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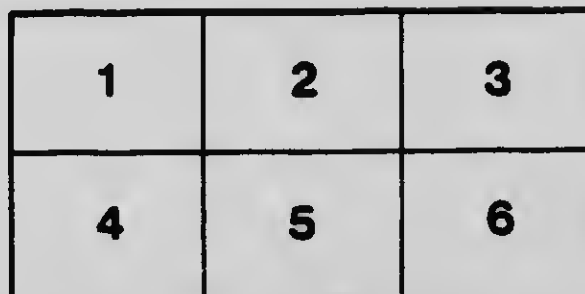
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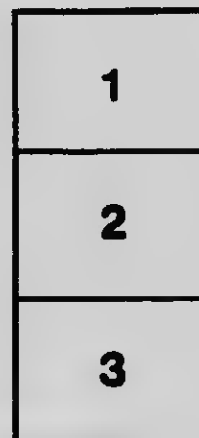
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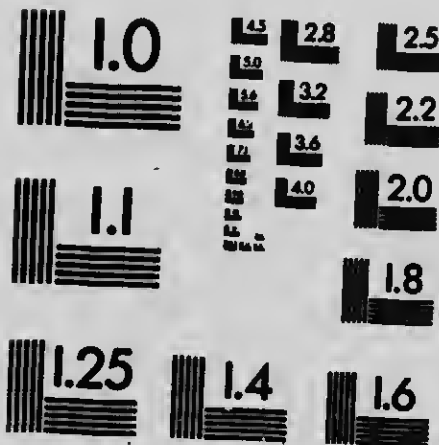
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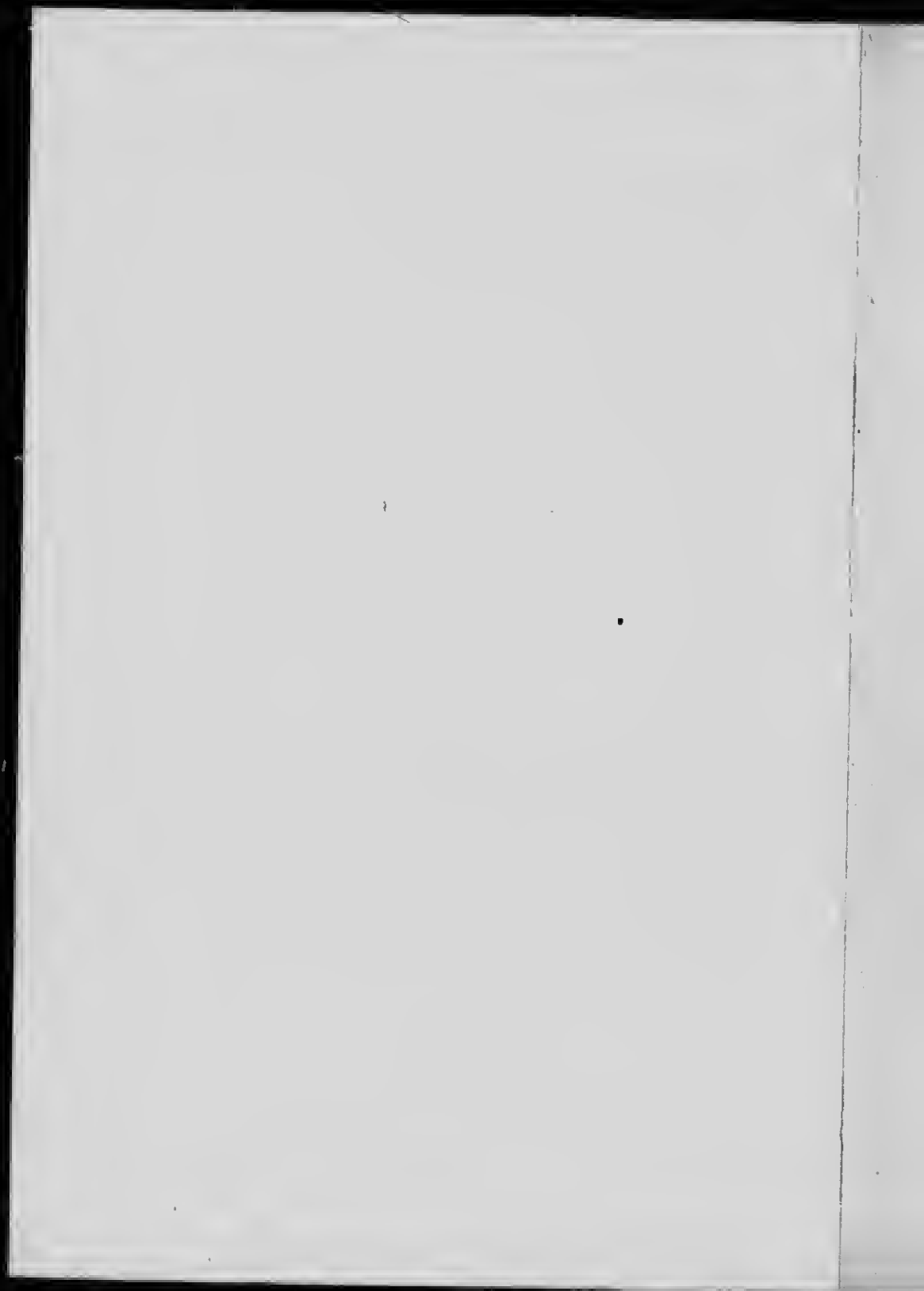
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BY

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FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH



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RELIGION AS AN EXPERIENCE.

"God is our refuge and strength;
A very present help in trouble;
A Father of the fatherless,
A strength to the needy in his distress,
A refuge for the oppressed,
Our dwelling place in all generations.

Cast thy burden upon the Lord,
And he will sustain thee;
Wait on him, and be of good courage,
And he will strengthen thine heart."—*Psalms*.

Religion presents itself to man under four aspects: as something to be gone through with, or performed; as something to be believed; as something to be studied, analyzed, or speculated about, and as something to be experienced. In other words, it presents itself as a Ceremonial; as a Creed; as a Philosophy, and as a Life.

What are we to say of these differing conceptions of religion?

Doubtless we should say that all are legitimate; all are useful; but no one taken alone is complete—each needs the others to round it out to wholeness. Especially is this true of the first three, that they need the fourth. *Experience* or *life* is the end toward which each of the others ought to lead—the only result which gives them justification for being. Without religion as a personal experience, ceremonials, creeds and philosophies are a body without a soul.

Experience of religion! I know there is a prejudice in many minds against the thought of religion as an experience. To some persons, such experience seems only superstition, or cant, or pretense; to others, an empty dream of the imagination. Persons with habits of free thought, or who care much for science and reason, are perhaps particularly liable to be among those who look upon religious experience with incredulity and disfavor. But why should this be so? Can any one give a good reason?

No one denies the validity of experience in matters outside of religion. Indeed, the scientist and the man of independent thought are the very ones who, in other things, are likely to appeal to experience most. They do not want speculation, they tell you; they want to know. They want the testimony of somebody who has seen, heard, felt, experimented, experienced. They, of all men, then, should show *not least but most* respect for experience in matters of religion.

If I believed that religion rested upon a foundation of mere hypotheses and speculation, I certainly should not be a religious teacher. Indeed, if I did not believe that the main, central truths of religion are as evident, certain, verifiable as anything known to man—as the facts of science, or as the demonstrations and axioms of mathematics—I certainly should not be standing to-day in a Christian pulpit. I do believe that nothing in man's knowledge rests upon a more secure foundation—upon one more absolutely incapable of being disturbed, than religion. Why? Because it rests upon the foundation of *the soul's deepest experience*. Below these it is impossible to go. If here is not reality, then indeed

“The pillar'd firmament is rottenness,
And earth's base built on stubble.”

For even the validity of our knowledge of the outward world depends upon the truthfulness of the world within.

You say, agriculture you know about, for that has to do with tangible things; and a science like geology you can be sure of, for that deals with hard facts. But do you really think that a stone is any more a hard fact than is love or hope? Are you any more sure that the stone is out there, than you are that you love your children or your friend? I think not.

Are you any more certain, when you plant your corn in the spring, that you will get a harvest in the fall; or when you go to bed at night tired from your toil, to rest for the next day, are you any more sure that there will be any next

day, than you are that justice is better than injustice, and truth than falsehood? I think not.

As regards any object of external nature, as a flower or a tree,—are you any more sure that it really exists, as to your sense it seems to, than you are that over the tree and over all else you see, and over your own life, there is a Power higher than the tree, and higher than yourself, from which, somehow, the tree and yourself came,—a Power and Wisdom that can be trusted—which you have learned by all the experience of your life can be trusted? I think not.

Men talk strangely, sometimes, about the physical world—the world of external nature—being certain, and the internal world of the mind and the spirit, being uncertain,—as if the *distant* could be more certain than the *near*—as if knowledge of France, Germany, Europe—foreign, far away lands—could be more reliable than knowledge of our own country wherein we live. For, do we not know, the things of external nature—trees, grass, houses, hills, other persons, animals, skies—are really our souls' foreign lands, the lands which the mind reaches by journeying away to a distance. The *own country* of us all, the land in which we habitually dwell, is the internal world of our own thoughts, our own feelings, our own desires, aspirations, hopes, fears, memories, longings, loves, imaginations, emotions. Shall we say that our knowledge of this near, familiar land is uncertain, untrustworthy? and to get knowledge that we can rely on we must travel away from home, sailing out from port of eye and ear, over oceans of air and mysterious spaces we do not understand, to the foreign land of objective things—physical, external nature—stone, tree, river, sky?

No, there is nothing so near to us as ourselves. There is nothing we so immediately and certainly know as ourselves. Our deepest knowledge is experience; and not even that experience, either, that comes to us from without, indirectly and roundabout by way of the senses, but deepest of all is that immediate, internal experience, which is of the mind, the heart, the conscience, the moral and spiritual nature, upon which true religion forever builds.

