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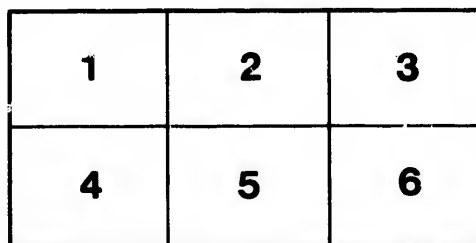
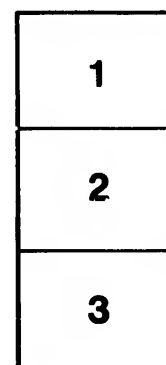
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ADrift IN THE BREAKERS;

OR,

THE PRESENT DANGERS TO RELIGION.

In the last days perilous times shall come.

—II. Tim. 3 : 1.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "MIND IN MATTER."

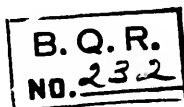
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WILLIAM DRYSDALE & CO., PUBLISHERS.
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PRELIMINARIES.

Some choose to think that the Sacred Scriptures are largely occupied about matters which unfit them for this enlightened age. It is not fully realized that the miracles were wrought and the prophecies uttered to impress the world in its infancy ; and in its maturity ; but especially during the time of susceptible youth through which each generation passes. In divine wisdom the facts were prepared to be interesting when sacred impressions tell with force and leave fixed traces in the mind. To be honored God must be a Hero equal to His greatness. He made a beginning of revelation by claiming the Creation of all things ; circumstances arose which

made it necessary for Him to prove it; which in condescension to human needs He did by displays of omnipresence in every portion of nature. In thinking back how many can recall that the story of Eden and the Antediluvians, of the Deluge, or of Abraham, or Joseph, or Moses, of Samson, of young David, of Elijah, of Jonah, or Daniel, narratives scoffed at by the unreflecting, were those that made lasting impressions and originated their interest in the Bible. One and all, those biographies exalt the highest form of intelligence and cardinal virtue, faith in God. For a race to lose faith in its Creator must be a tremendous crime and an equal calamity; but once lost, without divine demonstrations of some kind, how could there be either faith or religion?

The heroes of the Old Testament will never cease to create an interest for the

male portion of youthful humanity; but as the "sex" is equally important, because the real educators of the race, the Bible wisely adds a human to the religious interest for them also. Their quick capacity for spiritual analogies can add charms to a book like the "Song of Songs," of which the "high critics" have no conception; and the Bible includes the history, not of heroes only, but of heroines; a class with a very distinguished record. Indeed, many of the laws of Moses could be executed vigorously by women only; those relating to the home, as, for example, the annual search for leaven, which necessitated a thorough scrubbing day. Then the refined taste and keen appreciation of beauty possessed by the female mind fitted it to cherish the laws devoted to ceremonial and to priestly adornment; the lesson, the superlative importance of the sacerdotal

office. In the absence of a complete revelation, bones of doctrine were overlaid with integuments, which gave them attractive beauty for the class on whom the nation's religious instruction most depended. Bloodshedding for sin was the prominent fact then as it is still; dignified in the one case by official pomp, in the other by a Divine victim. Repeatedly in the ages men have failed in their public duties, and generally, for a season, to put them to shame, Providence has sent females to the front. That so many brave women have come forward in the present age and made their shrill voices heard is a suggestive fact.

The Book of the Revelation of God is as big as the world, because both have the same Infinite Author. In consequence, every part of nature may serve in turn to illustrate or explain or fortify

some department of the Word of God; which makes information on a most liberal scale requisite in the teachers of Christianity. Except creations of the imagination, there are no real obstacles to belief; keen eyes and ears always on the stretch for the latest results of investigation, have as yet seen or heard nothing to set aside a Bible fact or an article of the faith. New information has brought mistakes of interpretation to light, but that is all. Hostility to Christianity is connected at present chiefly with the supposition that there is no God, because on the other supposition Butler has demonstrated for the ages that no contrariety exists between nature and revelation.¹ But why in a matter of such importance, should there be a wish, the father of the thought, which gainsays either the Divine Exist-

¹ What Bishop Butler calls analogies Prof. Drummond calls natural laws in the spiritual world and throws confusion into the whole subject.

ence or a veritable revelation from the Author of our being?

There are probably few who doubt that, whether acknowledged or not, the severities of the Bible are the disbelievers' corner stone; who, having learned the story of infinite goodness from the Gospels chiefly, now turn the lesson against its Divine Author. These severities have given rise to the "high critic," a generous person who would defend religion, especially by expunging everything distasteful to evildoers from its sacred records. To yield at this point to the critics, as many are now disposed, would be to sacrifice Christianity, and the argumentative necessity is against it, because the Bible record of God is almost a *fac simile* of the one presented by nature, which never smiles so sweetly, so blandly, as just after it has carried devastation far and near by

storms on land and sea. Nature veils its God while it reveals Him, and as conspicuously by judgments as by goodness. This must hold good also of every open revelation. It did so in the demonstrations to Israel; and when the Divine Majesty veiled Itself in a human form it was not to obscure any of Its peculiarities; that life was brought to a finish as the most signal exhibition, not of mercy only, but of judgment, ever made before the universe. And the heralds of salvation hold a commission to foretell not only what is in store for them who "receive Him," but for them also who received Him not. In general it takes two motives to enforce one, because it is human to be impelled by fear as well as hope. Christ came to reveal a danger unseen by men because looming from the eternal world, and to open a way of escape; He therefore in

mercy emphasized the danger to create an appreciation of the remedy. They alone who labour and are heavy laden come and find rest for their souls.

The Bible takes it for granted that until the "fall" our progenitors possessed a sense, ever since lost, related to the Majesty of God in some way as sight is to the glories of the world, revelation being a supernatural effort to restore it; which necessarily required and requires a series of painful operations. The terrible events connected with the Exodus, including the phenomenal manifestations at Sinai, form a not inconsiderable portion of the effort. The results were seen even outside of Israel in the exalted conceptions of God possessed by such men as Job and his interlocutors, whose theology was realistic to an extent that must appear startling to the present generation. Psalmists and prophets were

inspired to follow up the advantage; the object of the "Holy of Holies" also, in which God dwelt on earth again—the mysterious centre of Israel's worship, which none could enter and live except a chosen one, and he but once a year, and not without blood. That the calamities were necessitated by justice as well as economy was not left in doubt, as the most exemplary of them were foretold. Until the Captivity the Jews as a nation never took in an adequate impression of God, but have ever since illustrated how predicted calamities of an overwhelming character bear on revelation. The punitive events of the early world were not fruitless, they fostered civilization and their record supports it yet. To study the two Testaments as one Book and harmonize them is the biggest work still before the Church. The general impression now, which is

doing incalculable harm, seems to be that justice has been engulfed by mercy.

Wrong in many of its forms is denounced by the pulpit of the age with a zeal and directness worthy of all praise; yet this can be done with little advantage to the Gospel, whose aim it is to advance the Kingdom of God by bringing Heaven and earth to a meeting place that God and men may cease from antagonism and be reconciled. Little is now said, especially where the pews are held by money, calculated to awaken a sense of the Divine in impenitent hearts, or to impress the fact that notwithstanding the gospel "God is angry with the wicked every day." Comparing modern sermons with those of former generations there is an absence of effort to impress the Holy Majesty of God, to create a kindred holiness, fitting men to meet Him in peace when they shall see

Him as He is. "Salvation" implies a precondition of inexpressible danger, arising from contrast in character between God and men, expressed by the descriptive word "lost" which in event is destruction "from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power." When the precondition is not felt, as it is not where sin is allowed to suspend the consciousness of itself, a deceptive nominal faith becomes the substitute for reliance on Christ. The gospel, if good news, is so because men are sinners; and the motive which brought pity to the race, its eternally hopeless condition, must be most effective in making men pity themselves. Besides, it is a function of the Christian ministry to keep alive a conscience by fostering in the general mind, "The fear of God, which is the beginning," or starting point, "of wisdom." Strange that the ministerial idols

at present are often those who strain matters to shew that God is not to be feared; a most serious threat for all who have a stake in the world, and chiefly unperceived by those most interested. In 'influential' congregations there always is a tendency more or less to Arianism, or worse, because among the unreflecting portion of such communities the importance of wealth or pride of learning dims the spiritual eye or clouds the reason. Of the two principal matters emphasized by the Bible the magnitude of sin is one, "That sin might appear exceeding sinful," and the most sceptical cannot make it out to be trivial, although basing their reasonings and risking their fate on the supposition.

The story of the rich young man of the gospel and the returned prodigal misunderstood are favorite texts with people determined to remain *in puris*

naturalibus. But the merciful father of the prodigal denotes Him who came "to seek and to save," and who said, "I and the Father are one." In the other case "Making friends of the mammon of unrighteousness" and making God a friend are different things; otherwise God may be bribed with money. When Jesus asked, "Why callest thou Me good, there is none good but One," He put knowledge of His personality to the test. Alone of divinely commissioned teachers Jesus required faith in Himself, "Believest thou that I am able to do this?" and He claimed the 'Kingdom' as His own. When he added "But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments," He simply employed the law as a schoolmaster; for, to bring this self-righteous youth to his senses, He at last probed his besetting sin by the command "Go sell that thou hast," but added,

“come and follow Me,” which is the rule of spiritual life. If Jesus came to teach only, what sense was there in delaying the message for thousands of years? There was a purpose if the object of delay was to reveal the necessity of salvation by revealing the enormity of sin. Christianity is fitted to be the religion of the world because it establishes the rights of men by first re-establishing the rights of God. This is its peculiarity; therefore the Cross of Christ is its master fact. ‘Good men’ there are, who, having a large share of the human element of conscience, which shows itself by a strong sense of human right, have notwithstanding little or no sense of the rights of God. Such people have no mission of a religious nature for the world, and their opinions will be confined forever to the select few.

By taking it for granted that their

auditors always are of the heavenly minded class, kindly souls like old Eli really cast "pearls before swine" by unintentional compliments to the impenitent, and not for their good either here or hereafter, nor for the good of the public. Such a tendency appears to have developed before the close of the Apostolic age, which necessitated the the booklet of Jude, St. Peter's 2nd Epistle, the Epistle of St. James and the Revelation of St. John. On account of contrast in his writings an unperceptive critic divided the Prophet Isaiah into two people ; an even greater contrast is apparent in the writings of St. John. To reimpress the Holy Majesty of God, in danger of obscurity by its heralds, the loving disciple in his last Book employed the very imagery of Isaiah and almost his very words. As happened in the early church, before two centuries

the churches of the Reformers were sinking into spiritual lethargy; in the case of the latter, too, it was from controversy; emphasizing doctrines which indeed constitute the way of life, but neglecting to strengthen the mainspring of religion. When "the voice of conscience, which is the voice of God," is allowed to expire, doctrines become dry bones to be cast aside eventually as useless. Men who in the pulpit joke about "Adam and the apple," have failed to learn the lesson of the Bible, which is that disobedience to God is the crime of crimes and the source of all other crime, a failure which at present is demoralizing the world. Once again celebrated ministers begin to deprecate the doctrines of grace as out of date, and now recommend as a religious diet a Sunday rehash of the discussions of the press. It is because the experiment of applying

remedies posthumously to the lips of 'subjects' of the dissecting room has miserably failed. After years of spiritual decadence and death it will be found necessary to go back to the first things and raise the dead. The efforts made to keep religion alive without the conscience has the appearance of life; by dint of urging and flattery people may be induced to become more generous, but assuredly they are not becoming more upright.

Other days made themselves memorable by giving birth to distinguished philosophers, historians, poets, etc., the present one will always be memorable for its distinguished rogues. The justification of successful rascality is in the air and in the pulpit, begetting strenuous efforts towards effacing a sense of justice from the human mind. Attempts to discredit the Old Testament exist be-

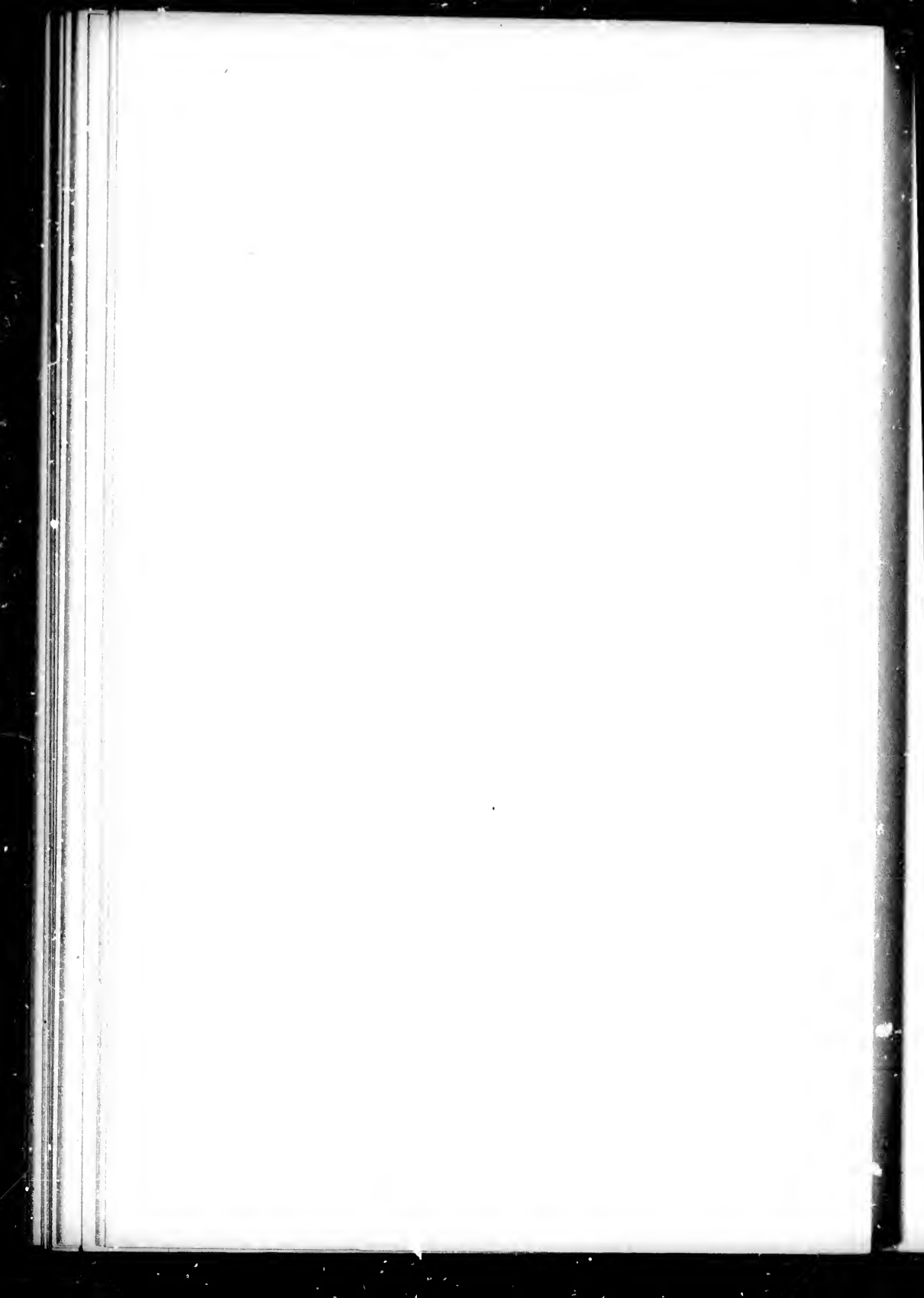
cause every page reveals the patent object of impressing that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

It is impression of the character of divine justice that nourishes a sense of justice in the human conscience. Efface that and man becomes a wild beast, his hand against every man. It is the awful justice in the Atonement, the condition of infinite mercy that gives out in presentation such extraordinary results in the naturally obdurate clients of the Salvation Army. A God without a conscience and who is not the destined judge of all the earth must and cannot but have a following of conscienceless worshippers.

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THE APPARENT DANGERS.



THE APPARENT DANGERS.

EVOLUTION.

“Evolution,” about which so much has been written in the present age, can never become a great danger to religion because at sight opposed to common sense, and very distasteful by connecting men as a progeny of apes. Among thinkers its unscientific character—it is science become unscientific, as one of them puts it—is its fatal defect. It is an “ascent” of life working in the imagination, notwithstanding that an infinity of creatures, all, in fact, that are known, have remained stationary as object lessons. No evidence having been found away down where discovery of progress would be significant, evolutionists violate the inductive principle by inferences opposed to innumerable facts pointing

so clearly to a fixed status in primitive organisms that Darwin's other self, Dr. Wallace, is forced, in contradiction to his own theory, to pronounce immobility to be their chief characteristic. Creatures innumerable continue what they were from the first—all in fact on which a scientific inference can be based—and an exception, unknown and imagined, is conceived in a spurt or in a succession of spurts in its progeny, by which it has run itself into the elephant, the ape, man and everything else.

Evolutionists, notwithstanding, affect severe scientific method—indeed, for a generation they have posed as about the only scientists — making careful and interminable inductions comparing creatures of the same species with each other and marking their differences, inductions entirely valueless because made at the wrong or finished end. It is as if an architect, to withdraw attention from the details of a building, should make his report a windy treatise

on the chimney pots. The ratio of *known* change put over to a creature say $\frac{1}{300}$ of an inch in diameter is the ridiculous upshot to those who see the bearings. The conjecture of the evolutionist is that nature, or the objective of ratiocination, has played false by wandering from its type; erraticity of nature is the backbone of the hypothesis and its condemnation. As a remarkable illustration of erraticity in thinking there is the so-called evolution of the horse. The real question concerns the origin of organs and members, and behold, the only striking evidence advanced is their decay; a thing that may often happen, but it is the opposite of evolution. Organs may be improved or the contrary by use or disuse, but they cannot be begotten thus.

In connection with arguments of this nature it can be said that there is as much evidence in behalf of the conception that saurians are atrophied birds as that birds are atrophied saurians.

The presumed evolution of life is blocked by the process that gives it countenance. *Growth* throughout experience reaches a climax and reacts ; as, indeed, expansion in general did ages ago, the largest forms being remains. Did nature uniformly terminate life while in progress it would favour evolution ; on the contrary, a death is natural when the organism has matured and reacted. Races also achieve a limit of progress and then decay.

At length the illimitable possibilities of mind have come to be the accented argument. Alas ! a mind, too, reaches its maximum of power, and the mind of races as well. The unrestricted possibilities of knowing are due to the works of an Infinite Creator.

General principles get their support from particulars, which in the present case are millionfold, and all presenting growth in limitation. As a consequence, the more sensible friends of evolution regard it now as an hypothesis,

which, if true, cannot be proved; but on the contrary, the argument is against it; nor is it germane to the better sense of its defenders. To the latest both Darwin and Wallace failed to grasp the conception that underlies it, viz., that life in its long ago elementary conditions must have been pregnant with an expansiveness altogether out of the range of present experience, doubling, trebling, and even tenpling itself at a bound. It does not appear to have struck either of them very clearly, or definiteness was sacrificed when expounding for the public, that the microscopic must have become the visual. Why make ado about the link between men and apes when the more interesting question had to be settled, when and how a creature nearly invisible in the eye of a microscope, was changed into a mammoth? An idea that might originate in a lunatic asylum. If animal bodies in general betrayed a tendency to reproduce excised organs even, it would favour evolution;

but if an organ, even the smallest, cannot be replaced by the full energy of a mature animal, how was it possible for the whole body to make itself out of nothing? The *vis medecatrix* of nature is limited to healing the wound.

In fairness the chief direct evidence for evolution has to be stated. It is this: At certain stages of development the embryos of familiar animals bear a strong resemblance to more elementary forms at their maturity; the contention being that the former are an evolutionary output of the latter. The conclusion, however, is not founded on any known expansive power in the inferior organism; because the hypothetical paternal type continues just what it was, otherwise, how could it be pointed out! Nor does even the evolutionist believe it will ever be anything else! Nor is the catch phrase, "the survival of the fittest," anything but an argument against evolution, since the fact is learned from the survival of "species" through their more

vigorous members, and not from the generation of new species.

Were it discovered that primal forms are being produced in an endless stream, to continue a panorama of general progress, it would be decisive; but to draw inferences from the stable facts of nature for unknown exceptions, stamps evolution as a fool's invention. The theory is based on the strange presumption that nature once accomplished without instrumentalities, what is now done through them; in other words, that what a live matrix does at present, was once done without it by an independent force; in fact, that matrices were begotten by creatures without the organ, so that embryos, as it were, begat their parents; a sage conception, but not sufficiently so to set aside the verdict that it is the "fool" who "saith in his heart there is no God."

They who own inability to "conceive" God creating "out of dust," will find it still more difficult to conceive the general resurrection. God's first act regarding

all life, and His last regarding men, are of a piece, creation and re-creation out of dust, faith in one being the test of faith in the other. It would be well, however, if more attention were directed to the soul, a new substance forcing creation home on the individual, as regeneration does supernatural power. The argument for a "rise" as opposed to the "Fall" of man is very weak.

The attempt to impose evolution on the Christian Church as an article of faith cannot succeed for another reason; God cherishes the glory of His own works. Had it been His intention to hide instead of reveal Himself, evolution would have done it effectually. The miracles wrought uniformly on great exacting occasions revealed Him to men; the miracles of the creation, it is intimated, revealed Him to the universe "when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy." The creative period appears divided into smaller pe-

riods of specific action, "days," which is inconsistent with evolution.

It is possible to imagine that Divine self-revelation would have been effected better through fewer species with wider gaps between them, which the imagination could not so readily overleap. As divine wisdom makes no mistakes, the purpose must be accomplished best by a multitude of species, many of them nearly identical in aspect. Mind would reveal itself, if at all possible, by minds and wills. The "social" barriers separating species almost identical in aspect are remarkable expressions of divine power. In 6,000 years men have been unable to erect a barrier between any of the creatures manipulated by domestication; and is there anyone who believes that endless time would do it? although it is known that domestication brings change more rapidly than nature. The alien "social" tastes that separate species in full liberty¹ and very similar in appearance is the pro-

¹ Any one familiar with "bird-rocks" will feel the force of this.

vidential object lesson that "God created . . . every creature that moveth after his own kind." Nor were the inspired writers allowed to ignore catastrophies which made a renewal of life necessary: "Thou takest away their breath, they die." . . . "Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created, and Thou renewest the face of the ground," Psalm 104, 29. Nature and the Bible are at one in presenting occasional interpositions of miraculous energy all along from the beginning of time; so that what has taken place since the creation of man is of a piece with the former history of the world.

CREATION AND MIRACLES.

When nature has been scrutinized far as investigation has reached, nothing can be found to beget a surmise even that all is not the product of design, except the vastness of the effect and the smallness of the reasoner. It is intellectual imbecility and not power that disqualifies

men to "conceive" the Being who originated the thought that radiates throughout nature and the symbols which express it. By portraying life well an artist immortalizes himself; affected sagacity owns itself too dull to see art in real life or in the beauties that adorn it. However, the mystery is, that men who confess themselves unable to cognize the great Statuary and Painter, and fall back on chance—for evolution is chance on dress parade—have come to be accepted at their own rating, ranked as geniuses and put high up in the temple of fame. Is it not a demonstration of the moral catastrophe, "the Fall," that men are cheered on to make God an alien in His own world?

People cannot see how matter could be created: but they fail to see many things; for example, how matter attracts other matter without a rope. Is the inexplicability of the laws of matter or absence of *nexus* not evidence that both it and its manifestations are effects of volition?

Unenlightened by divine truth the human mind has invariably goaded itself into pantheism, a doctrine exploded by modern science: yet the denial of Revelation is forcing many to the same unscientific goal. All the forces are indestructible except one; when an organism is destroyed an important entity ceases to exist—its life. Nothing is left to represent it as the other forces exist. And as life alone begets life and an endless chain is impossible, there must be an existence capable of organizing matter by adding life to it. By crudeness of thinking men persuade themselves that because matter is always more or less compacted, it must have a common substratum, whereas chemistry reveals it as a number of independent substances, lifeless and powerless to become a divinity in either vegetation or consciousness. Then let the substances of the brain and its motions be magnified till plainly visible, and it will be seen that the distance to thought, or the soul and its powers, is

infinite. This is the view presented by the Bible and must be held good common sense till it has been discovered that life and thought are essentials of matter.

Material substance never originates anything *per se* and far less in the absolute sense of being its own origin. That it can or will or did crystallize into existing forms is as unlikely as that its known elements, the alphabet of nature, will ever lose their identity in a common pulp to efface a mass of fitnesses marking design. The unconscious movements of nature, such as those of the heavenly bodies, of the winds, of light, heat, electricity, of the rivulets of vapour that form raindrops, chemical action, cell multiplication, etc., all look as if there was a will behind them, which, indeed, is not more unseen than the human will; and the nexus of volition is always inscrutable. Mind has initiative and originates, that is, brings from absolute non-existence, for example — thought; and therefore of the two substances it

has the best claim to rank as the image of the Original. A Mind existing in Originality, may well be supposed capable of originating the materials necessary to express Itself. A *new* idea is often an entity of terrible power, and matter, it is well known, is the slave of mind. The assumption that mind cannot exist in isolation because the human mind, for educational purposes, is from its inception encased in matter, does not efface the marks of intelligence from nature; nor does it remove awkwardness from the supposition that whereas everything tends to fruition the universe may fashion and obliterate itself and "leave not a wrack behind." Revelation makes souls the eternal result. That while everything else belonging to man perishes, his thoughts may enjoy immortal youth favours the view. Every mind is also a new substance, an illustration of existence from non-existence, the transmigration of souls having been invented to surmount the fact.

