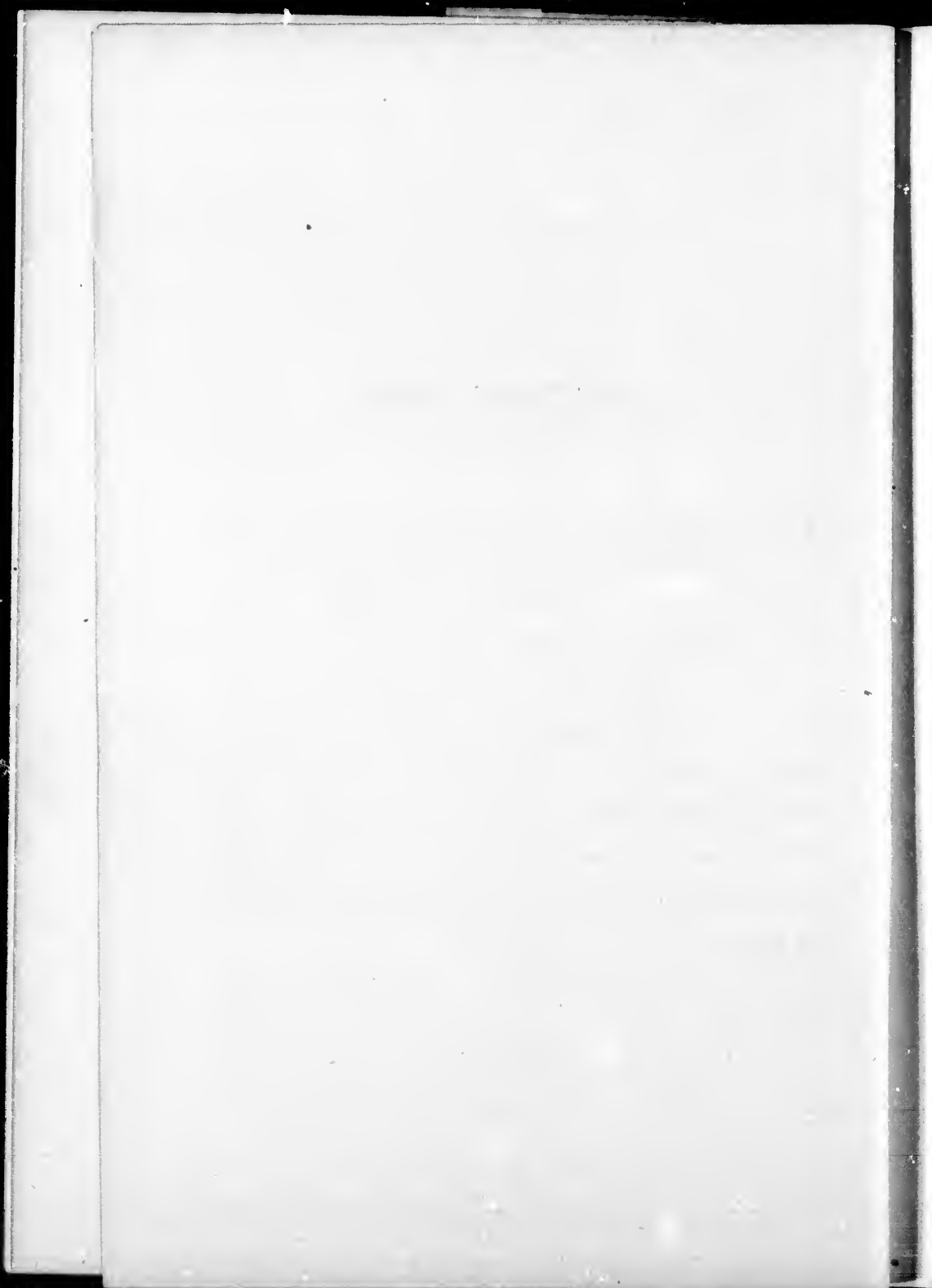
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## PREFATORY NOTE.

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THE Lectures and Sermons included in this volume were delivered before the Theological Union of Victoria University, which was organized in 1877. Both Lecturers and Preachers have been very felicitous in selecting topics of living interest to the Church and to the Theological Student. As they are largely Apologetic in their character, the Annual Meeting of the Union hopes, by their publication in this form, to help toward the settlement, in the minds of the young, of some of the religious difficulties of the age.



# SIN AND GRACE

CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO GOD'S MORAL GOVERNMENT OF MAN.

BY THE

REV. JAMES GRAHAM.

## The Practical Test of Christianity.

BY THE

REV. HUGH JOHNSTON, M.A., B.D.

BEING THE SIXTH ANNUAL LECTURE AND SERMON  
BEFORE THE THEOLOGICAL UNION OF  
VICTORIA COLLEGE, IN 1883.

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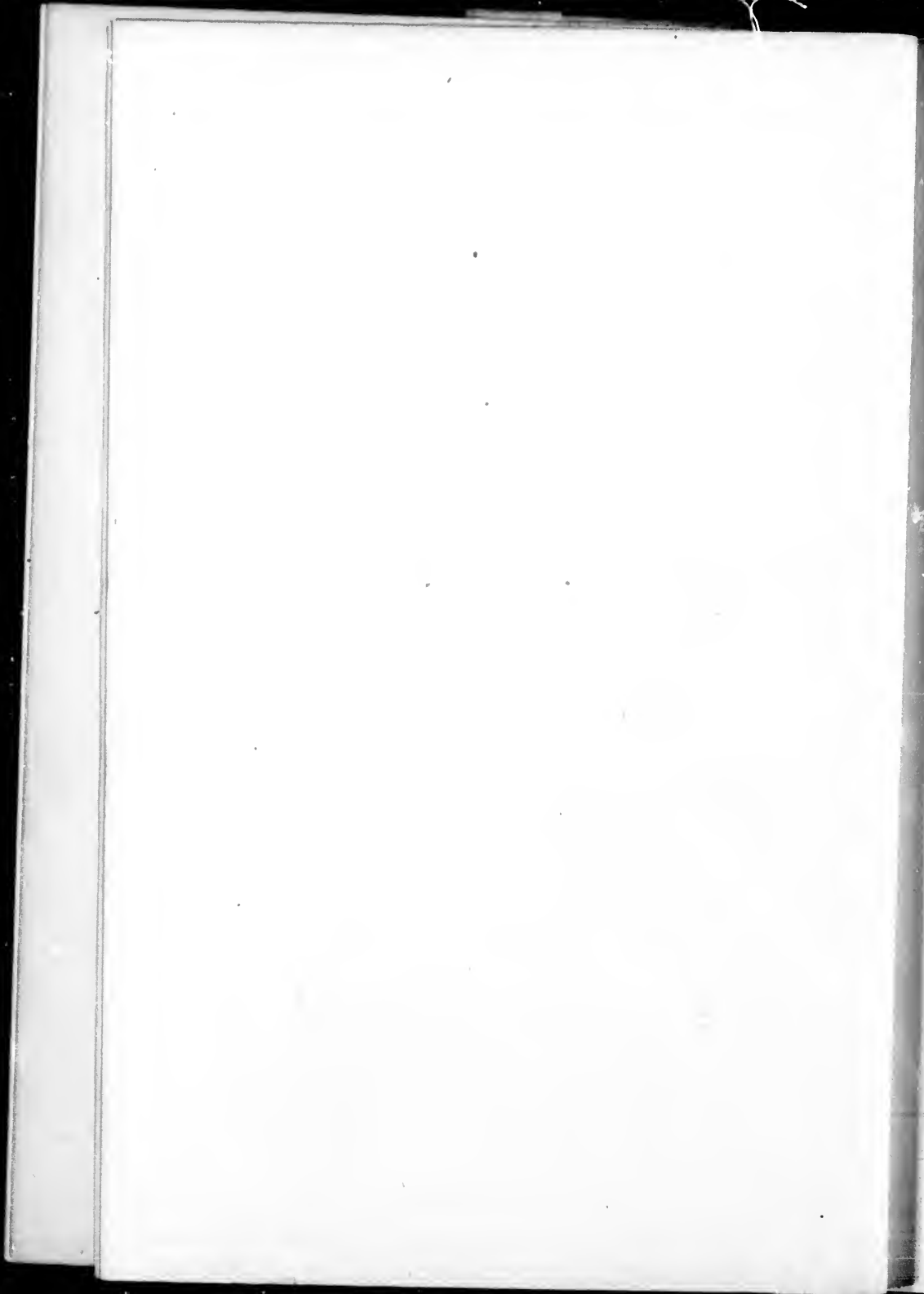
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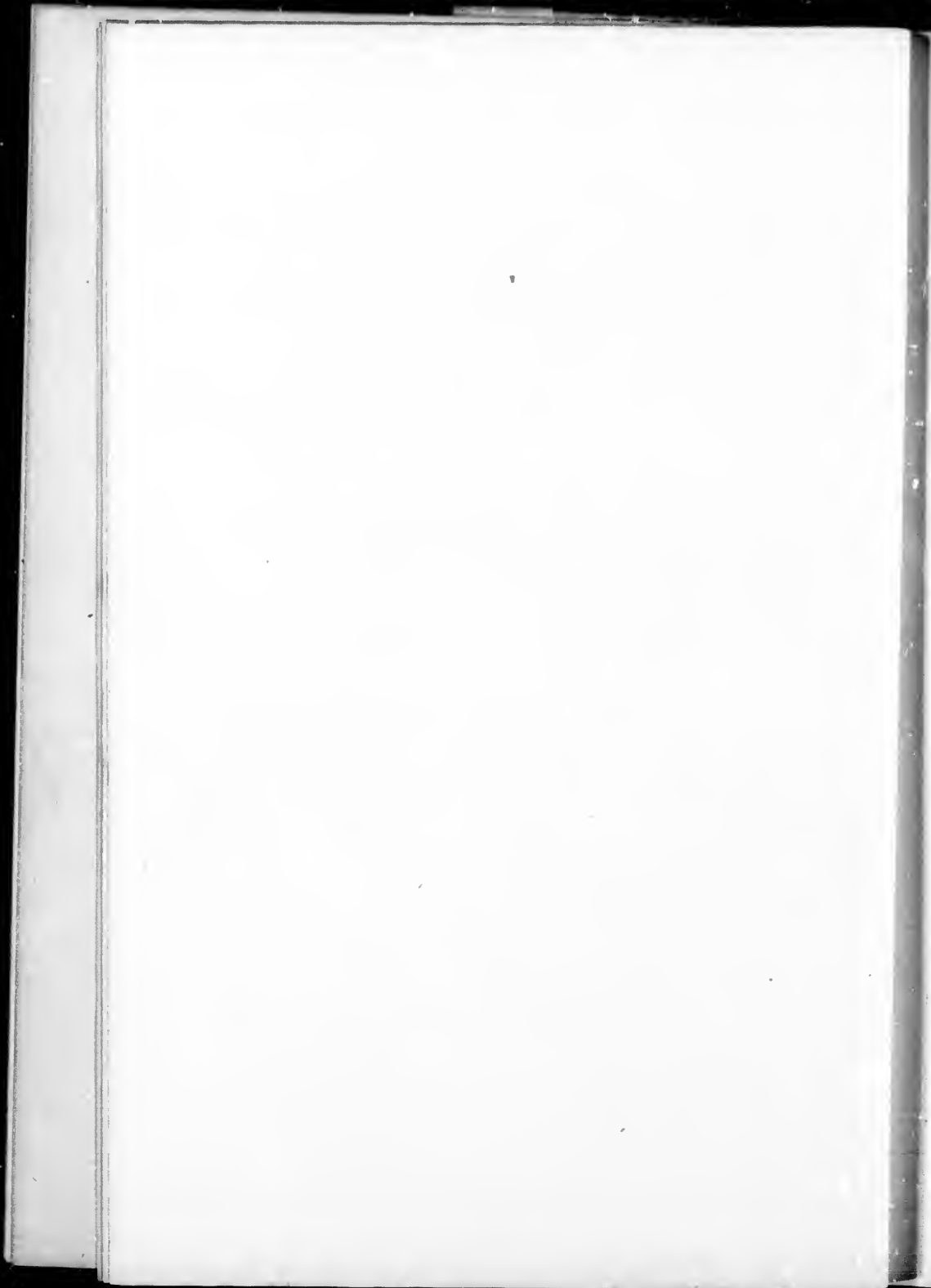
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BY THE

REV. JAMES GRAHAM.





# LECTURE.

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## SIN AND GRACE CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO GOD'S MORAL GOVERNMENT OF MAN.

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THE sources of moral influence indicated by the terms Sin and Grace are not discoveries made by man, but information communicated to him. Revelation not only furnishes new subjects of thought, but sheds additional light on the whole course of providence. But it does not manifest all things happening under the course of providence so clearly to us, as to leave no further light either desirable or possible. On the contrary, it indicates that what we now see only through a glass darkly, we shall yet see in the light of noon-day; and that, what is unknowable by us now, we shall know hereafter. Out of our relation to Revelation arises our duty to study its credentials and contents. Whatever Revelation may be intrinsically, its regulative influence on our life is according to what our thought concerning it is. Though our thought can add nothing to the contents of Revelation, it may

enable us to make some progress in a more correct apprehension, and in a more systematic statement of its truths. Patient investigation, not hasty anticipation, is the proper temper of the student of Revelation, as well as of the student of Nature. But, as in every other sphere of thought, so in Revelation, we may meet the mysterious and the difficult. If it is the glory of God to reveal one thing, it may also be His glory to conceal another thing. Partial ignorance concerning the reasons of the Divine procedure, is probably the condition of all created minds. A perception of our ignorance of some things may indicate more mental clearness, than an over-confident pretension to know them. It is not a mere paradox to say that it is part of our knowledge to know our ignorance. If, then, we should find that, considered in some aspects, both sin and grace are somewhat unknowable by us during our present life, that is not contrary to, but in analogy with, the whole course of providence concerning us. Revelation informs us that man, as created, was "very good." Thus, what an omnipotent God created, an omniscient God approved. But that very good man was created with a power of mental freedom, which might be used in obedience to the will of his Creator, or it might be abused by willing against the will of his Creator. Man did abuse that power by willing against the will of God. But still man is, and God is, and the race will be. But the old foundations are now out of course. If we ask here, Why did not God prevent that sin? or why did the creature commit

that sin? even Revelation does not furnish an answer to either question. And if we contemplate the various attempts that have been made at a philosophical solution of the origin of sin, we see failure legibly stamped upon every one of them. It is not unreasonable to suppose that very few can be ambitious of adding another to that long list of failures by making another attempt at the solution of that problem. But it should be remembered that mystery is not absurdity. The confounding of these has been the source of much fallacious reasoning on religious subjects. The importance of not confounding these may be perceived from the fact, that we must either believe facts or truths, notwithstanding that some mystery may be connected with them, or stand convicted of absurdity by denying them. We can believe notwithstanding mystery, but we cannot, rationally, believe absurdity. Mystery may only be that which transcends our mental comprehension, but absurdity contradicts the immediate perception of our intellect. And though we have to confess that the origin of sin is to us a mystery, we do not cognize it as an absurdity. True, we have had a good deal written about "how sin came," but that does not answer the questions why was it permitted, or why was it committed? The *how* in these cases is not the *why*. Had this been always perceived, it might have saved a goodly number of writers on the subject, from confounding their expositions of the possibility of sin, with a rational solution of the origin of sin. I do not discuss here

the origin of sin either in reference to God who did not prevent it, or in reference to man who committed it. As it is admitted that man is a responsible subject of moral government, I design to consider the influences of both sin and grace upon man, considered in his relation to the moral government of God. If man is naturally a totally depraved being, how can he be held as the responsible subject of moral government? This is the mental difficulty of man's moral history in his relation to the Divine government. This question has puzzled more minds, in reference to the acceptance of Revelation as true, than the cycles of Geology or the evolutions of Biology. And it seems that instead of shedding any light upon this difficulty, the darkness has been thickened by the teaching of a large part of the theology of Christendom, upon the subjects of sin and grace. In treating of these subjects here, there is no attempt made to explain the mysterious, but to expose the absurd, and to state the true. First, let us consider the fact and doctrine of

#### ORIGINAL SIN.

But what is, or what should be meant, by the phrase "original sin?" Considered in reference to Adam, it includes his first sinful act, and the depravity of his nature consequent on that act. Considered in reference to Adam's offspring, it means the depravity consequent on Adam's sin as transmitted from his fallen nature to the whole race. That type of anthropology which denies the depravity of Adam's nature by his

original sinful act; and also denies that his depraved nature is transmitted to his posterity, is here rejected as being utterly anti-Biblical. Revelation teaches that Adam's sin depraved his nature, and that the depraved nature is transmitted to his posterity. And the whole photograph of human history seems to corroborate that doctrine. But among those who admit the fact of congenital depravity in the human race, there has not been, and there is not now, uniformity of opinion with respect to its influence on man's relation to the moral government of God. The following questions are still subjects of discussion:—"Are we legally liable to suffer for our original depravity the penalty annexed to Adam's original sinful act?" and, "Are we personally guilty for the depravity of our nature as transmitted to us?" Numerous theologians have answered, and do answer, these questions in the affirmative, but I must answer both in the negative. If our depraved moral state be viewed ethically, and in comparison with the holiness of the Divine law, it may be pronounced sinful, as being in non-conformity to that law. But this transmitted sinfulness of nature forms no just ground for the charge of personal guilt for its existence as transmitted to us. Hereditary, personal depravity, there may be, but hereditary guilt there cannot be. The ambiguous use of the term guilt, to designate our relation to the Divine government because of inherited depravity, has darkened and perplexed this subject. The strict sense of the term guilt is liability to punishment for free personal wrong-

doing. But, unfortunately, it has been largely used in the theology of Christendom, to mean liability to legal punishment, and even liability to providential suffering, through the wrong-doing of others. But it makes no matter what mere word-juggling may be employed on the subject, one thing is clear, for inherited depravity there can be neither responsibility, nor guilt, nor liability to the punishment annexed to Adam's original sinful act. But—as if to bar out all further questioning—*consciousness* has frequently been appealed to in support of the charge of guilt for inherited depravity. The appeal to that court is useless. It has not jurisdiction in the case. Consciousness can only say guilty for what is the result of the known wrong use of our natural powers. But inherited depravity is not such result, therefore consciousness cannot pronounce guilty for it. Again, though it may be considered a moral state, hereditary depravity is also a congenital, and necessary state; therefore, consciousness can no more pronounce guilty for it, than it can pronounce guilty for a naturally sickly habit of body. It has also been contended that the intuitive judgment of conscience declares guilty, for our naturally depraved moral state. But, it may be replied, so much the worse for that intuitive judgment, if it does so. But it does not do so. Such a judgment will not stand the tests of intuitive truth—"self-evidence, universality, and necessity." Will the declaration of guilt for unavoidable depravity stand the first test? Is it self-evident? On the contrary, I submit that self-evident moral axioms, and logical

deductions from them, on the subject of moral responsibility, stamp their effectual and legible veto on the verdict of guilt, and punishment, for an inherited depravity. That judgment contradicts the moral axiom that *moral freedom must underlie moral responsibility*. We never had freedom from inherited depravity, and therefore no responsibility, and no guilt for it. This will stand the test of intuitive truth.

But it is also submitted, that the doctrine of liability to suffer the legal penalty annexed to Adam's original sin, for inherited depravity of nature, destroys all justice in God's moral government of man. If the penalty annexed to Adam's sin was eternal punishment, and if for inherited depravity that punishment may be inflicted on the whole race, then the whole race may be doomed to suffer eternally for what not one individual of the race had any more power to avoid than he had to avoid his existence. Such a judicial procedure as that destroys all justice in the government which employs it. So far as we can judge of justice, we must decide that the charge of guilt, and liability to eternal punishment, for an inherited and necessary state, contradicts our first perception of justice. It is to be regretted that the calling such a judicial procedure justice, should not always have been left to stand as the peculiar glory of the old predestinarian den of realistic solidarity in Adam's guilt, and of the glorious justice of necessitated damnation.

But, furthermore, this doctrine involves another most appalling consequence. If there is personal



guilt chargeable against any person for *our* inherited depravity, it must be charged against God. The steps to this conclusion are few and plain. It is not our guilt, because we never had power to avoid it. It is not Adam's guilt, because, though guilty for his personal act, he did not constitute his own being, nor did he establish the naturalistic law by which his depravity of nature is transmitted to us. God constituted Adam with a nature which his sin would deprave, and ordained that his depraved nature should be transmitted to his posterity; therefore, for what is inherited through the natural law of transmission, the sustainer of the race through Adam is responsible; and, therefore, if guilt for our natural depravity exists at all, it lies against the Creator of Adam, and the sustainer of the race through Adam, depraved by his sin. This conclusion must be accepted, or the premises from which it legitimately results must be given up. It is of no avail in support of the doctrine of guilt for our original sin, to say that it is not the guilt of Adam's original sin imputed to us, but our own sin, because of the "solidarity of the race in sin." But it appears to me that this doctrine is also absurd. Sameness of moral state is not unity of personality. As the individuals of the race had no personal existence in Adam, they cannot be guilty for his act, though it may be euphemistically called "the act of humanity." The charge of guilt for such a fictitious crime indicates more the power of invention than the purpose of righteousness. Nor is it of any avail to charge us

with guilt because Adam acted as our "Federal Representative;" because, in any sense applicable to this argument, such a representative is simply a fiction. In truth, the charge of guilt for an act without personal existence, or of guilt for the act of a representative that we never elected, or of guilt for a state transmitted to us by a natural law, are all, in one sense, equally absurd, because in any, or in all, we have no moral control. The mind that can declare guilty for those, so-called, acts of humanity, or for that necessary moral state, may be capable of judgments still more surprising, but of none more absurd than that.

But still, on this point of guilt we are plied with the question:—"Are we not guilty for our moral state as well as for our moral act?" The terms of this question, as related to man's naturally depraved condition, are ambiguous, and in order to develop the fallacy wrapped up in them, I reply, Yes, and No. Yes, if the meaning is that we are guilty for continuance of that transmitted depraved state. And again I reply, Yes, if the phrase "moral state" refers to a state of necessary depravity, which may be superinduced by the persistent abuse of our free power. But I reply, No, if the phrase "moral state" refers to our moral state, as transmitted to us. And again I reply, No, we are not guilty for our natural "moral state," as we are for our "moral act;" because, from that moral state we had no freedom, but from our moral act we had freedom. In short, for the reign of sin in us we are guilty, for perpetuity in sin we are guilty, and for

our moral act we are guilty; but for a moral state which we never had power to avoid we are not guilty.

Dr. Pope—speaking from the Theological Chair of English Wesleyan Methodism—makes the following statement on the subject of *Original Sin*:—"Methodism accepts the Article of the English Church! Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man that is engendered naturally of the offspring of Adam; whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit; and, therefore, in every person born into this world; it deserveth God's wrath and damnation," etc. \*

Now, I hesitate before accepting that doctrine as the standard doctrine of Methodism. Nor was I previously aware that the English Wesleyan Methodist Church "accepted" the whole Anglican Article on the subject of "Original Sin." But if she accepts as her standard teaching the doctrine that, for our inherited corruption from Adam "every man deserves God's wrath and damnation," I doubt whether she can claim Wesley's mature judgment for that doctrine. The deserving damnation for that depravity was rejected by Wesley when he formulated the VIIth Article of our Church. I accept that article as it came from Wesley's hand, but I do not accept the whole Anglican Article on the subject of "Original Sin," either as *our* Church stand-

\* *Compendium of Theology*, p. 243.

ard, or as being in accordance with the Bible standard. It is quite clear that the Anglican Article teaches the universal *desert* of damnation, for inherited depravity from Adam. Had Wesley believed that doctrine when he formulated our Article on Original Sin, he would not have deliberately rejected it from the Article. Wesley seems to have done with the Anglican Article on "Original Sin," what he did with the whole thirty-nine Articles—he gathered the good into sound vessels and cast the bad away. It is of no avail in support of the acceptance of the Anglican Article to say that it is our sinful nature which is meant when it is said that it deserves God's wrath and damnation; and that the *nature* must be conceived of as abstracted from the *person*. As a subject of thought, we can conceive the nature as abstracted from the person; but with respect to a moral being, considered as the responsible subject of moral government, no such abstraction of nature from person is allowable. Could the nature be deserving of any thing abstracted from the person? A person, and only a person, can be deserving of either reward or punishment. But if the person is not endangered, we cannot feel very keenly on the subject. Yet I do feel that such attempted hair-splitting is very like trifling with such a subject as desert of God's wrath and damnation. And most certainly that abstracted nature is not the meaning of the Anglican Article on Original Sin. It says plainly that for inherited corruption from Adam, "*every person* born into the world deserveth God's wrath and damnation."

This *personal desert* of damnation for *that* depravity Wesley rejected. So do I. And so ought every man who believes in God's justice, and in man's moral intelligence.

It is really surprising—and were it not for the solemnity of the subject it would be amusing—to hear the absurd platitudes from the lofty altitudes, which have been delivered to us by sapient theologues on the subjects of just penalty for, and on the mode of deliverance from, the just penalty of original sin. We are told by some that eternal damnation is its just and legal desert, while they admit that man never could have avoided it. The absurdity and injustice involved in such a decision as that, render it incapable of rational belief by an intelligent mind, or a feeling heart. In embracing such a mental monster the heart is perverted, and the intellect pushed backwards. And we are told by others that, though eternal damnation is the just and legal desert of original sin, yet no one will ever suffer that penalty for it, because Jesus Christ died to save the race from it. This is a decided relief to the feelings of the benevolent heart, but it is quite unsatisfactory to the rational decisions of the intellect. On the strict principle of justice, we are bound to deny that any one was ever liable to eternal suffering for inherited depravity. Such a doom for such a state, could not be inflicted by a just God. And if such a liability never existed, and if such a doom would not be just, how can it be said with propriety that Jesus Christ died to save us from it? Did He die

to save us from that to which we were never liable? Or did He die to save us from God's injustice? Most certainly not. It is not the intuitive moral judgment, nor a legitimate logical procedure, that can lead the human mind to accept such absurdities, but a confused and confounding theological culture. If any human being can believe that it is just to doom any one to eternal suffering for what he never had power to avoid, there is no use in reasoning with that man on moral subjects, because the subjective mental ground-work on which all such reasoning must be based, is wanting in that mind. And then, on the other hand, how absurd the procedure which unjustly represents man as liable to eternal damnation for original depravity, and then calls in Christ's merit to save him from the injustice! Such mental conceptions seem to resemble the, so called, reprobates of "Reformed Theology"—damned before they were born. These contradictions cannot be avoided in the structure of Systematic Theology, until the baseless assumptions of guilt, and liability to eternal punishment for an unavoidable state, are swept down to the region of moles and bats by the purifying breezes of heaven.

One argument in support of the charge of guilt, and the infliction of legal punishment by God without personal demerit in the being punished, may be considered here. The argument has been considered a real poser for its opponents, and a theodicy for its abettors. It is this: "None but the guilty can suffer under the government of God, even infants do suffer

under that government, therefore they must suffer because of the imputation of the guilt of Adam's sin to them." To this I reply, it is not true that none but the guilty can suffer under the government of God. Whatever may be our philosophy of suffering under the Divine government, the fact that the innocent do suffer under it, is self-evident; and therefore, all conclusions based on the assumption that none but the guilty can suffer under the government of God, crumbles into ruin. And with respect to the imputation of Adam's guilt to the child, it is absurd, because guilt cannot be separated from demerit in the person who committed the sin. Nor can legal punishment be justly inflicted on any human person who did not commit the sin deserving it. And as respects the theodicy contained in the imputation of Adam's personal guilt to the infant, it is a total failure with respect to a vindication of the Divine justice in the infant's sufferings. Some good souls seem horrified at the thought of the innocent suffering at all under the Divine government, but they seem to become pacified by God imputing the guilt of Adam's sin to an infant, in order that thereby God's justice may be vindicated in dooming the personally innocent infant to eternal torment. Now, when we are called on to assent to such a profound theodicy, and to admire such poetic justice as are manifested in such a judicial procedure as that, perhaps the best thing we can do in the case is to beg the author's pardon, and request him to take that theodicy, with our compliments, to the Sphinx. Verily, that

defence of the Divine justice seems like a miserable specimen of human casuistry. But such are the contemptible shifts to which false postulates drive their honest devotees. Until these pseudo assumptions are discarded, the throne of God will appear to human intellect not only tinged with mystery, but bristling with injustice.

The true relation of God to Adam, and to the human race, I conceive to be this: God constituted Adam with a nature which his sin would deprave; and God ordained that Adam's sinful nature should be transmitted from him to all his offspring; and God ordained means for the final well-being of all, which shall fully vindicate His righteous administration at the great day of final account. What those means are will appear sufficiently evident if we carefully examine

#### THE ADMINISTRATION OF GRACE.

I do not here contemplate that administration of grace manifested in the conscious justification and regeneration of the adult believer in Jesus Christ, and the impartation of which is conditioned on the trust of the recipient in the atonement of Christ. The term grace is here restricted to that universal and unconditional favour to man through the atonement of Jesus Christ, which, under the administration of God, opens the way of salvation to all who do not persistently reject its benefits. The impartation of such grace, and the continuance of a depraved race, was God's eternal purpose. It may be safely assumed that God can



neither be harassed with doubt, nor disconcerted by contingencies. God's creation of man did not take place without the knowledge of what the creature would do, or could do; nor without the knowledge of what God himself would do. God knew before the creation of man not only the possibility, but the actuality of Adam's sin; and also, its consequences to the race through Adam's depraved nature. The decision to continue a naturally depraved race did not exist in the Divine mind independent of, or separate from, the decision to restore free power to man—for good—through the atonement of Jesus Christ. These decisions existed together in the Divine mind before human depravity became a fact, or grace a Revelation. With the bestowment of such universal grace on man in view, the continuance of a depraved race is morally possible; but without it, we cannot see the moral possibility of the existence of a depraved race under the righteous moral government of God. Rational thought leads to the conclusion that God's moral providence concerning man was, from the first, pitched on the key-note of grace. And without grace, fallen man cannot be the responsible subject of just moral government. Justice renders to all, and demands from all, only what is due. There may be a mercy which goes beyond this—though it must be consistent with it—but short of this, justice is not. Would it be consistent with that justice to continue a race of naturally depraved beings, without any means being afforded them whereby they might overcome sin, and escape

everlasting woe? Such a procedure is inconsistent with Biblical representations of Divine justice; nor is it consistent with human ideas of justice. Without the bestowment of gracious power to moral good, naturally depraved man cannot either overcome sin, or escape suffering. To leave man under such an everlasting curse, without ever having had the power to avoid it, is not a mere mystery which transcends our power of mental comprehension, but a contradiction of all that we can ever know about justice in this world. If man is naturally a depraved being, and yet is held as a responsible being, I conclude that universal depravity must be met by universal grace. Jesus Christ is God's theodicy to the moral universe in His government over man. The creation of man, the continuance of the race, and the vast scheme of providence over this world, are all based upon that plan of God which He purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began. As the radii of a circle all meet in the centre, so creation, providence, and grace, centre in Christ, the incarnate and redeeming God. And as the sun enlightens all in the solar system, so spiritual light is shed upon all men, through the grace of that Eternal Word who "enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world."

We have frequently read from the pages of Christian writers, and heard from Christian pulpits, the doctrine that God, without any impeachment of His justice, might have left the whole human race under the reign of unavoidable sin, and endless woe, without any redeeming grace. But I cannot help thinking

that such a governmental procedure as that would be more accordant with the throne of Nero, than with the Throne of Jehovah. Without doubt, we occupy a rational and Scriptural position, in maintaining that the existence of a race of moral beings congenitally depraved, without grace, is not morally possible under the righteous moral government of God. And though there may be found in Methodist writers a stray word inconsistent with this position, yet the standard writers of Methodism are almost unanimous in occupying this ground, when attempting to justify the ways of God with men. Perhaps a few of their testimonies may not be deemed irrelevant here. Speaking of the manner in which the grace of Christ to man meets the principle of theodicy, the

Rev. John Wesley says :—" It is exceedingly strange that hardly anything has been written, or, at least, published, on this subject ; nay, that it has been so little weighed or understood by the generality of Christians ; especially considering that it is not a matter of idle curiosity, but a truth of the greatest importance ; it being impossible, on any other principle,

‘To assert a gracious Providence,  
And justify the ways of God with men.’” \*

Rev. John Fletcher says :—" As we sinned only *seminally* in Adam, if God had not intended our redemption, His goodness would have engaged Him to destroy us *seminally* by crushing the capital offender

\* *Wesley's Sermons*, vol. 2, p. 43.

who contained us all. . . . But we see His justice and goodness shine with equal radiance when He spares the guilty Adam to propagate the fallen race, that they may share the blessings of a better covenant." \*

Rev. Dr. A. Clarke says:—"Had not God provided a Redeemer, he, no doubt, would have terminated the whole story by cutting off the original transgressors; for it would have been unjust to permit them to propagate their like in such circumstances, that their offspring must be *unavoidably* and eternally wretched." †

Rev. R. Watson says:—"Had no method of forgiveness and restoration been established with respect to human offenders, the penalty of the law must have been forthwith executed upon them; . . . and with and in them the human race must have utterly perished." ‡

Rev. Dr. Pope says:—"The mediatorial government of the world from the beginning, has been a fruit and proof of redemption. No race, unredeemed and without hope of redemption, could in the universe of a holy God continue to propagate its generations." §

Rev. Dr. Whedon says:—"Without the Redeemer no equitable system of probation for fallen man is a possibility. . . . Without Christ the foundations of our present moral system cannot be laid." ||

\* *Checks to Antinomianism*, vol. 1, pp. 146, 147.

† *Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 74.

‡ *Theological Institutes*, vol. 2, p. 56.

§ *Compendium of Christian Theology*, p. 403.

|| *Whedon on the Will*, pp. 341-343.

Rev. Dr. Raymond says :—"The only conception admissible in the case is that, but for redemption, the race would have become extinct in the persons of our first parents." \*

Thus we have the consecutive and uniform teaching of standard Methodist writers in support of the position that the existence of a naturally depraved race, without the provision of redeeming grace, is not morally possible under the righteous moral government of God. And I think they are entirely correct in that teaching. But if they are correct, what becomes of the doctrine of liability to eternal punishment for inherited depravity from the first Adam, seeing that only for the grace of the second Adam the depraved race could have had no existence? Surely, if it is true that nothing produces nothing, it is also true that nothing is liable to nothing.

Should it be said that the ground of moral government herein advocated, "is only mere hypothesis, and not based on positive Revelation," I reply, that the impartation of universal grace to man is not *mere* hypothesis, but a truth of Revelation, and the non-existence of the race without that grace, is a legitimate inference from the moral character of God as manifested to us in Revelation. Thus we see that the continuance of the race, through universal grace, is supported by the facts, or truths of Revelation, and by the logical inferences deducible from them. With this just and gracious economy in view, man was created,

\* *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, p. 309.

and the depraved race continued. Its gracious bestowment and provisions, furnish the necessary conditions of a just moral government over a race naturally depraved. The combined anthropology and soteriology of St. Augustine affords no just moral basis for the government of a race congenitally depraved. It professes to save some of the race by an irresistible force, called free grace; while it leaves others without help or hope, under the everlasting dominion of necessitated sin and damnation, for what they never had power to avoid. It is very much to be regretted that a scheme so parsimonious with respect to salvation, but so liberal with respect to damnation, should ever have been charged to the God and Christ of the Bible. But the combined anthropology and soteriology of St. Paul, lays the basis for a just moral government over the fallen race, by the bestowment of free power to man, and gracious provision for the final well-being of all through the Saviour's propitiation for the sins of the whole world. This general grace is God's pyramid of truth, standing erect in the vast solitude of time, which can never be moved from its foundation on the Rock of Ages, and around its summit the light of eternity must play.

The King of Terrors is said to love a shining mark. But it may be said with equal pertinence that he loves a youthful prey. Half the human race is said to die in infancy. All these never were probationers. The decision of many Christian theologians on these dead children would be a matter of curiosity, only for its

sadness. By some, they have been sent to a limbo milder than hell, but still outside of heaven. By others, they have been consigned to annihilation, without hope of resurrection. And by others, they have been doomed to an eternal hell of torment, if not among the elect. But over those hills of darkness light is breaking, calm and clear. Even the upholders of creeds which restrict the benefits of Christ's atonement to the elect number of the human race, by the eternal decree of God, have ventured to hope that all dying in infancy are saved. I do not see how that hope can be rationally entertained by those who maintain such a decree; because, all the children who die could only be saved by being included in the elect number; and I do not see how any one can rationally hope that all dying in infancy are included in that elect number. But still that hope makes the theological outlook more hopeful. If, during the ministry of Jesus Christ on earth, He corrected the error of His disciples by the example of a living child, so, after the elapse of eighteen Christian centuries, He may, by the instrumentality of a dead child, both shake our false creeds, and "enlarge our scanty thought to reach the wonders He has wrought." Does not this hope of salvation for all dying in infancy indicate a departure from the heretofore historical theology of Calvinism on the subject? Most certainly; for that has largely been for infant damnation. Even the theological world moves—let us hope upwards. Nor must we fail to note here that other non-probationers, as well as chil-

dren, are saved through the grace of Jesus Christ without passing through a probation, during which their salvation is conditioned on free volitional action. Our ignorance of the mode of the administration of the saving grace in these cases, cannot make void the fact that the atonement in Christ brings salvation to all men ; nor should it eclipse our faith that God will impart the saving benefits of the atonement to all who do not wilfully reject them.

And with respect to all probationers of the race, that grace is given them, unconditionally, which is necessary to restore that moral balance towards holiness, which has been destroyed by original depravity. I do not mean that original sin has destroyed any constituent faculty of human nature. Original sin is only an accident, as distinguished from an essential constituent of the human constitution. But original sin has so deranged the action of the faculties of the soul in reference to moral good that fallen man cannot move towards holiness, volitionally, without the aid of grace. It is sheer sophistry to say of a totally depraved man, when totally deprived of grace, "He can be good if he will ;" because the fact is, he cannot *will* towards holiness, without the aid of grace. But under the gracious administration of God, that free power is given to all, unconditionally, which is necessary to restore the free mental balance towards holiness, and thus place them upon that moral level of freedom which is a necessary condition of their being placed on a responsible moral probation. As well might we consider the brute im-



pelled by animal instincts, or substances in the crucible of the chemist, to be on moral probation, as a totally depraved man without the aid of grace to be on moral probation. But, with graciously restored free power, we are placed at the helm on life's perilous voyage, and in spite of storms and false lights on the shore, we can gain the port of safety.

Without some power for good acting on man, we cannot account for the facts of human history, nor square them with the statements of Scripture concerning the condition of our fallen humanity. Most certainly, the Bible teaches the total moral helplessness of the merely natural man to moral good. But the whole history of man, viewed as inside or outside the lines of external Revelation, does not present one unrelieved mass of seething depravity. To account for the apparent element of good in man, some ascribe it to an universal natural ability to good in fallen man, independent of all grace. Dr. Tulloch, in a late work, entitled "*The Christian Doctrine of Sin*," says: "We look within, and we know that whatever may be our connection with a given order of events which hold us in their dependence, we are free to act—that if we sin daily, yet we can help sinning—that even when temptation is at its strongest we can turn away from it, and choose that which is right and good. Nay, we know that the right and good form the law of our being, to which we are truly bound; and not the wrong and the evil which yet so often binds us. There is that in us which is deeper than all sinful habit, and which

no force of original sin can overcome if only we give it free play." \*

This doctrine may be called by some *broad-churchism*, but I think it is *mis-called* "*The Christian Doctrine of Sin.*" Freedom to the right and from the wrong is freely admitted. But not by a naturalistic power inherited in fallen humanity, independent of Divine grace; but by grace given to all men, through Him who is at once the life and light of men. Let us take a glance at this "natural ability" philosophy of moral good in man. If there is inherent in fallen man naturally, a power to right and from wrong "greater than all sinful habit;" then it legitimately follows that man can never pass beyond the possibility of restoration to holiness, except by the annihilation of his natural powers. Again, if fallen man possesses, naturally, a power to good and from evil, which "no force of original sin can overcome," then it legitimately follows that original sin can only be a partial weakening of man's power, not a total helplessness to moral good, without the aid of grace. And furthermore, this doctrine of natural ability to good, independent of grace, departs from the Christian *super-naturalist*, and sides with the mere naturalist in religion. But it may be seriously doubted whether the Augustinian theologian will succeed in rejuvenating his own shattered constitution, or in shedding any light on the darkness of man's moral history, by transmigrating into the body of the equally sickly Pelagian

\* *The Christian Doctrine of Sin*, p. 197.

philosopher. It is only by a graciously given power for moral good acting on fallen humanity, that the fact of any good in human history can be squared with Biblical statements concerning the totally depraved condition of fallen man; and that all good in human history receives its rational explanation. The bestowment of universal grace sets aside *mere* naturalism as a useless hypothesis in theodicy, and Scripture statements concerning the total moral helplessness of man to moral good by original depravity, convicts it of falsehood. The truth is, without universal grace man's moral history is enclosed in tunnel darkness; but with it, the tunnel flames with light from above.

As God's government of man does not end with man's removal from this world, we must take a step onward. The judgment is now set. Now it is only by the bestowment of universal grace that we see a moral basis laid, for the approval of the doom inflicted on the finally persistent sinner by the Judge of all, on the last judgment-day. Suppose the sentence upon any man to be, "Depart, ye cursed, into the everlasting punishment prepared for the devil and his angels." Now, suppose that the man so doomed could truthfully say, "I was born in sin, and never had any power to avoid the sin for which I am condemned, therefore my doom is unjust." Would not the conscience of the moral universe decide for the condemned man? Certainly it would. And it is just because he had sufficient grace given to him, and that he will be judged not according to that which he had not, but according to that which he knows

he had, that the condemned himself will feel that just and true are the ways of the Lord. And this will be the judgment of all consciences on that day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to Paul's Gospel. But neither the conscience of approved nor condemned could possibly feel the justice of the sentence, if the condemned never had power to avoid the sin for which he is condemned. And if he was naturally depraved, and never had sufficient grace given him to overcome sin, he could not have avoided the sin. In the government of a naturally depraved race, the withholding all grace renders all condemnation for sin unjust. But the Judge of all the earth will do right. He will be just when He judges. And we can see even now that, like colours in the rainbow, justice and grace are blended in his rule over man.

But against this plan of universal justice, by the bestowment of free power on man through universal grace, in the moral government of man; objections have been urged, which, though often refuted, are still repeated, and therefore, demand continued refutation. First, it is said that "as this free power is demanded as a justice, it cannot consist with a system of grace." This plausible sophism has often been refuted, but as it is still repeated, I present once more the most concise refutation of it that has lately come under my notice, in the language of its author:—"Of an entire system a single part may be, as viewed in different aspects, both a justice and a grace. It may be a justice, because, if the other parts of the gracious system are

brought into existence, that part too must exist *in order to the completeness of the system*. Unless that part be supplied, the system is defective, perhaps *graceless*, or even *cruel*. But supply that part, and not only is the whole system *gracious*, but that part itself is pre-eminently *gracious*. The entire process of restoring Lazarus to life, and to the enjoyment of his friends, was a miracle of mercy. Christ was not bound to perform it. But to have granted him conscious life without the power of locomotion, fastening him for ever, consciously alive, in the tomb, would have been the height of cruelty. Was the additional grant of locomotion a debt? As a completion of the miracle of mercy, we answer, it was. The Saviour could not benevolently perform a part without performing the whole. But performing the whole, not only was the whole process, but every part of the whole process, benevolence and grace. So in the system of God, were He to bring the whole race into existence under the law of natural descent from a depraved parent, and under the impending curse of the Divine law, He would be obligated by His own righteousness to furnish the redemptive part. The system, as a righteous system, would be incomplete, graceless, and cruel, without the compliment of atonement. Furnish that part, and not only is *the whole gracious, but that particular part is pre-eminently gracious*." \* Thus we see that there is a harmonious blending of justice and grace in God's government of man. Grace is not ex-

\* *Methodist Quarterly Review*, 1861, p. 665.—Dr. Whedon.

clusive of justice in the Divine mind, but exclusive of moral merit in man.

Again, it has been urged that "it is no goodness to bestow free power on man, by grace, in order to probation." But if it is no goodness to confer free power by grace, it must be equally destitute of goodness to confer free power in creation, in order to probation. Therefore, the principle that denies goodness in bestowing free power to man, by grace, in order to probation, must also deny that it is any goodness to confer free power in creation, or in any way upon any creature, in order to probation. This excludes goodness from the whole intelligent creation, as all were created free. That argument resembles one of those overloaded, or ill-constructed guns, which, in being fired off, does more execution at the breech than at the muzzle. It seems there are some minds who can see no goodness in the creation of any being that is not placed under the law of necessary force. But we well know that the God of providence and grace has based the probation of some moral beings on free power given in creation, and the probation of others on free power imparted by grace; and in doing both He is just and good.

I conclude that sufficient has been said to show that hereditary depravity is the mental difficulty of man's moral history, and that the impartation of universal grace to man, through Jesus Christ, is its only solution. If the light of that grace does not remove every cloud from between our intellectual eye and the ways of

God with men now, it does point our eye to the bow of hope which has always spanned this stormy world; and it enables us to see that every revolution of the wheels of providence, assures us that we approach the revelations of that final day when—"the righteous saved, the wicked damned, God's eternal government shall be approved." And had it not been misrepresented by a large part of the theology of Christendom in the past, the Divine government of the world would be better understood and more widely approved of to-day than it is. One of the darkest chapters in the history of human thought, is that which represents the all-righteous God as an Almighty Moloch, dooming from eternity the intelligent creatures of His creative hand to endless suffering, for what they never had power to avoid, "for the praise of His glorious justice." One feels like asking, How did it come that so large a part of the Christian Church was afflicted with such a paralysis of intellect, and such an atrophy of conscience, as are manifested in such misrepresentations of God's governmental relation to man? As the misrepresentation is almost as pernicious as the denial of God, it may be confidently expected that when Church creeds and, so-called, philosophical theologies cease to publish libels on God's government of man, there will be fewer rebel voices raised in His kingdom.

To us who have the common salvation pressed on our acceptance through life, the deadly, damning sin is rejection of the life which it offers through faith in

the atonement made for all by Jesus Christ. Man can lay hold on eternal life, through grace; and he can, by sinning against grace, lay hold on eternal death. But he does either, in the full possession of free power to the contrary. If he holds on to sin to the end of this life, even the Revelation of grace holds out to him no hope of deliverance from it, beyond this life. His sin remains. Mere power could call a dead Lazarus from the grave,—

“But the deaf heart, the dumb by choice,  
The laggard soul that will not wake,  
The guilt that scorns to be forgiven,  
These baffle even the spells of heaven.”

Damning sin freely chosen, saving grace freely rejected, results in self-superinduced subjection to sin; and that soul removed from all counteracting influences to good, becomes “a wandering star to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.” But for that doom the sinner alone is to blame. And a bitter ingredient it must be in his cup of everlasting woe, that for his rejection of eternal life offered through the Saviour, he will be compelled by the law of his own conscience to feel a self-contempt that is bitterer to drink than gall. We may “pass on, nor venture to unmask that heart, and view the hell that’s there.” But from out all the providential darkness which surrounds us in this world, we may all be able to look up to the home of our Father above, and feel a well-grounded hope that one day we shall be in the full possession of the inheritance of the saints in light.



Even now, unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness. Though the Christian may be able to see some things now only through a glass darkly ; though he is subject to unavoidable suffering now ; though he must wait until the future for the entire repairment of the impairment of his nature by original sin ; yet, he possesses now the anchor-hope of a compensation-day coming, when all perplexities will be unravelled, and every murmur hushed for ever. In a hope which outlasts the smoking cinders of a ruined world, he waits for introduction to that world, of which it is said, "*There shall be no night there.*" Standing with undimmed eye in the unclouded light of that eternal world, we shall then see all this world's

" Obscure mystic symbols glow  
With pleasing light—that we may see and know  
The glorious world, and all its wondrous scheme ;  
Not as distorted in the mind below,  
Nor in philosopher's, nor poet's dream,  
But as it was, and is, high in the Mind Supreme."

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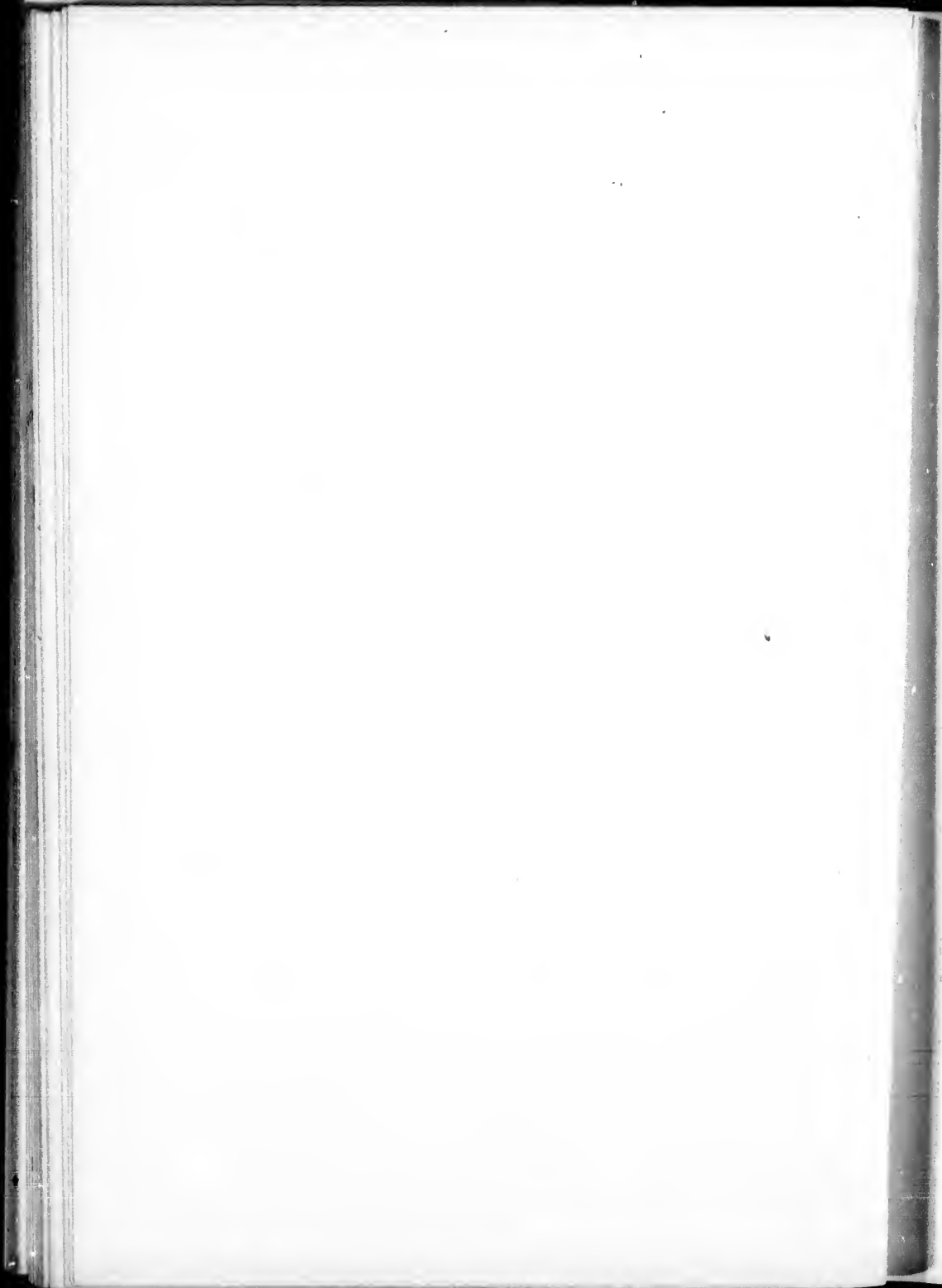
THE PRACTICAL TEST OF CHRISTIANITY.

A SERMON DELIVERED BEFORE THE THEOLOGICAL UNION OF  
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY, MAY 13TH, 1883.

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BY THE

REV. HUGH JOHNSTON, M.A., B.D.



# SERMON.

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## THE PRACTICAL TEST OF CHRISTIANITY.

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“The tree is known by its fruits.”—MATT. xii. 33.