"The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

One of the striking things about the preaching of Jesus when he was on the earth was his constant talk about what he called "the kingdom of God", or "the kingdom of heaven". He represented his constant desire, his great aim, as being to establish that kingdom, to build it up among men. He taught his disciples to pray, "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, . . . *thy kingdom come*". He pronounced blessings upon the humble and lowly in spirit, and those who were persecuted for righteousness' sake, saying, "Yours is the kingdom of heaven". When men desired to know what that kingdom was, he represented it as the reign of truth and love, of peace and good will, on the earth. And when asked further about it, he said, "the kingdom of heaven is within you."

Now, what did the ordinary hearers of Jesus, those who saw only superficially, think about this talk? Undoubtedly they thought it nonsense. The "kingdom of heaven" to them was probably nothing but a fancy, a hallucination of the mind of the Nazarene. As for them, they preferred solid, enduring things, not dreams and moonshine.

A kingdom! Herod had a kingdom that was real; for could they not see the swords and spears that supported it? Kings in other nations round about had kingdoms that were substantial; for were they not guarded by powerful armies? Especially was the empire of world-commanding Rome solid. But this kingdom which this religious enthusiast declaimed about, which consisted simply of ideas, principles, truths, sentiments, and which was declared to be within the mind and heart—let him go and preach it to silly women! Were they not men with too much shrewdness and judgment to be caught with such chaff?

And yet, now that nigh two thousand years have gone, how stands the case? Which do we see to have been right, the prophet of religion, who proclaimed a kingdom of the soul, or they who could see nothing strong or enduring, or worthy of regard, but that which appealed to

the eye and the ear, and the physical senses of men?

Alas! in a few brief years every vestige of Herod's kingdom was gone. Rome stood longer, but in spite of her unparalleled strength, she too fell. And all these eighteen centuries since the prophet's voice was heard, have been full of the noise of toppling thrones and the wrecks of kingdoms, empires, dynasties. But how about that kingdom of the spirit of which Jesus spoke? Has it faded or failed? Not so. Steadily has it strengthened; century by century has its dominion widened; never was it so powerful, and never were its foundations so firm as to-day. Amidst a world of change it has proved the one enduring reality.

"In vain the surge's angry shock,
In vain the drifting sands;
Unharm'd upon the Eternal Rock,
The Eternal Kingdom stands."

Truly, indeed, the things that are seen are temporal; the things that are not seen are eternal. Verily, the solid things are not those which we hear and see, and taste and handle. The solid things are those of the soul. Religion builds upon what cannot be shaken, because she builds upon what is deepest in the nature of man.

And this, too, is why religion can supply man's deep and permanent needs, as nothing else can.

What are the deepest and most permanent needs of man as he journeys through the land of earth? Of course he must have food to eat and water to drink by the way, and clothing and shelter to protect him from the cold. These are essential, for without these he dies. But these alone, and all things else on the plane with these, satisfy the wants of only the brute beast in him. Is he only a brute beast? Has he no wants other than those of the ox or the tiger?

There is a higher side to his nature, which has its needs as deep and imperative as those of his body. He was made to think, and feel, and hope, and love, and will, and pray; to cherish truth, to obey reason, to champion right; to care for his fellow-men, to help every good cause; to abhor evil, to spurn wrong; to aspire after that which is above him, to

love nature, to walk joyfully and holily through the world, to keep his heart full of patience and trust to the end, and when the evening of his life's day comes,

"Approach his grave
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams"

But where is he to get help to do all this? Yet his need for all this is quite as great as his need for food or drink or shelter for his body. For what would compensate if he should feed the animal in him and let the angel starve?

To be sure, in this world of so sore poverty and physical want and physical suffering, it is a great problem how to supply adequately the bodily needs of the poor. The importance of this should not be overlooked. And yet the larger, deeper, graver problem is how to supply the spiritual wants of both poor and rich. For, oh! how much ignorance, fear, sorrow, disappointment, pain, heart-break, despair, sin, lust, greed, cruelty, pride, profanity, hate, misery and evil in ten thousand forms is to be seen all up and down the world, among rich and poor alike! And where is this spiritual want and misery to find relief?

When man is hungry with that hunger which is of the soul, and which physical bread only mocks; when he thirsts with a thirst which the things of sense cannot quench when he is tired, so that no bed can rest him, weary in mind and heart, tired of life itself; when hope fails; when strength is gone; when courage departs; when the currents of human friendship and love freeze; when sorrow and disappointment fall upon him and break his heart; when bereavement and death stand coldly, bitterly in his path and must be met; and saddest and most terrible of all, when temptations to evil roll over him like billows and sweep him under; and when sin, like a body of death, fastens itself on him, dragging him down, down, with resolves broken, desire baffled, will enfeebled, down, down—then, then where is help to be found? In what direction, in such deep needs as these, may we look for light or hope?

There is no direction but one; in all the world's ten

thousand years of search for help in these her experiences of mightiest need, no at all adequate resource but one has ever been discovered. What is that? I need tell none of you who have thought, none of you who have observed, none of you who have read history, none of you who have hearts—that resource is religion—the personal experience of religion in the soul—the conscious, purposeful, earnest opening of the soul's doors to the incoming of the spirit of God, the power of God, the peace of God, the love of God, the life of God. The tides of life from above once set flowing through a man, then, but only then, there is hope for any human soul. And that is the reason why religion, particularly the Christian religion, of God's Fatherhood and everlasting and unfailing Love to all his children, has been able to reach, quicken, ennoble, sanctify, save men in every condition of life, among all classes, rich and poor, bond and free, high and low, learned and unlearned, kings and peasants—transforming sorrow into joy, disappointment into hope, weakness into strength, fear into courage, hate into love, selfishness and pride into generosity and self-forgetfulness, ill-doing into well-doing, oaths and curses into blessings and thanksgiving and songs of trust.

Do not misunderstand me. There are other influences in this world besides religion that have elevating, ennobling, saving power. I would not undervalue or make light of these. Among the more important of such influences are doubtless education, homes, association with the good—and in their way, science, philosophy, laws, physical environment. All these should be employed and made the most of, and some of them are exceedingly important. And yet it is no disparagement to any of these to say that, as an agency for bringing hope to the despairing, comfort to the sad, courage to the faltering, succor to the tempted, strength to the weak, patience in trial, light in bereavement, calmness in the presence of death, and above all moral and spiritual regeneration to men dead in indifference and sin, none of them have a tithe of the power of religion. As a practical reformatory influence in society, as a begetter of moral

power, as an inspiration to men to live for the highest things, religion has been, at least through all Christian history, is now, and probably always will be, without a rival, without the possibility of a rival—something alone, unique, incomparable, truly divine—divine because the point at which man consciously lays hold of a strength higher than his own; divine because the point at which the divine life flows consciously into his life.

You see, then, what I mean by religion as an experience. And you see why the subject is one of so deep personal concern to every one of us.

We none of us know much about our future. God kindly hangs a veil before our eyes. But this much we most surely know, the future of each of us will be full of deep heart needs, which must be supplied from some source higher than ourselves.

We shall all our lives have work to do that will not be easy—that will tend ever to sink into mere drudgery and slavery. What can prevent it? What can give us songs in our toil? Nothing so certainly—this is the testimony of the ages—nothing so certainly as the acceptance of our tasks as from God, to be done for him, not only as a part of his plan of things, but as under his eye, and in the light of his smile if done well.

We shall all, a thousand times over in the years that are coming, be pressed hard by temptation—temptation to hold lightly by our integrity; to stoop somewhat below high honor; to suppress the truth when we ought bravely to speak it out; to vary from the line of strict honesty in business; to be selfish when we ought to be generous; to ask what is easy, or popular, or expedient, when we ought to think only of what is right; to yield weak and slavish obedience to our appetites or passions, instead of keeping our lower natures in subjection to our higher. What can help us in these crisis times of life? What can give us strength to stand on our feet and be men—yielding obedience ever to conscience as our king? There is no such help as religion. The soul that has once definitely committed itself to the

RELIGION AS AN EXPERIENCE.

religious life, that has opened itself to religion as an experience, that has learned to identify the voice of conscience with the voice of God, is armed against temptation in all its forms as no other can possibly be. Consciously in alliance with a power higher than his own, by a subtle law this higher power flows into his life.

So, too, as we travel on across the years we must all expect to meet disappointments, discouragements, failure of plans, dashing to pieces of cherished expectations; such is the human lot. How are we going to be able to bear up under these? The danger is that as a result of them we may lose hope, courage, incentive, interest in life. What can save us? Nothing can so effectually save us as a noble religious faith, which looks beyond seemings to realities, beyond temporal things to eternal, and sees that in the soul itself lies all enduring good; so that even if riches take to themselves wings and fly away, and earthly prospects fail, and disappointments in matters of worldly interest or ambition come, the real ends of our existence are not affected; still, the soul, strong in the life of God and confident of an immortal destiny, rises serene above all these temporary clouds of earth, its hope undimmed, its courage undaunted.

Nor is anything less to be said as to the practical value of religion in the sorrows and anxieties connected with that deepest of all mysteries, death. It does not take a long experience in this world to teach us all that we are in a land whose green soil on every side breaks with startling ease into graves. The sunniest faces of to-day, to-morrow are wet with tears of sorrow for loved ones gone to return no more. And the end for ourselves, we know is only just a little way on down the road.

What can help us in all this? Man in all his experience on the earth has found no such help, in the nature of things there can be no such help, as the calm, strong faith in the soul, that Wisdom and Goodness are at the heart of this Universe,—that we and all our loved ones, for life and for death, are in the hands of One who cannot do wrong and will not be unkind.