As it is by creating mind acts in all its own operations, bringing thought from non-existence, so extraordinary creative power is the best explanation of the origin of the universe, which cuts the ground from the chief objection to miracles, because, while out of the "course" of nature, they are in line with its origin. Miracles are incredible only on the supposition that nature is uncreated; if created its laws are ordinances, and therefore changeable by Him who established them. Laws that are not eternal may be suspended or repealed; so that miracles become credible if a valid reason exist for them, and it is remarkable that the knowledge of God and of the Bible are co-extensive. Nations beyond the ripple wave of the Exodus are, after 3,000 years, what Egypt was before Moses appeared. If to demonstrate the Creator to minds paralyzed by the laws of nature was an object, how could it be done? By making chairs dance? By turning tables?

No, but by operations in every department—the miracles of the Bible cover universal nature—such as the Creator alone could perform. Contemners of the Bible see nothing to laugh at when men basket themselves in trees in Africa to study the chatter of apes! Human wisdom at the close of the nineteenth century! Since God has no claim on men except as their Creator, why should a Book be ridiculed which makes it like A B C to them. It is just what God would do if He exists, and the men who recorded miracles have inspired about all the love of truth in the world. Beyond their influence “all men are liars.”

In the dawning period of the world change of temperature would of itself make living structures obsolete and necessitate the introduction of other forms. In human history necessities of another kind led to exhibitions of supernatural power that are continued in the spiritual sphere and constitute experimental proof. Because records cannot place the worker

of physical miracles in the presence of an enquirer it does not follow that even better evidence is far to seek. The Omnipresence and accessibility of the Son of God, for Whom miracles were the introduction, places Him in the power of the doubter, so that when he opposes Christianity he acts on a foregone falsehood: "This is the condemnation that light is come . . . and men loved darkness rather than the light." As formerly stated, about the first lesson taught by Scripture is that the obstacle to seeing God is sin. Extraordinary physical manifestations were indispensable when introducing the supernatural, to mark a policy of supernatural action; if continued they would obstruct the object by becoming natural; also because the aim is to induce the habit of cultivating a Spirit. To facilitate this it was necessary even for Christ to go away. Were He on earth there would be a felt necessity to meet Him by travel. But the conclusive test in religion is prayer;

material substances being determined by means of matter, the Absolute in Christ, by mind direct. As Mind and not a material substratum is the ultimate it must be susceptible of contact by substances of its own nature. The Bible never hesitates here, a very considerable portion of Holy Scripture being occupied with examples of intercourse with God, which reveal the possibility of conscious nearness to Heaven. The aim of the scientific argument is to awaken conviction and make the conclusive test an obligation. Thanks be to God that the Mediating Person is not at the distance of heaven; nor eighteen hundred years off; as "Immanuel," He is "God with us." A careful study of the prayers of the Bible will repay the earnest enquirer.

"THE HIGHER CRITICISM."

The originators of what is known as the "higher criticism" made the miracles of Scripture outputs of the imagination, "myths," self-convicted of putting all

other knowledge under the same category. Like others, the Germans were taught the road to science by Bacon; for their ideal philosophy they are indebted to the imagination of an ingenious Irishman; but connection between the two there is none. Efforts purely mental are creations; investigation in general connects itself with impressions received *ab extræ*. By their philosophy the Germans make impressions also creations, so that their opinion about miracles is not all-important for the world. On the one hand human littleness minimises the miracles wrought to reveal the greatness of God by their very greatness; the ideal philosopher simply surmounts them; nor should it be a surprise. A German philosopher is "a moment in the life of God," indeed, there is no God but Him of whom this German is the conscious portion; which puts salvation out of the question by enthroning sin in the Mount of God: The Stygian origin of modern criticism!

On account of the vast importance of religion an insignificant person who repudiates the faith or any portion of its leading articles creates a sensation, just as the man who commits murder excites more attention than millions who do not; so the Germans have monopolized more attention about religion far than their knowledge of the subject warrants. The German talent lies in memory rather than judgment or invention, except in relation to sights and sounds, while their noted philosophy strangely denies the existence of both. Through the friction of peculiar thinking many fine thoughts have forced themselves into the German mind, yet when compared with the English race they are not thinkers or inventors, except, if admitted, with a tinge of insanity such as geniuses are often supposed to betray.

Human knowledge being limited to a moment in an eternity and to a point in infinite space, there is room for extramundane light. As all action bears on

the future, and the sum of action on an unknown eternal future, there is need for a spiritual Sun. On the supposition that a Creator exists, is it likely that He would allow Himself to be forgotten in His own world or its glories ascribed by sinful prejudice to non-entity? Yet it is extraneous information thoughtless men strain at. To eliminate the light divine the Sacred Books have been attacked in detail, misinterpreted, ascribed to other authors, have had their dates changed, have been charged with mistakes by pretentious ignorance; for what do the self-styled critics know about them more than others from what appears on their face? And it is an honest face that ever frowns on falsehood. More than others! The essential quality of a religious critic is the love of God; when Satan persuades a man that there is no God, or that himself is God in consciousness, what criticisms can be expected? Blasphemy. Even in Christian times men have never worshipped a God for long

they did not make themselves; this is the prominent symptom of a disease the Sacred Book diagnoses, describes, illustrates by specimens, and for which it furnishes the remedy. As the remedy is by necessity divine, but to be proved for each by personal test, the Bible proclaims itself a voice from heaven with testimony from those who have enjoyed the cure, living examples being also found in every age. St. Paul is the style of man Christ makes out of a Pharisee; his writings immortal, because his type is constantly reproduced, which makes them appreciated. Because all who will find eternal consolation in Christ, just as the apostles did, scepticism must disappear with the growth of intelligence, discredited also by the fact that not only in Greece has the spade restored an antiquity expunged by the critics, but in the East has restored whole cities once ranked as myths by the same sagacity.

It has ever been the policy of unbelievers, by diffusive shows of learning,

to put Christianity at a disadvantage. Through scraps of information gotten from the monuments, a superlative pretence of familiarity with the early Semites is now made, with the two-fold object of inculcating that people so humanly related as the Israelites were could not possibly obtain information outside of their own invention, and that men having so much information about their origin must be infallible. The reasons for believing that the Israelites enjoyed supernatural illumination may be summarized thus: The other Semitic families took no stand for the early traditions of the race regarding the Unseen Creator, nor against false gods. Among the Israelites progress towards acceptance of the light was through protracted struggle, information coming from isolated men who claimed divine illumination, which they demonstrated so well that their writings were made immortal, though very distasteful. The Jews had no interest but a religious one in preserv-

ing books which represented the difficulty of inoculating them. In the world at large the advance has been through ages of struggle, the Bible remaining intellectually and morally far in the van even of the Churches, although it would need an angel's pen to describe the ennobling effects already produced.

The high critics are men "born out of due time," coming 3,000 years too late. They should have been in evidence when the Jews, as a jury, were in process of conviction. Indeed, even then, when centuries passed without miracles, critics led the people back to idolatry, making fresh, indubitable manifestations necessary. At length for thousands of years the shrewdest nation in the world has worshipped the Invisible God, detesting images; has mutilated its male children for a moral purpose; has devoted a seventh part of time to rest, with other stringent religious observances; has kept itself separate from the nations, and endured incredible suffering for its

faith. In sight of the facts the "critic" is like a mosquito buzzing about the head of a giant, only a mosquito is not so unwise as to doubt the presence of blood in the head. So well, too, was the start given to Christianity and its foundations laid, that its principles have been adopted by the greatest and wisest nations on earth. On account of a peculiar infallibility the Greek and Latin churches know the meaning of the second commandment better than the Jews, who were taught it by God Himself through years of chastisement!

In the opinion of the critics the Old Testament was well discredited when its histories were found to be "mosaics." But all histories are, in one sense, compilations; they are collections of facts, and are no less trustworthy, perhaps are more so, when really compilations. They thus indicate a historian's confidence in the "recorder" and approval of his literary work. The genealogies of the Bible mark a high intelligence, up to, if not in

some respects beyond, that of the nineteenth century; an intelligence that led the men to make carefully prepared records of world-thrilling events, so well prepared for memorizing as to make recomposition unnecessary. Very naturally, the record expands beyond memoriter preservation when it reaches within sight of the art of writing. The histories of three patriarchs and of Joseph are greatly larger than those covering over 2,000 previous years, apparently fitted for the memory. Joseph, being familiar with facts in the lives of his immediate forefathers, could in Egypt avail himself of the art of writing, and would preface his work with the carefully prepared traditions of former ages. The Egyptian education of Moses would qualify him to translate such documents into alphabetical Hebrew; on which account Genesis would rank as one of his books. Afterwards, when a tribe was separated for religious learning, the nation could never be without capable recorders. The

Jewish histories are compilations of such records, and instead of being less worthy are on that account doubly worthy of confidence. Moses was fitted personally to be his own historian, and if his writings embrace "monographs" and "notes" they would be his own, made by divine direction, and then combined in the permanent record by himself. The authority, not only of the Jewish nation, but of Jesus Christ, surely outweighs that of all the critics. If the Books of Moses were produced during the Captivity, as the critics assert, would the Israelites almost to a man have been killed in the Wilderness because unfit to enter the Land? Even Aaron! Even Moses!

When would-be critics pretend to detect a difference in style in the same Hebrew writer, it makes an impression of extraordinary learning on the ignorant multitude. There is no living man capable of detecting any such thing, except it be in the broad lines that separate poetry from prose, and surely men

endowed to write immortal books might be poets too.

Slowly but surely, through investigation in Bible lands, a harmonious background is looming for the sacred histories and with it remarkable confirmation of individual facts. In addition to the unearthed remains of cities once supposed to be mythical, there have now been discovered a record of the seven years' famine relieved by Joseph, also of an appeal to Egypt by Canaanites, contemporaries of Joshua, for help against enemies they accused of magic; also of Salem as the home of a chosen priesthood before the calling of Abraham; and there is now incontestible proof that alphabetical writing was practised before the days of Moses.¹ Evidence also that the "glacial" occurred in the human period, is accumulating, making the Deluge a necessity. A glacial age would account for glaciers but fails entirely to account for the overflow that conveyed

¹ About the middle of the thirteenth century the flow of the Jordan was suddenly arrested by an avalanche, near the spot indicated by Joshua—the city of Adam.

them to where the relics are found, far away from mountain sides and up hills where there are no rocks of the kind above them anywhere. Just think of the glaciers of the Rockies transferring themselves to the neighbourhood of Winnipeg or Montreal! The Book that never lies says: "And the waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth and all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered." Such an overflow would detach the ice masses of the North and send them towards the equator. The Deluge was the work, not of nature alone, but of nature co-operated with by supernatural power, that imperishable traces might exist of the earliest, mightiest, and most universal miracle ever wrought before the human race. As there are no traces of ice below the 20th parallel, there would be summer enough in the temperate zones during a glacial period, to melt most of the annual snows, so that the vast ice formations would need to convey themselves

to their final anchorages! On the other hand, before the northern ice could reach those latitudes where its deposits are found, the Deluge must have subsided largely; as a consequence, the continental waterways would draw it in their direction from the hills. Very far north in Canada boulders are found on the tops of the highest mountains.

The suggestion that the writers of the Bible were inspired but not the writings, may be convenient as a loophole for the objector, but is inconsistent with the wonderful verbal harmony of so many books, many of them written ages apart and dealing with so many subtle points, a harmony not apparent to the *dilettante*, but borne home with convincing power to the life-long student of the Bible. The Bible must be accepted as a whole or rejected; there is no middle course. The necessity of light from heaven, pre-supposed in a revelation and emphasized by world-long antagonism, makes it impossible to

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tell off-hand if portions may be dubious, and what ones; a position sustained by objections that knock the bottom out of both Testaments without the objector being aware of it. Many a very small man has made himself look very big in a sinful world by denying portions of the Word of God.

Not to multiply illustrations, take first the denial that Abraham was commanded to slay his son; but the New Testament re-affirms the fact and as intended to serve a purpose. If God's command and Abraham's intention to slay Isaac were exceptional, the intention to give up the Son of God to death was even more so. (The modern pulpit illustrates the necessity of very pointed types.) Moreover, Abraham was chosen to inaugurate a revival of faith in the world; what better illustration of faith in the Creator of the human race than faith in the resurrection? "Whom he received from the dead in a figure." Abraham was elected to be a pattern by Him who

decreed that the record of his life should never perish ; and that his decendants through undying books, should be an instruction to the world on the real source of national prosperity.

There are two books, one in the Old and the other in the New Testament, which together form the best test of a critic's ability to dicuss Revelation—Leviticus and the Epistle to the Hebrews. He who turns to the study of the sacred volume with the conscience suppressed is like the story of Nelson putting the telescope to his blind eye. Every live Christian has become such by learning the value of the appointed bloodshedding ; and gets his undying faith in religious truth from personal experience of its virtues. Hence he is the best apologist who labors to mature conviction of sin in his auditors by exposing it in the light of God ; which will put the types and prophetic utterance of the Old Testament and the revelations of the New aglow with heavenly splendor.

Virtually Christ was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The need for a great concentrated preparatory work is well illustrated by the history of Christianity. Were it not for the Jews with their Testament how would the evidence for Christianity stand? And had not the miraculous demonstrations for divine revelation been pushed into modern times by the late appearance of Jesus Christ the effect would have been weaker still. It was indispensable, not only to shew the necessity for Him by the self-demoralization of the world, but to prepare His way by revealing who He was and what He was coming to do. It was an exceptional thing, indeed, for sinners to confess sin with hands placed on the heads of animals, and to present their blood for atonement. It was appointed to familiarize something no one would have ever thought of inventing, or could invent; and no one did. Who could imagine that the blood of animals would cleanse from

sin. Nor did it. The type got all its meaning from its anti-type, a meaning unseen for ages. The self-wisdom which leads the critic to reject portions of the Bible is not their inconsistency with other portions but with his own ideas; hence the principle leads, by logical sequence, to the rejection of Christianity as a whole. The worldly wisdom that began in Germany to amend God's word would have stood aghast at the copestone.

We conclude by shewing what can be said in behalf of the most *exceptional* miracle in the Bible. How the profane wits have played off their ridicule on the story of Jonah and the whale! But if it was the intention of Providence to placard a notable example of "preaching" to the heathen before the Messiah's advent, was it not well done? All the missionaries and all the money spent have scarcely done in a century what Jonah did in a few days by the "herald's cry" in repetition. He had refused to

do what every missionary for eighteen centuries has refused, and thus have stopped the progress of the gospel. A missionary who had returned from India to seek helpers was lately heard to deplore that he had a parish of 25,000,000 souls and that in fourteen years he had not been able to reach over 2,000 of them!

The Jews have made the whole world familiar with street cries ; instead of choosing college dons exclusively for the heathen, Christ should be imitated in sending a majority of men chosen from the work-a-day world. The inventor of the Salvation Army recognised the necessity of outside demonstration but chose drumsticks. Surprise has been expressed that the Japanese adopt the fruits of civilization and refuse Christianity ; but what effort has ever been made to awaken the conscience of the nation ? or is felt to be needful in spite that John the Baptist is the figure-head of the Gospel, and the Old Testa-

ment stands in introduction to the new, a flaming hieroglyphic on Law. Justice in God and Conscience in men are the capitals of this religion.

Regarding the integrity of the Sacred Scriptures the credit of preserving it needs to be distributed. The Jews preserved their own sacred books with all care, and the Greeks the books written in Greek; the Latin Churches are witnesses to the integrity of both during their own times, having been indifferent to either Hebrew or Greek and therefore incapable of altering manuscripts in their possession.

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God's mercy has been said to triumph over his justice through the gospel, but the victory had to be secured by satisfying its demands, not by ignoring them. In general it takes two ideas to illustrate one. In the more spiritual parts of the Old Testament righteousness and mercy are put into contrast to magnify the graciousness of God. "Thy righteousness is like the great mountains, Thy judgments are a great deep." . . . "How precious is thy loving kindness, O God." When justice is let drop out of sight in offers of mercy the results are as disastrous as when mercy itself is withheld, and of the same kind. That the grace of God may be appreciated, it is necessary to know the obstacles it had to surmount; obstacles, when understood, which become motives to godliness and holy living.

The aspect of divine righteousness towards evil-doers, unmodified by mercy, has been the starting-point of superstition in every nation on earth. It was under the frowning shadow of Mount Sinai, Aaron made a new god for Israel, the image of a *calf*. But on the other hand, when the divine justice is ignored, what else does he become? A cypher. Put a calf-like man on the throne of France and surmise what the result would be! And if France "needs a man," the world needs God. Were the conception cherished by those Christians who ridicule zeal for inflexible divine justice, to become generally prevalent, viz., that repentance is the atonement—a principal so unworkable that prisons are kept full of men and women making satisfaction by suffering—the world would become a very hell; and the class who at the present time strain every nerve to keep the idea of future punishment out of the pulpit would be the chief sufferers—the rich.

It was so during the infidel interregnum known as the French Revolution.

Minds are ruled by ideas. When looking out over the distant horizon or up through the stars, men, as it were, gaze into eternity; mighty influences can be brought thence, which the Christian ministry must never cease to wield. What is needed at present is reformation on the lines of the old prophets, which are substantially also those of the New Testament. God must be replaced on the throne and duty inculcated from this vantage ground. As formerly stated, the first moral lesson of the Bible and its capital letter on duty is that disobedience to God is the crime of crimes and the source of all crime. The complaint, however, is not to be that the love of God for men is too much heralded, but rather that it is not; for it is impossible to exhibit the matchlessness of that love when the magnitude of the danger which necessitated the incarnation is ignored. Moreover, it is

just because God is love He cherishes eternal indignation against wrong in all its forms.

The great peril to religion now lurks, as it did in the far off ages, not in scepticism but in the opinions of professedly religious men and women on the road to scepticism without knowing it. In every age the mainspring of error has been the same—the aspect divine justice presents to evil-doers. Far from aiming to be godless the early world fabricated a variety of gods suited to their tastes, while the ineradicable sense of divine justice expressed itself by hated “molecks.” Were people everywhere free from criminal instinct, the awful sanctions of divine law might without risk be dispensed with, but as they are, were men in general convinced of the non-existence of a Judgment Day, it would be impossible to forecast the evil to be evolved, crime being committed where fear of human law is also at a minimum. The greater por-

tion of the sins of mankind, if ever reached, it must be through the fear of God.

Dislike to the severities of Heaven originated the gods of heathenism, but did they augment the happiness of mankind or better the race? They had their inception in degeneracy to foster it. It is to be feared that history is once more preparing a terrible answer to these questions when put in regard to the artifice of too many pulpits, devised to harmonize the laws of the universe with parish wishes. Awed by their hearers or to make the gospel tolerable to the indifferent, many religious teachers cease to insist on the most pressing reasons for repentance, those which made the Incarnation and the Cross necessary for salvation; as if success depended, not on truth, but on crafty concealment of its most effective forms. The eternal danger to which impenitents are exposed is generally ignored, although neither the Incarna-

tion nor the gospel ministry have any other *raison d'être*. Churches, to obtain popularity, are disposed to flaunt themselves exclusively as "angels of sweetness and light," oblivious that men will, in the long run, refuse to accept any authority that is without the power or will to enforce justice. The throne of mercy which Jesus occupies must also be the throne of God and the final judgment seat. Was it the influence of the Ritualists that now compels men to read the New Testament in Greek when danger is expressed? If Hades means the unseen world only, why not have said so, instead of forcing the impression that there are two universal prisons?

Efforts made to emasculate the teachings of nature and of revelation by denying them to be miraculous are quite consistent; but admitting the personal revelation and refusing its verdicts when displeasing,¹ are not. To single por-

¹ The Bible must be accepted as a whole or rejected. The completed results of criticism shew that no middle course is possible. The object of Inspiration was to teach what no one knew or would think of and the supposed interpolations are all of this character.

tions of the Bible out for acceptance implies that men are more impartial judges of what God should be than Himself, and know better how to control the human mind. If the gospel is in point blank contradiction to former dispensations, the way of shewing it was peculiar. John, coming in the spirit of Elias, was a strange "forerunner" for Messiah, and the language of Jesus on the fate of unbelievers was no less beside the mark. Jesus had magnetic power which many were prepared to feel, but to conceive him with affections trailing in the dust for sympathy from the wicked is a mistake. It is doubtful if anyone ever aroused fiercer hostility against himself; its source was divine greatness expressing uncompromising hatred for sin. He wept over Jerusalem, but those eyes from which the tears flowed fixed on his enemies held them powerless in their own stronghold while he hurled invective after invective at the Scribes and Pharisee hypocrites.

In Gethsemane His silent look staggered His capturers and shook them prostrate in the dust. He went about doing good; but to whom? His enemies? Seldom or never. Whole districts were cut off from benevolent attentions because they took no stock in Him. And it is the same ever.

Because the only Visitor from the eternal world and familiar with it, Jesus pictured the fate of the wicked in darkest colours; all the most awe-inspiring descriptions are His. He alone among inspired teachers ever ventured to portray a lost soul subjected to its fate; it is appealing for a mitigation, a momentary relief; and it is denied. It was done with tearful eyes because a picture of the unseen, unapprehended danger which brought Him into this mortal life; out of pity He let men know what it is.

To make the *life* of Jesus of exclusive importance, the sermons of Channing, which have become the gospel of not a few, are a fond caricature. Their author

never understood Jesus, nor human nature. Men are of a temper so peculiar that heroes of the Napoleonic type have most attraction for them. There is no need to hesitate when asserting that the invectives of Jesus have done as much to create His fame and promote His cause as His words of kindness. It is justice tempered with mercy and not mercy alone in God and His Christ that is pregnant to make the hearts of men tender and penitent. The ante-reformation churches represent Christ as exclusively severe; modern ones oscillate to the other extreme;¹ combined, the extremes about form the full round character of the Nazarene, and make the New Testament harmonious with the Old. The Book of the Revelation of St. John puts them into full accord. Before introducing their softer strains great musicians experiment with those of an opposite kind; there is art

¹ Encouraged by the misrepresentations of His friends, perverse men have begun to put Jesus into competition for effeminacy with the corrupt Gods of India, modelled after the idea that produced Aaron's calf.

in this, and there is art in the structure of the Holy Bible.

In both Testaments the contrast in God is caused by the changed aspect He necessarily presents to the penitent and the impenitent. If impenitents are not now exposed to the retributions of Law, why did Jesus tell the Pharisees it would be more tolerable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for them? The supposition that the spirit of the older dispensation is altogether eliminated by the gospel comes from reading the New Testament with insufficient attention. When, in a financial matter, two parties conspired to deceive the apostolic church, they were overtaken by instantaneous death, and in connection with the ministry of St. Paul a bitter enemy of the gospel was smitten with blindness. He told the Corinthians also that for habitual sins many were weak and sickly among them and that many slept or were dead. Of course, Christians are not allowed to take the

law into their own hands as Elijah did, which Christ forbade the disciples to do. Nevertheless, through the use made of the eternal future, the teachings of Christ and of his disciples are in reality more severe than those of the older economy. To inspire faith by self-interest? Yes and no. When finally impelled by a sense of personal unrighteousness, awakened by God's opinion of sin, a soul seeks reconciliation, it has been purified from selfishness and self-seeking.

Strange as it may appear, the New Testament is in one respect by all odds the sternest revelation ever made. Former ones confined their horizon chiefly to the present life, the object being to rouse the conscience by visible judgments and prepare it for a more serious view of sin. The herald of the New Testament, which John the Baptist was, began at once to make use of eternity, a policy that had much to do in securing the superior influence of the new dispensation. Far from antagoniz-

ing the past, Jesus came to make forgiveness consist with eternal justice and to be at the same time a safe governmental policy, which this religion has proved to be. Were the experiment of absolute forgiveness tried in the smallest country on earth tragic consequences would soon develop. Yet "modern thought" imagines that the universe can be governed on principles unworkable anywhere. It is true that in religion both guilt and forgiveness embrace a tremendous scope; the thought of eternal punishment takes the breath away; but it is intended to be continuously awful only to those to whom it is not sufficiently awful to make them cease to neglect the great salvation. It is the awfulness of sin as it presents it that gives the Cross of Christ its reforming power.

Some who by the legerdemain of ingenious interpretation evade the evident meaning of words may be led to see the necessity of divine severity by

the investigation of results. Pretence to limit and modify the penalties of sin began to be made ages ago by ecclesiastics; Italian ones probably claim the honour, whether it belongs to them or not. The announcement that "now is the accepted time," "the day of salvation," is one of the mightiest forces of the Christian religion; but the seed of corruption was sown in the early churches by the introduction of a second probation implied in prayers for the dead. The upshot was an ever-increasing demoralization on till the Reformation.

The gospel can work wonders in the direction of mitigating the innate cruelty of the human heart or its legal action; but it is demonstrable from the history of the Church that the point of equilibrium has been passed when men sit in judgment on God and condemn the revealed verdicts of His justice. All punitive action has the appearance of cruelty and tends to awaken sympathy for criminals in the

weak-minded. By encouraging criminal instincts in men a reaction in favour of cruelty has set in wherever God's irrevocable judgments come to be denied or modifications substituted. Centuries before the Reformation nearly all the heathen modes of torture had been brought into use again, and the churches had become radically corrupt in head and members. History carefully read will shew that the writer puts his thumb on the surface of the root sore.