OUR Lord here lays down the general principle, that nature lies back of effects: that what is good or evil in essence will be good or evil in results. The character of the tree is back of the fruit. “A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.” “Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?” Never. This principle is of universal application, and applies equally to individuals and to nations, to systems and to creeds. On this is based the scientific test. On it is based the Bible test of our holy religion. The gospel must be judged by its fruits. Christianity is a wide-spreading tree. Its roots are planted deep in the social soil, and intertwined with all that most profoundly affects the destinies of man. It is the most conspicuous, and widely-influential power on the earth: the mightiest factor in the world’s life, moulding the government and laws, the literature and morals of the best races of

men, and directing the currents of the world's progress. It claims authority over the conscience, over the affections, over the life of man, and carries with it promises and penalties that reach into the life beyond. It is of untold personal concern to each one of us, for in it are bound up the duties and the destiny of every soul that is feeling after some solid ground, some sure foothold on the floors of eternity. To uproot this tree would be to convulse the social world, and prove as fatal to the life of humanity as to tear a throbbing heart out of a living organism. And yet, this is the desperate work that infidelity is attempting. The adversaries of the Gospel are many, and strong. I do not believe that since the days of Celsus there has been a single infidel objection that has not been fairly met and answered; yet the old attacks are constantly renewed. Now, how shall we meet modern skepticism? What is the chief evidence of Christianity to-day? Shall we go back to the miracles and predictions of the past? It seems to me that the conclusive evidence is to be found in Christianity itself. Here is an impregnable defence. Christianity is a practical system: Let us apply this crucial standard of judgment, "the tree is known by its fruits," and we shall find that it challenges our confidence and gives ground for unshaken assurance.

#### I. APPLY THIS TEST TO THE GREAT BOOK OF CHRISTIANITY.

In history, a mere book is often a sufficient basis for faith. The truth of Xenophon's *Anabasis* is unquestioned, though not a monumental inscription marks

the retreat of the ten thousand Greeks. Not a trace of wall or palace is left of old Tyre; upon a more desolate shore you never gazed; and yet we doubt not the story of her ancient greatness. Pliny tells of a cloud of ashes that descended from Vesuvius and buried Herculaneum and Pompeii. The story seemed incredible, for there was not a trace of the lost cities. Yet men of faith began to excavate, and found walls, and temples, and dead men's bones, all in accordance with the statements of the historian; and to-day tourists wander through those silent, rut-worn streets and roofless houses, and read the open volume of city life as it existed nearly two thousand years ago. Now, the documents of Christianity from which we ascertain its facts and its teachings are the Holy Scriptures. Here is the most wonderful volume in the whole circle of authorship—the Bible—to *Biblion*—the *Book*—as if there were no other book, as if it were the one Book of the world. This Book claims to be of Divine origin—the inspired Word of God. It is indeed a *wonderful Book*.

(a) *Wonderful in its age*—Older than the Vedas—older than the sacred books of the Chinese—older than the Greek classics—the oldest book in the world. Written in the venerable Hebrew and the beautiful Greek, both of which became dead languages when the record was completed, there the Revelation abides unaltered—petrified in languages of stone that can never be changed. The earliest book of Job was written more than six centuries before the Iliad of

Homer; the Pentateuch is a thousand years older than Herodotus, the father of profane history; the Psalms of David are five hundred years older than the Odes of Pindar; while the completed revelations of Jesus Christ and His Apostles rank in age with the Latin Classics of Virgil and Cicero, Tacitus and Sallust. Made of paper, the most perishable of all materials, written upon rolls of parchment, it was copied with such unerring precision that the scribes could give the central letter of each book, and of the entire Scriptures; they copied not only every sentence, every word, every syllable, every letter, but, with scrupulous exactness, they measured every pen-stroke; and the latest copy of the Hebrew Scriptures does not vary a single hair's-breadth in extent from the first that was received. Thus it has come to us across the waste of thirty centuries, while copies of it have been taken from tombs that have been sealed up for fifteen centuries.

(b) *Wonderful in its sublimity*; for the brilliant passages of the sages and poets of Greece and Rome seem like the compositions of school-boys compared with the inimitable grandeur of Moses, the gorgeous imagery of Isaiah, the lyric poetry of David, the lofty reasonings of St. Paul, or the dazzling metaphors of John. From its glowing pages the master-thinkers of the world have drawn their highest inspiration, and the most gifted poets have struggled to set its grand conceptions in song, the divinest painters and sculptors to embody them in colour and

marble, and the great musical geniuses to swell them in oratorios.

(c) *Wonderful in the range of its subjects*; sweeping back to the world's dawn, and on to its day of doom. It is called pre-eminently the Book of God, because the great theme of it is that one, living, true God, whom no man hath seen or can see, but "in whom we live, and move, and have our being." How sublime its conceptions of Deity in comparison with any forms of mythology, ancient or modern, Egyptian or Hindu, Greek or Roman, where the gods, many, are such personifications of wickedness that the very worship of such beings corrupts and degrades men. It furnishes the only rational account of the creation of the world and the origin of man. Compare the simple and significant statement, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," with the childish fancies of the most civilized nations of antiquity concerning Chaos, and Erebus, and the starry Ouranos, or with the more recent scientific speculations about "molecules" and "atoms," "correlation of forces," "molecular machinery, worked by molecular force," "differentiation," "potentiated sky-mist," "highly differentiated life-stuff," "evolution," "natural selection," "spontaneous generation," and other phrases, whose mysteries are past finding out. What does star-eyed science tell of the origin and the destiny of man? The genealogy of the Bible ends with, "which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God. The genealogy of the High Priests of Nature ends with, "which was the son of a



hybrid, which was the son of a demoralized and tailless monkey, which was the son of a fish, which was the son of a frog, which was the son of a polawog, which was the son of an oyster, which was the son of a jelly-fish, which was the son of protoplasm, which was the son of bioplasm, which was the son of nothing." Now, I do not wish to undervalue science or philosophic inquiry ; but how weak is atheistic evolution to explain the mystery of a universe, self-made, without a God, by the side of the true Genesis of the Bible, which presents the world of life, "fresh-teeming from the hand of God," whose Infinite Intelligence directs and superintends all things ; for He "binds the sweet influences of the Pleiades, brings forth Mazzaroth in his season, and guides Arcturus with his suns." And as to human destiny, it only hath brought "life and immortality to light." Six thousand years of human existence have rolled away, and generations have gone down in ceaseless procession to the grave, from which has come no voice or murmur to tell "whether they sleep with the brutes or wake with the angels." The living have gone with their broken hearts, and hung over the remorseless tomb with a speechless agony, waiting, with heads bowed, to hear a whisper from that deep abyssmal darkness ; or, in the hush of night, they have looked up to the stars, and cried to the all-merciful Father and to the spirits above, for some ray of light or sound of the hushed voice. But no prayer of broken hearts, no cry of desolated homes, no wails and sobs that have gone surging up to the

heavens, have ever awakened a response from our darlings, or called back a messenger from the dead. Not one, not even a father asks,—

“Who is it that cries after us  
Below there, in the dark?”

Sit down with the philosophers and ponder the subject; search among all the other religions of the world, and you will find nothing but husks, and they will leave you desolate with an utter desolation. Only one voice speaks out of the silence and darkness, and with more than heavenly sweetness it says: “I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.” Wonderful, this book. It alone has truths that are vital to the race—truths for which the world has sighed and longed and wept—truths that go down to the everlasting granite of human existence.

(d) *Wonderful in its organic unity and completeness*: A library in itself, written by more than thirty different persons—enthroned monarchs and humble fishermen—sagacious statesmen and unskilled peasants—at vast intervals of space and time, forty centuries contributing their best things to it, these sixty-six books when brought together are found to constitute one book bridging over the entire course of human history from the creation to the final judgment; a harmony of design pervading all and running like a thread of gold through types and ceremonies, precepts

and promises, the same doctrinal truths taught, and all gathering around one majestic character and one sublime purpose—the purpose of Redemption in Christ Jesus. The magnificent cathedral at Strasburg is full of deformities because the architect died before the work was completed, and there was no one who could fully understand the plan which he had in his mind. But here are men of every shade of intellect and variety of endowment writing through the long period of fifteen centuries, these many and diverse books all linked together and making one work as absolutely perfect as though it were a grand epic by one writer, a unity which proves its author to be one and Divine, for no mind other than the mind of God could act over so vast a lapse of time and be 1,500 years in working out a common plan.

(e) *Wonderful in its moral teaching.* Inculcating every duty that we owe to ourselves, to our fellow-men, and to God. It is the great text-book of morals; the ultimate standard of appeal in human conduct, disclosing to us the will and purpose of a Being with whose will and purpose we are to be concerned forever and forever; telling the story of sin and of salvation so plainly that the Sunday-school children of our infant classes can understand them, with mysteries so profound that the student-angels as they bend over them may droop their wings wearily and ask God to give them rest, and time, and strength. It is indeed the Book of books, and claims to be God's written word. It has never shunned the test of logical inquiry,

and has defied the sharpest criticism of all the centuries; for from Genesis to Revelation the Bible has been in the battle, and all the while its armor has grown brighter, its sword keener, and its arm stronger. Have its wonder-laden narratives ever been falsified by authentic history? Never. Have its teachings ever been found in antagonism to true science? Never. Has the evidence of miracles ever been overthrown? Never. Have the prophecies ever been falsified by events? Never. Visit Egypt, now the basest of kingdoms, Philistia, Edom and Babylon in heaps, and Nineveh lying empty and waste, and the voices sounding to-day among their ruins tell us that prophecy came not in old time by the will of man. Tread the ancient land of Palestine, behold Jerusalem left desolate, Mount Zion literally a ploughed field, and wheat growing on the ground where stood the stately palaces of David and of Solomon. See brought to our very door prophecy fulfilled; for when the skeptical Frederick the Great demanded from his Chaplain in one word a reason for believing the Scriptures, he answered, "The Jews, your Majesty, the Jews." Behold this people, plundered and robbed, persecuted and scorned, a by-word and a hissing among the nations; yet for two thousand years preserving their nationality—a gulf stream flowing through mid-ocean never mingling its waters with the emerald walls that press on every side—the same people that received the law of Moses and that rejected and crucified our Lord. How is it that these old prophecies are fulfilled to the letter, that the Jews

should be scattered to the ends of the earth and yet be kept separate, while the other great empires march on in their predicted course? This book rests upon a rock of adamant. No discoveries in science have shaken its foundations; no facts of history have falsified its records; no changes in the modes of thought have superseded its instructions; and while the advancing tide of knowledge is sweeping away the false system of religion—while modern geography convicts the Koran as an ignorant imposture, and the microscope exposes the folly of the Shasters, and astronomy confutes the system of Confucius—the Bible retains its place and power, and with the growing light the truth of God shines brighter from the sacred page.

*Now the question comes, who wrote this Book? Is it God's book or man's? Did bad men write it? Impossible; for "like produces like." "Can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit?" Bad men write a book which enjoins all duty, exalts all virtue, is filled with sanctifying power and loads with eternal infamy every "hidden thing of dishonesty!" Such a book bad men would not write if they could, and could not if they would. Then, they were good men who wrote it; and if good men wrote it, it is true. Good men are not forgers and deceivers. They would not be found perjured witnesses of Jesus Christ, and say of the most stupendous fraud, "Thus saith the Lord." If this Book is not the inspired truth of God then it is the grandest imposture the world has ever known, and its "Hear ye the word of the Lord" is but the lying*

invention of fraudulent, designing men. If it is a bad book, how is that bad men hate it and good men love it? I hold every skeptic to this position. "The tree is known by its fruits." If this is a bad book why is it not found among bad men? Why is it not found in all our drinking saloons and in all the dens of gamblers, thieves, and debauchees? If this is not a good book why have all evil powers leagued together to extirpate it from among men? Antiochus sought to destroy it, but the fidelity of the Jews frustrated his designs. Diocletian, in his bloody persecution, issued an imperial edict that all the Scriptures should be burnt; cruel superstition has tried to blot it out, and boasting infidelity to demolish it; but the Book has outlived all its enemies, and "abideth forever." This Bible preserved through all the ages is now printed in some three hundred languages or dialects. Thirty-five copies drop from the press each minute of every working day, and its total copies scattered broadcast over the earth are nearly two hundred millions. Men may hate it, resist it, but they cannot destroy it. Lord Hales has found scattered through the writings of the Christian Fathers, to the end of the third century alone, the whole of the New Testament with the exception of less than a dozen verses, and now it is so interfused into almost all the books on earth that if every Bible were annihilated it could be reproduced again from current literature with not a missing thought. To destroy the Bible you would have to destroy all the literature of civilization. The Sibylline

leaves are torn to pieces and scattered, but this Book is imperishable—its voice has gone out to all lands ; it enters into all that we love and cherish ; it reigns over human thought and feeling, and is influencing the destinies that await the remotest generations. This Revelation is divine. Escape the conviction you cannot. Think of a book standing in unapproachable greatness, lifting itself above the mightiest thought and intellect of every age, like the peak of Teneriffe, or like Sinai, the Mount of God, above the level plain ; think of such a Book coming with falsehood to fill the world with honesty, coming with a conscious lie to teach consummate holiness, to inspire the affections, fill the soul with holy light, and hold the best hearts of the world through all the centuries. *You cannot.*

This Book has in it a self-evidencing power. You cannot read it frankly without feeling the Divine presence, and exclaiming, "Lo ! God is here ?" Who has not heard about John Newton, the blaspheming infidel, who one day was led to ask himself the question, "What if, after all, the Bible should be true ?" He was induced to examine it, and came upon the passage which promises the Holy Spirit to them that ask for it. He applied the test and found it true. The Spirit was given. He was awakened and converted. The raging profligate became a true believer, a holy, happy, experimental witness of the truth, and having lived a saint for fifty-five years, and having written some of the sweetest hymns that we sing, he died in the triumphant assurance of ever-

lasting blessedness. Now am I addressing any who from association with unbelievers, or who from reading brilliant but skeptical periodicals have begun to lose faith in the old Book that has lain neglected on the parlour-table, or the bed-room stand? Let me ask, have you acted fairly toward a book which professes to be the Word of God? Have you examined honestly and candidly its claims? If not, pause; though you have travelled far on the road of unbelief—stop; read the Book—read it thoughtfully, with an open spirit, and the secrets of eternity will lighten upon your eyes; read it earnestly, honestly, and just as sure as there is a God you will hear His voice, and feel the pressure of His hand. You will feel that God is a reality—the soul a reality—the eternal future a reality—and though the truth on which you have stood may have seemed before a fragile and storm-driven thing at the mercy of the awful waves, you will realize that adamant is beneath your feet, and that the foundation standeth sure and immovable. When the wounded soldier lay dying in the hospital, and the tender mother, who had journeyed far, was denied the boon of seeing him lest the shock should prove fatal, the kind nurse who sat beside the sleeping boy with her hand upon his forehead, allowed the mother to slip quietly into her seat, and place her hand upon the fevered brow. No sooner did he feel that soft, familiar touch, than with eyes still closed, he murmured, “That’s my mother’s hand? O! mother, have you come?”



So shall you know the touch of the parent-hand of God, and become a happy witness to the divinity and power of His word. This is the one ultimate standard, the present, self-attesting evidence that this Book is supernatural. "The tree is known by its fruits."

II. APPLY THIS TEST TO THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST,  
THE SUPREME HEAD OF CHRISTIANITY.

The one majestic presence which pervades the Book of Christianity, and runs through all its pages like the coloured thread which runs through every foot of cordage in the British Navy, is that Jesus of Nazareth, who has led, and is leading through all the ages, the moral progress of humanity. Of the four Gospels which tell the story of Jesus Christ, Matthew wrote for the Jews, the Gospel of the Messiah; Mark wrote for the Latins, the Gospel of Incidents; Luke for the Greeks, and John for the Church—the spiritual Gospel—the final picture of the Redeemer. Now, how do we know that the Gospels are true? They stand on their own authority. We can trace them back to a certain period as surely as we can trace back any writing of classic authors. "No single work of ancient Greek classical literature," says Tischendorf, "can command three such original witnesses as the Sinaitic, the Vatican and the Alexandrine manuscripts to the integrity and accuracy of the Gospel text? These Evangelists describe one who lived for thirty-three years a perfect life. They knew Him intimately; saw every act of His public life; heard His daily words;

witnessed the miracles which He wrought ; and they unfold His life as the Holy of Holies of Biography. Zeno preached a stoical virtue, but he was not personally moral ; nor was Plato, and even the highest and purest name of heathen antiquity grows pale and dull in the light of Christ's purity. Compare Socrates, the son of Sophroniskos, with Jesus, the Son of Mary. Compare Krishnu, the incarnation of Vishnu, the purest god of the Hindoos, with the incarnate Son of God, and he appears a lascivious and lustful monster. Of all the generations of men, He was the only one who ever dared to put the question, " Which of you convinceth me of sin ? " and the men of that age, by their silence, and of succeeding ages, by their speech, answer, " Not one." All unite with Rousseau in the testimony, " the life and death of Jesus were those of a God." Think of that lowly peasant, born in a remote corner of the Roman Empire, reared in a wretched village, no better then than it is to-day, the citizen of a despised nation, with no advantages of learning, no means of culture, pursuing His holy mission unstained and untainted, hated for His purity and goodness, at the age of thirty-three crucified and buried, but now alive for evermore, the crown and glory of the race, filling the world with His influence and power, all history past, present and to come, revolving around Him, His name set above every name, all mythologies, pagan Calendars, Yugas, Kalpas, Olympiads, City Foundings, Hegiras, having lost their meaning and become merged in Him whose appearing in Palestine has given the epochal date of

human chronology, so that every event takes its place before or after Christ—His name the only name in the universe that is strong enough to balance the ages upon itself.

Great is the miracle of His mighty works ; greater still the miracle of His words, but greatest of all the miracle of His life—the one model divine man before whom we instinctively bow and worship His perfectness. We cannot find one spot in the whiteness of the marble, or cast one sullyng breath on the purity of the mirror.

Is this record real or is it fiction—a mere myth—a Galilean idyl—a wreath of legends which the romance of the disciples festooned around the head of their Master ? Did these humble fishermen invent such a character ? Search all the romances, all the poems of the world, and then answer could these men, unpracticed writers, destitute of artistic skill, out of their imagination invent a character so pure, so lofty, so divine ? Impossible. Shakespeare stands colossal above all men that have portrayed character, and he is greater than his Hamlet. It would take a greater than Christ to forge a Christ, and if these Evangelists produced such a marvellous creation of fancy then they are greater than the Lord Jesus, and let us bow down and worship them. No. His life must have been real, or they, of all men, could not have portrayed it ; and, if real, then it is Divine. And this is the marvel of the record—they present Him as the

God-man. Here, too, is something beyond human conception, and the problem is to invent a Divine-man; to describe Him from birth to death in all His discourses and actions; perfectly human, perfectly Divine, yet so blending the Divine and the human that no flaw can be found. I ask could any mind, short of the Omniscient Spirit, paint such a picture?

*This Divine Man comes to seek and to save the lost.*—He laid down His life for us, and His crucifixion is the overwhelming tragedy of time. "He was delivered for our offences," and the cross stands in direct relation to the dark, appalling mystery of sin. His atonement is attested by actual experience, and it alone gives peace to the troubled heart; for in the absence of expiation man's conscience forebodes punishment, and only when we place the death of Christ between us and our sins in all their multitude and mass of guilt and weight of punishment, and by faith lay hold of His redeeming sacrifice, does the conscience find peace and the heart exult in the joys of salvation. Only the blood of Christ can wash Lady Macbeth's red right hand, and only this divine method of redemption can sustain in the supreme moment of life. When the good Bishop Butler drew nigh to death he trembled; but when one quoted "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin," a calm came over his spirit and he said, "I have read these words a thousand times, but I never felt their meaning as now." When the saintly Bishop McIlvaine, of Ohio, lay dying in

Florence, far from home, with childlike faith he grasped the cross, saying,

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in thee ;”

and when they sang

“Just as I am, without one plea,  
But that Thy blood was shed for me,”

“That,” said he, “is the whole of my theology ; let it be sung at my burial.” So our own Dr. Punshon lifted his eyes to the cross, and with his last breath saying, “I feel that Christ is a living reality,” was charioted away into His glorified presence.

Now apply the test to this greatest historical personality, “The tree is known by its fruits.” Is He what He claimed to be, the true God, or the greatest of impostors ? Do you say “He was only a good man ;” we answer, “Nay, for He deceiveth the people.” Is He a mere man ? How then has he such supremacy ? Alexander, Cæsar, Napoleon, have to live to establish and perpetuate their empire. Christ dies that He may make His truth mighty over all hearts ; and now, out of sight, out of hearing, crucified eighteen hundred and fifty years ago, yet He has more personal power than ever He had before He died, and millions upon millions love Him as no one else has ever been loved ; love Him more than a mother her child—more than a woman the idol of her heart ; love Him because He first loved them. Is He a mere myth ? Then explain

His power to create historical personalities second only to Himself—men that have made the centuries, like Paul and Peter, John, Augustine, Aquinas, Milton, Pascal, Luther, Calvin, Knox and Wesley. Let these personalities be dropped from history, and what would the world be? Why, the great men of this and every age, the benefactors of our race, have had their purpose and inspiration from Him. Do myths exert such influence? That influence, penetrating and pervasive as the atmosphere, has passed into the thought and spirit and blood of humanity, and the world cannot escape it. Our very infidels, who reject and deny Him, cannot escape Him; and standing up in borrowed plumes, with Christ's truth and Christ's thought and Christ's ideas, they proclaim their so-called religion of humanity. Of Him Goethe says, "He is the Divine man, the Holy One." Byron says, "If ever man was God or God man, Jesus Christ was both." And Tennyson sings:

"Thou seemest both human and divine,  
The highest, holiest manhood Thou."

He Himself declares, "Ye are from beneath, I am from above;" "I am the way, the truth, and the life;" "I and my Father are one;" "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Are these astonishing pretensions true or false? His self-assertion is boundless. "Follow me," "Believe in me," "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." Yet He is the model of humility and says, "I am meek and lowly of heart." Is this conceit? Theodore Parker,

dying, stroked his own forehead and said, "Noble forehead, it ought to have done something for mankind." He thought himself the pioneer of a religion that should last a thousand years. The other day, when in Boston, I passed the church in which he preached his great discourses, now a rendezvous of the Bohemians and Ishmaelites of society. How comes it that Christ's ascendancy over men increases with the ages? When Lepaux, of the French Directory, was trying to impose his new religion of organized Rousseauism upon the nation, in his difficulty he sought the advice of Tallyrand, who said, "I am not surprised at the difficulty you experience. To succeed I recommend you to be crucified and to rise again on the third day." The race is shut up to the cross of Christ as its only hope. Before Him the whole world withdraws its pretensions. He says: "Judge me by the fruits. The works that I do they bear witness of me." The most credulous thing in the world is infidelity; and the man who can believe that Jesus Christ, the leader of humanity, is a mere myth, or mortal hero, has not the faith which can remove mountains, but the credulity that can swallow them.

### III. APPLY THIS TEST TO INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE.

"The tree is known by its fruits." As a test of the essential truth of religion, the practical evidence must always be the strongest. The answer from a sun-lit soul,—the sense of pardoned sin, joy such as angels do not know, hope full of immortality, peace like a

heavenly benediction ; these give a confidence in Christianity which it is impossible to overthrow. The question which should determine the divinity and truth of religion is, what does it do for man ? Does it provide for his weakness, does it meet his needs, does it satisfy his spiritual nature ? If it does these perfectly, it must have been made for man, and it must be true, unless God is a deceiver, and the soul of man a lie. Sin is a great fact, and the pardon of sin is also a fact. The Gospel promises to a genuine repentance and hearty reliance on Christ the sense of pardon, peace of conscience, and the hope of heaven.

There are thousands upon thousands of the most cultured, most gifted and best of men, who can by personal experience bear testimony to the truth and reality of religion. If the religion of the Bible were false and could not fulfil its promises, it must speedily have perished from the earth, it could not have survived the experience of a single generation, for every one who put it to the test must have become a witness of its falsehood. But it has been submitted to the actual experience of two hundred generations, from the sainted Abel, who obtained the witness that he was righteous, down to the penitent who to-day has found peace and joy through believing. What witnesses in ages past ? Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, a persecuting Saul, a polluted Magdalen, a dying thief ! It saved Augustine, the young Roman, from his abominations and made him "a royal diadem in the hand of our God." It took Whitefield from the riot and ruin



of a village inn, and made him a flaming evangelist of the Lord. And Bunyan, of Gipsy blood, himself so wicked and blaspheming, that he was reproved by an abandoned woman, it transformed and lifted into the the Palace Beautiful, from which he looks out upon the sunny ranges of the Delectable Mountains, and points the whole world to the splendours of the Celestial City. The long line of witnesses come from the martyr fields, looking up like Stephen when the stones crashed in upon his brain, to see heaven open and Jesus standing at the right hand of God—witnesses from the Coliseum of pagan Rome, where timid women surrendered themselves to the devouring wild beasts, when a hundred thousand voices roared, “The Christians to the lions! the Christians to the lions!”—witnesses from dungeons and caves and sick beds, where human suffering has been transfigured into glory. Oh, this testimony of the dying, how precious it is! how many pallid lips have uttered it, how frequently has it been gathered up and consecrated by tears, where faith in Christ triumphed over every fear; when the grave had no terrors, and our farewells no sadness for them; when, as we moistened the quivering lips, we felt that we were ministering to angels, we knew that the sinking heart was already rising for immortality, and that the closing eyes already saw heaven open, and all the hills of God radiant with everlasting light.

How are you going to meet this practical evidence? What are you going to do with the testimony of the wisest and best characters the world ever saw, who

declare that they owe everything to Christianity; that it has redeemed them from sin, crushed out selfishness, tamed the passions, filled their cravings, refined their sentiments, uplifted and inspired their hearts, taught them how to bear sorrow, and triumph over suffering and tears. At the battle of Gettysburg the cannons were placed amid fruit trees, in which singing birds had built their nests. In the wild rush of battle when the guns opened their red throats and shook the hills, the little songsters were in an utter bewilderment of terror. But the moment there came a lull in the thunder of the artillery, they would spring up into the trees where their nests were, and pour forth their songs—songs on the battle field. So amid the conflicts of life, there are Spirit-baptized hearts that carol like the birds of heaven, and sing, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea."

How comes it that these experimental blessings are thus realized? There are many before me who are ready to declare that God for Christ's sake has pardoned all their sins, and they are accepted in the Beloved. They came to Him weary and heavy laden, and have found rest. Even those who have not felt its transforming power are familiar with examples of wondrous and manifestly real changes wrought in the life and character of men. Not long ago there dropped into one of our services an aged, trem-

bling sinner. He was a drinking, blaspheming old man. He had once been respected by all who knew him, the owner of an estate, and the head of a happy household. But drink had ruined all; his children were scattered, his wife had died broken-hearted, and he was left almost alone, eking out a miserable existence by standing on the street corners selling a few papers or a little fruit. But the cross was lifted up before the dim eyes of that ruined, reckless, helpless, hopeless, homeless man; and the blood of Christ was able to cleanse his sins away, and he was washed and arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints. The other day I heard him give his experience: his mouth was filled with grateful song, his heart with joy, as he spoke of pardon and peace, and the hope of heaven. He is walking from day to day in purity of life, living quite on the verge of heaven. What but the Gospel could redeem and save that outcast man and wretched inebriate? Did you ever hear of philosophy, or science, or culture, our best things short of Christianity, saving men from intemperance? Even infidels expect a man to be made better by becoming a Christian; and if he is immoral or inconsistent, they are the first to denounce him. I ask who does not believe that the world would be benefited beyond conception if all men should become sincere, enlightened, whole-hearted, perfect Christians? What would be the result if every one who heard the Gospel should obey its precepts and follow the example of the Lord Jesus? Why there would be no vice or

debauchery, no lying or theft—every parent would become gentle and loving, every child dutiful and respectful, every husband affectionate, and every wife prudent and good. It would fill our homes then with the aroma of heaven; it would empty our gaols and prisons, close up our criminal and police courts, and make the community so peaceful that the passing angels gazing upon the scene would exclaim, "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men!" The Gospel is its own witness. It bears its own fruits. A religion which produces such effects cannot itself be a delusion. Will you not believe it? If you will question the testimony of believers and regard them as fools or hypocrites, then test it for yourself. In an humble, prayerful, penitent spirit come to God in the name of Jesus Christ, and, my soul for your soul, you will feel His power to save. Deep down in your consciousness the sense of guilt will be gone, and forgiving love will take its place. You will be restored to the Divine image and favour and fellowship. You will know the truth, and realize that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation. I believe this. I preach it. I risk eternity upon it. There is nothing more true in all the story of time than that God does forgive sin and plant a heaven amid the affections of the soul. Nothing is more real and certain than our heart experiences; and if you will not accept the practical evidence of living Christians, if you will not judge Christianity by its best fruits, then we challenge you to accept the demonstration of Christianity, the demon-

stration of the spirit and of power. He that believeth hath the witness in himself,—the deep, restful, undisturbed repose of a soul that knows, that is thrilled with the inspiration of a celestial certainty.

#### IV. APPLY THIS TEST TO THE GENERAL RESULTS OF CHRISTIANITY.

The Gospel aim is two-fold—individual and universal; personal and social. The individual but leads up to the social, and the world is changed by changing its units. Men were found to become new men by becoming Christians; and thus from the very dawn of the Christian era there has been a defined and continuous society—the Church of Christ. It started weak and helpless,—without wealth or arms, patronage or power; no swords were for it, but many against it: yet, in the midst of fiery persecution and fierce conflict, it defied the lions and the flames, laughed emperors to scorn, and ere three centuries had rolled away, ascended the throne of the Cæsars with the royal purple on its shoulder and the royal diadem on its brow.

What a triumph was the early triumph of the Gospel over Greece, when she was the fountain of light to surrounding nations; and over Rome, when she was the supreme mistress of the world. The myriads of deities then worshipped—the Olympian Jove, Diana, Apollo, and Venus, Queen of Heaven,—were unable to confront those pierced hands, but fled into neglect and oblivion. The temples that shone with splendour

crumbled, and the idols fell. For a thousand years no human being has bowed the knee to Jupiter, chief deity of the Roman Empire, or hung up garments saved from shipwreck to Neptune, god of the sea. Doré's great picture—the "Triumph of Christianity"—which represents the heathen gods all fleeing before the genius of the new religion, while Jupiter, the father-deity, has wild terror in his face as his ponderous crown drops from his brow, is a true representation of idolatry utterly destroyed throughout Europe, for not an idol can be found from the Ural Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean.

"Our Babe, to show His Godhead true,  
Can, in His swaddling bands, control the damned crew."

True, there came an eclipse of faith, and the Middle Ages were a night of darkness that yet casts its dread shadow across the nations. But the morning of the Reformation came with a dawn of bright beams and an onward swelling life, so that in the eighty-three years of the present century Christianity has gained more adherents than in all the previous centuries together; and at the present rate of progress, before the twentieth century is rung out, the world will be restored and sitting at the feet of Jesus. The Church is the most amazing moral force ever exhibited in the history of mankind, and is indeed "the kingdom and royal dwelling-place of Christ upon the earth."

The chief blessings of the Gospel are spiritual and divine—blessings which uplift the nature and fill the

soul with holy light and life. But we shall not here confine ourselves to its saving and sanctifying effects, but trace its indirect influences as seen in institutions that bless humanity and uplift the race. But Christianity has saved civilization, and been the crowning benefactor of the world. We would not over-estimate its effects ; but it has worked in conjunction with other forces.

1. *Look at the influence of Christianity upon man's social condition.* What were the homes of Greece and Rome in the days of their highest refinement ? Reeking with every abomination, with no sanctity in the marriage tie, and woman utterly debased. Athens had become the corruptress of the world, and its shrines of consummate beauty were sinks of utter infamy. Rome was a cesspool of impurity ; and even Juvenal pictures her as a filthy sewer, into which flowed the dregs of every Syrian and Achæan stream. But Christianity threw a purifying element into the fetid mass. It raised woman from the abysses of shame, and enthroned her a queen amid the sanctities of a well-ordered home, until even the heathen exclaimed, "What women these Christians have !" And how it widened human charity ! What deeds of cruelty and horror are recorded on the classic page ! The wandering Ulysses, landing in Thrace, sacking a city and killing all the inhabitants, was but a type of the world at large, where plunder and murder were perpetual, and the words stranger and enemy were synonymous. Christianity sounded a condemnation of war, pro-

claiming it a revolt of brother against brother; and although the voice of Christ commanding peace has not been obeyed by all His followers, yet it has greatly lessened the barbarity of war, and on every modern battle-field there flies *the Red Cross of Geneva*, a flag which every nation is bound to respect—the symbol of that religion which, when universally received, shall give universal peace. Human life was everywhere held cheap. You have seen Gerome's picture of the Gladiatorial Fight: there is the crowded amphitheatre, in the arena the two combatants—the conqueror standing with uplifted sword over the wounded athlete, waiting the signal to slay or to spare—the Vestal Virgins voting for his death,—the Emperor, on whose nod a human life is hanging, carelessly eating a fig; while a hundred thousand are enjoying the spectacle of a man “butchered to make a Roman holiday.” Christianity, however, proclaimed human life a precious thing, and uttered a plea for the poor and weak. “Our charity dispenses more in the streets,” says Tertullian to the heathen, “than your religion in all the temples.” In our day it has covered the world with hospitals and asylums. Its spirit made Howard the prison reformer; Wilberforce the slave emancipator; Florence Nightingale the Crimean heroine; and Müller the orphan's friend.

2. *Trace its effects upon Liberty.*—The slave, when Christ came, was a “mere live chattel, an implement with a voice, a piece of property valued less than an ox.” Crassus, after the revolt of Spartacus, crucified



ten thousand slaves at one time ; and Trajan made the same number fight in the amphitheatre for the amusement of the people, and prolonged the massacre one hundred and twenty-three days. At the root of this "sum of all villanies" a blow was struck when our Lord said, "All ye are brethren;" and though He left the great world-despotisms untouched, yet He gave a moral force which did two things: First, it gave an inward spiritual liberty to the individual, whether master or slave ; and next, it made the creation of new civil institutions only a question of time. The Gospel is the nurse of liberty. Not only does she strike off the shackles from every slave, but she is ever the herald of national liberty as well.

3. *See its effects upon Science.*—Some of the wayward children of science, falsely so-called, who forsake their own domain to assault Christianity, and would like to banish God from His universe and set up their own crude speculations in the stead of His eternal truth, talk about the conflict between science and revelation. There is no such conflict. There may be a conflict between divine truth and many of the theories of scientific dogmatists. But theory is one thing and scientific fact another. In the domain of science we walk not upon adamant, but over a pathway strewn with the wrecks of vain speculations now utterly abandoned. So, many of the plausible theories of the day that stand in imposing semblance of truth will end in utter emptiness, and be recalled only with derision ; and men will wonder that they could ever

have been accepted as established truth. True science can tell us nothing but facts, and true science and true religion go hand in hand. Do you want the proof? Where but in Christian lands has science found its widest sphere, its greatest welcome, and its most splendid victories? Where do we find the brilliant discoveries of astronomy and geology, of chemistry and physiology? Where do we find the inventive genius that saddles the wind, bridles the lightning, harnesses steam, constructs the telephone and the phonograph, and makes the electric light an illuminating agent? Where? In Christian lands alone.

4. *Trace its effects upon Literature and Art.*—How Christianity enriches the human mind! She touches with her mystic wand the rude, unlettered mind, and out springs the divine angel of thought. Intellect is ennobled, and poetry, painting, music, architecture, literature and philosophy revive under her genial influence. The debt of mind to religion is like the debt of vegetation to the sun. Modern art is but the handmaid of religion. Greek mythology gives no more fascinating picture than that of the delicate and resplendent Aphrodite, goddess of beauty, who rose from the foam of the sea and hastened with rosy feet to the land, where grasses and flowers sprang up beneath her tread. What is that but a fable of Christian art giving form and expression to its ideals of beauty in the glorious marble of the *Pièta*, the divine sweetness of the Madonna, the Hallelujah Chorus of "The Messiah," or the immortal verse of Paradise Lost?

5. *See what it does for Commerce.*—Christianity creates a commerce wherever it goes, for it stimulates men to develop the resources of the earth, gives industry and peace, security to life and property, brands all dishonesty and meanness, and makes trade to be governed by honest, and unselfish principles. Other systems of religion never sustain great commerce. Where are the white-winged ships of Asia and of Africa? There is no reason, except in religion, why the sails of those great continents never dot our waters. In short, Christianity develops manhood, and gives the highest type of character. Bacon attributes Britain's greatness to her breed of men. What but the influences of Christianity have given that elevation of the race, that sturdy vigour which leads the world, and by which her little band of thirty thousand British in the heart of India holds up the banner of civilization against the mighty odds of two hundred millions.

The Christian religion is the moving and inspiring power in our modern civilization. It is the foster-parent of enterprise, wealth, and scientific culture; and behind the commercial, mental and moral development of nations is this mighty power of Christianity, which has given us all that is noblest and most majestic in our civilization.

Can a religion which brings forth such fruit, which has contributed so much to the advancement of the race, which rides on the highest wave of progress in science, and arts, and civilization, and purer morality, be a fraud and imposture? I know that the advocate

of the naturalistic theory will deny that Christianity has had anything to do with human development, and will ascribe everything even in advanced humanity to the cosmic forces of nature, and the influence of external circumstances. But this is no mere question of theories—it is a question of facts. Will any sane man deny that the world is different now from what it would have been if Christianity had not been revealed? Compare our condition with that of unchristian lands. “Look on this picture, and on that.” How is it that beyond the pale of Christendom all civilization is unprogressive? We know what are the affinities of our holy religion; how it combines with pure morality and chaste living, with learning, liberty, law; we know its effects on domestic peace, industry, and comfort. We know, too, the affinities of infidelity, for Emerson has truly said “that depravity is at the root of much of the free-thinking of the day.” Hume, the greatest name on the roll of unbelief, was a defender of adultery, taught that suicide and even murder was lawful; for he said that there was no more crime in turning a few ounces of blood from their natural channel than in diverting the courses of the Nile or Danube. We know the degradation of morals in England one hundred and fifty years ago, when the principles of infidelity were rife. We know the Reign of Terror, and of licentiousness, in France, when the Atheistic Council abolished Christianity as a religion, and decreed “There is no God, and death is an eternal sleep.” Society was disorganized; a very hell was kindled; the earth was

drunk with the blood of four millions of the best citizens of the land; until, in terror, Robespierre called the Council together, and they issued the decree, "The French nation believes in God and immortality."

Once again, we hold you to the practical tests. Can that religion be a fraud, a stupendous lie, which, aside from the spiritual and eternal interests of men, fits them for the enjoyment of civil liberty; stirs up invention and enterprise; aids and carries forward civilization; extends science and art; renovates the moral nature of man, and multiplies the comforts and blessings of humanity? Impossible. When the great discoverer of America entered the waters of the Orinoco, one of the seamen said he had found an island. "No," replied Columbus; "such a river cannot flow from an island, it must drain the waters of a continent." So this mighty river of Christianity which lights up the landscape with its brightness, and creates life wherever it flows, cannot have any human origin. Its springs are far off in the everlasting hills of God.

You who think that Christianity is on the wane, that religion is going to die out as a force in the world, let me ask—does progress lie in the direction of barbarism? Is the development downward? Shall the world go back? Shall civilization lose all it has gained? When something purer and higher in truth and morality than the Christian system can be found then we will abandon it, but not till then.

Says the author of *Ecce Homo*:—"Among all the

men of the ancient heathen world there were scarcely one or two to whom we might venture to apply the epithet "holy," while there has scarcely been a town in any Christian country since the time of Christ where a century has passed without exhibiting a character of such elevation that his mere presence has shamed the bad and made the good better, and has been felt at times like the presence of God Himself. And if this be so has Christ failed? or can Christianity die?"

Voltaire thought he was living in the twilight of Christianity, but it was not the twilight—it was the dawn of a more glorious day. It is yet morning with Christianity. Skeptics talk of the little that has been accomplished by the Gospel in these eighteen centuries. True, it has not overspread the earth and exerted all its vivifying power upon the hearts of men. It advances slowly—by suasion, not by miracle. Give the Gospel time. The period demanded by geologists for the deposition of strata and the building of our world is millions of years; and to adorn its surface, to lift up its mountains, and spread out its plains, and prepare it for the residence of man, enormous periods more. And in their theory of the Descent of man, to evolve him through all his intermediate forms, and get him educated away from his "poor relations" of the gorilla tribe, what ages do the evolutionists require? Will you not give as much time for the Ascent of man into the full stature of the sons of God? Will you not give as much time to transform a world of sinners into saints as to trans-

form a world of ancestral apes into men? Christianity has only begun its workings in the world; and as it multiplies its victories and advances its banner, behold its triumphs in homes refined and purified, hospitals and churches rising, art and industry expanding, manners catching a kindlier courtesy, science glowing with richer hues, literature kindling with nobler purposes, oppressions ceasing, and liberty triumphant. And as it widens over the world, from continent to island, from shore to shore, humanity is redeemed and glorified; our fallen earth ascends swiftly along the brightening way which leads to God, and as it mounts the empyrean, the sentinel stars which challenge its advance shall send reverberating from floor to floor, and from vault to vault, through all the aisles, and arches and pavilions of eternity, the onward, swelling chorus, "Hallelujah! The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ."

In conclusion, allow me to ask what is the extent of your belief in Christianity? Have you no positive convictions? Have you no personal interest in religion? Are your heart and life faithless, and are you living as if your *doubts* were true? Are you satisfied with uncertainties, and even guesses, in a matter of infinite moment? Or do you yearn to know the truth and do the right? Are you ready to accept Christianity in its Divine claims, though your faith is darkened by great shadows as you wrestle with the awful problems of eternity? Have no fear about your doubts if you are

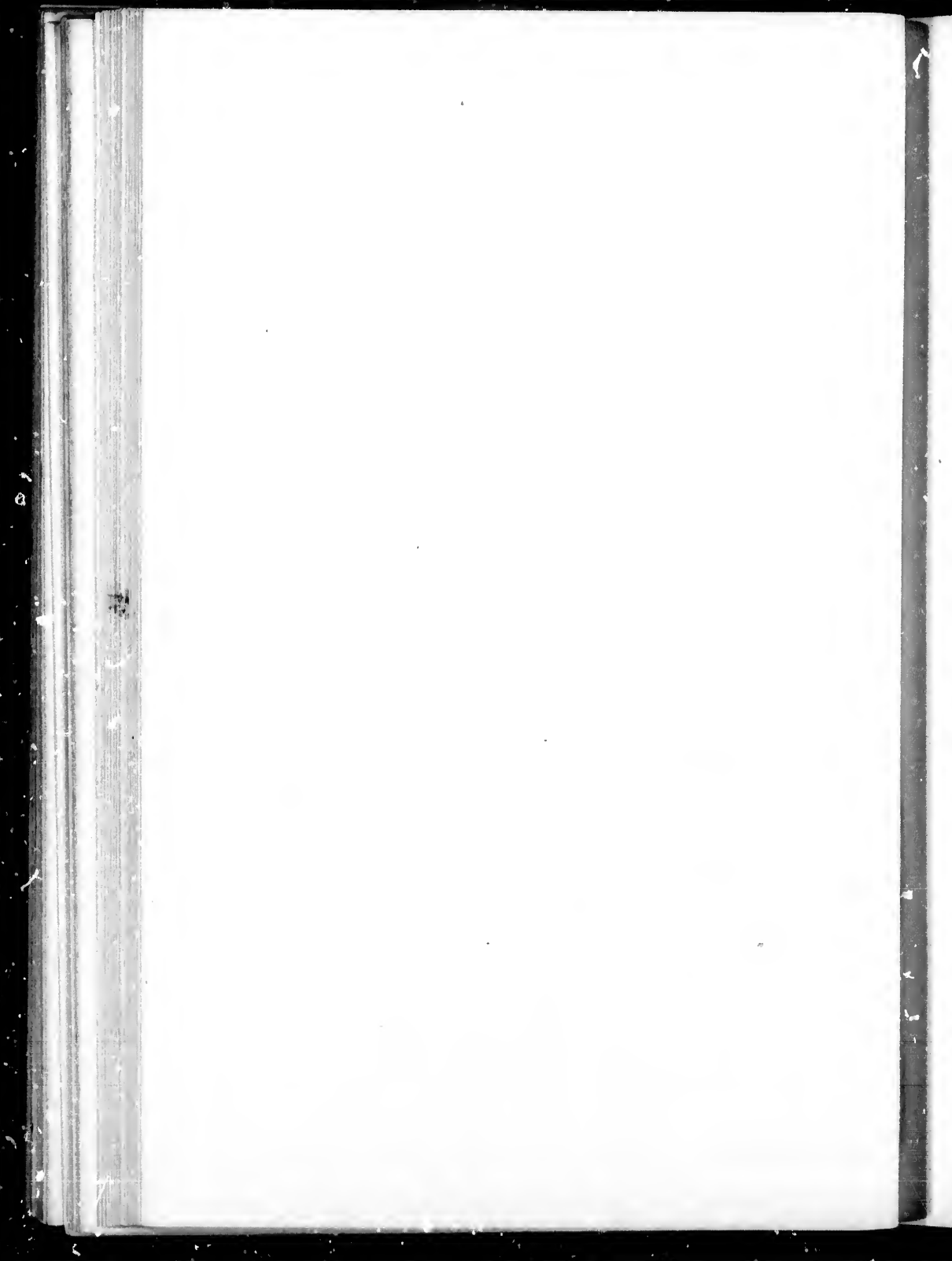
earnest and true. They will lead you into light, and as you fall

"Upon the great world's altar stairs  
That slope through darkness up to God,"

and stretch "lame hands of faith" upward, they shall be clasped by the hands that were pierced and you shall "see God."

Beloved, if these things are true, they are tremendously true. If this Book of Christianity is Divine, God help us to receive it, to believe it, to hold fast its doctrines, and adorn its truths. If the Christ of Christianity is Divine He still asks, "Why do you not believe me?" God help us to lay hold of His Cross and be saved through Him. If this experience of Christianity be Divine, God help us to feel its transforming power in our own hearts, for by this "we believe and are sure." If the practical fruits of Christianity abound in the beauty and magnificence of our civilization—in all that is beneficial to mankind—all that makes life best worth living—if it is so high and holy that we cannot even conceive a religion that could make men better or happier, then let us acknowledge its truth, confess its power, and have our fruit into holiness that we may receive the end of our faith, even life forevermore.





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FOR

FELLOW IN THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE (F.T.L.)

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The Course of Reading is to extend over three years, and to consist of Biblical, Historical, Doctrinal, or Apologetic studies. The character of the Course shall be optional, *i. e.*, the subjects or branches of study may be elected by each one reading; *Provided*, that two subjects shall be read for each year, one to be selected at the beginning of the Course and continued throughout, and the other varied from year to year. The thoroughness of the reading will be tested by a thesis, to be assigned on the 15th of March and returned by the 30th of April, and a written examination upon the books read by means of questions sent to each one reading, to be answered and returned with the thesis. All persons reading must send application for subject of thesis to the Secretary by March 1st, stating the year in which they are reading, the Course subject, the option selected, and the books read. Each subject should be studied in at least two authors, from a comparison of which an independent opinion may be formed; and a student must put in at least one thesis each year until the Course is completed.

## COURSE OF STUDY.

## FIRST YEAR.

1. *Biblical Study*.—The Life of Christ. Text-books : The Four Gospels ; Westcott's Introduction to the Study of the Gospels ; Andrew's Life of Christ ; Geikie's or Farrar's Life of Christ.

2. *Historical Study*.—The Reformation ; D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation ; Seeborn's Protestant Revolution ; Fisher.

3. *Doctrinal Study*.—The Atonement. Text-books : Crawford ; Randles ; Miley.

4. *Apologetic Study*.—God and Nature. Text-Books : Cocker's Theistic Conception of the Universe ; Dimon's Lectures on Theism ; Flint's Antitheistic Theories ; Blackie's Natural History of Atheism.

## SECOND YEAR.

1. *Biblical Study*.—The Epistle to the Romans. Aids : Lange, Philippi and Beet.

2. *Historical Study*.—Life and Times of Wesley. Tyerman's Life Smith's Methodism and Southey's Life ; Isaac Taylor's Methodism ; Watson's Reply to Southey.

3. *Doctrinal Study*.—The Person of Christ. Pope's Person of Christ ; Liddon's Bampton Lecture on our Lord's Divinity ; Glover's Historical Sketch of the Doctrine of Christ's Person.

4. *Apologetic Study*.—Rationalism. Hunt's History of Rationalism ; Fisher's Supernatural Origin of Christianity ; Mansell's Limits of Religious Thought.

## THIRD YEAR.

1. *Biblical Study*.—The Psalms. Lange, Perowne, Tholuck.

2. *Historical Study*.—Modern Theology. Dorner's History of Protestant Theology ; Rigg's Modern Anglican Theology.

3. *Doctrinal Study*.—Christian Perfection. Wesley's Christian Perfection and Sermons, with Burwash's Notes ; Fletcher's Last Check ; Pope's Theology, Vol. III.

4. *Apologetic Study*.—Inspiration. Bannerman, Lee, Elliott, Pope's Theology, Vol. I.

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A.	
B.C.L.	
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N.B.—All members who pay their annual fee of \$1 will be presented with a copy of the "Annual Lecture and Sermon."





7

# ETERNAL PUNISHMENT,

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM I. SHAW, M.A., LL.B.

# THE COMING ONE,

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM R. PARKER, M.A.

BEING THE SEVENTH ANNUAL LECTURE AND SERMON BEFORE THE  
THEOLOGICAL UNION OF VICTORIA COLLEGE IN 1884.

---

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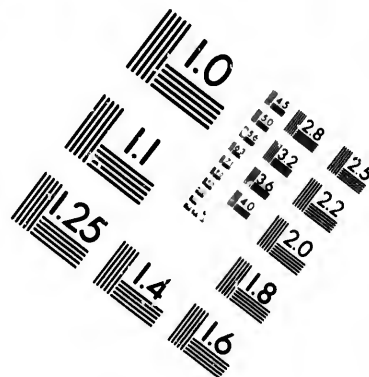
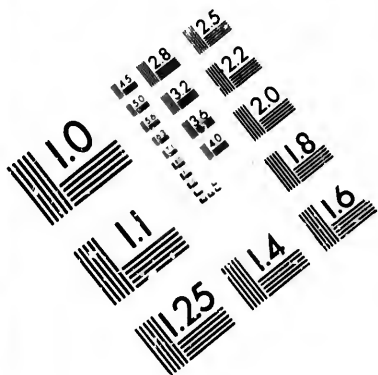
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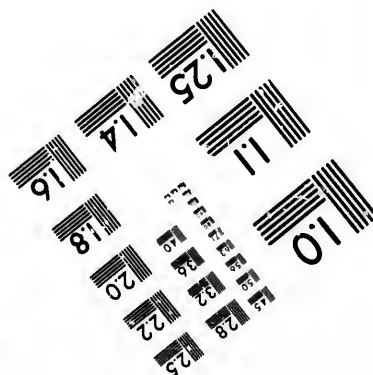
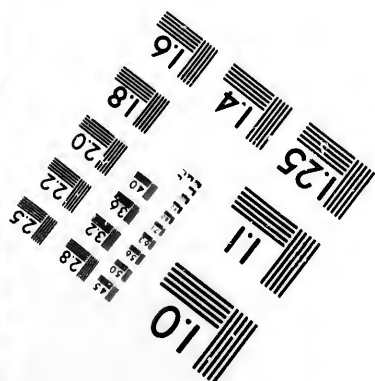
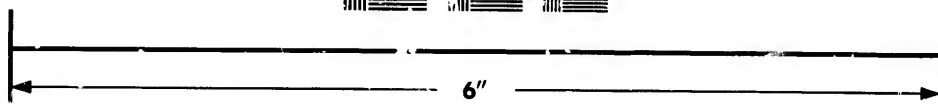
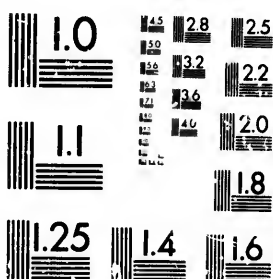
BY THE

REV. WILLIAM I. SHAW, M.A., LL.B.





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## Lecture.

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### ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.

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"IT is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," yet "the Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works." Again, "Sodom and Gomorrha are set forth as examples suffering the vengeance of eternal fire," yet "God retaineth not His anger forever, because He delighteth in mercy." How to reconcile these apparently conflicting declarations is a problem it would be extreme narrowness to ignore. The enigma of existence gathers most of its difficulties from the mysterious blending of light and darkness, joy and sorrow, happiness and pain. The grim spectres of sin and suffering flit among the phantoms of our earthly joys, and it is not strange that, wondering at times what can be the source of evil, we say with Dante:

The world, indeed, is even so forlorn  
Of all good, as Thou speakest it, and so swarms  
With every evil. Yet, beseech thee, point  
The cause out to me, that myself may see  
And unto others shew it; for in heaven  
One places it, and one on earth below.

One thing is clear, we are in a world of evil. However it is to be accounted for, the mystery of suffering confronts us on every hand. "It is appointed unto men once to die;" that is an article common to all creeds. If we can agree nowhere else, we find at the grave, a place where Atheist, Agnostic, Polytheist, Deist, and Christian are united in their assent to this universal truth. The Christian is no more obliged to explain this truth than his strange companions by that open sepulchre. Any one could state the problem, How came death and its concomitant sufferings? and as this strange group would consider it, one would be as much responsible for its solution as another. The dark fact of human suffering still stands all the same, whatever solution of the problem of its existence we may offer. But, passing the bounds of mere physical suffering, we discover that we are only on the confines of the gloomy domain of moral evil—a great dark empire of death reaching out so vast we feel certain it stretches away beyond the limits of time, and so blasts by its torments and ruins the victim of despair, that we feel the force of Pollock's description :

"A being that had burned  
Half an eternity, and was to burn  
For evermore, he looked."