Thus it is that religion as an experience comes to us, not like so many others of earth's helpers, to offer us its aid only in hours of sunshine, and when all goes well. Rather does it proffer its help most urgently and generously when other resources fail. There is no time of deepest, sorest need in life, when it is not at hand for us if we will have it.

" From the cradle to the grave
It comes to save!
From the world's temptations,
From tribulations,
From that fierce anguish,
Wherein we languish,
From that torpor deep
Wherein we lie asleep,
Heavy as death, cold as the grave,
It comes to save.

From doubt where all is double,
Where wise men are not strong,
Where comfort turns to trouble,
Where just men suffer wrong;
Where sorrow treads on joy,
Where sweet things soonest cloy,
Where faiths are built on dust,
Where love is half mistrust,
Hungry and barren and sharp as the sea,
It comes to set us free.

Oh! where its voice doth come,
There all doubts are dumb,
There all words are mild,
All strifes are reconciled,
All pains beguiled.
There light doth bring no blindness,
Love no unkindness;
Knowledge no ruin,
Fear no undoing.
From the cradle to the grave
It comes to save."

How? How, in these deep needs of life, does religion as experience come to us to set us free and to save us? In the only way possible. By digging deeper and filling more full the fountains of life within us. By opening up anew the connection between our lives and the infinite life of God.

THE SOUL'S CRY FOR GOD.

"My heart crieth out for the living God."—Ps. 84: 2.

No demand of the human soul is more deep, more pathetic, more inextinguishable, than its cry for God.

This cry began seemingly with man's creation on the earth; certainly it has accompanied all his earthly history so far as we can trace that history; nor does there appear to be any reason for supposing that it will ever cease so long as he remains in this world. This cry of the soul for God is what all the altars and temples and religions of the world mean; it is what its philosophies really mean; it is the deepest impulse of its poetry and art and music; I am not sure but it will sometime be seen that it is the real meaning of its science.

Said St. Augustine: "Thou madest us for thyself, O God, and our heart is restless until it repose in thee."

As a babe feels out instinctively for its mother's breast, and cannot be happy or still until it finds it; as the caged eagle is restless inside its bars and can be satisfied only when it feels its wings beating the free air; as the human eye pines for light, the human mind for truth, and the human heart for love, so the human soul, in its weakness, ignorance and imperfection, is restless—must be,—its very weakness cries out for a Strength higher than itself; its very ignorance cries out for a Wisdom higher than its own; its very imperfection cries out for Perfection; and not until these are found, as they can only be found in God, does it seem possible, in the nature of the case, that man, created as he is, can rest or find peace.

I say I think that this is not only what man's temples and altars and religion mean, but really what his philosophies and poetry and art, and even his very science, will

more and more be seen to mean at bottom as we learn to understand them better.

Man's *reason* is so made that it cries out for an *answering Reason in Nature*—an Intelligence over all things, through all things, in all things, the explanation of all things. Nothing is more abhorrent to man's mind than the thought of an idiot universe—a world without intelligence or meaning. But for man's reason to demand intelligence and meaning in the universe is, in its own way and language, to cry out for God—for what is God but the Infinite Reason?

The mind of man is so constituted that it seeks *order* and *unity*. It cannot rest in disorder. It has sometimes been said that classification (putting things in order) is knowledge. We know by discovering likenesses and unlikenesses; similarities and dissimilarities; by bringing parts together into wholes; tracing unities in diversities. This is the way all the sciences are built up. The science of botany is the orderly array of the facts of the vegetable world; it is the setting forth of the unities that run through the diversities of vegetable life. So too with the other sciences. As soon as the facts concerning the rocks of the earth, and the stars and planets of the sky, were fully enough studied out, to reveal their lines of order and their unities, we had the sciences of geology and astronomy. So everywhere science is the push on to find the order in the disorder, the one in the many. And this push is instinctive to man's mind. The human mind hungers for order: it cries out for unity.

Nor can it stop with the attainment of its object in a mere part of the creation, it must find it *everywhere*. Botany and geology and astronomy do not embrace all there is in the universe. Is there not an order running through nature as a whole? Is there not a great unity binding all its parts into one? This is what the mind longs for. And it can never rest until the answer comes, "Yes, there is such a supreme order; there is such a supreme unity."

But when the scientific mind impelled by its own irresistible instinct has thus pressed on until it has discovered

order transcending order, and unity beyond unity, until it has reached at last an ultimate highest unity in the universe, what has happened? Why, it has simply climbed the same mountain peak from its own side that philosophy and religion, propelled by a like impulse in the human soul, have been from the beginning climbing from their respective sides. They have all been climbing from disorder to order, from diversity to unity.

This is exactly what philosophy's thought of First or Efficient Cause, means. This is exactly what religion's thought of Creator, and Moral Ruler of all things means. As in the physical world the mind cries out for unity, and cannot rest until it finds it, so in the intellectual and moral worlds the mind's demand for a like unity is just as imperative. And the great final threefold unity, unity in power, unity in intelligence, and unity in beneficence, which we find at the summit as we press up all these three paths of the physical, the intellectual and the moral, is what we mean when we say the Infinite, Eternal, Supreme, *One*,—*God*.

Thus it is that the human soul's insatiate and ineradicable demand for order and unity, is its own confession that it can never rest except in the thought of One Power over all, One Wisdom embracing all, One Plan of Good for all worlds, that is to say, a moral universe commensurate with the physical, "one far off divine event toward which the whole creation moves."

A hint of the same thing I think we find in the mind's cravings for *harmony*. The lowest form of harmony is that of sounds—mere physical harmony—sounds of such pitches that the waves of air which produce them are in length multiples of each other. Such harmony of sounds gives pleasure of its kind. But we soon rise to the perception of subtler harmonies—harmonies of sound with feeling and thought; and then, to harmonies that transcend sound and all things physical. The great musicians soon get to the point in their musical compositions where they feel that their instruments are poor and inadequate, and the resources

THE SOUL'S CRY FOR GOD.

of sound are practically exhausted, and they long to burst through the cramping limitations of the physical into the realm of the free spiritual. That is, the physical harmonies which the hand or voice can produce and which the ear can hear, only dimly hint those higher harmonies which the soul feels. But when they come to try to express these feelings or to attach words to them, what is the character of the words? Instinctively they are religious words—words of adoration and worship. So deeply does the soul feel that its cry for the loftiest harmonies is really a cry for God—that is, a cry for the all-perfect Life and Love in whom all the soul's imperfections and dissonances are made complete.

Thus it is not by accident that music attaches itself so closely to religion. Harmonies of spirit are love and worship. When the soul yearns most for harmony on the human plane it feels most the spirit of love toward human beings. When it yearns most for harmony on the plane above the human it feels most the spirit of adoration to God. Perfect human Love is just perfect harmony between human soul and human soul. Perfect worship is just perfect harmony between the soul and God. Thus the soul's deepest longings for harmony are cries for a Perfect and Infinite Love. And what is that but God?

Likewise in man's natural desire for *beauty* and inability to be satisfied with any possible beauty of earth, there seems to be a secret testimony to his relationship to the divine. His longing for the beautiful quickly exhausts the possibilities of the physical, and rises to the richer realm of the intellectual and moral. It is the vision of the ideal that ever haunts him, woos him, thrills him—the ideal that is not on earth—that finds its realization only in the All-Beautiful, the All-Perfect. Thus it is that man's longing for the beautiful, which cannot be satisfied short of the Perfect Beauty, is really, in its deeper meaning, the soul's cry for God.

And man's desire for *truth*, too, seems to be the same. Man's soul is so constituted that it cannot rest in falsehood or illusions. It wants reality, it wants verity. And

this not merely at one point, or on the surface: it wants these everywhere, and above all at the heart of things. It cries out with a passionate cry that will take no denial for Truth, absolute, eternal, unchangeable, as the meaning of this universe. Is such truth possible without God?

And the soul's cry for *right*, too—right that is immutable and eternal—right and justice at the heart of being—what is that but a cry for God? No thought that ever came to man has more power to drive him wild, to make life intolerable, than the thought that possibly the great plan of things may not be just—the thought that possibly in the end wrong and not right may prevail in this universe. From this thought all that is sanest and highest in man revolts—saying, it cannot be. Amid all the shortcomings and seeming miscarriages of earth where the wrong seems to prevail, amidst all the dark problems of evil where we can see little light, there is that within us, deeper than all other voices, which says, There must be a solution; there must be a Justice throned on high which we may trust.

And what is that voice but the divine within us witnessing to itself? What is it but the soul, as St. Augustine puts it, made for God, unable to rest until it rests in Him? And when it does thus consciously rest in Him, able to feel that whatever comes the Judge of all the earth will do right, how great and inexpressibly precious is its peace!

There are times when man's need of God seems especially clear, times when the soul's needs seem especially deep, and therefore when its cry for God is likely to be especially urgent. Let us note some of these.

Times of danger are such.

Were you ever with a company of persons when a great danger suddenly came upon them? If so you know how instinctively a large part of them began to call upon God. When a sudden disaster overtakes a vessel at sea and all expect quickly to go down, we are told that many lips unused to prayer for once at least pray fervently. Nor is it

strange, or in any way unreasonable. Only, in such times men usually pray for what it is very foolish and useless to pray for, namely, some miraculous deliverance, some change of the laws of physical nature for their benefit. God is too wise and good to answer such prayers, for if his physical laws were not constant man would be safe nowhere, on land or sea, and the earth would become speedily uninhabitable. But there are prayers that are fitting and blessed in such hours of danger—prayers for self-forgetfulness and courage, and trust in God, so that one may, if possible, be of service to others, or, if not, then so that one may go down calmly and peacefully, sure that it is as safe to die as to live—singing:

“The ship may sink,
And I may drink
A hasty death in the bitter sea;
But all that I leave
In the ocean grave
Can be slipped and spared and no loss to me.”