God grant that a false sympathy seducing ministers of religion to pose as more pitiful than their Master may not inaugurate in the Reformed Churches the fatal happenings of other ages. Jubilants over a clergyman who is imprudent enough to pronounce against future punishment are sinners who need relief and who should be pressed on to the great decision; the relief given by effacement of the future encouraging them not to make it, and in most cases to cease attaching any importance to

religion. Voltaire did not do nearly as much harm to religion as ministers have done by withholding the truth. Why are so many outside of the churches if not because consciences are unimpressed with the unspeakable value of Christianity? A full half probably of those who bear the name of Protestant seldom or never enter a place of worship. The Spirit of God on Whom success depends refuses to back up half truths or tendencies that make Him a liar. Efforts now made to pipe people back with music accompanied by display will be fruitless unless the original blunder is repaired. It is but just to admit that compared with some countries Canada is not quite in the current yet, although beginning to make foolish experiments in its direction.

Elijah scarcely treated the priests of Baal with more biting sarcasm than sceptics have showered on the gospel ministry of the age for its impotence, and not without a fair show of reason;

it has been fussing and perspiring without its lever. For the ridicule cast by infidels the churches have thrown aside their best tools and are now laughed at for their pains. If it be said in mockery that hell creates the church, what of it? Is it not a sufficient cause? Could anything short of infinite danger have brought about the Incarnation? The Remedy equals the danger and the danger the Remedy. Let no one be shamed by infidel banter; the Master knew what He was talking about while the banterer does not.

Deep impressions of divine justice and nothing short will keep an adequate sense of justice alive in the human breast. It is in this way the gospel civilizes. Where God's opinion of wrong is not impressed by His opinion of wrong's full deserts, men deteriorate and the materials on which they operate deteriorate too. When consciences in these countries have been re-awakened the age in which we live will be

looked back to as one of paying inventions indeed; but also as the age of glucose and shoddy, of corporation swindling and incendiarism, of sugar-coated religion and grasping greed and civic corruption and published benevolences.¹ Is it not true that men are losing confidence in each other? Is money not becoming more and more an object of quest thought to justify immoral methods in obtaining it? Is sympathy for criminals not growing at a dangerous rate, betraying an absence of indignation against crime? Through withheld efforts to maintain a national conscience as a principal cause, crime in America is increasing nearly 50 per cent. faster than the population. It would be worth knowing what relation blatant atheism bears to crime; but at worst its influence is on the low criminal instincts. It has little bearing on the most dangerous criminals of all; chartermonsters, stock manipulators, bank bursters, betrayers of trust and embezzlers, fraud-

¹ And of divorces.

ulent assigners, etc.; they are all members or adherents of select churches (they would not be trusted were they not) men whose ears are far too delicate and their intelligence too lofty to need hints from the eternal world; and they never get them except as heaven. The incipient villains of the future on gigantic scales are one and all in process of nurture under the ministry of men up to the latest touch of fashion. When the justice of Heaven has become too indelicate for the refined sensibilities the sponge has been set in the asthetic mind for all the criminalities. It is worthy of note that when St. Paul reasoned "on righteousness, temperance and judgment to come and Felix trembled," it is not added that the reasoner saw his mistake, nor when he foretold judgment of the secrets of men to the Areopagus!

With a few noisy exceptions that press to the front in most congregations people in general are very different from what fashionable preachers think they

are. How the whole country flocked to hear the uncompromising utterances of John the Baptist! That they will do this still is illustrated by the crowds that attended Spurgeon's early ministry, who, by awakening the consciences of his followers, secured his success to the last. Instead of soft words the majority prefer hard ones where religion is concerned, because they know they are deserved; a thing the ministers of the Church of Rome understand perfectly and never blunder by withholding the threatening aspects of religion from those outside the church, which keeps their churches filled to overflowing. Christianity well understood is never made offensive by personalities; it places all men on the same level as sinners, and the unsophisticated conscience is ready to sanction everything the Bible asserts concerning the wages of sin; feels that he is an honest man who gives the warning and that he who withholds it is a fraud. A faithful sermon including a fearless statement of

impending danger has been known to send infidels to their knees ; the unalienable consciousness of God only needing to be fortified ; and the Spirit of Truth co-operates with fitting words. According to Matthew XXV. professors of religion are on "their way out to meet the Bridegroom," an attitude of soul which inspires action for Christ's sake and therefore worthy of reward. Were church-goers fully notified of such things it would be a word in season for the indifferent, tending to save them from throwing away the "lamps," of their profession as useless.

It is a mistake to suppose that sinners are ordinarily influenced by the very highest class of motives, the kind of experiment Jesus probably had in view when He referred to "casting pearls before swine." Backs have not unfrequently been turned on such good-natured experimenters by many who were elsewhere caught by less learned but more artful fishermen who knew

better how to bait their hook. It is doubtful if anything but a sense of divine severity could have brought a man like Saul of Tarsus to his senses, or the Philippian gaoler, or the Pentecostal converts who were "pricked in their hearts," a painful experience; or almost any real convert mentioned by an inspired writer. The lines of inspired history should be marked and followed.

Notwithstanding that the covenant of grace excludes every hope of forgiveness in the great hereafter and therefore requires immediate decision, yet before the close of the second century it began to be surmised that probation might not be limited to the present life and that churches might be credited with a modifying influence over the doom of the lost; postulates extremely dangerous for society, although not in conflict with the present well-being of the clergy. While the clear light from eternity diffused by the Reformers has awakened improvement far and near in Christian countries,

nevertheless, in the European nation, the noted seat of ecclesiastical authority, still experimenting with the imperfect light of the pre-reformation ages. it is not safe to deviate from the line of public travel, and from five to six thousand murders or attempts at murder are committed annually. Honesty in public men is as noisily demanded in Russia as elsewhere, but is seldom found, because as a member of the Church the Russian has only the fear of purgatory to face. The leverage is lost when the eternal consequences are taken off by the artful hand of a self-seeking clergy. This is a great source of difficulty in France; is what originates causes for chronic revolution in South American Republics; and it is the mainspring of nearly all the rascalities nearer home.

Although purgatory cannot be called a "god-send," it is often made a profitable "man-send" by ward and other politicians with a criminal instinct, carrying with it the "promise" of this life

as well as that which is to come. What is known in America as the political conscience is coddled by defective religious teaching, and is reacting at present with sinister effect on religion generally, because the conduct of public men cannot but tell. The infallible test of a belief is its fruit. Men with little ability or wish for business who possess a facile oratory, often make politics, especially city politics, a short cut to the main chance. In high positions they are fairly secure from human law, and if the criminal idiosyncrasy be in them and the divine law can be tampered with by liberal donations, a strong temptation lies to grab both worlds. It is with extreme delicacy the biggest, blackest curse of this continent and all continents can be touched; the patrons of a dangerous system are conceded the full privilege of advocating it; he who replies is a "fanatic," or the edge of an argument is met with the edge of a stick or a stone. The subject is barely touched

for the sake of the inference:- If shortening and alleviating the divine penalties of sin have produced such astounding scandals, what must the ultimate effect be of dropping them altogether, which in general is quietly done now by Protestants? The fatal policy is already telling injuriously on public men in every city on the continent; in England, where people are honest from other motives, it may tell by fostering æsthetic virtues.

It was not in justice merely, but in wisdom that "Tophet" was ordained of old," and its ordination proclaimed to the universe. Pity 'tis that mankind can be kept near the plumb only by overwhelming motives from the eternal world; it is poor human nature and not an innate nobility of character that necessitates it. The divine government

¹ People not in the habit of reflecting deeply take it for granted that the idea of a life after death would suggest itself to some one and would readily become an article of faith in the early world. The fact that the Great Teacher was more specific both on the eternal future and on its conditions than any other, points out the origin of these beliefs. When occupying themselves about what this, that, and the other person once said on the subject, unthinking people miss the points.

is practical ; it takes man as it finds him, and not as it might be supposed he should be. God knows who He has to deal with and how to govern him, and all attempts made to improve on His plans have improved men the wrong way.

Prof. Huxley has declared it to be his opinion that as a matter of policy it would be dangerous to abolish "hell," no doubt having noted effects as the writer did from whom he got the idea. But eternal principle always lies at the bottom of a sound policy. Who but God alone can tell what disrespect for an Infinite Creator means or deserves? And He has stereotyped His opinion, not in the Bible only, but in history and in the human heart. Because society is a unit sin starts a ripple wave that never ceases to expand ; and there are crimes so outrageous as to be unpardonable by men. The human heart is so constructed in the state of nature that when wrong is brought home to it in the

form of personal injury, its sympathy is with the demands of eternal justice. The parents whose daughter has been led to ruin; the victim of the dragonades of France, for example, if alive millions of years hence, will feel that, if their former tormentors are alive and not in hell it will be because there is no justice or no God. Revenge! Yes! Pardon is an idea introduced into the world by the gospel; nature knows it not; and they who refuse the gospel and the divine pardon it brings are left to the sweep of nature and of law. The devil and his angels are souls exposed beyond the influence of common grace; there is not a thought of repentance nor an imagined possibility of atonement, for the stream of sin goes on and expands itself for ever.

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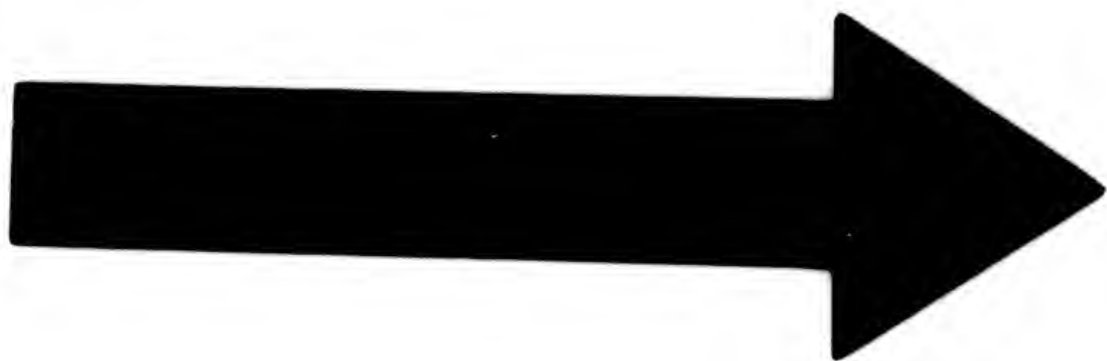
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TWIN DANGERS.

On a gospel ministry courageous to enforce divine truth, including those portions intended as probes, in such a way as to reach the conscience, rests the hope of the world. The apprehension of God which comes in the course of nature, as it were, must be enforced by authoritative teaching. As success depends on co-operation by the Spirit it must be taken for granted that startling truth will be made awakening even when it raises a "breeze" in self-complacent minds.

A visitor from Japan to the congress of religions told his countrymen on his return that Christianity had lost its power in America, an impression formed by what he saw and heard in Chicago at what might or might not be a repre-



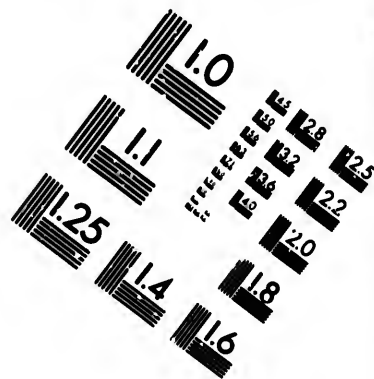
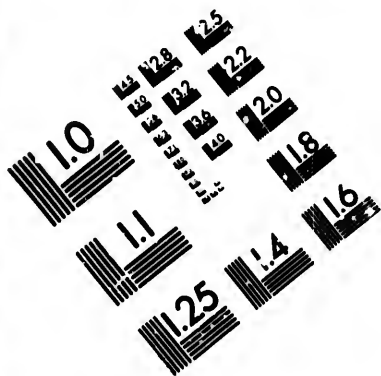
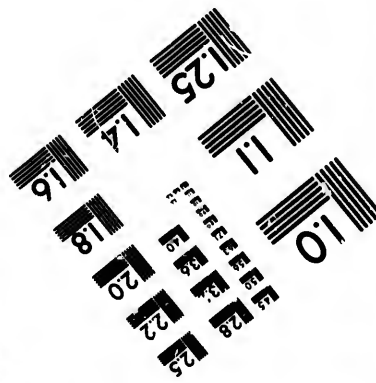
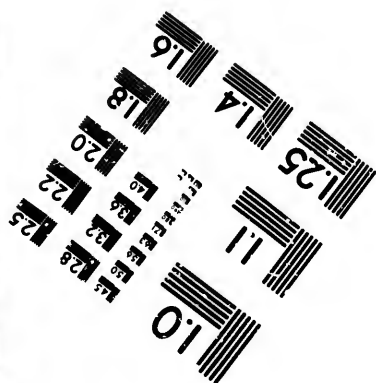
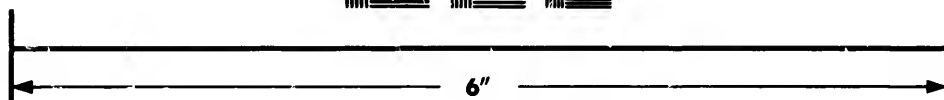
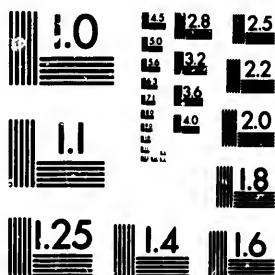


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sentative time. Still, were investigation made even regarding descendants of the early English settlers, it is not clear that the verdict would be far astray if losing instead of lost had been the term used. Writing from inside the voluntary system one finds it impossible to deny that dangers exist, of which probably the greatest is men-pleasing by a dependent clergy. Outside of the Church of Rome are no communities where more fuss is made about religion than in some of ours; but observation will shew that such agitations are not greater evidence of religious life than indispensable expedients to maintain it. To keep vitality in religion working like oiled machinery, it is necessary to smite not sins only, but sin itself, with the full vigour of the Law and at the root; this with more faith in God and somewhat less in men.

A disposition to refined flattery not unfrequently seduces real friends of Jesus Christ to ignore that His mission was to a race deeply fallen as the lost

angels and deserving the same fate ; facts which by their publicity help to account for the success of early Christianity. As conscience is not a fixed quantity, but knowledge from interchange of impressions, if teachers of religion fail to estimate sin, which is done fully by taking in all its consequences, the voice of conscience will become still. Naturally blinded by their suggestions and pleasures, men doom themselves to fixed alienation from Heaven ; if ever reached savingly it must be through conviction of sin deep enough to create faith in the necessity of the satisfaction by blood. Expositions of Christianity worked out by unbroken consciences put men back where Saul of Tarsus was, "alive without the law."

The educated portion of some Christian countries has rejected Christianity ; it did so in France, where it betrayed unmistakable signs of insanity, and in Germany, where sceptics were at length forced to pray by the infidel French.

As results have thus developed, Voltaire's paternal relation to the Revolution should secure that nothing worthy to be called learning will make infidels again; surely neither the learned nor any who have a stake in the world can cherish a pleased interest in the developing results of evolutionary and other forms of irreligious thinking, anarchic atheism. The masses are getting to be the danger now, and if contempt for Heaven and the rights of men are to be checked it must be by motives such as the forerunner of Jesus employed. "John did no miracle," yet he produced a more general commotion than Jesus, notwithstanding His miracles. Thank God that at the worst conscience only sleeps.

On the continent of America as elsewhere the press far outstrips the pulpit in the power to popularize; which would not happen to any such extent, nor would its secularizing tendency be so great were the relative importance of eternity duly emphasized by the churches.

Gloom, is it? People who struggle for riches grope their way through far deeper gloom with ultimate disappointment as the common reward. But the possibility of eternal bankruptcy? The anticipation is not intended to be eternal; but a momentary shadow, an arctic summer night opening out into an eternal day. The grandest music in the world and the sublimest poetry have been inspired by religion. Where can music be heard at present outside the churches, that is, music as distinct from smartness of execution? Even the old dispensation produced a volume of songs, some memories of conflict, conscience pangs, and gropings after God, but ending generally in the enthusiasm of deliverance. In their assemblies Christians always sing. Were the sceptically inclined philosophers they would ask why a theme so distasteful to them is of such engrossing delight as many of the Psalms indicate: "Whom have I in heaven but Thee and there is none in all the earth that I

desire besides Thee." "Oh, how love I Thy law, it is my meditation all the day." "Thou hast given me more than the men of the world when their corn and wine are increased."

It may not be amiss, however, to pause and ask if there is not a present danger of religion flickering out again in chants as it did once before. "After seventy years Babylon shall sing as an harlot," was a strange saying of an old prophet to be immortalized by holy writ. The harlot's song would be sung to cheer her regardlessness and to attract lovers. As church music is addressed to God, or ought to be, it may not be out of place to ask if it be to please men or God so much artistic music is paid for by the churches? It does not appear that the inspired teachers of Christianity encouraged any leading attraction except preaching Christ and Him crucified; the present necessity for other methods should make men pause and enquire if it does not spring from

the defects the writer is endeavouring to point out. The pre-reformation churches also found it necessary to bedeck themselves with ornaments and sing; Christianity loses headway whenever or wherever its terrible necessity is overlooked.

As a rule, in cities especially, sermons are now constructed after Channing, which probably would not make men much worse were they all saints; but they are ill calculated to extract the Pharisee out of sinners. Through ignoring ill-desert in its most serious aspect, enforced above all others by Jesus, the satisfaction by blood, the prominent lesson of both Testaments, is dimmed because it puts a frown on the divine countenance which must ever beam with pleasure to get the public suffrage. The well balanced character of the Nazarene exhibited on one side the tenderness of a parent, but when rebuke was needed, a faithfulness that warmed into burning

indignation.¹ From its first to its last page the Bible is of a piece, as much holy indignation being expressed in the last book as in the first, and as much loving care for men.

It is God's greatness as well as men's that makes the chasm so yawning now that they have become hostile. Mental weaklings fall out and agree again, the offences of the trifling are trifles; but sin, both on account of Him sinned against and him sinning, is no trifle. Gruesome death was God's instantaneous stamp on it. It is true that all other creatures are doomed to suffering and death as well as men. In imagination look down into the ocean and see a veritable pandemonium, an endless variety of creatures created apparently to live in fear and to be devoured by each other. God asks for no apologists, as He makes no apology; because this is His object lesson on the value he

¹ In the most glowing passage in Isaiah justice is not overlooked: See Isaiah LXI, ver. 2, "To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God," which Jesus did.

attaches to mere sensuous life. When man fell into sensuousness he became like the beasts that perish, his organism so changed too, that his excretions poisoned the very atmosphere and originated all the plagues. But because he has a higher nature with tremendous possibilities that fights successfully against absolute extinction, he is very precious in the sight of God, Who in mercy has chosen to exhibit His own greatness by making advances for renewed friendship. In order to reconciliation God and men must meet again; the life of Christ was a repetition of the companionship of Eden on a different scale. The result is that in His divine nature Jesus is here for ever, "He walketh in the midst of the candlesticks." Some men object to the pre-supposition that there is a plurality in the Godhead; but how could a Being existing in absolute unity create a world in which society is the characteristic of all life? To conceive of a Being existing in lonely Personality having

such persistent ideas of society produces the chill of an iceberg.¹

Because the proud avenger of every slight, the destroyer of life, the bold, unscrupulous warrior is the human ideal, Jesus was abnormal in the world and felt to be so. Although faultless and because faultless, a torturing death was inflicted on Him by representatives of the nations. But if Jesus thus failed to stamp His image on the race in His own brief day, far less were the fishermen of Gallilee qualified to do it. The Day of Pentecost was a necessity as indispensable as the operation that formed the pattern of the new humanity. Christianity is a series of divine achievements, spiritual victories in the dominion of souls. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." Referring to this change the prophet was authorized to ask, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots?" Saul of Tarsus is put up as a perpetual illustra-

¹ People who, like others, came into universal surroundings yesterday, think they know that the Godhead must be in all respects a unity.

tion of the source of spiritual life; Christianity lives and is destined to live by the omnipotence of God.

The words employed in St. Paul's conversion are worthy of attention; the commandment came to him in the form of a question; "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" In substance it was the accusation made the source of commotion on the day of Pentecost. And here too it was the soul-stirring voice of Jesus, if through words of accusation coming from human lips. In general it is as it were on the storm lashed waves, an object of dread, when He comes to be the Source of an eternal calm. Men fear when they think they have seen a spirit; this time it is One, on His first visit, but coming to be an everlasting Friend. In ordinary cases how can there be true reconciliation with God if there be not first a sense of the awful justice which made the Cross essential to salvation? Failure in so many "conversions" comes from neglect of the all-

important preliminary, to "Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns.." It is really moral self-depreciation forced upon the consciousness by the Word and Spirit that compels "all old things to pass away and all things to become new," and, moreover, that makes faith in Christ a felt necessity. "As in grafting," some one remarks, "the wounded parts meet and unite, so the wounded soul and the wounded Saviour." On that terrible night when the destroying angel passed over Egypt the Israelites old and young were in the shelter of their homes and the posts of every door were sprinkled with blood. Faith in God's word made them do it and it saved them. Then it was faith that saved, now it is conversion, because modern ingenuity has found out a novelty—a road to heaven with the conscience asleep.

In what are called revivals the remark is too often true that man is spelled with a large M and God with a small g. But

if a special creative act formed the pattern of the "new humanity," no revivalist can form the new humanity itself. The mistake has its origin in a tendency to undervalue regeneration by conceiving it as conversion or a restoration to former individual experiences, which some men, by their peculiarities can bring about. To please parents, their children are described as born with angels in their bosoms, germs of righteousness that only need religious excitement to make them bud or sing. On the contrary, it is in this sphere miracles need to be continuous, physical miracles having been intended to mark the introduction of a miraculous dispensation. The import of preaching is well expressed by the words, "Awake, thou that sleepest, arise from the dead and Christ shall give thee light." When this command is heard, as the life-giving voice of Jesus, there are results and not otherwise. Omnipotent grace alone can erect the standard of God in the human

heart; a conception of righteousness, higher and holier than was ever conceived by the soul, and through it, bring the new man from the thralldom of the old. Regeneration is the law re-written in the heart; Christ must be formed there by victorious grace before men can live His life.

It is no less dangerous, however, to make the mistake of replacing faith, the condition of salvation, by conversion; because it slackens efforts to inspire the necessity for Christ, which is an awakened conscience. The "new redemption" seeks to save men from sinning, which is the new meaning of sin for polite ears; consequently, sweets have to be administered as a counterpoise, although it is well known that "dry husks" and not sweets brought the prodigal home to his father. Men are willing to emphasize sin; the Bible emphasizes guilt, a thing separable from sin and transferable to a substitute.¹ It

¹ This was the fact emphasized by the formalities connected with animal sacrifice of old—imposition of hands and confession of sin.

is of ill-desert sinners have to be convicted; something that adheres after actions are forgotten; and he who said "By the terror of the Lord we persuade men," knew a thing or two about effective dealing with souls. There is no anæsthetic for surgical operations on the spirit. When reasoned with on righteousness, temperance and judgment to come, Felix trembled; how differently are men of his class dealt with now! When addressing citizens of Rome, St. Paul discounted their significance and made a starting point for forgiveness by such expressions as "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish on every soul of man that doeth evil." The most calamitous result of sin neither repentance nor regeneration can remove: its ill-desert.

Belittling sin, which creates unwillingness to believe in the severity of divine justice, is at the root of infidelity. The determined policy of Christians should be to hold the fort and not allow the

seeds of scepticism to spring up within the Church itself. A good-natured cypher on the throne would be a good stake were the subjects all good-natured cyphers too; as men are, the conception would encourage demoniac passions. Stern justice, with power to enforce it, is the complement for the position; and the honest truth should be proclaimed fearlessly in unhesitating faith that God will co-operate with it to establish His Kingdom. Few will be bold enough to say that the Bible had its origin in cruelty instead of in kindly honesty. Prophets of smooth things flaunt themselves as tender-hearted, but "The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel." Because Christianity was originated by danger, its warnings are its most tender portions; their object being to save men unconscious that "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Because the opinion of the Middle Ages, impressed by literal pictures of fires and worms, has been

exploded by a careful study of the New Testament, which represents God as "a consuming fire," it is reasoning *per saltem* to conclude that the eternal future of impenitents has been blotted out.

A good deal of the preaching of the age, on the theological as distinguished from the practical side, consists in proclaiming the importance of money; enjoining sacrifice, which means money, as about the shortest cut to heaven. A grateful preacher with polite ingenuity, can juggle the line that marks off the evidence of faith from the substitute for it; a thing almost unavoidable when danger from hereafter retribution is ignored, a refined development with a serious threat in it for the present. For if Christ's personal teaching to be safe had to be inaugurated by the stringent views of the Baptist and qualified by His own outbreaks of righteous indignation, with a full exposition of eternal consequences, the imprudent course is not safer in the hands of His nineteenth

century followers. The modern experiment is on a par with what abolishing prisons would be, and in many quarters antediluvian experiences are thickening fast. All moral forces sink into utter insignificance when compared with preaching; only it must be done, and on the New Testament lines. Samson shorn of his locks, grinding in a prison house, is not an inapt representation of a portion of the ministry of the day; making sport for the Philistines.