But such tortures confront us even here and now. And their sulphurous fumes we recognize amid the scenes of earth's crimes and cruelties, the reek of alcohol, the debasement of virtue, the oaths of torments

already begun, the outrages of malice, the crushing of innocence, and the glowing hate of self, and of all beside. In all such scenes we find distinctly expressed three ideas: God, and justice, and hell. Were there no ray of hope piercing the gloom in this world; were there no Star of Bethlehem leading to light, and love, and purity; were there no revelation from the Creator of His gracious will, we would feel spell-bound by the bird of evil omen which the Poet of Despair has described:

Ghastly, grim, and ancient Raven, wandering from the nightly shore,

And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,  
And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor,

And my soul from out that shadow, that lies floating on the floor,  
Shall be lifted,—Nevermore.

But the mind, wearied and worried by the great problem of the existence of evil, finds satisfaction and rest at last in the sure word of prophecy which God has given us, and finds satisfaction nowhere else. I take my stand then, to-day, on the foundation of a few central truths thus divinely revealed, which I do not intend to discuss: 1st. God is. 2nd. The Bible is the only perfect mirror of His nature.

“Here the whole Deity is known.”

3rd. The Divine nature is equally marked in relation to man by goodness and severity, love and justice,

compassion and indignation. The Bible is a stereoscope to blend these in perfect harmony. Look at them without the proper use of revelation, and you have the confused outlines of two pictures—a very distorted conception of God. But look with both eyes, with both mind and heart, through both lenses of Sinai and Calvary at both pictures, and you see God as He is, infinite in mercy and inflexible in justice. 4th. Sin or a violation of God's laws is sure to be punished. Taking our stand, then, upon the basis of these certain truths, we propose for our study, as far as our brief time will allow: 1st. The doctrine of the punishment of sin, more especially as to the eternal duration of punishment. 2nd. Historical development of the doctrine of Retribution. 3rd. The objections urged against the teachings of the Bible on this subject.

#### I. THE DOCTRINE OF RETRIBUTION.

(1) A serious and intelligent man is not to be found to-day who will claim, as did the early Universalists, that sin and virtue are equitably punished and rewarded in this life. The fact that men of putrid character and vilest lives live in worldly ease and plenty, while the most virtuous noblemen of heaven have to struggle with want and adversity and indescribable tribulation, is a fact that even a very limited observation of human experience will readily recognize. The oldest writer of the Bible, from the depths of his desolation, was constrained to ask: "Wherefore do the wicked live, become old; yea, are

mighty in power? Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them." The Psalmist Asaph tells us that the study of this problem was too painful for him, until, he says, he went into the sanctuary of God, and understood the destiny of the wicked. Eternity needs to be taken into the account to perfect the equation. Neglecting to go into the sanctuary of serious and prayerful thought and of Divine teaching, we are in danger of adopting Dryden's words:

"Yet sure the gods are good ; I would think so,  
If they would give me leave ;  
But virtue in distress and vice in triumph  
Make atheists of mankind."

Our present life is manifestly not the scene of perfected rewards and punishments. Whatever views may be entertained on this subject, all men are beginning to protest against the unreformed villain and his innocent victim entering the same heaven, and are demanding that the former, in some place and in some way, be purified from his wickedness before he can be admitted to the abode of the blessed. Paint as you may, in darkest colours, the sorrows of the wicked here; represent them as the troubled waves which cannot rest; be as eloquent as possible in depicting the gnawings of remorse, and their being pursued through all the mazes of pleasure by the horrid spectre of guilt; still, when you have made the picture as black as possible, one fact yet stands which overthrows the

flimsy structure of Universalism—the fact that the innocent here suffer with the guilty, and often more than the guilty. If God be just, there must be compensation for this inequality in another world.

(2) Again, I believe that the impenitent soul passes at death into a state of torture in Hades, from which it will pass at judgment into the torments of Gehenna. By Hades, as the derivation implies, I simply mean the invisible world or intermediate state occupied under different conditions respectively by saved and unsaved until the general judgment, for “God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world.” With this intermediate state I do not mean to associate any purgatorial or disciplinary agency to any of the respective degrees represented by Dorner, Farrar, Pusey, or the Roman Catholics. That there is implied, on the part of the lost, a consciousness of suffering in Hades, in opposition to the error of Psychopannychy, or sleep of the soul, is manifest from the case of Dives, whose torment must be regarded as anterior to the general judgment; for his brothers, for whom he is solicitous, are represented by Christ as yet in a state of probation.

(3) Again, I believe that the material elements of sulphur and fire, and all the concomitants of intensest physical agony in Gehenna, are to be understood in a figurative sense, even as in the apocalyptic description of the celestial state there are used the highest types of joy and splendour, harp and song, and crown and gold, and emblazoned jewellery. This interpretation

was adopted by Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, and John of Damascus. I have all respect for many wise and good men who have interpreted these things literally, but I think I am not mistaken when I say that a figurative interpretation is the one seriously entertained by the great majority of Protestant ministers to-day. Even the Roman Catholic theologian, Perrone, notwithstanding the materializing interpretation so common in his Church, says: "This alone is matter of faith, that there is a hell. All the rest, as to the place or nature of the punishment, are not matters of faith. For, as Petau says judiciously after Vasquez, 'By no decree of the Church, nor in any Synod, has it been defined, viz., either that the fire is corporeal, or that there is a place under the earth where the demons and the lost are tormented.'" By this method of interpretation I do not think there is implied any mitigation of the sufferings of the lost. On the contrary, as symbols are always less than the things signified, if the agony of physical burning be so intense—the most acute we know of—how much more intense will the reality be, as represented by "the worm that dieth not and the fire that cannot be quenched?"

(4) Again, I believe that every lost soul is in a state of confirmed enmity to God and opposition to His law. The doctrine of universal tendency to permanence of character is not new with Joseph Cook; for, as far back as 1702, Archbishop King, in his "Origin of Evil," reasons that "as our limbs, when distorted, become incapable of their normal action, so

by persistency in sin we become utterly incapable of reformation." This doctrine is not without some serious difficulties. Only this point in it we observe at present, viz., that with the cessation of probationary privileges and influences, the soul, whether previously confirmed in sin or not, now of necessity is helplessly under its sway. Of course, this view implies a complete rejection of the Pelagian idea that the human will in the lost has the power of submitting to God and of originating, when unaided, holy volitions. To my judgment, the Scriptural doctrine commends itself of the complete moral impotency of man. It follows that if the supernatural aids provided for all by a universal atonement are withdrawn, the soul reaches the point mentioned of confirmed and irreversible antagonism to God and to all that is good. Everything then hinges upon the question, Do these supernatural aids terminate at death? That they do is clearly manifest from the fact that this is made the whole ground of appeal to the sinner, so far as his peril is concerned. Says the Wise Man, "There is no work, nor device, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest," and therefore he appeals to us, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." This seems like the cry of desperation, as if the chance of rescue were so brief that the one opportunity now offering were the only one; and so, as with terrific earnestness, Paul calls to our careless world, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." There would be no sense nor honesty in



this mode of appeal were it not for this solemn consideration, "They that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth." The Apocalypse, whenever written, and whatever interpretation we may give to its mysterious predictions, most certainly refers in its closing chapter to the consummation of all things, when "they that have right to the tree of life shall enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs (*i.e.*, spiritual Gentiles, the uncircumcised in heart), and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." Like the awful knell of the darkest doom to men responsible, guilty, and lost, even this gospel of mercy, in its closing passages, has to say, "He that is unjust let him be unjust still, and he which is filthy let him be filthy still." The gulf that separates the lost from the redeemed is described by the Saviour as a "great gulf fixed," and equally fixed are the characters on each side of it. That this impassable gulf will at some future age be bridged there is not in Scripture the slightest ray of hope. If such should ever be done, the prophet of Nazareth might indeed be suspected of decidedly misleading, by his teachings, an immense number of the most honest and competent enquirers after truth. Both Hades and Gehenna I regard, with reference to the finally impenitent, as a state of confirmed enmity to God.

(5) Again, I consider that in Gehenna there are constant violations of the divine law, which themselves merit their consequent retribution. I accept

the statement of an able English Universalist, Mr. Vidler—"A rational creature cannot be without law either in heaven, earth, or hell." Sin is sin as much in hell as on earth, as much a million years hence as to-day; and the "cursed" that will be driven at the day of judgment "into everlasting fire" are such because they are sinners deliberately committing themselves to an eternal career of sin. Christ refers to them in His declaration, "He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but shall be in danger of eternal sin" (Mark iii. 29). This reading of *ἀμαρτηματος* instead of *κρισεως*, it is well known, is sustained by the leading uncial and many cursive MSS. and versions, and implies that to "quench the Spirit" and persist to the last in opposing the gracious influences of heaven's rescuing mercy, is to abandon one's self to an eternal rebellion against God. I know not how such a condition of antagonism to God's law can escape the righteous indignation of the Most High. Nemesis, the daughter of Night, silent and swift of foot, hovers upon the track of the wrong-doer, pursuing him with certain vengeance, whether it be in the fall of the angels, the sins of earth, or the crimes of hell. Canon Farrar, in his sermon on "The Consequences of Sin," depicts most faithfully and forcibly the certain punishment of the transgressor. I think this law will operate eternally.

(6) Again, I believe that the statement, though plausible, is misleading, that sin is its own hell. Marlowe, in his *Faustus*, expresses it:

"Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed  
In one self place ; but where we are is hell ;  
And where hell is, there we must ever be."

I admit that sinners are punished in part by sin as well as for sin ; but to maintain that sin is its own and only punishment, is to ignore the clearest operations of punitive justice both in God and man, and to deny simple facts. If sin brings its own punishment, how is it that the more a man sins the less really he is punished ? Scripture makes frequent reference to those having their conscience seared with a hot iron, "who being past feeling, give themselves over to work all uncleanness;" whom "God gives over to a reprobate mind, and sends them a strong delusion that they should believe a lie." The principle we are opposing, so dear to Latitudinarians, and inspiring much of their eloquence, is simply absurd. Parents, masters, and rulers, all reject it. Society does not say of a villainous murderer, Poor fellow ! he has had punishment enough in the ever-haunting spectre of that white face of his innocent victim and in the lashings of his tormenting conscience. No ! Society demands that, being convicted, he should be judicially punished, and he is hanged ! I regard hell as a state of punishment as well as of remorse ; and punishment implies legal process, the sentence of law executed by legal authority whether the culprit's conscience be seared or tender. The terms employed in Scripture to represent the sufferings of the lost, imply something positive and objective to their remorse. They are "cast into it," they are

"tormented in it." "It is the furnace of fire," "the lake of fire." These are allusions quite foreign to the self-acting of the soul. "The stripes," "the horrible tempest," "the taking vengeance," "the tormentors," "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish." This all means suffering from without. This penalty is not personal revenge on the part of God in the sense of vindictiveness, but it is the necessary operation of divine law, the cessation of which means that God ceases to be. Paul tells us that "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, who shall be *punished* with everlasting destruction" (1 Thes. ii. 9); and Peter tells us that the unjust are reserved "unto the day of judgment, to be punished" (2 Peter ii. 9). The Gnostic view of the third century, represented by the school of Valentine, held that divine justice simply means righteousness or integrity and that the idea of punitive justice is directly opposed to divine benevolence. This idea was revived by the Sozzini in the sixteenth century, and among many of their followers to-day it is held in high favour. Only one alternative is possible on the acceptance of this view, and that is the rejection of the authority of the Scriptures; for the wildest and most reckless exegesis cannot eliminate from them the awful utterance, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Indeed, it is not clear which is the more terrific, nature or the Bible, in its utterance that violation of law must invariably be punished.

(7) Again, I believe that the number of the lost will be small in comparison with the number of the saved. Canon Farrar's works, "Eternal Hope" and "Mercy and Judgment," in my opinion, owe nine-tenths of their popularity and destructive influence to attributing to the orthodox three views that are for the most part monstrous, and are doomed to universal rejection by the Church. One of these is the Calvinistic doctrine of reprobation; another, is the possible damnation of infants; and the third, is the view which he perpetually attributes to defenders of the Scriptural doctrine of retribution, more especially in his sermon on "Are there few that be saved?" viz., that but a small company, an elect few, constitute the redeemed, while hell is teeming with an immense majority of the human race enduring the most intense agony of corporeal suffering. I reject and spurn these monstrous errors as a blot upon God's character and a disgrace to Historical Theology; and I am persuaded that I am not alone here. I think I know at least where 35,000 ministers may be found, leaders in the most aggressive form of Christianity the world has known, who resent with contempt the imputation of any of these views; and, in my opinion, the great majority of Protestant ministers outside of Methodism, are equally agreed in their rejection. Referring now to the third of them, I hold that the disposition of the Church is not to represent the redeemed as a favoured *coterie* about the divine throne, an oasis in the great desert of moral ruin in the universe. "The Church," it has been beautifully said by

Dr. Pusey, "has its long list of saints; it has not inserted one name in the catalogue of the damned." Any of our preachers before passing through probation, acquires skill in proving scripturally and effectively by our Arminian interpretation of truth, that the majority of the human race will be saved; and many go so far as to hold that the lost, including men and angels, will be in proportion to the saved, as incarcerated criminals are to law-abiding citizens in our community. Without committing myself to what this last comparison implies, I am satisfied that the great majority of our race will be found among the redeemed. This must at once appear from the fact, that the majority of human beings die before reaching years of accountability. Add considerable numbers of others who are likewise irresponsible, to whom the inheritance forfeited by Adam's sin will be restored by the world's Saviour. Add, according to our Arminian interpretation of Chapters I. and II. of the Epistle to the Romans, which Whedon discusses so ably in his immortal work on "The Freedom of the Will," under the title of "Equation of Probational Advantages," a considerable number of heathen, who, while striving to live in harmony with the light they have, show that they trust the mercy of the Supreme Being for the forgiveness of delinquencies of which they are conscious. Add the ever-growing multitudes of believers whose numbers will increase with accelerated rapidity as we approach the millennial triumph of the Gospel. Add these together, and you have "the multitude which no man could number," a vast majority of our ransomed race.

I have thus stated seven elements of the doctrine of the punishment of sin, as they commend themselves to my judgment: 1st. It must reach beyond this life; 2nd. Its tortures begin at death, in Hades or the Intermediate State; 3rd. It does not necessarily imply corporeal sufferings; 4th. It implies confirmed antagonism to God; 5th. It implies in the other world a career of sin, itself meriting corresponding punishment; 6th. It is more than remorse—it is a positive and judicial infliction of punitive suffering; 7th. Only a minority of the race will be consigned to such torment.

(8) The great question still remains, in case the above views be accepted, What Scripture evidence is there of the eternal continuance of this punishment? If the admission of an opponent could settle this question, it is closed at once with the statements by Theodore Parker, in his published sermons: "I believe that Jesus Christ taught eternal torment; I do not accept it on His authority." The candour of these words is only surpassed by their impious boldness.

Without repetition of what I have said in another connection, the eternity of the torments of hell, I remark, is evidenced by the cessation at death of all probationary opportunities of salvation. This is implied in the exhortation, "Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear," "Redeeming the time," "Lay hold on eternal life," "Seek the Lord while He may be found," "While it is said, To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." After death comes what? the judgment. This we know with certainty,



but of a *post mortem* probation we know nothing, absolutely nothing, from either nature or the Bible. The remark of Baxter, in his treatise on the Christian Religion, is here very appropriate: "How foolish a thing it is to go from the light of a plain revelation and scripture, and argue from our dark uncertainties."

Again, all Scripture that represents the Atonement of Christ as the only means of the restoration of the sinner, absolutely precludes any efficacy attaching to a supposed *post mortem* discipline which does not belong to the power of the Cross. In other words, this view I have mentioned, if correct, supersedes entirely the necessity of an atonement, and the whole scheme of grace. It makes the restoration of the lost a matter of personal merit, and the greatest blunder in the government of the Universe was when the divine Christ went, unnecessarily, through the agonies of His passion, to save those who can as well be saved by a brief period of discipline in hell. Heaven itself would be amazed at the appearance, after some period relatively brief, among the ransomed throng, of those who have served out their time in torment, and who now come, not "with their robes washed in the blood of the Lamb," but with the smell of purgatorial fires upon them; who, poor abjects, have been conquered, not by love, but by that oft abused consideration, the fear of torment. How startling to all such dreams and delusions comes the word, like a thunder crash, from Jehovah's lips: "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth



no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries."

It may seem strange to some that the tender, loving, gentle Saviour is the great announcer of the solemn truth of man's danger of eternal ruin. Says the Rev. Dr. Hamilton, in his very able Congregational Lecture in England, in 1847: "It cannot escape our notice, it cannot but awaken our surprise to find more terrible descriptions of future punishment in the teachings of Christ than in the former dispensations, where they might seem more appropriate. We are prepared for the blasts of the trumpet, which ring out from the precipices of Sinai; for its 'blackness, and darkness, and tempest.' We are prepared for the curses of Ebal. But when we enter this dispensation, we await the meekness and gentleness of Christ. We expect an infinite tenderness, and we find it. He pleads to weeping, He agonizes to blood. Yet what voice ever told so much of hell? He reiterates illustration after illustration, He heaps image upon image, He adds warning to warning. Like successive and loudening thunder-peals these repetitions roll along until startled sinners are made to realize the terrors of the place 'Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.'" These last words are quoted by Christ from Isaiah lxvi. 24, where they manifestly refer to the ungodly, as also in the apocryphal book of Judith, xvi. 21. "For he will give fire and worms into their flesh, that they may burn and feel for ever." The

torments referred to by Isaiah are associated with the Valley of Hinnom, or Gehenna. The fires of this valley were first kindled for idolatry; afterwards, to debase the scene of moral pollution, the refuse of the city of Jerusalem was heaped there and burnt; and so, says Isaiah, at the very end of his prophecies, after describing the new heavens and the new earth, "They shall go forth and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me, for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched." At the time of Christ, this geographical term, with its terrible associations, was used to represent the eternal torments of the wicked. For a full statement of this point, and discussions as to the evidence of the Targums and Jewish testimony in general, I can confidently refer to Bishop Merrill's "New Testament Idea of Hell," chapters x.-xiii., and to Dr. Pusey's "What is Faith?" pp. 47-96. He, indeed, would be a "Son of Thunder" who would preach the terrors of the law as fully and as faithfully as did Christ. In His merciful incarnation He thus appealed to the obdurate: "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" In His judicial glory He declares He will say to them, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." The entire Bible harmonizes with such teachings: "The smoke of the torment of the wicked ascendeth up for ever." "They have no rest day nor night." "The wicked shall dwell with everlasting burnings." "The beast and false prophet shall be cast into a lake of fire, and shall be tormented for

ever and ever." And just here notice the significant words of Jesus, "the Lord who weigheth the spirits," relative to Judas, "It had been good for that man if he had never been born." Nay, Divine Teacher, we cannot believe Thee, if Restorationism be true, for if, after the lapse of ages, heaven be gained, it would be "good for that man" that he ever saw the light. His would be later but, after all, eternal glory that would counterpoise any conditions, that would repay the torments of the lowest depths of hell. But, alas! to the wicked is reserved "the mist of darkness for ever," and "the blackness of darkness for ever," "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." "They shall be tormented day and night for ever." Anticipating these fuller revelations of the New Testament, from the Old there come the significant words, "They that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt," harmonizing with Christ's words, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into everlasting life." I know the interpretation that Restorationists have given to the word *κόλασις* here as if it meant only disciplinary suffering, but I also know that the same word may be consistently used as a synonym for *τιμωρία*, or punitive suffering in the only three other places, where it occurs in the New Testament, and forty times in the LXX., is the word so used. Among classical writers so employing the word there may be mentioned, *e.g.*, Plutarch, who was born in the apostolic period, and fifty times does he use the words *κολάζω*

or κόλασις as involving τιμώρια, or the judicial sufferings of the wicked. Prof. Sophocles, recently deceased, a Greek lexicographer and distinguished Professor at Yale College, in his Glossary of later and Byzantine Greek defines κόλασις as "punishment, torment, and damnation," referring for his authorities to the New Testament, to the apostolic institutions, and the Greek Fathers. It is interesting to enquire just here what disciplinary design, in any case, can appear in this κόλασις or punishment that awaits the wicked if it be everlasting.

This leads me to the enquiry as to the meaning of the adjective αἰώνιος or its equivalents, found in so many of the passages I have quoted relative to the eternity of perdition. There is a general readiness to recognize the adjective αἰδιος as being derived from αἰεί, ever, but the contention of some Restorationists is that αἰώνιος is not so derived. It would be a convenience if they would tell us what is its derivation. Aristotle is probably a competent witness here. He says, *De Cælo* i. 9: "The boundary that incloses and comprehends all time and space is αἰών, a continuous existence immortal and divine, deriving its name from αἰεῖ εἶναι." I think we may safely challenge any opponent to show cause why αἰώνιος should not be rendered *ever-lasting*. But Canon Farrar defines αἰών as simply "something above and beyond time," "an age, an indefinite period, long or short." That is because it is not said when it will end or that it positively will last for ever, therefore it will not last for ever. In other words, because

it has no end, therefore it must have an end. I really cannot discover from searching the views of various restorationists on this critical point that their argument has any more validity than what I have indicated. I know how we are reminded of our frequent use of such expressions, eternal rocks, mountains, etc., and the Poet Laureate has befriended the Restorationists by stamping his authority upon the newly-coined word *aeonian*, as he speaks of "the *aeonian hills*." With reference to all such uses of the word *αἰώνιος*, I think the view of Moses Stuart, in his discussion on Future Punishment, is incontestable, viz., that this adjective implies such a perpetuity of existence as is possible in the nature of the subject, that eternal hills means, for example, hills that will last as long as it is possible for hills to last, and "eternal punishment" means punishment that will last as long as the immortal soul being punished can last, that is, for ever. I have not time to apply this to the various instances cited from classical writers in which these words *αἰὼν* and *αἰώνιος* occur, but I think the principle stated will stand the test of such an examination. In the New Testament the word *αἰὼν* is used ninety-five times, and always in harmony with this principle; sixteen times in praise to God; five, relative to the divine existence; four, the kingdom of Christ; one, God's word; eighteen, as *ever*, with the negative *never*; seven, an indefinite period in the past; twenty-nine, in the sense of age or world, either present or future, Jewish or Christian; nine, future happiness of the righteous; and five,

future punishment of the wicked, viz., Mark iii. 29 ; 2 Peter ii. 17 ; Jude 13 ; Rev. xiv. 11, xix. 3, xx. 10. A similar analysis, showing the use of the adjective *αἰώνιος* in the sixty-six passages in which it occurs, strongly establishes the view that has been stated, fifty-one instances having reference to the everlasting benefits of the atonement, and six to the endless perdition of the lost, viz., Matt. xix. 8, xxv. 41-46 ; Mark iii. 29 ; 2 Thess. i. 9 ; and Jude 7. Dorner, in the 3rd Part of his *Eschatology*, admits that "*αἰὼν* or *αἰώνιος*, in the very nature of the case, in reference to the eternal life of believers, signifies endless duration." I know not why it should signify less concerning the lost. Canon Farrar confidently asks, Why, if punishment be everlasting, was not some more certain word than *αἰώνιος* used to describe it, *eg. gr.*, *ἀτελευτητός*, endless, or *ἀκατάλυτος*, or *ἀπέραντος*, interminable ? Let us see how these would serve. Paul uses this last word in one place (1 Tim. i. 4), and what is the instance ? Just this, endless—*genealogies* ! Had punishment been generally described as *ἀπέραντος*, perhaps Canon Farrar would have held more orthodox views ; but some one would be assailing him with the question, How could *ἀπέραντος* mean everlasting when Paul applies this very word with a necessarily limited sense, to "*genealogies* ?" Principal Bartlett, of Dartmouth College, has clearly shown that the words used by the Holy Spirit are (a) appropriate, (b) well known, and (c) apprehensible modes of expressing the eternity of perdition, and that the very words suggested by Canon Farrar are (a) in-

frequent in classic Greek, and almost unknown in the Hellenistic, two of them never appearing in the LXX., and the third but once, and (*b*) not so decisive as the words employed.

I began the discussion of this point with the admission of Theodore Parker; I close it with the following admission, made two years ago by Dr. Ellis, a distinguished Unitarian teacher in the United States, in the presence of a numerous assembly at Boston: "Fifty years of study, reflection, and reading, devoted chiefly to the Bible and literature relating to it, have brought me to the conclusion that it, as a whole, is an orthodox book. It teaches what is called orthodoxy. The immense majority of its readers, by following the natural sense of the book, by taking it literally, by keeping to the impressions made by its principal texts, find orthodoxy in it. It is only by means of forced explanations, and by skilful distinctions that we liberals come to find in it anything else. The sects called Evangelical are evidently in the right when they maintain that their views of the Bible and of its doctrine establish a profound distinction between their faith and ours." I know of no logical alternative but to accept the doctrine I have stated, or reject with it the authority of Holy Scriptures.

## II. HISTORY OF THE DOCTRINE.

I very much regret that limit of time deprives me of the pleasure of tracing the history of the doctrine of Retribution. I must simply be contented with stating its modifications.



1. Restorationism, originating in the third century in the school of Alexandria, represented by Clement, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzum, Schliermacher, Neander, F. W. Maurice, Farrar, Kingsley, Dale, Brown, Parker, and Allen. In here citing Farrar's name, I do not forget that in his *Mercy and Judgment* he disowns being a Restorationist, and says, while claiming to be in substantial agreement with Dr. Pusey and Cardinal Newman, "I expressly stated my belief that there was a hell, and that I could not teach that all would ultimately be delivered from it." This disclaimer illustrates the honesty of the man, and at the same time is an illustration of the illogical nature of much of his work. As Restorationism seems to be defended by a strong array of names, it is necessary to observe that, on the very clear showing of Dr. Pusey, Origenism was specifically condemned by the 5th Ecumenical Council; and Hagenbach classes it among heresies in his remarks (vol. ii. p. 376). "This doctrine made its appearance only in connection with *other heretical* notions, and especially with the otherwise anti-Origenistic Millenarianism." Philip Schaff, in an able article on Studies in Eschatology, in the last October number of the *Presbyterian Review*, says: "Since the middle of the sixth century the doctrine of the final salvation of all men has been regarded as a heresy by all except by the Universalists."

2. The Roman Catholic doctrine of Purgatory, originating with Augustine, and established as a dogma by Gregory I., in the sixth century.



3. The Anglo-Catholic view of the intermediate state, represented by Dr. Pusey in his sermons and in his very valuable work on "What is of Faith as to Everlasting Punishment?" and which looks somewhat to the Romanist view in associating with the intermediate state the moral improvement of believers as preparatory to their entrance into eternal glory.

4. The Reformed Theology expressed in the Westminster Confession which, in its opposition to Romanism, goes so far as to reject the whole doctrine of the intermediate state, even in the form in which it is held by Evangelical Anglicans and Wesleyans.

5. The views of Dorner as to a *post mortem* probation when all the departed heathen, and others comparatively irresponsible here, shall have definite opportunity of accepting or rejecting Christ.

6. Universalism in America, in its earlier, more serious, and Calvinistic form, in which the sovereignty of God and the irresistibleness of grace were associated with the doctrine of the universality of the atonement, represented before 1790, by Rely and Murray.

7. Universalism in its later and looser form.

8. The view of the Annihilation of the Wicked, and with this the doctrines of Psychopannychy, or Sleep of the Soul, and Conditional Immortality, represented by John Locke, Rothe, and Archbishop Whately.

9. The peculiar view of Rev. G. W. Olver, in the Fernley Lecture, in England, in 1878, that the lost spirits will have no bodies, and will have no fellowship with any being, but each incorporeal spirit will spend eternity in solitude and despair.

10. The thought of Joseph Cook, in 1882, that in the case of multitudes who die without seeming to reach any permanence of character, either bad or good, the experience of death so quickens their mental and moral powers, that they fully realize the vast importance of the issues before them, and, in most instances, submit themselves, he thinks, to God, and trust in Christ; or else they abandon themselves to confirmed opposition to God. This view is designed to give some reply to the objection against the doctrine of permanence of character, that in by far the most instances, to all appearance, there is no permanence of character reached in this life. (See very able answer to Cook, by Dr. Buckley, in the *N. Y. Christian Advocate*.)

11. The view of Bishop Martensen, a Lutheran bishop of Denmark, recently deceased, that the words of Scripture relating to punishment clearly favour the doctrine of its being everlasting; but that there is in revelation what he called an antinomy, or theological paradox, similar to that between divine sovereignty and human freedom, in the solution of which he tended to Restorationism.

12. The view of Archbishop Tillotson, that, though God threatens to punish eternally, He does not intend to carry out the threat, similar to the unworthy Calvinistic subterfuge that, though God says He "wills to have all men to be saved," He intends that all shall not be saved. To this Bledsoe well replies, "We shall only say that if the Almighty really undertook to deceive the world for its own good, it is a pity He

did not take the precaution to prevent the Archbishop from detecting the cheat, that He suffered the secret to get into the possession of one who has so indiscreetly published it to the whole world."

As we are only now in the formative period of dogma in the department of Eschatology, it is hoped that where so many good men differ, some Athanasius or Augustine or Anselm may appear to aid us in reaching more uniformity of view out of all these discordant elements. In the meantime we will do wisely, as believers did before Athanasius, to cling to the simple teachings of Scripture, and this will determine the scientific form of the dogma when it is formulated.

### III. OBJECTIONS.

In stating, as I will try to state impartially, the objections to the Scriptural doctrine which I have presented, I must premise that to very much that is contained in revelation, both the mind and heart of the unrenewed man is directly opposed. This especially relates to the enormity of sin and the justice of God, and appears in the first objection I specify, viz.:

(1) That there is no equitable proportion between the sinner's transgression and his eternal punishment; that as John Quincey Adams is reported to have expressed it, "It is impossible for a man to commit sin enough in this life to deserve eternal damnation." The objection is otherwise stated that, at the worst, life in most instances is but a series of blunders, into which men inadvertently fall, and it is contended very

plausibly that between a moralist and imperfect Christian, between a good sinner and a bad saint, there is not enough difference to justify their diverging destinies in eternity. Underlying this objection, thus variously presented, there is a manifest misconception of the nature of sin. The demerit of sin, in the first place, is not to be measured by the time spent in its commission. One man may condense into a moment's execution more infernal malice, more of the quintessence of vice than another man exhibits in the sinful career of a lifetime. What Gregory XVI. said, in condemning a liberal work of the priest Lamennais, in 1834: "It is small in compass but enormous in wickedness," is true of many an evil act in human history, is true indeed of every sin. Suppose a man pulls up but one rail from a track just before the express train is due, and then retires to witness the crash, does he not deserve to be hanged as a villain as much as if he spent hours in tearing up the whole track? The measure of the desert of sin is not mathematical, but moral. Sin is necessarily momentary, but its consequences are vast; not, given so many years of sin there shall be so many years of penalty; but given the offence of high treason against God, the highest possible crime known in the universe; of setting at defiance the law of the Supreme Being, and of insulting and rejecting the divine Saviour, the representative of the majesty of that law, who, with His hands dripping with His own life-blood, offers us a free pardon so dearly bought. For such a one there is

forgiveness neither in this world nor in the world to come. Of such the Saviour said, "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth upon him." As to the mere "moralist," compared with the dying and penitent criminal, I think there is an infinite difference in favour of the latter. He at last grounds his weapons of rebellion. The other, on the supposition before us, does not. He illustrates what our guilty, despairing world so much needs to know, that "whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall find mercy." The other, in the circumstances supposed, is guilty of the great crime against God before described. If he is not, then there is, of course, hope in his death, and all the more hope because of his morality. I decline, however, to test the doctrine before us by applying it in any judicial way to individuals, for who made us to be judges of human destiny, or to deal judicially with individual cases? It has been said, "This is too sacred a region for the vulgar tread of a mere human curiosity, or the idle play of a mere human sympathy." This one thing settles my mind calmly and satisfactorily, with reference to the seeming mystery of human destiny, "The Judge of all the earth will do right." I am certain no one will go to hell by whom its torments are not deserved.

(2) Again, to the Scriptural doctrine of Retribution there is the objection based upon a defective view of divine benevolence; and it is said that any father that would make such a use of his power over his children as God makes of His omnipotence, in the eternal pun-

ishment of the wicked, would be regarded by men as a monster. It is just here to be observed, that God is now doing, and has been doing ever since the creation of man, what no earthly father would do, and what no earthly government would allow him to do, even if he had the disposition. What father would drown his children as God drowned the old world? What father would burn his children as God burned His in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah? What father would make his children suffer from such woes and sickness and pain and death, as beset our world? And yet God is good, indeed so good, says the opponent, that "God is love," and nothing else. What is thought to be a crucial test here is thrust upon us by Farrar, with a skilful *argumentum ad hominem*, thus, Would it not really give us satisfaction to find out in eternity that we were mistaken as to the scope of divine mercy, and that the punishment of sin is not everlasting? I reply, that anything I find with certainty concerning God, at any time, whatever it is, gives me satisfaction; and, therefore, I depend upon His perfect justice, wisdom, and mercy, as I receive from His Word the doctrine of eternal punishment, so clearly and certainly revealed. Does a child, in a well-regulated household, derive satisfaction in discovering that his delinquent brother is not punished as threatened? Possibly he does; but if so, it is because he fails to realize the importance of discipline. If he is old enough, and competent to realize the importance of this, he feels that order, and therefore happiness, in that home are most

seriously imperilled. As a child of God, depending in my weakness upon His wisdom and goodness, I tell you I derive no satisfaction from man contradicting God when He says, "The transgressor shall be destroyed forever, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs." On the contrary, I feel that in the burning fury of the Almighty against sin there is a guarantee of order in the universe which is one of the best pledges of divine goodness for the welfare of His creatures. But, it is said, Is not God so merciful, that if a sinner repent in hell God would receive him? In the abstract I believe that for the sake of Christ He would; but the sinner will not repent that he might have life, and that is just why he is there; and the certainty that he will not, is becoming greater through successive ages of eternity. To suppose, however, that a lost soul repents, is to suppose that he is not in hell at all; for, as we have already seen, hell is a state of confirmed antagonism to God and to good. But, persists the objector, the only object of punishment is reformation, and an excess of punishment above this is unjust. It is what Jeremy Bentham has called "so much suffering in waste." The objector may be just a little confused here. Does he mean the reformation of the offender only, or the moral improvement of society in general? If he means the former, he is manifestly forgetting that penalties are very often inflicted, in human law, which can have no reformatory design upon the criminal. The culprit who is hanged, I suppose, is not very much reformed as a member of



society. If the thought be as to the welfare of the universe, who can say that the eternal punishment of the wicked is not a necessity; and that this little planet, favoured as probably no other province in the great empire of God has been, by the incarnation of His Son, should not supply to the universe the spectacle of a minority of our guilty race with devils suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, as a warning and as a proof that it is "a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." But is it so, that when punishment ceases to be corrective it ceases to be just? Then it follows that men with a seared conscience, and with hands dyed in human blood, should go free, for they are too inveterate to be reformed, and all punishment that does not reform is cruel. Criminals, too far gone to be redeemed, should suffer nothing at the hands of God or man, for no punishment will reform them, and all punishment that does not reform is cruel. There is no encouraging evidence that the devil and his angels are being reformed, for "the devil sinneth from the beginning." If they are irrecoverably lost, their sufferings are unjust, for all punishment that does not reform is cruel. In the apocalyptic vision we read that when the fifth angel poured out his vial of wrath, the wicked "gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of Heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds." This harmonizes with the verdict of history, that punishment, in most instances, does not reform but harden. Yet it is just



and necessary. The whole objection before us, based on the divine benevolence, simply loses sight of other attributes of God which are of equal importance. The world needs to be told that God is good; but to-day it needs more to be told that God is just, and to be made to

“Feel how awful goodness is.”

“Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God;” or, as it is in the Genevan Bible, and Cranmer’s, and Tyndale’s, “the kindness and rigorousness of God.” This clause contains the substance of the gospel.

(3) Again, it is objected that if hell be a state of confirmed sinfulness, it makes sin there a necessity, and consequently it loses its criminality. The objector seeks to betray us into a Calvinistic necessitarianism, which we, of course, reject. God dooms no man to sin, either here or hereafter. It is not so much that the soul will sin forever because it is consigned to hell, but rather it is consigned to hell because, in its own freedom, it wills to sin forever. Adam’s offence entails corruption upon the human race, but the human race is in no wise responsible for Adam’s offence, and therefore not for the inherited corruption; but the doomed spirit entails upon himself in eternity a state of confirmed antagonism to God by his own choice in life. The choice is his own, not Adam’s, not the Almighty’s, but his own, and here is surely a sufficient basis for his perpetual responsibility to God for the consequences of his choice. This state of confirmed sinfulness

ness is sometimes reached even in this world; still, it is not a state of absolutely necessary sinfulness, for it might have been avoided. Sin ceases to be sin when it is necessitated. Jerry McAuley's testimony, in the Water Street Mission, New York, is very wise and relevant. He says: "I used to ask, Why had God made me a thief and a rascal, while He gave other people money and fun? And then it came across me that He hadn't done one o' these things. It was me that brought myself to what I was."

(4) The next objection I notice is based on the social relationships that may have subsisted between the saved and the lost in this life, an objection which, I confess, seems at first sight very serious. Says the objector, "Do you tell me that a father is going to be perfectly happy, singing psalms in heaven, when he knows that his son is enduring the torments of eternal damnation?" I readily admit—I glory in the fact—that no religion condemns and abhors like the Christian religion those who are "without natural affection," but the ground I take is, that the same divine book contains these three things: Due regard for the bonds of kindred, the unalloyed happiness of the redeemed, and the eternal sufferings of the lost. Reconcile them as we may, they are all there. I have no more right to reject the last than the first. I presume that the redeemed spirit is so completely in harmony with God that he finds perfect satisfaction in all that God does. To say that I so love my sovereign that I would indignantly resist any attempt made upon her life or her

authority, though the regicide were my own child, is to suppose a circumstance by no means remarkable. Now; if the Sovereign opposed be the Supreme Ruler, the fountain of all good, I can conceive it possible that the redeemed spirit may be so lost in God as to regard with perfect satisfaction the execution of His judgments, whomsoever they may crush. This very faith makes me the more earnest here, that my child be not among those upon whom shall descend like an avalanche the terrors of those judgments. But let us look into the matter a little further. Are the angels perfectly happy? Yes. But how can that be, since ages ago their fellows lost their first estate, and they have since been "in everlasting chains, under darkness?" Again, are the redeemed now happy, and will they continue so? Yes, assuredly. But how can that be, when, according to the Restorationist, for a thousand or a million of years their lost friends are in torment? The thought that these torments shall terminate may affect the degree of distress for the lost, if such the saved at all have, but assuredly cannot remove the distress itself on the supposition of the objector. But just here I wish to ask again, Does any earthly parent love his offspring more than God loves His creatures? Yet God is perfectly and infinitely happy in His own self-existent glory and goodness; and withal He witnesses "the whole creation groaning and travailing together in pain," and His intelligent creatures suffering indescribable anguish, in many instances, too, when they are innocent. If the great Father God can witness

such sufferings, I am confident that in some way He will enable His ransomed ones to regard with perfect contentment every exercise of His high prerogative, whether in wrath or mercy, that their language may be : "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord, but let them that love thee be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might."

(5) Again, it is objected that the perpetuity of sin and its punishment in hell will forever detract from the divine glory. I do not think so. I believe the glory and majesty of Queen Victoria's rule are as much displayed in our prisons as among law-abiding subjects. The objector falls into the palpable error of Voltaire, who tries to thrust us into a dilemma by saying, "Your God is either unable or unwilling to put an end to sin. He seems to be opposed to sin. He cannot, therefore, be omnipotent." As if the natural omnipotence of God determined the moral character of His creatures. Is virtue a matter of mechanics? Is goodness produced by physical force? Can electricity or gravitation or any other of the great natural forces, which are God's fingers, clutch a sinner and lift him up into purity and obedience? The objector is simply forgetting that in the discussion before us we are in the realm of the moral, not of the physical. If the perpetuity of sin seems mysterious, it is certainly much less so than its origin. Archbishop Whately said very appropriately, "I will undertake to explain the final condition of the wicked, when some one will explain the existence of the wicked." But most

startling and shocking of all would be an attempted violent termination of sin by physical force. When it is objected that it is not in harmony with our sentiments and with the fitness of things that sin should be eternal, I reply that it is not in harmony with our sentiments that sin should exist at all. But in the manifestation of our vanity in opposition to certain facts in the divine government, do we not deserve the reproof of Butler, when he says, "We make very free by our sentiments, if I mistake not, with the divine goodness by our speculations," or the sterner reproof of revelation, "Moreover, the Lord answered Job, and said, Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? He that reproveth God, let him answer it." We may depend upon it, God will look after the fitness of things without our instructing Him how to rule a universe.

I have now tried to answer all the objections I can think of against the Scriptural doctrine of Retribution. In conclusion, I submit that, as ministers, we need to regard this doctrine as a most vital one in revealed religion. I think the minister is making a most serious error, who, with a spurious catholicity, slights this truth, and either says nothing about it, or speaks very ambiguously. If this be not a vital doctrine I know not what is. But, says the objector, "May not a Restorationist get to heaven?" I answer, by reminding the objector, especially if he be an Arminian, that he may take the whole round of Christian doctrine, and, according to the test he is trying to

apply here, he will find none about which there have not been held erroneous views by very good men. I think that Channing, a Unitarian; and Molinos, a Roman Catholic; and Socrates, altogether without revealed religion, are in heaven; but, if they are, does that prove that the doctrines they failed to receive are not vital? That a doctrine is vital is not disproved by the fact that there have been good men who have not received it. If that be the test, I defy you to name a single specific doctrine of the Christian system that is vital? No! Doctrines are vital really in proportion to their practical bearing upon human destiny, and in this respect the truth before us is one of the most vital parts of the message divinely committed to us. A man may hold erroneous views concerning retribution as concerning many other things, and be saved; but depend upon it, if this doctrine be generally abandoned, so also will be the authority of Scripture, which is so unequivocally in its favour, and with the Bible will be abandoned the whole system of Christian truth, and with Christian dogma will soon go Christian morals, and with Christian morals Christian civilization. We may rest assured if we import any latitudinarianism here, we are imperilling our spiritual and moral force over men's lives and characters. Our revival aggressiveness is paralyzed; our missionary enterprise is dead and gone, when laxity of faith prevails here. Do you think the gallant lifeboat service, amid the surf and storm of the British coast, would maintain its heroism if, by some strange infatuation, its members

were led to think that drowning men disappear for a time in the dark, cold waters, but they will come to life again after some months and re-appear among men? The inspiration of their heroism is the thought that the shipwrecked must be rescued at once, or they are hopelessly lost. This doctrine is so vital, I think we should regard with approval the action of the Southern Baptist Missionary Board in the United States two years ago, when it refused to send to China two missionaries previously selected and equipped, because at the last moment it was discovered that they did not hold the orthodox view of Retribution. Some one has said, "He who has but a small abhorrence of evil has but a feeble allegiance to good." I do not say that in the case of able and earnest men like Neander, Tholuck, and Farrar, but in the case of multitudes of unconverted men, who are finding solace in the destructive error of Restorationism, and in the case of hundreds of formal Church members, who are drifting in this direction, the whole tendency is explained by laxness concerning the enormity of sin and its terrific consequences as revealed in the Sacred Scriptures. Such are they to whom God speaks by Ezekiel xiii. 22: "With lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life."

As regards Methodism, I do not think it is chargeable with much laxity here; still we do well to remember that it is especially unbecoming in us to



compromise this doctrine of Retribution, not only because of the prominence it has had in the preaching of our fathers, but also because it forms a part of the doctrinal system of Wesleyan Arminianism which, we think, is more and more commending itself to devout students of truth as most consonant with Holy Scripture. Without expanding the thought, I simply here throw it out, that upon Methodism will come the honour—and, what is of more account, the responsibility—of being the most conservative defender of orthodox truth in coming years, and for this reason, among others, that it has nothing, we think, that must be abandoned like many elements, for example, in the Calvinistic system, which has done such sturdy service in the past for God and humanity, in spite of the very errors which are now imperilling its entirety. I do not mean that Methodism will be perched up in popular favour. On the contrary, it may be most unpopular when most true. Of all Churches in the universe, Methodism can least afford to trifle with the doctrine of the eternal punishment of the wicked.

But, last of all, I would say to the members of this Theological Union, whom I have the honour to-day to address, let us hold the truth of Christ in the spirit of Christ. If cold, hard dogmatism is anywhere out of place, it is in the presentation to the people of the awful truths which have just engaged our attention. No man should preach on hell without a very rich baptism of the spirit of love and tenderest sympathy. "Knowing therefore the *terrors* of the Lord, we *per-*



*suade* men." Whatever Canon Farrar sometimes illiberally says to the contrary, they who have believed in the eternal punishment of sin are they who have done most to save men from sin. Have John Howe, Alleine, Baxter, Wesley, Whitfield, Jonathan Edwards, Fletcher, Chalmers, and the great evangelists of all the Churches, been less marked by tender sympathy for men than the representatives of the various forms of error in Eschatology? Is it Universalists and Restorationists that have gone with the love of Christ constraining them to compel men to come in from their want and peril to the benefits offered by Christ? Nay, verily, the Church and the world cannot afford to forget what is due to the mighty men of God who, with glowing zeal, and yearning pity, and tenderest sympathy, have laboured to snatch men as brands from the eternal burnings of perdition! May God baptize every Methodist minister, every Christian minister with this spirit, that the world may see that we are more concerned in saving souls than in saving our creeds.



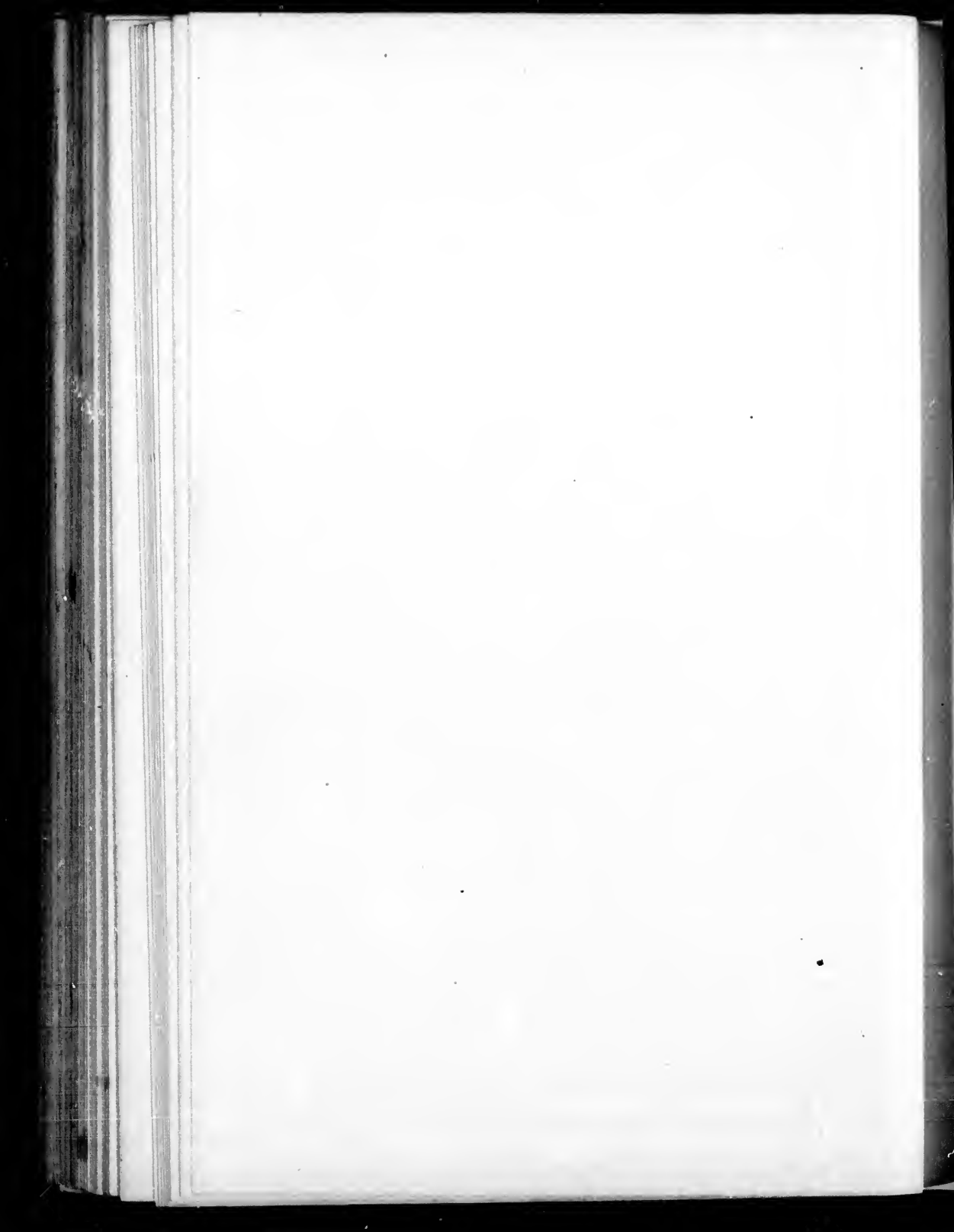
# The Coming One:

A SERMON DELIVERED BEFORE THE THEOLOGICAL UNION OF  
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY, MAY 4TH, 1884.

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BY THE

REV. WILLIAM R. PARKER, M.A.



## Sermon.

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### THE COMING ONE.

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“When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?” “Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.”—LUKE vii. 20 and 22.

THESE messengers came from John, confined in the gloomy prison at Makor, to Jesus amid the absorbing activities of Nain. The changes have been rung concerning the reasons that impelled John to formulate and forward this brief but pertinent message. It is not, however, relevant to our purpose to-day to enter the chase after the correct verdict in such a wide field of conjectural opinions. Suffice it to say, that that most splendid eulogy pronounced over His grand Forerunner, by the Royal Master, forever protects his motives and character inviolate. If the fiery preacher of the wilderness, chafed by the tyrannous chain of the contemptible Herod, found his firm conviction of the friendship and sympathy of Jesus tested to its very

foundation, is it a matter of wonder? If, as the eye of the caged eagle filmed within the dark, dank walls of the Idumæan dungeon, John suffered moments of intense, heart-breaking despondency, is it more than seized the spirits of the brave, intrepid leaders of the former and later times? Was it not thus with even a Moses, an Elijah, and a Paul? Even so sank the hearts of Savonarola and Jerome in the prison-cells of Florence and Constance, and the agitated soul of Luther in the castle of Wartburg.

Our attention centres, however, in the *matter* of this message and the *reply*. It is a subject fraught with an interest vital as salvation, wide as the race, and far-reaching as eternity. As this Prophet of the Desert was the last and greatest of all God's Messengers, heralding the Advent of the Messiah, so now he is the embodied Voice of many an imprisoned spirit, of many an unhappy skeptic, many a wandering tribe, and of many a heathen nation, crying: "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?"

Let us prayerfully consider: I. The Momentous Import of John's question; and II. The Decisive Testimony of Christ's answer.

I. THE MOMENTOUS IMPORT OF JOHN'S QUESTION: "ART THOU HE THAT SHOULD COME?"

The *import* we affirm, because the weighty significance of this question is not inferential, but intrinsic. It grows out of the forceful phrase, "He that *should* come."

(a) There confronts us, therefore, the cardinal necessity that *Some One should* come! Some one wiser than the wisest; better than the best; diviner than the divinest of earth and man. Some Shepherd to leave the ninety and nine safely enfolded, and search the wilderness for the lost sheep. Some Deliverer of the enslaved peoples; some Redeemer of the race—an Emmanuel, God with us, should come! The wants and woes of humanity imperiously demanded His coming. Men had sought for Him, but by searching could not find Him; not even by all of Himself the Creator has ingrained in the soul of man, nor by all that can be clearly seen in His Eternal Power and Godhead in the things which do appear. The ancient world, by the mouth of its best sons, confessed that it had long groped for God, but had not found Him. In all literature there is nothing more pathetic than the wail of despair wrung out in the utterances of the most gifted scholars of Greece and Rome touching this failure. Hear Plato voice the conclusion of all: "We must wait for *some one*—be he god or inspired man—to take away the darkness from our eyes."

(b) Some one "should come," according to the Divine plan and prediction.

The plan of Jehovah was, that a Redeeming Ruler of mankind should come forth from the Father into the world. Each of the great epochs of Old Testament revelation bore testimony to the coming of this Saviour—*mighty to save*. Indeed, scarcely had the "Fall" occurred, when the early promise shed bright-

ness upon the gloom of Eden, by announcing the remedy for the ruin. Before the sentence was pronounced upon the guilty pair and their posterity, the golden promise was given, that One should come in the flesh, who would "bruise the serpent's head." The Patriarchs saw Him *coming*, afar off, and were glad. The Mosaic institution of Sacrifice traced His approach in lines of fire and blood. Emphatically, to his appearing gave all the Prophets witness. Indeed, "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." By them all He proclaimed, "Lo, I come!" until John, the last and greatest, finished the roll of testimony, witnessing: "He that cometh after me is preferred before me, because he was before me."