The calling of the soul upon God which means or which helps to create such trust as that, is blessed and only blessed.

Times of trial and discouragement are occasions when men are perhaps somewhat more likely than at other times to cry to God. And this is well. Dark hours I think are never made darker by going to God; but they are often made brighter. The great thing to be feared from discouragements and trials is that they may make us hopeless, and perhaps cynical and bitter. If this be their result, they are an evil indeed. But I think the world never found such a preventive of this as going to God. The very act of laying our troubles before one who is greater and wiser than we, whose plans are larger than ours, and whom we can trust, can hardly fail to help us look upon matters more calmly, and to see that there is no reason for bitterness or despair. As between two men, one of whom goes to God for help in his trials and the other of whom does not, I am sure the former will be likely to come through the braver, the

calmer, and the more hopeful man—yes, and what is important, much the sweeter in spirit. He who in his hours of trial and agony learns to say as Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me, nevertheless not my will but thine be done," by his very submission to the higher, wiser will, rises to a nobler plane of life.

If in dark times we go to God to coax, or bribe, or importune, or compel him to do as *we* want, we shall get no good, but shall be likely to come away more bigoted and pharisaical and hard of heart than we went. But if we go to learn that his ways are higher than our ways and his thoughts than our thoughts, and to get strength and grace to prefer his wisdom to our unwisdom, then we shall come away with new light and peace, having gained a great victory.

A party of clergymen went to President Lincoln at one time during the war when things looked very dark in the field—when disaster after disaster was coming to our armies—and thought to give him some religious advice. In their conversation they took rather the tone of reproach and chiding for what they thought his religious derelictions. Might not these military disasters be traced to his neglect of prayer? they gravely inquired. Had the President with sufficient earnestness and persistency besought God to be on his side in his plannings? Mr. Lincoln listened patiently, and then when they were through, said to them: "Gentlemen, really it had not occurred to me to try to get God on my side. Indeed my whole attention has been taken up in trying if I could to get on God's side." Then, after a pause, he continued, "and really I think, gentlemen, I had better keep on trying to get on God's side; don't you?"

Could the difference be better described between helpful prayer and pious impertinence? In every time of trial and need, let us know that if our object in going to God is to get him on our side, we had better stay away, for our prayer is impudence, if it be not profanity. But if our object is to get humbly and gladly on his side,—that is, on the side of

the true and the right—then our prayer will be blessed to us, and I am sure will be well pleasing to him.

In *loneliness* the soul instinctively cries out to God. And how much loneliness there is in every human life! It does not require residence in a forest or a desert to beget loneliness. There is no more weary or oppressive solitude than that in which many a soul lives in the midst of a crowd. To be in the midst of human beings who do not understand us or sympathize with what is deepest in us; to have hopes and fears, sorrows, yearnings and ideals, that we can tell no one, Ah! that is to be lonely indeed. What is the resource? The holiest, the sweetest, the most blessed resource that man ever found is God. In him we have a friend that understands us wholly; to whom we can tell all; with whom is perfect sympathy.

We are all very much like little children. The little child goes to sleep peacefully in the dark if it knows the loved presence of its mother or father is near. Waking up in the night and finding itself alone it cries out in fear. But a word or a touch of the parent hand, revealing the dear protecting presence, drives away the fear and brings peace again. So it is that in the night-hours of our soul's lonelinesses, we cry out for God, and cannot rest until we hear the divine voice or feel the divine hand.

When we *suffer wrongs* our souls instinctively cry out to God. Alas! the danger is lest we cry out for vengeance upon the wrong doer. If we do that the lash will fall upon our own backs. The *ideal* for us, is the prayer of Jesus for his crucifiers: "Father forgive them; they know not what they do."

Or even if we are not able to reach the height of that, it is much to be able to look up and say, Oh God, thou knowest mine innocence; thou art not deceived; thou dost not misjudge or misunderstand. Many a man misjudged and wronged by his fellows, who, without this resource, would have been utterly overborne and crushed, has been able to bear all and keep a cheerful and courageous heart to the end, because in the night watches he has been able to look

up to God and say: Thou knowest; none can hide the truth from Thee; Thou art a witness to my integrity.

There is no time when the soul has more reason to cry out for God than in *temptation*. He who in temptation to evil shuts God out of his thought is in most serious peril, if he be not lost already. But he who draws near to God, to shape his yea or nay to the tempter in the light of the Divine Presence, is safe. The question, "What will God have me to do," and the prayer, "God help me to be true and do right," will prove a shield against which the fieriest darts of temptation will be impotent. Or if, neglecting God, the tempted one has fallen into sin—then what shall he do? Shall he continue his neglect? This he will be only too likely to do. But he must not yield. God now is his hope. Let him, like the prodigal, say, "I will arise and go unto my Father." And yet not to escape justice. Let him not make the mistake of crying to be delivered from the penalty due his sin. There is no true repentance and no safety in that. Just penalty is kind. Let him pray for grace and strength to bear the retribution, and to rise up through the just desert borne into strength to overcome in future time.

But perhaps the deepest and most passionate cry for God that the human soul ever knows is that which it utters in the presence of *bereavement*. To see those who are very dear to us—dearer than life itself—loosen themselves from our arms and drift away from us out over the silent river—we are unable with all our effort and tears to hold them back—this is anguish that is unspeakable. Is there no assuagement of it? No balm in Gilead?

The most helpful and blessed resource that man has ever found in all his experience on the earth, is faith in an Infinite Love over all, who takes away our loved ones only to keep them in his more immediate presence and tenderer care; the faith that sings,

"They are not dead! they have but passed
Beyond the mists that blind us here,
Into the new and larger life
Of a serener sphere;

And ever near us, though unseen,
Their dear, immortal spirits tread—
For all the boundless universe
Is life—there is no dead."

The faith that all our dear ones—God's dear ones as well as ours, and therefore are safe, and that it is only a matter of a little while before the veil will part and the shadows will roll away, and we shall all be one again—re-united in our Father's house,—this faith makes us all conquerors over death. In its presence death vanishes away, and is not. All is life—life eternal in God.

These, then, are some of the ways, and there are many more, in which the human soul cries out instinctively, and ever, from the earliest moment of its conscious rational existence, all through life, for something above itself, stronger than itself, more perfect than itself, the light of its day, the source of its life, the permanent amidst the changing, the explanation of its ideals, the infinite unity and harmony at the heart of all discords and diversities, the satisfaction of all its longings.

We see, then, the answer he made to any of our fellow men who may ever talk *lightly* of our relations to God, or of our dependence on him. We see the answer that is to be made when any speak, as thoughtless men sometimes do, of outgrowing the need of laying hold of the Divine Hand as we go through the world.

Talk lightly of our dependence on God? Outgrow our need of help higher than ourselves? Alas! who are we that thus we dream? Can the creature outgrow his Creator?

Ah, when we can call ourselves into existence, or sustain ourselves; when we can bring the morning at our wish, or the night at our call; nay, when we can create a blade of grass, or guide our own steps for one hour with certainty that within that hour sorrow and danger and death shall not overtake us, then, but not before, may we talk lightly of our need of God, or cease to listen to those deep voices of our nature that cry out for him.

Do without God? Yes, if the time ever comes when other things can do without the source of their life, then perhaps we can.

If the time ever comes when fish are able to do without water, or plants without light, or babes without mothers, or springs and rivers without the sea whence all their waters come, or the earth without the sun, then, but not before may we, we puny children of earth, turn our backs upon him who is our Strength and our Life, or stop our ears to those voices, without and within, that forever call us to his protection and his love.

Oh, friends, we little realize what treasures exhanstless and infinite, we have in God.

Imagine a world *without* God, and then we shall see. Without God the universe loses its meaning. Without God reason is baffled in its every flight. Without God our ideals are dreams and our hopes are bubbles. Without God faith's feet stand on nothing. Without God immortality fades away, and man sinks down essentially to the level of the brute, and death speedily swallows up all.

But with God, Oh! *with* God, the world is rational; the universe is alive; man is immortal; hope lights eternal fires; love reigns in all worlds; and there is no good thing in earth or heaven that is not waiting to be ours.



THE SUREST WAY OF DOING GOOD.

We are approaching the end of another year of church and school. Before next Sunday morning arrives, some of the young men and women of our great University will have begun to take their departure for their homes, scattered over many states and lands. Some will return; but some have finished their student careers and will not come back,—they go now to take their places and begin acting their parts in the stirring and earnest drama of life. Thus not a few of you are with us for the last time this morning.

Such an occasion naturally stirs deep feelings and awakens serious reflections.

What is a fit theme for our thought in such an hour?

I have asked myself this question many times the past week. Among the themes that have presented themselves, none seems to me more worthy of consideration, both by those who go and those who stay, than one suggested by a notable passage in the writings of Dr. Channing. The passage is a very thoughtful and profound answer to that great question which every serious and earnest person asks himself again and again, but which should be especially pondered by every young man and woman at the beginning of active life—the question, How can I make myself of greatest benefit to the world?

This is the way Channing answers the question:

"The greatest benefactor of society is not he who serves it by single acts, but he whose general character is the manifestation of a higher life and spirit than pervades the mass."

In other words, the most important way in which any of us can benefit the world, is by making ourselves true and noble persons in the world. From our general character, rather than from our separate actions, will go forth our

strongest and most abiding influence to our fellow men.

I think we have here a principle valuable enough to be planted as a seed, not only in the thinking of this morning hour, but in the future lives of us all.