When not faith in Christ for salvation but sacrifice is continually enforced, which means money and goodness by proxy, there are two classes of interested people, the beneficent¹ and the beneficiaries. The mistake in regard to the former may be in taking for granted that they are all what they are not—saints. They who come to church to enquire what *good thing* they shall *do* to have eternal life, are insincere and will end

¹ A rogue who gives his thousands is a far greater personage in churches than the widow who gives her last two mites, because Christianity is not uppermost in the age.

by turning their backs on Christ; that is, unless corrected; and this may be an offence. These unqualified harangues on sacrifice enforced on those who have anything to part with, tend to fill a country with tramps who eye the well-doing as legitimate prey. Enforcing love and its expressions without emphasizing justice on those who have and have not anything to spare is a blunder unconsciously fostering the danger of the age—socialism, among people who do not accept the gospel as a whole any more than many of those who pretend to preach it. To check in the bud the worst catastrophe that ever threatened the Christian nations, the "good news" must without loss of time be associated again in the public mind with eternal Right. God's word, when faithfully proclaimed, is the instrument of His moral government, "The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

The relation of the Cross to eternal justice, well understood, is the secret of

the reforming power of the gospel. Had Jesus merely taught His accredited lessons and done good as recorded, which the Jews never denied, nor do they yet; for Jewish parents still tell their children and others in argument that He filched His power by a surreptitious entrance into the "holiest;" had His doings and sayings been everything His fame might not have reached beyond His age and country. But why, for example, was He thought so much greater than Moses that one day in seven, the day commemorative of creation changed, came to be observed in honour of His Name? Moses was a worker of far greater miracles than Jesus; Jesus fed multitudes; Moses saved and fed a whole nation for forty years! But the greatest miracle of Jesus was spiritual; he saved a lost world. Apropos of His ability He declared that "All power in heaven and on earth was committed" to Him; how could He wield it if not Infinite?

Faith in the representative principle

grows with the growth of intelligence ; God hangs the fate of races on it. How few there are of either the fortunate or unfortunate who can say that their position in life is altogether owing to themselves. On account of the solidarity of the race or the units of society, a principle underlies human affairs that seems to conflict with justice which is nevertheless endorsed to its fullest extent and bearings by the intervention of Jesus Christ. A divine Person assuming human nature is necessarily greater than the whole family of mankind together ; and is necessarily their Lord and Master and as such their Representative. In assuming human nature by divine arrangement, He assumed its obligations which gave His obedience unto death an infinite value for those who receive Him. There are dark shadows all round "a light shining in a dark place;" but the skilful navigator making for port fixes his eye on the clear light ahead and not on the surrounding gloom. It

is often necessary to walk by faith outside of religion as well as in it.

Unbelief is the condition of a mind unadjusted to nature or that is out of gearing and disjointed by sin. In a universe created by God, that rests on Him, that is operated by Him, faith in Him should be the normal condition. Because human alienation has alienated God, familiarity with His reserve has changed the natural perceptions. Only a Being of immense social qualities could have created the social instincts of the world; such a Being would seek society. So that the Bible combines a true picture of the real as opposed to the perverted nature when it also describes the origin and workings of the latter. Visiting the world He made and even becoming incarnate in it is nearer real nature than the opposite view, although intellectual through moral imbecility makes a divine operation necessary to adjust minds to the truth. A confused

perception of this has led the scepticism of the age to get rid of God.

Faithful preaching does not, as is often charged, create artificial anxiety in order to allay it. Plights about religion exist occasionally and in measure in most bosoms and should be nursed to the deciding point, instead, the writer has not unfrequently heard "hades" whispered as if out of dread that consciences might be discomposed. It is true that in rare cases the conscience is dead; it is so in silent men who never trouble about religion and cannot see the difference between this and that belief. Blatant unbelievers talk to keep their courage up, consciously fighting against God. Were the best known and most demonstrative atheist in America to overhear a well reasoned sermon on the judgment to come it might take months of blasphemy to put his disjointed thoughts at rest again. Not unfrequently such men are more susceptible than others, going to churches to deride and

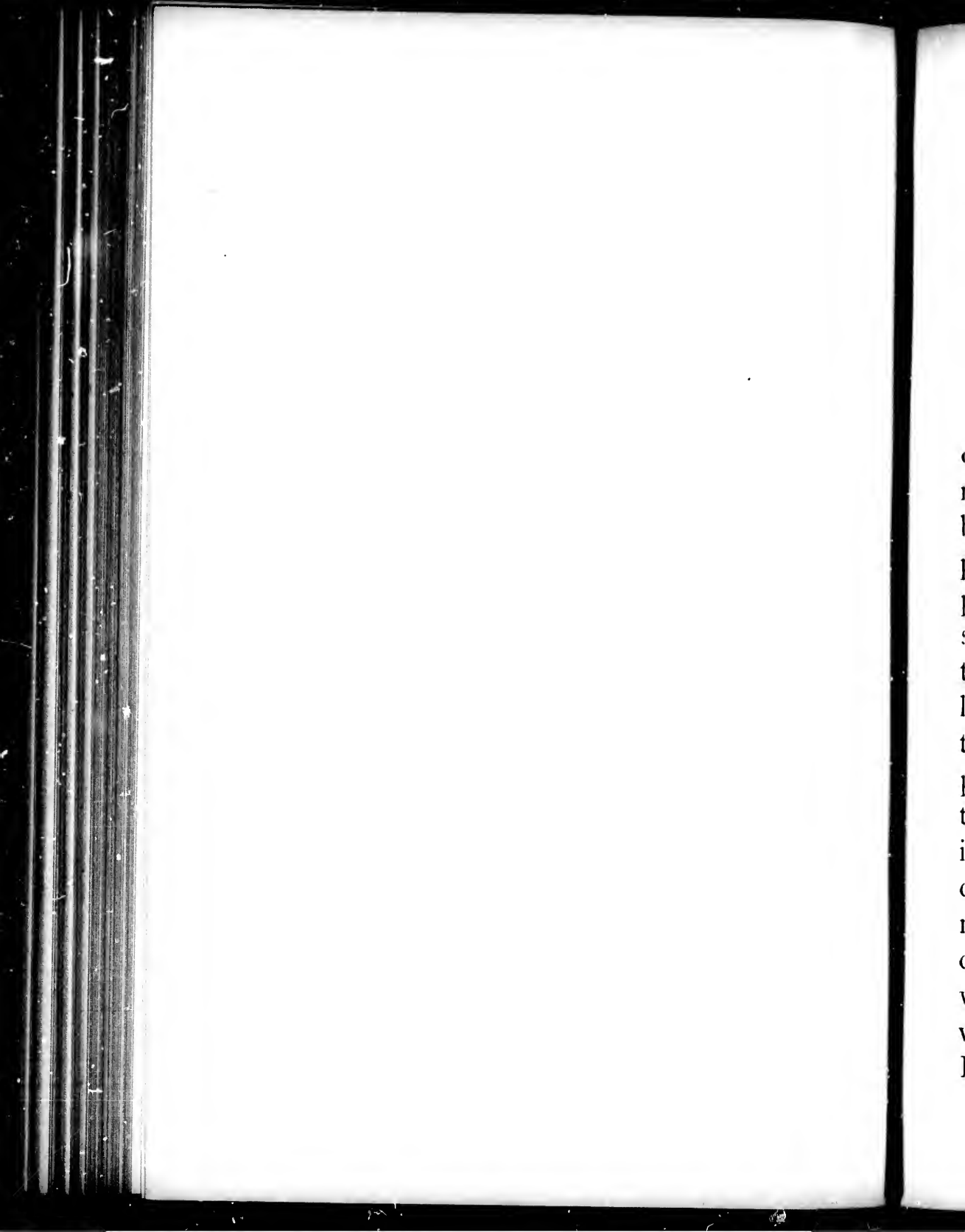
remaining to pray. By no means should any chance be lost of creating the necessity for Jesus; but it must be done after the example of St. Paul by calm "reasonings," "on righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." It was a reasoned sermon on "Sinners in the hands of an angry God," that began the greatest unmistakable revival that ever took place on this continent; one which has been going on ever since.

Let it be added that men who take in the fulness of Christian Theology and its many-sidedness, are not placed under any press to secularize the pulpit as they are who have become insipid and tiresome by harping on a single string. When not only the love of God but its awful reactions against wrong are firmly grasped, the old story clothes itself with the fulness of the Bible and of universal nature and affords pastures of inexhaustible richness and variety. Ritualistic churches, by missing the point, have been forced to make additions to the

authoritative truth of God, till the Bible has disappeared under a load of traditional rubbish. Modern ecclesiastics, who miss the point, pressed¹ for substance, have become speaking Sunday newspapers, savouring of the theatres, and of works of fiction. The field of truth open to the Evangelical preacher is large as the universe and its Creator. This is called narrow; he is very large minded whose grasp of truth is weak, hesitating or a total miss; such cobwebs of humbug the Christian teacher must learn to shred away.

¹ Religious menu of a Christian city as advertised for a recent Sunday. Subjects :—"Is the Trilby craze dying out?" "Fitzsimmons and Corbett." "How the pastor spends his vacation." "Should our daughters marry foreign noblemen?" "High sleeves and theatre hats." "The Gold Brick saloon." "Wordsworth and the Lake school of poetry." "The 53rd Congress." The rights of motormen." Texts like these advertised in Chicago may have convinced the Japanese that the Christian religion had exhausted itself.

OTHER DANGERS.



OTHER DANGERS.

RITUALISM.

At some period of life probably everyone has to deplore the actualities of a nature he possesses in common with barbarians. History has revealed a proclivity to savagery everywhere until people have been forced by authority to submit to some kind of rule. Civilization is the external impress of family and national laws, and admits even among the baptized outbreaks of lawlessness that the prisons cannot check. The bloodthirsty tyrants of the French Revolution were ingratiated friends of the people till circumstances exposed the stuff they were made of. "Is thy servant a dog," exclaimed a plotter for the throne of Israel when told he would deluge his country with blood. Because Jesus unveiled the Pharisees by letting them know what

they were they crucified Him to prove He was mistaken. It was human nature as it is, bad at the root, that made Him announce the necessity of a change so radical that He called it to "be born again." A secret dislike to God inspires the wish that there was no God; the root sore that has begotten the deformities of history. Criminals can scarcely be patriotic; but the trouble is that crime against High Heaven, when not against human law, is cherished by the guilty as venial, God's opinion and theirs being *toto cælo* apart. The initial step of reform is by divine impression or impact to make them accord; the gospel is the "Kingdom of Heaven," because it establishes the reign of God in human hearts.

The absence of an adequate knowledge of the real nature and extent of the change known as the "second birth," which seems to be regarded by many as a mere form of words that can be realized by another formality, comes from

defective experience and from inattention to the very pointed teachings of Scripture. Infant baptism is intended to impress the fact that from birth a child needs spiritual cleansing from Heaven; in which, however, the parents acknowledge an obligation to co-operate by instruction and prayer. The aim of ritualism is sacerdotal prestige.

Children take in vivid impressions from nature; at an early date their attention should be called to the isolation of the world, to heavens within sight but in reality shut up and sealed; an admonition explained by the initial revelations of the Bible that ought to arouse the conscience. As a modern writer has said, the world has every appearance of having been fitted up for a penitentiary, with instruments of punishment and death. There are herbs that poison; quadrupeds that terrify and devour; serpents that bite; insects that sting; worms that prey on man and his supplies. Even the elements essential to

life carry the power of death in them ; the atmosphere by storms and as a conveyer of infection ; the electric currents and the liquid element. As children that survive have to find their way to Heaven by securing fitness for it, the necessity should be shewn them by fixing their attention on ebullitions of sin ; impatience, unreasonableness, fretfulness, ingratitude, jealousy, falsehood, covetousness. To parents their children may be angels, to others they are generally about the reverse. Baptism cannot, does not wash ; but it teaches the need of spiritual change ; an important lesson. As John said, in striking the key note on the subject, I baptize with water, He that cometh *after me* shall baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire ; the expectants get the blessing. Baptism admits to the visible church those who are to be postulants for the church invisible.

As an encouragement to early religious instruction it is on record that probably

the heartiest appreciation ever accorded Jesus was by children in the Temple, who cried, "Hosanna to the Son of David, hosanna in the highest." Religion imbibed in early life ought to scotch two of the worst vices at the roots; a sinner saved by grace should be as humble as his Master, and in the hour of success. Jesus, when nearing Jerusalem and knowing that an ovation was in preparation for Him, chose a colt, the foal of an ass, not in affected humility like others, the smallest creature able to bear his weight and rode it amid the plaudits of the people. Wealth inspires the ambition to ride nearer heaven; but sanctified wealth can never be made an instrument for rivalling others in display. But the rich are often unheeding that idleness and unlimited opportunities of pleasure demoralize the young. Job had a considerable family of sons and daughters whom he indulged in ceaseless rounds of gaiety, under the misapprehension that prayers and sacrifices could

save them from ruin and check their influence for mischief on others. Because it conveys a sharp providential opinion on the subject, not many books deserve immortality more than "Job." "God keeps silence" "and afflicts very sore." Not without reason was that good but over indulgent parent and his inconsiderate helpmeet put at the mercy of calamity for a season and made a deathless warning to others. Affliction, because its primary object is to awaken faith in God, is a stimulus to upward progress. A bad boy is always rash and full of confidence in himself; the rod, wisely used, inspires him with confidence in his parents; it is human nature to think that wisdom lies at the back of a powerful arm. Affliction softens too; and above most refining influences stands the death of children, even little children. The hallowing effect of the death of a child has not unfrequently told for generations; and who can pronounce that the little patient was not bettered by

ordeal? What tempers! No other young creature is so impatient and rageful as the child of man.

True, even on the supposition that regeneration is by baptism, instruction might be needed; but surely not in "line upon line and precept upon precept," as at present and enforced by the rod. When the appeal is made to results another argument looms up. Regeneration by the Holy Ghost through a begotten faith issues in "The peace of God which passeth all understanding." They who mistake baptism for regeneration never get rid of dominating sin and guilt, but are forced to hope for emancipation through imposed penances, church ritual¹ and purgatorial fires. Ritualism and purgatory are linked twins.

It seems to be the fate of all churches sooner or later to die, through a proud and boastful "self-conscious-

¹ For several generations the early Christians at Rome paid no attention even to Easter or Holy Week. See Eusebius on Victor of Rome and his quarrel with the Orientals.

ness." Ritualists imagine that it is only necessary to establish a formal procession from the early Christian Church; which, if amounting to identity would mean little, for how often has an enquiry established the identity of a corpse. The sapless tree is identical with the old living one and its veritable successor, only its life has fled. A true church may have to be a shoot or sapling from the undying Root of the Apostolic one; just as the Church of Christ was a sapling from the Root of the Mosaic one. What are called "Canonical Orders" have become a great obstacle to the authority of Christ, by claims put up of keys not merely to open and expose the treasures of the kingdom as Peter did, but for their absolute disposal.

If English Ritualists claim independence of Rome, they should shew it by less *bare-faced* plagiarism. But is it possible for a mere succession of names with the St. Peter legend left out to form anything but a rope of sand. There is

no other choice of a Foundation for the church except St. Peter and Rome or St. Peter's confession, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God." If the latter is chosen it explodes the trick of unchurching others who rest equally on the same foundation and who claim, what must be admitted as true, that acceptance of a form of church government is not the condition of salvation. To pose as an exclusive church like the Church of Rome without the figment¹ on which her pretended authority rests can only excite a laugh.

Ritualism was invented long ages ago when there were few Bibles and very little learning; and it seems almost incredible that an intelligent people like the English, so long accustomed to look beyond both Italy and Greece for religious leading, can be seduced to extin-

¹ No Jew would have so misapplied the words "Thou art Peter," which was a dignified form of asseveration, as "Thou art Pharoah," which meant, as sure as thou art Pharoah, so surely, etc. As sure as thou art *Petros*, a moveable rock or stone, so surely will I build my church on this *petra*, an immovable rock, "The Rock of Ages;" and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." St. Peter's confession is the foundation on which the gospel rests.

guish the glorious Sun of the Church of England in order to light her up with candles. True, it is hard to see why an Englishman, more than a Latin or a Greek, should be unable, by humming prepared sentences in the ear of God, to induce Him to change His verdict on the dead; only when everything depends on advertising, promptitude generally carries the day. The others have it.

That neither Jesus nor His apostles were hopefully enthusiastic about immediate results is apparent from their forecasts. The great Author of the New Testament turning His face futurewards retired with a frown on His brow, which is expressed in a Book lurid with indignation and threatening storms; an exhibition of His other side, the reaction of love, "the wrath of the Lamb." The writers of the sacred books were inspired to reveal the interaction of the spirit world with the world of men; and it is their peculiarity never to veil unpalatable truth, leaving the result with God. They

foretell success, but as the long delayed aftermath of struggle, failure and even apostacy. In its essence the apostacy of a church is loss of conscious intercourse with God, which for centuries was symptomized by an almost universal conviction, not only that sacerdotals but dead men and women are not only within more easy access but a nearer cut to heaven than the Condescending Mediator. Because divine, Jesus is momentarily present with the hundreds of millions of souls scattered over the earth. Almost His last words were, "Lo, I am with you alway." Of no saint or sinner is this true, nor can it be true. Nor does the idea of angelic intermediaries improve the matter, because eternity would be hoary-headed before the hundreds and millions of prayers offered daily could be attended to. The idea was begotten in ages of credulous simplicity. The Foundation of a spiritual building destined to extend into all lands throughout all time must be omni-

present. With appreciation, Jesus is called, "Immanuel, God with us." Above other functions it is the duty of Christ's servants to put their Master forward as a Living Presence; not a physical presence or of the portion of His Person which cannot be omnipresent, a substitute for the conscious Presence of a conscious Person. The attempt to re-establish the lost intercourse with Christ, who holds Himself aloof, by means of an unbroken chain of ordinations and through them by a supposed transformation of the sacramental elements,¹ fails where, if true, it ought to succeed, in the consciousness of the Church, which displays an ever intensifying dependence for intercourse with Heaven on the supposed sainted dead of other years and on mortal men. In translating the Old Testament it was a dangerous oversight to call the official of the ancient ceremonial church a *presbuteros*, variously made

¹ The Jews had no word that meant to represent, but employed the substantive verb. To escape the charge of carniphagianism, the Romans watch the teeth, but nevertheless make the mistake of putting Christ into the stomach instead of the heart.

prester, Pêtre, "priest." The mistake has filled many heads more familiar with Greek than the Greek Testament with confusion. If the officials of the two economies had been identical *Hiereus* would have been the word. The mistake points to the neglect of Greek by the Western Churches.

Through the Incarnation in its completed purpose on the Cross, God comes into living contact with penitents, all obstacles having been removed by the annihilation of guilt. As formerly by miracles wrought in His name, Christ continues to demonstrate His omnipresence by directly communicating the new nature and adding "The peace which the world can neither give nor take away." Of course it is natural for ecclesiastics of the conquering nations, Greeks, Latins, English, to claim a monopoly of religion too; but except that there is money in it and distinction it is a mistake. In this religion all must rest on the same Foundation and in the same way, by

immediate contact. It is because Christ is now here His words are of eternal import, "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." When they were uttered there were neither Greek, Latin nor English "priests" in existence; nor was anything ever added concerning them afterwards by inspired men.

The danger that threatens the Episcopal churches of America is just what helped to ruin all the ancient ones—the patronage accorded to bishops. A dependent clergy, owned by the bishops, is necessarily an obsequious one, flattering their patrons till inflated with a false supernatural consciousness, dangerous to the liberties of mankind. When Eusebius was listing the apostolical succession who could have imagined that a day would come when 200,000,000 human beings would be worked like marionettes by a single hand! Unchecked by the laity the clergy are sure to "consolidate" under a single crook and foolscap; and

will glorify their office by magnifying the import of religious symbols. It is notable that the churches which, at the Reformation adopted an unadorned worship, have been best attended throughout and have secured the attachment of their people. Yet it should be no cause for surprise, as in them there is least to draw attention away from Christ and to muffle the conscience. Churches made like caverns and lighted up to give the officials the appearance of flitting ghosts uttering sepulchral sounds substitute a mystic awe for religion and which cannot stand the strain of enlightenment.

SOCIALISM.

As rivers depend on lakes for their steady flow, so the rich are necessary for the poor. By providential control means are heaped up in careful hands to be paid out to those who need to work for them; if obtained without effort by the majority the world would stagnate and rot. Men fitted to accumulate are not

commonly ruined by accumulations; whereas those not fitted soon ruin themselves through accidental abundance.

Immigrants to a new country bring society "in pieces" with them to re-construct it anew; and it is often noticed that those who begin by paying even outward attention to religion succeed, while those who do not about as generally fail. In America adherents of churches as a rule became such when they owned little and got what they have by the blessing of God; a fact sometimes forgotten by their children, to their own great loss. God's blessing made Abraham rich in a new country, a thing not without parallels on this continent.

Many outsiders whose poverty and distress connect with a back turned against God, hate the churches because there are rich people in them; mostly rich in some; ignoring that the Church is an institution established by Jesus Christ, and that the silver and gold are His. The rich are not in churches

because they are rich, but are rich because they are there. The best advice to the ill-clothed, ill-fed multitude is to trace out the footsteps of the flock, God's flock, and follow them. The Good Shepherd holds the "keys" and can unlock the treasures of earth as well as heaven, Christians having the promise of this life as well as of that which is to come. To not a few God gives their good things in this life as a reward for external respect for religion; it is the interest as well as the duty of all to seek what is infinitely better; although the wealth of the churches and of Christian nations is one of the striking evidences of Christianity. If it is unequally divided careful observation will often disclose that a considerate providence controls the inequality, so that the rich in turn may be a providence for the poor; and as charity should be the twin sister of justice, a just providence to their employés; for there is neither sense, benevolence nor religion in stint-

ing labourers in order to create fame by liberality to hospitals and almshouses and other vicarious charities, which, when religion gains full sway, will be unnecessary, charity being best dispensed by contact with the sufferers. The rich should above everything recognize a right in all the well-doing to acquire something that can be laid aside. Much might be done by clergymen of courage to foster justice among their people; justice, not charity alone. The necessary texts will not be found wanting.

Women not wishing to bring on calamity by their exclusiveness can do a great deal to stop the "brew" of whatever disturbance is among the coming possibilities. The wives and daughters of large employers of labour should let their religion lead them to take a living interest in the employés and in their poor wives and children. A brow placed carefully on a book-board on Sunday is not necessarily religion; such acts, at any rate, would be more satisfactory were

the mind not unfrequently charged with anxiety for struggling families, and the tongue employed to plead their cause with the task-master. An ill-hidden disrespect adds greatly to the sorrows of the poor; labour should be dignified by honouring the muscles it forms at least equally with those formed by mere exercise. The most indispensable members of society, like those of the body, are the lowest, its hands and feet. The English people, for example, could get along for a much greater length of time without the house of lords than without the coal miners. When human intelligence has reached the stand-point of St. Paul, who described the Church as one body made up of many members, much of the sawdust stuffing shall have disappeared from human life. The Bible begins its lessons by pointing to the human race as a blood-related family, and supercilious ignorance must never get fairly rid of the fact. If successful men and women would also hunt up

the acquaintances of youth who have been unfortunate, much could be done to alleviate the sufferings of the world.

From year to year, by God's blessing, mother earth yields sufficient for the keep and comfort of mankind; and there is capital enough for it to reach the needs of all; if it does not the fault is often with those who have, but far oftener with those who want. When Christianity obtains its rightful sway the antichrist of the English race shall have been dethroned and by far the larger part of its miseries blotted out¹—King Alcohol.

Nothing can be done without capital; capital is created, not by industry only, but by thrift, poverty in general existing because one or both of them have been wanting. As those who cannot make generally fail because they will not keep; were labourers granted part control with him who made a stock-in-trade, often there would soon be little left to divide.

¹ Tobacco has greatly increased the tendency to drunkenness by depressing energy and making stimulation necessary.

Individual possessions and control are a merciful arrangement for the race; and irreconcilables to the system hopelessly fight against God. A few at the start have worked like beavers and by stint accumulated savings, envied by such as cannot save and will not; were socialism adopted in full sweep and the savings of a people put under joint control, there would soon be universal poverty or universal slavery. God's blessing co-operating with talent makes the world productive; and talent with ambition checked would have to bear sway perhaps to a much greater extent under a social system. Those who by business qualities made money outside of the system would at length of necessity be conceded the direction in it; and the eloquent advocates of socialism with the empty pockets would be gratified with the position of slaves. At present there is a public press where complaints can be ventilated; state socialism would put the publishing interest too into the same

tyrannical hands; and instead of pensions for old age, the should-be pensioners would be forced to labour while two threads of them hung together. Accumulations would disappear because the motive to accumulate had been snuffed out. Rich "brotherhoods" are composed of chosen persons, and not of the people at large.

No! Christianity accepted generally by the young, rich and poor as well, is the only hope for the labouring world. Men imagine that socialism could be worked outside of the Church; it cannot; the idea, like other ideas with a kindly look, originated in the Church, and if anything approaching it is ever reached, it will be by the Church. Wherever the gospel is faithfully preached the help given to the distressed is considerable. Were the crowd to come in and insist on preaching or religious teaching such as existed in apostolic times, thus giving free course to the grace of God, charity would be wisely enlarged. As it is,

there are few cities in Christendom where successful men are not found whose start in life dates from orphanage, when a widowed mother moved the sympathy of the community for her fatherless children, cast upon God. The unprecedented liberality at Jerusalem was brought out by a multitude who through the Christian excitement overstayed their time and whose funds had given out. When men at large adopt the Christian religion there will be equal liberality in times of distress; for this religion is the same for ever.

But the hope for labourers is not beggary: in the Christian system "Children are God's heritage and the fruit of the womb is His reward." The idea, a forgotten one, perhaps because parents depend too much on Sunday school and too little on home instruction, is that children are a rich investment. To dedicate a child to God and lead him to dedicate himself is the best thing a parent can do for both; it puts the

young on the road to success and makes them too noble to neglect in their old age and feebleness those who gave them birth. By oversight Christians must not any longer allow the religion of China to surpass their own in so important a matter. Let the poor who have become so by forsaking God, as the Jews often did, retrace their steps and take order that their children may not be guilty of such a blunder. One of old said, "I never saw the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread." Pity 'tis that in so many homes the Bible is seldom or never opened, prayer never said, and no catechism taught. Without family religion a church is an armless sentinel, "a voice crying in the wilderness." If the Christian endeavourers could secure a general adoption of family religion the society would leave its mark on the world. In Jewish households there is conspicuous a structure occupying a central place, a real family altar, the source of the figure, which

indicates that the family worships God. This and not the Synagogue alone is the explanation of the undying vigour of Judaism.