Note, moreover, how specific the very phraseology became, containing the prediction of His coming. When the Greek language, of such exceptional grace, spreading from the ancient centre of Philosophy and Art, became the tongue of the Hebrew people, the expectation of the Redeemer was condensed into a Greek phrase the precise equivalent of the Hebrew *Yaveh*—Jehovah. This was, *ὁ ἐρχόμενος*—the Coming One—or He who should come. This is the indential phrase found in the message of John, in the original. He bid his brethren ask Jesus: "Art thou, *Ho erkomenos*?"

(c) Some one "should come," as a Deliverer, to meet the *general Expectation of the Race*.

As, says Robertson, "The Expectation of the manifestation of God is the mystery which lies beneath



the history of the whole ancient world." The germ of this Expectation was planted in the human mind in Eden; and wheresoever scattered, the sustaining, inspiring sentiment of the race was, the *coming* of the *Ideal Man*.

We are not surprised that the Hebrew People, because of the glowing predictions of their Prophets; and remembering that all their types, symbols, ceremonies, and altars, and all the gorgeous ritual of the Temple were but foreshadowings of the coming Messiah, were wont to sweep the horizon to discern the first beams of His rising. We are not surprised that this distinguished nation, of whom, as pertaining to the flesh, Christ was to come, should have been stirred with profoundest anticipations. We do not wonder that their holy hermits in the caves of their sacred mountains; or Simeon, Zacharias and Anna in the Temple, should be found, "Looking for the Consolation of Israel." Yet we cannot but be thrilled by the pleasing surprise at the concurrent yearning of the Gentile World. The throbbing Expectation of some wonderful Personage to change and mould the destinies of the race was not confined to the Jews, but was diffused throughout the whole Earth. Humanity was deeply conscious that it had left its moorings; and it tossed restlessly about, eagerly longing for the coming of the Helmsman.

The royal Stranger was impersonated in Melchisedec, King of Salem. The hope of His appearing sustained the suffering Patriarch of Idumæa, and inspired his

immortal utterance: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the Earth." It fired the lips of the sorcerer-Seer, Baalam. It was the theme of Confucius, Seutonius, Tacitus, and of the Sibylline Oracle. It was the marvellous—if not the inspired—prediction of the fourth Eclogue of Rome's immortal bard, Virgil. And it seems a fair presumption that Longfellow credited the North American Indians with some traditional memories of Messianic Expectation among their ancestors. In his graphic Song of Hiawatha he has—

"Gitche Manito, the mighty,  
The creator of the nations"—

looking down, from the "Mountains of the Prairie," upon the wranglings and dissensions of the warrior tribes, and thus addressing them:

"Oh my children! my poor children!  
I will send a Prophet to you,  
A Deliverer of the nations,  
Who shall guide you and shall teach you,  
Who shall toil and suffer with you.  
If you listen to his counsels,  
You will multiply and prosper;  
If his warning pass unheeded,  
You will fade away and perish!"

But, whatever the modern poet may conjecture, at the historic date of the Advent the world had reached its crisis. To the Jew and Gentile it was "a fulness of time;" and the common heart was stirred to its depths by the magnetic force of the Coming One. Europe

expected Him from the East ; and Asia looked for Him from the West ; and then the East and the West gravitated toward Judea. "Put a flower into a dark room, and let the light shine in through the keyhole ; the flower will instinctively turn towards the door, and stretch out its tiny leaves to be kissed by the sun-beam." There is a sympathy between the flower and the light. So, the world was shut up in darkness. There was but one sky partly relieved by faint streaks of celestial light, and toward those beams of the rising Sun of Righteousness the religious nature of universal man quivered and gravitated. The wise men of the Gentile world came from the East to Jerusalem, enquiring : "Where is he that is born king of the Jews ; for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him ?"

(d) The *momentous import* of John's question centres in a *person*—"Art thou *He*?" All men sought—all expected—a person. The world's weary-heart hunger ; its sickness and its sighs demanded not a prescription of healing, but a Physician ; not a theory of deliverance, but a Deliverer. The contention is pertinent : "If man were only a thing, he might be content among things. Were man nothing but intellect, he might be satisfied with a theory. Were man nothing but a conscience, he might find peace in a religion." But man, the *person*, in his complex nature and with his whole being, imperiously claims a Person as his "alabama"—the supreme rest of his tired nature.

Now, a Wonderful Person has come ; and John's challenge, in effect, is—Art thou who hast come, He who "should come?" Is there certainty at last? Other men have come in other days and lands.

1. Heathenism, not content with theories of Philosophy and systems of government, had embodied her hopes in men such as Homer, Hannibal, Socrates, Aristotle, Alexander. In Imperial Rome you find the most singular instance of this endeavour. Rome means *power* ; and Julius Cæsar, just a few years before the birth of Jesus Christ, regarding himself as the incarnation of this power, sought to subvert the liberties of his country by a *claim* to a throne. This was, moreover, the throne of that King that, according to the oracle of the Temple, was to arise at that time ; whose reign should be without bounds, and whose administration should secure universal peace and prosperity.

2. It is noteworthy that Judaism, too, had sought to meet humanity's longing for a personal Saviour. The Jews had furnished several false Messiahs. In many quarters the cry was heard: "Lo! here is Christ, or Christ is there." No wonder, therefore, that when that marvel, the Voice, thrilled the multitudes on the verdant banks of the Jordan, or in the dreary depths of the wilderness, the people flocked about him and pressed him with the enquiry: "Art thou he, art thou he, that should come?" And John the Baptist confessed and denied not, but confessed he was not the Christ. Alas! Both Judaism and Heathenism had signally failed to find the expected Deliverer of the

Nations. All the bright lights had gone out in darkness, all experiments had proved abortive. The world was brought to a solemn and hopeless pause. The crisis-hour of the race had come. The shadows of things in the heavens they had seen once and again in their dreams and visions, but the things themselves they had not beheld. Yet the vision of the shadow argued the existence of the reality somewhere. We should never see the shadow of an eagle gliding softly across the field, if a real eagle were not just then flying in the air. We should never see stars in the silvery lake, if real stars were not shining in the sky. So the image of a heavenly Messenger traced along the valleys or mirrored in the ceremonials of the peoples of earth, unmistakably witnessed the existence of the "Desire of all Nations." These yearnings amid uncertainty roused rather than lulled the masses. Just as all men in the regions where the sun is hid for many months, console themselves with the hope of his appearing, and fixing their gaze at the point when they expect his dawn, they quit ordinary pursuits, dress in their richest attire, and climb the highest hills to greet his first rays, so was it with the rising of the Sun of Righteousness. From Alps, Andes, and Lebanon, eager eyes settled their gaze upon Bethlehem, and, lo! the Light of the World shone upon them that "sat in darkness and the region and shadow of death," a "Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel."

## II. THE DECISIVE TESTIMONY OF CHRIST'S ANSWER.

"Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached."

"The greatness of the ancient world culminated in Socrates and Plato; and the greatness of Socrates and Plato culminated in their power to ask questions, and not in their power to answer them." So the greatness of the Old Testament Prophets culminated in John: and the greatness of John culminated in his power to ask questions, and not in his power to answer them. But the full-orbed greatness of Jesus is seen in His power to answer these questions with a wealth of wisdom and an infinitude of Divinity essentially His own.

Sir Matthew Hale, that eminent jurist, once said: "More can be learned from some people's questions than from other people's answers." Be it so: but this is the *Master's* answer to the peoples' question. No more vital, all-comprehending enquiry could be made. Prophecy and Type had minutely specified the World's Hope, the Saviour of the race; the suffering, reigning Lord. He was foretold: "a Child born; a Son given." The child of man, the Son of God. The son of David, while David's Lord. Is this Jesus of Nazareth He? Is this *Ho erkommenos*?

1. His humanity. We may rest assured John was not troubled on this point. Jesus was his own kins-

man, according to the flesh. Then Jesus Himself had taken especial pains to show that He is in a cardinal, generic sense, "the Son of Man." A living Welsh writer puts this aspect of our Lord's nature with freshness and force: "He is humanity condensed, the second edition of our nature revised and amended by the Author. He is *man*, thorough man, growing out of the depths of our nature. The sea on the surface is divided into waves. Go down, and you will soon come to a region where there are no waves, where there is nothing but water. So humanity on the surface is broken into nationalities and individualities. But go down a little way, and you will soon come to a region where differences give place to resemblances, entities, and every man is like every other man. Now, Jesus Christ emerges from the profoundest depths of our nature, from the region of entities. He is not Jew, nor Greek, nor Roman, but Man."

2. His Godhead. Nor had John any misgivings touching the Godhead of Jesus. He was the "man sent from God," who bore witness that Jesus, who "came after him, was preferred before him," the only begotten Son of God. John had seen "the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him:" and he had heard "A voice out of the heavens, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." John had baptized Him for His official work of Prophet, Priest and King. Besides, he uttered and reiterated the cry: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."



So with the Apostles and Disciples, this doctrine was a conviction. His own mysterious Being had touched their inner being, and made it vibrate with the knowledge of His Divinity. When He said to them, "Whom do ye say that I, the Son of Man, am?" Peter earned His benediction by answering for all, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." They were sound in the true Christology. They were wholly free from the taint of Arian and Apollinarian Heresies.

3. May not this investigation of the depth and meaning of John's question, help us the better to grasp and appreciate the force of Christ's answer? You will remember that daring but most triumphant experiment made by Benjamin Franklin. Seeing a cluster of thunder-clouds hanging overhead, he let fly into their midst a paper kite to which was attached a metallic chain. His knuckles having touched the chain connecting him with the wild lightnings, he was surprised and thrilled with sparks from the electrical current—since made such a messenger of intelligence to man. So John's question, bold and urgent, pierced the clouds of opinion that were floating in society concerning Jesus Christ, and drew from Him the evidential formula that forever dispels all vagueness and uncertainty about the true mission and methods of the Redeemer and His claims to Messiahship.

A. Let us consider specially the decisive testimony furnished by Christ in His answer to John. This reply crystallizes into the immutable axiom, that Christianity



challenges credence upon *proof* and not upon *authority*. Jesus does not say to John's "*Art thou He?*"—"I am He," and that is enough to know. According to inspired prediction, miraculous works of healing were to be the broad seal of heaven to the Prince Messiah. Jesus performed most noted cures before the face of the messengers, and sent them back to tell John the things they had *seen* and *heard*. You have—

1. *The positive proof of practical facts* constitute the Divine method. It is not by mythical incantations, or the ambiguous, oracular utterances of ancient heathenism or modern spiritualism; not with earthquake, tempest, fire, and sword, but with the mild, potent logic of facts. Not words but *deeds*, the actions that speak more loudly than words. This method best suits the Divine nature and human needs. All the *volitions* of the Infinite mind are *deeds*. He stamps every material thing with His seal and superscription. He moulds every atom into a letter, and every work into a word. On this principle Christ wrought the deeds that make up the gospel—a mosaic of facts. He did what all other systems only promised. And His works meet man's deepest wants. It is by deeds and deeds we can see and comprehend, we are really convinced and satisfied.

2. Christ's miraculous works as a *Demonstration*. The miracles of our Lord did not so much *establish* His claim, and make His doctrines *true*, as *demonstrate* and make manifest their truth. Take the case of the Tichborne claimant. Either he is the genuine or an

*impostor* from the outset; but it is by the evidence adduced that the issue is determined. So in Mathematics. Every proposition in Euclid is true before it is put on the blackboard; and the mechanical process but demonstrates the pre-existent truthfulness. So of Jesus the Christ who "should come." His doctrines and claims were true independently of the miracles; but the truth of the miracles clearly demonstrate the validity of his doctrines and claims. In this respect, therefore, a single fact is worth a thousand arguments; because with moral systems and agents the final test must ever be practical efficiency.

(a) This demonstrative method is fitted to the popular demand. To test the force of evidence, we must not forget there are two classes of mind involved. First, the *Reflective* type, moved by moral character rather than by any physical manifestation of power. The life of Christ will influence such more than His works. Second, the *Perceptive* type of mind, influenced by things occurring before the eyes, startling to the senses, such as the supernatural works of Christ. Every age has had minds of both orders. In one age the one had pre-eminence, in another the opposite one; and in different stages of the same mind, both types may appear.

(b) This law of mind has a counterpart in a dual law of *times*. History is made up of two alternating *Periods*. One Period is *creative*, giving birth to new truths and forces. The other Period is *Reflective*: no new truths spring up, but the old are analyzed and

classified. The age of Moses was Creative, the age of the Judges Reflective. The age of the Prophets was Creative, that of the Scribes Reflective. With the advent of Christ and the labours of His apostles, came another Creative Period. New truths of ineffable beauty and purity were born, and new and mighty forces were evolved, pertaining to the character and kingdom of Christ. In that Creative Period the Perceptive class of mind, perforce of things *seen* and *heard*, predominated. Therefore when the Jewish world would know from Jesus, "Art thou He that should come?" and when the Gentile world would enquire of Him, "Art thou the Desire of all Nations?" they challenge: "What dost thou *work*?" "What *sign* showest thou?"

(c) This view will gain force when we remember that all the Saviour's miracles of Mercy and Benevolence were symbols of *spiritual healing*. They were Parables of the Gospel kingdom;—each from its own angle a minature of the one great miracle which He is continually working in the regeneration of the human soul. Take, for instance, those wonderful works enumerated in the text, where the supernatural power is interposed to arrest disease and restore life. These miracles were not contrary to nature, but operated to neutralize that which *is* contrary to nature,—to remedy the abnormal. Disease is not man's normal state; and death is not only not natural, but anti-natural. But Jesus, in *healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, raising the dead*, interposed to bring back the subjects to their true normal condition. He restored

each to the possession of his health and himself, which is the Creator's ideal of physical humanity. So precisely sin is unnatural to the soul. Depravity is not true spiritual wholeness, health. It is abnormal. It is disease, and our Lord's physical cures foreshadowed the restoration to their normal spiritual condition; when He shall have healed all their diseases, forgiven all their iniquities, and renewed them in the image of Him that created them in righteousness and true holiness. Therefore, in the process of this renewal, every blind eye lighted proclaims Jesus the "Light of the World." Every deaf ear opened is the pledge that multitudes, *heedless* of spiritual things, shall "hearken and hear and their soul shall live." Every case of leprosy cleansed proclaims, "Clean"—the Keyword of the Kingdom of God—and that Christ proposes the purification of the whole world by the sacrifice of Himself. Every dead form raised to life guarantees that He will raise *dead souls into newness of life*. "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." Not the light was the life, but the life was the light. A modern philosopher, who would *recast* the *religion* of the Bible, declares the great desideratum of the world is "Sweetness and Light." But Jesus Christ affirms the great need of the world to be *life*.

"'Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,  
More life, and fuller, that we want."

Thus we see that Christ's display of power on the plane of common life, is a type of His work in the sphere of grace. It is His method of leading from the

seen and temporal to the unseen and spiritual. In a distinguished gallery at Rome, Guido's famous painting of Aurora is on the ceiling, and thus the visitor cannot examine it there with profit. But a mirror has been placed in the room at such an angle as to present a reflection of the picture at a point where the spectator can conveniently study it at his leisure.

So the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, whereby the "image of the heavenly" is brought out on the human soul, is far beyond our inspection; but in Christ's miracles of healing—as in a mirror—we have manifold reflections of the Divine Artist's renewal of the heart, even "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." In our Lord's cure of the Paralytic, we have furnished us a beautiful illustration of the evidential force of physical healing. Jesus had said, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven." But the cavilling Jews charged Him with blasphemy, demanding, "Who can forgive sins but God only?" Now Jesus met them on their chosen battle-ground. Here let me paraphrase a little. Jesus in effect said to the objectors: Ye claim that no one can forgive sins but God only? Yes. Ye affirm with equal force and persistency, that no one but God alone can cure a man sick of the palsy? Yes. Very well then. Ye have heard me pronounce this man's sins forgiven, but ye discredit the fact because ye cannot see the heart and discern a spiritual cure. But now, if I can cure this man's body which ye do see, and which act of healing ye regard equally the

work of God with the pardon of sin, then ye must admit my power to effect the spiritual healing by the demonstration of my power on the physical? They had to say, Yes. Then said Jesus to the sick of the palsy, "Arise, take up thy bed and go unto thy house." And immediately the paralytic arose and walked. Thank God for the decisive testimony, once for all and forever; and though no miracles are repeated now, none are required, for those that are historical form a permanent Mirror, perpetually reflecting the power of Christ to forgive sins, though the performance itself lies in a department beyond the range of human inspection.

Whether, then, it be true or not, as Drummond affirms, that "Natural Laws and Spiritual Laws are *Identical*," there is surely pertinence in his classification: "Their dignity is not as Natural Laws, but as Spiritual Laws, Laws which at one end are dealing with Matter, and at the other with Spirit. The visible is the ladder up to the invisible; the temporal is but the scaffolding of the eternal." And thus, too, a scriptural coloring gilds Milton's question:—

"What if earth

Be but the shadow of heaven, and things therein  
Each to other like more than on earth is thought?"

B. These are the Positive Proofs by practical Facts, which make the first instalment of this *decisive testimony*. And what is demonstrated for Christ Himself is also and equally for Christianity.

1. Does that class of Scientists that would fain divorce what God hath joined together haughtily demand of Christianity—*facts*? loudly boasting that their teachings ever appeal to facts—self-evident facts. To their chosen data, then, we welcome them, for Christianity is a solid structure of Facts.

Does the infidel deride our Faith and Works system and require of us “the sign” of Philosophy? Then we adduce *experience* against his *speculations*: and we triumphantly array what Christianity has *done*, in the face of what he tells us Philosophy *is*.

Does Utilitarianism magnify its purpose to *improve* the *circumstances* of society? Christianity proposes to improve society *itself*. Is Utilitarianism content to *do* men good? Christianity exists to *make* men good. Yes verily! To change the lion to the lamb, the vulture to the dove—to expel the demon of envy, malice, hatred and all uncharitableness, and clothe the subject in his right mind; to transform the wilderness into a fruitful field, and make the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose—these constitute the proud aim, and the glorious accomplishment of a Christian utilitarianism.

Is Christianity depreciated, scorned by the ancient and idolatrous system of Religion? Her uniform triumphs enforce the retort: “What Age have ye morally transformed, what nation regenerated?” Indeed, in sorrow for the unhappy peoples, we must allow the indictment of a modern writer. “The Religions of the heathen nations are to-day the greatest obstruc-



tion in the way of their progress. Mahometanism is now acting as a check upon the growth of the Arab and all the other tribes subjugated to its yoke. Buddhism acts like a nightmare on the natives of the East, dwarfing the teeming millions of India. The religion of Confucious presses like an incubus on China, effectually repressing all mental and spiritual development." Alas, alas! In those fair and fertile lands, "Where every prospect pleases, only man is vile!"

Does Roman Catholicism presume to unchurch Protestantism? Then compare her Austria, Italy, Spain, Ireland, Quebec, with Germany, England, America, Ontario, or even the Latin States of Switzerland, which are Protestant, with the German States, which are Roman Catholic. History and modern intelligence distinguish the difference. It was left to Gambetta and his pious Minister of Religion, Paul Bert, to confound Protestantism with Popery.

Beyond question the world's heart throbs yearningly for the world's Redeemer to-day. The Greek "would see Jesus," and the Jew devoutfully enquires: "What think ye of Christ?" The Japanese are testing "The Jesus Religion," and at home the prejudiced Nathaniels "come and see" whether any good thing can come out of this Nazareth. Everywhere the practical men of these pre-eminently practical times require the evidence Jesus sent John, "things seen and heard," and they subject each ecclesiastical body to the crucial challenge, "Art thou the Church that should come, or look we for another?" They care not so much for



boasted antiquity or assumed Apostolicity as for life and action. They want deeds, not creeds. They seek not so much epistles of commendation to some one, or from any one, as to behold regenerated multitudes—"Epistles, read and known of all men." This discriminating age echoes the song:—

"Ye different sects who all declare—  
'Lo! here is Christ,' or 'Christ is there,  
Your stronger proofs divinely give  
And show us where the Christians live."

*Finally*—Mark the final Clause in the Cumulative Testimony for Christ and Christianity. *The Gospel preached to the Poor—the God Spell—good news*, "the Gospel of the grace of God," "the Gospel of the Kingdom," "the Gospel of Christ," "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God,"—this Gospel preached to the *poor*.

(a) Note the fact itself as filed in evidence. Christ expressly named the fact, "to the poor the Gospel is preached," as conclusive proof to John that He was *Hō. erkommenos*.

(b) Let us calculate the *force* of this fact. It is given the last, but not, hence, the *least*. It is the *greatest* element in the decisive testimony on the point at issue. Christ Himself adduced it as the crowning proof of His Divine character and commission. He thus forever elevated Moral supreme over Miraculous evidence. He thus affirmed it easier to suspend the laws of nature than to reverse the usages of society—

easier to open the eyes of the blind, cure the leper, and even to raise the dead, than to cause the Day Star to arise upon dark minds, to purify sinful hearts, and raise dead souls into newness of life. Thus potentially evidential is the fact that, the Gospel is preached to the poor.

But let not this rush us to the conclusion, that this choice of the Son of God, by dignifying the poor, has discriminated against the Rich. Our Lord gladly blessed the household of Jairus, just after He had made whole the impoverished woman amid the pressing throng. He dispensed Salvation as cheerfully to Zaccheus the rich ruler as to Lazarus the beggar. At His feast, the "Rich and the poor meet together." What Christ proclaims in trumpet-tones to the ages by this Parable of Poverty is, that while the hungry rich will be ever joyfully welcomed to the Marriage Supper, Jesus does not rate them as the *especial*, much less the *exclusive*, guests to His feast. But it is the *characteristic*, the *distinctive* feature of "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," that to the very poorest of the poor the plenitude of the Gospel provision is proclaimed and furnished "without money and without price."

(c) This signet stamp of King Jesus upon the Poor, is but the *type*, the sample, of His Redemptive scheme. He came not to bless *race*, but *Man*. The Son of Man will save individual, universal Man as *Man*. He would resurrect, develop the *ideal* Man. Where will He so soon find him as among the poor? There is

with them less of the *conventional*, and more of the *normal, ingenuous, simple, and human*. Thus the seeking Saviour finds Humanity—Man, not *rank*.

“Rank is but the guinea’s stamp,  
Man is the gold for all that!”

(d) The Gospel for all the world must compass all the social conditions of man. Jesus meets the requirement. He came to found a religious Democracy,—organize a Christian Commonwealth: to elevate the masses, and lift the lowest of the race to God. How must He do it? When the famous Victoria Bridge must span the magnificent St. Lawrence at Montreal, the Cofferdam must help the engineer to sink the Titan piers to the solid Laurentian rock. So Jesus Christ must sink to the level of the lowest stratum of society. Aye, more. He must lay the Rock of Ages *under* the lowest layer of lost humanity; for all idiosyncrasies of character, all conventional distinctions are but the upper strata, which vary locally, while beneath all these lie everywhere the solid primeval rocks. Thank God! to this deepest depth the love of Christ sunk Him to save. He laid His foundation below all influence, and, by the verdict of men, He threw Himself away. He was “made *sin*,” “having become a *curse* for us.” Here sounds the deep-bass note of the song of Redemption. “Christ crucified” is the climax of the Gospel story. The “Child born,” the “Son given,” do not comprise all the elements of the Christian system. He was born to die. Golgotha is

the complement of Bethlehem. "The Cross" is the crown of the Nazarene. On it Jesus "tasted death for *every man*." Thus, then, by blood, He became the Friend of the friendless, the Patron of the Poor. Hence the universal adaptation of the Gospel message, addressing itself to the great rudimentary characteristics and the universal wants of human nature. It passes through all surface distinctions, and goes right down to the depths of the central identities, to the flaming heart of the race, where we are all alike. Not, then, to this or that sort of man, but to all sorts and conditions of men; to man as man, be he philosopher or fool, sovereign or serf.

Thus, the Gospel becomes the heritage of the poor, deeded by the sign-manual of the King, who hath chosen "them that are poor as to the world to be rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom;" and, as candidate for universal suffrage, has significantly selected the lowliest among all peoples to constitute His perpetual constituency.

A. Mark the Divinity of the Gospel Testimony. Its Divinity is registered in its Novelty. It is the potent innovation of all history. To sink to the lowest, in order to reach the highest, to win distinction by alliance with the outcast, is certainly something new under the sun. This fact essentially distinguishes, differentiates the Christian from all other systems. The choice is unique, the plan original. There is no precedent for it, no prepossession in its favour. Hitherto nothing but contempt was felt for

the poor among all the great Statesmen and Philanthropists of the world. The Autochthonic theory, feebly urged by some recent writers, largely obtained then. Its doctrine is, *that every nation is indigenous to the soil upon which it is found*, having developed out of the earth like the flowers and trees. The contention is, that no organic connection exists among the peoples of earth.

Hence the Greeks, esteeming themselves the aristocracy of the world, contemptuously despised all nations as Barbarians. Then, in turn, the Freeman despised the slave; the Sage the simple. The Rich—yea all—contemned the poor. They were rated as *chattels* rather than *creatures*. They were valued as *property*, not *persons*. They were not an integral part of society, but its conveniences and drudges, aids to state luxury—tools of the ambitious, and war-material in the conflict of Kings.

As a consequence, no Philanthropist, fired with the idea of some social reform, ever conceived the motive of beginning with the poor. Even the Jewish Rabbis were not an honorable exception. They were not "moved with compassion for the multitude," they did not glow with "the enthusiasm of humanity." They sought not the flock, but the fleece. They scornfully said of the poor: "This people"—this rabble—"that knoweth not the law is accursed." With this, Heathenism was on a par. Plato, the apostle of Pagan philosophy, had inscribed in large, legible characters over the portals of his celebrated Academy: "No admission except for

Geometricians." But Jesus Christ has written in letters of fire over the ever-open gateway into the School of Salvation, "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

(a) The Divineness of the Gospel Testimony appears further in the *method* of its proclamation. Preaching, the Divine Master's method of conveying His message, is itself *Divine*. It is rightly claimed that preaching is an institute peculiar to the Gospel. It is an agency, previously unknown, which Christianity created for itself, to be forever its chosen mode of utterance. There *was* a Dispensation when Ritual and Ceremonial were of God; for Moses had then fashioned "after the pattern showed him in the Mount." But as Christianity is neither "a wisdom" for "Greeks," nor "a sign" for Jews, nor a philosophy for Rationalists, nor a millenary for Ritualists, nor a "Wafer" for an "altar," but a Gospel message from God to man—*preaching, purely*, must ever be the appropriate vehicle.

(b) As with preaching, there is a Divinity about Preachers. I would not unduly magnify the office. I remember the incumbents are but "Earthen vessels." But these Vessels are "chosen" of God, and *holy*. The Commandment, "Go, preach," is holy: the anointing *unction* is the Holy Spirit. He alone makes Preachers, whatever their previous and subsequent training and

furnishing. Even the Apostles were not preachers before Pentecost. Then tongues were given; that was the birthday of preachers. "The new message brought new utterance. It created spokesmen of its own." The narrative says: "They were filled with the Holy Ghost, and *began to speak*." The divinity of Ministerial testimony appears the more when you remember that this Agent is *testimony embodied*. He is not only a "Minister," but also a "witness." Paul, who "*testified*" in Jerusalem, was to "*witness*" for his Lord at Rome also. The ascending Head of the Church announced the general truth, "Ye shall be my witnesses, unto the uttermost parts of the earth." A witness speaks of something which he *knows*. The Apostolic preachers said: "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen." Their testimony embraced not only matters of fact, but matters of *experience*. Experience is a chief element in evangelistic efficiency. To have known the disease, and then the cure; to "know whom they have believed" themselves, and so testify, is the most cogent of all arguments. Jurists will tell you that one word of evidence from an unimpeachable witness outweighs ten thousand words of professional pleading. Courts of Justice can better dispense with Lawyers than witnesses. On some of the most crucial occasions of his most eventful life, Paul, that master logician, employed this most persuasive argument. He told them the simple, magical story of his conversion from a persecutor to a preacher. Among the many excellences and gifts of



the early Methodist preachers was this master habit of testifying. In many a polemical fray, in the teeth of many a persecuting storm, as well as in the historical log "Meeting-house," and rousing old-time "Camp-meeting," they rang out the burning words with tongues of fire:—

"What we have felt and seen,  
With confidence we tell;  
And publish to the sons of men  
The signs infallible."

God help us all to prove the worthy sons of such noble sires! See to it, especially you, my young brethren, that amid the golden advantages of University and Theological Halls, you never lose the "*roll*," experience, nor the skill to wield this "sword of the Spirit," testimony. The great want of the age is a witnessing Ministry. In the face of Agnosticism, Ingersollism, and all "false doctrine, heresy and schism," preach and testify concerning your personal knowledge of the Divinity of Jesus of Nazareth, of "Christ crucified," of a Risen, living Saviour, of an all-prevalent Intercessor, of the King of Kings on the "holy hill of Zion," whose is the "Kingdom, and the Dominion, and the Glory."

And while you witness to all, and pass by none, remember that the specialty of your mission is to the *poor*. You may have learned that one rendering of this axiomatic testimony to the genuineness of Jesus and Christianity, "the poor have the Gospel preached

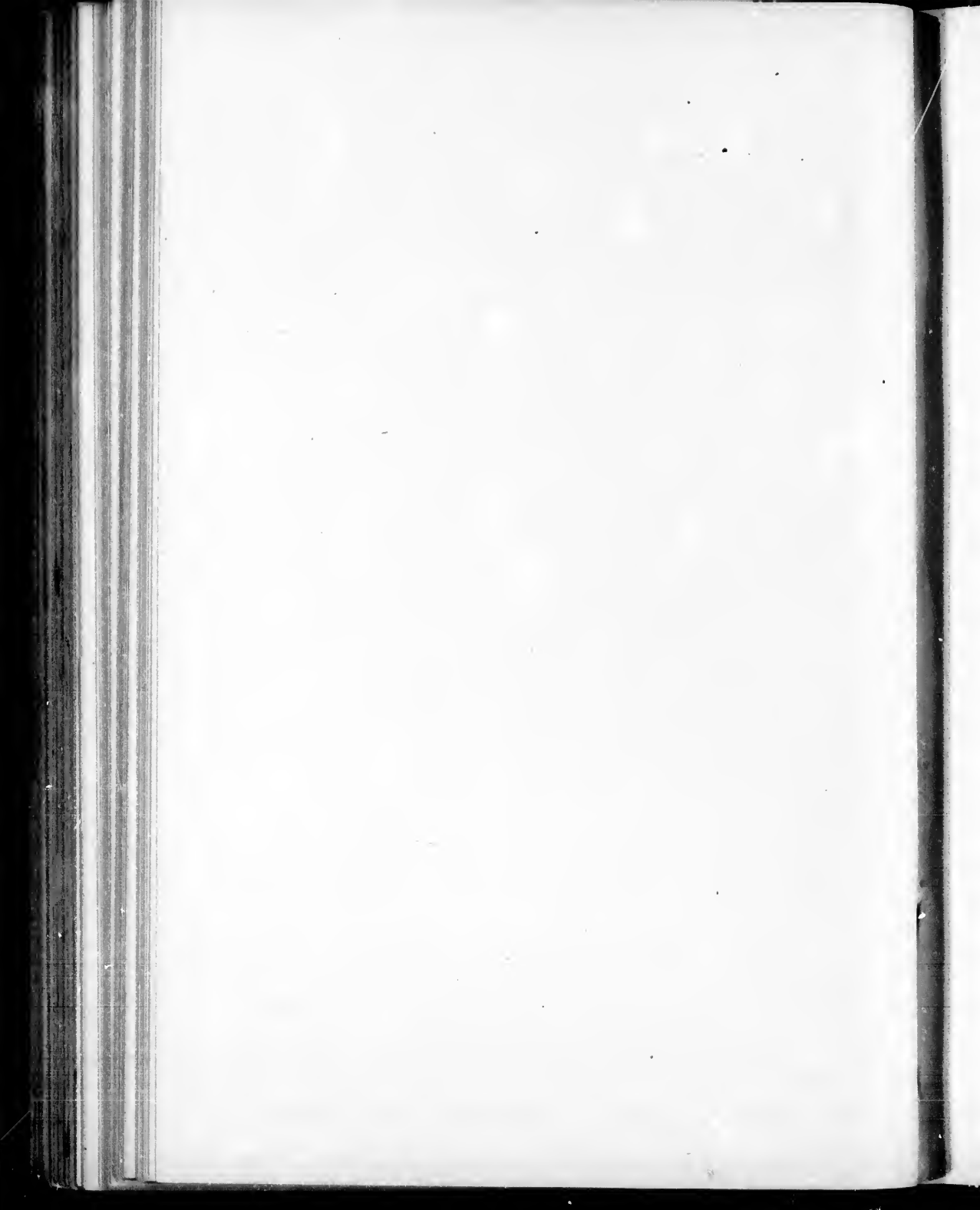


to them," is "the poor have taken to preach the Gospel." Has it not been, ever since the days of the "fishermen," that the majority of the best Christian Ministers have come from the ranks of the poor? And is it not equally true that most of them have lived and died comparatively poor? notwithstanding that their lives and labors contribute more than all commerce, government, and mere education to conserve the integrity of empire, and to ensure the probity and progress of the peoples of earth. Is not Angell James' contention a marvel of fact, that "Preached sermons are the cheapest of all cheap things in this age of marvellous cheapness?" Nothing in this world to-day is so grand and unanswerable an evidence of the Godhead of Jesus, and the Divine nature and mission of Christianity, as the perpetual succession of an army of ardent, able, self-denying preachers of the Gospel, in these times of so many open avenues to wealth, fame, and power. Brethren, be worthy your noble heritage of example, of your high calling, of your exalted dignity and peerless destiny! If you should remain poor men, don't be *poor preachers*; but be sure to preach to the poor! Be in this *succession*:—"As poor, yet making many rich!" Let us not discriminate against the poor in *social caste*, in *Church accommodation*, or in *Evangelistic and Missionary Enterprises*, To all tribes essentially, as to the "Red Man" literally, we must cry: "Lo! the Poor Indian!" No Church, whether its Polity be Episcopal or Presbyterian, its

name Baptist or Methodist, can grow away from the poor but at the risk of becoming an ecclesiastical tree, "twice dead, plucked up by the roots." I am no alarmist on this score, however. I rejoice in the loyalty of the Churches to their Head, their fidelity in witnessing for Him, and "battling for the Lord" effectually, if not *popularly*, "An Army with Banners." Matthew Arnold says: "Clergymen and ministers of religion are full of lamentation over what they call the spread of scepticism, and because of the little hold which religion now has on the *lapsed masses* of the people!" I have not heard any Jeremiahs around. Have you? I fear it is but the "dogma" of a Seer, whose attitude is that of a modern Balaam toward Israel. He would "nationalize" religion, as George would "nationalize" property. These are self-sent heralds of "another Gospel." And they are not alone in these days of novelty. There is any quantity of cheap sentimentalism, fuss and cant, gush and gammon about the Poor, and the "Laboring classes," among Land-leaguers, Communists, Nihilists, Politicians, and Demagogues. But the Church can point to the legitimate fruitage from Gospel sowing, not only in millions of saved men and women, but also, and specially, such Christian and Philanthropic agencies as Asylums, Poor Houses, Orphanages, Reformatories, Ragged Schools, Cheap Literature, Free Libraries, Abolition and Temperance Societies, the Extended Franchise, the Ballot, Sunday-schools, Home Missions, and Missions

to the destitute and heathen, and humbly but triumphantly exclaim, "the signs of our Apostleship are these." And all this because we "Know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor; that ye through His poverty might be rich!"





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1. *Biblical Study*.—St. John's Gospel. Aids: Godet, Meyer, Mutton, and Milligan.
2. *Historical Study*.—The Christian Church to the close of the Council of Nice. Text-books: Neander and Schaff.
3. *Doctrinal Study*.—The Atonement. Text-books: Crawford, Randles, Miley.
4. *Apologetic Study*.—Natural Theology. Text-books: Flint's Theism and Anti-Theistic Theories, Diman's Theistic Argument, and Janet's Final Causes.

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1. *Biblical Study*.—The Epistle to the Romans. Aids: Godet, Meyer, and Beet.
2. *Historical Study*.—The English Reformation. Text-books: Burnet, D'Aubigne, and Hardwicke.
3. *Doctrinal Study*.—The Trinity. Text-books: Bull's Defence of the Nicene Faith; Dörner's Person of Christ.
4. *Apologetic Study*.—The Canon of the New Testament. Text-books: Westcott, Briggs' Biblical Study, Sanday's Gospels in the Second Century.

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1. *Biblical Study*.—Isaiah. Aids: Cheyne and Lange.
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4. *Apologetic Study*.—Inspiration. Bannermann, Lee, Elliott, Pope's Theology, Vol. I.

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7

# DOGMA AND DUTY.

BY THE

REV. JAMES AWDE, B.A.

## CHRIST'S DIVINE MISSION.

BY THE

REV. S. J. HUNTER.

BEING THE EIGHTH ANNUAL LECTURE AND SERMON DELIVERED  
BEFORE THE THEOLOGICAL UNION OF VICTORIA UNIVERSITY  
IN 1885.

TORONTO:

WILLIAM BRIGGS, 78 & 80 KING ST. EAST.

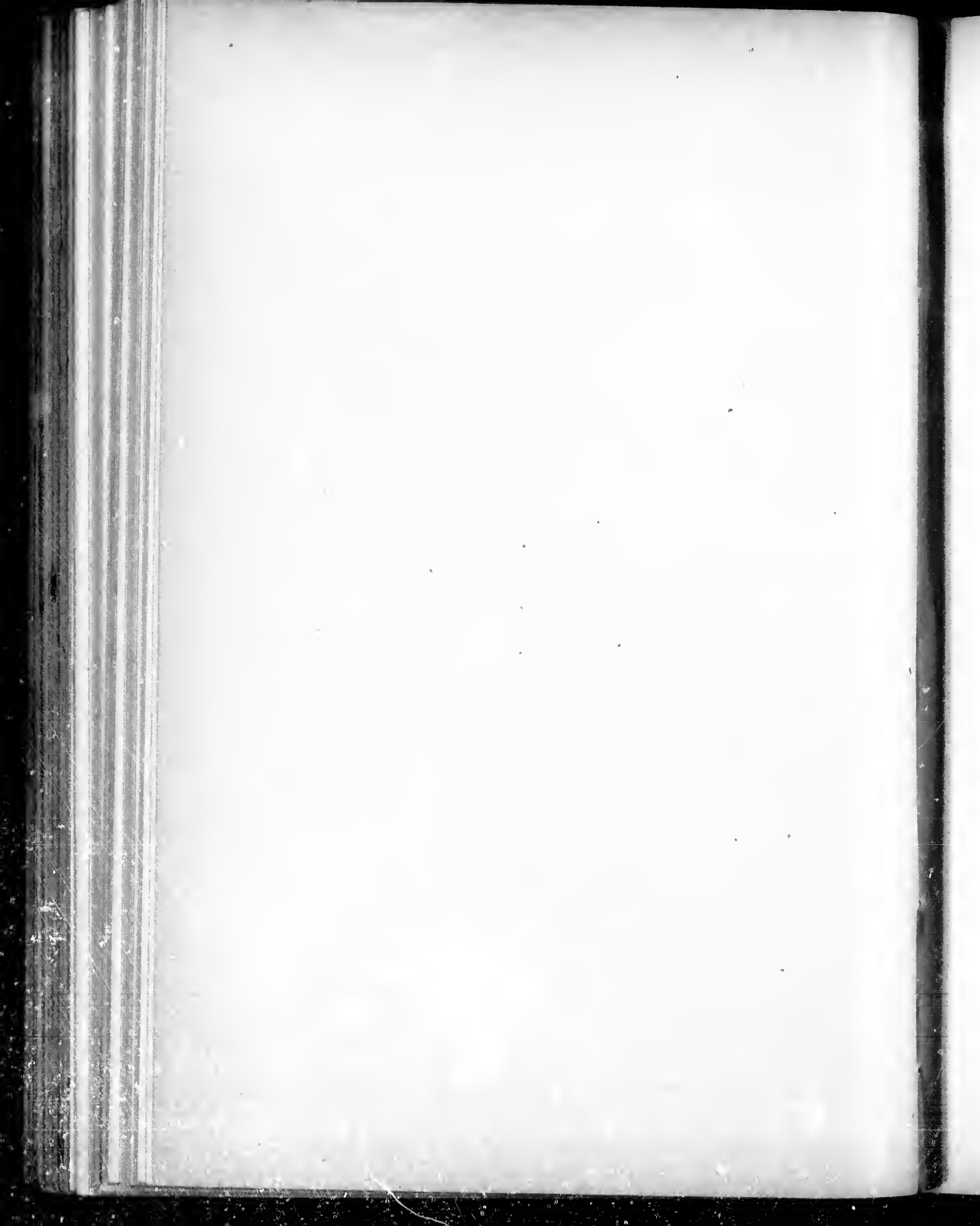
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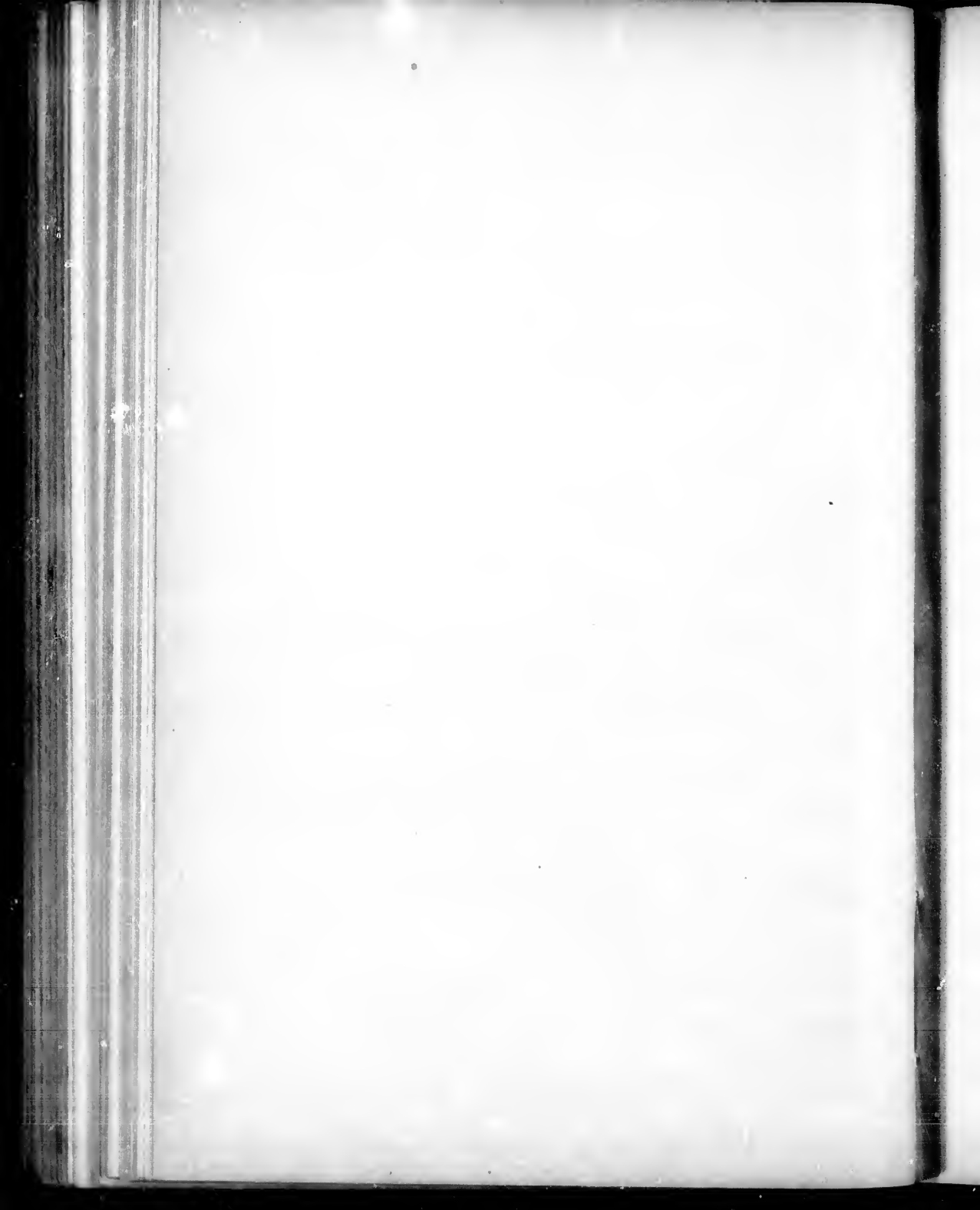
# Dogma and Duty :

A LECTURE DELIVERED BEFORE THE THEOLOGICAL UNION OF  
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY, MAY 11TH, 1885.

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BY THE

REV. JAMES AWDE, B.A.





## Lecture.

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# DOGMA AND DUTY.

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"LET me know what is true that I may do what is right," is an appropriate motto for the highest intellectual life. This knowledge of the true, when exactly formulated, is the content of the word *dogma*. This right-doing, connected with the antecedent obligation, is the meaning of the term *duty*. What is the connection of duty with dogma in personal and social life? What is the effect of our thinking upon our conduct? What is the bearing of Theology upon Morality? This is the question which demands our grave and patient consideration.

Not without reason do I venture upon this topic, for it is one of the most serious and significant controversies of our time. The champions of the Gospel of our fathers are summoned to show why the ancient theologies should be conserved and perpetuated. The relation of Theology to Morality is, by some, regarded as, at best, an open question. Our dogmatic systems, and even the fundamental truths upon which the systems are built, are assailed with a confidence, a

persistence and an ability which the Church may not allow to pass unchallenged. Mr. Herbert Spencer, a keen observer, a man of immense industry, and a master of style, attempts to show that moral ideas are gradually developed by a process coördinated with the course of scientific evolution. The late Professor Clifford has also produced a most interesting treatise upon the scientific basis of morals. Mr. Leslie Stephens, in a still more powerful book, likewise endeavors to construct a science of ethics. An able Canadian writer propounds the question, "Has science found a new basis for morality?" The Secularists are seeking an ethical ground for the well-being of society, upon the assumption that this world is all. There is a growing repugnance to accept, as valid in morals, any conclusion which cannot be submitted to the same formal logical proof as ordinary knowledge. Men are indulging the hope that all modes of moral conduct, personal righteousness, domestic fidelity, social obligations, political purity, ideal legislation, and international amity may be secured from the multitudes, without the aid or the intervention of theological ideas. In essays on Natural Science, on Psychology, on Social Economy, on the Philosophy of History, on the Theory of Religion, in works of fiction, and in the most pervasive periodical literature of the day, the controversy is recognized. And by all these avenues of approach, openly or clandestinely, the sacred truths of religion are attacked with astonishing virulence. There is a German legend attached to the martial story of the great

battle of Chalons where the Roman allies won a sanguinary victory over the fierce Attila. The battle ended, the sword was sheathed, and the field was strewn with heaps of slain. But, for three nights after the engagement, it is said, the spirits of the dead soldiers were seen hovering over the battle-field, and continuing their savage warfare in the silent air. The conflict of our age is more ærial than terrestrial; it is mental, spiritual. The foes of the holy Gospel have put up their swords, they have extinguished the fires of Nero, and no longer keep enraged wild beasts to crunch the bones of the martyrs; but they yield the pen and the press, the persuasive eloquence, and all the weapons of intellectual warfare, with a courage in attack, and a skill in defence that would have delighted the heart of an apostate Julian or a scoffing Voltaire.

For us, this is a living question. "For all who think seriously, and still trust their religious instincts, the hour is one of fearful perplexity. It must be one almost of agony for many of the best and most cultivated among the clergy." These are the words of Mr. Goldwin Smith. With him, I fling back the insinuation that "The clergyman is a part of the Church equipment not more liable to intellectual disturbance than the pulpit or the font. The Roman Catholic priest may perhaps go mechanically through his prescribed round of duties without greatly feeling the pressure upon his individual soul. But the Protestant pastor, as often as he enters the pulpit, has to express his personal convictions, and if he reads what

is read by other men, his step surely must sometimes falter as he mounts the pulpit stair." Any controversy touching the utility and validity of theology affects us and our work. We all hear, from a distance, the confused noise of the warfare. Many of us, like David, have sat by life's dusty roadside, hailing the fleet couriers with the eager question, "What news from the battlefield?" And some of us, with such equipments as we could improvise in our busy life, have mingled in the tumultuous strife. We stand ready to vindicate the claims of theological dogma as the ground of ethical duty. We do not fear to ask how far the connection of dogma with duty is vital and necessary, and how far conventional and accidental.

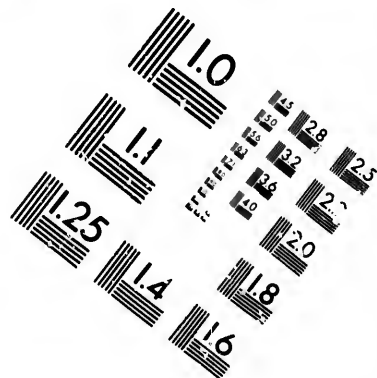
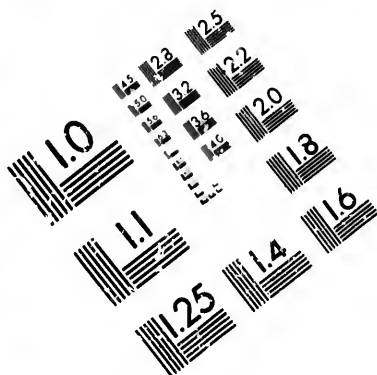
I.—We need feel under no constraint, at this time, to uphold any specific doctrine, least of all to justify any dogma which any considerable section of the Church may deem untenable. A dogma may be either an individual conviction or the formal edict of a supreme ecclesiastical court. In the good sense it includes all exact truth-formulæ. Thus, an axiom in Geometry, Newton's Law in Physics, and the personality of the Holy Ghost in Theology are equally dogmas. In the bad sense a dogma signifies an imperious edict of some spiritual or secular authority which does violence to reason or liberty. In so far as I venture to specify the present application of the word, I confine it to the fundamental religious ideas, God, man and immortality; or, in a wider sense, to the simple, unmethodi-

cal content of the Bible, as given to us, in the artless simplicity of nature, by the inspiring Providence.

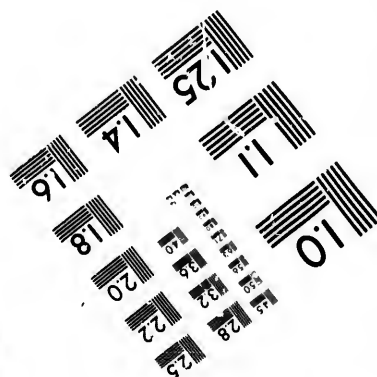
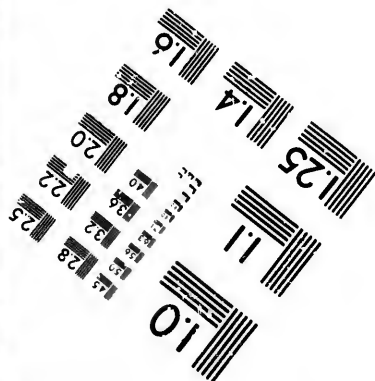
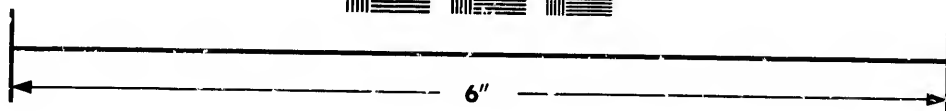
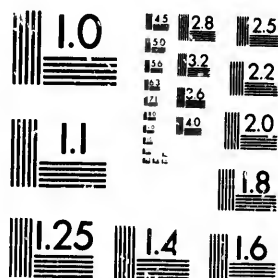
Hence we do not now set up a defence of Wesleyan standards, or of the Thirty-nine Articles, any more than we open a bombardment upon the five points of Geneva, or the seven sacraments of the Vatican. We should endeavour to take a generous view of the subject. We should feel after some of the facts and incontrovertible principles involved in this question. This course may be the more perilous, or it may not; but, if I am called, by your suffrages, to navigate this lectureship, I would rather, if you please, sail in the ocean than in the creek.

1. *The first principle*, then, which demands our assent is *the necessary relation between thinking and action*. This is one firm position upon which to base our exposition. It is the more appropriate since it is admitted by all parties in the controversy, and furnishes common ground from which believer and sceptic of every school of thought may stand side by side and survey the field. There is a real bond between right thinking and right action, as there is between false thinking and wrong action. Other things being equal, the man who has true conceptions of life and its main factors will be morally a better and stronger man than one who has false views of life and its conditions. He who believes that he is doomed to die like a dog, that being the last of him, will not live as he would in the faith that death, to the good man, is the gateway to a perfect and immortal life. As all rules have excep-





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tions, so all principles require occasional flexion or modification in practical life. I shall indicate the modification of this principle further on. At present I insist only upon the vital relation of a man's creed, the sum of his ruling convictions, and his conduct, the circle of his purposes and activities. There is here a fixed logical sequence; and where this iron link of logic exists, if there be no neutralizing influence, there is a certain practical consequence. We may expect, with unvarying certainty, that every theory, wrought into operative convictions, will produce its practical results. Bring forward your scientific observer, your biologist, your philosopher, your positivist, your moralist, your poet, your theologian, and all agree that dogma tends to expression in duty, and that a man's conduct is both the logical and practical sequence of his *actual* creed.