I suppose no high-minded person doubts that it is the duty of every human being to try to accomplish some good by his living. We are in a world where there is a vast amount of evil and pain and sorrow. Look at matters as optimistically as we may, if we are intelligent and earnest we cannot help seeing on every hand, even in this favored land of ours, enough to fill our eyes with tears and our hearts with pity. On every side of us are poverty, hardship, disappointment; hopes and prospects ruined; diseases of a thousand kinds fastening upon men, women and children; suffering of protean types; ignorance, superstition, fear; mental darkness and slavery; vices and crimes almost innumerable; lust, passion, appetite, dragging multitudes to destruction. Men and women of earnest purpose in life do not need to be persuaded by argument that they ought to do what they can to improve this sad condition of things. Without argument they instinctively feel that it is their duty—nay, the *noblest* natures feel that it is their *privilege*—to do what lies within their power to cure this suffering, this sin, this sorrow, and to benefit in all ways they can such of their fellows as are less fortunate than they.

But *how*? With many at least, that is the question. *How* can they *accomplish* this which they see the importance of and desire to effect?

Of course I would under no consideration speak lightly of good deeds. Good deeds are blessed flowers that brighten the world, and make fragrant its air wherever they appear. Good deeds are the footprints of God's angels. If it lay within the plan of my discourse I should be only too glad to speak with as much fullness as the time would permit, of charities, philanthropies and social reforms of many kinds, already accomplishing great good, and promising still larger results in the future, which invite us all to give them

our aid; and also to point out various individual and private ways in which we can all do something to benefit the ignorant, the suffering and the vicious around us, if we will.

But while this line of thought would unquestionably be useful as well as interesting, it is not the one I have marked out for myself this morning. Nor do I think it goes down so deep, nor so much needs to be kept in mind and emphasized in connection with all our plans to benefit society, as the principle of Channing. However important the individual actions of a man may be, the general character and spirit of his life are more important. Specific good actions may be more than offset by a bad life. A poor man, living a pure and noble life in a community, may benefit it more by what he himself *is*, than an unprincipled rich man by the most lavish expenditure of his wealth. Peter Cooper's example and influence are a richer legacy to New York than even his money.

The kind of service to the world which arises from living in the world a true and worthy life, has at least three distinct advantages.

First, it is less liable to failure than any other.

Second, it is open to more persons than any other.

Third, its effects are more deep and abiding than any other.

Let us examine each of these statements, and see in how large and important ways they are true.

1. There is no way in which one can undertake to do good that will be so little liable to mistake or failure as that of being good. At first thought the matter of trying to avoid mistakes may seem unimportant. But further consideration will show, I think, that it is very far from unimportant. The truth seems to be that in few things have men in all ages and lands made more serious mistakes and failures, than in their attempted charities, beneficences and reforms.

It has been generally taken for granted in past ages that to give to the hungry or the poorly clothed or the destitute is to do good. Few have ever, until within very

recent years, thought of questioning the matter. But it is now coming to be seen that in reference to all this the world has been judging superficially. Of course the relief of immediate, pressing want—want so great as to endanger life or health—is always commendable. But the giving to the hungry, the poorly clad, and the destitute, in the indiscriminate way in which charity in the past has generally been exercised, it is now seen only tends to foster laziness, shiftlessness and deceit, and to perpetuate the very destitution which it was thought to relieve. Mrs. Elizabeth Thompson, the distinguished philanthropist of New York, whose charities have been so munificent, said on one occasion, "I have given within the past sixteen years for benevolent purposes some \$600,000. But I now see that the most of this has been used to encourage idleness, corruption and crime." Many other testimonies as startling as this come to us.

The evils of short sighted and miscalculated benevolence appear in many forms. For example. Poor and ignorant persons, in cases where they have access to provident dispensaries from which they can obtain medicines free, or to hospitals where they can get board and attendance for little or nothing, are often found as a result to become increasingly careless about taking care of their health.

The multiplication of homes for foundlings has been discovered to result in many cities in an increase in the number of foundlings. In like manner multiplication of asylums and homes for orphans has been observed not seldom to result in increased numbers of children deserted by their parents. All this not because such asylums and homes are not good and needful, but because those who have had them in charge have made mistakes in their methods of managing them.

Many and grievous errors and blunders have been made in respect to our reform school systems, our insane asylums and their plans of structure and conduct, our treatment of convicts in our institutions of punishment and detention, the temperance cause; and most of the other movements of

charity, reform and beneficence which appeal to us for sympathy and support.

Of course all this does not justify us in relinquishing these movements. Rather it furnishes an additional reason why we should take a deeper or at least a more intelligent interest in them, and thus help save them from the mistakes which so cripple their usefulness. But at the same time it also shows how large an element of uncertainty enters, almost or quite of necessity, into all our efforts to help the world through the channel of acts, deeds, direct outward beneficences, and what an advantage, therefore, there is, in a means of benefiting others which is free from danger of mistake, and from the consequent liability to accomplish harm even when one means well and thinks he is accomplishing good.

But living a pure, upright and noble life is a way of doing good that is absolutely sure. No one was ever true or honest or unselfish or pure-minded or careful for the welfare of others, without the world being the better for it. As every grass blade and tree leaf absorbs poisonous carbonic acid gas and gives out life-sustaining oxygen, and hence makes the atmosphere better capable of supporting the physical life of men, so every good person by his very presence in the world counteracts as it were the moral poison in the social atmosphere; and gives out moral oxygen; and so promotes the moral health of the community. However much of Mrs. Thompson's money may have miscarried, and harmed where she hoped it was going to benefit, not one jot or tittle of the nobleness of character or unselfish love for humanity that prompted her gifts has been anything else than a blessing to the world. Her judgment may have made mistakes, her intellect may have blundered; and hence what she has *done* may sometimes have been a failure. But what she has *been* has always succeeded. More than that, in cases where through mistaken judgment her money may have been expended in ways to do harm, the beneficent influence of her excellent and unselfish intentions has steadily tended to offset the harm. And so it always is.

When one sets out to do good acts, there is always more or less of uncertainty as to whether the ultimate outcome will be what he expects, there are always so many modifying circumstances that must necessarily come in, all of them beyond his control, to effect the result. But when one sets out to live a virtuous and unselfish life, and be true and pure, about the influence of that there is no room for doubt. Sooner will the heavens fall than the influence of a noble character be other than helpful to men.

2. The method of doing good by being good is open to more persons to engage in than any other.

One of the most discouraging things about attempts to benefit others by active works of beneficence is the difficulty of knowing where to begin. As I have already said, most persons want to be useful, but they do not know *how*, or think they do not, which amounts practically to the same thing.

One says, I wish I were *rich*: then I could do good with my *money*. But, as it is, I am poor, and so I cannot be useful except in very limited and meager ways.

One says, I wish I were *educated*: then I could be useful with my *knowledge*. But, as my education is limited, of course I am in the main powerless.

Another says, Oh that I had *leisure* to do good! But as matters are, I am busy almost without intermission, in my store, or shop, or on my farm, or about my professional duties, or caring for my home and family, and hence cannot get the time to be useful in the community as I should so much like.

Another still, says, I cannot do much for others because of *infirm health*. I should be glad to do good; if only I had health and strength how much I could do, and should count it a privilege to do! But physical inability shuts me up at home and ties my hands.

Now of course all these pleas of inability to do good are true and weighty, if we consider only that *kind* of good-doing which consists in outward *acts* of beneficence. But how different does the whole matter appear as soon as we begin to consider the deeper kind of beneficence which cou-

sists in *being* good! Here neither poverty, nor want of education, nor want of experience, nor want of leisure, nor even want of health, can cut one off from usefulness of the noblest kind.

No matter how busy men may be, if they are honest and upright in their business the example of their honesty and integrity shines out through their business to all with whom they have to do, and helps raise the moral business tone of the whole community. To be a thoroughly upright business man among business men is to do more for honesty in a community than can be done in any other possible way. So that *leisure* is not necessary to doing good by being good.

But as little is *wealth*. No doubt the richer a man is the farther in a certain sense his influence extends. His wealth makes him conspicuous, and gives him increased means of affecting other lives. So that if he is equally good with a poor man, his goodness will have larger influence. But this does not make it otherwise than true that the goodness of the poorest man will count for its full worth in a circle more or less large, and generally larger than he thinks. Indeed some of the most influential and beneficent lives of the world have been lived in deep poverty. And it will always be so. Poverty, then, while it is a bar to doing good in ordinary outward ways, can only slightly hinder, and in some cases it even helps, that deeper and more enduring beneficence which springs from character.

And the same is true of physical infirmity. In order to do, one must have health and strength of body. But to *be*, this is not essential. To be sure, a saint with a good physique is of more value to the world than a saint with a poor physique. Religion has not always remembered this as it ought. Nevertheless persons with weak and frail bodies need not despair of great usefulness, because, even if they cannot do, they can achieve the still higher and better thing, they can *become* and *be*.

Thus, when we come to consider this kind of usefulness, we soon see that it is something which absolutely all

classes and conditions of men can have part in. It is for the high and the low; the rich and the poor; the educated and the uneducated; the socially conspicuous and the socially obscure; the strong in their strength and activity, and the weak in their weakness and invalidism.

What comfort there is in this discovery! I suppose there are few of us who do not sometimes grow discouraged, and feel that our lives are well-nigh useless, and ask almost frantically and half despairingly, What can we do? Will not some body show us something that we can do, so that our lives may not pass away without benefiting the world? Here, in our thought of this morning, is the answer. We can be patient, be kind, be loving, be true, be our own best, purest and noblest selves; and in just being thus we shall each and all contribute rich treasures to the world's moral good.

8. This way of doing good by being, is not only less liable to mistake than any other, and open to more persons to engage in than any other, but it is *more vital and deep-reaching in its influence* than any other.

He does most for this world, not who increases its material wealth, or who multiplies its physical comforts, or even who diminishes its physical pain and suffering, important as all these things are, but who contributes most effectually to build up manhood and womanhood. Virtue and character are the supreme things, beside which all else pales.