The feasibility of the scheme to disinherit landowners in America by a single tax on land may be judged by the fact that throughout North America the large majority of constituencies are agricultural; and in them the overwhelming majority of voters are landowners. The highest titled person in Europe never achieved anything equal to cutting a home out of the forest. At any rate, fighting at the back of a coat of mail scarcely began to indicate a heart of flint like that which attacked a tangled forest in a campaign of twenty or thirty years. At one time, and not so very long ago, it was no uncommon thing to see in French Canada "teams" of four oxen and three horses tugging at a plough, the habit created by a peculiarly stubborn and root bound soil in the beginning. Canada is destined to main-

tain in all departments a leading place on the American continent, because settled by people the equals of those who went to the American colonies before the Revolution. Already, however, in cities where vast sums have been spent on breathing spaces, if a man buys more land than his house is intended to cover, and adorns it for the public eye, he is punished by an immense fine, no distinction being made from land held for speculation. The people of the country at large are of a grain insufficiently flexible to be handled in any such fashion.¹ The clearance of the land with its cultivation, has created the villages, towns and cities with all their wealth, and it is stupid to talk of taking revenge on land by a tax, instead of taxing the wealth it has made and is making.

People who hunger for land control should do what common sense dictates; make it out of the forest, or a thing in-

¹ George's principle was evidently a suggestion from countries where land monopoly exists; a mental slip. As the prosperity of cities depends on a crowd of small traders, so the prosperity of a country depends on a multitude of landowners as far as possible untaxed.

calculably easier, on the prairies. It would teach them what the rights of land proprietors are.

The discontented would be very happy they think, if such and such changes and privileges were conceded to them; very unreasonable things many of them. It is to be feared that at present an atmosphere of fancy created by novel reading is doing much injury to the race everywhere; from tender infancy children are isolated from the work-a-day world by a film of imaginings awakened by fiction. At length the door of Don Quixote's library had to be built up; sooner or later for the benefit of mankind something in this line will have to be done on a general scale. An ingrained novel reader is out of joint with matters of fact, and unperceptive of eternal truth as a savage; as well try to spread water over an oiled skin. A good deal of the discontent of the age and of its irreligion too, must be ascribed

to the unreality of imaginative descriptions.¹

Yes, the discontented think they would be happy if such and such things were theirs; this can be true only of one thing, Christ called the "one thing needful;" the pulsations of eternal life. In the mass people were never better off than at present, yet were they never more noisily dissatisfied because finite things cannot satiate an immortal spirit. "The sorrows of Werther" about portray the feelings of those who strive to live without God and without hope in the world. On the other hand, every conscious dependent on God is able to say with the poor man who penned the words, "Thou hast put gladness in my heart more than they have whose corn and wine are increased." Since creatures have power to express their thoughts, feelings to each other, it would be strange indeed if God could not express His own to men.

¹ It is claimed that good has and may be done by novels; but in concocting falsehoods the good have no chance in competition with the "father of lies."

Materialistic views of the Old Testament were a danger, apparently foreseen by one of the Apostles. The "land flowing with milk and honey" leaves the impression that religion then had most to do with temporalities; while its aim without announcing it, was to lead men to a nobler ambition. Neither Abraham, Isaac nor Jacob ever owned a foot of land except the morsel that surrounds a tomb; and for 400 years their descendants were serfs in Egypt; and with one or two exceptions the generation that escaped from bondage lived and died in the wilderness. Even in the Land of Promise the Israelites were never allowed to rest in worldly ease; when the tendency evolved a curse was surely on the wing, war, or famine, or pestilence. And is this not as it should be if God believes His own word that our home is beyond? The heaviest curse ever pronounced on a nation or an individual is expressed in these words: "Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone."

Jesus makes it undoubted that he takes special interest in the labourers of the world; wants to cheer them as He was cheered by rays from the eternal glory. Though a carpenter He could say what He can enable other workmen to say to the doubter, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." In what glowing language do the prophets fore-describe the glory of the gospel! And they made no mistake; it was to be an inward glory that would gild the common places of human life. Poverty, therefore, is not the sign that its subjects have not a Friend, kind and powerful, who wishes them well for ever. Nevertheless, faith in God is commonly the start for better things here and now, for "godliness is profitable for all things having the promise of this life as well as of that which is to come." But materials are not the highest satisfactions of life nor are they its best security. The story of David and his family illustrates for the ages the danger of wealth

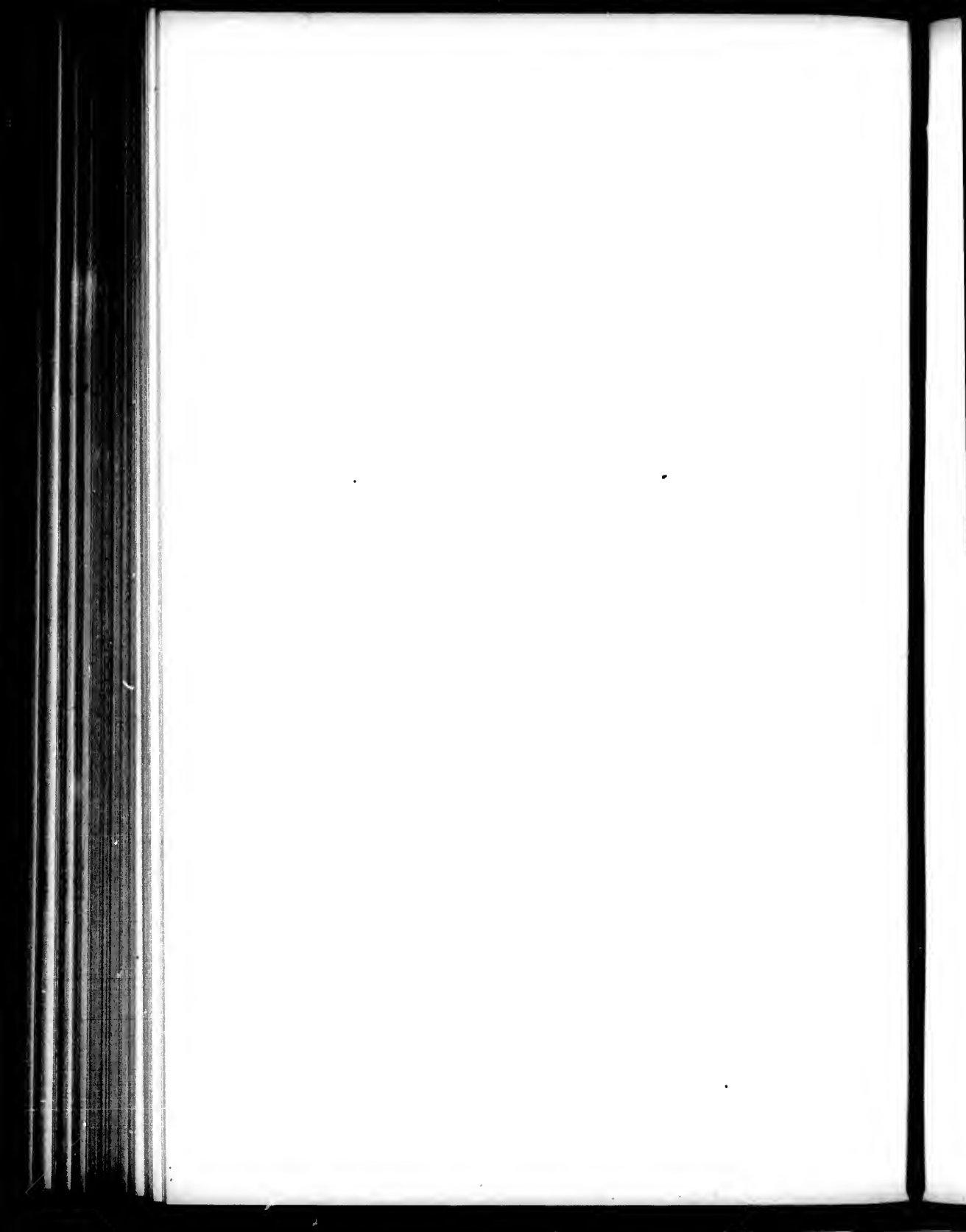
and power even to the faithful. In addition the poor have the consolation that if there is a difference in the size of dwellings there is very little in the size of men; and the most the rich can do for themselves in permanence is to adorn a grave.

It may not be amiss to indicate what is probably to a large extent the actual cause of the economic pass now so plainly within sight. "Owe no man anything," is the word of God, which the wisdom of this world imagines can be disrespected with impunity. Slow, yes, but sure. For generations businesses have been augmented through credit, and two people put into business for every one that should; the result, ever, a few years of trade excitement followed by an equal number passed in a state of "crisis." Competition is the life of trade, but through credit it is also made the opportunity of the unprincipled and the promoter of bankruptcies. The chief permanent result has been an un-

natural increase of population everywhere; an overflow that has peopled all come-at-able countries at least three centuries sooner than it should have been done—one upshot, agricultural overproduction. Now that the choicest parts of America have been occupied the jostling in cities has begun, and who knows how it is to end! Apart from new openings abroad in the past for the surplus people of the old countries, there would have been famines, pestilences, and bloodshed long ago. People are produced by credit like goods and the market overstocked. When the prairies of Canada come to be truly appraised it should put the evil day off for a generation. It must be admitted, however, that the crush in cities has been aggravated by the general adoption of agricultural machinery, often bought on credit.

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INSTRUMENTALITIES.



EDUCATION.

All substances possessing life may be considered capable of improvement beyond what their ordinary environment is able to excite; which gives men a chance to co-operate with God in perfecting the beauty and utility of the world; and to improve themselves by the operation. Creation might have been as inelastic as cast metal; the possibility of improvement with the changes implied is the condition and stimulus of progress. Finished statuary with voluntary beings to admire it seems to be the evolutionist's idea of what a created world should have been.

It must have been in foresight that the imperfections embraced in the chances for improvement would one day be turned against the Creator. By a maggot leap the evolutionist now installs change in the room of God; which once

more shews divine prescience in the literary monuments that make creation in general the first lesson in religion and the creation of man the second. While, squarely, Darwin never did, Dr. Wallace does acknowledge creative action when, accounting for the immeasurable contrast between the genius that built the pyramids, measures the stars, navigates the oceans, harnesses the forces of nature, puts up matter in every variety of form for convenience and pleasure, analyses it, and not only traces out marks of creation in its elements, but brings motives thence to control life:—and the mind of an ape! And the field of human action, what scope it embraces, industrial, educational, artistic, religious! Concentrating attention on the simian as a mimic man seems to have effaced every other point of view. When evolutionists become less niggardly of thought they will acknowledge the divine fiat also in the extensions that give symmetry to the superstructure that differentiates men

from apes, and will see that such a Creator would scarcely make the sub-structure out of the ape as shoddy. As every mind is a new entity, so is its body, although constructed by the law through which like produces like.

Perhaps as much as for any other reason, evolution was invented to account for man without admitting him to be a moral wreck. But whence were his moral characteristics derived? two divergent lines of action of vast scope and diametrically opposed? Every other creature has its law of action which it follows; men subject themselves to law and lawlessness, a class of impulses that leads them to destruction. If animals are trapped and destroyed it is their mistake; men trap themselves with their eyes open and against remonstrances from a better nature; and no other creature is forced to be a destroying angel to its own kind, or is naturally such. Among arts the art of destroying human life has always held a leading place; in

spite of 1800 years of Christianity the mightiest engines in existence have no other purpose than to destroy mankind. And no animal in its savage state but man tortures its victims out of cold-blooded delight in cruelty; still less when they are its own kind. Taken a conjunct view of the history of the world how true the words of Jesus appear when He said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the works of your father ye will do." The pages of history are few against which the enlightened conscience does not hurl condemnation and anathemas. Moreover, men and *women too* often sink so low that it dishonours the brute creation to join them together in the same breath. Loathsome diseases, the product of vice and contaminating the blood of progenies are unknown among the brutes. By the first act of disobedience sin was forced into existence as a permanent entity below the consciousness, the source of immoral feelings and thoughts. It is the result

of race consciousness of the divine displeasure; which also explains why renewed friendship with Heaven inaugurates a moral revolution in the soul.

As there was nothing supernatural in the first sin *per se* it is not necessary to think that the most terrible of its consequences was supernatural. At any rate, modern science suggests a cause for the long lives of the antediluvians. The atmosphere, not only of cities, but round the highest mountains of Europe, has been examined; it can scarcely be doubted that at least some of the dust found everywhere is injurious to human health. Could the breath of life, not only of cities, but of the world at large, be restored to the purity of 6,000 years ago the effect could be surmised. Prophecy foretells that the life of man will yet equal the life of a tree; it is easy to divine the reason. Moreover, the story of Mecca, with its germinations from human filth enables us to understand why there should have been an immense

shortening of life immediately after the deluge; an unburied world festering and polluting the atmosphere! If water is the chief vehicular source of disease, the waters will yet be healed, having been poisoned by sin.

The Book of Genesis is unique because an introduction to the history of a world. It thus excludes the possibility of comparisons to reason from; so that the story of a general lapse ought to be viewed with an open mind. To beings familiar with millions of peopled worlds the moral results in descendants from a primal ancestor's conduct will appear perfectly natural. As to form, if acknowledgment of dependence on the Creator was the object, certainly the conditions were as little burdensome as possible. In feudal times possessions were not unfrequently held on very slim conditions; yet neglect of those conditions entailed outlawry and death. To secure sacramental friendship was the desideratum. In Eden, violation of the

very reasonable condition prescribed alienated Heaven and issued by reflex action in chronic insurrection among men. Many of the gods that came to be worshipped look as if invented out of spite to insult the Creator. Criminals cannot possibly admire the representatives of law; yet it is doubtful if the conception of a divine being has ever been expunged from a human mind.

Some who accept the inspired records as true seem to regard the calamities of the early world in the light of the poet, "Behind a frowning providence he hides a smiling face." But does such a view impart an improved conception of the divine character? Was He smiling when He destroyed the world with a flood? or when He overwhelmed Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and brimstone? or when He killed the first-born of Egypt? or the armies of Pharaoh? or the Israelites in the desert? or the Canaanites? A frown or a laugh of derision would have answered better.

There is infinite drollery in the divine mind expressive of innocence; must be, because drollery as well as gravity is exhibited in the aspect of every living creature. But the deformities produced by sin are infinitely repulsive to God.

Conjoined with the primal disobedience and its condemnation there was an inspiration of hope, spoken in enigmatical words, to be expounded later on by clearer revelations. An understanding existed throughout the whole early world that intercourse with Heaven was not finally cut off; yet that the way back was to be a bloody one, which was symbolized by the death of substituted animals; self-evidently not a suggestion of the human mind while universally acted on.

But mark that "the way" was necessarily back to God, because the obstacle to human happiness was a hiatus across this track. During the antediluvian period a striking example in point was given; probably designed also to shew

how sinless men would have passed to higher spheres; as the redeemed also will at the general resurrection. Enoch was taken to heaven without dying; a lesson for all ages pointing hope to worlds beyond. But almost as remarkable as the apotheosis of this holy man was the revealed ground of it; there is not a syllable about the ostentatious benevolences that would indicate saintship to many people of the present day; it is simply said that he "walked with God" and that "God took him." To walk with God is the substance of Christianity. They who do good to obtain God's favour know that they have not got it; and their method is purely mercenary. As all sin is sacrilegious robbery, regeneration must result in consecration to God and an imitation of Christ's beneficence. But as hypocrisy may be a motive strong as goodness of heart, care must be taken in an age when every benevolence is heralded to the world that an *ignis-fatuus* is not sub-

stituted for religion. If giving is, as is constantly affirmed, the thermometer of religion, it ought at least to be practised according to rule: "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."

"If I give all my goods to feed the poor and have not charity (love) it profiteth me nothing;" and charity must be kindled by sparks from the central Fire. So that the device of the gospel, or salvation by a mediator is essential to the beginnings of religion. Because, by His sacrifice on the cross, Jesus can remove guilt from those who trust in Him—guilt which is the law's unsettled claim against sinners—of which the Bible is a continuous assertion—paralleling the unsettled claim which sends even penitent criminals to the penitentiary or the scaffold—the Spirit of God is free to create the heart anew unobstructed as when He breathed at first and man became a "living" soul. A start can thus be made in religion by "loving Him who first loved us and

gave Himself as a ransom." To all intents sin annihilated the Fatherhood of God and also the sonship of men, so that Jesus could say to the impenitents "Ye are of your father the devil." Through Jesus sonship is restored by the divine "breath" "breathed" anew. To those who understand the theology of the New Testament well, what is spoken of as the higher Christian life can only mean true regeneration as distinguished from the law in the conscience which may never be written in the heart by the conscious love of Christ. Religion in the soul is like mercury in a thermometer, always on the move, sometimes very high, at other times very low, but the only radical change is at the start. The history of real Christianity is made up of "new births" with their results; and every one of them gives the lie to evolution, which is gradual development. The moral history of the world and of the Jews gives the lie also to the idea that Christ was

evolved. No true Christian can ever be an evolutionist.

Considering how very many never get beyond the law in the conscience it is of importance for society that churches put it there. The "schoolmaster" has done good to the Jews, if not all the good possible. The conviction sedulously cultivated by a portion of the ministry that God is love, and nothing else, which they evolve also out of His supposed Fatherhood; and that He is deep in love with men in spite of their impenitence is producing a peculiar style of character. It is impossible to humbug men from the pulpit without doing them harm. Yes, humbug, because "he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the *wrath of God abideth* on him,"—John III. 36. It cannot be said that churches are exercising a bad influence over the criminal classes, for they can scarcely reach them; but are they doing all that should be done to keep church-goers from becoming criminals and the ances-

tors of criminals, and thus making history repeat itself? What an amount of home mission work has to be done among the descendants of Christians! Why have so many fallen out of line if there is divine power in the gospel? Half-truths. Every servant of God should proclaim at least occasionally his commission, which is "To preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned."

A misapprehension of the import of the leniency shewn to a woman taken in adultery has done much to create the impression that Christ's real aim was to destroy the law; a mistake that has made Christendom a sink of heathen immorality through crimes condemned by the seventh commandment. He pardoned the woman, but it was done by Him as a Saviour, not as a magistrate; which He was not and is not. Had the case been taken to the courts, where it should have been, the woman would

have been treated according to law ; nor would Jesus have followed to interfere. He pardons criminals every day who come to Him in penitence and faith ; but this secures no immunity from the criminal law. Murders do not produce a thousandth part of the mischief inflicted upon society by violations of the seventh commandment ; condoned by the laws of Christian nations because Jesus is supposed to have made adultery a venial sin. Over and over again adulterers and fornicators both in Canada and the United States have been declared by the courts to be fit subjects for assassination by the injured parties ; a result of the *lawlessness* of the laws, not of the courts.

In education great care must be taken not to prejudice the young against their Maker ; which can be avoided without distorting facts. God's justice is the reaction of His Grand Nature against wrong, which children can be trained to appreciate by a cultivated hatred of

injustice. Intense indignation against criminality, which the mistaken teaching of the age tends to suppress by its tenderness for criminals, is the sentiment of all noble natures; in the utmost degree it is a peculiarity of the divine nature. Taught to sympathise with the injured, the young everywhere should be educated upholders of law. The religion of Christ would be a curse and not a blessing were it understood that its Founder intended even to modify just civil and criminal laws. It is of the last importance too that from earliest infancy children should be taught the distinction between *meum* and *tuum* in the smallest matters; they should be brought up strictly honest. Yet it must never be overlooked that uprightness to be truly such must rest on the justice of God. The Judge of all the earth lost the sympathy of the world long ago; it is to be hoped that He is not about to lose the sympathy of the churches through

a mistaken sympathy for criminals and the criminally disposed.

First lessons in religion to be of full advantage must come from a mother's lips because mothers are in contact with the earliest buds of intelligence and can bend the twigs. Children who from early infancy have been made to know that the all-seeing eye of God is on them have imbibed an incisive lesson that can never be lost. The exclamation of Hagar in the desert "Thou God seest me," should be inscribed in large letters in every nursery and in every school-room. They are the most stimulating words ever spoken because pregnant with the omnipresence of the Rock of Ages.

To get light and direction it is not necessary for a man to walk with his eyes fixed on the sun, yet all feel his genial glow and get leading from his revealing light. What the sun is God once was and may be still to every human spirit. The discontent and un-

rest and wretchedness of mankind spring from spiritual bereavement, orphanage — unconscious because natural — yet consciously felt in its effects by natures out of joint from their spiritual environment. "Darkness" is a figure employed by divine inspiration to emblemize the spiritual condition of the world; there is an eclipse of the Sun. Driven from the human consciousness by sin the glory that excelleth was figured for ages by a shekinah dwelling in temples made with human hands. It is restored to the bosoms of men through faith in Christ; it is "the secret of the Lord with them that fear Him;" of which every true believer is a living witness. The "natural man" of the age, instead of seeking testimony from those who know what he does not, is disposed to cover up his nescience by dignifying it as agnosticism. The agnostic, like all others, walks by light coming from other worlds and must occasionally reflect that the temporal and material may be an emblem of

the spiritual and eternal. But the God-consciousness is weak in all by nature—so weak in most nations as to be the merest superstition—and needs to be awakened by God speaking through His word in tones such as He must address to the impenitent and unbelieving. When He spoke to Elijah in the wilderness, a saved man, He was not in the thunder clap, nor in the tempest, nor in the earthquake. It would be a mistaken inference however to say that He was not on Mount Sinai speaking to a sinful nation; or that he was not present in the voice that smote Saul of Tarsus to the dust and made him know that he was poor and wretched and miserable and blind and naked. Probably the agnostic has never heard a preacher full of a sense of his responsibility—one among a thousand now—consciously standing between two eternities and between the dying and the dead and declaring a message fraught with life or eternal

death, the conscious herald of the Majesty of the heavens.

Unprecedented efforts have to be made at present to interest the young in religion, mostly extraneous, because the whole truth on the importance of salvation is kept out of view. That religion should relate to the present life chiefly and not be made a "lifeboat" for the hereafter is a hobby in some quarters, but a dangerous and most unscriptural one. That the present is an apprenticeship for a higher life involving infinite risk is the most effective lesson of the gospel for young and old. Overlooking this is making profit and pleasure everything and money the God of the world. The theology of too many is picked up out of novels.

To bring the souls of men up not only to saving faith but to unselfish works, something has to be done either by pointed teaching or by "the whips and stings of fortune." Misfortune is or ought to be a preparative for the

truth on its loving side. By destroying the consciousness of itself sin intoxicates the soul—a glamour which must be removed by calamity, teaching men what God thinks of them, or by faithful preaching, or by both combined. The criminally disposed are not fitted to appreciate love. Victor Hugo's outcast rewarded his kind ecclesiastical benefactor by stealing his silverware; and a thievish city councillor or politician will rob his confiding friends who put him into office. As the aim of Christianity is to create character it cannot be done by petting alone. Were the law employed after the example of Christ in its full sweep as a "schoolmaster," thus giving the Spirit of God a chance to inscribe it in the heart, much of the artificial revivalism of the age could be dispensed with. If the Jews have had to be kept under divine laws for over 3,000 years to create a conscience toward God—a necessity made patent not only by their obstinacy but by the con-

scienceless state of a country like China—is it possible for any nominal Christian nation ever to become Christian fully without the law.

The apostle St. John may be considered the father of the “infant school” of preachers; but mark that before his task was completed he was forced to harp on another string, and not inconsistently with his former attitude he became one of the most stalwart of all the apostles. His Revelation was evidently intended to prepare the way for the Millenium by predicting it with the preceding events. Living as we do, probably, within a century of that world wide revival, if hints are not taken from St. John and efforts made to rouse the conscience of the world it may have to be done by calamities, such as have seldom startled men before. The perilous times foretold by St. Paul in his Second Epistle to Timothy are not far off; we are drifting into them. Imperfect methods are turning things upside

down, making the young greater than their parents and women than men; making criminals the most celebrated of mankind and gold the god of the nations. It is because the living consciousness of God is not promoted to inspire veneration for every word of His, that whereas in the better days of this religion elders held the pre-eminence, it is coming to the juniors now; and women are, as it were, forced to leave their proper sphere and become public agitators.

Women about rule the world any way, but are sure to lose headway by grasping at the reins. Their function, a powerful one, is influence guided by a natural instinct of caution. If in any case they succeed as public agitators, it will be by putting men to shame and thus forcing them to act; because men hold the fort and will continue to do so. The sufferings of women with their children have created respect for their stand on the liquor traffic—in every

country where English is spoken the way of government is paved with ruined bodies and broken hearts—but success, when it comes, should not encourage them to affect the place of men on matters in general. The woman who above all others has exercised an influence for good on the modern world has a rooted disinclination to make public utterances; it is the secret of her power.

The Bible is infallible in its wisdom, and St. Paul voices its spirit on this whole subject. No woman was chosen to be an apostle; nor did the apostles or early Christians ever choose one to be a preacher of the word; nor is any public speech or prayer of her's reported in either the Old or New Testament. Miriam, the sister of Moses, was a prophetess, and as such led in the songs of Israel; which might be one of the functions of the prophetesses of the New Testament; the other would be inspired influence. Deborah was no declaimer, neither was Esther. Mary and Eliza-

beth spoke words worthy of immortality, but privately to each other; and Anna the prophetess filled the office by talking not by preaching. Churches that admit women to the pulpit will lose public respect to the extent in which they do so; that is, unless divine influence over public opinion is weakened, a thing to be dreaded. When women realize that by agitating before the public they rather injure the causes they have at heart they will have the goodness to stop. One of the results of the growing influence of women is a false sympathy for criminals. It requires sterner stuff than they are made of to make and maintain the laws.