2. A *second* elementary proposition is *that the value of any dogma, or dogmatic system, is to be tested by its actual results.* "The tree is known by its fruits." So of our theologies. The merits of a system may be righteously tested by the actual consequences of the teaching. If the system be new, and have not been tried in real life, its intrinsic worth can be tested solely by its logical results. But, as already stated, if no counteracting influence intervene, the logical and practical consequences will be identical. In clear thought, then, in determining the utility of dogma, it is fair to abstract from all opposing moral forces, and to trace the doctrine or teaching to its ultimate logical outcome.

Here we find tangible distinctions among dogmas. In August the farmer finds it easy to separate the fat alluvial plain from the great stretches of surface limestone. He can stand upon a hill, and with his eye trace a line between them, on one side of the line being verdure and waving corn, on the other side the red and parched surface. Some systems are barren as the sands of Sahara, others fertile as the valley of the Nile. The green, in spots, extends into the desert, and the bare rock runs up here and there into the rich field, so that the line is wavy and irregular; but you can see this line. Lessing, in "Nathan the Wise," declares that the ultimate test of the value of religious sects is their fruits. When the world can tell which set of doctrines, or which religious denomination, can do most for human well-being, can best satisfy the deepest human instincts and meet the wants of man in life and death, then the world will know what to believe. It is therefore in order to ask, "How will your reputed truth affect me?" If it tend to debase me or my brother, then let me reject it, though an angel from heaven preach it; but if it will elevate me or my neighbor, then I will gladly embrace it, esteeming the humblest man who brings it as a messenger from God, from "that someone not myself who makes for righteousness." For, while here comparison is uncommonly odious, if I am driven to comparison, as the life is more than meat, and the body than raiment, so conduct is more than opinion, and character than creed.

II.—These two principles are simple, self-evident, and sufficient for our purpose. In this clear, uncompounded light, let us proceed rapidly to review some of these half-fledged, embryonic theories which are proposed as substitutes for the ancient theological basis of morals.

1. The new ethical systems put forward are so near akin that if we say aught about one of them we are lauding or defaming the whole family. Indeed, they are like the Siamese twins, you cannot attack one without hurting both. For the sake of clearness, however, we may say that the substitutes for the established ethics are three—not twin but triple theories—the *Materialistic*, the *Hedonistic*, and the *Secular*; and that the ligament which firmly unites them is their common Materialism.

2. *We begin with the Materialistic hypothesis.* Life is the outcome of organization. Consciousness, thought, will and moral ideas result from the organism, and with the organism they perish. Matter is the Alpha and Omega of being. All matter is similar. The first man is called a mollusk or a jelly-bag, and the last mollusk we call a man. The only difference is that one came early, the other late; one is simple, the other complex. The molecules may have been moving a few ages longer in one case than in another; but the whirling of a leaf, the growth of an apple, the writhing of a worm when trodden upon, the flight of a deer from the hound, the eloquent philippic of Demosthenes, the lay sermon of Huxley, the prayer of Elijah, and the

charity of Peabody are all alike the simple effects of moving atoms. We have supposed that instinct, thought, reason, imagination, will, sentiment, passion, fear, love and hope determine the flight, the oration, the poem, the prayer and the charity. No, replies the materialist, all these are the effects of the movements of the molecules of matter.

This means that men are moved by atoms. Those atoms, then, are the responsible gentlemen that ought to be sent to heaven or to hell. Those molecules, and not we, are the criminals to be brought to judgment. We are thus exempt from condemnation and approval. The cause of all action in mind and morals (says one of these thinkers) is "nascent motor excitations of nerve and brain." If these motions are single they run into action; if various they lead to a conflict among the nerve forces which we call comparison, reasoning, volition. Volition does not determine nerve motions, but contrariwise. At present we have one set of "nascent motor excitations" corresponding to the ideas of right, duty, freedom and responsibility. We have also another set of "nascent motor excitations" corresponding to the desire for ease, property, gratification, another man's privileges, his money, or his wife. But the materialistic theory puts a stop to the first set of nerve-motions, utterly destroys them, and leaves the lower, selfish, sensuous appetites to sweep the individual and society away. Imagine all the lazy, unoccupied and immoral classes, now kept in order by the sense of right and wrong and impending judgment, turned

loose upon society, freed from responsibility and moral restraint, under the sole sway of the baser appetites, and the logical and practical outcome would be social anarchy and destruction.

This molecular hypothesis leads also to *physical fatalism*. When attacked upon this point, the materialists hide behind the doctrine of philosophical necessity. Mr. Huxley, for example, obtains a big screen which is held up by Calvin on one side and by Jonathan Edwards on the other; and taking refuge behind it, he challenges the hottest fire of the theologians. But, Mr. Huxley, some wise men think that Calvin is not invulnerable. Philosophical necessity is guarded and counterbalanced by other doctrines. Philosophical necessity, pure and simple, is dangerous enough when reduced to practice, but physical fatalism is ten times worse. And the molecular Ethics is fatalistic. As Moleschott affirms, good and bad actions being determined by physical causes in the same way as speech and style, the color of the eyebrows, and the motions of the earth, it follows that "freedom is a fancy." Says Carl Vogt: "Free will does not exist; at no moment are we our own masters." Man, then, is an automatic machine. The poor man is no more free than the rolling stone which gathers no moss. Man is no more worthy of praise or blame than a water-wheel or windmill. To punish human actions is as absurd as to explode the cave of Æolus on account of a hurricane. As just had been the Romans in hanging the image of Neptune because a storm had shattered their fleet; as

wise was Xerxes when he whipped the Hellespont that destroyed his bridge of boats, as that court which brands a man criminal, or inflicts upon him pain or death, when he is at no moment his own master, and every thought and deed is determined by physical necessity. To punish an automaton man is like breaking into fragments your watch because you are five minutes too late for the train. Materialism is fatalism, and thus destroys freedom, responsibility, and all moral ideas, and subverts the ethical basis of society.

In our day the materialist is invariably an evolutionist, and the leading ethical doctrine which he proclaims is *the law of the survival of the fittest*. Thus Hellwald claims that "the word 'morality' should be banished from scientific writings because it is empty, that there is neither freedom nor soul, that the struggle for existence and the right of the stronger is the only basis of morals." Here he would replace our moral conflicts, with their lofty, historic grandeur, by a struggle for existence, a dog-fight, with its brutal debasements. The permanence of holiness, justice and love now gives way to the right of the stronger. This is the famous robber's transposition of might for right. The new basis of morals—the only right is that of the strongest. Studying this principle in nature a witty Frenchman says, "The whole of nature may be summed up in the conjugation, active and passive, of the verb to eat and to be eaten." The same becomes the law of human life. The verb to destroy and to be destroyed tells the whole tragic and



monotonous story. Nobody is to be blamed. Society destroys the criminal not because he is to blame, but because society is the stronger. If the criminal be able he should destroy society because he is the stronger. Only the fittest ought to survive. The new ethics discovers an easy solution of the problem, What is to be done with the many people who are not worth keeping? Kill them off—what harm? "It is wrong," you say. There is no wrong. The only crime is being a nuisance, and surely we may abate a nuisance. Those tramps—do not feed them, swiftly remove them. Those helpless, deformed children—divine Plato approved of exposing them, follow his sage counsel. Certain people are in your way—learn from the Fijians before the advent of missionaries, eat those whom it is inconvenient to keep. Aged and infirm persons own millions of property of no present value to the public—why not forcibly seize those possessions. Purify the race and thus confer a boon on posterity. Drunkenness, says one, is a valuable agent in destroying the low and sensual class. Then keep your liquor-shops in full blast. What expense we shall thus avoid—no hospitals, no orphan homes, no asylums for the insane, no instruction for the blind or dumb, no churches, no parsons, no useless scientific speculators; all these are of no public utility, cut them off in the same simple fashion and earn the gratitude of succeeding generations. Clearly the materialistic conception of ethics, when pressed to its logical consequences, overturns the entire framework of society and obliterates the very name of morality.

3. *The second basis of morals proposed by the Evolutionists is modern Hedonism.* Pleasure and pain are the supreme tests of conduct. Pleasure is favorable to the vitality of the organism, pain unfavorable; the former is therefore right, the latter wrong. This is substantially the doctrine expounded by Mr. Herbert Spencer in his "Data of Ethics." In his evolution of moral ideas he begins with a mollusk and ends with a man. There is no radical distinction between the moral character of an oyster and that of an Oxford scholar. Spencer calls one higher and the other lower, but the moral significance of these adjectives is borrowed from the religious system. Man is more complex than the mollusk, but bears no moral differentia. All life is purely animal. In this theory is no authority, no conscience, no duty, no virtue, no obligation, no principle, no rectitude of motive. It knows nothing of moral beauty or excellence. Actions purely pleasant are absolutely right, actions attended with pain are wrong.

This is not the Hedonism of Epicurus. This philosopher came into the world six years after Plato left it, and has been generally assailed as the apostle of low, sensual enjoyment. But he was a man of blameless life, moving in the atmosphere of an estimable Greek scholar. His doctrine, that happiness or pleasure is the end of life, differs from the animal Hedonism of the evolutionist in that Epicurus teaches that the pleasures of the soul are to be preferred before those of the body, that pleasure is closely connected with virtue, that a wise man may be happy though in torture, and that



he so far transcends mere animal delights that with a little barley-bread and water he can rival Jove in happiness.

But modern Hedonism is animalism pure and simple. For man is an animal, nothing more. In the community the only test of the moral quality of an action is pleasure, the only end of an action is to increase the duration and intensity of life and transmit it to our offspring. There is no more morality in a community of men than in an ant-hill, a bee-hive, or a beaver-dam. The shark that moves through the sea with fins and devours fish for pleasure, or to sustain life, and the shark that walks our streets and steals property and honor for pleasure, and for the increased intensity of life, are upon the same level. It can be shown by this method that the seagull, which lives beyond the span of human life, in wild freedom, exempt from care and pain, is morally superior to the storm-beaten sailor. To take an example from an author already quoted: A heroic Italian physician finds a new, mysterious plague ravaging the city. He resolves to devote himself for the life of the people. He shuts himself up with a subject, makes observations upon the disease, commits them to writing, feels the poison in his blood, and calmly lies down to die. Another man finds a single life standing between him and a large fortune. He takes that life in such a way as to escape suspicion, he gets possession of the fortune, avoids a life of drudgery, improves his intellect, shares every pleasure, social, domestic, intellectual, animal; is sur-

rounded by troops of admiring friends, and after a long life dies universally honored and lamented. Why should the murderer die unhappy? Why does the physician die happy? Why do you call one man base and the other noble? We have an answer. The agnostic has none! By the pleasure test the murderer is the wiser and the better man of the two. "But," says the hedonist, "the physician had an altruistic nature, and the murderer had an egoistic nature, and an altruist is higher than an egoist." "Higher, Mr. Spencer?" "Yes, higher, as a lobster is higher than an oyster, that is all. There is no moral differentiation." "The altruist and egoist, according to your hypothesis, are bound to seek pleasure, each following his own nature. If one is thus led to murder, and the other to self-sacrifice, there is no essential superiority or excellence of one over the other." The physician is like the remarkable wolf that suckled Romulus and Remus, the murderer is a common wolf that devours the children; but both are wolves. The objections then to modern Hedonism are briefly these:—

- (1) It subverts all moral distinctions.
- (2) Since pleasure is relative to the organism, whether altruist or egoist, it makes all morality subjective or individual.
- (3) It fails to decide the plainest questions of morality.
4. *The third and remaining substitute for Christian morality is Secularism, with which we may connect Positivism.* As I understand the connection of these

two systems, Positivism is the scientific, and Secularism the popular, side of the same general theory of life. Secularism maintains that man has an adequate rule of life independent of belief in God, immortality, or revelation, and would regulate our affairs by considerations purely human. Positivism teaches that man is a beast that perishes—no more, no less; that there is no personal immortality; that we know only what we can discern with the five senses, all beyond this material mechanism being a blank; that there is no mind, and therefore metaphysics, as a science of mind, is a dream; that there is no God, and therefore theology, as a science of God, is visionary; that humanity is the sole and loftiest object of adoration and worship. While, therefore, Positivism is the scepticism of the *savant*, and Secularism is the scepticism of the man of business and the proletaire, both agree in making this life all. All our good is compressed into these few stormy years which are numbered on our tombstones. The only life beyond is to live in the memory of humanity.

Such is the Secular theory of morals. Not entering into any prolonged discussion of the Secular ethics, we may, in a few words, summarize its logical results.

(1) It is devoid of authority. It possesses no moral dynamic. It contains nothing to impel or persuade one animal to make sacrifices for another animal. Why should an individual work for the good of a society of animals which is to flourish some æons after the individual has perished? There is here no original

authority. The assumption of authority by society, or a part of society, the individual may resent and repudiate.

(2) This theory of morals removes man beyond the reach of law, it makes law impotent, and justice an empty name. The secularist says society can be kept in order by human enactment. But a twitch of the forefinger, or a sip of a sweetened liquid will remove me, in a moment, beyond all these pains and penalties. I can laugh at all your human legislation, if there is no Divine Lawgiver. It is absurd to speak of a law which I can escape as easily as a man lies down to pleasant dreams.

(3) The secular code justifies suicide. We recall Hamlet's famous soliloquy. How simple, in poverty or bodily pain, in failure or in crime, to escape all the unpleasantness, and make our quietus "with a bare bodkin." Convinced that this is the only way of peace, the reproaches, denunciations, and pleadings which it is the fashion of society to heap upon the would-be suicide would fall upon deaf ears. A man's first duty is to find comfort, even if he seek it in the bowl of Socrates, or the fire of Sardanapalus, or the seven-shooter of a bankrupt merchant. This life being all, it is immaterial whether it end in June or July.

(4) This theory also furnishes a most cogent argument for Communism. Your serene philosopher in his West-End mansion will not follow this principle to its logical results. But teach the masses, the poor, vicious, idle and dangerous classes, that there is no law but

such as men make, no good or evil but such as they can grasp by force, here, to-day and to-morrow, and they will find a short path to ease and pleasure; they will involve society in a dire catastrophe, and repeat the horrors of the Paris Commune in London, Birmingham, Chicago, New York and Toronto.

(5) That the individual should live for the welfare of the humanity of the future is, upon the secular hypothesis, an unwarrantable assumption. The humanity of the future is clearly not worth living for. A tale is told of a Russian woman and her children in a sleigh pursued by wolves. As the fierce brutes approached she threw a child to them, and this she did again and again until alone she arrived in safety at a village. In the village inn she was reciting the tale of her deliverance, when a stalwart peasant cleft her head with an axe. She had no right to be saved at the cost of those children. And, on the hypothesis of Secularism, the humanity of the future has no right to flourish upon the labors, the life, the sufferings of the individuals of to-day. Down with that humanity of the future which would sacrifice the individual to-day. A few cattle are not worth keeping, then why should you and I continue to live and suffer for the humanity of the future. Life is not worth living. I will not toil for a dream. I will not toil at all. In pain I will not live. If I live at all, animal I am; comfort to-day is my philosophy, my aim, my exceeding great reward, and if my personal comfort cease, I will pass swiftly into night and nothingness.

"Twere best at once to sink in peace  
Like birds the charmed serpent draws,  
To drop headforemost in the jaws  
Of vacant darkness and to cease."

This most popular ethical hypothesis of the modern schools of unbelief is thus tried and found wanting.

III.—Thus far we have confined our attention to the logical bearings of the new ethics. This was the more necessary, since these theories have never been tried. Those gentlemen who teach them sit in their nice suburban homes under the protection of a Christian Government and civilization. Here they cannot do much harm. Nor have they very ample opportunity to ascertain what good is in the new ethics. They should go, like missionaries—but leave all religious ideas and the products of these ideas at home—and try the new-fangled system upon a tribe of heathen savages. Or let them take a million of people from the lower parts of London to some remote locality, where, undisturbed by the current religious truths and traditions, they can make an experiment. Hitherto they have done nothing to speak of. They have caused no sweeter fruit to grow upon the tree of life. I am not aware that Materialism ever caused two blades of grass to grow where Christianity only produced one. Perhaps the evolutionist has forced some sluggish minds in our era to think, but the Bible has been a thousand times better intellectual stimulant. Hedonism teaches us to care for the body, but the apostles of Christ proclaimed this duty in more impressive language, and



urged it by more powerful motives. Secularism professes to be busy with many plans for the temporal improvement of the people, but Christians are much more prompt, more active, and more successful in secular enterprises. We are thankful that those negative systems have never been fairly tested, no organization has arisen with sufficient faith in them to give them an open trial. But we may now mention a few facts to indicate what the practical influence of the new ethics may be. What manner of men does it make? How does it work when applied in practical life?

1. Let us take, then, the most romantic picture in the gallery, that of Comte, the founder and idol of the Positivists. He, when a delicate and fractious youth, was turned out of school; he was rejected by the great socialist teacher, St. Simon, was unhappy in his marriage and in his family life, spent a season in an insane asylum, nearly succeeded in drowning himself in the Seine, and was banished by his wife as a madman, an atheist, and immoral. He finds he has a heart which is swept away by his frantic adoration of the lonely wife of a convict who is absent in the galleys. Following those who sixty-four years earlier had set up goddesses of reason in the cathedrals and churches of Paris, where upon each high altar a fair woman, chosen for her faultless beauty, sat enthroned, her foot resting upon the consecrated slab, Comte proclaims that two hours a day, divided into three private services, are to be spent in the adoration of humanity

under the form of a living or dead woman. This is Comte's system, a wretched parody of the mummeries of Rome. This is your man, however it is attempted to hide the grim reality under the glamour of French romance; this is the Positive philosopher who gives to woman everything except justice, disowns God and immortality, worships humanity and his Clotilde, and dolefully sings :

"Cessation is true rest,  
And sleep for them opprest,  
And not to be were blest ;  
Annihilation is a better state than this,  
Better than woe or bliss."

2. Turn now to a more familiar example of the legitimate products of secular morality. No more painful and shameful scenes have been enacted in the proceedings of the British Parliament in our time than those in which Mr. Charles Bradlaugh was a chief actor. We see this man, a blatant and blasphemous atheist, appearing at the bar of the House of Commons, ready to deny God or to appeal to Him, ready to take an oath upon the Bible or to spit upon it, ready to trample upon the law of a Christian nation or to crouch before it like a whipped cur, in order to obtain a seat in the legislature; and in this man without fine sensibility, in this man devoid of moral honesty, in this man unfit to be trusted with the interests of a great Christian people, in this man we have a specimen of the grade of moral character that atheistic Secularism can produce. And he is no



ordinary person. He is one of the popular and influential leaders and teachers of the Secularist party, at whose feet their common men meekly sit.

3. Do you call for an example of the type of moral character which the new ethics can evolve in the life of woman. We have one ready to hand in that singular compound of feminine sensibility and masculine vigor of intellect known to us all under the sobriquet of "George Eliot." She became a disciple of the Positivist school, a daughter or granddaughter of Comte. Educated amid evangelistic influences, had she yielded to the teachings of her Methodist relatives, and her father, she would have been saved from those errors which impel even Mr. Cross to speak her name with bated breath. But she went over to the Secularists. Here surely was good material to work upon. Out of this nobly endowed woman, whose works of genius we read with unaffected admiration, the anti-Christian moralists had a splendid opportunity to produce an example of pure and lovely womanhood which we should delight to place before our wives and daughters for their imitation. But they ignominiously failed. They failed, not because the woman was bad, but because their ethical system was vicious; and I charge it to Hennell and to Bray, to Strauss and to Lewes, and to the coterie of sceptics that surrounded her impressible intellect and hungering heart, that this marvellous woman fell into those moral and domestic vagaries which render it well nigh impossible to study her life without tears.

4. I will pass over Mr. Louis Greg going to church devoutly carrying a prayer-book in which he does not believe; perhaps it makes him feel better in the darkness of his doubt. I will not speak of the author of "John Inglesant," who, with no faith in Christianity or its Christ, comes to the Lord's table, and in taking the sacred symbols of Christ's doctrine and life, joins in the holiest act of Christian worship; it may be that in some way the unknown God touches his soul through the shadows. I will not insist that another member of the agnostic fraternity, Mr. J. H. Clapper-ton, characterizes such conduct as hypocritical, and therefore immoral. I will not further refer to the inconsistency of the advocates of the new theory. But I will give you one more instance of the practical working of the new ethics when consistently applied.

5. Some years ago a man of exceptional intelligence, thoroughly educated, a graduate of the University of France, stood before the criminal court in Paris, on trial for his life. He had murdered an aged woman of some means for her money. His defence, logical to him, but audacious to society, was bold enough to startle even gay Paris. It was the Darwinian theory of "the survival of the fittest." He knew the old woman had a large sum of money; that she could not or would not use it; he was convinced he could make better use of it than she, and it was therefore fair and right to put her out of the way, and assume possession of the money. Admitting his premises, that there is no future, no responsibility, that the right of the

stronger is the only rule of morals, his conclusion is unavoidable. The logical sequence and the practical results are identical. This was his defence in the French court. His advocate, silenced by the cool effrontery of his client, could not defend him directly. But he presented this deplorable case as a result of the false teachings of the day, especially in France; and there and then, before that tribunal, he solemnly, in scathing eloquence, impeached those damning doctrines which had led this unhappy man into crime, and to the scaffold.

Such men are produced by these doctrines. They are more dangerous to society than ordinary criminals, for they corrupt their fellows, making crime a necessity and a virtue. They are the rotting fruit of society, contaminating whatever they touch. They are the malcontents of the modern state who rise to the surface in times of popular agitation. Each of them brings a torch for burning, but no hammer for building; and when their numbers increase they imperil the social order and tranquillity. They stood at the head of the Paris Commune. They are the leaders of the more dangerous forms of German Socialism. They are the most desperate and unscrupulous characters among the Russian Nihilists. Wherever these evils threaten to disturb the existing order, allowing a large margin for superstition, and much for hoary wrongs that need redress, these evils are the bitter fruit of those irreligious theories which are put forth as substitutes for the dogmatic foundation of morals. When

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tried, those systems do not work well, and whatever does not work well stands condemned. "The tree is known by its fruit."

IV.—Our next step will be to survey the theological heritage we possess. What are our truth-treasures which modern speculation asks us to replace by her novel negations? What dogmas do we already hold? Have they proven strong enough to sustain the framework of character and society? What has been the result of the transmutation of Biblical doctrines into convictions? How do they work when honestly applied? The answer to this question finds so frequent expression in the pulpits, and on the platforms of our churches, that it is less necessary to deal with it at any length. But justice demands some allusion to the nature and influence of Biblical dogma. Is, then, this bird in the hand so void of plumage and song and true value that we are prepared to let it go, and beat the bushes for the two birds said to be hidden in the tangled undergrowth of incipient science? I trow not.

1. Take the Bible as a summary of religious truth. Take Jesus Christ as the most efficient teacher of this truth. Commit to memory the Sermon on the Mount; take the Gospel according to St. John in your right hand, and the Epistle to the Romans in your left; stand under the cross of Calvary, and there study in the light of subsequent history the influence of Christian dogma, in the only form which we, as a Church, recognize as of Divine authority. This, however, is

not a study for an hour ; years would not exhaust it. No learning or eloquence would suffice to recite these annals ; it would need some celestial genius to depict in becoming terms the marvellous influence of Christian truth since Jesus flung those sayings of His upon wind and wave.

Here is a small book. We call it the New Testament. From the middle of this book we select a few pages. Here, in this audience, select at random an educated man. He has read many books, in various departments of literature, in many branches of science, in several different languages. During the thirty remaining years of his life he expects to read many more volumes, to absorb the best thoughts of many great and good men. When he becomes an old man, he will have spent his life in familiar contact with the richest products of the best minds. Then, standing on life's bourne, he will put all those stories of human learning into one scale, and these few pages from this small duodecimo volume into the other scale ; and he will testify that these few pages from the New Testament, in his life, outweigh all the treasures of literature. In power to transform, to elevate, to control, and to bless the individual life, these few pages are proven to have more vitality, greater moral momentum, and more efficiency in awakening the dormant intellect, kindling the moral nature with holy life, and thrilling man with angelic raptures, than any, or all, teachings that have ever touched us. Such is my personal testimony, and such is yours. Such is the testimony

of tens of thousands of the most admirable of living men. Such is the testimony of that great multitude which no man can number, who have passed into the unseen. This alone is a remarkable fruit of the pure theological dogma. I venture to say that not three men can bear similar emphatic testimony concerning any one of the three systems of which we have spoken. Those trees are barren, why cumber they the ground ; cut them down !

2. The Biblical doctrine has left a track of light through the ages. Wherever the Bible has gone we see a ramification of this radiance. It has furnished the most powerful motives to virtue. It has exemplified the meaning of holiness. It has formed the most saintly and beneficent characters of history. In the days of the Patriarchs, of Moses, of Solomon, of Jesus, of Luther and of Cromwell, it has produced the best men. It has not indeed made those men perfect, not obliterated every trace of depravity, not rectified every crook and perverse deformity of character, not made those men invulnerable to temptation ; but it has taken them, made of common clay, from the lowliest places, and has exalted them far above the ordinary level of human excellence. Men moulded by the Bible have not been perfect, but they have always been the best men of their time, and their country. Who are your pure and saintly men ? Who are your stalwart workingmen ? Who your model mothers ? Who your pure-minded patriots ? Who your trusted legislators ? Who your revered teachers on Monday



as well as on Sunday? Who your noblest men of letters? Who the brave pioneers of your civilization? Who your heroic missionaries? Who your martyrs esteeming truth more precious than life? Who? Men whose souls accumulated vigor and health, and force and beauty by feeding upon the doctrine of the Bible! What made grand old Abraham tower above the men of his time? Or Socrates, or Paul, or Constantine, or Bede, or Alfred, or Columbus, or Washington, or Florence Nightingale, or Grace Darling, or Victoria, or Gladstone? What made the lives of myriads of men and women fragrant as the rose of Sharon? Nothing but religious truth and principles appropriated by natures of original force and mettle. The test of a system of ethics is the manner of men it makes. Select the half dozen men that Secularism can produce, if you can find them; take from them such excellences as they owe to Christian civilization, and let them stand, half clad, a poor corporal's guard, beside the countless hosts that Biblical dogma, informed with the spirit of Christ, has instructed and transformed and glorified with all the high qualities of stately, and beautiful, and benevolent manhood. Then, as you read the unmeasured and immeasurable contrast, remember the principle to which you freely assented, "The tree is known by its fruit."

3. But any system of truth that can produce such manhood and womanhood can also build up society. What pure soul does not take fire in contemplating the beneficent influence of the Christian dogma upon social

conditions. It has dotted each Christian country with happy homes. It has erected our marriage altars, and placed woman, in queenly state, upon her throne. It has filled the Western world with sweet charities. It has fed the poor and aged, and gathered the sick and infirm into hospitals. It has built asylums for orphan children. It has trained armies of skilled nurses. It has sent ministers of mercy with cordials to the wounded and dying soldier. It has manned life-boats on the storm-beaten coast. It has broken the fetters of the slave. It has founded schools, and given, in the dark ages, an impulse to learning. To the toiling children of men it has given the Sabbath, as a benediction to rural life, and a safety-valve of city populations. It has improved the temporal condition of the peoples that have received it. It gave England the Magna Charta, and the free constitution of the world's greatest Monarchy. It gave to the United States the Declaration of Independence, and the free constitution of the world's greatest Republic. It has purified many corrupt fountains of political life. It has made many deserts "rejoice and blossom as the rose."

I will ask the opponent of the open Bible, be he a priest or a sceptic, to study history and life. I will show him that the grandest modern nations have founded their constitutions upon the Bible. I will show him, both in England and New England, that the brightest pages of history were written when the people had an open Bible, read it, and loved it. I will take him to Canada, or Ireland, or Italy; and show



him that those countries are the most prosperous where the Bible is in the homes and hearts of the people. I will take him into any city of this country, into any street of that city, and show him that there is more wealth, better health, higher intelligence, cleaner dwellings, greater sobriety, industry and purity, a superior class of citizens, a happier people, and sweeter homes, where the Bible is open, taught, believed and obeyed. Where our dogmas, pure and potent, are received, there we find the material comforts, the moralities, and the holiest sentiments of life. This, I judge, is an incontrovertible position.

Some thirty-five years ago (writes the Rev. Joseph Cook), Lord Beaconsfield wrote a book called "Tancred." He saw that, notwithstanding the wide diffusion of liberty, intelligence and property, the people were not happy. In this book, Disraeli sends a young English lord from London to the Jordan in search of a cure for the social and political evils of Europe. He represents the young noble kneeling at the Holy Sepulchre, at Bethany and at Bethlehem, in prayer to the Unseen Powers for some guide in the healing of the nations. He passes over the Jordan, and traverses the wilderness, until at last he comes to Mount Sinai. One night he goes alone to the very spot where the law was given. There he kneels beneath the watching stars, and falling into a trance, sees the Genius of Christianity standing with her arms outstretched over the nations. She speaks in answer to his prayer, and exclaims: "The equality of man can be accomplished

only by the sovereignty of God. The longing for fraternity can never be satisfied but under the sway of a common Father. Announce the sublime and solacing doctrine of theocratic equality." Not only is Theology the firm foundation of morals, but it is also the groundwork of national prosperity, and of the fraternity and happiness of the people.

This Christian truth is the Tree of Life. It is laden with fruit forevermore. Its leaves are for the healing of the nations. With former generations of men, we "sit under its shadow with great delight, and its fruit is sweet to our taste."

V.—We may fitly conclude this exposition with some reflections upon the attitude of a wise and fair-minded theologian in the present state of ethical speculation.

1. And *first*, let us distinctly recognize that a man may be better or worse than his written creed. As a man is not therefore good because he can pronounce every theological shibboleth, so he is not necessarily bad because he has plunged into the depths and shallows of sceptical materialism. The theist may be vicious in defiance of his creed, as the atheist may be virtuous despite the inherent tendency of his negation. Our opponents exultingly inform us that David, the king and poet, the pet of the theologians, fell into sin. True, but his sin brought him into deadly antagonism with the principles of his religion. Darwin, the modern apostle of evolution, we are told, was a man of stainless, and almost massive grandeur of character.

True again, but he was made such by forces outside of the blank negations of materialism. We can neither attribute the excellence of the agnostic to his denial of theology, nor trace the moral delinquency of the believer to its acceptance.

We cannot, in all candour, avoid being charmed by the lofty sentiments and serene morality of some of those men who have wandered from the faith of their fathers. Far be it from us to throw dirt upon any white garment. Let us rather acknowledge that a man may be better than his creed. And no wonder! There is a certain unworldliness in the manner of life of some of those men of science. Think of Agassiz, so intent upon the study of nature that he had no time to make money. We have heard even of some clergymen more worldly than that. Those years spent in patient toil, and long, and lone journeyings over forest, mountain, and sea; this self-abnegation, to accumulate information, and furnish data for future inductions; these habits of close study and wide reading, all give a certain elevation and refinement to the character of the original investigator. Then, even in the extinction of their own faith, these men still live in the twilight of religion. They are held fast to the existing social order, in a net-work of sacred personal relationships. They are rich in the possession of sentiments and hopes formed by religion. They have taken the fundamental idea of duty from Christianity; and while their theoretical convictions have fallen into ruins, their conscience still remains

standing, the sole witness of a demolished building. The terms higher and lower applied to actions, the terms noble and base, moral and immoral, right and wrong, and the corresponding ideas, they have appropriated and freely use. They live by the faith of others. By the religious convictions of others, society is sustained and conserved, and these few men share the benedictions. They are so busy digging stones, or measuring planets, or pondering metaphysics, or playing the iconoclast, that they have no time to bake the bread necessary to sustain life; but they live upon the bread already prepared by the great permanent faiths of humanity. When speculation becomes absurd in reason, and hence falls into aberrations of conduct, then strong, sturdy common sense, that enemy of fruitless and dangerous speculation, keeps men in the ways of righteousness. The child lives by instinct before he attains a conscious, fixed faith in the truth of life. And often, when the man of science loses his early faith, he goes back, and lives by instinct again. What marvel that those men are often better than their creed! For, as it has been well said, "The priests of science have stolen from the crown of Christ's Gospel its most rare and precious jewels, and then have pretended to the world that they found them in the mines of nature, in their own honest search after truth."

2. Theologians should, in the *second* place, frankly acknowledge that their dogmatic statements are not final. This truth-treasure is often poured into earthen

vessels. It is surely no indignity to creeds and confessions, ancient or modern, to say that these vessels are earthen. Shall the vessels which we fill from the sacred fount of inspiration always be of the same shape and design? Must I continue to carry the water of life in the same goblet, although it is cracked, or a hole is worn in the bottom? Do you compel us to drink from the same tin-cup no matter how rusty the years have made it? Are we supposed to be unable to see the hole or rust? May we not solder it, or polish it, or even cleanse it? I do not need to counsel so grave and learned a body to obtain the best possible theological vessels, and occasionally to mend them.

Dogmatic statements are not final. They are liable to the imperfection that attaches to all human concerns. Incompleteness is a characteristic of creeds, in the nature of things. And misconceptions of incomplete statements of religious truth have stirred many an unholy passion, provoked many a savage blow, and shaken the Church with unseemly controversy. Hear the venerable Copernicus, with his eye on the star circles, lift his feeble voice against the finality of creeds. Hear the Smithfield martyrs from the flames, hear the Vaudois mountaineers whose moans the vales repeat to the hills and they to heaven, hear the brave Covenanters as they raise their psalms in the lonely glens of Scotland, hear the Reformers of Germany and the Evangelists of England, hear all those who are charged with turning the world upside down pro-

test in a voice of thunder, in the hearing of all the Churches, against the finality of creeds. Hear Mr. George Holyoake, the prominent advocate of free-thought, in an address delivered in this country, tracing his heterodoxy to his early impressions received from his devoted mother's torturing dread lest she had committed the unpardonable sin, and to the doctrine of infant damnation enunciated by the celebrated John Angell James in Carr's Lane Chapel, which he attended in his boyhood. And if the transition be not too sudden, I may ask you to hear the quaint language of the Farm Ballad of Carlton.

"The first thing I remember whereon we disagreed  
Was something concerning Heaven, a difference in our creed ;  
We argued the thing at breakfast, we argued the thing at tea,  
And the more we argued the question the more we didn't agree ;  
And so the Heaven we argued no nearer to us got,  
But it gave us a taste of something a thousand times as hot."

These are concrete examples of some of the perils of dogmatism. Exact theological terminology and formal statement is necessary. Yet we should not hesitate to purify and improve such extreme statements as may be liable to abuse. The theologian proceeds to demolish Huxley's automaton man, when, to his astonishment, Huxley turns the theologian's arguments against the fatalism of Edwards. The sovereignty of God, a dogma firm as the pillars of heaven, has been abused by men seeking excuse for inaction or false conduct. Extreme predestinarian formulæ are admitted to be injurious. On the same principle it has been said that



the doctrine of justification by faith is immoral. Roman Catholics declare that Protestantism is inimical to the stability of society, and this is founded on a misconception of the position of the Reformed Churches. It is disastrous to the interests of truth to cling to defective statements needlessly liable to misconstruction and abuse. We may safely grant that dogmatic statements are not final. We need not fear to purge them of extraneous matter. Every intelligent teacher of religion practically does so in his sermons and prelections. In theology, all imperative propositions should possess the qualities of brevity, simplicity and scientific accuracy.

3. *Thirdly*, in regard to the use of dogma, it is well to distinguish between the pulpit and the school. This suggestion is intended both for that venerable worshipper in our churches who, being a born theologian, is never quite satisfied with a sermon unless it is a profound theological disquisition; and for that student in our theological colleges who is a born evangelist, and thinks every class lecture by the Professor of Divinity should be a red-hot sermon. Now your theologian in the pew, and your evangelist in the class, having confounded the essential functions of the pulpit and the school, are both doomed to frequent disappointment.

There is also another practical error here which I may indicate. A young man, fresh from one of our theological institutions, or while yet a student, is called to regularly occupy a pulpit. He must have

sermons, of course. If you could see into his study, during the first year of two of his ministry, you would probably find him, week by week, pacing that room, wringing his hands, and pressing his throbbing temples, saying, "O dear, what shall I preach about next Sunday?" In his trouble he has recourse to his accumulated stock of theology. He fishes from his trunk those old notes and lectures, with one or two well-worn text-books. He intends to preach on Sin. Here is a chapter that will make a sermon on that subject. He proposes to preach on Justification. Here is a chapter which may be wrought up into a sermon on that topic. And if this does not quite satisfy him, he will polish it or buttress it with some extracts from one of Wesley's. It is in order, upon a Methodist platform, to refer to personal experience. I recall my first year in the pulpit, having graduated, not from a college, but from a farm-house. I have preserved those first manuscript sermons. Very careful statements, are many of them, of such doctrines as Primeval Man, The Fall, Depravity, and The Atonement. How the villagers applauded those productions; for though they were like the dry bones of Ezekiel's vision, they *were* orthodox. I cannot honestly preach in that fashion now. And it is my misfortune that those old sermons will not likely be of any further use until that day which seems very far distant, when I shall be called to a theological lectureship in some college.

The relation between theology and preaching appears to me to be nearly the same as that between



botany and materia medica. The botanist lives among plants, for his own pleasure, or in the interests of science, to enlarge the domain of knowledge by original research and discovery. He knows all about plants, their organs, structure, habits, and technical names, and can put each into its own genus, species, or class. An Indian doctor, however, is ignorant of all scientific terminology; he could not classify a Canada thistle so as to satisfy a professor of botany. But if an Indian brave is wounded, or a papoose has a fever, the rude medicine man knows what to do with the herbs he has found in the woods. Here we see the reason why a Methodist preacher, with very slender educational advantages, often proves more effective in converting sinners from the error of their way than the scholar who comes forth equipped with all the learning of the theological seminary. But we may roll the botanist and the Indian doctor into one, and give this compound man some special college and hospital training in the art of healing, and we then have the enlightened physician who goes into the sick room, ministers to the diseased body, and prescribes from the fulness of exact knowledge, while no pedantic echo of a scientific term escapes his lips. We are aiming, I am persuaded, to roll the Methodist preacher and scholar into one, and to give to this compound man some special training in the sacred art of healing the moral maladies of men. I say not that the professor's chair should never become a pulpit, or that the pulpit should never become a teacher's desk. But I fear the distinction has not

always been clearly recognized. The theologian, as such, goes through the Bible, in the interests of truth first, and of man secondly. The preacher, as such, goes through the same Bible, first in the interests of man, and secondly in the interests of truth. The theologian endeavors to fix the relation of each truth to other truths, and its place in the system. The preacher takes the same truth and asks, What can be done with it? How can I use it to minister to a mind diseased? Is it antiseptic or anodyne, tonic or antifebrile, aperient, or stimulant? Never mind the system of doctrine, what malady will this truth heal?

Now in the school the clergyman is a theologian, but in the pulpit he is a preacher. The preacher, as far as possible, should be able to handle truth as the theologian does, but that is not his proper work. He knows the intrinsic value of the school theologies. But he surveys a group of once hopeless men and women, saved by the rough methods of some unlettered men, and he discerns that quite crude and simple statements of doctrine are very effective in dealing with a certain class of living and sinning souls. An evangelist may make a sad medley of the theologies, and yet be successful. Like the sailors' preacher of Boston, when he lost himself in an involved sentence, he can say, "I don't know where I came into this sentence, and I don't in the least know where I am going out, but thank God I am bound for the Kingdom of Heaven." If, in these days, we are wise, we will not confound the functions of the school and the pulpit.

We will not set one against the other. The more clearly we perceive their true relation the less likely shall we be to provoke the hostility of frivolous or critical hearers to doctrinal sermons, and to the hard and dry dogmatism of the pulpit.

4. *Fourthly*, in view of current ethical speculation, we need not tremble for the final issue of the conflict of our age. An age of doubt, of ferment, of high intellectual excitement, it certainly is. This sign of our time is daily forced upon our notice. Every sunset brings it before us with the evening journals. What will be the end of all this turmoil?

Now, I think the study of former critical epochs in the history of religion and philosophy will enable us, with tolerable certainty, to forecast the future. We see a great deal of fine writing, doleful too, about a "moral interregnum." Morality is about to be dethroned, leaving every man to do what is right in his own eyes. All this mournful eloquence should be read by Christians while they dwell in the sunlight and the song of their high faith, lest these melancholy predictions should plunge the faithful into the abyss of pessimism. Above all these nightmare fancies of doubt we may confidently lift up the prediction that, as the world never has been cursed with a moral interregnum, so the world never shall be desolated with a moral interregnum. The Almighty Power, who created the world, who guides its multifarious life onward to that "far off divine event to which the whole creation moves," will guard against any calamity so disastrous

to society, to the Church and to humanity, as a total collapse of moral principle and practice. Amid all these doleful prophecies we observe a steady improvement in the moral conditions of human life. Our Heavenly Father has led His people down the ages to this the happiest and most fruitful of the centuries, and we, His children, will rest and sing in the sweet confidence that the world and mankind are safe in His hands.

Man has come through former periods of searching inquiry, the truth of Christ has passed through the hottest criticism, the Church has seen forms of unbelief bolder and more blasphemous than those which we contemplate, and man has lived on through it all; the institutions of society have stood, all the interests of life have been conserved and promoted, the old truth has still held the noblest minds and formed the best characters, the Gospel has continued to be received, the Sabbath shone upon devout worshippers, wise legislation was effected, crime was punished as before, schools were kept open, children were educated, evangelists flamed far and near, explorers penetrated unknown lands, commerce sent her swift ships over the seas, literary workers poured forth books, artisans toiled at their various crafts, happy homes were established, the millions ate and drank, married and gave in marriage, lived and loved, served their generation, fell on sleep and went in triumph to heaven, heedless of the wailing prophets of scepticism, because men knew God their Father, and eternal life their heritage, and

duty their watchword, and hope the anchor which fastened them to the unseen verities. Occasional unbelievers there may be, but humanity is not sceptical. Therefore has society ever remained stable and secure amid the fluctuating billows of unbelief. The few ripples on the surface cannot change the course of the mighty tide of human life as guided by Him that made the sun, moon, and stars. A moral interregnum coming? No, never! "The thing that hath been is that which shall be," only under happier conditions. In this respect, depend upon it, "there is nothing new under the sun."

Yet we may find some cause for immediate alarm. Not, indeed, from the handful of cultured agnostics "whom nobody expects to break out into violence or lust," but from the spread of those pernicious theories among turbulent spirits, taking from the masses of the poor the compensating hope of a future life, and exciting them to grasp, by fair means or foul, all they can of the temporal and material good. The horoscope of any theory that tends to disintegrate and enfeeble the faith of the people in the great dogmatic truths of religion points to possible disturbance. To select an instance, the life of the French nation, her religion and her Church were not overthrown by the scepticism of the eighteenth century, but the decay of faith introduced the most turbulent and unhappy period of her history. The bloody revolution, the awful "reign of terror," the seige of Paris, the horrors of the Commune, the tragic end of the good Archbishop, the nameless

crimes, and the subsequent restlessness which even now threatens to burst forth, with volcanic fury, in some national fanaticism or popular madness, all this is, in part at least, the effect of the relaxing of the religious faith of the French people. They who ride at anchor in some roadstead, or sail a yacht on some placid Windermere, know little of the storms; but let them launch upon the ocean, if they would feel the fury of the elements. We, in Canada, in our quiet towns, never feel the pressure of feudal tyranny or wrong, and dwell in peaceful security. But go into the great centres, the dense populations of countries long divided between ignorant superstition and clamorous infidelity, and there learn that when faith wavers we may expect destroying tempests, and conflagrations, and volcanic eruptions in the heart of society. Nevertheless we know, in the great battle of Armageddon, which side will conquer, and assured of the final result, we join our fortunes to that only and eternal King who "must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet."

5. *Lastly*, we are resolved, I am persuaded, to stand by *duty* wherever it may lead. Nelson, in the hour of battle, sent ringing through the bands of British sailors the clarion call, "England expects every man to do his duty." But long before Copenhagen, and ever since, duty has been a talismanic word. Yes, we will stand by our duty. Then must we also stand by those dogmas upon which duty is based. God, the supernal Trinity; Christ, the Divine Sacrifice and



Example; freedom, the glorious endowment; eternal life, the hope and reward—this is our faith; for it is our life, our joy, the power of righteousness, the salt of society, the safeguard of all human interests, the light of the world.

A favorite dogma of modern science is the conservation and dissipation of energy. It appears that in the operations of nature there is a continuous waste. In a remote geological epoch the earth was once unfit for human habitation; and in consequence of this perpetual dissipation of force, such a time will come again, unless power supra-material intervene to preserve the life of man upon this planet. Even science calls for a Power, that is for a God, to rescue nature from desolation. We know there is similar necessity in the moral life. In the advancement of society there is a ceaseless dissipation of moral energy. This waste must be repaired by the constant communication of Divine power and life. If terrestrial life must eventually perish without God, how much more the spiritual life of the race. It then becomes our duty, so far as in us lies, to unite the soul, the Church, and the world to the Divine Power by invincible faith and prevailing prayer,—

“For so the whole round earth is everywhere  
Bound by golden chains about the feet of God.”

Not detaining you longer, I will quote a few lines from a discourse delivered in Montreal at the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of

Science: "I have sat beside many death-beds and have learned that there are truths in the system of things as real and as certain as any law of nature. My eyes cannot see them, my ears cannot hear them, nor can I touch them with my hands, but they are there. I know them to be true, and that they will endure when nature and her laws shall have passed away like the memory of a troubled dream. I testify what I have seen. I have many a time seen an humble earnest faith in those unseen truths cause a smile of joy to play upon the pale face distorted with pain, like a sunbeam dancing on the bosom of the troubled ocean. I have seen those truths illumine with a light from heaven the dim eyes soon to be closed forever by the cold hand of death. Those truths are more dear to me than all that nature can teach me, because they touch my inner life and consciousness. I learned those truths as a little child at my mother's knee; I cherish them in my heart of hearts; and in defence of them, if opportunity should offer, and God should count me worthy, I would gladly lay down my life."





# Christ's Divine Mission :

A SERMON DELIVERED BEFORE THE THEOLOGICAL UNION OF  
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY, MAY 10TH, 1885.

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BY THE

REV. S. J. HUNTER.



## Sermon.

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# CHRIST'S DIVINE MISSION.

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"Philip saith unto Him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us."—JOHN xiv. 8-12.

WHILE there is a great variety of views as to the relative importance of the evidences of Christ's divine nature and mission, such variety does not disclose any weakness in those evidences. It arises out of the very abundance of resources at the command of the Christian apologist. Neither let any one suppose that a change in the line of battle betrays any weakness or misgivings about the ultimate issue of the conflict. The Greeks made several changes of disposition in front of their watchful enemy before the battle of Platea, which Mardonious mistook for weakness; but soon and sorrowfully he found that his exultation was unfounded. In my text, Christ states the evidences of His mission. He speaks of a variety of proofs,—“works,” “greater works,” His “words,” and that union of His with the Father which a true insight might have discovered, and which would be discovered by those who should come under the guid-

ance of the Holy Ghost. First, He asserts that His miracles are of themselves proofs of His mission ; but He evidently places them below that self-evidencing power residing in Himself, which He seems to regard as the highest evidence. Then, He makes this remarkable assertion : " He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also ; and greater works than these shall he do ; because I go unto My Father." Because of His ascent to the Father and the consequent descent of the Spirit, His disciples would do greater works than He. On another occasion He taught a kindred truth : " He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive : for the Holy Ghost was not yet given ; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." The explanation of these " greater works," given by some, is puerile ; namely, that they are the cures wrought by the shadow of Peter, or the handkerchiefs of St. Paul, or the gift of tongues, considered simply as a miracle.

Alford gives, I think, the true interpretation. " ' Greater works than these ' they did ; not in degree but in kind ; spiritual works, under the dispensation of the Spirit, which had not yet come in. They should have much greater success in their ministry than He had met with." But is this promise to be limited to the disciples ? No. The wonders of grace and the triumphs of the Spirit cannot be temporary, but must continue to the end of time, if the Spirit so

continue. Surely we may say that the flowing out of the Spirit from the hearts of believers in holy tendencies and sympathies and assimilating power, through all time, is included in the promises of the seventh chapter of this book; and this is equally true of these "greater works," so that we have here indicated the whole evidence of the propagation and moral effects of Christianity resulting from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Church, and this evidence Christ places above that of the material miracles wrought by Him and His followers. But, further, Christ here speaks of His words, of which He elsewhere says: "They are spirit and they are life;" as if they carried with them to the hearing ear unmistakable proof of His divinity. But over and above all He sets Himself as His own evidence, and treats it as a matter of surprise that those who had been so long with Him as His disciples had been, did not recognize His oneness with the Father. And thus is brought out in its full force a truth of paramount importance, namely, that the discovery of His divinity, which personal intercourse had failed to give, should be imparted by the teaching of the Spirit, whom He promised to send. "At that day,"—after the Holy Spirit has come,—“ye shall know that I am in My Father.” Now, if called upon to state the evidences, as this passage states them, and as they stand related to each other in value and importance, I should range them thus:—1. Miracles; 2. Christ's words; 3. The propagation and moral effects of Christianity; and,

4. The personality and character of Christ, associated with the existence and indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

*1st. Miracles.* I shall not enter upon a detailed argument in proof of the possibility of miracles. To assert the impossibility of the miraculous, on the ground that the course of nature is immutably fixed, exhibits an assumed knowledge of the universe and of God which the greatest mind ought to be slow to arrogate to itself. If the world was created by a God of infinite wisdom and power, He must be able to lay His hand upon the mightiest forces that He has brought into existence, and compel them to do His will. Bind God by the iron laws of necessity, and I may fear Him, but I cannot reverence Him. As Sir Isaac Newton justly said, "If you deprive God of His providence and intelligent purposes in creation, you have nothing left but mere Fate and Nature." Equally fallacious is it to argue that even if miracles are possible, it may be impossible to prove that they ever happened. Hume's argument is, that our confidence in testimony, being due entirely to experience, can never warrant our believing any reported departure from experience. But, assuredly, all that Hume was entitled to say was, that he had never had experience of the circumstances in which supernatural facts are alleged to have occurred. It was impossible for him to say what could or might happen in different circumstances. And then, as to testimony itself—and this is true in the case of the New Testament writers—it may be given in such a

form, by such men, and in such circumstances, that its falsehood would be a miracle. Christ did not go to obscure places to work His miracles, where investigation could not follow Him. He did not work one miracle, but many—on sea and on land—on hopeless paralytics and raving maniacs, and on death itself. The people laughed Him to scorn because He said of the daughter of Jairus, "She is not dead, but sleepeth;" but He took her by the hand and she lived again. If you say this was a case of *apparent* death—was the son of the widow of Nain only a case of suspended animation? Was Lazarus another case of trance—four days dead—corruption already working upon the fluids and solids of the body? Was Christ Himself a case of suspended animation—an animation which asserted itself at the very time at which before His death He said He should rise again? No. Mothers had learnt too well the look of death in the faces of their children to be mistaken, and disease was too well understood to be cured by the incantations of a juggler. Men tell me that the doctrine of miracles impeaches the perfection and order of the universe. Why, the regularity of the laws of Nature is indispensable to the argument from miracles. If these laws were not ordinarily uniform in their action, the interruption of their uniformity would be no sign of God's hand. But why conclude that a miracle is a violation of a law at all? We rather believe that it is the working of a higher law subordinating and controlling the lower, in perfect analogy with what we



see and do every day in the sphere of the natural. For instance, life, supervening to the mechanical and chemical laws of matter, causes the sap to ascend contrary to the law of gravity. Will, itself a supernatural power not subject to any natural laws, supervening to these, as organized in the human body, causes the limbs to act and move intelligently, and produces effects in the world of nature which nature could not do. So the Divine will, according to laws above our comprehension, and for ends within the Divine reason, for which and by which the world was made, supervenes by miracle upon the ordinary course of nature; the higher and infinite circles of God's supernatural system dipping into and sweeping visibly across our lower system of material causes. This no more deranges the order or violates the laws of nature than eclipses or meteoric showers, which also are miracles to the ignorant savage. Miracles are part of an enduring *order*—visible signs of a vast system of supernatural powers and agencies constantly acting upon and within the system of nature. But while accepting the fact of miracles, and while regarding them as amongst the evidences of Christ's mission, I do not place them on the highest pedestal. The chief defence of Christianity does not rest in them. Possibly too much has been made of them, and hence science has been brought into its mistaken conflict with faith. The miracles are only in a few instances claimed by Christ as evidences of His mission; but are wrought for the healing of the sick, the feeding

of the hungry; so that one of their chief designs—if not the chief—is to be visible fruits of His love which sprang up in the pathway of so Divine a Being. I cannot, indeed, see in His expressions the extreme disparagement of them so current amongst a certain class of theologians in the present day. He certainly considered them sufficient evidence to render opposition to Him inexcusable, and helpful to a personal faith in Him; though He expected that those who were about Him should overleap this preliminary stage. Nor do we forget what stress He laid on that crowning miracle of all—His resurrection from the dead. We should guard against carrying into our estimate of miraculous evidence the not uncommon error of supposing that what is of less relative importance has no importance. It does not follow that a thing is not great because something else is greater.