How can manhood and womanhood be strengthened? How can virtue and character be promoted? Indirectly of course by outward acts. But directly and most effectively by vital communication—by contact of life with life—by the subtle but profound influence of personality. Good persons in the world—persons who have risen to something higher and better than the average of their fellows—are the starting point and secret of all general moral advance. By living in the world a better life than the average, the life they live becomes the light of men; just as it was said of Jesus that his life, so high above the moral and spiritual

level of his fellows, became the light of men in a pre-eminent degree.

Of course there is moral light in good deeds and in good words. But there is far more in good lives. Good words and deeds are flashes of light in darkness. But good lives are candles, torches, beacons, never-setting stars, that burn steadily, and light our paths all the way through the journey of earth.

Says George MacDonald: "To know one person who is positively to be trusted will do more for a man's moral nature—yes, for his spiritual nature—than all the sermons he has ever heard or ever can hear." To know one person who is *positively to be trusted*! Yes, it is just by knowing such persons that we all get—if we ever do get at all—faith in humanity, faith in truth and right as destined finally to triumph over falsehood and wrong, and that means faith in God. And it is by the awful experience of losing faith in persons whom once we have believed in, that we come to lose faith in humanity—if so dreadful a calamity ever comes upon us—and lose faith in the permanent triumph of truth and right, and lose faith in the universe and in God;—and so the heart goes out of the world and out of life. Oh, I hardly know of a disaster so great and awful as for one to lose faith in others! We ought all to make the utmost efforts always to be strong and true for this one reason alone, even if there were no other, that those who trust us may never have occasion to go through the sad, the heart-withering experience, of losing faith in us—and so have the awful suspicion come into their hearts, through us, that the foundations of the moral universe may be rotten.

There is a very true sense in which we all stand in the place of God to each other. As we learn to have faith in each other we unconsciously take the first step toward faith in God. And as we lose faith in each other we dreadfully disturb, even if we do not destroy, the foundation on which all possible faith in God must rest. For faith in virtue is essentially one wherever it appears. And if we come to believe that virtue as it incarnates itself in man is only a

name, we shall almost of necessity believe that the virtue throned on high is only a name. Whereas, if we believe in the reality of human virtue, the natural and almost necessary thing to believe next, if we think, is, that there is a virtue higher than the human, a virtue that is immutable, eternal, divine.

It is curious how easily we are all duped by seemings, so that we shut our eyes to realities. We go through the world cheating ourselves for the thousandth time with the notion that *words commendatory* of virtue can somehow avail in the place of *being virtuous*; and flattering ourselves that if we always *say* that honesty and truth and purity and unselfishness are good and beautiful, we thus cast our influence on the side of those virtues, even if we do not always exemplify them very fully in our own lives. But the truth is, words that do not correspond with lives, instead of teaching virtue, teach hypocrisy. Nothing can in any vital way teach honesty but being honest; truthfulness but being truthful; purity but being pure; unselfishness and nobility but *being* unselfish and noble. When a man merely *advises* his fellows to be good, he is very likely laughed at for his pains. When he *exhorts* them, his exhortation is very apt to fall on deaf ears. But when he sets out earnestly and conscientiously to *live* before them and with them a *true* and *noble life*, then he conquers. Nobody but a fool jeers at a good life. Nobody who is not a stone is uninfluenced by it. "Let your light shine before men" said the great teacher. But how shine? We cannot let our light shine unless we have light within us to emit. That which is itself dark can give forth no light to others.

Some one has very pointedly said, "Make yourself an honest man, and then you may be sure there is one rascal less in the world." And this tallies well with the old recipe for reforming mankind: "Reform yourself, and then you may be sure that the reform of the world has at least well begun."

There are a great many evils and abuses in the country at large and in all our communities, which we lament, and

desire to have corrected. Where shall we set about the correction? Not with our neighbors, nor with people far away, as we are so apt to do. But at home.

Is there too much dishonesty in general trade? In one place we have control; that is in our own dealings with men. Here let us see to it that there be no dishonesty. Thus we shall begin in a substantial way the purification of the trade of the world.

Is politics corrupt? At least *our* duty is to be incorruptible in all our political dealings and relations. If we do that it will be much.

Is fashion tyrannical? The question for us to ask is, Are we, so far as we are concerned, strong enough and brave enough to rule, and make fashion our servant, instead of bowing down to it as a slave to a master?

Do we believe in temperance, and want to promote it? However hard the battle goes elsewhere, there is one place where we can win a noble victory for our cause. We can ourselves be temperance men.

Do we see in religion a popular tide flowing in the direction of what we believe to be falsehood and bigotry? At least we can strive earnestly to keep ourselves from bigotry, and pledge anew, and ever anew, our own fealty to truth; remembering what Emerson so wisely says: "Society gains nothing so long as men, themselves unregenerate, attempt to regenerate society."

The great importance of elevating only good men to office and places of honor in the community, lies not so much in the fact that bad men will *do bad things* if put in such places, as that they will *be bad men* in those places. A good and noble man in high political office, making serious mistakes, does not so deeply harm a nation, as a bad man in the same high office making no mistakes. The *bad man* is himself the greatest possible mistake. His shrewd management may put money into the people's coffers; but his occupying such a place of honor corrupts the life of the people. When the bad are in high positions, all the good have reason to wear weeds of heaviest mourning. For the

exaltation of the evil makes evil honorable in a land, and good dishonorable.

This is the reason why rich men, and talented men, and men in position and honor, should be held to a stricter responsibility than poorer and commoner and less conspicuous men; just as the lighthouse keeper on whose light property and life are dependent, should be held to a stricter account than the girl who trims your kitchen lamp.

This is the reason, too, why we should be so careful about the teachers we put our children under. A teacher molds more by his spirit and character than by his words. Only one blessing do I think it is possible for children to have, greater than a noble teacher, and that is noble parents. While school boards should be exceedingly careful about the intellectual ability and thorough scholarship of teachers employed, they should be more careful still about their moral character, and the aims and ideals which actuate them—whether they be high or low. And teachers, and persons preparing to be teachers, should understand that more important than book learning, or than mental acumen, for them, in preparation for the work of the true teacher, is moral culture. Oh, what a position of grandeur, yet of solemn responsibility, is that of the teacher! standing in the midst of young lives, and being the looked up to, respected, honored, and therefore influential one, among those whose characters are forming! How earnest, how devoted, how high minded should the man or woman be, who dares to be a teacher!

But if this of the teacher, what of the parent? The highest and most solemn, as well as the gladdest and most blessed responsibility known to human life, is that of the parent. Who is equal to it? Are you? Am I? Alas, far enough from it! I suppose there is not a thoughtful, earnest parent living who does not feel deeply his lack. What shall we do to fit ourselves as well as we can for our responsibility? Of course we must make ourselves as intelligent as we can; but incomparably above all else we must make

ourselves as true and sincere and noble as we can. If anything will save our children this will. Not what we *say* to our children avails most, but what we *are before* them and *with* them, day by day.

More than three and a half centuries ago Michael Angelo planned the dome of Saint Peter's church in Rome. Since that splendid creation of genius rose to its place in the sky of Italy, it has uttered no word to the world. It has simply *been*. But what an influence has it exerted on the architecture of Europe and America! Cathedrals and capitol buildings and public edifices almost without number, in all Christian lands, are to-day crowned with domes which would not be but that Saint Peter's was and is. That dome has not asked the world to imitate it. It has just existed—*been* the thing of incomparable beauty and grandeur in the world that it is, and all the rest has followed inevitably. In the same way, the great and good men—the morally and spiritually epoch-making men—of the world, like Jesus, and Luther, and Wesley, and Channing, do not work their great work on the ages so much by what they say or do as by what they *are*. They come into the world, and exist, live;—men see them, hear them, are taught by them, but especially feel them. By their touch, by their influence, by their spirit, by their personality, by their lives, they create higher ideals, and set flowing new and nobler streams of life in the world.

The same principle holds good with lesser men as well. If you or I are ever to do much for the moral life of the world, or any part of it—for the community in which we live, or the society in which we move, or our own homes, we must do it in exactly the same way.

Channing was right: "The greatest benefactor to society is not he who serves it by single acts, but he whose general character is the manifestation of a higher life and spirit than pervades the mass."

Men, in their shortsightedness, may judge us by what we seem or what we do. God judges us by what we *are*. Our real contribution to the world is not what we give from our

THE SUREST WAY OF DOING GOOD.

pockets, or even from our hands, but from our *souls*. Life alone begets life; love, love; virtue, virtue; character, character. This is the law. There is no other.

*"Be noble! and the nobleness that lies
In other men, sleeping but never dead,
Will rise in majesty to meet thine own."*

This, then, is the thought which I commend to all minds to-day,—the old, the young—those who remain, and those who leave us, to go out into the world. I am sure it is a thought worthy of the serious attention of all. Planted as a seed in our lives, it cannot fail to bear good fruit, for ourselves and for all with whom we have to do, wherever our lots may be cast.

*"Thou must be true thyself
If thou the truth would'st teach;
Thy soul must overflow
If thou another soul would'st reach;
It needs the overflowing heart
To give the lips full speech.
Think truly, and thy thought
Shall the world's famine feed;
Speak truly, and thy word
Shall be a fruitful seed;
Live truly, and thy life shall be
A great and noble creed."*

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On July 17 Mr. Sunderland expects to sail, with his family, for Europe, to be gone a year, for purposes of travel and study. Before returning he hopes to visit northern and central Europe, Italy, Greece, Egypt, and Palestine, returning home in August of next year. The "College Town Pulpit" will, of course, be suspended during his absence, but it is his purpose TO RESUME IT AT ONCE ON HIS RETURN.

THE NEXT NUMBER MAY BE EXPECTED IN SEPTEMBER, 1896. *He will be glad at that time to greet all his present subscribers, and many new ones.*

IMMORTALITY IN THE LIGHT OF EVOLUTION.

Most of us are familiar with that fine passage in Shakespeare's *Tempest*:—

"The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And like the unsubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."