No, when the necessity for Mount Sinai or the "schoolmaster" comes to be thoroughly understood again and discrimination made between penitent and impenitent hearers, dropped out of unwise consideration for the impenitent, conscientious women forced by enthusiasm into hypernatural activity by glar-

ing public evils, will retire to their own true place and vantage ground; and the elders will resume theirs. No necessity will be found for extra church organizations, such as young men's and women's Christian associations or Christian endeavourers; because the church of Jesus Christ will be found to be the Kingdom of God, and the word "the rod of His power."

It would be absurd to affirm that associations of enthusiastic young people are not in the way of good; that, for example, the C. E. are not doing something to unify large sections of the Christian Church. It is the necessity for such methods the writer condemns, and because the event itself is not going to be brought about in that way. When two people meet, each having a living conscience that has been pacified by the blood of Christ, they are consciously brothers, no matter to what sect they belong. General unity will come when the general conscience has been awak-

ened and blood sprinkled, and not till then. A cumbrous mass of spiritual death in the churches, attaching undue importance to sacramental rites and church peculiarities is the barrier to unity; awaken the general conscience and these barriers fall. How is it to be done? "Thy watchmen shall see eye to eye when I bring again Zion." It can only be accomplished by an outpouring of the Spirit of God and an awakening of the "priesthoods" of the church universal. The present time should be one of waiting and of prayer instead of fuss; unless it be as efforts by the ministry to revive forgotten truths. The Christian ministry is of divine institution and God will honour His own appointments.

Institutions supplementary to the churches are necessitated by the oversight that a push as well as a pull is necessary to move men Godward. The pull dissociated from the push is filling the Christian world with cobwebbed hearts that are vitiating all life, business

life as well as politics. The law working mightily in the conscience prepares men to enjoy the throb of Christ loving heart, and to admit the infusion of His love, which is the law written in the heart. It was the discrepancy between the utterances from Sinai and the dispositions of the listeners that filled them with dismay; but now the dismayed ones "come to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel;" and it is the dismayed ones who come. Any general movement Godward will be brought about by the appointed ministry and not by fussy instrumentalities of home invention.

Because the Divine has too important a bearing on the preparations for life to be ignored, Roman Catholics are fully justified in their stand in behalf of religious teaching in the schools. Recent experiences in England shew to what extent schools in which religion is not ignored can diminish crime. But on the other hand are Roman Catholics

not blamable for assuming the responsibility of excluding religion from the common schools of America. The doctrines in which they agree with Protestants are vastly greater in number than those about which they differ; and are of far greater importance. Enough is believed in common for a good broad basis of religious instruction, and all should co-operate to form one.

That a mind may attain its possibilities intellectual and moral, God must be its life; without Him the soul of man is out of touch with the universe, a pottering, pusillanimous creature with an ape consciousness. The conception of a Creator is an expanded intellectual grasp; he who has it begins life a spiritual giant. The idea that Mind and not matter is supreme is an ennobling one. It also prepares the way for a true philosophy by suggesting that the mind forms the body, all animal bodies in fact, by moulding them to be an expression of itself, evidenced at the stages of

growth, and especially when changes of moral character take place ; which intensifies the importance of mental and moral training from earliest infancy.

The religious qualities necessary in those who conduct primary courses of education are equally indispensable for the higher branches. Because the relation of all existences to God is the keystone of knowledge it is obvious that sceptics and agnostics are unfit to teach even seemingly neutral subjects like the classics. As portrayals of the ethnic mind the classics form a good background for divine revelation ; and they bear evident traces of the influence of Israelitish thought on the thinking of the ancient world. Solomon was the philosopher of antiquity by pre-eminence who awakened the nations to thought.

Some years ago attention was called to the symmetry of the ancient languages as evidence of their divine origin ; a position to which Mr. Gladstone has recently added the support of his great

learning. When compared with the classics, English is a "broken" tongue. Fortunately or unfortunately the classics can never hold a much less conspicuous place in general studies than they have done; because to such an extent they hold the roots of modern languages; and because when laboriously cultivating the dictionaries the student is treasuring words and their precise meanings. It is to be hoped that the day will never come when the classical master is not considered the proper person to be at the head of a college. If he is the right man in the right place he can take the irreligious chill off his subject, which naturally has more of the hyperborean in it than any other.

Many years ago Sir William Hamilton sounded a note of warning on the mental training into which mathematics too largely enters; a species of reasoning that bears small relation to concrete subjects in general, and if possible still less to religion. The English press

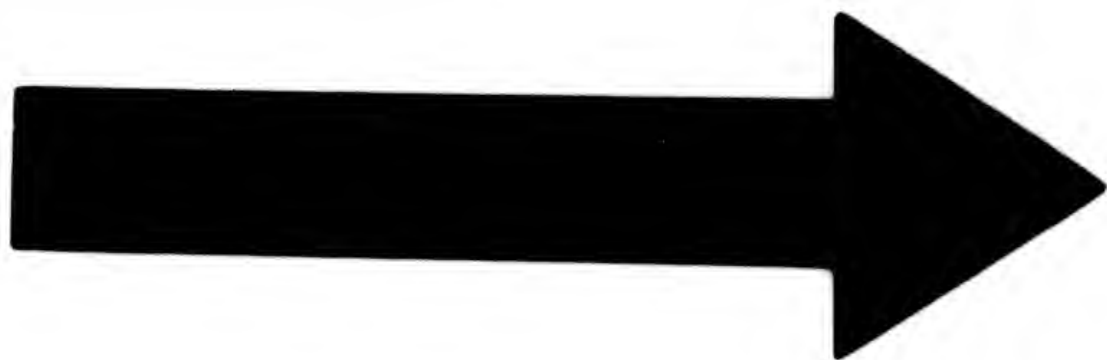
had just begun to teem with vagaries about the teachings of the Bible, which it has continued to do ever since, oscillating all the way from materialism to the rankest superstition. Divine truth is historical and experimental; it proclaims a supernatural remedy for human woe, which can be proved by testing it: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." It is when churches have let the omnipresent and ever accessible Mind of the great Hierarch slip out of their faith; in other words, have put Him at the distance of 1,800 years, that an electrical connection has to be established by a long succession of quasi hierarchs. It was to meet the difficulties and establish a perpetually immediate connection between heaven and earth that the Saviour was constituted divine as well as human. Practically His divinity is as completely ignored by the Christian superstitions as by materialism. In fact, the extremes meet through the tablet by which Christ is professedly

placed in the digestive organs instead of in the heart.

The value of individual Scripture books is to be estimated, not by mathematical reasonings any more than by the aspect they present to men in the Pharisaic condition of self-righteousness; but by the verdict of the divinely appointed nation jury and their relations to the Messianic religion. In many quarters young men are considered qualified students for the Christian ministry because they have received the rites of the Church, as if such formalities were equivalent to the eye-opening *after* baptism of the Holy Spirit. The consequence is that books of the Old Testament, like Daniel for example, verified when historical verification was possible by God's witnessing nation, and brimful of Messianic light, are rejected as spurious on the slimmest excuses. If no trace of Daniel has been found or exists among the stones of ancient cities, it may be for the reason England has just

denied a monument to Oliver Cromwell. Through Providence Cromwell began to pave the way for the present succession, but he did it with a stern countenance. The influence that sent Daniel to the lions would scarcely send him to the sculptor.

Religion apart, the present danger to education lies in burdening the memory at the expense of the intellect. The higher education should train a student to grasp the main point of his subject whatever it may be. Probably a college of a single professor, like the one over which Socrates claimed the honour of presiding, or like the schools of the rhetoricians, would make better thinkers than one having a score of professors; because necessity would confine instruction to first principles or the salient points of all knowledge. Teachers counted by the dozen, each of whom has a certain number of lectures to deliver, and who therefore cannot avoid spinning out wearisome details, are a



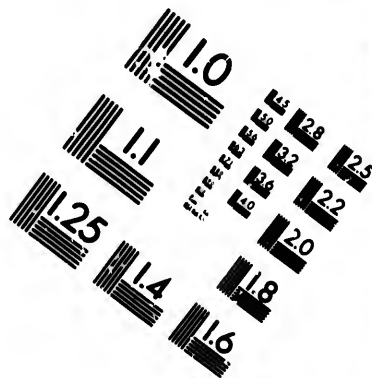
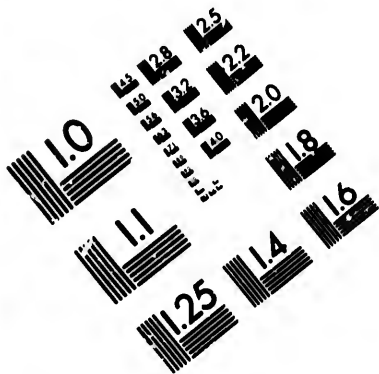
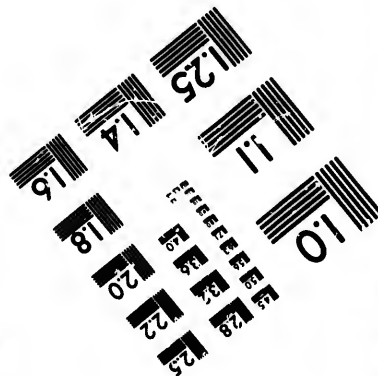
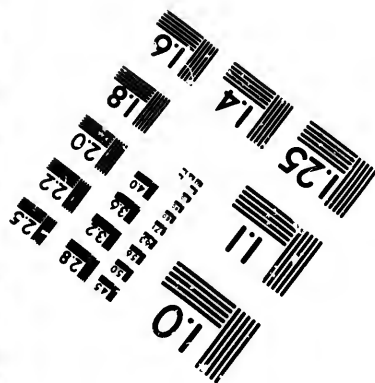
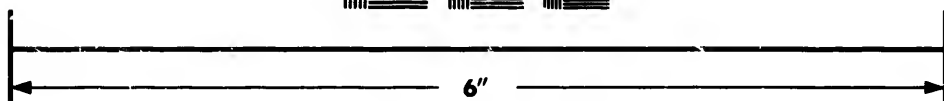
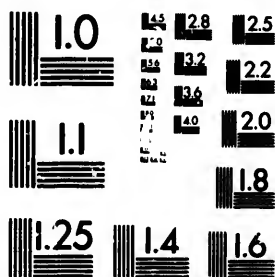


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burden to the student, who is forced to overwhelm his memory with minutiae, which, as an investigator of specific subjects, he could see after better in future life. In Darwin we have an illustrative specimen of a mind wrecked with the importance of details he could never see out of; so that he spent his life to its latest days in the vain effort to form a cumulative argument in favour of an impossible position from completely parallel facts gathered from the whole field of living nature. It is believed in Canada that the scientists of England, almost to a man, are convinced that because organisms are all cellular and the cells composed of similar materials, that life therefore had its origin in matter; a poor shewing for the boasted education of the nineteenth century. The day was when life appeared a new thing under the sun, just as the ideas that have harnessed steam and electricity, and that have created thousands of organisms with as much consciousness

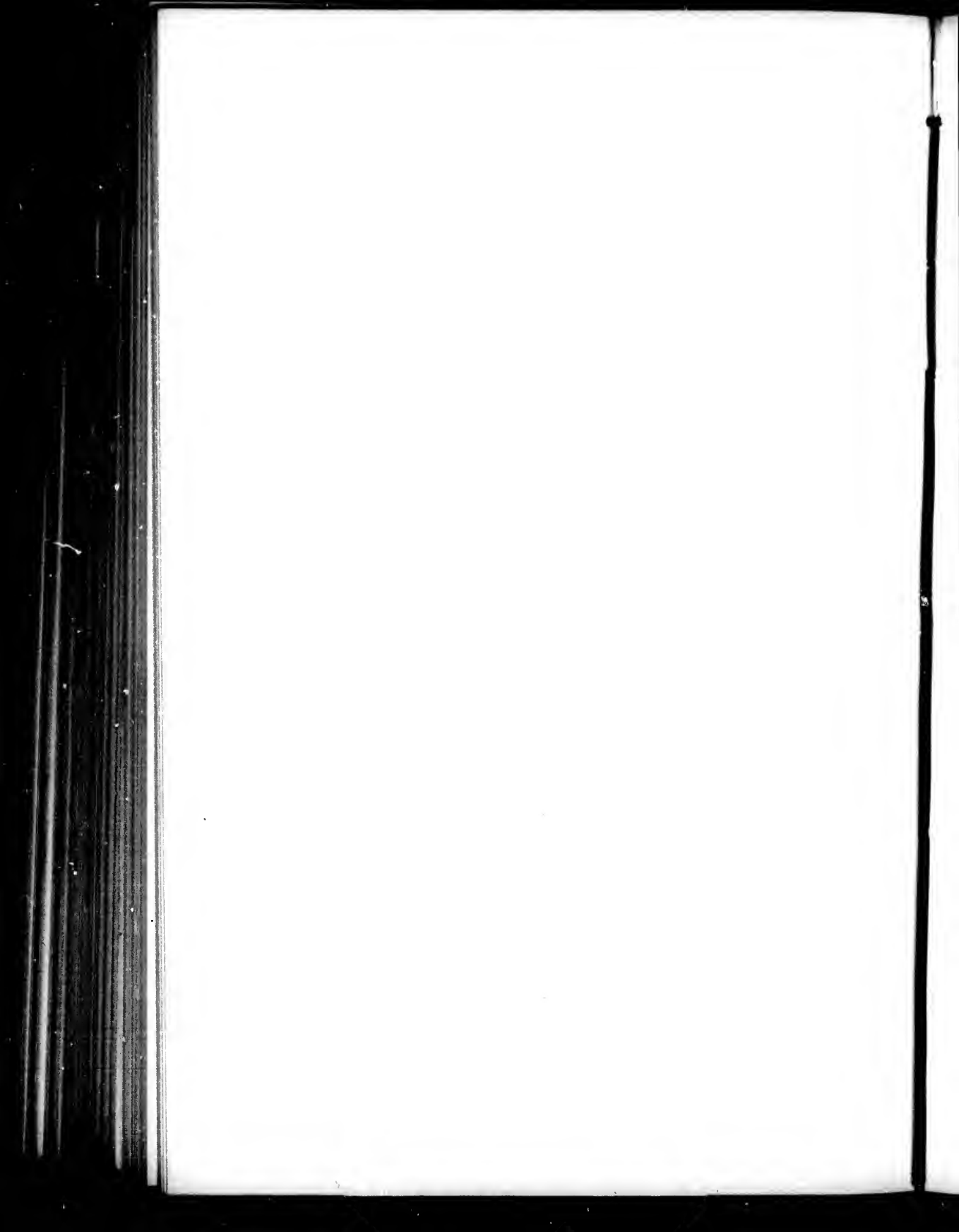
as vegetables. Only in reference to life it has to be said: Behold a greater than Watt or Franklin is here. The mind which in individual forms gives living matter its direction is new in every case; God does not cease to create any more than man does.

Reference to the rhetoricians is a reminder that the original object of the higher learning has slipped out of view and that the signs of education, especially in pulpits, have little connection now with what was once understood as oratory. In the apostolic church the "gift" of utterance was a leading form of spiritual manifestation. It stands to the credit of Rome that she enforces "speech" in her pulpits; notwithstanding that her appeals to heaven are in print and made on the supposition that God is a native of old Latium and therefore unfamiliar with modern languages. Does it not look like sarcasm too, that as a rule Protestants who claim exclusive possession of the Holy Spirit

are unable to utter a word in public except by reading it. People like to hear a public speaker; and no doubt read sermons have helped to breed contempt for religion. Especially do the common people listen to a speaker gladly. The great predicted revival will certainly begin by unloosing tongues and thus restoring to the churches the lost gift. All honour to those who continue to observe the apostolic practice of "preaching," which some have found it necessary to do by itineracy. But surely a way can be devised by which written out thoughts may be readily mastered without the slavish committal of words. A clear thought naturally clothes itself with speech.

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INSTRUMENTALITIES.



PRE-CONDITIONS.

It is nearing 6,000 years since the Salvation was first announced, and the little progress made is a surprise, seeing that omnipotence is at the back of the work. The Being who occupies eternity as His own may take pleasure in slow processes; at any rate, He seems to do so, as the law of all production is first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. In the spiritual sphere too the soil must be prepared for the seed.

But on the ground that immortals are in question with the certainty of one of two contrasted destinies each eternal in its duration, the millions that have departed this life indifferent to God and without hope forces reflections that fill sensitive souls with awe. But let it be awe. By minds equally blinded through the corruption and condemnation of sin let there be no determination to charge

God foolishly. All know what the consequences of a violation of human laws often are ; the extinction of life or life imprisonment—in fact, the severest penalties that can be inflicted—no matter what the consequences may be to offspring or other relatives of the criminal. Even on the low supposition that punishment is an economic expedient, who can pronounce what the amount under a universal government whose subjects are immortal must be ; or on the higher supposition that it is the just correlative of demerit who can undertake to say what the demands of absolute and eternal justice are ? The cords that bind a sinner hand and foot, or the tendency to perpetuate the sinful state, are part of sin, and must be taken into account in estimating what God thinks of its deserts, and in weighing the possibility of deliverance. If the stream of iniquity could be stopped, like crime by imprisonment, ages might atone for the past.

Taken the lower supposition, it is

essential not to overlook that the world in its physical status is one among innumerable others and linked with them by the same laws. Revelation makes a fact of what might be suggested as a reasonable probability, that the intelligences of all worlds are more intimately in association and destined to be than the material universe. Men will yet pass into other spheres, higher and lower; and at the moment there is a continual influx from other worlds into this. The whole universe is interested in human experiences; "The angels desire to look into these things."

For religion, history serves two purposes—on which account Providence took order from the first, that its prominent facts should be preserved—it reveals both God and man. In regard to both it creates surprises; on the one hand by revealing what villians men are. The fate of Sodom, moral and physical, is a fair sample of the landing place of the whole ancient world; only in executing

judgment God let men kill each other or keep each other in constant terror. It is also a revelation of God; of his patience indeed; but also, which astounds men, He is compelled to be the opposite of the conglobation of tenderness they think He ought to be. With the wicked His nature forbids Him to be otherwise than unsavoury and severe. St. Paul's pen pictures of the Gentile nations were intended for treacherous memories and to justify God in history. And morals, if possible, would have been worse had it not been for checks of Providence. Efforts are now made to turn the effects of the gospel against God by making the race out to be better than itself; which shews the necessity of ages of revelation by history.

It cannot be affirmed that the evils of the world are beyond divine restraint; that is, of God's power dissociated from wise purpose. No one endowed with wisdom would put an organism with its possibilities out of his own management

by the act of construction; yet through some law of moral necessity or economy it does look as if the world were out of divine control. From the beginning there have been prayerful men and women anxious for the spiritual good of their fellows; at any rate, since the days of the Apostles prayers have ascended daily to heaven for the conversion of the world; yet at this date probably not one in a hundred of its population is a Christian in the truest sense. It may be said that the prayers were unaccompanied by indispensable efforts, which does not hold true of the first and second centuries. A large lodgment of divine truth was effected in most countries then but wiped out at a later date in many of them. What is the cause if omnipotence is the lever of Christianity?

The explanation may be found in a rule disclosed by ages of experience and no doubt resting on necessity that a state of preparedness must exist for the faith. The unfitness of the nations that did

embrace Christianity has vitiated the whole history of the Christian Church ; which, as an object lesson too, may explain why the nations at large have not been converted sooner. Those familiar with the story of missions know how many years passed before the pioneer missionary Carey had the satisfaction of making a convert. The inference ought to be that his field of labour was in a very particular state of unfitness for the gospel. Could it be known with exactness what was meant by "the fullness of time" spoken of in connection with the birth of Christ—rightfully understood to mean more than the date fixed by prophecy—it could be made out what are the conditions necessary to the general awakening of the coming centuries. "Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased." One preparation for the Messiah was a very generally cherished conception of God revived by the Israelitish religion and diffused wherever the

Jewish name was known. Christianity so rests on theism that no step in its direction can be made where faith in God does not exist.

The conception of justice as differentiated from savage revenge, which the exhibitions of Roman law tended to foster, would be another preparation. "Justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne;" hence displays of human justice must be helpful to the gospel. Many seem afraid lest rulers should recognize the divine in their legislation, although much of the Bible was addressed to them; especially those parts of it that began the work of creating a conscience—the Old Testament. What the Romans were as instruments of Providence without the Bible, the British now are with it in many countries, pulverizing the rocks and preparing a soil for the husbandmen. So that British conquests are missionary operations and not an opening of the doors for missionaries merely. The laxity with

which laws are administered in America out of indulgence to themselves by the sovereign people is a great obstacle to religion; aggravated by laxity out of indulgence to the sovereign people by expounders of the Scriptures, making the new trade of revivalism¹ a necessity.

Out of the diffused perception of justice in Roman times arose a burning sense of injustice in the vast majority. Injustice is the enlightenment of the serf, as the justice of God is the eye-opener of the world. It has been said that people never were more miserable than in the Augustan age wherein our Lord was born. In the long periods of war and of defeats and triumphs peace would be looked forward to as the surest happiness, an idea familiarized by the evangelical prophet; but the absence of fear from foreign oppressors gave the world leisure to reflect on its true condition. In general people were never

¹ "Evangelist" applied to a revivalist is a misnomer; the evangelists had no need to revivify the churches planted by the apostles; they did the work among Jews and Gentiles the apostles could not overtake. Missionaries sent to heathen countries are the evangelists.

better off than at present, yet co-existent with prosperity and all kinds of comfort is ceaseless discontent, because peace during the current century has given scope for it. The ground reason, however, is that material comforts cannot satisfy the human soul, or calm its turbulence. When, from experience gathered out of disappointment, men come to be about unanimous in tracing their miseries to the mind itself and its relation to God the night will have been far spent and the day at hand. Let any one ask himself about how much money or ease would satisfy him; and then if he had his wish, about how long the satisfaction would last. There are millionaires who are more wretched now than when they were day labourers.

But as the God of grace is also the Author of nature, scientific knowledge must contribute largely to the "fulness of time" and the conversion of the world. Knowledge is power in religion too. It was from defective knowledge

that "not many mighty or many noble" embraced the gospel in apostolic times; and because God co-operates with fitting means. To such in those days the Christian religion was a vulgar fad; worse, it was *excitabilis superstitio*; just as science falsely so called, is an obstacle to religion now. The two revelations support each other when both are well understood and especially when the inspired volume is fully accepted. Hence it is that a good scientific shaking up always contributes to the progress of the gospel. Hume, no doubt, thought that the time had come when the Faith might be given its *coup de grace*; on the contrary there has been continual revival ever since, because the deep things of science are also the deep things of God; and both science and revelation can afford to be looked at. When churches are compelled to examine the foundations they find them resting on the solid Rock.

Failing signally in attempts against

the nature and evidence of Christianity, the sceptics of the past and present generations, irritated in mind, have been tempted to attack the Being of God. Disbelief of miracles and of prophecy and inspiration has no valid ground but pantheism or materialism. By the Providence of the God assailed a deeper look has been obtained into science and a sharper look, promising to result in a closer and more life-giving touch with the God of nature as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and justifying the expectation that the controversions of the age when completed will have their winding up in a revival such as the world has never seen.

In every direction matter is found to turn an index finger to Mind as its cause; to a world Builder and the Author of the materials as well. He is seen to be the latter by the points of view of quantity, of adaptibility to combination, and of utility. The quantity of all kinds of materials is proportioned to the neces-

sities of the structure. But the combinations were not fortuitous; nor by law; had it been so the heavier ingredients would have massed themselves by attraction in a body, and the gases have been left to constitute the universe at large. Chemists will understand what is meant when God is represented as saying, "Let there be light." By setting the chemical affinities at work the materials of worlds were put into combustion. God did it; otherwise it is impossible to comprehend how union could have taken place. Complete divine control in the formation of the world is apparent from the proportions of the liquid element; from the vast hydraulic power; from the configuration of the continents and their superficies or drainage systems; from the supplies for vegetation and for conscious life, and from the wonderful structures and chemistry of organisms.

With regard to organization there is no such thing known as a germ that has not been produced by other germs. This

denotes the law of nature; so that the sceptical have to stultify themselves by scepticism as to nature's laws as well. The attempt of such people to look wise and masquerade as having seen something has been played out; and the reasonings accepted by them, which make the pine tree and the creeper that clings to it, and the hippopotamus and man and a microbe developed forms of an identical germ in a world wherein the law of all life is that like produces like are very similar to what might emanate from a paradise of fools. There is a great deal of undistributed middle in the syllogism by which it is proved that black is white; and there must be a vast amount of undistributed something in the attempt to prove that universal nature and universal experience are pure deceptions. If the present age has not given birth to the greatest satire in the world it must be because defects of education have disqualified men to make use of the materials. Individual men

have lost their intelligence and lapsed from theism into atheism, and from virtue into vice; and nations have lapsed into barbarism; but every lineament of their brutalized faces and forms bespeaks—fallen; a progress not up, but down. That the Bible has had to contend with the rubbish by which it has been assailed during the passing generation will yet be seen to be a bulwark thrown around it. When men have been taught again to distinguish between demonstrative and probable truth they will realize that the whole weight of evidence is in favour of the word of God. The reasoning of a sceptic has at length come to be this: "I was not present when God created the world, therefore I don't know it;" an open admission that he cannot draw an inference.