*2nd. His Words.* I take the "words" of Christ to mean His doctrines, His teachings relative to the great facts of life, God, and eternity. And when I look upon Him as a Teacher and study His words, I am convinced of His Divinity. He was born nearly two thousand years ago, in an obscure country village—the child of a poor woman whose husband was a working carpenter. His knowledge of men, His acquaintance with literature, His intercourse with the educated must have been exceedingly limited. He died at the early age of thirty-three. He never wrote a book. Men wrote down what He said in four small books, and if all the

repetitions were expunged, the entire records would fill but a few pages; yet the thought of those few pages fills the world to-day. His words, His teachings are alive as the words of no other man are. Take Plato, Demosthenes, Cicero, Socrates, Homer—the colleges study them, the student delves into them; but the words of Jesus are ringing everywhere; little children and masters of Philosophy are studying them; they are translated into all languages, and men everywhere are reading them. Now, you look at Christ as a Teacher, and how different He is from other teachers. Ordinary teachers, if they are wise, are men of caution; they do not dogmatize; they regard themselves as learners a little in advance of their pupils. A teacher is about ready for superannuation when he ceases to be a learner. But Christ never felt His way to a truth. His doctrines were not the accumulations of experience. He never made a declaration in which you can detect the slightest symptom of misgiving. The tone of every utterance is “verily, verily, I say unto you.” On every subject on which He opened His lips He had complete, absolute knowledge. The system of truth taught by Him is complete. Science is a development—every new principle contains the germ of another new principle. Take, for instance, the science of Chemistry. Mankind find themselves surrounded by chemical phenomena. Fermentation, combustion, oxidation, dissolution are occurring on every hand. These events have been studied, have been made the subjects of experiment. The result of

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these experiments has been recorded. This record constitutes the science of Chemistry. But on that dread moment when Christ said "It is finished," Christianity was perfect. The idea that the words of Christ are only steps to a completed revelation, and that the human generations are approaching the truth only as astronomers locate a new planet—the idea that the truth is evolving—has no warrant in the Word of God. When I say that Christianity is a completed revelation, I mean that it was completed just as creation was when God rested from His works and pronounced them very good. All the great astronomical facts existed then just as they do now. The telescope has only brought nigh what was afar off. So the science of Biblical interpretation has been progressive, and is still going on. Christ's words are so full of meaning that we do not get their full measure all at once. They are a mine, and no matter how far bygone ages have delved into it, they have only broken through the outer crust. But as to the truth itself, the world will never discover anything that goes beyond Jesus Christ. And then, how perfectly accurate His teachings are! Take, if you will, His teaching relative to things concerning which we are in a position to judge. There never was a teacher so sharply criticised as Christ has been. Every word He uttered, every doctrine He advanced has been placed under the lens of critical analysis; but who will say He was mistaken in His teaching regarding earthly things. He dwelt in an obscure corner of the earth.

and among the narrowest, most bigoted of people; yet He legislated for the world and for all time, He touched upon the relations which men sustain to one another, He gave rules for the government of the family, He taught for the governance of civil society, His Sermon on the Mount is replete with all that can affect the welfare of the man, the family, the Church, the world; and who says that in any single point He was wrong? The keen, logical John Stuart Mill, the polished, critical Renan, the able and eloquent Theodore Parker—in a word, all sceptics capable of judging and honest enough to give an unprejudiced opinion, give the palm to Christ, and say that in relation to questions affecting material interests “never man spake like this man.” And now when I look at this fact, and when I combine with it His life, which infidelity itself admits was absolutely pure—I say, when I find that this Teacher passes through the material world where I can follow Him and compare His teaching with facts as I find them, and discern that He is absolutely correct; when He passes on into a world and life beyond, when He tells me of beings this world never saw, of states of existence surpassing the most fantastic exaggerations of romance, of facts in relation to God and humanity which my reason never could have discerned, of doctrines of the inner life which the eye of sense cannot read; and furthermore, when I find in my own soul a desire for, and intimations of, the immortality which He brings to light, and a witness to the sin which He exposes, and a longing

for the deliverance which He promises, I shall follow Him thither and trust Him to guide me out into the future as He guides me in the present. He has been true in everything else, unchallenged in everything else, why should He not be the same here.

*3rd. The Propagation and Moral Effects of Christianity.* I said a while ago that the remarkable words, "He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father," indicated the evidence arising from the propagation and effects of the Gospel, consequent upon the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Church. I take this as the third in value of the evidences. It is well to put forward and vigorously press this upon the consideration of Christian people. Men are for the most part influenced less by abstract statement than by what they see immediately around them, and so the life of every Christian, in every rank of life, must and will have influence on those who observe it. The effect of real harmonious and sustained Christian life is above the power of words to estimate. Christ has committed to His people the perilous dignity of being "the light of the world," and the world has a right to judge them by that standard. It can never be known till "the day" shall declare it, how many stumbling-blocks have been placed in the way of honest doubters by the inconsistencies of professed Christians, or how many who obeyed not the Word, have without the Word been won by holy lives that they have witnessed, *The manifestation of an increased unity*



*amongst Christians* occupies a place of its own under this head, and no words can do justice to its importance, when we consider the prominence given to it by our Lord. If we need an illustration of it we may see it in the infancy of the Church. "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul. . . . and with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." The unmistakable manifestation of the internal unity of the believers gave a greatly added power to the miraculous evidence. That Christianity has been grievously shorn of her strength in this particular cannot be concealed, but it is a matter of great satisfaction that the signs of a closer bond of union among Christians are becoming so marked and numerous as to attract the notice even of the sceptical. *The evidence arising from the fruits of Christianity* possesses also peculiar power of its own. A field is opened to us here too vast for us to explore to-day. Take a single illustration—the social and commercial condition of Rome when Christianity appeared. Rome was mistress of the world, the tribute of all places flowed into it. "Mommson," says Fairbairn, "the greatest authority on Roman history, says its population was 1,610,000. How was it composed? There were 10,000 senators and knights, 60,000 foreigners, 20,000 garrison, 320,000 free citizens, 300,000 women and children, and 900,000 slaves—three fifths of Rome were slaves. Slaves were the absolute property of the master. Your dog has more rights than a Roman slave had. All labor was done by

them, so that the wealth of Rome was gathered into the hands of a few thousand men who owned them, and outside that circle there was the deepest poverty. The 320,000 were idlers, or they were worse—buffoons. Look at that vast Colosseum—what does it mean? It means that an Emperor had a people so idle that he had both to feed and amuse them. And whole rows of gladiators, men or even ungentle women, met there with knife and shield and sword to fight, row upon row, and unto death; and this was the amusement. Moral putrefaction and death polluted the air of Rome. Face to face with this came Christianity. What did it do? It did not at once abolish slavery, yet it declared itself the foe of slavery. In the Church there was no slave and no master, all were servants of Christ, and members one of another. Slowly the idea of man's equality entered into the heart of society. When you come to Justinian and his laws, slavery is still allowed, but to kill a slave is made a crime. Later still, the slave gains new rights. He can become a free man, he can enter into a religious order, and there become the peer of the very best. And so liberty grew, until there arose a society without slaves, where manhood is known and honored and has its rights conferred. Then, following a greater love of freedom, there came a large belief in the dignity of labor." Christ and the Apostles gave dignity to toil. The Roman citizen couldn't soil his hands, the Christian teacher worked toiling with his hands. Then, see how the Christian religion consecrated the home, built it



up in purity and love, gave position and character to woman, built colleges and seminaries of learning, gave inspiration to inventive genius, and opened up pathways for commerce through the seas. Men say these are but the outgrowth of civilization; but why is it that they are found only where the Bible is read, and where the Cross of Jesus is uplifted? "Ye shall know them by their fruits." And then there is the propagation of Christianity. Miracles being common both to Christ and His Apostles, they had greater success than He had because, as He told them, the Holy Ghost should be with them. Miracles being absent, it follows that the spread of Christianity is the work of the Holy Spirit. The Gospel has won its way because it is divine. As such it has an independent life. It is independent of outward forms. It can live and grow amid wide diversity of creeds and great variety of government—Congregational, Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopal, or Papal. It is an inward personal life, and like all forms of life it maintains in all hearts its own peculiar type. The pine tree may be different in size and form, as it is planted in the sheltered valley or on the stormy mountain side. But everywhere it is a pine. And so with the Gospel, in all hearts and circumstances, it is the same Divine life, controlling and regulating all. Christianity is also the only religion which can now be propagated beyond the home of its birth. Hinduism cannot live if translated to another climate. The Chinese may come to our shores and build their joss-houses, but they cannot win converts

amongst our people. Mohammedans can extend only by military conquest. But Christianity goes into the home of the Hindoo and wins him to itself; it bounds over the great walls of China and leads the poor child of superstition to Jesus; it throws its golden chain of love around the Indian of the north or the savage of the south, and makes him a member of the family of God. Its past progress is the standing miracle of the ages. It shows no sign of decay. It goes forward majestically winning nation after nation, and by and by it will hold the world in its fond embrace.

*4th. The Personality and Character of Jesus, associated with the Existence and Indwelling of the Holy Spirit.* This evidence Christ appears to put the highest of all. But anyone who carefully weighs it will see how difficult it is to deal with it. It is addressed to deeper perceptions than the others, and defies definition. The "character of Christ" may be drawn out in beautiful words—but that is only a part of the evidence we are now referring to. On one occasion, in John viii. 46, 47, He challenged credence on that ground, but on numberless occasions He demands reception on the ground of an inherent right to be recognized as Divine in His words and in His being. His own challenge, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" is plainly, from the context, a challenge to show that He had been untrue to His Father. "I honor My Father," "I seek not Mine own glory," "I do always such things as please Him," "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me." Such are a few of

the words spoken by Him in his aspect towards God. We can form no conception of Him if we do not give prominence to this supreme regard for God. He acquiesced in God's appointment, "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in Thy sight." "My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me except I drink it, Thy will be done." So far we have been regarding Him as a holy man, calling God His Father, not necessarily in any other sense than that in which He teaches us to call Him "Our Father." But when we once get beyond the character of Christ in His relations to man, and study it in its relations to God, we reach a point where we become conscious of a region beyond, into which we are summoned to enter. There we hear more distinctly the challenge to see Him as the Son, to believe in Him as we believe in God, to believe that He is in the Father and the Father in Him—in a word, that He is God, that He and His Father are one. Christ puts this evidence higher than all other evidences, and the point to which all other evidence tends, so that the faith that does not reach it falls short of its ends. But, in connection with this, arises another vital consideration. The disciples had been long with Him, but He had still to say "How sayest thou, show us the Father?" But then He added the promise of the "Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost," and He taught them that they should know more of Him when absent, from the teaching of the Holy Ghost, than they had known of Him when present. "At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father." Now, it is im-

possible to draw out the evidence of the Divinity of Christ without postulating the existence and operations of the Holy Ghost. He appeals to men's insight, but adds that insight is to be obtained from the Holy Spirit. He says to Peter that flesh and blood had not revealed to him the truth he confessed. Again and again He insists on the necessity of being taught of God. "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." Put that promise to the test. If your prayer be granted, the Bible with all its promises will become your reward; but if your ardent, persevering prayer bring no light and knowledge from above, you may pronounce the Bible an imposture and doubt the being of a God. The witness of the Holy Spirit gives heartfelt effect to any evidence, and he who has that "witness in himself" is in his turn a witness to the reality of that Divine Life from whence he draws his life. Christianity, to such an one, is not a dead and powerless thought of the forgotten past, but a living, energetic reality, instinct with all that is noble, elevating and divine.

My brethren, "What think ye of Christ?" Is he a man? Yes, but I want more than the dignity of manhood, however perfect it may be. Is he a great teacher? Yes, but I want more than food for my intellect—instruction relative to the things of the present. Is he a great philanthropist? Yes, but I want more than a cure for the ills of the body. I am a member of a

fallen race ; I myself am fallen ; I am diseased by sin ; I hold no part of my being in soundness, and my soul cries out for a healing balm and the offices of a physician who can infallibly cure. I am a candidate for another world ; before me is the grave, the throne, the Judge. I want a teacher who can tell me how to save my soul and reach a happiness lasting as eternity. This Christ is a perfect man, a teacher, a philanthropist—but is he God ? *Yes !* cry the prophecies that foretell His coming to our world. *Yes !* say his miracles—surpassing all the power of man. *Yes !* echo His words, diviner in their wisdom than those of earth's sages and philosophers. *Verily He is !* speaks His inimitable character in its relations to both God and man. *He is, He is !* declares the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son and dwelling in me as a witness to the fact of salvation through the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. If, then, this Christ be God—if our Christianity be Divine—He is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him, and this world shall yet be brought under the strange spell that has lifted so many nations and peoples into civilization and enduring greatness. I should despair of bringing the nations to God, if it were not for the Divinity of Christ. With that doctrine, heartily and intelligently accepted and believed, we know that the time shall come when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ.

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N.B.—The privileges of membership are conditioned upon enrolment, and the payment of an annual fee of \$1. All who pay the membership fee are entitled to a copy of the "Annual Lecture and Sermon," and the "Lectures on Preaching." Annual Fees paid in the "Jackson" and "Douglas" Societies are accepted in lieu of the Annual Fee of the "Union," and entitle their members to all the privileges of membership.



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FOR

FELLOW IN THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE (F.T.L.)

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The Course of Reading is to extend over three years, and to consist of Biblical, Historical, Doctrinal, or Apologetic studies. The character of the Course shall be optional, *i.e.*, the subjects or branches of study may be elected by each one reading; *Provided*, that two subjects shall be read for each year, one to be selected at the beginning of the Course and continued throughout, and the other varied from year to year. The thoroughness of the reading will be tested by a thesis on each subject, to be assigned by the 1st of February and forwarded by the 1st of April to the Examiners; a written report of the examination of the thesis to be in the hands of the Secretary by May 1st, who shall report results to the candidates. All persons reading must send application for subject of thesis to the Secretary by January 1st, stating the year in which they are reading, the Course subject, the option selected, and the books read. Each subject should be studied in at least two authors, from a comparison of which an independent opinion may be formed; and a student must put in at least one thesis each year until the Course is completed.

## COURSE OF STUDY.

## FIRST YEAR.

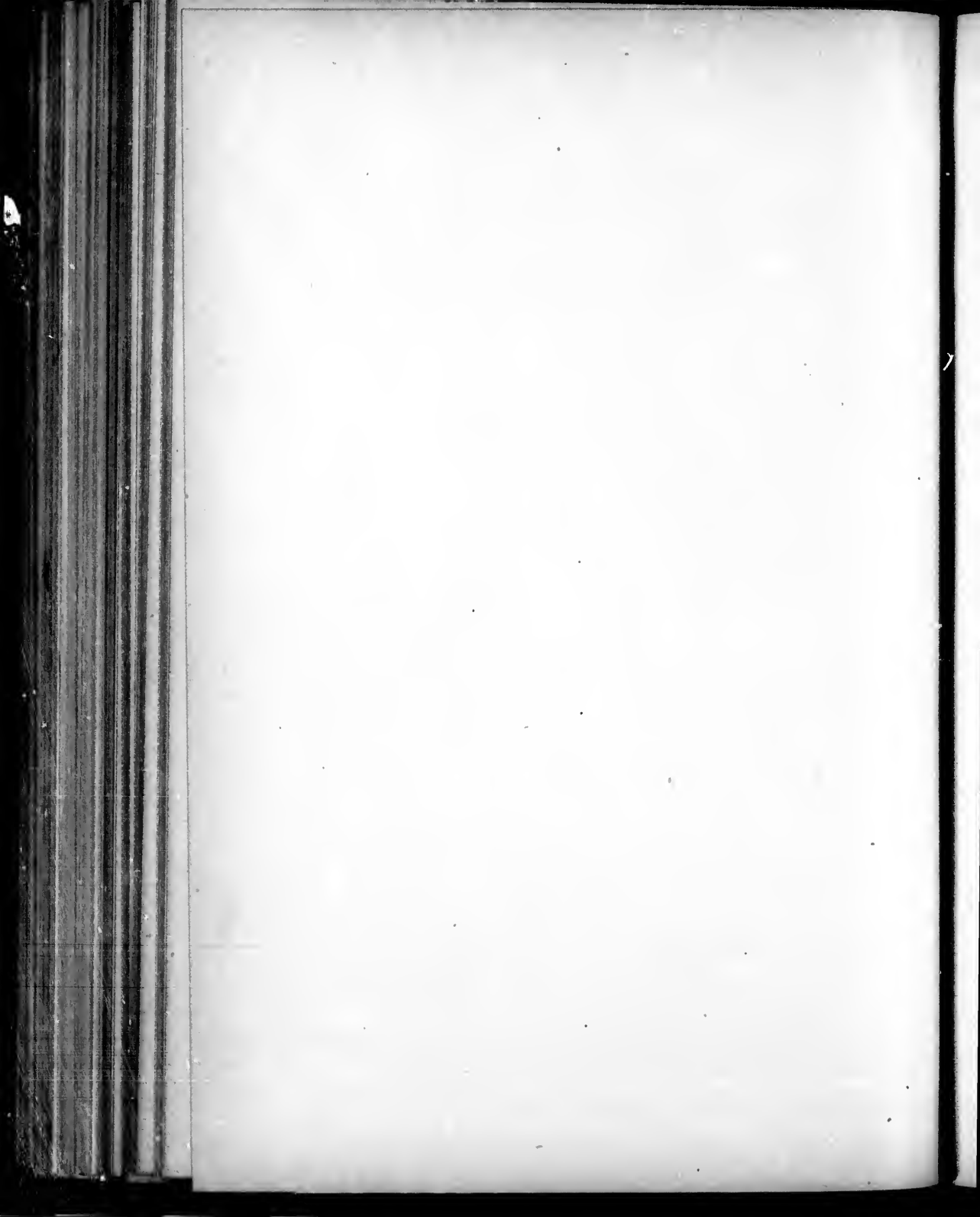
1. *Biblical Study*.—St. John's Gospel. Aids: Godet, Meyer, Moulton, and Milligan.
2. *Historical Study*.—The Christian Church to the close of the Council of Nice. Text-books: Neander and Schaff.
3. *Doctrinal Study*.—The Atonement. Text-books: Crawford, Randles, Miley.
4. *Apologetic Study*.—Natural Theology. Text-books: Flint's Theism and Anti-Theistic Theories, Diman's Theistic Argument, and Janet's Final Causes.

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2. *Historical Study*.—The English Reformation. Text-books: Burnet, D'Aubigne, and Hardwicke.
3. *Doctrinal Study*.—The Trinity. Text-books: Bull's Defence of the Nicene Faith, Dorner's Person of Christ.
4. *Apologetic Study*.—The Canon of the New Testament. Text-books: Westcott, Briggs' Biblical Study, Sanday's Gospels in the Second Century.

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1. *Biblical Study*.—Isaiah. Aids: Cheyne and Lange.
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4. *Apologetic Study*.—Inspiration. Text-Books: Bannermann, Lee, Elliott, Pope's Theology, Vol. I.



7

METHODISM

AND

THE MISSIONARY PROBLEM.

BY THE

REV. C. S. EBY, D.D., F.T.L.

BEING THE NINTH ANNUAL LECTURE BEFORE THE THEOLOGICAL  
UNION OF VICTORIA COLLEGE, IN 1886.

TORONTO:

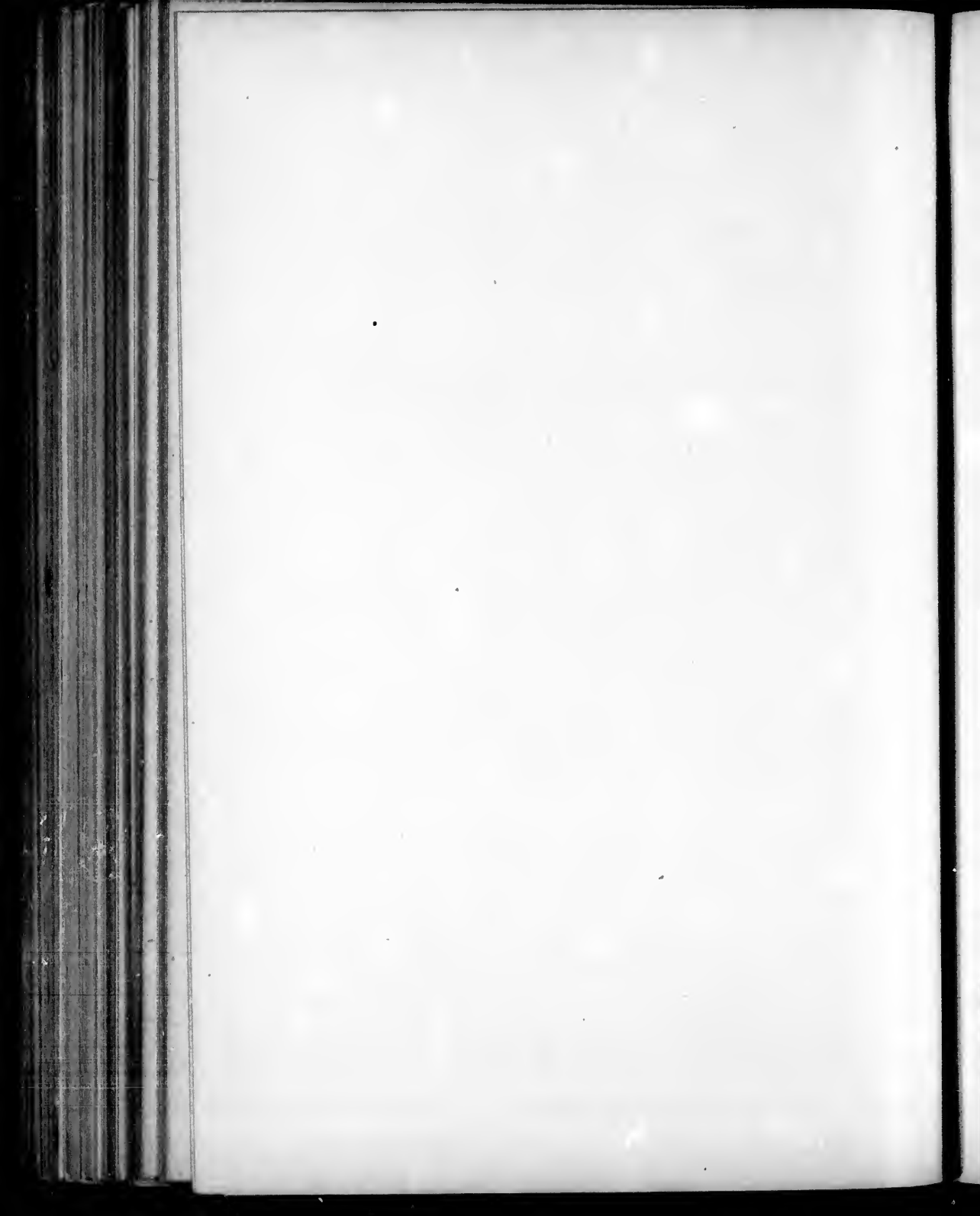
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1886.





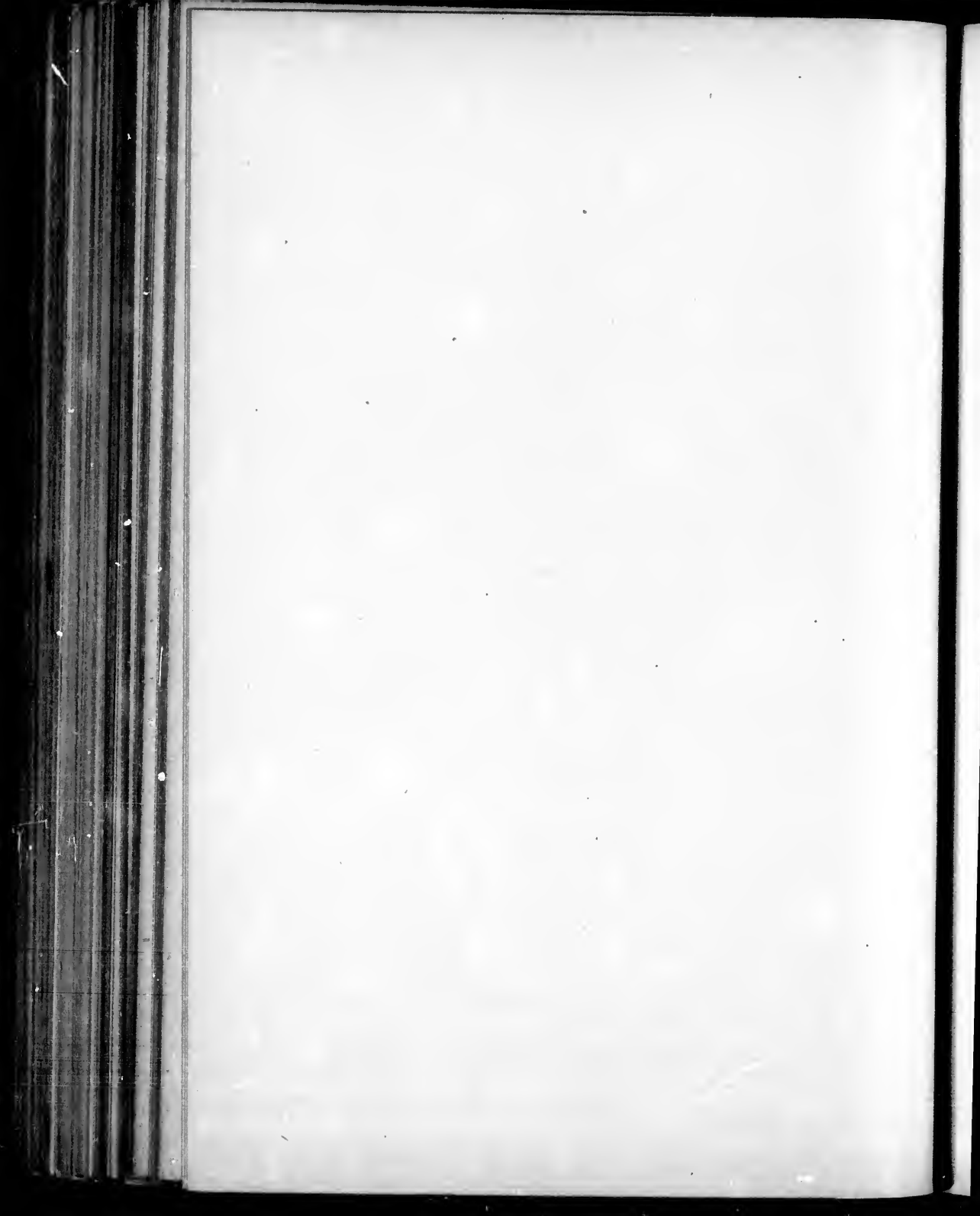
## EXPLANATORY NOTE.

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By special request of Rev. E. B. HARPER, D.D., the Preacher for 1886, the Annual Meeting of the Union decided not to publish the Sermon for this year, that the Lecture might be published in full, and a larger edition than usual issued. In the interests of our Educational and Mission work, as well as of our Church work generally, it was unanimously resolved to place a copy of the Annual Lecture, by Rev. C. S. EBY, in the hands of every Minister and Probationer of the Methodist Church, at the expense of the Theological Union. Our Preachers will therefore please accept the Lecture of 1886 as an expression of the interest of the Union in the great work of the world's salvation, and are asked to assist us in our efforts, and to give the Lecture as wide a circulation as possible among all our people.

REV. A. M. PHILLIPS, B.D.,

*Sec.-Treasurer.*



# Methodism and The Missionary Problem :

A LECTURE DELIVERED BEFORE THE THEOLOGICAL UNION OF VICTORIA  
UNIVERSITY, MAY 10TH, 1886.

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BY THE

REV. C. S. EBY, D.D., F.T.L.

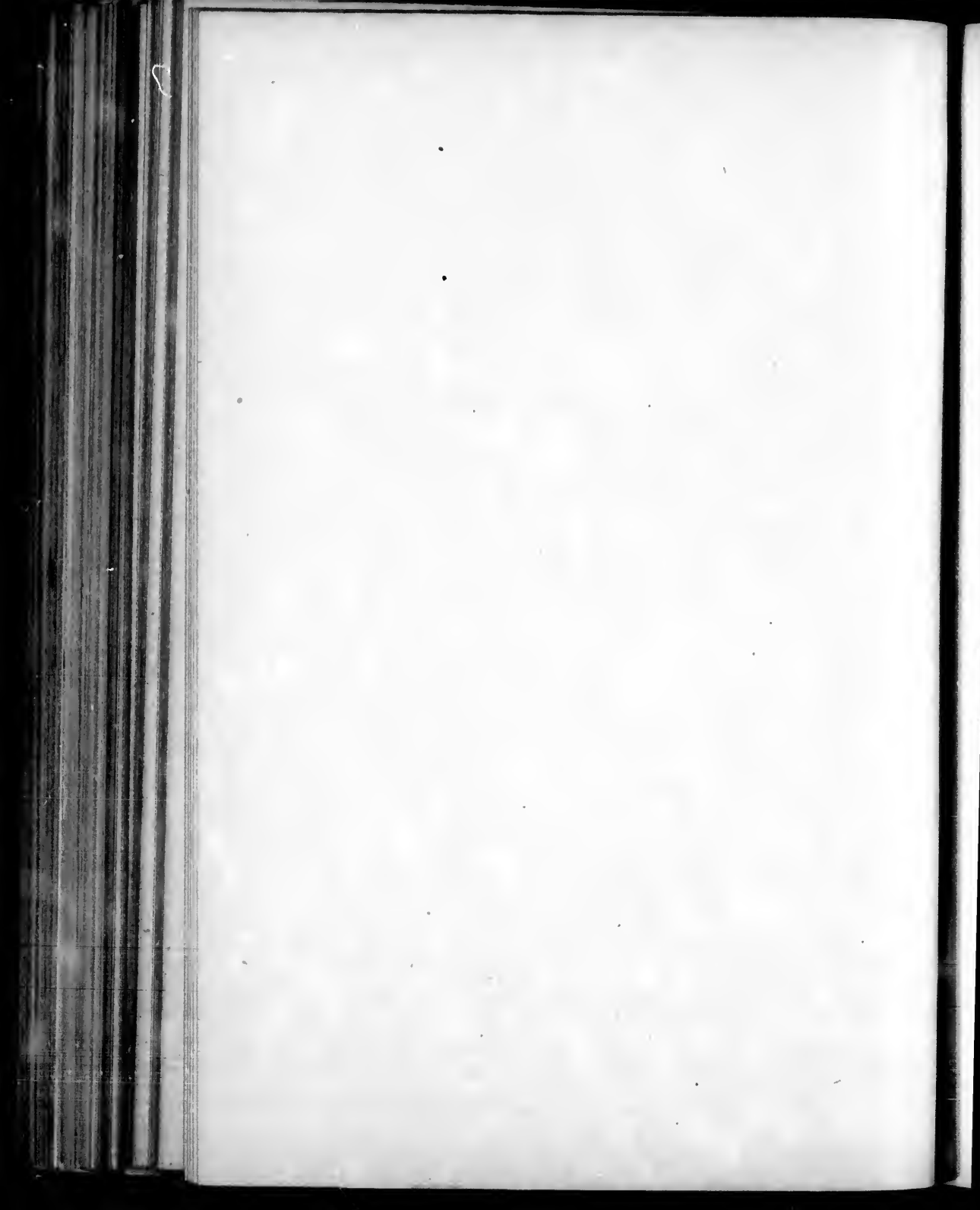


## PREFATORY NOTE.

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THE reader of the following pages will please bear in mind that I have not aimed at being exhaustive but simply suggestive. Every point touched needs to be elaborated, and some possibly guarded. I have not written for critics, but for earnest men, especially young men and for a practical age. If I have been able to make a contribution, however small, to a higher ethical development absolutely necessary to usher in a new day of practical holiness to uplift Christendom and save the world, I shall be devoutly thankful to God. Let us plead earnestly for the Holy Spirit's power, so that we each and all may do our part in bringing about as speedily as possible the day of God for all our ransomed race.

C. S. E.



## METHODISM

AND

# The Missionary Problem.

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SEVEN or eight hundreds of millions of our fellow-men are still pagan and under pagan governments. Four or five hundred millions are under Christian, or so-called Christian governments, of whom two or three hundred millions are still pagan. Of nominal Christians, the majority belong to a paganized form of Greek or Roman Catholicism. Of the apparently small remnant left, the majority stand aloof from the Christian Church, either as avowed unbelievers or practical neglecters of religion. And in all these lands, so full of gospel light, iniquity abounds. Does this gloomy outlook appal? Has God's plan to save the world failed and are His promises and prophecies false? God forbid. God's part never fails; but in His inscrutable wisdom He made the success of His plans for humanity largely dependent on voluntary human co-operation—and our part often fails. Ages of preparation have been leading up to the present crisis of the missionary



question which we are called upon to face. We are inheritors of the riches of the past; upon us devolve the responsibilities of the grandest opportunity ever known to man for the salvation of nations and the infusion into human affairs of the divine salt of God's love. Upon the Church has been laid, with promise of divine help, the salvation of mankind. The long history of the Christian Church, from the Acts of the Apostles to the present day, indicates men's conception of the undertaking, giving instances of success or failure, leading to the crisis of to-day, which gives to the whole subject a vastly different aspect from that seen by our fathers of even one short generation ago. The heroism of the pioneers, the work accomplished by the moderate efforts of the last half century or so, have brought upon us a burden of responsibility which demands immensely increased effort and enlarged plans to be at all commensurate with the opportunities of the hour, and failing in which the ever vigilant powers of darkness will soon have stolen a march on Christendom that a century will not recover.

From the very first God indicated that His gracious purposes towards man should be carried out by the union of the divine and the human, the co-operation of God and man. The seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head; in Abraham and his posterity all the nations were to be blessed; the Son of David and His kingdom should unite the allegiance of all the earth. In the Old Testament the promises of God in this regard and indications of His purposes emphasized

the divine side, for men were not yet able to appreciate the real nature of God's reign over the world in a spiritual kingdom, much less able, voluntarily and consciously, to unite with God in bringing into existence and extending such a kingdom. It was only when the God-man came, uniting in Himself all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, giving a perfect illustration of the union of the divine and the human, that the larger duties and responsibilities of the man of God towards humanity were made clear. The universality of the fatherhood of God, of the atonement of Christ, of the brotherhood of man, was unfolded, and the central injunction unifying all was placed upon the infant Church,—“Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you ; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”

It required a special baptism of the Holy Spirit, after the ascension of their Lord, to cause even the morning of the larger idea of a spiritual conquest of the world to dawn on the material minds of the disciples ; and then, after years of successful labors amongst Jews and proselytes, it required another miracle to get the most impressible of the apostles to break through old caste prejudice, and Peter was almost forced to present the story of salvation by faith to a Gentile, when immediate and marvellous success convinced him and through him the head church of

the time, of the remarkable fact that God had indeed granted unto the Gentiles also repentance unto life. Eventually, by means of a man of larger education, who was able to take in and discuss the larger problem, God taught the infant Church that their calling was not exclusively to home missions, and Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, became the pioneer and ideal foreign missionary. Thenceforward an aggressive policy marked both home and foreign mission work, until Imperial Rome acknowledged the rule of the Nazarene.

The Roman Church came to temporal rule, and was needed to hold together in some shape the chaotic elements of Europe when the Empire expired, and she grew into the idea that her sway over nations and governments represented the idea of Christ's kingdom among men. That idea was the old one which the gift and power and presence of the Spirit was to cure. But the Spirit was gone, and the machinery remained animated by human ambition and error, and remains to-day a vast hierarchy—a political church. It has all along had and has to-day, a marvellous power in arousing the enthusiasm of men and women in extending its influence in every way open to them, whose unselfish devotion commands our admiration, but whose moral and spiritual influence in renovating and uplifting the peoples they reach must be placed almost at zero.

The Church of England became largely Protestant in its theology when England revolted from the rule of Rome, but inherited much from the old Romanism

which it replaced as a national church; its ecclesiasticism had been made to fit into the society of the time and all its developments tended to make it tenacious of old forms, social and political. And so its carefulness of orders and of order, its easy service for the rich, and its lesson of resignation for the poor, made it into a social church, or the church of society, which character it preserves in other lands where the political prestige it has in England has passed away, so that one can appreciate the wag's definition of it as a church which preaches "salvation by taste." Of late years a great revival of spiritual life within the Episcopal Church has sent forth many distinguished and devoted missionaries into other lands, where they have met with a measure of success. But sacerdotalism and tenacity of certain orders and forms prevent that church from taking the high rank which her wealth and position should claim in an aggressive evangelization of the world's vast millions now open to the gospel.

The other great churches of the Reformation broke more thoroughly away from the trammels of Rome. This is particularly true of Puritanism in England, where the battles of a second Reformation had to be fought by voice, by pen, and by sword. They laid the foundation of their church in an absolute faith in the Bible as the word of God, to be nourished and fed and perpetuated by an educated people who should read and digest and believe, and particularly by an educated ministry who should expound and teach and lead. After the din of confusion in which the Coven-

anters and the Puritans were tried had passed away, we find them growing up into an intellectual church which has made Scotland and New England the schoolmasters of the world and made Presbyterianism and Puritanism powerful in the councils of nations. Though early missions were born in Germany, for lack of later and deeper religious revolutions which have uplifted Anglo-Saxondom, they have never expanded largely in the churches of the Fatherland. After the early contentions were over, and a new spiritual life had touched them, the churches of Scotland and kindred ones awakened to missionary effort, and gave birth to some of the grandest missionaries of all time. The vigor of their doctrinal teaching, the simplicity of their ritual, the similarity of church polity which makes union of different churches easy, render them first and foremost as successful evangelizers wherever they preserve the living, glowing inspiration of a spiritual life.

Methodism arose in a time of spiritual torpor and moral stagnation—arose to awaken all the churches, and to lead Christendom to a profounder spiritual revival and grander moral uplifting than had ever been known in the world's history. It was born, not in struggle or alliance with temporal powers, as the Papal Church; not as a revolt from the domination of a foreign hierarchy, as the Episcopal Church; not in a revolt of the intellect against the tyranny of a corrupt ecclesiasticism, as the German Churches of the Reformation; not in a revolt of conscience against narrow

and bigoted attempts at compulsory uniformity, as the Puritan Churches; but in an unappeased hunger of the human soul for a conscious, practical union with the divine nature—a thirst after the living God and His holiness. The conflicts of other ages had prepared the way for a new and larger development, and God gave the men, as He always does—just the men needed for the times. John Wesley and John Fletcher freed theology of its trammels, infused into it new life, opened up its vastest possibilities, translated it into the language of the common people, so that, as the poorest were saved, they could tell coherently what they had realized, and could lead others to like precious faith. Charles Wesley and other poets of the time put the renewed evangel into song and the potency of the word preached was multiplied by the power of heart-stirring hymns of penitence and praise. Those men had also a genius for organization and thus preserved the fruits of a revival which otherwise would have been ephemeral, so that instead of its dying out in forty years, which Luther gives as the limit of every great revival, it not only stirred the hearts of the masses in its earlier days and aroused other churches to spiritual life, but it moves on wherever worldliness has not sapped its vigor, a perennial revival. So that within the last twenty-five years Methodism has doubled and now stands at the very head of all the great divisions of Protestantism in number of members and accredited ministers. Although much of this growth is amongst the poorer classes of



Anglo-Saxondom, the poorer classes of a few years ago are largely growing into wealthier classes to-day and the sons of illiterate parents are having all the advantages of education, so that the capital of material, intellectual and moral wealth within the Church is increasing by enormous strides and puts into the hands of Methodism a leverage of stupendous power with which to work for God and man, if rightly enlisted and directed. In view of all these facts, it is well to review the relation which Methodism bears to the evangelization of the world,—her present attitude, her responsibility, her advantages and disadvantages,—and what is the need of the hour to enable her to do what Providence intends that she should accomplish.

In attempting to deal with this question I shall look at it from the different standpoints of our doctrinal teaching, our organization, our educational facilities, and the motive power on which we rely for the sinews of war. In doing so I shall seek neither to glorify nor to minify Methodism, for her past achievements or present position, but simply take her as an existing factor, a great and growing branch of the Church of God, with commensurate privileges and duties under the Saviour's commission, through whom we all are, like Paul, debtors to all who have been redeemed by His blood, whether Jew or Gentile, home or foreign, that we can possibly reach with the message of salvation that has made us free.

In the points I have indicated we have the human elements of our church life, and these I emphasize, not

because I would overlook the need of the divine presence as the source of spiritual power, but taking that for granted we have the human elements as our theme. I pause, however, just long enough to say that I can conceive of nothing more bare and ghastly than Methodism without this divine vital energy. More is left in any other church when it becomes a purely human institution. In the Papacy you have the gorgeous ceremonial, splendid architectural piles, and a powerful political hierarchy; in the Episcopal Church a chaste and noble service and fine historic culture; in Presbyterianism a perpetual effort to feed the mind, a demand for logic and thought; but Methodism, without the divine revival power, becomes a great grinding piece of machinery, where conferences become a scrabbling point of culmination for a year's wire-pulling of preachers for the fattest appointments possible and of circuits for the biggest preacher to be had. Then alas for the missionary spirit! A few weeks ago I preached in the morning and held a Sunday evening missionary meeting in a certain city across the line. The day was damp, not even a Scotch mist, but the two Methodist churches had scarcely a fifth of their congregations, while Presbyterian and Congregationalist churches were well filled. The evening service was in a wealthy suburban neighborhood, the pastor a D.D., the choir well paid; it was quite a matter of indifference whether I had selected hymns or not, the people had no idea of singing; there was a sort of little concert with religious tendencies, a bit of incipient ritual, and by and by it



devolved upon me to take my turn. I gave them a red-hot missionary talk which seemed to arouse the pastor into a warm appeal for money. I enquired how much they gave last year for Home and Foreign Missions and was astounded to learn that that congregation of over a thousand ordinarily, that could buy out, bag and baggage, any one or more of our Canadian Methodist congregations that pay \$1,000 a year to the mission fund, had actually risen to the magnificent sum of \$120! I was not astonished when I afterwards learned that both pastor and church had decided that they had enough to do at home without paying for other people who could not pay back again. Nominal Methodism can exist without much divine life, but if so, alas for missions! As our Church recedes from her Divine Head, the cry first goes up, "Let us curtail our foreign missions," and then would go our sympathy for home missions, excepting so far as they furnished places for men who are in the machine and must be fed.

#### I. AS TO DOCTRINAL TEACHING.

Truth is divine, Science is human. Christianity is divine, Theology is human. Revelation is divine, exposition, whether spoken or printed, with the sanction of the Church or without it, is human and fallible and should be open to correction, for "we know in part and we prophesy in part" only. The history of Protestantism makes one thing very clear to us, and that is, that while men are men there can never be absolute uniformity of doctrinal belief and statement.

The world will never be all Calvinists nor all Arminians of any particular shade, though the time may come when all will be Christians. We cannot overlook the fact, also, that some of the greatest evangelists of these revival centuries have sprung from other churches and held to the Calvinistic faith. Brownlow North, Grant of Arndilly, Mathison and others, of Scotland; Edwards, Nettleton, Finney, Moody, and hosts of others in the United States are samples of soul-winning evangelists of other communions who moved not only their own churches but impressed the outside community. Methodist theology during the same time has produced men who were mighty within her own organization for her own upbuilding and indirectly helpful to others, but, since the days of Wesley, scarcely any one who has stirred the outside community until these later days of Booth and the Salvation Army. And yet it cannot be denied that the world owes a debt of gratitude to Wesleyan theology, that it broke the fetters of the doctrine of individual inability from off the proclamation of salvation and brought back to the Apostolic message its pristine glory and missionary power. The great principles of God's message to man were clothed in living fire, in argument and exhortation and enthusiastic song. A free, full salvation for all men, the need and possibility of repentance, faith, the new birth, witness of the Spirit, cleansing by the blood, fulness of the Spirit for each and all, came as a new revelation and as a salt for all Christendom. Successful evangelists outside of Methodism have succeeded

by emphasizing largely the same grand principles, or some of them, and not emphasizing those peculiarities wherein their school of theology essentially differs from ours. Methodism has a definite and distinct theology, which has changed but little, if at all, in its essentials since the days of Wesley, and in spite of endless divisions in Methodism, not one has resulted from doctrinal differences. Methodism, the world over, has one theology. But her theology is more practical than theoretical, for with all due deference to Watson, and Pope, and Raymond, and a multitude of other writers, no satisfactory theology of Methodism has yet been published. It may be that some day a Hodge may rise in Methodism and for Methodist theology; that a Methodist Hamilton may seize Methodist thought and experience and life and put it into philosophical form, or we may forever have to do without such services. Nor would I consider the want a very great calamity. All these published statements are helps to students and milestones by the way, but in a living, growing, practical Church, I should dread anything that would claim the place of a final theology. For in this, as in all else that touches divine Providence,

“Thro’ the ages one increasing purpose runs,  
And the thoughts of men are widen’d with the process of the suns.”

The fathers of Methodism took the great fundamental principles of God’s revelation,—took them on their knees untrammelled of the scholasticism of the past—took them as lessons of God to solve the world’s

problem of that particular time. They found those which fitted the world's heart, and gave them to their children forever. The children take these same fundamentals and translate them into the thought and language of their own times, their theology more largely shown in holy lives and spiritual power than in books. Take the single doctrine of Entire Sanctification—you cannot find in all literature a definition and analysis that will satisfy the purely theoretical theologian; it must be experienced to be known, and then it is largely "unutterable" to other ears. Men have tried to catch it and tie it down to some particular measure and the result too often is that some one factor is taken and emphasized and carried to an extreme, rendering the whole thing ridiculous. One side runs off into faith cures, another into absurdities of dress, and some, coming a little nearer home, run the thought of divine guidance to such an extent as to emasculate men's common sense and ascribe to the Holy Spirit the stupidities of our own foolish heads. The true preacher is no mere echo of the voice of the fathers; their preaching suited their times, their usages fitted their days. The live preacher of to-day must be an embodiment of his theology and fit it by utterance and plan of work to the day in which he lives. The hurdy-gurdy preacher who grinds out varieties of Wesley and Watson to the tune of a generation ago, is no help to build up or extend in mission fields the borders of our Methodism. Some years ago, just before going to Japan, I happened into a village

church where the regular winter revival season was being kept. The preacher vociferated in good old style the staple articles of Methodist theology, seekers were invited forward, a number of young people had made up their minds that the time had come to live decided Christian lives and came to the altar. Forthwith old and middle-aged men gathered around them, one or more to each seeker, all praying aloud and shouting into their ears until I was almost deafened in the little "Bedlam let loose," so that I hardly knew what to do when they came and asked me to go also and "labor" with the seekers. When a lull came, on rising from their knees there was no trace of emotion to fit all the noise, and being asked to speak I said a few words by way of direction to the seekers, very quietly, but it struck a chord in their hearts which seemed never to have been touched before. At the close of the service they gathered about me and asked for more light, we immediately repaired to a vacant room over a new store, extemporized some seats out of lumber lying about and I had them tell just what they felt and wanted, gave them a little quiet direction and one after another their faces lighted up with the joy of a new consciousness of a living present Saviour. These young people had always been moral, knew nothing of the rough life of old backwoods times and could not properly be treated in the same way as their rough old backwoods parents and grandparents had been. If all these hurdy-gurdy preachers and theologies and usages could be laid on the shelf

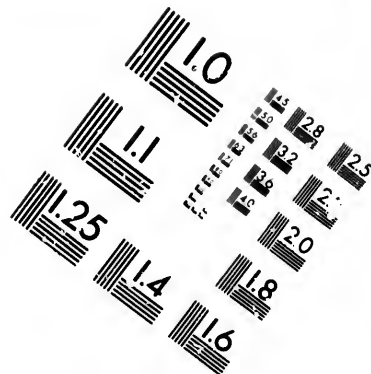
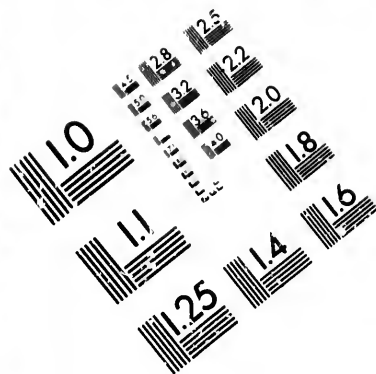
and living, intelligent preaching and guidance be substituted, the problem of many of our missions in this land, that have been missions from ten to fifty years, would be solved by their speedily becoming self-supporting circuits. And above all things, let our pioneer stations, our Indian missions and our foreign work, be spared the bane of these anachronistic echoes, but let them be manned by men whose intelligence is set on fire of God, "living epistles read and known of all men." We want to walk in the spirit of our fathers and not in the shoes they have left behind them; "the letter killeth but the spirit giveth life." Let it not be supposed that I advocate trimming the gospel to what may be called the "spirit of the times," so as to make it more acceptable to the average man we meet; not at all, what I want is an adjustment of aim so as to strike under the fifth rib of the age. For that matter the formal theology of Methodism has nothing to soften, nothing to excuse, nothing to hide, but as a whole, and in its several parts, fits the needs of human hearts the world over, commends itself to the common sense of converts from oriental philosophy, and is, I believe, the best missionary theology in the world.

## II. AS TO ORGANIZATION.

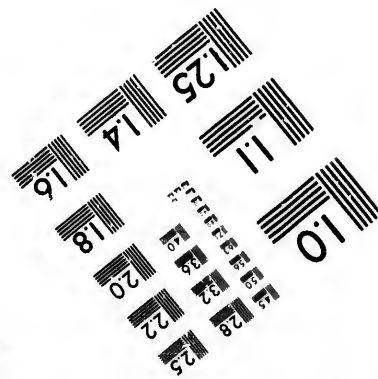
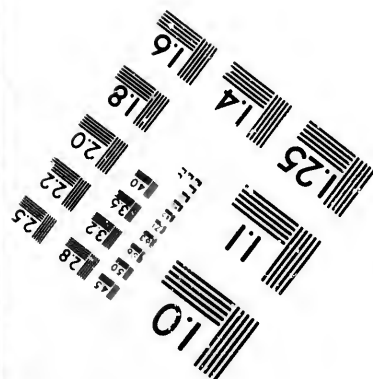
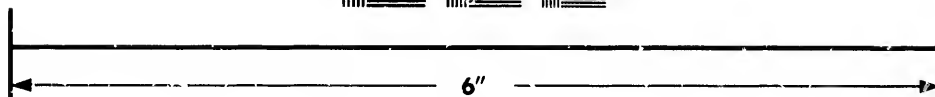
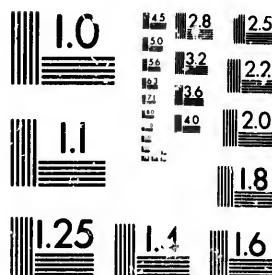
The Church is divine; the churches are human. The Spirit who "gave some to be apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers" is divine; the prudential arrangements







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by which these are organized into building up the Church of God are human and need to be adjusted to the developments of humanity. But there is nothing which so soon ossifies as ecclesiastical arrangements, so that they grow into a sacred machinery which it becomes a sacrilege to touch. As humanity grows these ecclesiasticisms become fetters, to escape which violence and revolution are too often needed. Witness the struggles of the Reformation against Rome; of Puritanism against semi-popery; of Methodism against Anglicanism; of many sections of Methodism against unyielding mother Church. The fathers of Methodism were great organizers, adapting their rules to the exigencies of the times, ready to discard anything that was useless and to accept anything that proved useful in their great work. Their children solidified their organization and almost began to worship it as divine; their grand-children are now finding out that fossilizing does not succeed and hence is un-Methodistic. Methodism can work in any organization and succeed, hence the organization is not Methodism. In monarchical England it succeeds best in democratic form; in republican America in episcopal uniform; in the democratic-monarchical Dominion of Canada in a sort of heterogeneous mixture of the two; anything to any land or people so long as it works. A generation ago Methodism was in danger of fossilizing on a narrow line, lopping off the zone of her activities both below and above; so that the late Luke Wiseman, one of England's grand-

est Methodists, had to warn her against idolizing machinery and sacrificing men. Twenty years ago English Methodists had no place for a man whom God had called to make a large evangelistic movement among the lowest classes of the unwashed; and Booth had to go out of the ranks of Methodism to organize a Salvation Army which now ministers to millions. To-day, some of the finest minds in English Methodism are agitating for such truly mission work, without its fandango, among the growing masses of London—a city containing as many people as our whole Dominion, and adding to its numbers a city of Toronto every year—masses who, by the hundreds of thousands, are still untouched of Methodism. Well balanced men, grandly fitted to lead in such work, are ready to step in and Methodism is asked to make an effort commensurate with the great need, the great opportunity, and the greatness of the Church. But the devotees of the machine have almost crushed the effort; they want to try a *little* thing, while city circuits, miles away on different sides, with churches half filled with staid Christians, raise a hue and cry that such mission work would interfere with their rights. Years ago, a German by the name of Albrecht, in the United States, was converted in the Methodist Episcopal Church. He wanted to preach to his people, and wished Methodism to father the work and extend her influence among the German people by the use of the tongue of the fatherland. But they were told to learn English and no special work

for the Germans would be needed. The result was a German Methodist Church—the Evangelical Association—which has grown to a church as large as our Canada Methodism, with missions in Europe and Japan. Later, learning wisdom by experience, William Nast was allowed to begin work in the name of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and with tremendous and growing success. We all know the wonderful career of that remarkable man, William Taylor; his power and career as an evangelist; his being thrust into the founding of self-supporting missions. How he was hounded by the authorities of his Church and its organ—in which noble work some of the great names of English Methodism added a measure of venom. How the people rallied to his aid, in sending men and women—noble, self sacrificing souls—to India and South America. How, to escape badgering, he took his place among laymen and as such was elected to the last General Conference, and then, how the Conference, partly to appease the popular clamor in favor of the man and partly to get rid of him in a sort of Botany Bay, made him Bishop of Africa, where he is putting to shame all prophets of evil, and showing himself a chosen apostle of God. Instances of this kind might be multiplied, where men and opportunities have been sacrificed on the altar erected in honor of the machine. We have had no place for men whose mission is amongst the slums, nor have we room for the highest type of men, who are born for aggressive work on

planes above our ordinary routine. Dr. Long, one of the finest Oriental scholars living, had to go from a Methodist mission to Roberts' College,\* of the Congregational Church, in Constantinople, to find the work for which he was adapted, and Methodism missed a fine opportunity. It may not be generally known to what an extent hierarchical tendencies have developed in the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States, but the dream of a Methodist Episcopal Church all over the world, ruled by American bishops, has not been confined to the hours of night when reason loses hold of ambition, but was the expressed aim of many great men there—notably of the late Bishop Janes, who declared that their General Conference should be held some day in Rome, and also Bishop Gilbert Haven.