This is one view of the world, and of human life. Place beside it another. It shall be from Paul's second Epistle to the Corinthians: "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Which of these two views of the world and of life is the true one? What are these human lives of ours? Are they things of a day only? Or do they take hold on eternity? When the funeral bell tolls for our friends (as it will soon toll for us), and we gather around their motionless forms to bid them farewell, will it be forever? Or, will there be a glad meeting awaiting us on some fairer shore?

These are questions that none of us can help asking. We should be less than human if we did not ask them. One difference between us and the brute animals below us is, that *we can* ask them, and search for an answer.

Can Evolution give an answer? Can it help us in the direction of an answer? This is our question this morn-

ing. You see then how high, how serious, how full of the most profound and absorbing interest our theme is.

It has been thought in the past that Evolution cannot give us any light on the subject of man's immortality. Nay, worse; many have believed that it has an answer to give, but an answer of despair, linking man with the lower forms of life, not only in origin but in destiny, and saying to him in the language of Ecclesiastes, "That which befallerth the sons of men befallerth beasts; even one thing befallerth them; as the one dieth so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast."

I say many in the early days of Evolution have feared that some such dark and hopeless word as this was to be its message to humanity. Later, however, since sufficient time has passed to allow its facts to be more fully understood and interpreted, I think I am safe in saying that that fear is proving to be without foundation. Of course there are evolutionists who are pessimists, and there are evolutionists who are materialists, as there were pessimists and materialists before Evolution came on the scene. But I think it is beginning to be discovered by nearly or quite all broad minded thinkers that Evolution does not necessarily or even legitimately lead toward materialism or pessimism, but quite the reverse. Instead of taking God out of the universe, it puts Him into the universe more centrally and vitally than anything has ever done before, making him the living Energy and Soul of it all; instead of belittling man, it lifts him up to a dignity which he had never before possessed, making him the end towards which the evolutionary process tends, and in which it finds its consummation; and hence it opens a door of splendid hope to man.

Before making an inquiry concerning the evidences of immortality, it will be of service to do a little preliminary thinking on the general subject of evidence. There is confusion in many minds as to this whole matter of proof bearing on such subjects as that of life beyond this world. Many men say thoughtlessly, "Give us demonstration; give

ns demonstration; then we will believe; not otherwise." Do they know what they are saying? What do they mean by demonstration? Mathematical demonstration? Is this subject of a future life one of mathematics? Then how are you going to apply mathematical demonstration to it, one way or the other—to prove or to disprove? Is it a subject of logic? Then how are you going to apply logical demonstration to it, one way or the other?

The truth is, very few things in this world can you demonstrate, even of those that you most firmly believe, and concerning which you have the best grounds for confidence. You cannot demonstrate that the sun will rise to-morrow. You can establish a very strong probability that it will, but that is all. Yet that is enough. No reasonable man asks for more. On the strength of that probability you make all your plans for to-morrow, and go forward to meet the day with perfect confidence.

So with regard to nearly everything in life, your ground for belief is reasonable probability. All business is conducted on grounds of simply reasonable probability. No railroad company knows at the beginning of any day that it will have a single passenger that day. It makes all its preparations for the day's traffic on the grounds of probability. No merchant when he opens his store in the morning knows that he will have a customer. Even if customers have promised to come, he does not know but that accident, or sickness, or death may prevent them. All social intercourse is conducted on the basis of probability. I do not know that a friend who has promised to meet me will do it. All schools are based on probabilities. Nobody knows that there will be a student in any school of this city next year or to-morrow. And yet reasonable probability is so safe a ground for trust and belief in all of these matters, that nobody thinks of asking for any other.

Here is a lesson for us in regard to grounds of belief in immortality? Why are we not content with the same kind of evidences here that we have in other things? We call a man a fool if he will not trust reasonable probability, and

trust it with perfect confidence, in business, and nearly everything pertaining to life. We call him a fool if he insists on demonstration. Then why should we insist on demonstration as soon as we begin to talk about things of another life? Why are we not satisfied there also, with reasonable probability? and on the basis of such reasonable probability, if indeed we are able to find it, why do we not rest with assurance and peace? I bring up this point at the beginning, so that none of us may misunderstand regarding the evidence required to give us ground for belief in immortality; and so that all may avoid the folly of demanding demonstration in a realm where demonstration is neither possible nor needed.

Very well, then, in the light of Evolution do there seem to be valid reasons for believing in a future life? And if so, what are they?

These questions can be best answered by considering, first, some *objections* which trouble many minds. In studying these objections we shall be able, as I trust, not only to clear the ground, but to discover some of the foundations upon which a rational faith in immortality rests.

1. Perhaps the objection that is oftenest made to the doctrine of immortality is that of its impossibility, on the ground that mind cannot exist without organism. In this world man lives and thinks; but it is because he has a brain. The brain is the organ of thought. There can be no thought without brain. When a man dies and his brain perishes, there is an end to the man; therefore, immortality is simply impossible.

What are we to say to this? It requires only a little reflection to discover an answer.

In the first place it seems to be a pure assumption that mind can exist only in connection with an organism. That the human mind is associated with a physical organism in the present life does not prove that no other plan of things is possible. For aught we know there may be such a thing as free spirit,—spirit existing untrammelled by any organism of a physical kind,—spirit as free as our thoughts are,

and as superior to all brain limitations, matter limitations, space limitations,—like our thoughts now here, now at the other side of the earth, now in the distant stars. Why may not spirit exist as free as that? We certainly see evidences of mind in nature, everywhere,—in the rose, in the galaxies, in the sweep of law, in all the order of the universe. Has this mind a brain? Is it associated with organism, or dependent upon organism? Who dare say that? Then we had better be careful how we assert that there can be no mind without organism; and certainly we had better consider before we declare that there can be no mind without brain.

Even if we grant that mind does require an organism, what kind? Is no kind possible for something so fine as spirit, except such coarse brains as ours? Granted that in such a physical world as this,—a world of earth and rock and air and water, a world seen by the eye, and heard by the ear, and come into contact with by physical touch, such brains as ours may be necessary. But how about those finer, those subtler, those more wonderful worlds which science is revealing to us in so many ways?—worlds which are all about us, which transcend and penetrate this gross world of sense,—worlds which stretch away into infinity, an "Unseen Universe," and yet, though unseen if possible more real, and infinitely more resourceful and more marvellous than the universe which our eyes behold! Into such a universe, limitless in possibilities, whether considered extensively or intensively, the spectroscope and our theories of light-waves and of a universal ether give us a glimpse; into it electricity sets a door ajar; into it the Röntgen rays open a little window; into it the microscope with its marvels carries us a little way—an inch or two; of its wonders Professor Crooke's "Radiant Energy" gives a hint. Are we to suppose that in such a universe of infinite subtlety and yet of solidest reality, and inconceivable potentialities, mind must require an organism of the coarse kind which we see in our present brains and nervous systems?

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Even if minds—at least finite minds, like ours—do require an organism, is it not easy to conceive of an organism framed of the subtler material of the Unseen Universe—such material as radiant energy and the universal ether and electricity and the X rays give us intimation of? Some of our greatest physicists are telling us that there is “no fact in physics, chemistry or mechanics that contravenes the theory of an electro luminous organism for man,” such as may exist already unseen and unrecognized within his physical body, and wholly incapable of being affected by any such change as that of the dissolution of his body.

Something like this seems to have been St. Paul's thought, 1,900 years ago, when he said “there is a natural body and a spiritual body”—a body of flesh and blood which is corruptible and perishes at death, and another of a nature finer and higher, which is incorruptible, and cannot be affected by death. The widely accepted, and I believe the fast-growing belief to day among thoughtful men is virtually this. To essentially such a view I believe all our best science is tending.

So then, as far as we can discover, there seems to be nothing, either in the nature of spirit or of the universe, standing in the way of immortality for man. It is easy enough for us, even with our present limited vision, to see that there are worlds enough for him to live in besides this, and if he needs another organism than his present body, there is plenty of material all around him, out of which to build it.

2. One profoundly significant fact we are very likely to overlook in all our discussions of the possibility of man's living again after death, and that is, the fact that every man who is living at all is already living after death,—and not only after one death, but after many.

What do I mean? I mean that life and death are both at work all the while in our bodies. Without death there is no life. Our bodies are all the while dying and being built up again with new tissue. The dying process completes itself in about seven years. That is to say, once in

about seven years I get a new body; the body which I had seven years before is completely dead and gone. Not a particle of it remains. So then, if I am 20 years old I have had nearly three new bodies, or passed through bodily death three times. If 30, more than four; if 40, nearly six; if 50, more than seven; if 70, ten.

You see then what I mean when I say, we are all living after death, and most of us many deaths. Right through all these deaths we, our souls, our consciousness, the spiritual self within us, that thinks and wills and loves, has persisted, has lived right on. Do you not perceive what tremendous significance is attached to these facts, as bearing on the subject of immortality? Men say, "My soul cannot survive the death of my body." I say, how do you know? I am 50 years old; that means my soul has survived the death of my body seven times. How dares any one deny the possibility that it may be able to do it again? Even if the next death comes in a different form from those of the past, it will be no more certainly death than the others have been.

3. Another objection to the doctrine of immortality, that is often made, is of a very different kind. It is the claim that no line can be drawn between man and the animals below him, so that if man is immortal they also must be. They and he came into being by the same path of Evolution,—many of them have bodies close akin to his; many give clear evidence of intelligence, reason and other mental attributes similar to his; some even show moral qualities, as fidelity, a sense of duty, an ability to distinguish between right and wrong. Must we not believe, therefore, that they and he will have the same fate? If he lives again, will not they? If they perish must not he?