To bring the substance of this chapter to its point; were a farmer to cast seed into untilled or worn-out fields and depend on prayer for results, would he get a harvest? Certainly not. Souls in

general are in the condition of fallow ground overrun with weeds; worse, our Saviour characterizes much of the field as little better than rocks, or as a hard wayside. It took ages to form the soils of the world, which suggests an analogy that may not have been foreign to the inspired writers. Until nations, heathen or Christian, become dissatisfied with idols, and disgusted with sin, it goes without saying that they will cling to them, and a living conscience alone can create the dissatisfaction. In one island of the Pacific the inhabitants were found to have no gods; which probably was explained by the fact that in another they had just cast off theirs, having found them useless for any purpose. Such cases stand exceptional, alone; the divine in conscience must be the lever of the soul. It is a rule in grace that God has to be asked, not by others only, but by those who need the benefit, to do them good; and what else but conscience is able to enforce the necessity of regenera-

tion and pardon. Tears and other effects of touching stories are no evidence of true contrition and cannot be accepted as the new birth. Penitents must come to the judgment seat, consciously into the court of heaven, for there alone can they obtain the divine amnesty.

But how very little is done by the "watchmen" of the age to bring them there! True, there is much expressed dependence on the Holy Spirit for results; on this principle, however, would it not display more faith to depend on Him entirely and do nothing? The Spirit of God co-operates with wisely directed efforts; in most cases the fallow ground needs to be broken up, and no blessing can accompany the seed cast among thorns. Asked millions of times to save men He has refused until it has become quite common for the impatient to accept what is called conversion for regeneration. Hence the stagnation and growing tendency to depend on specialists, who probably do understand matters

better; but even they often discover by experience that there has been "no deepness of earth."

It was said of a good pastor of former days that he prayed till his knees became like shells; at length the awakening came; but in a mean time of many years he had been preaching and praying—and there is always more divinity in prayers than in preachings—and the soil had been prepared for the seed. By the "superior" ingenuity of the nineteenth century the whole operation can be simulated in an evening or two through a number of well-told, pathetic anecdotes and sentimental hymns well sung. Ah! where there is no deepness of earth the seed soon displays its vitality; but the upshot is much surface religion with a great deal of dishonesty underlying it; in fact an age of combined religion and grasping greed.

The voice of the charmer charming evil spirits with music and soft words instead of casting them out cannot but

bring disappointment. Although, in most, hostility to Jesus is not pronounced as it was in Saul of Tarsus, yet it cannot be taken for granted that honied words give the spirit of God the best opportunity of co-operation; or that ordinarily the dead can be raised without startling utterances. There was anger in the tones of Jesus addressed to Saul; a voice of warning intended to send him to the only meeting place of peace—the cross. A notion is in the air that the revivalist only needs to be “full of the Holy Ghost” to effect all possible good; but as He is not a Spirit of inspiration now and consequently subject to the speaker, so “workers” may err by presenting their own inefficient ideas. It was when Moses came down from Mount Sinai where the Law had been given that his face shone; to be truly efficient, evangelists must have a full sense of the justice as well as of the love of God. Lying messages, delivered in the name of Jesus, are calculated to

make liars and cheats ; there are Christians and Christians, imperfect types formed by charming the evil spirit instead of ejecting him. To represent God as friendly to the unreconciled while the wrath of God abideth on them instead of merely willing to be friendly for Christ's sake, is a dangerous misrepresentation. At the first spiritual contact there is hostility in both God and men, which brings on a duel in which God saves by overcoming, gives life by killing. "I was alive without the law once but when the commandment came sin revived and I died." Representations of God in Christ that have no tendency to make men aware of their wretched nature and spiritual death with its eternal consequences are proclamations of peace where there is no peace.

The Christ of the modern pulpit is an artifice being in whose bosom anger was unknown ; one with whom the Scribes and Pharisees would have been completely satisfied ; and not the uncom-

promising enemy of sin and all falseness; who looked round on audiences in anger because of their unbelief. If bestowal of amnesty on the narrow theatre of a nation has to be done with the utmost caution, with what carefulness must it be bestowed on the universal scale? It was indispensable that the Commissioner who represented the Deity and appeared in His image should be a diplomat as well as a Saviour. For minds corresponding to "the bruised reed and smoking flax," Jesus was graciousness itself. He knew what was in man and His perfect nature assumed an attitude that corresponded with the disposition of those who presented themselves before Him. In one point of view He was a Lamb; in another He was the Lion of the tribe of Judah. At present there is a proclivity to make Him a kind of Buddha; a fad that, if harmless, might be let alone, but it is gradually sapping the foundations of Christian character. Jesus "carried the

lambs in His bosom," was a tender Shepherd to every soul that inspired a ray of hope; but when men turned their faces from Him, assuming an attitude of final impenitence, His leonine characteristics were made apparent; as, for example, to the Scribes and Pharisees and to Judas to whom he gave the sop. It was a disposition which fits Him to occupy the seat of final judgment; to divide the sheep from the goats, and to say to those on the left hand, "Depart from Me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels;" words He put into His own mouth while still in the flesh; "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

To get a full impression of Jesus it is necessary to make the Messianic Psalms fill up the story of His life; just as it is necessary to put the New Testament beside the Old to get at the whole truth on any divine subject. In one of those Psalms, the fortieth, Messiah prays thus; "Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver

me: make haste to help me, O Lord. Let them be turned backward and brought to dishonour that delight in my hurt; let them be desolate by reason of their shame that say unto me, Aha, Aha." Strange sounds for self-complacent ears; yet not nearly so terrible as the reply to them. Almost from His day the cities of the Jews have been in desolation because they rejected Him; and their calamities have been prolonged beyond all precedent experience. So that religious teachers find little reason to flatter "conscientious" rejecters and opposers of the gospel. And there is no contradiction in the prayer at the Crucifixion; "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" any more than there is in asking God to forgive a murderer, while concurring in his condign punishment.

Among religious people it has always been customary to blame theatres for a large share of the levity and immorality of Christian countries. But were Christ

well understood and honestly preached in the pulpits of any Christian city there would soon be few theatres left, or if there were any their nakedness would be covered and the shamelessness that threatens to stamp *harlotry* on the general countenance. The word of God is an instrument of tremendous power; "a sharp two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." In view of ordinary results the words may create a smile, although the word of God; but it is because the weapon is seldom used except with a blunted point and an edge ingeniously made into a back, with which the blows are struck.

It will be inferred, no doubt, that the heralds of such "grim" times will be men of chippy and stern brusqueness. Ah! nothing in the world produces tenderness like the conception of danger or suffering. When an accident has happened the person chosen to open the fact

to the woman who has been made a widow and her children fatherless will do it with subdued and sympathetic tones. The tenderest words ever spoken by the Son of God, which brought the big tears to His own eyes were: "Hadst thou known even thou in this thy day the things that belong to thy peace, but now they are forever hid from thine eyes." In former ages the denial of God's irrevocable judgment on the wicked hardened the hearts of men and made them cruel. The favoured sweetened flavouring and phosphorescent light of the modern pulpit essay scarcely allows the essayist to feel even if he has some dim conception of danger threatening from eternity. God's tenderness for men is pity prompted by their lost estate; which, ascribed to Him, should be felt by all who speak in his name. Ways of presenting eternity so as to touch the heart and reduce the importance of time except for "the one thing needful," is the requirement of the age. All dangers are future and unseen;

and in fact the vast majority of people, rich as well as poor, are pleased with honest warnings; even the indifferent like to be stimulated religiously. For example, the higher classes in Sweden, from the king down, were very careless about religion till the Salvation Army appeared there; now the Army has become fashionable. Great sinners and impressionable ones are not all confined to the back lanes of cities.

Complaint has to be made constantly of Sabbath desecration; but let it never be forgotten that it is the great importance of religion which must give importance to the Sabbath day. What is needed now are occasional glimpses of eternity from midway between Mounts Ebal and Gerrizzim. The prevailing understanding seems to be that hearers of the Gospel are all necessarily prepared to receive it, which betrays inattention to the most obvious teaching of Jesus Christ and of religious history, and gives rise to a vast amount of

misdirected effort. The good old practice of classifying hearers should be re-introduced and a word of warning addressed to those who need it—the impenitent. Before the time of universal revival ministers will be all well up again in pioneering work, having been brought to acknowledge that Moses is the frontispiece of the Bible, and John the Baptist of the New Testament, and one of its chief object lessons. Perhaps the very shortest road to a correct point of view would be to reinstate Jesus as king and to restore the conception of the kingdom of God. Instead of presenting Him invariably as a suppliant for admission, He should be represented as knocking with authority and demanding access to the heart. The authority of Jesus is indisputable and has infinite power behind it. The incarnation was not a dethronement.

Christianity had its origin in heaven; its object, immortal souls viewed in relation to their dangers and possibilities.

Because the tenements of undying minds Jesus valued the tabernacles of clay and evinced power to save by delivering them from the results of sin. Even Buddhist tenderness for animals springs from a belief that they are the abode of undying spirits. Real Christian benevolence has its source not in love of display but in gratitude for salvation and awakened hope, intensified by the preciousness of the souls of others. The unexpected willingness of many Chinamen in America to accept Christian instruction may arise partly from its humanitarianism, which bears a resemblance to the humanitarianism of Confucius; and from the decided present tendency to make humanitarianism the limit of religion. But humanity to be real must have an adequate source; by ignoring God and as a consequence both the love and justice of God, Confucianism has begotten probably the most conscienceless people on earth; and its generosity compared with what can be instilled by

Jesus Christ is a Chinese gong in comparison with the bells of Moscow.

But the humanity of Christians is still a long way from the summit to which it should aspire. The churches established by the apostles were in an informal way mutual benefit societies, "ministering to the necessities of the saints." A multitude of respectable men, probably a majority now, take a living interest in various societies, Masons, Oddfellows, Foresters, etc., to be reinforced, apparently, by societies of the "new women," to the detriment of the churches, because they ignore a great object—mutual helpfulness. The apostolic church was a benefit society, holding out promises for this life as well as for that which is to come—the unmistakable lesson of the Pentecostal liberality. Viewed in the light of the earliest Christian age many city churches of the nineteenth century are palace cars shunted off the road to heaven. Collections for the poor may be large and

liberal but they are bones cast out to the dogs. To awaken charity and keep it burning brightly there must be contact with its objects; when such contact is wanting, love of display or other selfishness becomes the motive for liberality; which in the long run congeals the heart into ice or stone. No, the rich and poor must meet together, and in the house of God, who "is the Maker of them both." As things are, if any poor remain in some churches they are less known by fellow members than if they were fancy curs and the rich dukes and duchesses; it is the Christianized heathenism of Constantine and not the Christianity of Jesus and His apostles.

During the apostolic times nor for many a day after could Christians possibly be "souters;" they were neither numerous nor rich enough to organize charities for the heathen. Friendship for Christianity must have been the condition of *public* almsgiving as it certainly was of miraculous benefit. This

would induce many of the poor to attach themselves to the new religion—a low motive, but people get under the higher motives by being levered out by the lower ones—it put them and their offspring within reach of the truth; just as large charities wisely administered by individual congregations would have kept multitudes in the churches and under Christian influence that have gone back to heathenism. Indeed, some charities are worked as if they were intended to be a premium on vagabondage from religion. In the Roman communion charitable institutions may be organized separately from the churches but are always intimately connected with them; although its poor are not retained by charities alone but by peculiar claims in regard to hell; only a seemingly wise policy, however, as in the long run purgatorial tariffs for the living and the dead become the influence that disintegrates.

A Christian temple is a building over

whose portals ought to be inscribed "To the poor the gospel is preached;" whereas a structure carpeted and cushioned for a few dozen well-to-do families is a lyceum and not a church. It is also a crying evil that in some quarters religion has become a luxury far too expensive for many who are not so poor as to be needy. It is to be hoped that the folly of detaching the labourers, men and fellow Christians, from the churches will be seen before it results in terrible consequences to the neglectful rich.

As to what is called proportionate giving it should be remembered that Melchizedek, to whom Abraham gave a tenth of all, was both a king and a "priest;" and that in the Mosaic system Aaron was the representative of the law or the visible head of the nation as well as of the church; so that in calculating the tenth now it would be legitimate to deduct what is exacted by the state. In the New Testament nothing is said about tithes, for this reason pro-

bably, and for another ; it is easier for a person with \$100,000 a year to hand over \$30,000 or \$50,000 than it is for a man with an income of \$600 to pay \$60. Evidently greater proportionate liberality is expected in rich quarters under the new dispensation. But let there be humility and brotherly kindness with the liberality. In the presence of God in His house souls should be in estimation and not pelf. The writer is endeavouring to indicate the way by which this can be brought about. A danger felt in common is a great leveller.

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INSTRUMENTALITIES.

PRAAYER.

For important reasons it is expedient to devote special attention to the conclusive test in religion—prayer. The need for God, not by individuals only, but for society, is an argument in favour of His existence. Atheism begat the assassins of the Orient, and again begins to betray its dangerous character by anarchism. Because conscience is prompted by religious instruction, public prayers full of reverence for God become powerful instruments of good; so is sacred song when of the right stamp. Many of the Psalms are prayers, others inculcate moral lessons which inspire hatred of wrong and improve morals by expressing sympathy with God when He punishes it. When James and John proposed to bring fire from heaven on their enemies, Jesus told them they did not know the spirit they were of; but

the statement was not meant to condemn either divine or human retribution; in other words, to alter just penalties in the interest of criminals.

It does not appear on the face of the New Testament that Christians in their corporate capacity as churches any more than as states are under some of the rules given to individuals. Under the Old Testament God killed men wholesale or disabled them; under the more merciful spirit of the New Testament he kills individuals or disables them in admonition to evil-doers; for example, Ananias and Sapphira and Elymas the sorcerer. In the Book of Revelation the church is found appealing to God for vengeance on its enemies and complaining of divine dilatoriness. If the man who mediated in killing Ananias and Sapphira or He who blinded Bar-Jesus, were alive now, there is one open-mouthed blasphemer in America whose race would have been cut short years ago; a man whose prolonged enmity to God is making

infidels by suggesting doubts as to whether the Lord God Almighty, the the Maker of heaven and earth, is at the back of our holy religion. Judgment is God's strange work; it was St. Peter's and St. Paul's strange work; but cases arise in which it is merciful to strike terror into evil-doers.

Some of the Psalms appear revengeful because written in troublous times and their author was king in Israel. In the presence of invasion or rebellion or on the eve of battle, is the Christian bound to pray for the success of his enemies? It is just here where both prayers and hymn books will come short in the future times of trouble, as they come short already of impressing stern justice. When, for example, a murder has been committed, should seeking God's co-operation in uncovering the guilty not be considered a public duty? or when burglaries or other crimes? Had the obligation not been neglected could 9,000 murders have been perpetrated in the

United States of America last year and not 200 executions take place?¹ Churches miss opportunities of shewing the value of prayer, and act often as if crime had been so atoned for that judges must forgive the enemies of mankind. If commands Jesus gave to individuals apply to them when in a magisterial capacity it would have been better had the Sermon on the Mount never been uttered. In the Messianic Psalms, as already shewn, Messiah prays that justice might overtake His persecutors; and without inconsistency, as there is no inconsistency between stringent justice and divine mercy. Appeals are made for God's pity in behalf of culprits when the law is taking its course with them on the scaffold.

Many cities of this continent are ruled by thieves; and churches seemingly consider it a religious duty to submit in silence instead of asking Heaven's help to create the machinery to bring condign

¹ There is "unprecedented crime" in Canada also.

punishment on the guilty. As a consequence, in many cities and towns the sway of the thieves is supreme; also because neglect of this public duty has killed the conscience of the electorate. Inspired men should be imitated in seeking God's help in the difficult task of suppressing crime among public servants as well as others. As formerly stated, the biggest work yet ahead in religion is to harmonize the New Testament with the Old, that large sections, as the Psalms, for example, may not be rejected in ignorance of their bearings. The modern Christian spirit is one of truculence to wrong; meekness in the presence of crime, and forbearance with iniquity. The self-complacent suavity of the modern pulpit in existing circumstances is one of the dangers of the age. The only refuge of the oppressed is neglected by those who should set an example of trust in God.

Moreover, while nations continue criminal and as nations deserve punish-

ment, there will be wars; and God will be a God of battles; and Christians, whether they like it or not, will be forced to pray for the destruction of His enemies and their own. King David never asked God to send those who rose up against him to hell, but he certainly did ask Him to make them bite the dust. Anything else in the circumstances would have been idiocy. Just think of the Hovas in the late war asking God to preserve the French instead of to kill them. It is to be feared that missionaries, stupified like others by long years of peace, taught them that nations as well as individuals must not resist evil. Christ merely told His disciples not to take the execution of law into their own hands, in other words, He forbade private revenge; but He never uttered a word which betrayed a tendency to drivel; "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth, but a sword."¹ The prayers of a great Christian general like

¹ He also said "He that taketh the sword shall fall by the sword," but referred to the propagation and defence of the faith.

Gustavus Adolphus would be very much of a piece with those of King David. Religiosity lost Jerusalem to the Jews; they refused to fight or work on the Sabbath day; and religiosity in coming times of struggle may for a period deprive the Christian nations of God's help.

Distinguo was a favourite word with the old theologians; distinction must be made between individual and civil and national obligations; and because not sufficiently made churches are unnerving the arm of the civil magistrate and fostering the seeds of corruption in the world. Indignation against wrong, as formerly affirmed, is the reaction of love; the more intense the love, the more terrible its reaction. When indignation against public crime ceases to radiate from "Zion Hill," because weakling hearts occupy its prominences, virtue dies and crime carries the sway. When preaching against wrong becomes useless it is high time to pray.

Not a little mischief has thriven through a misapprehension of the real import of the remark on the Christian spirit. Taking into account the character of many councillors of many cities on this continent, and indeed of not a few legislators, the public prayers touching them are very defective. True, when a minister of religion anywhere knows the value of appeals to Heaven against wrong and does his duty, a cry is heard from terrified criminals and their sympathizers everywhere; yet simply intreating God's blessing, as is commonly done, for men full of the low cunning of the serpent, is demoralizing whole communities by creating the impression that there is virtue in crime, and that official criminals are above justice. There have been men whose prayers were more dreaded than an army by the powerful wicked. That day is past, because Satan appears now to have confederated with religion as an angel of "sweetness and light." But

tax the suavest of the existing clergy severely as others and it may be found that even they will entreat God to bring their common enemies to book. Thus immunity from taxation may be a clever device to silence Heaven in the interest of wrong. As for the hackneyed advice of voting in better men, it often cannot be done, as there seems to be an influence making for unrighteousness, as if working to bring on revolution by demonstrating that electoral government is impossible. In some quarters the religious influence is against reform. Since the world began there never was a time when a general conscience kept alive by appeals to Heaven was more needed than at present, when the property of cities, of nations in fact, is gradually passing under the control of penniless voters forming into combinations, to be augmented at length by adding their wives and daughters. In this crisis the churches which embrace the proprietors are singing hymns as

"Nero fiddled when Rome was on fire."

There is another class of institutions that would be improved by an occasional prayerful glance from the churches—railways. More than once the Christian world has been startled by the ongoings of railroad employés in the West. But why should there be surprise when it is the fixed policy of the railroad authorities to wipe out religion by making it impossible through the extinction of the Lord's day. A railway is valuable property, very; and needs special divine protection; but since the owners persist in sowing the wind they deserve little sympathy when the time comes, as come it must, when they shall reap the whirlwind. If this were all, the matter could be allowed to drop with complacency; but as railways are the arteries of a country it should be made impossible either for the directors to introduce demoralization along their way, or for employés to put a thumb on the jugular

of commerce. Some one wisely suggests that railroads should be under government control to the extent of being compelled to maintain a fund for pensioning employés when disabled by age or accident, in order to secure their good behaviour. At any rate, as railways are fruits of Christian civilization, their management should be given to understand that they must not do the work of the devil by secularizing the Sabbath day. By constant repetition a most dangerous proverb has become an article of faith, viz., that corporations have no souls. It is a lie; they are conspirators when they co-operate for mischief in the interest of self.

The reason why it is so difficult to induce the influential classes to cherish an adequate respect for the Lord's Day and some other commands is because so little is said by a complacent clergy to impress men of wealth with the unparalleled crime of disrespecting and disobeying God. The Bible was inspired

to prepare men for salvation by enforcing the overwhelming character of this crime; therefore it is its first and its last moral lesson. The Christian view of the Sabbath is established by the evangelical prophet, Isaiah LVIII. The religious object of the day is to prepare men by habit for an eternity in God's presence and to be happy there. To be miserable in a presence from which it is impossible to escape is hell.

Independently of its direct object, there is something in the conception of prayer calculated to awaken the soul. There is not a man or woman or child on earth, no matter how lost or poor, who may not, through faith that "God is, and that He is the rewarder of them who diligently seek Him," get access to Him; multitudes who were they to move heaven and earth could not get into the presence of the most circumscribed princeling. The whole Bible, in fact, is a revelation of the importance of man in the estimation of those above

the skies. He was made a little lower than the *elohim*, but has been crowned with glory and honour through the attentions paid him by the Highest Heavens. There is no possibility of forming an adequate conception of what men would have been as unfallen creatures, nor of what they are destined to be as the redeemed; but opinion in heaven so fully expressed by the interest taken, should count and give meaning to the question proposed by Jesus; "What shall it profit a man if he should gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

CONSCIENCE.

He who said, "The voice of conscience is the voice of God," either knew something or guessed better than he knew. It is the still small voice of God that speaks to the hearts of men; which it does till His Spirit is grieved; He then mingles severity with tenderness; and when this fails He employs severity

alone, which sometimes consists of letting men alone. Conscience itself is the reason and susceptibility educated by information and experience. There is essential right or wrong in actions, but how does the quality come to be detected? A child soon learns that wrong is felt by the recipient who avenges it; or it may be felt and avenged by himself. This is his first moral lesson, one not soon forgotten, and it opens his moral eye. There would necessarily be an instinctive perception of right or wrong in conduct if there were also an instinctive inclination to do right; but in natures shattered by sin it is otherwise. How few of the Christian virtues have been considered such by the nations!

The natural prompters of the religious conscience are the signs of intelligence by which men are surrounded in nature and which point to the existence of God. As a consequence, no matter how near men lapse to the consciousness of the

ape, they never cease to conceive of God in some shape.¹ In the earliest ages so far from being atheists, men made too many gods.

Rules of moral judgment learned from experience come to be instantaneously applied, which has deceived philosophers who have pronounced conscience to be an instinct or faculty instead of a capacity. Were it an instinct, or if so not a lost one, it would have been true to God as the needle to the pole. On the contrary, in all nations at the first presentation, the true God has awakened hostility and a conviction that it was justifiable to express it. That a sense of obligation to duty is left after the object of worship has been changed is disproved by history; men have even destroyed their adopted gods when displeased with them.

In consequence of its nature the divine element in conscience needs to be fortified by religious instruction till God is

¹ Stanley professes to have discovered a "godless" tribe in Africa; they were the most degraded savages he ever saw.

fully known. The importance of enforcing obligation by religion arises from the fact that there is no law of *duty* strictly so called, independent of the divine nature; brutes have none but fear of each other; nor if left alone would brutal men. A thing is wrong or a sin when it violates the law of love, love in God being the ultimate standard, as its reaction in Him is the measure of sin's deserts. To impose "duty" on the Deity would make His nature not supreme. By eliciting love Jesus restores the capacity for duty; which He could not do were He not a divine person, as love for Him would then stand in no direct relation to love for God. Since gratitude alone can now be the initial phase of love, as pity is initial love in God, conviction of ill-desert is the necessary initiative of salvation. When through inconsiderate kindness Christ is pressed for acceptance where the conscience remains unawakened, religion becomes a floral display on tombs. And when the temporal con-

sequences of sin are alone emphasized the effects are as among the ancient Jews; complacency in the successful and a feeling that the poor are outcasts.

Conscience is often charged with what it has nothing to do, except negatively by its silence or absence. Wherever it is thoroughly awakened the person will by impulsion grope his way to Christ and rest in peace; but such as continue in the religion of nature or in the religion of nature modified by multiplication of externalities, or who live satisfied with scepticism will do so because the conscience is asleep. Until the encrusted deposit of sinful indifference formed over every human spirit is broken up by the law as a hammer and fused by the love of God people are proudly satisfied to live by religious forms or without them.

Men are practical factors in their mutual obligations; among savages, and even those who are not, the dread of anger and a powerful arm tells; and much can be done for morality by mak-

ing and enforcing laws. Civil government or authority rests on a divine foundation, something more freely admitted in the olden times than at present.

By faithful preaching religion can be made a practical factor in establishing the authority of God; an object or end imperceptibly slipping out of the intellectual grasp. It is not a matter of indifference whether religious duty be considered an instinct or an impression from the Deity mediated by instruction; if the latter it is a chief duty of ministers of religion to let the whole world know what kind of Being God is, or declares Himself to be. Religious impressions were inaugurated in the early world by immediate divine manifestation; and they are propagated by the record. Those early experiences cannot be allowed to go for nothing among those on whom the ends of the world have come; enforced reflection is a gentle way of passing through them. The New Testament had its origin in a fresh contact

with the Divine; and St. Paul, born out of due time, got the impulse of his religious life from a meeting with Jesus; it was a painful one, as first meetings with Him often are, but the issues were glorious. The origin of spiritual religion in every case is contact with Christ as God through the word and a living energy implanted by the Spirit of God.