There has been a notable reaction against this idolatry of the machine since the great Ecumenical Conference in London, only five short years ago; notably in Canada, where the apparently impossible

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\* M. De Lavelaye speaks enthusiastically\* of the influence of the Robert College at Constantinople in the regeneration of Turkey. From that institution, carried on by American missionaries, the seed of an entirely new civilization has been scattered broadcast upon a rich soil with the decay of an effete system. Upon this the New York *Witness* remarks that Mr. Robert was a New York merchant, not known to differ from a thousand others who live and die and leave no mark in the world. The difference was that he gave his money to the founding of this college, and so his name will go down as, to a considerable extent, the regenerator of an empire.—*Montreal Witness*.

has taken place, in the union, by mutual concession, of all branches of Methodism, excepting the Evangelical Association—and that by an unpardonable oversight of the larger bodies. Men say we need no new machinery, work the old well. I reply, if man were an automaton, and history would stop revolving, and time cease rushing, and humanity stop growing, and opportunities for the Church cease opening, we might stop and say that our machinery was final. But so long as these things persist in moving, we must change our machinery and adapt it to the needs of the hour. All things move on now with accelerated speed. We progress more in five years than formerly in fifty. Every General Conference opens a new world for us to take possession of and rapid changes must take place that will astonish staid conservatives who are still living in the memory of other days. Methodists of to-day must be as heroic as our fathers in laying large plans and putting new machinery, if needed, into operation to do our part in the moulding of our nation, in the uplifting of the world.

“’Tis as easy to be heroes as to sit the idle slaves  
Of a legendary virtue carved upon our father’s graves.  
Worshippers of light ancestral make our present light a crime :  
Was the *Mayflower* launched by cowards, steered by men behind  
their time ?  
Turn those tracks towards Past or Future that make Plymouth  
Rock sublime ?

They were men of present valor, stalwart old iconoclasts,  
Unconvinced by axe or gibbet that all virtue was the Past’s.

But we make their truth our falsehood, thinking that hath made  
us free,  
Hoarding it in mouldy parchments, while our tender spirits flee  
The rude grasp of that great Impulse which drove them across  
the sea.

New occasions teach new duties ; Time makes ancient good  
uncouth ;  
They must upward still and onward, who would keep abreast of  
Truth ;  
Lo, before us gleam her camp-fires ! we ourselves must pilgrims  
be :  
Launch our *Mayflower*, and steer boldly through the desperate  
winter sea,  
Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's old rusty key."

To meet the real demands of the best work in cities  
the iron "rule of three" in our itinerancy may have to  
be extended, but to mention it brings a wail from all  
sides that the very ark of God in Methodism is being  
deseccrated. For our pioneer missions special local  
superintendents would seem to be a natural thing, so  
much so that democratic Presbyterianism has them,  
but our church seems to have such a horror of super-  
intendency that is not tied down to a circuit, that  
again efficiency is sacrificed to cast-iron rule. Surely  
we in Canada have gone through enough of the phases  
of kaleidoscopic possibilities of organization to know  
that the organization is only the machinery of Method-  
ism and not Methodism itself ; our servant, and not our  
master.

And what has all that to do with the mission prob-  
lem ? Simply this, that we must not expect our mis-



sionaries in foreign lands to be propagandists of an organization, but to plant Methodism, so far as we know it to be divine, as a means of bringing the people to God. What right have we to attempt to plant in Japan, for example, Episcopal Methodism North, and Episcopal Methodism South, and Canadian Methodism, and Protestant Methodism, and Evangelical Association Methodism, and perhaps English Methodism very soon, as such, with the expectation of gaining a body of Methodists in each separate camp, standing apart for no earthly reason that they can understand, excepting to help the devil retain his hold on the land and please the churches that planted the missions, evidently more for their own glory than for the good of the nation and the glory of God? Not so did the Apostolic Church, not so can the Methodist Churches continue to do. How much more honoring to God and creditable to ourselves and useful to the people, if we could cease our propagandism of sectarianism, unite in building up one united independent Methodism that would be a mighty factor in the land and leave to the people themselves largely the choice of the organization most suitable to themselves. It may be that the tendencies of the M. E. Church in the United States, that I mentioned before, will for a moment present the chief hindrance to so desirable a consummation, as has been stated lately in the *Christian Guardian*, but I cannot help thinking that a little discussion of the matter will convince the great heart of American Methodism that her duty to God in Japan is not in



planting an American Episcopacy, but in planting Methodist Christianity there, and when that is done, the rest will be comparatively easy. But accomplished or not, it is for us to aim at giving Japan and every other independent nation we visit, as quickly as possible, an independent Methodism of their own, and leave our reward with God.

### III. AS TO EDUCATION.

The powers of the human mind are given of God for a definite work ; the highest type of that work can be accomplished only by the highest mental culture, as physical results can be obtained only by the best physical culture. It would seem as though, with our doctrines of consecration to God, Methodism would seek to develop the highest type of mind as an offering to God and not be satisfied with the halt and the lame, the blemished offering. And yet it is just here where lies the secret of the weak spots in Methodism to-day, the one thing in which above all others we need to bestir ourselves. We are told that, considering the hole of the pit out of which we were digged, we have done wonders in the way of education. It is true that John Wesley by circulating cheap printing—a particular phase of early Methodism which modern Methodist Book Rooms have completely outgrown—did much to stimulate and feed the minds of the masses ; that he also established schools, and his successors founded colleges. But I believe if Wesley or his full-fledged spirit had lived on a few decades longer, English Meth-

odism would have had a university that would have compared favorably with the other universities of the old lands, which are Presbyterian in Scotland before they are Scotch, and Anglican in England before they are national, for lack of which the finest sons of noble sires are lost to Methodism and Methodist colleges are but hangers-on to other churches. In the United States noble offerings have been given for this purpose, but the mistake has been made in aiming rather at quantity than quality and a mass of superficiality cannot fail to result from a large number of institutions, big with pretentious names, but feebly equipped for actual work. This, I believe, however, is largely due to unprecedentedly rapid growth in Church and State, and time will no doubt work a cure. But of all places I know of there is none where humiliation of heart on this account is more appropriate than in this Canada of ours. We have not begun to measure up to the conceptions of our own fathers of forty or fifty years ago and an immediate forward movement of our church as a whole must take place, or we shall shortly feel more keenly than ever the fruits of deserved degradation in retrograde Methodism. We have nothing to do with the past as an excuse for our present remissness. Ours is a duty to the present hour, to the millions of the on-coming generations, to the claims of God upon us as a people who have undertaken to attire the Church of Christ in all her beautiful garments, as a bride adorned for her husband; ours to face boldly and practically the modern intellectual

onslaught on the truth of God and quit ourselves as men in this conflict—the bitterest conflict of the ages. In the matter of a middling education, Methodism has done much; for higher education, very little in comparison with what she ought to do and to do at once. In all our educational discussions one wide-reaching point seems largely to have been overlooked, and that is that our Christian colleges are not simply to guard the individual student by religious training or religious influence, important as that may be, but to guard the education of the age and mould the thought of generations yet to be.

One cardinal cause of Methodist inappreciation of higher education is the absurdly low standard of culture contemplated in her ministry. “Like priest, like people,” in this as in other things; and if the ministry, which, if not a profession, ought to be high above all professions as an elevating influence among the people, proposes to itself a low standard of culture, it is impossible that the laity should have such a keen sense of the need of a high standard of general education, as to lead them to contribute largely to the enterprises of the church in aid of first-class colleges. Nor will they generally feel that such a ministry should have anything but the lowest standard of stipends. There is a subtle law, explain it as we may, of averages and *quid pro quo* in secular matters that will control the temporalities of the pulpit as any other business matter, especially of voluntary churches. If our average minister, from a secular point of view,

is of a low standard, you cannot raise his secular return to a high standard. Many of our circuits think a man with six children amazingly well paid on \$500 or \$600; that he ought to save money, and if not, should send out his daughters as servants to farmers' houses and his boys as day-laborers. And we can hardly expect a much higher idea there, so long as we have the standard of culture for our ministers lower than first class common school teachers. An effort is being made to form a Sustentation Fund to bring up the salaries of our men to a minimum of \$750, or to put them on a par with those paid Presbyterian ministers and I for one would do what little I could to bring about such a consummation; but I do not believe it possible to bring our people to pay to our average minister, whose standard is that of a common school teacher, a salary equal to that paid by Presbyterians, who appreciate education, to their ministers, whose average standard is that of a college graduate or teacher of a high school.

There are men among us who rise to a higher standard, but it is by their own individual force and consecrated ambition and no thanks to the educational conscience of the church. There are churches that will not be satisfied with the ordinary standard; must have men of higher culture and are willing to pay for them; but there are also many more who want the highest kind of men but give the lowest kind of pay, so that many of our choice young men of good parts and culture are kept down in the mill and have to be satisfied

with the average salary or less. How can men on such salaries keep up their supply of literature for mental nourishment and growth? Dr. Buckley, of the *Christian Advocate*, says that a young man who does not read a book once a week will sink below the dead level before he is thirty-five; what then are we to expect of men who for ten years since their ordination have not been able to get an average of one book in a year? Our church puts an embargo on education in the ministry and a premium on its neglect. Take the case of three young men of twenty years of age, with a common school education, who feel themselves called to the work of the ministry. They go out under the Superintendent of District and succeed. One feels his lack of higher culture and is determined to get it; the second is persuaded to continue in the work, believing that he will do well enough with two years at college during probation, and the third will continue in the work without interruption. The first spends two years preparing to matriculate and four years as an undergraduate, during which time he does much theological work also: his six years are counted one year on his probation; he graduates at twenty-seven, and is a probationer till twenty-nine. The second is allowed one year for the two he spent at college, and is ordained at twenty-five. The third is ordained at twenty-four, and these two are ministerially, as to funds, position, rights, etc., that are under control of the Church, four and five years the seniors and superiors of the man who has won for himself an offici-

ally unnecessary education. Of course, in the long run, he will have his reward, but no thanks to the educational standard of Methodism. Surely, in view of the intellectual needs of the day, the growing intelligence of our people, the increase of infidelity in popular forms and a thousand other reasons that will readily occur to an intelligent observer of the signs of the times, our church must raise her standard to matriculation, at least, for entrance on probation and graduation, or its equivalent, before ordination, no matter how much it lengthens probation. Every facility is now offered for a pushing young man to get an education, and any one who has not brains and push and patience enough to get a good education has no right in the life-long pastorate of the immediate future. Let him work out his commission in a Salvation Army branch of our church, which we ought to have, or in the local ranks, while he earns an honest livelihood at work that he can properly do.

We have certain examinations for probationers. How it may be now-a-days I cannot of course say, but in my time they were oft-times little more than the veriest farce as then conducted. We were told that it was all right to ask each other questions, and then were left to ourselves; of course the result was that those who knew helped those who had not compassed the work, and all passed swimmingly, but as for any value as an examination, examiners and examined might as well have staid at home. Much is made of our giving one or two years' college drill to young men during their pro-



bation. Of course, some who have an instinct for books will be considerably benefitted, but as a material help to the mass of young men who get it, I set it at very little above zero. Their habits have already become set; they wish to pose at college as men and preachers, and can hardly come down to school-boy drudgery; they have not had the previous training to fit them for college classes and the instruction glides away, leaving them very much as they came, excepting that now they have been to college and henceforth they pose as college-trained men. One specimen returned and talked in the pulpit grandly of the "spider's noxious entanglement," and that the "spiritual diaphragm throws off the semi-religio-diabolus," and similar strains, to the edification of his congregation. If any young man should ask me for advice how to spend his two years, or one, that he might get during his probation, I should advise him to leave theology and science and philosophy alone and begin just where his schooling ended; learn how to study—go through the regular drill of common branches, as far as he could and then could get himself out of books more than by prematurely attacking them in college. In some places, I am told that they take crude young men who offer themselves for the mission field, give them a sort of special theological drill and send them forth as pioneers. I can conceive of nothing more inappropriate; no wonder that the impression gains foothold that missionaries are the most inferior of ministerial timber. Before one of my missionary services in a

certain Canadian city, a good lady who had heard echoes of that sort of thing, condoled with the brother in whose church I was to speak. "Do you really think," she said, "that it will be worth while going to hear him; those missionaries, you know, are such an inferior set."

And that brings us again to the question, What has that to do with missions? Much—every way; and chiefly this: Whatever you do with self-supporting and self-sufficient circuits, that pay their way or deliberately starve their ministers, for God's sake and the church's sake keep your average man out of missions that are paid from funds raised to extend the Redeemer's Kingdom and bring the world to God. I would let the standard man go to the average circuit; let the best of our young men win their spurs on home missions, by bringing them up to independence of the fund. Above all, in our pioneer missions in the north and west, I would have the choicest men appointed, with a strong effort, of course, to have them well supported. Even our Indian missions should be manned by a selection of strong men, intellectually, whose mental culture would give them resources in loneliness which a lesser standard could not supply. But when we come to select men for the foreign missions, it is simply the quintessence of folly to send any but the keenest intellects and the ripest scholarship, to grapple with the men and the systems of India, China, Japan and other lands of that grade. Secular writers in the East have set the average missionary in those



lands very low, declared him of less calibre than the native, that he obtains there double the salary that any church would give a man of his ability at home, etc. A short time ago a renegade missionary repeated the charges in a long article in the *Japan Mail*. I felt that even if those things were true, that was not the place to publish them, where they could only wound the brethren and could not cure the trouble. So I strongly defended the missionary band in the *Chrysanthemum*, which I was editing at the time. But here, where my words may reach those responsible for these selections, I am compelled to say that there is all too much truth, in many cases, in these allegations. A man who attains the Methodist standard for a minister is a mere baby in the hands of keen scholars of the East and is more a hindrance in the way than a help in reaching the highest minds of these people. Take our standard young man in our church here, and put him side by side with our native ministers in the East and some of them will surpass him far and away in mental grasp and in English education. The foreigner is not needed there to evangelize the masses, and there is where fifty years of mistake has been made in China, where they attempt to climb from the coolie up to the mind of the land. And there is the secret of success in Japan,—the brains, the ruling, thinking mind of the land is appealed to; the battle is to be fought on that plane, with Western infidelity and Oriental thought, while these strong men and women, when converted and

equipped, will reach the masses more effectively than any number of foreigners. Let me give an illustration. From the leading men in one of the most intelligent provinces in Southern Japan, where translations of Haven's Mental Philosophy, and other Western works, had been widely read, there came a message to certain missionaries in Tokio. The message was to the effect that although some Christian teachers had at times visited the province, they had failed to present the claims of Christianity in any such a way as to commend it to their intelligence. But from what they had read and from what they heard of its spread in other places they felt there must be something in it that the former preachers could not make plain. So they wished a visit from some competent missionaries from the capital, who would be able to present the claims of the new religion adequately. They offered to provide a large hall for popular discourses and throw open the parlors of the highest families to gather the literati and discuss the pro's and con's on more scientific lines. The message came to the mission best prepared to respond and two of the most experienced of our Presbyterian brethren undertook the pleasant task. They were cordially received and on alternate days for a length of time addressed thousands of the populace in a great theatre and met a company of some scores of literati in one of the finest parlors of the wealthy. The popular audiences were, of course, a mixture of all classes, from the highest to the lowest, the reunions of the literati took the form of discussing fundamentals, one

each day. The first question was, "Can man really know?" There you touch the very soul of agnosticism. What would your standard Methodist preacher do with that? And yet these men had to face it and battle it without appealing for a moment to the Bible, but simply, with cold logic, prove to those keen Orientals that man's knowledge is real and not merely relative, in Spencer's sense, and delusive. The next night the question was, "If we have powers that know, can they apprehend the unseen world?" Next: "Is there a God, and if so, how can you prove that your idea of God is correct?" Next: "How can you prove that the soul is immortal?" And so it went on, night after night, in long discussions; you can easily perceive that it would require men of no ordinary ability and culture to take those questions and deal with them so as to convince men who had been trained in opposite schools of thought—all without appeal to authority, or the Bible, or miracles, or prophecy, or anything but logic and phenomena and scientific demonstration. And yet if we do not meet these tests and master the situation, the simple result is, the mind of the nation smiles in pity and passes on in scorn, while Christianity is left to dabble and play amid the seething millions of the masses. What is wanted is schools for the young people who come flocking to all the great cities for an education, manned by trained teachers, and then a few apostolic men of large mind, elastic temperament and of the broadest, deepest type of sanctified scholarship, or men who give

promise of such attainments by exercise and experience, to plant the standard high and light the candlesticks of God in the highest intellectual plains and gather around them an army of native evangelists to carry on the work to final success. Now, I ask, has Methodism such men for such work? If so, let us send them, in God's name, and we will do much to solve the Missionary Problem. I am happy to learn that Victoria's sons are amongst the foremost in offering themselves for the most laborious of our mission fields—putting the lie on the charge that culture unfits a man for the hardest work. May the Church only rally to their aid and send and support them in their holy toil.

#### IV. THE MOTIVE POWER.

I come now to the last point, as to the motive power on which we rely to bring forth to the practical solution of this problem, a sufficient number of men of the right stamp, a spirit in the Church that will send them and a sufficiency of means to sustain them and their work until the churches planted become self-supporting. I have tried to picture to myself the real state of this missionary problem but find it difficult to grasp it as it unfolds and impossible to find words to voice it to busy folks here in these lands of Christendom. Ten hundred millions of people still without Christianity, excepting as mere lonely taper-lights in the midst of dense darkness, and Christendom so full of everything opposed to Christ and goodness,

and that near the dawn of the twentieth century since Christ gave us His commission. A generation ago every pulpit and family altar was familiar with the prayer, "Oh, Lord, open the door for the preaching of Thy word, prepare a way for the message of salvation into all lands." Now that prayer has been answered and the Church hardly knows what to do about it. She is not ready or willing to go up and possess these lands that all lie open to her effort. We missionaries come home and tell of tantalizing success, of marvellous opportunities almost untouched, of millions waiting to hear, of statesmen wishing their peoples Christianized, of unbounded fields ready for the reaper, of Satan and unbelief coming in as a flood from these Western lands, of the certain moral and spiritual loss of nations for centuries unless we bestir ourselves and send forth laborers into the harvest; appeals that, one would think, ought to rouse all Christendom to a mighty crusade that would speedily conquer the world for God. We point to the fact that the triumphs of missions thus far have been merely in the easy outposts of heathendom where the Church with infant zeal has tried her apprentice hand; no great religion has fallen, no great priesthood overthrown, no great nation won, but we now stand face to face with these forces which laugh to scorn our guerilla skirmishing, while heathendom is actually gaining ground in these Christian centuries. We urge that statesmanlike plans and commensurate efforts must second our holy ambition, our zeal for God. All we say excites only a

passing interest, a sort of "Well, I declare," a few dollars more, perhaps, here and there for missions and every one moves along just as if no one believed our report, or believing cared not.

Something is radically wrong somewhere, and must be righted before the mission problem can be solved. Here is a church, a beautiful church, in a city with scores of churches all around it, giving an average of a church to 1,000 people. It is usually well occupied, but not crowded. But it is coming to be unfashionable to have a pew in the gallery, no matter how comfortable, and some of the people cannot get pews downstairs. Forthwith to accommodate these, and to furnish room for more people, so that the income of the church may be more easily secured and increased, the church is enlarged and remodelled to the tune of \$13,000. Probably a very useful move and a good investment for that church. Three or four streets away is another fine brick church, but it is not in every respect pleasing and does not accommodate quite enough people to pay a sufficiently high salary to get a first-class man. Forthwith it is pulled down and a new church built on the same spot at a cost of \$40,000. It may be all right for these two out of twenty Methodist churches in one city to spend nearly \$60,000 in one year on making things easy. But what staggers me is to find that it is thought a wild and visionary scheme to ask the Church of our whole Dominion to spend one-third of that amount in putting up an inadequate building where no large church



of any name exists, in a city of a million people—over ten times larger than the former with its hundred churches of different denominations—the head and heart of an empire of 38,000,000 now stretching forth her hands unto God. Everywhere enterprises in which self-interest is largely mixed command almost unbounded wealth, but for unselfish enterprises amazingly little. In England the missionary income seems to have reached its utmost limit of expansion; in the United States the very heavens and earth seem to be stormed to raise a million for missions, a veritable *ridiculus mus* for the laboring of so great a mountain, even then far below our Canadian standard; but here in Canada we appear to have come to the end of our tether also, our home efforts are starved, progress impossible, and over our foreign work, unless we move soon and move largely, we may as well tack up the ticket: "For Sale! They began to build, but were not able to finish!"

For years I have seen this crisis culminating, and have pondered the means to meet it. To my mind the only solution is in a radical reconstruction at the very soul of the whole undertaking—a conversion of the motive power that will bring in a new missionary age. The old plan of putting missions among the charities, relegating God and His dearest work to our list of paupers and then giving as our sympathies were wrought upon, has simply outlived its usefulness and must give way for the practical operation of some nobler force. Time was when the fitful winds which propel the clouds were the only forces known

to man to work his machinery and to carry his commerce to other lands. Time came when men's interests were too large and pressing to brook the waiting for the wind to rise and commerce too eager for sailing vessels and canal boats. So steam power came to meet the need and the steam engine on land and water has multiplied the products of machinery and commerce a thousand fold. We are still in the age of wind in our mission business and dependent on the power of gush to run the machine. We are beginning to find it impossible to raise the wind when it is most wanted and so our grist remains unground and our divine commerce is mocked too often by enforced calm in mid-ocean. A generation ago missionaries came home from foreign fields and told of blood-curdling atrocities; of Jugganath rolling over the crushed carcases of devotees; of widows immolated on funeral pyres; of babes flung to the Ganges; of savages more ferocious than tigers, tattooed and painted and feathered; of missionaries caught and roasted and boiled to garnish the festive boards of cannibals; crowds listened with mouth agape, enjoying the luxury of sympathy and they swelled the meagre givings of *their* fathers to larger benefactions. Our own Crosby and Young and others present us the noble, the debased savage of our own land; and as we listen to tales of exposure amid snow and ice and winter cold, in journeyings often and privations many, crowds grow momentarily enthusiastic and a few more dollars are given. But we no longer respond to those thrill-



ing stories to such an extent as to carry us much ahead. They are about exhausted, anyway. There are scarcely any new worlds of horror to conquer and the power of conjuring with such things is just about gone. We can only talk plain business: there is the work to do; there is the world to disciple for God and there are your marching orders. How can we move the Church to action? It is absurd to say that the Church has reached the limit of her power to give. Ten dollars could be paid by the Church for this purpose where one is given, if there was but a mind to give. In one of the smaller cities of Canada, in one Methodist church, that altogether gave about \$1,000 to missions last year, there are six men who, if they chose to do so, could devote to God's work one million dollars and still live in all the luxury of plenteous wealth. A business man who is succeeding very well had money to invest outside of his regular trade. He was induced to invest \$40,000 in a certain mine; it turned out a bogus affair; he simply puts down his \$40,000 to profit and loss and goes on with his regular successful work as before. If one-half of our successful business men would invest only such surpluses in God's work, it would mean millions for beneficent enterprise and no loss to individuals or to society.

The difficulty is simply that our motive power has been too purely humanitarian, too dependent on our moods. We have talked a great deal about our duty as stewards of God, but, with the exception of a few

individual cases, with very superficial effect. One of the six of whom I spoke a moment ago, who sings loudly and prays constantly and talks persistently about consecration, rises to the sublime point of giving just two dollars a month for all purposes into the church and ten dollars a year to the mission fund, and though that may be an extreme case, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred to talk of our being God's stewards is the veriest bosh. Here is a man who begins life poor; he owes to Christianity every bit of capital of physical, mental, business ability and the element in which he works. He succeeds in making a property of \$200,000; he gives perhaps an average of fifty dollars a year to the work of God; one son, who is brought up with the idea that he can live without work, as the heir of a paying property, kills himself by dissipation; another is determined to make himself richer than his father and develops into that meanest specimen of a man, a stingy man of wealth. The father wills the college perhaps \$25,000 when he dies, and gives away \$175,000 to people who have not the slightest need of it, to enlarge schemes of avarice or support in ease a degenerate generation. And yet for his one gift, unusual, alas! in its size, he is lauded to the skies as a man of benevolence. If Bible teaching is true, he is a thief and a robber, who has squandered on hangers-on his Master's goods and instead of acting as steward has turned the Master out to starve on a percentage which he would think insufficient for his

stable-boy, and then, to quiet his conscience, invests a fraction for the Master's work.

Men talk of giving a tenth—the New Testament sets us no such old Jewish standard, but puts a larger principle to work, which, when allowed to come to fruition, will make us ask, not how small a percentage can I give to God, but on what percentage *can I live* while I work for God and make use of His property for His cause? In the last "*Presbyterian Review*," a capital Quarterly of that excellent denomination, many of these thoughts of mine have been put into striking shape in an article on the "Reorganization of Christian Living." The writer places the basis on which the necessary reorganization is to be effected in our sense of duty to God rather than in our sympathy for man. That is a position Alps higher than that on which we have been moving, and would turn our paltry offerings into a splendid tribute to God, as men brought in what they considered as God's portion, or what was due to Him for His great love to us. That is the point in which that school of theology would naturally culminate.

But all that does not satisfy me, as the final solution, and the question to my mind just now is, Has Methodism in its spirit and theology the germ of that which will give a final solution? Every great ecclesiastical upheaval has brought an old divine principle into clearer light and power and for every great advance it seems that a new sect or denomination has to be formed, for the new wine could not be held in

the old bottles. Will it be so now? Must a new denomination rise to put into practical shape the struggling missionary spirit and stir the world with a wide-reaching missionary revival? Or is there within Methodism the latent energy, and in her institutions the elasticity to give it scope when properly awakened? I believe that this final solution is the legitimate culmination of Methodism, the ultimate outcome of her spirit and theology, for which her past development has been but a track-laying stage. If this is not so may God speedily raise up a people that shall embody His idea for humanity's salvation, that shall lead every branch of God's hosts to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty, before we are put to shame in the sight of our enemies. And wherein in Methodism, you ask, lies this secret fountain, this sealed and sacred hope for these ends of the ages? In the legitimate application of her doctrine of holiness, I reply. The preaching of holiness is the very palladium of Methodism; holiness obtainable by faith, lived now and here, not in the life of a useless ascetic, not in ghastly theological abstraction, not in dim hope of some future holiness that we may approach unto but never obtain, useless alike to God and man, but a scriptural holiness whereby the reconstructed man walks the earth, in a sense, an incarnation of God. In the old Minutes we read: "What was the rise of Methodism so-called? In 1729 two young men, reading the Bible, saw they could not be saved without holiness, followed after it,

and incited others so to do. In 1737 they saw holiness comes by faith. They saw, likewise, that men are justified before they are sanctified, but still holiness was their point." And it has ever been the rallying point of Methodism from that day to this. Though persistently there has been a natural tendency away from it, spiritual weakness ensuing, we are again, by some standard-bearer, brought back to our palladium and war-cry. It has been the point, and yet no doctrine has been so jeopardized by foes without and crudities within, it has existed all along and exists to-day as a splendid spiritual inspiration, which gilds and quickens and glorifies every other phase of salvation with which it works; but it is still to the mass of our preachers and people a splendid intangibility, simply because it has never yet received a definite ethical development, enforced with the irresistible combination of spiritual genius and moral courage to set on flame the conscience of the age. The Rev. Dr. Dale, a devout Congregational minister of Birmingham, one of the most masculine thinkers of our time, preached a remarkable sermon some time ago, on the occasion of the meeting of the Methodist Conference in that city, in which occurred the following suggestive paragraph: "There remains one doctrine of John Wesley's—the doctrine of perfect sanctification—which ought to have led to a great and original ethical development; but the doctrine has not grown; it seems to remain just where John Wesley left it. There has been a want of the genius or the courage to attempt

the solution of the immense practical questions which the doctrine suggests. The questions have not been raised, much less solved. To have raised them effectively, indeed, would have been to originate an ethical revolution which would have had a far deeper effect on the thought and life—first of England, and then of the rest of Christendom—than was produced by the reformation of the sixteenth century." I want to present one of those practical questions to-day, and would to God that it might be a tree of God's own planting that shall strike deep root and grow and fructify till the nations eat of the fruit thereof. So that in place of the remnants of our pietistic mysticism, our tendency to theoretical quibbles or fanatical huckstering of cliques, our stirring up of an enthusiasm which for lack of practical output recoils in selfish efforts after unselfishness and fails, we shall have our Zion go forth as brightness and her righteousness as a lamp that burneth, that our sun may no more go down nor our moon withdraw herself, that the days of our mourning may forever be ended.

When I came to college in 1865, I was hungry for holiness of heart. I sought all help I could in our theology and from living men and read much published in our own and other Churches, seeking for light that suited my case. In 1875, while conscious of the peace of acceptance with God, in an agony of longing after a consciousness of being just what God would have me be, all human help vanished and all theology fled, I was alone with God, face to face with the



problem of my life. Through the heavenly anguish of a spiritual crucifixion I was graciously led to take as my standard forever the completely altered motto, "*None of self, but all of Thee,*" and rose into another world, wide and heavenly, whose orbit ever centres in the eternal God. God's will was heaven. He willed apparently that I should go to Japan; a life of toil in Japan is now better than heaven. I have since, in the light of personal experience, read many books and papers on holiness, published by men and women of almost every Church and phase of theology, but none gave me more help—and that more in the way of a pregnant hint—than the monograph of James Agar Beet, on the subject of Bible Holiness. To put it into a nutshell, the best holiness sermon is God's, "Be ye holy, for I am holy," which to me, means that every God-given faculty—and every faculty we have is a counterpart of God's own nature—should be Godlike, not only in constitution, but also in character and use. God gave us an object lesson of what He meant by coming Himself in human form, and from the historic Christ we may learn each one for himself to be a Christ likewise, expressing so far as our finite powers extend the immense and infinite moral perfections and actions of God. Let us take Christ's life as an exegesis of His word. He says, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth." The exegesis of theologians tells us that that is to be taken with a grain of salt; that we should not set our affections on them and should have other treasures as

well. The exegesis of Christ was, "The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." Christ said to the rich young man, "Go, sell all that thou hast, distribute to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me." Exegetes tell us that that was a special case, or that it has a qualified meaning. Christ's exegesis was that He emptied Himself for poor humanity's good; "though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we, through His poverty, might become rich." And so on through every chapter of Christ's teaching. Methodism has always had and has to-day, an army of men who could easily earn a competence in secular business or other profession, but who literally follow the Master, singing

"No foot of land do I possess,  
No cottage in the wilderness,  
A poor wayfaring man,"

in order to *carry* the gospel to their fellowmen. Now, the question in my mind is this, why cannot we have a consecrated army of similarly cultured and competent and successful business men, who shall make money that shall be God's to *send* the gospel, while they simply call a living salary their own?

I ask for no long-faced asceticism, for no dreary, unrequited drudgery; but to put it into tangible form: let one hundred young men starting in life—graduates of this college if you like—form a holiness association on this wise. Let those who are called to the work of the ministry offer themselves for any mission



field, at home or abroad, that the regular church authorities think them best fitted for, as fast as funds are supplied to send and support them, and give them means to work. Suppose that fifty are thus called and appointed, let the other fifty—either in combination or separately—go into business for God, promising to put every dollar of earnings above a comfortable salary into the hands of the same church authorities to carry on God's work where they see the best openings. Let there be kept up a mutual insurance and superannuation and sick fund if you like, so that all shall be cared for and exigencies met. I venture to say that inside of five years, if the plan were enthusiastically and honestly worked, those fifty devoted men at home would support the fifty men abroad and the contagion would catch and lift up the Church givings all along the line, multiplying such men as Studd and his offering of \$500,000. Let one thousand business men consecrate their all in a similar way, and a thousand new missionaries would soon be abroad as flaming angels of truth, lighting up the farthest and darkest corners of this sad earth, and all Christendom would heave with such a moral uplifting as humanity never dreamed of.

You talk of your tithes as of Christian duty; out upon such paltry devices to satisfy an enlightened conscience. We talk of the cent-a-day system, and it does good in showing what wonders can be done with the paltriest offerings if they are but systematic; but it is only the child's A B C of working for God. Heat to be diffused

must be generated in a furnace of fire ; light to be diffused must be produced in a central glowing flame. So in the Church of God. And if we Methodists are to be nothing more than the stokers for Christianity—lamp-lighters for the churches of Christendom—let us build a furnace worthy the object, kindled and fed by the fire that warms all heaven, and swing aloft a flaming candelabra detached from earth, suspended from the throne of God, with each of its thousand electric jets a consecrated Christ, showing in actual practice the light of God's own love incarnate. Oh, brethren, what we want as a motive power is holy, human eyes, to see the problem as God sees it, holy, human hearts, to sympathize with a lost world, as Christ Himself agonized, until we have fellowship with His sufferings on their behalf, and that we put our sympathy into practical form as He did. If this could but be done and become contagious in Christendom, very soon would hell on earth be driven to the place prepared for the devil and his angels, and the new heavens and the new earth would appear,—the Missionary Problem would be solved, and Methodism would have done her work and be ready to gather up her feet and die and be buried in the grave of every other 'ism, all having become Christ's, and God all in all. Then the evening stars would sing together and all the sons of God would again shout for joy ; the day of earth completed, time would be no more, but in its place come forth in glory the fuller day of eternal heaven.

“Hallelujah ! the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth !”

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 Cooley, John W.  
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 Emory, Vernon H.  
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 Barkwell, J. H., B.A.  
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 Bishop, G. J.  
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 Briggs, William, D.D.  
 Brown, G. M.  
 Brown, George.  
 Brown, W. P.  
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 Dewart, E. H., D.D., F.T.L.  
 Eby, C. S., D.D., F.T.L.  
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 Hare, J. J., M.A.  
 Harper, H.

Harper, E. B., D.D.  
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 Philp, S. C., Jr.  
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 Redditt, J. J.  
 Reid, Thomas R.  
 Richard, A.

# LIST OF MEMBERS.

61

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Shorey, Sidney J.  
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Simpson, G. M.  
Sing, Samuel.  
Stafford, E. A., LL.B., F.T.L.  
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T.L.  
L.



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Rev. J. H. Robinson.	Rev. Wm. Knox.
Rev. Thomas Cobb.	Rev. W. H. Gane.
Rev. S. D. Chown.	Rev. A. Whiteside.
Rev. James Watson.	Rev. C. Teeter.
	Rev. A. E. Smith.

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT, 1885-86.

*Receipts.*

Balance in hand as per last account.....	\$328 65
London Conference Branch .....	14 50
Niagara Conference Branch .....	27 50
Guelph Conference Branch .....	26 00
Toronto Conference Branch .....	36 00
Bay of Quinte Conference Branch .....	18 00
Montreal Conference Branch.....	8 50
Manitoba Conference Branch .....	no returns
Total.....	<u>\$459 65</u>

*Expenditure.*

Book Room Account, 1884-85 .....	\$52 76
Rev. S. J. Hunter, Expenses as Preacher, 1885 ...	3 50
Rev. E. B. Ryckman, Lectures on Preaching, 1885.	50 00
" " Expenses .....	12 00
C. W. Coates, Book-Room Account .....	9 10
Postage and Express Charges .....	2 24
Total.....	<u>\$129 60</u>

Receipts over Expenditure ..... \$330 05

*Liabilities.*

Book Room Account, 1885-86 .....	\$161 76
Rev. E. B. Harper, Expenses as Preacher, 1886 ..	12 40
Total.....	<u>\$174 16</u>

Balance of Assets over Liabilities ..... \$155 89

N.B.—The privileges of membership are conditioned upon enrolment, and the payment of an annual fee of \$1. All who pay the membership fee are entitled to a copy of the "Annual Lecture and Sermon" and the "Lectures on Preaching." Annual Fees paid in the "Jackson" and "Douglas" Societies are accepted in lieu of the Annual Fee of the "Union," and entitle the members to all the privileges of membership.

## COURSE OF READING

FOR

## FELLOW IN THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE (F.T.L.)

The Course of Reading is to extend over three years, and to consist of Biblical, Historical, Doctrinal, or Apologetic studies. The character of the Course shall be optional, *i.e.*, the subjects or branches of study may be elected by each one reading; *Provided*, that two subjects shall be read for each year, one to be selected at the beginning of the Course and continued throughout, and the other varied from year to year. The thoroughness of the reading will be tested by a thesis on each subject, to be assigned by the 1st of February and forwarded by the 1st of April to the Examiners; a written report of the examination of the thesis to be in the hands of the Secretary by May 1st, who shall report results to the candidates. All persons reading must send application for subject of thesis to the Secretary by January 1st, stating the year in which they are reading, the Course subject, the option selected, and the books read. Each subject should be studied in at least two authors, from a comparison of which an independent opinion may be formed; and a student must put in at least one thesis each year until the Course is completed.

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\$174 16

\$155 89

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accepted in lieu  
the privileges of

## COURSE OF STUDY.

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### FIRST YEAR.

1. *Biblical Study*.—St. John's Gospel. Aids: Godet, Meyer, Moulton, and Milligan.
2. *Historical Study*.—The Christian Church to the close of the Council of Nice. Text-books: Neander and Schaff
3. *Doctrinal Study*.—The Atonement. Text-books: Crawford Randles, Miley.
4. *Apologetic Study*.—Natural Theology. Text-books: Flint's Theism and Anti-Theistic Theories, Diman's Theistic Argument, and Janet's Final Causes.

### SECOND YEAR.

1. *Biblical Study*.—The Epistle to the Romans. Aids: Godet, Meyer, and Beet.
2. *Historical Study*.—The English Reformation. Text-books: Burnet, D'Aubigne, and Hardwicke.
3. *Doctrinal Study*.—The Trinity. Text-books: Bull's Defence of the Nicene Faith, Dorner's Person of Christ.
4. *Apologetic Study*.—The Canon of the New Testament. Text-books: Westcott, Briggs' Biblical Study, Sanday's Gospels in the Second Century.

### THIRD YEAR.

1. *Biblical Study*.—Isaiah. Aids: Cheyne and Lange.
2. *Historical Study*.—American Church History. Text-books: Stevens' and Bangs' American Methodism, Punshard's Congregationalism.
3. *Doctrinal Study*.—The Future Life. Text-books: Beecher's History of the Doctrine, Randles, Shaw's Lecture on Eternal Punishment.
4. *Apologetic Study*.—Inspiration. Text-books: Bannermann, Lee, Elliott, Pope's Theology, Vol. I.

# FAITH vs. KNOWLEDGE.

BY THE

REV. E. I. BADGLEY, B.D., LL.D.

## Christ, the Light of the World.

BY THE

REV. J. COOPER ANTLIFF, D.D.

BEING THE TENTH ANNUAL LECTURE AND SERMON, DELIVERED  
BEFORE THE THEOLOGICAL UNION OF VICTORIA  
UNIVERSITY, IN 1887.

---

TORONTO:

WILLIAM BRIGGS, 78 & 80 KING ST. EAST.

C. W. COATES, MONTREAL.

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1887.



# Faith vs. Knowledge:

A LECTURE DELIVERED BEFORE THE THEOLOGICAL UNION OF  
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY, MAY 9TH, 1887.

---

BY THE

REV. E. I. BADGLEY, B.D., LL.D.





## Lecture.

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### FAITH vs. KNOWLEDGE.

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YOU have been called as a witness in a court of law. You understand the whole case. Your evidence cannot be shaken, and will settle the matter without any possibility of doubt. Your confidence in your forthcoming testimony is the effect of absolute certainty that you are in possession of facts, and know the facts.

In this way you have often reasoned with yourself and with others. The hour arrives, and you are in the witness-box. How long has the cross-examination continued before your testimony has become confused, and faith in your supposed facts begun to waver? You speedily leave the court-room, deeply chagrined and perhaps hopelessly sceptical, where before you were so positive and self-assured. As the realm of certainty became more and more circumscribed, belief, or actual doubt, was seen to occupy the vacated territory, and litigation in the court of consciousness became a fact as real as the litigation in the court of law.

You are a student of facts and phenomena, and you seek to explain your mental confusion. You carefully

note what stood the test in that cross-examination, and what added nothing as evidence before the court. A critical examination of the senses and reason, as sources of knowledge and vouchers in their own right for its unqualified and absolute correctness, was the result. You learned that the mind has its special faculties, as the body has its special organs, and that nature has determined each to its legitimate sphere of action. As the eye is not destined to perform the duties of the hand, neither are the senses to assume the functions of the mind. You thus trained yourself to draw a clear distinction between sense and intellect.

You had not yet reached the end of your problem, nor of your difficulties. You found reason and consciousness furnishing you with principle and fact, and presenting you with conclusions and inferences, both deductive and inductive. You congratulated yourself on the greatness of the conquest, and the stability and perpetuity of your intellectual empire. A breath of criticism again turned your science into a creed. Reason in her deep stronghold was summoned to explain and vindicate her right to royalty. On what ground rests her imperial claims? What witnesses can she call? How settle contradictory testimony whose claims are equally balanced? Powerless against so many, so antagonistic and so deeply-seated forces, you have supplicated foreign aid. This mental confusion must be reduced to a minimum, or continued intellectual and spiritual unrest must be the consequence. Are there no schools that have as yet found

a balm for mental distraction and a wounded conscience? Most certainly there are, and divided into hostile camps, as your reason is divided against itself. "Believe that you may understand," says one; "Understand that you may believe," replies the other. "Accept only what is rational," says one; "Accept only the irrational," shouts another. To one faith is the highest and only authority; to another it is but secondary and subservient to reason. With some an all-absorbing faith has found only mystery everywhere, and with a religious zeal devoid of knowledge they have taken at a single gulp, without mastication and consequent impossibility of digestion, infinite contradictions and numberless absurdities. With intellectual pride, the offspring of irreligious tendencies, others scorn all recognition of the claims of the faith faculty, and proceed to weave out of the *a priori* depths of their unfathomable intellect a rational universe constructed on the only plan possible, and find at the close of their labored effort that neither that universe nor themselves hath any being.

Intellectual confusion, absolute nonentity, or an Agnosticism, first-born son to despair, seem to be the necessary outcome of the unwarrantable severance of faith and reason. These two God hath joined together, and man has neither the privilege nor the power to put them asunder.

We need not seek, then, in objective sources or historic names an answer that shall unify and harmonize the myriad voices within us. The soil on which the

questions grew must, when analyzed, explain its own productions. If faith and reason are in the last analysis found to be one and inseparable, the accumulated stores of knowledge must be their joint production.

Fifteen hundred years ago Clement of Alexandria uttered the great truth: "There is no faith without knowledge, nor is there knowledge without faith." Every cognition, whether of empirical or rational origin, involves both faith and knowledge. Without faith in the utterances of sense and reason all physical and intellectual activity must cease, or aimlessly and unproductively perpetuate an unmeaning and irrational history. Faith in the declaration of the eyes that a missile is aimed at our head enables us to ward off the blow. Faith in the great law of Causality carries human enterprise and research through many a realm that would otherwise be unexplored; while the final revelation of the coveted secret adds a new province to our intellectual empire, and justifies our confidence in the unseen laws that operate in the depths of our mental nature. Faith in the great laws of the indestructibility of matter, and the conservation of energy, transformed, transferred, but not destroyed, lies at the basis of all modern chemistry and physics. No man hath seen the law at any time; the sciences born of the law have confirmed its *a priori* utterance. Faith in the perpetuity of the established order of things, and faith in each other, are foremost among the motive forces that drive the

wheels of commercial industry, and give us our fair heritage of social law and order.

"The Godhead in us wrings our nobler deeds  
From our reluctant selves."

Faith in the deep mysterious utterances of the soul, and faith in a living God, have covered the universe with altars of sacrifice, and inspired the missionary zeal and Christian heroism of all these centuries. And finally, faith in ourselves, in our mission, and in Him who hath called us thereto, has been the ever-fruitful source of strength to nerve the arm, to inspire the mind, and to energize the will. A Credo, "I believe," underlies all practical activity, all science, and all theology.

"O welcome, pure-eyed Faith, white-handed Hope,  
Thou hovering angel, girt with golden wings."

*But is all this faith without knowledge?* By no means. All faith entitled to the name contains an element of knowledge. No greater leap into darkness was ever taken than when any doctrine is accepted with no evidence or knowledge for its defence. "A belief, to be rational, must have rational grounds. When held without grounds it is a volition; when held on irrational grounds it is a prejudice or a superstition." Faith, knowledge, in brief the simplest mental fact, whatever may be its nature, will in the last analysis be always found to be at least a duality in some form. Says the eloquent Henry Rogers: "We

would represent Reason and Faith as twin-born: the one in form and features the image of manly beauty; the other, of feminine grace and gentleness; but to each of whom, alas! is allotted a sad privation. While the bright eyes of Reason are full of piercing and restless intelligence, his ear is closed to sound; and while Faith has an ear of exquisite delicacy, on her sightless orbs, as she lifts them toward heaven, the sunbeams play in vain. Hand in hand the brother and sister, in all mutual love, pursue their way, through a world on which, like ours, day breaks and night falls alternate; by day the eyes of Reason are the guide of Faith, and by night the ear of Faith is the guide of Reason. As is wont with those who labor under these privations respectively, Reason is apt to be eager, impetuous, impatient of that instruction which his infirmity will not permit him readily to apprehend; while Faith, gentle and docile, is ever willing to listen to the voice by which alone truth and wisdom can effectually reach her."

Says another: "The eyes of Reason are the eyes of Nature, and the eyes of Nature cannot see into that which is beyond or above Nature. Reason sees from Nature to Nature. Faith sees from God to God. Reason eyes Divine truth as an infant an egg—all shell; Faith pierces the shell and perceives the bird of paradise, abiding its time with folded wings and closed eyes within its house of defence."

*It is generally assumed that faith characterizes theology and the religious life only, while knowledge*

*especially belongs to the physical and mathematical sciences.*

No greater delusion has ever been entertained. It would not be altogether incorrect to say that the more a science has to do with the material and tangible, the more marked is the element of faith, as giving support to its fundamental principles.

There is something significant in the fact that the Decalogue has never needed revision; and that the Mosaic account of creation by the free act of a personal God is the objective point toward which physical science, by many a devious route, is tending. Christ, as Stewart and Tait have said, "must be regarded as doing for ethics incomparably more than Newton did for physics. So completely did He grasp its fundamental principles, that ever since His day the science has been mainly deductive, and very much confined to a practical application of the great maxims which were given to the world more than eighteen centuries ago. . . . Ethical science is already forever completed, so far as her general outline and main principles are concerned, and has been, as it were, waiting for physical science to come up with her." A Divine revelation, you say, and not a scientific discovery. Wait a moment. The Old Testament cosmogony and Old and New Testament ethics find an echo in the depths of reason—an echo so like the original that the scientific basis of each is found within ourselves. We thus stand face to face with eternal verities and unalterable principles of action. Faith is here so intimately



wedded to reason, and reason so one with faith, that separation from each other or from ourselves becomes impossible in act and unphilosophical in thought.

Material existences and physical forces, as such, have not for us this intimate and kindred relationship. Their lines of action and reaction are open to the eyes of sense, but make no part of our consciousness in the same manner as does an ethical or rational law. Faith in an unvarying principle and definite results is thus to an extent disturbed. Hypothesis, conjecture, theory, are introduced until there is nothing left as a hunting-ground even for the poetic imagination. A wag defined a philanthropist as "a man whose charity increases directly as the square of the distance"; and the application of the term faith to much that is called science is equally appropriate.

"Rational principles, the facts of consciousness and immediate perception, are all that can claim to be strictly called knowledge." But what does this imply? It implies that an infinitely larger territory, to which the proud name of science is too often exclusively appropriated, has substituted faith for knowledge, and has, in a moment of mental aberration, lost the distinction between principle and hypothesis. A principle, as such, is always rational, and is the *a priori* condition of fact or phenomenon. Ultimate, unalterable, self-evident to the human reason, they have their basal reality in the eternal and unchangeable reason of God. An hypothesis is but a prop upon which we lean to thread our way through interacting and sometimes



apparently contradictory phenomena. If we merge into sunlight the hypothesis lays aside its tentative character; mental discord ceases, and our checkered experience thus becomes the agency—not the cause—through which truth and principle have unfolded themselves as abiding realities.

We say "agency, not cause," for the cause is that realm of rational reality that "the vulture's eye hath not seen nor the lion's whelp trodden;" that reveals itself to no eye of sense, but apprehending which we take hold of fundamental being—God. And so Plato says: "Those who see the absolute, and eternal, and immutable, may be said to know, and not to have opinion only."

In illustration of our position that, strictly speaking, truth or knowledge is revealed to the eye of reason rather than to the eye of sense, notice for a moment the hypotheses concerning the ultimate nature of matter. What is it? From the days of the Greek Atomists, and even earlier, until the present an effort has been made to answer this question. Each answer has been but an hypothesis to explain the phenomena and give to them a rational harmony. The atomic theory, the vortex-atom theory, the theory of infinite divisibility, the theory of Boscovich, where all idea of substance vanishes and you have left merely a geometrical point as a centre of force, and many others each to-day claiming for itself a hearing, and each in turn, even by professional scientists, denounced as wholly wrong or absolutely absurd, all reveal that finality

has not been reached even in that with which we are most familiar.

Prof. Bowne says: "Were the natural sciences restricted to what is truly known they would shrivel up to a handful of unrelated facts, of much value for practice but of little or none for intelligence."

We thus see how largely the physical sciences rest upon hypotheses, assumed principles—in other words, upon faith, and yet further, a faith not always even rational. Individual facts, infinite in number and variety, are known and turned to practical account; but correctly speaking, that only is science where the fact is a deduction from a principle, and the principle a law asserting itself with distinctness and clearness through the reason. And so Herbert Spencer says: "Positive knowledge"—that is, conscious, sensible experience—"does not, and never can, fill the whole region of possible thought. At the utmost reach of discovery there arises, and ever must arise, the question, What lies beyond?" And again: "An entire history of anything must include its appearance out of the imperceptible and its disappearance into the imperceptible. Be it a single object or the whole universe, any account which begins with it in a concrete form is incomplete, since there remains an era of its knowable existence undescribed and unexplained. . . . Knowledge has obviously not reached its limits until it has united the past, present, and future histories into a whole."

Physical phenomena, sense, experience, are thus seen

to be not ultimate in themselves. An intellectual theory must be constructed as the invisible framework upon which the whole structure rests. Without such framework nothing but dismembered and fragmentary phenomena appear and disappear, conveying in themselves no information as to their origin, offering no explanation of the present, and uttering no prophecy as to their future. Dwelling only in the realm of the tangible, the concrete, and calling this science, calls to mind the utterance of the prophet Isaiah: "For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes, the prophets; and your heads, the seers, hath he covered. And all vision is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed: and the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned."

Reason is eternal, and the true aim in all scientific culture should ever be to lead us from the phenomenal and temporal to the absolute and unconditioned, the universal Reason—God. These laws are modes of the Divine activity, and to that extent, in the unalterable and fundamental principles there revealed, they make known to us that highest Personality, embodying in Himself life and light and love. "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Let us turn now to mathematics, supposed to be the most absolute and most completely apprehended of all the so-called sciences. Its formulæ, its laws, its axioms, are always expressed in the present tense, as though the element of time in no way affected their truthfulness. There are no antagonistic schools in mathematics, and, speaking generally, no "*isms*." There may be different views on the psychological question as to how we come into possession of the principles—whether by the agency of the senses or the reason, or both—but as to their absolute authority there is a consensus of opinion. (We can hardly accept with seriousness the utterance of John Stuart Mill, *Essays by a Barrister*, and a very few others, that there may be a world where it is neither inconceivable nor absurd that  $2 + 2$  would equal 5. They have very wisely not applied such mathematics to our world of debtor and creditor.) But what mathematician ever stood face to face with the principles which lead him through the solution of a problem? The problem grew out of time and circumstance. The principles that give to it a solution are *above* all time and circumstance. The problem was concrete, tangible. The principles reveal themselves to the eye of reason, but as concrete realities they refuse all fellowship with the senses.

Faith in reason's imperial utterances in the unseen and eternal again crowds itself to the fore, and we find that if the term knowledge is to be applied only to that which is sensuous, strictly speaking there can be no knowledge whatever, and still less can there be

any science. It is yet further evident, that if knowledge or science rest only upon what can be demonstrated, neither can be reached. Foundation principles or laws cannot be demonstrated, but are themselves the *basis* of all demonstration, and faith is more or less involved in our acceptance of them.

Jevons, in his "Principles of Science," remarks: "Some of the most extensive calculations ever made were those required for the reduction of the measurements executed in the course of the trigonometrical survey of Great Britain. The calculations arising out of the principal triangulation occupied twenty calculators during three or four years, in the course of which the computers had to solve simultaneous equations involving seventy-seven unknown quantities. The reduction of the levellings required the solution of a system of ninety-one equations. But these vast calculations present no approach whatever to what would be requisite for the complete treatment of any one physical problem. . . The problems which are solved in our mathematical books consist of a small selection of those which happen, from peculiar considerations, to be solvable." In what do all these unknown quantities, equations, etc., finally take root? Not in concrete realities revealed to us through bodily senses, for they tell of a realm of reality that infinitely transcends all sensuous experience. The elements of universality and necessity involved cannot be explained by individual facts and experiences. Perhaps the utterance of an ancient volume may, after all, be found to contain

an element of truth ; and its statement, " Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," may be interpreted to mean, that through our reason we read somewhat of the nature of God and of the laws and methods of the Divine working. " He is their source and foundation ; and they, in turn, are the fixed modes of His manifestation."

" But," says the objector, " no man hath seen God at any time." Quite true ; and the man who believes only in what he sees, may, with others, doubt the existence of his own brains. We never see one another. " The senses never reveal the person," says Dr. Flint ; " our knowledge of God is obtained as simply and naturally as our knowledge of our fellow-men. It is obtained, in fact, mainly in the same way,—the Father in heaven is known just as a father on earth is known. The latter is as unseen as the former. No human being has ever really seen another. No sense has will, or wisdom, or goodness for its object. Man must infer the existence of his fellow-men, for he can have no immediate perception of it. He must become acquainted with their characters through the use of his intelligence, because character cannot be heard with the ear, or looked upon with the eye, or touched with the finger. Yet a child is not long in learning that a spirit is near it. As soon as it knows itself, it easily detects a spirit like its own, yet other than itself, when the signs of a spirit's activity are presented to it."

" Strange doctrine," you say. Yes ; but perfectly

analogous in this regard to the physical sciences. You suppose the universe called material lies at our very door; that it asserts its independent existence with most indubitable evidence; and that our knowledge of it is quite exhaustive. Not so, however, the leading scientists. It is a charge gravely brought against idealistic philosophers, that they in their metaphysical abstractions have got so far away from the world of concrete reality that they alone either deny its existence or claim that we have little or no knowledge of it. John Stuart Mill was an enthusiastic student of physical science, and yet the material universe was to him but "the permanent possibility of producing sensations." Alexander Bain is to-day no tyro in such subjects, and yet he gives as the conclusion of the whole matter the following: "The arguments for the two substances"—matter and mind—"have, we believe, now entirely lost their validity; they are no longer compatible with ascertained science and clear thinking. The one substance, with two sets of properties, two sides, the physical and the mental—a double-faced unity—would appear to comply with all the exigencies of the case." "Both professedly metaphysicians," you say. Yes; but both of the empirical school, and so more likely to be advocates of the material side of things. But turn to those who are not metaphysicians by profession, but physicists.

Stewart and Tait, in their celebrated work, "The Unseen Universe," say: "Matter is—though it may sound paradoxical to say so—the less important half



of the material of the physical universe." And again: "But, before discussing what is that *something else* besides stuff, which has an *objective* though not a *substantive* existence, let us in the first place inquire into the grounds of our belief that matter itself has a real existence external to us; that, in fact, the so-called evidence of our senses is not a mere delusion." Then follows an attempted proof of the existence of the material universe of which they are the professional expounders.

Not yet satisfied? What says Huxley, *facile princeps* in this department of study? In his "Lay Sermons," p. 327, he says: "Whatever matter may be in itself, all that we can know of it is under the shape of a bundle of our own consciousness. Nor is the knowledge of anything we know or feel more or less than a knowledge of states of consciousness." Huxley says somewhere: "Logical consequences are the scarecrows of fools;" but in charity let us not indulge in drawing any while we are left in so great doubt as to the existence of either the scarecrow or the fool.

Here we are brought around again to the same conclusion—all that we know is enclosed within a very small circle; while what we believe, or the realm of faith, even in physical science, is a territory, compared with the former, almost infinitely great.

It will doubtless be concluded that not alone in metaphysics and theology is the faith faculty called into requisition. It could, we think, be easily shown that they, *less* than all other sciences, lay that faculty



under contribution; that there is more and stronger evidence to prove the entity of the soul than can be summoned to the defence of a physical atom; and that the doctrine of the Divine existence can be more fully sustained than can that of a material universe.

Nothing lies nearer to us than the facts of consciousness, be those facts merely phenomenal of the ego, or be they the oracular utterances of reason. In the latter case we are introduced immediately into a realm of law and reality, touching all phases of existence, all time, and all space. But law in itself is an abstraction, and as such has no substantive character. Law, like force, is a consequence, having reality for its antecedent; and the nature of the law is a revelation of the nature of the reality of which the law is an expression. In the depths of our being mysterious processes are ever going on. It is only by analysis and reflection that we reach anything approaching a correct apprehension of their significance. If all the laws and modes of action of our marvellously complex intellectual life were expressed in one single law and by one word, "Causality" would claim the highest title to such royal distinction. It is, perhaps, not too much to say, that in some form or manifestation the law of causality reveals itself in every intellectual operation. It is, however, with its primitive or fundamental character that we are at present most deeply concerned. In that primitive character it asserts the personality, and consequent spirituality, of the ego. "The ever-changing phenomena that each one is conscious of so necessarily

presupposes an unchanging ego or self to sustain and connect them, that one cannot, even when one tries the experiment, conceive them appearing and the transcendent ego not existing." (Fraser's *Berkely*, p. xii.) At the same time, the relative or dependent character of the ego is declared, and upon the same high authority. In the presence of the relatively true, beautiful, and good, and of its own personality, it asserts the existence of an absolute Being and Personality, the final and uniting ground of all truth, and consequently of all dependent forms of existence or being—

"Whose kingdom is where time and space are not."

In this primitive and spontaneous utterance of our intellectual life the great mass of humanity always remains. Strangers to reflection they are equally strangers to doubt, and are put to confusion with the endless logomachy of the schools. In the language of Cousin, here is a "primitive affirmation which implies no negation. . . . Reflection is the theatre of the combat which reason engages in with itself, with doubt, sophism, and error. But above reflection is a sphere of light and peace, where reason perceives truth without returning on itself, for the sole reason that truth is truth, and because God has made the reason to perceive it, as He has made the eye to see and the ear to hear." Here in the deep recesses of the soul man communes with that other Ego of whom we are each the image, and we know Him as

"Life continuous, Being unimpaired;  
That hath been, is, and where it was and is  
There shall endure,—existence unexposed  
To the blind walk of mortal accident;  
From diminution safe, and weakening age."

In these depths, untrodden by the senses, consecrated only to the service of reason and the moral life, are laid the foundations of all that can with any warrant be called science. Observation, methods of experiment, the whole history of speculative thought, have but confirmed these fundamental utterances; in every instance, it may be, enlarging the field of knowledge, but never making more extended the realm of truth, and always confirming our faith in those rational principles that so project all our thought into the unseen. Truth—science—is found, not made.

Reflection—study—is then the fruit of the forbidden tree? Let Tennyson answer:—

You say, but with no touch of scorn,  
Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-blue eyes  
Are tender over drowning flies,  
You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.

I know not: one indeed I knew  
In many a subtle question versed,  
Who touched a jarring lyre at first,  
But ever strove to make it true:

Perplexed in faith, but pure in deeds,  
At last he beat his music out.  
There lives more faith in honest doubt,  
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gathered strength,  
He would not make his judgment blind,  
He faced the spectres of the mind  
And laid them: thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own;  
And Power was with him in the night,  
Which makes the darkness and the light,  
And dwells not in the light alone,

But in the darkness and the cloud,  
As over Sinai's peaks of old,  
While Israel made their gods of gold,  
Altho' the trumpet blew so loud.

—*In Memoriam*, Canto xcvi.

We thus see that we need intellectual muscle as well as physical, for there will as assuredly be days of struggle and conflict in the mental as in the material phases of life. But doubt, for the mere purpose of encouraging and engendering scepticism, is something quite different from that which merely suspends the judgment until the evidence on all sides has been duly considered. The last is both eminently philosophical and scriptural.

What, then, is the nature of faith, and what its province in relation to knowledge?

We will endeavor to answer the two questions together. Our view could, however, be readily inferred from preceding statements. I have always thought it somewhat anomalous that works on mental philosophy give little or no place to a consideration of the faith faculty. It is surely entitled to a discussion equally with, if not more than, some others, because of its dis-

inctive characteristics and its far-reaching consequences. In works on theology it has been given undue prominence, and too frequently made to do service where a little philosophy would not have lessened the value of theology as a science, although a death-blow might thus be struck to the advocacy of some special creed. It has thus come to pass that professional theologians have too little regard for the claims of a sound philosophy, while professional philosophers are equally culpable in ostracising faith. They are fellow-workers, and again we say, what God hath joined together let no man put asunder.

How beautifully has Wordsworth expressed the inner and united working of faith and reason:—

“I have seen

A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract  
Of inland ground, applying to his ear  
The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell;  
To which, in silence hushed, his very soul  
Listened intensely; and his countenance soon  
Brightened with joy; for from within were heard  
Murmurings, whereby the monitor expressed  
Mysterious union with its native sea.  
Even such a shell the universe itself  
Is to the ear of Faith; and there are times,  
I doubt not, when to you it doth impart  
Authentic tidings of invisible things;  
Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power;  
And central peace, subsisting at the heart  
Of endless agitation. . . .

This is the genuine course, the aim and end  
Of prescient reason; all conclusions else  
Are abject, vain, presumptuous, and perverse.”

It has always appeared to me as a fundamental error in the Kantian philosophy, that rational laws can do efficient service and enlarge the field of knowledge only where such laws may be made sensuous. It is at this point that subjective Idealism finds one of its strongholds in a philosophical system that has in it so many elements of perpetuity. It is also one of the beaten highways upon which Rationalism has driven, to the great detriment of theoretical and practical Christianity. The laws of reason—in other words, the fundamental principles of science—all take hold upon the unseen, and the logical outcome of each and all should be the union of faith and reason in the highest type of man, the reverent and adoring Christian.

There are three grades of scientific knowledge—the empirical, the rational or noetic, and the theological. The first enquires after the fact, and errs (1) when the fact is taken as a finality declarative and confirmatory of nothing beyond itself, or (2) when it resolves every fact into mere mechanical and physical forces.

The second deals with mathematics and the philosophical sciences generally. Here the enquiry is for law, principles universal and absolute. Its error is two-fold—(1) In giving existence to principles independent of some concrete reality, and (2) In mistaking what that reality is in which these principles finally centre.

In theology we stand face to face with the finality in all thought and investigation. This is the highest stage and culmination of knowledge. "The three grades are habitually designated as science, philoso-

phy, and theology, implying that the two latter are not science. There is a mighty power in words. And it is an unworthy artifice for the students of physical science to appropriate to their own branch of study the name science and to themselves the name scientists." "Knowledge in each of the three grades is science in the true sense of the word, and the exclusive appropriation of the word to empirical science is unjustifiable."—*Harris' Basis of Theism*.

We ought all to be familiar with the following statement from Aristotle: "There are three genera of the speculative sciences—the physical or natural, the mathematical, and the theological. . . . Of these sciences that one which is mentioned last of the three possesses the greatest amount of excellence, for it is conversant about that one amongst entities which is more entitled to respect than the rest. Each science, however, is termed more excellent, and more inferior, according to its appropriate object of scientific knowledge."—*Met., Bk. X., Cap. VII.*

It is a sad reflection upon the degeneracy and materialistic tendencies of our times when that which to a heathen Greek was the highest of all the sciences is now declared unworthy of the name, and must, forsooth, be but the *creed* of effeminate superstition. The true position is: Facts rests upon laws; laws are revealed to us through and by the operations of reason; these laws, these truths—

"Deathless flowers from Paradise transplanted"—



are discovered, not made, and they thus reveal themselves as the workings of an infinitely perfect, and in some way all-comprehending intelligence, called God. He is the ultimate cause of all intellectual, moral and spiritual phenomena, and these are a more sufficient basis for affirming *His* existence than physical phenomena are for that of *material* existence.

And so Plato says: "At the extreme limits of the intellectual world is the idea of the good, which is perceived with difficulty, but, in fine, cannot be perceived without concluding that it is the source of all that is beautiful and good; that in the visible world it produces light, and the star whence the light directly comes; that in the invisible world it directly produces truth and intelligence." Bacon says: "It is most wise soberly to render unto faith the things that are faith's." Here, as elsewhere, faith comes to supplement knowledge, when knowledge herself confesses that her own resources are exhausted, and that such aid is indispensable, and, let us add, perfectly rational. Without God as the finality, science is meaningless, philosophy is impossible, and knowledge vanishes as a dream. Deny to faith its right to supplement and complete knowledge, when reason transcends experience and carries us unerringly into the realm of the supersensible, and intellectual chaos is the result. All science thus rests upon faith, and all go to school to theology, carrying with them the hard questions and unsolved problems that, in the nature of things, could elsewhere find no solution.



What then is the province of faith ?

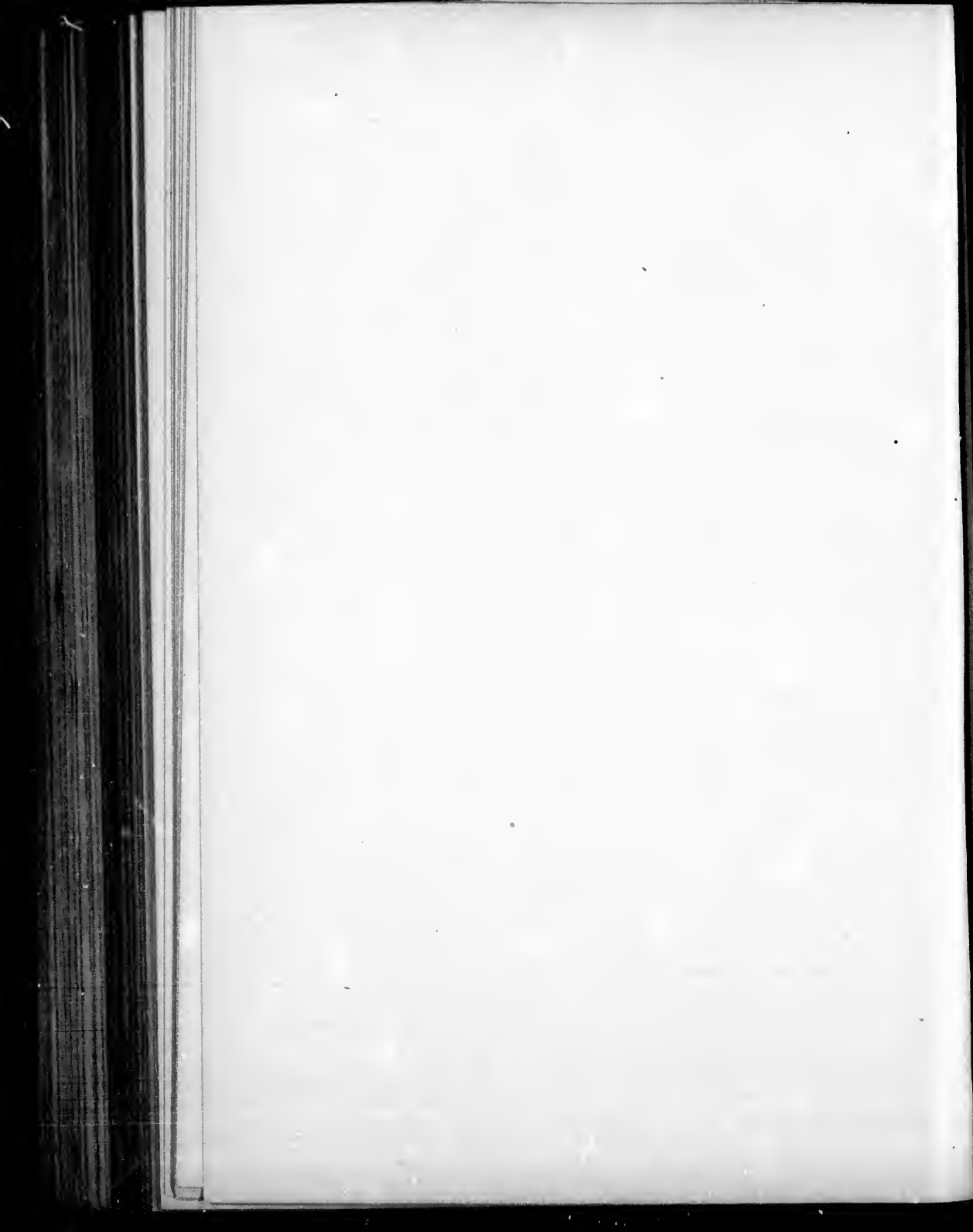
It affords an absolute and rational certainty of that to which no sensuous experience can attain. It teaches us that while faith is more extensive than knowledge, it is at the same time the basis of knowledge, and that the two are inseparably associated. It asserts the existence of God, without fully declaring all which that existence involves.

“ Not in entire forgetfulness,  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home.”

It carries the key that alone can open the portal leading to the solution of all mysteries and the dissipation of all error. It is “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” It is reason giving assent to its own utterances, reaching far beyond the sphere of the bodily senses. It is reason looking from the standpoint of the wreck and ruin of the present, and, like

“ The rainbow smiling on the faded storm,”

is prophetic of hushed tempests and cloudless skies.



# Christ, the Light of the World:

A SERMON DELIVERED BEFORE THE THEOLOGICAL UNION OF  
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY, MAY 8TH, 1887.

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BY THE

REV. J. COOPER ANTLIFF, D.D.



## Sermon.

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# CHRIST, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

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"Then spake Jesus again to them, saying, I am the light of the world."—JOHN viii. 12.

It has been said by Tholuck, that "Christ everywhere derived the similitudes which He employed from something which met His eyes." Though this statement may be too general, yet it is evident that usually our Lord's metaphors were taken from objects just before Him, or from incidents that were transpiring or had recently transpired in His presence. Thus we find that it was shortly after a great multitude had been miraculously fed with five barley loaves and two fishes that Jesus said, "I am the bread of life;" and it was at the close of the Feast of Tabernacles, during which the priests had daily ascended Mount Zion with water in the sacred vessels from the stream of Siloam, which they poured amidst great rejoicings upon the great altar, that Jesus cried, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." The remarkable metaphor employed by our Lord in the passage now

selected as the basis of our meditations was doubtless suggested by something immediately before the eyes of Himself and His hearers, though there is some difference of opinion as to what this something was. Some maintain that as the words were spoken on the last great day of the feast, and in that part of the temple called the treasury, the reference is to the two huge candelabra which stood in this apartment, which were fifty cubits high and richly gilt, and which were surmounted by immense lamps that during the Feast of Tabernacles were lighted, and which illumined the temple and indeed the whole city with their brilliant light. Pointing to these candelabra, whose light was meant to remind the people of the shining pillar of fire, which led their fathers through the wilderness, our Lord declared, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." But others hold the opinion that as our Lord spoke these words early in the morning, when the rising sun was scattering the mists and filling the city and temple with effulgence, which was brilliantly reflected by the golden ornaments of the temple, the reference is to the orb of day, and that there is special beauty in the metaphor when it is remembered that ancient prophecy declared, "Unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings." So far as the words themselves are concerned, the reference might be to either the golden lamps or to the golden sun, or indeed to both; but as the sun is the more majestic, and

perhaps significant figure, we prefer to suppose that our Lord had special reference to this when He declared, "I am the light of the world."

Let us then proceed to consider this august and comprehensive declaration, which, in passing, we may remark, gives incidental confirmation to the doctrine of our Lord's divinity; for apart from this doctrine it will be hard to reconcile it with the statement made on another occasion—"I am meek and lowly of heart;" but when we accept the doctrine that Christ was God as well as man, the two declarations are at once in harmony, as setting forth the two sides of His mysterious nature and person. In our text we are taught the great truth that Christ is the source of light to the moral and spiritual world; or in other words, the doctrine is set forth, that what the sun is to the physical world Christ is to the spiritual world.

Now, light very aptly is employed as an emblem of knowledge, of safety, and of joy, and we shall therefore endeavor to prove and illustrate—

I. THAT CHRIST IS THE GIVER OF KNOWLEDGE.

II. THAT HE IS THE AUTHOR OF SAFETY.

III. THAT HE IS THE SOURCE OF JOY.

I. We remark that Christ is the giver of knowledge.

In all nations light is employed as an emblem of knowledge and truth, while darkness is employed to represent ignorance and error; so that as the physical world is in darkness without the sun, the spiritual world is in darkness without Christ; for "that which doth make manifest is light." A very brief considera-

tion of the condition of men, apart from the revelation that Christ has imparted, will show how ignorant even the most learned men were about the most important matters that concern our race. While in the region of literary and intellectual scholarship they attained the very summit of excellence, in the region of the moral and spiritual they were

“Puzzled with mazes and perplexed with errors.”

Their need of a teacher from God becomes the more evident as we contemplate the disparity between their proficiency in worldly wisdom and their deficiency in heavenly wisdom: which shows that there is no necessary connection between science and sanctity, and genius and grace. And it may not be amiss to call attention, in passing, to the fact that in this nineteenth century the men who rank highest in science and art are not on that account to be regarded as oracles when they speak about morals and religion. Think of the marvellous attainments of those who lived before Christ, in literature, art and science, and then notice how foolish were their conceptions concerning divine and spiritual things. While illustrations might be drawn from Assyria, Egypt, and other famous lands of antiquity, we will look only at Greece, where intellect seemed to bear its richest fruitage. What do we find? In poetry, the dramas of Æschylus, Euripides and Sophocles, the comedies of Aristophanes, the lyrics of Sappho, the epics of Homer, are still read as models of strength and beauty. In eloquence, Demosthenes and



Æschines still captivate admiring students. In philosophy, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle rank as great schoolmasters of the world. In mathematics, the writings of Euclid are studied to-day in our highest seats of learning. In painting, Zeuxis and Parrhasius represent the highest style of art. In sculpture, the names of Phidias, Apelles and Praxiteles are household words; while in architecture, the names of some of the principal styles, as the Ionic, the Doric, and Corinthian, tell us how much we are still indebted to that classic land. But when we turn from these branches of mere human knowledge to those that concern man as a moral and spiritual being, we find ourselves taken out of warmth and sunshine into coldness and darkness that, like that of the Egyptian plague, may be felt: for "darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people." It seems as if the Almighty permitted the greatest and grandest spirits the heathen world produced to fall into mistake and error, to show how utterly impotent human reason is to discover spiritual truth. This is seen—

1. In their conception of God. St. Paul, speaking on this subject, asks: "Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? For in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God" (1 Cor. i. 20, 21). And again the same apostle writes: "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things,

. . . and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator" (Rom. i. 22, 23, 25). The philosophers in some instances confounded God and nature, and in others set forth the Divine Being as an absolute and infinite Being, but without consciousness or without any interest in human affairs. In the classic poems, which enshrined the popular belief, the gods and goddesses were represented as guilty of flagrant sins. Contrast this with Christ's teaching, who declared, "No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." Christ is the revealer, the illuminator, of God; for as St. John declares, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." Christ meets man's yearning to see God, and the revelation is found both in the words and works of Christ. In the discourses of our Lord we find the spirituality of God and His tender compassion for men prominently declared. What a flood of light is poured on the nature and character of God in the Sermon on the Mount and our Lord's conversation with the woman of Samaria! But especially in Christ's works do we see the manifestation of God. We there see infinite power exerted to heal and comfort; Divine love is seen pouring itself upon the outcast and neglected; the tones of His voice are tremulous with heavenly pity, and the other attributes of God also manifest themselves in His gracious yet righteous dealings with men. He is the image of the invisible God. In Him we see, so to speak, God

translated into the common language of men, that He may be apprehended and appropriated. Just as the treasures locked up in an unknown tongue cannot be known until some scholar shall give a translation, so until God is incarnated we cannot see and know Him ; hence God became man, and in Christ's human life we learn what are God's thoughts and purposes concerning us. As Tennyson truly says :

“ Though truths in manhood darkly join,  
 Deep-seated in our mystic frame,  
 We yield all blessing to the name  
 Of Him that made them current coin ;

For Wisdom dealt with mortal powers,  
 Where truth in closest words shall fail,  
 When truth embodied in a tale  
 Shall enter in at lowly doors.

And so the Word had breath, and wrought  
 With human hands the creed of creeds  
 In loveliness of perfect deeds,  
 More strong than all poetic thought.”

In the epistle to the Hebrews a beautiful expression is employed to signify the body of Christ—the *veil* ; and such it was indeed. Man could not gaze on Deity without some intervening curtain, for the dazzling brightness would have blinded him ; and consequently Christ comes to us to show the Father, but with the brightness of the Godhead toned down and attempered to our vision by the incarnation. In reference, then, to the nature and character of God we understand more than the ancients ; not because our understanding

is stronger or our intuition clearer, but because we have the clear light of Christ's teachings, which illumines the subject as the orb of day in his full shining lights up and beautifies the otherwise dark and distant landscape.

2. Let us now contemplate the revelation Christ gives us concerning man; and that in reference, first to human duty, and then to human destiny.

(1) In the region of morals. One of the greatest of the sages of antiquity is said to have remarked, "We need a teacher from God." When we contemplate the moral character and teachings of the best men who were devoid of Christ's light, we shall discover how different were their conceptions of right and obligation to those now accepted as the purest and best. Moral qualities we esteem were in some cases unknown to them, and in other instances vices were exalted into the place of virtues. As instances of the former, *humility*, *humanity* and *virtue* may be mentioned. Every student of language knows these words had a meaning attached to them by the ancients very different to their present signification; for it is a noteworthy fact that Christianity had either to invent new terms or else employ old ones in a new sense. Max Müller says, "The very word 'humanity' was unknown before Christianity." As instances of vices being exalted into the position of virtues we may instance *revenge*, which that great philosopher Aristotle praises as a noble thing. *Pride* was counted as an honorable trait of character. *Suicide* was defended and even

practised by men ranking as most distinguished moral teachers. A striking feature of the ethics of the most cultured nations is that morality in its higher forms, as it is conceived by the best of the philosophers, was never considered as for the people at large, but only for the few; or to use a phrase now current—morality was for the classes and not for the masses. The universality of a high and noble morality appears never to have been entertained as a feasible or even desirable thing. The profoundest thinkers were most sadly conscious of the incompetence of their teachings to exalt the degraded and sinful populace; and a wail of despair like a sad undertone runs through their philosophisings. Ultimately, as their history proves, the classic nations of antiquity were overwhelmed and destroyed by the flood of their moral corruptions; for in vain did their moralists exhort to justice and goodness when their system told of no high and adequate sanction to enforce the duties they set forth. Coleridge truly likened the light of ancient philosophy to that of the lantern-fly of the tropics moving in luminous specks on the face of the night—mere gleams and points, of no avail in the gloom around. When, however, we turn to the Divine teachings of our Lord we are at once in broad sunlight. Here we find the profoundest ethical needs of man satisfied; here beautiful theory is conjoined with holy practice, and Christ stands forth before the nations, after being gazed upon for eighteen hundred years, as the Teacher of whom all say, "Never man spake as this man," and of whose

moral character the record is still true, "We find no fault in Him." Those who reject Christianity are compelled to do homage at the shrine of Jesus of Nazareth, and, as is well known, some of the most glowing tributes to the matchless teachings of our Lord are from sceptics. Let us hear the testimony of one or two of them. Rousseau breaks out into the following impassioned language when contemplating Christ: "What sweetness, what purity in His manner! What an affecting gracefulness in His delivery! What sublimity in His maxims! What profound wisdom in His discourses! What presence of mind, what subtilty, what truth in His replies! How great His command over His passions! Where is the man—where the philosopher who could so live and so die without weakness and without ostentation? Where could Jesus learn, among His competitors, that pure and sublime morality, of which He only hath given both precept and example?"

In the posthumous essays of John Stuart Mill we have the following glowing eulogy of Christ as a moralist: "About the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality combined with profundity of insight, which if we abandon the idle expectation of scientific precision, when something very different was aimed at, must place the prophet of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in His inspiration, in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this pre-eminent genius is combined with



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the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer and martyr to that mission who ever existed upon earth, religion cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching on this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity; nor even now would it be easy even for an unbeliever to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract to the concrete than to endeavor to live so that Christ would approve our life."

Renan says: "Jesus is the highest of the pillars that show to man whence he comes and whither he ought to tend. In Him is condensed all that is good and exalted in our nature."

In this connection also it is worth remarking that Auguste Comte, the high-priest and arch-apostle of that strange system called Positivism, is said by John Stuart Mill to have found his favorite study in Thomas à Kempis' "*De Imitatione Christi*."

The system of morals Christ taught stands without a compeer or even a rival, and the world is more attentively listening to His words of grace and wisdom as the centuries pass along.

(2) Let us pass on to glance at the light Christ has cast on the problem of human destiny.

St. Paul states that "Our Saviour Jesus Christ has abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." Here again a comparison of the opinions of the most cultured of the heathen with the revelation afforded us by Christ will at once disclose the superiority of Christian doctrine. One

school of philosophers gave no hope of a future existence, another taught that the soul is material and mortal, and even amongst those teachers who seemed to have the clearest insight into the future there is vacillation and uncertainty. Turning to the popular theology as found in the poets, we find little to disarm death of its terrors. Read the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*, which contains the account of the visit of Ulysses to the regions of departed spirits, and how sad and chilling are the descriptions of the abode, the condition and the employments of the departed! Then turn to our Saviour's words in the fourteenth chapter of John's Gospel. What certainty, what warmth, what blessedness are enshrined in those inspiring and hope-giving words! These words have softened the pillows of myriads of dying saints, and enkindled triumphant hope in the bosoms of the stricken and bereaved. Yes, Christ draws aside the veil that hides the future from our eager eyes, and discloses entrancing visions of immortality for the good, and visions of remorse and pain for the finally impenitent. Apart from the clear and certain teachings of our Lord, the words are true—

“ And what am I ?  
An infant crying in the night,  
An infant crying for the light,  
And with no language but a cry.”

But with the teachings of Christ falling on the mystery of the future life, we find the darkness dissipated; “for we know that if our earthly house of this taber-



nacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. v. 1).

In meditating on Christ's teachings concerning these subjects, do we not feel that the claim He makes in our text is fully justified by the facts, and that He is indeed the light of the world? Let us walk in this light; and while some shut themselves in the blackness of sheer unbelief, and others grope in the twilight of agnosticism, be it ours to open all the windows of intellect and heart to the sunlight of the sure word of Christ's teaching.

But light is also an emblem of safety, and we proceed to observe—

## II. That Christ is the author of safety.

Darkness is a fitting symbol of danger and insecurity; hence we read: "The path of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble." A child seems instinctively to fear when alone in darkness. This state of trepidation, of fear, of insecurity, well sets forth the condition of men apart from Christ. Men naturally entertain a dread of God so long as He is unknown. The imagination pictures Him as mighty and terrible, as the Greek conceived Jupiter holding thunderbolts in his red right hand; and to the modern heathen, God is a dreadful king of furies, delighting in the cries of sacrificial victims. But, besides the element of ignorance, there is another potent ingredient that adds to man's sense of danger, and that is the consciousness of sin. Wherever un-

forgiven sin exists, the intuition we have of righteousness, together with the upbraidings of conscience, will cause alarm. The history of men of every age and clime, of every religion and stage of civilization, proves this position. When men begin to think they begin to fear. Now, Christ gives light concerning the mystery of sin and the greater mystery of pardon. From His lips we find no apology for sin; it is not an accident in the history of mankind; it is not merely a misfortune or a negative quality, nor a pardonable frailty, but it is something exceedingly evil. Indeed, only Christ's disciples have any conception of "the exceeding sinfulness of sin." So that Christ does not give security by blinding the eyes to the nature of evil, which is the fashion some would adopt. No; it stands forth in all its repulsive hideousness. It is seen to be an offence in the eyes and nostrils of God, and a curse and burden to man; but Christ shows how it may be pardoned, and how the soul may be cleansed from its guilt. There is a light streaming from the cross on this subject, and hence it is in the doctrine of Christ's atonement that we find a sense of security. We behold "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." We learn that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." When these words enter into the heart troubled with the burning consciousness of guilt; when the weary soul rests on Christ's sacrifice and finds pardon, then the feeling of security springs

up in the heart, the darkness is past, and the glorious light fills the soul. "Through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke i. 78-79). Let a man know—not merely hope, but absolutely know—that he is forgiven, and how safely he walks! He has the spirit of adoption pervading his heart. Both God's providence and God's grace conspire to bless him. With firm foot and a brave heart he walks through this present world. His triumphant song has become: "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalm xxvii. 1.) He can face hardship and trial fearlessly, for he is a son of God and can trust his Father to preserve him; and even in the prospect of death there is no trepidation, for he can exclaim confidently: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

But we further observe that light is an emblem of joy; and we remark—

III. That Christ is the source of joy.

Darkness is the symbol of misery: hence we read of such as "sit in darkness and the shadow of death," and hell is spoken of as "outer darkness." It seems natural for darkness and gloom to depress the spirits

and for light and sunshine to exhilarate, and this is the reason that in Scripture light is so frequently employed to indicate comfort and joy. Hence we read of the "light of God's countenance," and the Psalmist says: "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart: rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous." Consider what is the state of mankind in regard to true joy apart from the Gospel of Christ. The records of history prove that whatever man's outward condition may be, unless there is inward peace and rest his life is one of misery. Let a man have all the world can give him apart from Christ, and his condition is miserable; so it is a true saying that the ancient systems of philosophy had their origin in despair. The incompetence of outward advantages to give joy finds a remarkable illustration in the experience of the Roman Emperor Tiberius, who lived when our Lord uttered our text. As is well known, he retired to a lovely isle in the Ægean Sea that he might the more fully surrender himself to sensual pleasures, and he gave himself up to a life of unrestrained indulgence and luxury. From that enchanting retreat he wrote these bitter words to his servile and corrupted Senate: "What to write, or what not to write, may all the gods and goddesses destroy me worse than I feel they are daily destroying me, if I know" (*Tac. Ann. VI.*); and Pliny speaks of him in these melancholy words: "Tristissimus ut constat hominum"—confessedly the most gloomy of men. The experience of an English nobleman in more recent times, as

famous for his vices as for his genius, affords a further illustration of the utter inability of outward circumstances to give joy to the soul. Contrast the experience of Tiberius in his retreat of pleasures with St. Paul singing in the inner prison at Philippi, while his unwashed wounds were still keenly smarting; and compare Byron's tragic words—

“My days are in the yellow leaf;  
The flowers, the fruit of love, are gone;  
The worm, the canker and the grief  
Are mine alone.  
The fire that on my bosom preys  
Is lone as some volcanic isle,”

with the words of John Wesley, “By the grace of God, I never fret, I repine at nothing, I am discontented with nothing. I see God sitting on His throne and ruling all things well.”

Christ to-day is like a great reservoir from which countless multitudes are drawing unspeakable joy. They rejoice in the Lord: they live a life of the highest type in Him, and gladly confess their dependence on Him for all they hold dearest. And as in the scientific world it is an accepted doctrine, that all our physical well-being is dependent on the sun, and that death will ensue on our ceasing to appropriate his imparted gifts, so in the realm of the spiritual world Christ is the source of all spiritual life and delights; and following Him who is the light of the world, we do not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.

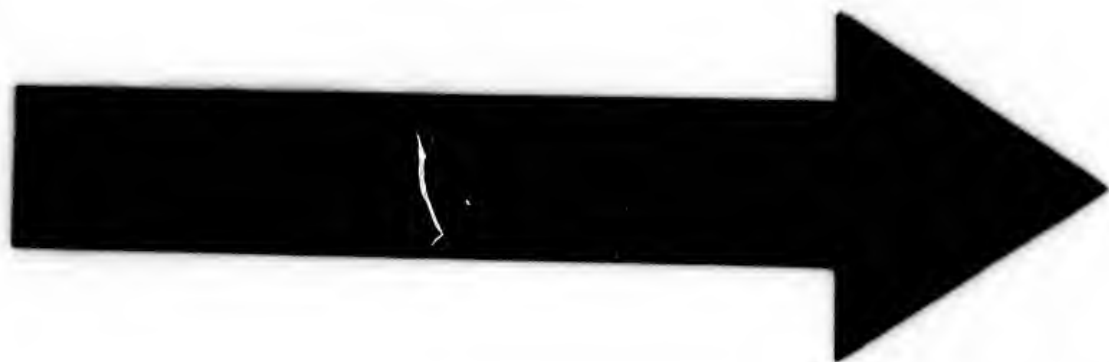
Christ is pre-eminently the Consoler, and the prophet Isaiah emphasizes this in that passage which afforded a text for Jesus in the synagogue of Nazareth, which amongst other words contains these, "He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to comfort them that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness" (Isaiah lxi. 1-3). And this joy is meant for all. Jesus says, "I am the light of the *world*;" not for one country or age, but for all countries and all ages. When men create their lights, whether by gas or electricity or other means, they provide only for themselves and those about them; but when God says, "Let light be," the daylight comes flooding along o'er mountain and valley, o'er ocean and meadow, giving plenitude and splendor to cottage and mansion; and in the same manner Christ, the Sun in the spiritual firmament, sends forth light for prince and peasant, for literate and illiterate, and for young and old. The echoes of His birthday hymn still are melodiously vibrating—"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."

If you would enjoy life, follow Christ: keep your face turned towards Him like that lovely flower, the heliotrope, keeps its face ever turned towards the sun and thus gets sweetness and beauty.

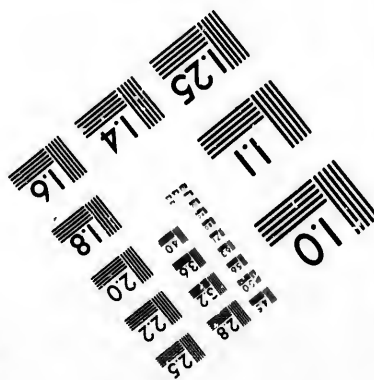
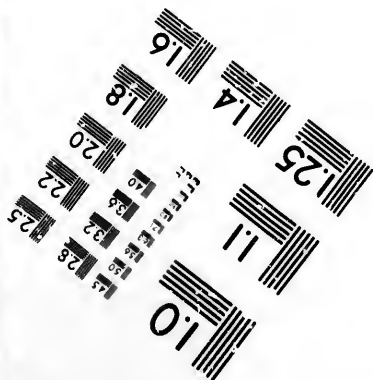
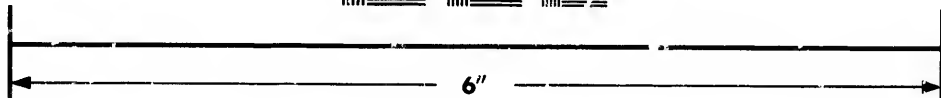
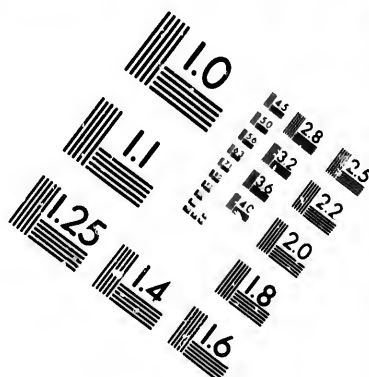
I have the joy this morning of speaking to many whose sacred duty it is to preach this Christ, and I

address others who entertain a holy and burning desire to have their life consecrated to this loved employ. I hail you, my brethren in the ministry, as sharers in the most delightful work in which a man can engage. We are stars in the right hand of our Master. Our light is borrowed from Him. We are called to reflect its effulgence, and as we go hither and thither holding forth the Word of Life, we might appropriately adopt as our motto the words engraved on a famous lighthouse on the English coast—"To give light to save life." Let us be careful to let the light shine fully on ignorant, endangered and miserable men. They need what we can give; they do not need literary essays nor philosophical disquisitions when they look up to us as we stand in our pulpits. Men are panting for the true light, and the cry of dying men is like the last words of Goethe, "More light." The gospel of Christ has not lost its power, and cannot be dispensed with in this age of scientific knowledge and invention. The most popular books to-day are those which tell the story of the life of Christ. The story of His life, His death, His teachings, has still a fascinating charm, and, as it has been truly said, "While man sins and suffers, while there is blood-tinged sweat upon his brow, while there is weeping in his home and anguish in his heart, that voice can never lose its music which brings forth the comfort and inspiration of the gospel, which tells the sin-tormented spirit the tale of the Infinite pity, and bids









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it lay its sobbing wretchedness on the bosom of the Infinite love."

Finally, let me remind you all that shortly we shall go hence. But whither? If we have accepted the Divine Saviour we shall go to dwell in heaven, where the glowing prophecy shall have its perfect fulfilment: "The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be to thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." We shall pass out of the shadows into the city of which "God and the Lamb are the light thereof."



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Kearns, D.	Wright, Robert W.
Kettlewell, William.	Young, George, D.D.

## GUELPH CONFERENCE BRANCH.

Ayers, Walter.	Cornish, George H.
Baugh, William.	Crane, Isaac.
Bielby, William M.	Cunningham, A.
Bowers, A. A., B.A.	Davy, R.
Broley, James.	Edmunds, S. C., B.D.
Buggin, George.	Edwards, Samuel H.
Burwash, N.	Fisher, John S.
Campbell, Thomas M.	Fydel, Thomas R.
Casson, Wesley.	Galloway, J.
Chown, E. A., B.D.	Gilpin, John W.
Colling, Joseph S.	Griffin, W. S., D.D.

Hall, Robert H.  
 Hannon, James.  
 Hartley, George.  
 Harris, James.  
 Henders, R. C.  
 Henderson, William C., M.A.  
 Holmes, Joseph W.  
 Hough, J. G.  
 Howell, Jacob E., M.A.  
 Isaac, John R.  
 Kenner, John.  
 Leach, J. J.  
 McAlister, J.  
 McCullough, Andrew M.  
 McDowell, David C.  
 McLachlan, James, B.A.  
 Mills, William.  
 Noble, James J.  
 Nugent, F. E.  
 Ottawell, W.  
 Pepper, John, B.A.  
 Phillips, A. M., B.D.  
 Phillips, Robert.  
 Pomeroy, J. C.  
 Potter, A.

Richardson, George.  
 Robinson, J. W.  
 Rupert, E. S., M.A.  
 Salton, S. T.  
 Sanderson, J. W.  
 Scott, John, M.A.  
 Sellery, Samuel, B.D.  
 Sherlock, Benjamin.  
 Shilton, J. W., B.A.  
 Smith, A. E.  
 Smith, John T.  
 Smythe, W.  
 Sparling, Philip.  
 Sparling, W. W.  
 Snowdon, T. G.  
 Stafford, Charles E.  
 Swann, Frank.  
 Teskey, Ebenezer.  
 Thibadeau, A.  
 Tonge, A. W.  
 Turk, George R.  
 \*Turner, John.  
 Walker, J.  
 Webster, John.  
 Williams, R. W.

## TORONTO CONFERENCE BRANCH.

Addison, Peter.  
 Barkwell, J. H., B.A.  
 Barkwell, W. J., B.A.  
 Barrass, Edward, M.A.  
 Bedford, John.  
 Benson, Manly.  
 Bishop, G. J.  
 Blackstock, W. S.  
 Briggs, William, D.D.  
 Brown, George.  
 Brown, G. M.  
 Brown, W. P.  
 Burns, R. N., B.A.  
 Cannom, G. W.  
 Clarke, R.  
 Cochran, George, D.D., F.T.L.  
 Conron, M. B.  
 Chapman, J. A., M.A.  
 Courtice, A. C., B.D.  
 Cullen, Thomas.

Dewart, E. H., D.D., F.T.L.  
 Eby, C. S., D.D., F.T.L.  
 Galbraith, W., B.A.  
 German, John F., M.A.  
 Goodman, John.  
 Gray, James.  
 Griffith, Thomas, M.A.  
 Hare, J. J., M.A.  
 Harper, E. B., D.D.  
 Harper, H.  
 Harris, J.  
 Hewitt, G. A., B.A.  
 Hicks, W. T.  
 Hill, L. W., B.A.  
 Hill, Newton.  
 Hunt, John.  
 Idle, D.  
 Jeffery, Thomas W.  
 Johnston, Hugh, B.D.  
 Jolliffe, T. W.

\* Deceased.

Langford, Charles.  
 Large, J. W.  
 Liddy, James.  
 Locke, J. H.  
 Longley, B., M.A.  
 Madden, W. W.  
 Manning, H. M., B.A.  
 Matthews, H. S.  
 McClung, J. A.  
 McDonald, D., M.D., F.T.L.  
 Meacham, G. M., D.D., F.T.L.  
 Metcalfe, J. F.  
 Philp, S. C., Jr.  
 Pirritte, William.  
 Redditt, J. J.  
 Reid, Thomas R.  
 Richard, A.  
 Roberts, E.  
 Rothwell, W.  
 Shorey, Sidney J.

Simpson, C. A.  
 Simpson, G. M.  
 Sing, Samuel.  
 Stafford, E. A., LL.B., F.T.L.  
 Stewart, J. W.  
 Sutherland, Alex., D.D., F.T.L.  
 Thom, James.  
 Thompson, G.  
 Van Wyck, J. A., B.A.  
 Vickery, John.  
 Washington, George, M.A.  
 Washington, William C.  
 Wass, J. B., M.A.  
 Webber, G.  
 Whittington, R., M.A.  
 Wilkinson, J. M., B.A.  
 Williams, Thomas.  
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 Baker, E. N., B.A.  
 Balfour, D.  
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 Bell, J. B.  
 Buchanan, Wm.  
 Burns, Wm.  
 Burwash, N., S.T.D., F.T.L.  
 Campbell, A.  
 Campbell, A. R.  
 Clarkson, J. B.  
 Copeland, G. H.  
 Courtice, R. T.  
 Curts, James.  
 Drew, N. D.  
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 Edmison, Thomas J., B.D.  
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Eves, Edward.  
 Howard, E. E.  
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 Johnston, William.  
 Jolliffe, William.  
 Lambly, O. R., M.A.  
 Leach, J. J.  
 Leitch, Robert H.  
 Lewis, E. D.  
 Mallett, R.  
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 McAuley, S.  
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 McFarlane, James.  
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Roger, Allin.  
 Scott, William L.  
 Taylor, R.  
 Thomas, Henry.  
 Tomblin, William.  
 Tovell, I.  
 Tozeland, James.  
 Tucker, W. B.  
 Wallace, F. H., B.D.

Watch, C. W.  
 Williams, Daniel.  
 Williams, Wm.  
 Wilson, A. C., F.T.L.  
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 Young, William J.  
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 Beynon, T. B., B.A.  
 Bridgman, W. W.  
 Chisholm, J.  
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 Crichton, Charles.  
 Dyer, W. T.  
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Hames, A. B.  
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 Kenner, Henry.  
 Lawson, Thomas.  
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Sparling, J. W., M.A., B.D.  
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Johnston, G. F.  
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REV. S. S. NELLES, D.D., LL.D.	Cobourg.
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REV. WILLIAM TIMBERLAKE	Aylmer East.
REV. ALEX. G. HARRIS	Leamington.
REV. A. C. WILSON	Oakwood.

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Rev. J. R. Isaac.  
 Rev. J. H. Robinson.  
 Rev. Thomas Cobb.  
 Rev. S. D. Chown.  
 Rev. James Watson.

*First Year.*

Rev. William Knox.  
 Rev. W. H. Gane.  
 Rev. A. Whiteside.  
 Rev. C. Teeter.  
 Rev. A. E. Smith.  
 Rev. John Weir.

\* Deceased.

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT, 1886-87.

*Receipts.*

Balance in hand as per last account.....	\$330 05
London Conference Branch .....	23 50
Niagara Conference Branch .....	21 50
Guelph Conference Branch .....	32 00
Toronto Conference Branch .....	20 00
Bay of Quinte Conference Branch .....	19 00
Montreal Conference Branch .....	13 00
Manitoba Conference Branch .....No returns. ....	.....
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$459 05</b>

*Expenditure.*

Book Room Account, 1885-86 .....	\$161 76
Rev. E. B. Harper, Expenses as Preacher, 1886 ..	12 40
Secretary-Treasurer, Expenses at Annual Meeting	6 77
Postal and Express Charges and Telegrams .....	1 40
	<b>\$182 33</b>
Balance on hand .....	276 72
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$459 05</b>

*Liabilities.*

Book Room Account, 1886-87 .....	\$277 18
Secretary-Treasurer, Expenses at Annual Meeting	13 75
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$290 93</b>
Balance of Liabilities over Assets .....	\$14 21

N.B.—The privileges of membership are conditioned upon enrolment, and the payment of an annual fee of \$1. All who pay the membership fee are entitled to a copy of the "Annual Lecture and Sermon" and the "Lectures on Preaching." Annual Fees paid in the "Jackson" and "Douglas" Societies are accepted in lieu of the Annual Fee of the "Union," and entitle the members to all the privileges of membership.

### COURSE OF READING FOR FELLOW IN THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE (F.T.L.).

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The Course of Reading is to extend over three years and to consist of Biblical, Historical, Doctrinal, or Apologetic studies. The character of the Course shall be optional, *i.e.*, the subjects or branches of study may be selected by each one reading; *Provided*, that two subjects shall be read for each year, one to be selected at the beginning of the Course and continued throughout, and the other varied from year to year. The thoroughness of the reading will be tested by a thesis on each subject, of a minimum length of at least twelve octavo pages of 250 words each, to be assigned by the first of February and forwarded by the first of April to the Examiners; a written report of the examination of the thesis to be in the hands of the Secretary by the first of May, who shall report results to the candidates. All persons reading must send application for subject of thesis to the Secretary by the first of January, stating the year in which they are reading, the Course subject, the option selected, and the books read. Each subject should be studied in at least two authors, from a comparison of which an independent opinion may be formed; and a student must put in at least one thesis each year until the Course is completed.

## COURSE OF STUDY.

## FIRST YEAR.

1. *Biblical Study* — St. John's Gospel. Aids: Godet, Meyer, Moulton, and Milligan.

2. *Historical Study*.—The Christian Church to the close of the Council of Nice. Text-books: Neander and Schaff.

3. *Doctrinal Study*.—The Atonement. Text-books: Crawford, Randles, Miley.

4. *Apologetic Study*.—Natural Theology. Text-books: Flint's Theism and Anti-Theistic Theories, Diman's Theistic Argument, and Janet's Final Causes.

## SECOND YEAR.

1. *Biblical Study*.—The Epistle to the Romans. Aids: Godet, Meyer, and Beet.

2. *Historical Study*.—The English Reformation. Text-books: Burnet, D'Aubigne, and Hardwicke.

3. *Doctrinal Study*.—The Trinity. Text-books: Bull's Defence of the Nicene Faith, Dorner's Person of Christ.

4. *Apologetic Study*.—The Canon of the New Testament. Text-books: Westcott, Briggs' Biblical Study, Sanday's Gospels in the Second Century.

## THIRD YEAR.

1. *Biblical Study*.—Isaiah. Aids: Cheyne and Lange.

2. *Historical Study*.—American Church History. Text-books: Stevens' and Bangs' American Methodism, Punchard's Congregationalism.

3. *Doctrinal Study*.—The Future Life. Text-books: Beecher's History of the Doctrine, Randles, Shaw's Lecture on Eternal Punishment.

4. *Apologetic Study*.—Inspiration. Text-books: Bannermann, Lee, Elliott, Pope's Theology, Vol. I.