The initial function of the Holy Spirit is to "convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; of judgment because the prince of this world is judged;" which probably means that the doom of Satan is an object lesson. But how is it to be done? By new revelations? Certainly not, but by a full impression of the old ones. His ulterior function is to instil the love of God, and how can this be done best; By ignoring divine justice or by setting His love in the light of it? It is the unsaved that are unsafe and need awakening, and how can it be better done than by uncovering the unseen dangers

of the eternal future? Minimising these dangers and the atonement as a consequence, forced the old churches into monasticism, self-inflicted atonements, and endless repetitions of the Lord's Supper, substitutes for the One Perfect Sacrifice. Like causes are producing like effects again; ritualism and monasticism and churches within churches to make up for the inefficiency of an imperfect gospel. If attempts to Christianize or civilize by art exhibited either inside or outside of churches have never done more than put a polished face on corruption, "the pulling down of strongholds" necessary to make way for Christ can be as little done by artistic preaching as by artistic shows. Out of sixty million people in the United States it is affirmed that not more than twenty million attend any place of worship; and there are churches by the hundred people may attend from the cradle to the grave and not be made definitely aware that to intercept an unseen, eternal dan-

ger brought the Son of God from the skies.¹ In fact a sound has gone out from not a few of them that there is no danger from that direction; and how many will refuse to trouble themselves with unnecessary checks on sinful enjoyment!

Since the most eccentric plant comes short of producing so many varieties as human nature, impenitence may have various causes. In one it may be callousness, in another the love of pleasure, or the wish to accumulate, or the ambition of fame; or it may be an overmastering vice, or it may be a rooted hatred of the Christian type, or an unforgiving disposition, or it may be unbelief; but the lever to move the soul out of the rut of one and all of them is the same—a conscience plied by revealed truth made effective by the

¹ The object of mentioning the United States of America here and elsewhere is to state facts and not to find fault, which would be unfair to a country all but completely snowed under by immigration. A description in a United States paper of the state of the pulpit in New York city first made the writer aware that there was danger ahead, and for Canada too necessarily, danger that could be averted by change of method in pulpit instruction everywhere.

Holy Ghost. As salvation is from sinfulness, how is it reasonably possible to put people into a salvable condition except by the conviction of sinfulness and God's terrible opinion of it? The desire for heaven may exist where there is no fitness for it; and enthusiasm for a Christ of the imagination may fill a bosom very ill prepared to face the real one. There will be surprises at the final meeting, as Jesus foretold.

It may be said that hell is nowhere more firmly believed in than among the "submerged;" just so; they have sinned till they feel the doom of the lost; "a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation." Sin can be carried to such a pitch as to awaken premonitions of hell; it does not always sear the conscience like infidelity or atheism or respectable rascality. This explains unexpected conversions among the most degraded.

It has to be admitted that defective presentation of revealed truth could not

alone produce the awful degradation found in quarters in most cities unless backed by strong drink; but the unprecedented modern tendency to drunkenness which necessitated the temperance societies has a specific cause—the introduction of tobacco into Christian countries. The pipe is a siphon establishing connection between the human organism and the whiskey barrel. There are whole families and multitudes of them in which a drunkard was never known until some of the members began the use of tobacco. The weed is a great weakener of will power, which is illustrated by the difficulty of breaking up the habit of its use.¹ It may yet have to be admitted that “A Blast against Tobacco” gives its royal author a good claim to be considered the wisest man of his age; would that his admonitions against the abominable habit had been attended to! Of course there are constitutions in which drink alone can estab-

¹ The Indians of America, who “smoke the pipe of peace” are utterly powerless to control their thirst for liquor when they get a taste of it.

lish dipsomania, and there are others in which tobacco cannot do it.

During the Middle Ages the great reforming machinery of the gospel was brought to a stand by putting up the church as a screen to protect from the wrath of Christ; now by tipping the time valuator and throwing the pendulum the other way, another stoppage threatens which makes it necessary to call in the specialist that he may set the works in motion again. For good results the pendulum must fly both ways to its full reach from the centre. As the object of this treatise is to oppose a dangerous extreme, the writer may possibly be accused of advocating the opposite one. On account of the infinite sweep of religion it is impossible to be an extremist except by ignoring one of the extremes. The true balance is maintained where the utmost of love and of severity are both embraced, according to the exclamation of St. Paul, "Behold the goodness and severity of God."

Since it is not faith considered as an act alone that saves, but *the faith* impressive views of the *necessity* of Christ as "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world," are indispensable in order that men may rest on Him for salvation. Outward reformation is sometimes effected by telling men of the good that is in them; spiritual reformation is always effected through a self-knowledge of the bad; "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." At the present moment there is no lack of most able expounders for the saved; but there is a lack of expounders for the unsaved, that is, of men who are willing to present a merited, judicial, eternal unrest of souls as the motive which brought about the Incarnation and established the Cross. By losing sight, in the smallest measure, of the demerit of sin, the work of Christ is belittled to the same extent, which is the germ and bud of scepticism always. To keep men in the faith it is necessary to give them a

firm grasp of the reason why such an apparently incredible thing as the Incarnation ever took place. It may be added that good Christians will be benefited by an occasional look back at the pit whence they were digged or at the doom from which they have been saved; it will keep gratitude alive and augment true generosity.

With regard to public prayer and its bearing on the conscience it has to be said that while from one point of view the public prayers are commonly too complacent, from another they are exceedingly dictatorial. Where individuals notoriously injurious to society are concerned, they err by limiting God to one line of action, often an impossible one, as the persistence of boodling shews. As a consequence the Christian public is left in doubt whether God rules and is the hearer of prayer. When asked to put a check on the wicked He should be left free to do it in His own way, which is

not generally by their conversion. As the complement of the New Testament "The Revelation of St. John" is an antidote to dangerous developments from misapprehension of the Christian spirit. The Book should be studied for its "divinity" independently altogether of the localization of its individual prophecies; because it checks the tendency to replace the Author of the Ten Commandments and of the gospel by Aaron's golden calf. The impression is gaining ground that God repents His severities as unjust, and is therefore disposed to be lenient; whereas all divinely inspired books can be distinguished by their savour of infinite justice; not a human product certainly; and pardon, on account of the Infinite Satisfaction, is a judicial act from the Throne. Neither in His ancient severities nor in His modern mercifulness is the Judge of all the earth unjust or derelict to His own Law. His severities are law, His mercy Law satisfied by Blood.

THE REFRAIN.

If the Divine Judge must not send men to prison for life, to whatever period it may extend (Prof. Huxley's expression) for infractions of universal law, why should human judges do so for the natural life? To illustrate the danger of plausible irreligious tendencies, you are reminded that several generations of great men in Germany smiled satisfaction at every good hit directed against the Bible by men thrust into pulpits to amuse their auditors with jibes against it. To-day, from the emperor down, the influential men there look grave at the mention of religion. Why? Because the permanent lodgment of anti-scriptural teachings has been in the back streets in crystals such as socialism and anarchism—standing threats to the whole world coming from Germany. They see at length that the record of the Flood, or the destruction of a world of anarchists; of Sodom and Gomorrah, a

sweep out of existence of whole cities of sensualists; and of Pharoah and his hosts, the deserved fate of cruel tyrants; judgments God claims He executed in exhibition of His anger and which can never be forgotten, are at the root of the civilization of the world. Whoso labours to undermine these records strikes society at the foundation. In their own interest the substantial people of America should spend liberally to put every criminal disposition consciously under the eye of omnipotent and omnipresent justice. This is the object of preaching as distinguished from other instruction. There is danger for you more than for others in the effacement from human consciousness of the Judge and justice of heaven.

As the Revelation was a work of infinite wisdom there can be no mistake in its contents nor in the amount of evidence with which it was launched on time. The first necessity was to convince those to whom it was made, which

certainly was not done by flattery. In those days mankind was shamelessly bad and no compositions ever painted human nature more to the life; the object—to bring men from depths of vice and rascality to the pinnacle of holiness; in short, in faithless ages, to make Abrahams and Josephs, men that even God could put confidence in, upright through and through. It was by accomplishing this purpose and creating contrasts of character such as the world never knew that the religion of revelation got its start. Physical miracles, some of them of foresight, were associated with miracles on the spirit to mark their divine origin. That the launch was successful and without mistake is proved by an increase from age to age in the number of those who accept it; the secret of which is that it has continued to do and does still what it did at first; only the general reform of manners brought about by its influence makes effects less striking to the eye. At the first super-

natural contact the Israelites were polygamists, at the last they were monogamists and have continued to be ever since. This is one example. It may be stated over again that unless it is the intention to deny divine interposition altogether, or in other words a miraculous dispensation embracing many miracles, spiritual and physical, it is futile to deny individual miracles, which in fact complete the scope to be embraced in the evidence for divine control. The miracles of the Bible cover every important department of nature and of human life to make the creation of all things unmistakable.

Geology from its inception has been a favourite science with those who plume themselves on the superior wisdom of differing from others about the Bible. On account of its vast subject matter it gives premature thinking any amount of immature evidence for destructive work. The person who first directed attention to the earth's crust did so because he

found several alternate layers of lava and vegetable mould in parts around Vesuvius and would have overturned the throne of God by overthrowing His word had not his conclusion on the "age of the world" been overthrown by the ruins of Herculaneum, found beneath the lowest strata. Yes, the throne of God as far as this world is concerned, because the stability of Christian society rests on the stability of the Bible. Demonstrate that its very exordium or the first three chapters are a lie and there is reproduced everywhere the Germany Napoleon I. dashed about like a potter's vessel and whose people he handled as fishermen handle herrings. There is an elixir of vigour for the nations in the truth of God as there was for the Jews. A world that is not nearly peopled even in the northern parts of Asia affords small evidence of an antiquity for the human family greater than is ascribed to it in Genesis. As a science geology is far too large to be fully grasped in ten

generations let alone in one; the possible mistake may be in making rocks of the same character over the earth's big surface of an identical age.

DANGER COMING APACE.

The forecasts of Flemming astonished Bible students when the French Revolution broke out; those of Cumming and others, although very exaggerated, were nevertheless made remarkable by events from 1860 to 1870. The Revelation of St. John still paints a future, and not very far off, in dark colours; as usual, he blames the churches, his prophesies always bearing on the future of religion. Chemistry has multiplied the power of criminals; exaggerated conceptions of liberty are in the air; consciences have been freed from the influence of eternity, and professors of religion have fostered greed and injustice by their bad example. Yet there may be no need for recourse to despotic government again, which some of the worldly-wise predict; the

gospel can become a power not calculated on by the wisdom of this world. The word of God "sent out of Zion," is "the rod of His power," and by it He can "rule in the midst of His enemies." No nation ever came to ruin in which the conscience did not die out first, giving ambitious men, civil and ecclesiastical, their opportunity.

Revelation XVI, 13-14, so long a puzzle, begins to assume an apparent meaning which may prove to be the true one. The creatures referred to have their natural habitat in water, which in the explained imagery of the Book means among the people. They are said to be begotten in a peculiar way; they come "out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet," which very clearly points to a paternity from false teaching by a politico-religious system. By all odds the most demoralizing influence from such a direction is as formerly stated the undertaking to limit penalties decreed by heaven; a pretence

that has paralyzed the conscience of the Christian nations. If the "false prophet" is Mahomet the meaning is complete, because the method of the new malefactors — assassination — originated among his followers.

The substitution in pre-reformation ages of the authority of the church for the authority of Christ dislocated the conscience and established a chasm between heaven and earth, Protestantism has with intermissions been striving to overcome. It is true that sermons cannot be confined altogether to what is known as "divinity"; but it is spiritual death to limit their substance to the "humanities," a growing tendency that is replacing the church in the seat of God by the *human* conscience; an improvement perhaps, but not the one sought for by the Son of God. When Jesus called Himself Master he claimed lordship over the conscience, His divine nature saving Him from the charge of making Himself a "pope." When His

mastership came to be ignored, it was found necessary, in order to keep people near the mark, to establish an ecclesiastical despotism through the confessional. When this despotic authority over the conscience is overthrown and not by the word of God, Satan generally occupies the vacuum, for which the text under review holds the authorities overthrown responsible.¹ The true kingdom of God on earth is the immediate reign of Christ for which He is fitted by His omnipresence.

The three unclean beasts point to men of the baser sort; they are beings uttering sounds from the gutter, then hopping up suddenly out of obscurity and startling people, as the assassins do. Events at length seem to throw light on a prediction which may have its fulfilment in the developing methods of communism, nihilism and anarchism. No prophesy of Scripture, that is, no pas-

¹ By dwelling constantly on the obscurities of the Bible to shew the necessity of an interpreter, people who lose confidence in the church are prepared to throw the Holy Scripture overboard also.

sage relating to future events, is its own solution, mistranslated "of any private interpretation"; it is fully solved by the event alone. These unclean beasts go forth not *eis* according to another mistranslation — to — but *epi* — upon — the kings of the earth, which will make combination against danger necessary. Attempts against the lives of rulers, of labour against capital, by votes and otherwise, may yet compel society to unite in self-defence; is in fact doing so. The assassins of the Middle Ages died hard.

A vigorous public conscience, more needed than ever before, because liberty is more extended, is the one thing capable of modifying or averting the prospective dangers; and surely the influential in churches should be last of all to obstruct the divine method of creating one. In the light of history, presented in unerring perfection by the Word of God, why have troubles been sent except to do by sorrow what religion should

have done by less honied words. False prophets of smooth things have never failed to put themselves in evidence in connection with the calamities of nations.

The Millenium will be a second coming of Christ, but not in the flesh; it will be a nearer consciousness of Him "who dwelt in the bush." But what upturnings the treachery of the pulpit and the sinfulness of men may necessitate as a preparation for His coming! Before His first advent "a great red dragon" was let loose to trample the nations under foot; and to aggravate their woes by enforcing silence. If the ministry of the age does not cope with its hypocrisy, self-seeking, dishonesty, pride, and ever increasing tendency to religious parade and even to idolatry, the world may have to be turned upside down.

The "daystar" of Christianity knew well what it was in his utterances, sounding far and near, that forced the multitudes to an audience! In his opinion what was it? "Who hath warned you to

flee from the wrath to come?" It was that. In describing the future of the impenitent, the Son of God employed the most awe-inspiring words that ever fell from human or even divine lips—in fact He prepared the vocabulary that has served ever since for what are called in contempt "fire and brimstone preachers." In John's theology and in that of Jesus, religion is especially a refuge from "the wrath to come" and all real revivals have had their instrumental origin in danger coming from the direction of the eternal world. All other considerations sink into utter insignificance in comparison with this; and it is the consideration carefully left out of the modern religious essay. Still it is not the dread of hell that is made efficacious by the Holy Spirit to influence men, so much as the solemnity of infinite and eternal justice in the predicted verdicts of the Last Assize. This it is that opens the understanding to a recognition of the "precious blood;" it is the absence of it that

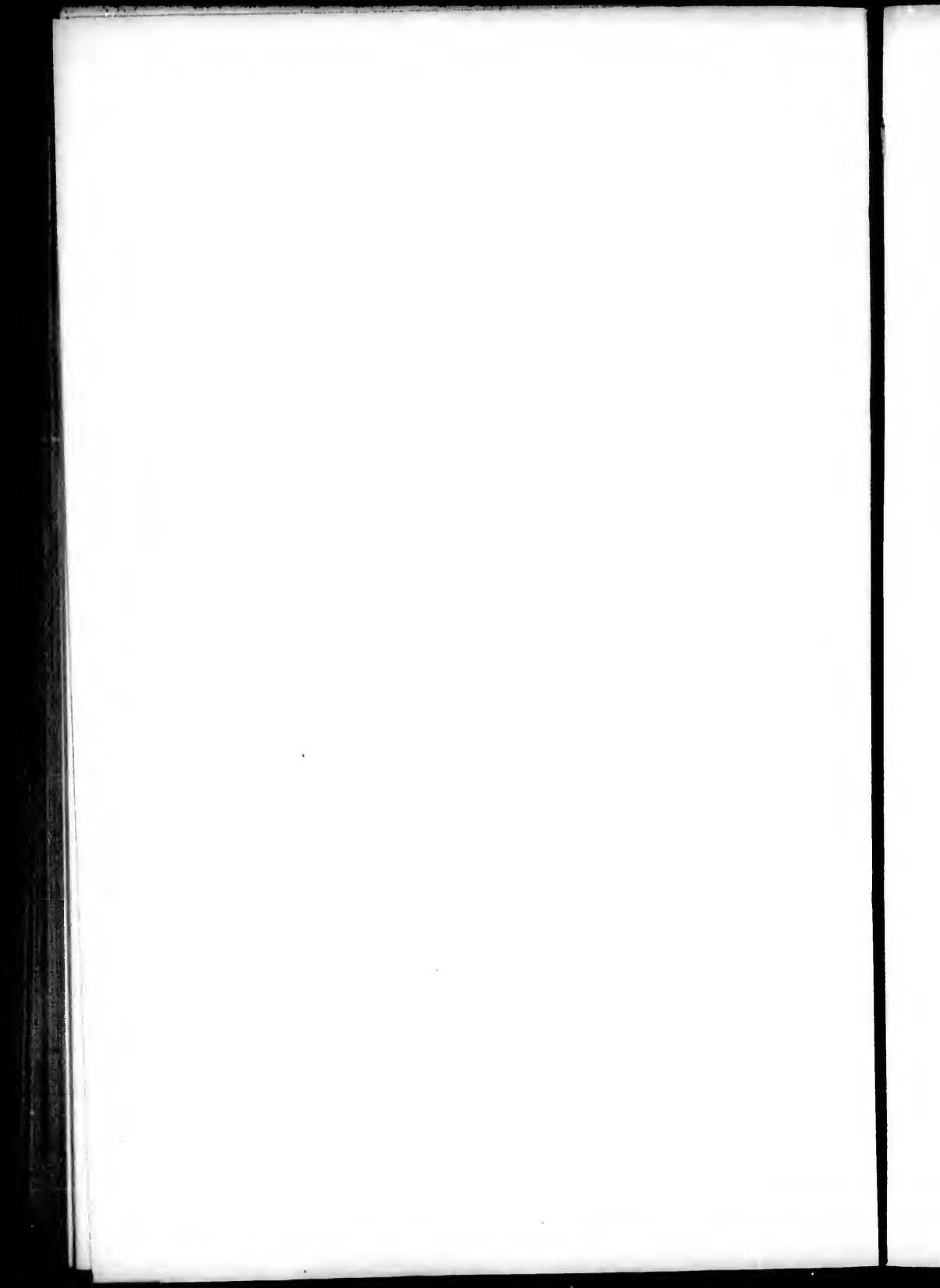
makes the "Blood" superfluous. It is not mercifulness in God, it is "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son that cleanseth us from all sin." "Flee to your strongholds, ye prisoners of hope."

The great motive which led to the establishment of our holy religion, and which alone can enable men to receive it intelligently, must not be allowed to drop into the background. Had Jesus not laid bare the dangers staring from beyond the present life, He would have failed even as a philosopher. The idea entertained by the Jews, taught by their spurious writings, that something can be done for the dead through prayer, has had much to do in sealing their eyes against the necessity of the great sacrifice; it has had much to do with their piebald reputation as well.

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ADDENDA TO "RITUALISM."



ADDENDA TO "RITUALISM."

The concluding words of the Book of Revelation indicate that they were to be the final utterance of Divine inspiration—its product infallible truth. "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book ; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city." Rev. 22, 18, 19. Through chronic tinkering human laws are in perpetual flux, in this country so much so that neither the lawyers nor judges seem to know what they are, and make a living by contradicting each other. "The law of the Lord is perfect;" it is finished legislation, and includes everything needed to make "the man of God perfect" also. Accretions there are which the Author of Revelation foresaw and forbade ; careful attention, however, reveals that the novelties were added in the interest of the clergy and not of the people, so that claims of infallibility are not put forth by disinterested arbiters. Once again the loudest cry of the Anglicans is that of the centuries which thrust Christ Jesus into the background, and when Churches everywhere were tottering for a fall—"Honour the clergy."

During the formative period of Divine revelation, rules were made intentionally that they should become obsolete when their purpose had been served. They related to the Person and work of Messiah, bearing chiefly on guilt and its extinction. The responsibility of appointing substitutions was shouldered by the Revealer Himself, who expounded so realistically that except by denying the illustrations there is no possibility of mistaking His meaning. But foreshadowings of the Deliverer became unnecessary when His work was done, except as records giving definite points as to what He had accomplished. The great *Sacerdos* makes any other of His class superfluous; a "priest" as a coadjutor of the Infinite is a candle in the glare of the sun—a thing figured in providential sarcasm in all ritualistic public worship. The key to the Levitical law—Hebrews—makes it evident that when the shadowings were done away the Object left was Christ, and Him crucified—the fact, and not vulgar realistic representations of His execution, which must be very offensive to the Crucified as they are to good taste. Remarkable, that once more in England it has become a question whether St. Paul was sincere when he wrote that "It hath pleased God through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe:" by preaching, and not by sacerdotal manipulations.

It is coincident with the Protestant view that no official of the New Testament is called a *hierens*—the New Testament designation of the Aaronic ministers. The modern signification given to "priest" measures

the distance ritualists have sunk in the slough of defec-
tion ; by the change the great *Archihierens* has also
become a presbyter—"priest." He has gone down,
and the clergy have gone up ! Expand "priest" into
presbyter, and at once a flaw is made in the parch-
ment of the Anglican drum ; from "presbyter of the
Church of England" the echo of the *papatus* is
exorcised.

Moreover, if it was intended that Italians should
occupy a position in the new Economy similar to
that of the Jews in the former one, the Epistle to the
Romans ought to decide it : a book whose solemn
silence on such a claim must be startling to any who
are risking their fate on the veracity of Italian ecclesi-
astics.

As there is not a trace of "priestcraft" in the Acts
of the Apostles or in their Epistles, it is strange it
could insinuate itself into the Churches. The "con-
version" of Constantine and accommodations for
an influx of the heathen have been worked beyond
their full power to explain matters. There has been
no irruption of idolaters into the Anglican communion,
and yet many of its presbyters accept baptism for
regeneration, and syncopate themselves into "priests."
As a matter of fact, the Church of Constantine's day
had gone further astray on the import of baptism
than Dr. Pusey does ; otherwise how could Constantine
have caught the idea of deferring his baptism ? Pro-
bably he was only more logical than Dr. Pusey. It
was a false development, not dreamed of in the
Apostolic age, because the meaning of the rite was
understood.

It is because baptism cannot give the conscience peace that faith in baptismal regeneration leads up to personal satisfaction for sin, as it has also led up to endless repetitions of the Lord's Supper, which in reality is made a crucifixion of Christ afresh.* The connection with Christ is broken, or rather non-established, by a great mistake in regard to the way through which it is formed; and the poor stricken penitent has to be persuaded that his conscience troubles come from sins for which no atonement has been made. "The Church" undertakes to confer both Christ and the Holy Ghost; but in his experience the poor confiding penitent finds that "the blood of Christ" does not "cleanse from all sin." The real explanation, however, is that the ritualistic christ is a shoddied article of commerce, and that baptism does not regenerate.

For the same reason, ritualism requires many days in addition to the Lord's day to make men religious: it is up-hill work. "Ye observe days, and months, and seasons, and years; I am afraid of you." Gal. 4, 11. "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified? This only would I learn from you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect in the flesh?" Are not the curses of the Book now beginning to fall on backsliding England?

* For the meaning of *is* in "This is my body," see Galatians 4, 25: "Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia."

But it may be replied that, as a matter of fact, Christ has not delivered His followers from all suffering. Providential suffering has two aspects, as it relates to the believing and the unbelieving; to the former it is fatherly chastisement; to the latter it is a foretaste of the eternal future, to awaken the conscience and lead up to faith. By doting parents, let suffering never be associated with wrong-doing in the mind of a child, and a conscienceless monster is the product.* By exhibitions of severity, God creates a conscience, and prepares men for salvation. His exhibitions in past ages, and threatened exhibitions in future ones, if wisely used, may do it, and save much present suffering.

One thing, however, can be said in favour of Roman Catholics, and it is a great thing, which cannot be said of most Protestant Churches—that their preachers have never supposed God to have been converted; in other words, that He has repented former severities as unjust, or that He is not now what He has always been where men are unchanged. The Catholic Church has never failed boldly to proclaim what the eternal destiny is of those who live without God and without hope, notwithstanding mistakes she may make about the Way of Life. The consequence is, that Roman Catholics have taken a more lively interest in their religion than Protestants generally have taken in theirs. Had Protestants been as faithful to Bible teaching on the future of the impenitent and unbelieving, and refused to waste

* Cain is one example, and there is a later one.

time in forcing salvation on people who were not first made to feel their need of it, not only would Protestant temples have been as well filled as Catholic ones, but, by pointing directly to an Atonement inconceivably great, to Blood infinitely precious as the only escape from all guilt, the awakened conscience of the Christian nations would have awakened the conscience of the world, and have prepared men everywhere to receive the Gospel. Justice and Mercy Infinite are the stimulants of religion, and they are most fully expressed by the Incarnation and the Cross: facts that are becoming meaningless common-places by familiarity and flippant repetition. What is needed is an adequate realization that "the Word was made flesh." Wonderful! Yes; a Being so great as God is cannot but do what is calculated to excite wonder. Overlooking this is a starting-point of error.

But any clergyman who is unaware that one of his functions is to raise the dead; who does not know that he is sent to preach to spirits in prison as really as Noah was—to men and women, many of them yet bound in unconsciousness in chains of darkness, awaiting the judgment—has mistaken his calling and could be less injuriously employed along some other walk in life. To the mental fertility and ingenuity of the modern age Churches owe the credit of a royal road to salvation; by applying spiritual remedies lovingly to the lips of the dead, and by letting the conscience tenderly alone in its sleeping beauty. Such an alarm to prepare men for Christ as was sounded by the Baptist would be considered heresy now. These are the latter days.