In reply, the first thought that suggests itself is the inquiry: Why may it not be possible that at least all the nobler and more intelligent of the lower animals may live again? Some by reason of their better qualities and their higher intelligence would seem to be fitter to survive than others. Perhaps that is the ultimate outcome

of the great law of the survival of the fittest, that some of the animals below man may be permitted to cross into another world and be man's companions there as they have been here. It would seem easier to believe this, than to believe that man is to perish. Indeed for myself, I think it would be easier to believe that all animals are immortal than that man is not.

However, I cannot think the claim is sound, that man and the brute animals are to be classed together. We do not class them together in other respects; why should we in this? Science certainly makes very clear, definite and radical distinctions between them. What are they? The most important single one is doubtless that of self-consciousness. When in the upward progress of animal life in this world a being arrived who was not only conscious, but was conscious that he was conscious; who not only knew, but knew that he knew; who was a self-centered ego, able to think before and after, and to relate himself not only to his physical environment, but to truth and right and duty and the powers that placed him here, and to reach up after ideals of life higher than he had yet attained, then man was born. Then a creature had made his appearance on the earth not simply superior in degree to the horse and the dog and the ape, but different in kind. At last the century plant of the world's life had blossomed, and the blossom was something more beautiful and precious than had ever before been seen beneath earthly skies.

Suppose we grant that the dog has something which we may call a sort of rudimentary, partially formed mind, is there anything strange if nature permits a thing so imperfect to pass out of existence at the death of the body which it has served? It is everywhere Nature's plan, to let the imperfect, the only partially-formed, drop out, and preserve permanently only the best, the most perfect.

This also is man's plan. Go with me into a great foundry where castings are being made. I see a hundred moulds filled with the shining metal. Wait until the moulds are opened. Ninety of the castings are perfect, ten are

imperfect. What is done with the imperfect? They are broken, and melted over again. Is there anything unreasonable in that? Dogs, horses, apes, the animals below man, are the imperfect castings of the world of mind. Why should they be permanently kept? Man is the most perfect mind-product of the world. Is there not reason why he may be preserved, even when they are snffered to perish?

Natnre is full of illnstrations of that which falling below a certain mark fails, while that which rises above persists. Thus a seed, if it has within it a certain amonnt of vitality, lives, germinates and produces after its kind, while if it lacks, no matter how little, of the requisite amonnt, it dies. Why then shall we nrge that man cannot be immortal unless the beasts are? I believe there is no ground for so nrging.

Says John Fiske, "I can see no insuperable difficnlty in the notion that, at some period in the evolution of humanity, this the divine spark may have acquired snfficient concentration and steadiness to snrvive the wreck of material forms and endure forever." For one I cannot see why this view is not in the highest degree reasonable.

4. One other objection to the doctrine of immortality I must mention in a word. It is the claim that in Evolution it is the race that is cared for, not the individual. So that if immortality of any kind awaits man we must believe it is immortality of the race in this world, and not immortality of individual persons, beyond this world.

Bnt how can nature care for the race without caring for individuals? Can the race be separated from the individuals who compose it? As for the immortality of the race in this world, we know that cannot be; for it is only a question of time when the earth itself shall reach the end of its career, and when its shallowing seas, its frozen continents and thin air will no longer snstain the life of man.

Bnt it is *not true* that nature does not care for *individuals*. Individuals are exactly what she does care for. Her whole effort is to produce individuals that shall be finer and

finer, more and more perfect. It is by improving her individuals that she makes all her advances in species, genera, families, races. With such jealous and unfailing care for individuals, and such constant effort to produce the best, is it any wonder if the individuals of that part of creation which represents her best, should be perpetuated, and not allowed to perish? Shall nature not care enough for her *chef-d'oeuvre* to save it from ruin? So that if there is to be any immortality at all, it must be of the individual, and in a sphere beyond the transitoriness of earthly conditions, it cannot be of the race here. Either there is immortality for individual man, or else there is utter and irremediable destruction for man, race, everything that this world has achieved or meant.

Such then, are the most serious objections, so far as I know, to the doctrine of man's immortality considered in the light of Evolution. Looked at fairly do they not fade away? I believe they do. I believe the considerations presented show that they do, and that immortality instead of being impossible, is possible, and has much probability in its favor.

But we are not yet through. Other and even stronger arguments for immortality still remain, that have not yet been touched. Let us spend the time that remains in a brief consideration of the more important of these.

1. First of all, it seems to be a well-nigh universal belief of men—a belief so deep as to be a very part of their nature—that death does not end all, but that there is another existence beyond the present scene. It is doubtful if a single people in the world can be pointed to, savage or civilized, that does not cherish this belief in some form. Even the Buddhists are no exception, as I could easily show if I had time.

Now what does this mean? Is it an accident? Has this belief been wrought into the nations and races of mankind by chance? This cannot be. The universe has wrought this faith into man's soul. May we then believe it a lie? Is there no reality corresponding to it?

Tell me, why has the universe wrought for man eyes? Because there was something to see. Why ears? Because there was something to hear. Why reason? Because he was in a universe that was rational. Why a sense of beauty? Because there was beauty all around him waiting to be recognized. Why love? Because there were beings to be loved, and to love him in return. Why his belief is right and justice? Because there are right and justice in the world. Is man's belief in immortality an exception? While all else in his being is grounded in reality, is this ineradicable faith of his, that he was not born to die, only a delusion? It cannot be.

Do you say it is simply a superstition, like witchcraft, or faith in signs? Then why does it not show some marks of superstition? Why is it not confined to dark ages and uncivilized peoples? Why does it not tend to pass away with enlightenment? Instead of that, it is found nowhere in such strength as in enlightened ages, and among enlightened peoples. Nor is it the worst, but the best persons, that hold it most firmly. The greatest believers in immortality, as a rule, are the greatest and noblest souls of every age.

I think all this means that the belief is rational, and rooted in great realities which men may trust. I think man's instinct that he is greater than the brute beasts, greater than a clod, greater than death, is a voice of the universe, and this means a voice of God, speaking in his soul.

2. Somewhat similar to this, yet different, is another argument, which I think ought to be regarded as having weight. It is the argument of *justice*, based on the fact that man everywhere *wants* immortality, *longs* for it, as for nothing else. There are here and there exceptions—men who say, one life is enough. But they are so rare as to be scarcely visible amid the multitudes of those who long and pray for a life that has no death. Now what has put this desire into men's hearts? Did they create it for themselves? Certainly not. It came to

them from the Creator of their being. Did he give it to them in mockery? Can he of right withhold immortality from men into whose hearts he has himself put such desire for it?

3. Still further, have we not a right to base a faith in immortality on the *greatness of man's nature*? Think of minds that can work out the intricacies of mathematics in all its endless forms; that can create sciences; that can write literatures; that can bridge the ocean with swift steamships, and speak from shore to shore beneath its waters, and harness the lightnings, and measure and weigh the worlds of space, and rob surgery of pain, and say to pestilence, Stay thy hand of death, and transform deserts into paradises, and build great cities, and rule vast empires, and connect all sections together by trade, and link every city and town of every civilized land with every other by mail routes, and lift the world up century by century to higher and higher civilization! Can minds that accomplish all this be snuffed out as a candle at the end of a brief three score years and ten?

Is man built on a pattern suited only for a day? Look at these powers of his that are unearthing, restoring, reconstructing the past—actually creating the world's past over again! We are digging up Rome, and opening its buried centuries and its forgotten histories to the light of day. We are excavating Mycenae and Troy, and finding cities hidden beneath cities, and learning more about their history, their art, their civilization and their life, than even Plato or Aristotle knew. The same with Egypt! A little while ago the great Egypt of the past was lost to the world. Men looked on her wonderful monuments with blind eyes that could not see. Not a word of the inscriptions that covered her temples and tombs could they read. The history and civilization of her almost numberless centuries were as if they had not been. The same was true of Babylonia and Assyria. But within our century man has unlocked the secrets of these lands and is bringing them all to light. So too, he is creating anew the mound-builders and their

lives, and the cave-dwellers and theirs, and the still earlier ages when only brute beasts inhabited the earth, and ages yet more remote when there was no life. It seems as if there is no secret of the past that he will not read. Is such a being only a creature of a day?

4. Once more, are there not *prophecies* wrapped up in man which declare that he was not born to die?

Man's nature seems to be full of prophecies of something greater than he has yet attained, or can attain in this world. Such a prophecy is seen in his capacity for growth and progress. The brute animals may advance a little way. Then the end of their tether is reached, they can go no farther.

But man's capacities for development are practically infinite. None may lay down a line beyond which he may not go. None can draw a circle bounding his knowledge or his thought. Only the universe is large enough for his home; only eternity long enough for the realization of the possibilities that sleep in his great nature.

I know not how anything can be more clear than that human life as we see it in this world is a fragment—a thing unfinished, incomplete. Does this incompleteness mean nothing? Look and you. Everywhere you see "great powers and small performances; vast schemes and poor results, 'thoughts that wander through eternity,' and a life that

'Can little more supply
Than just to look about us and to die.'

Who has ever lived to accomplish his utmost aim? What career is so complete as to comprehend all that is wanted of this world? We all retire with imperfect victory from the battle of life. The campaign is not finished when we strike tents. . . . The scholar has still unsolved problems at which he is laboring. The philosopher is summoned in the midst of experiments he cannot stay to complete. The philanthropist is overtaken in projects of reform that are to add new value to human life."

Martineau at eighty, though his life had been marvel-

lously full of attainment, exclaimed, "How small a part of my plans have I been able to carry out! Nothing is so plain as that life at its fullest on earth is a fragment."

Sir Isaac Newton at the end of a life that achieved more for science than almost any other of modern times, compared himself to a child who had merely picked up a few pebbles on the beach, while the vast ocean lay beyond unexplored.

Victor Hugo, in his old age declared: "For a half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose and verse: history, philosophy, drama, romance, tradition, satire, ode, and song. I have tried all. But I feel I have not said a thousandth part of what is in me."

Now what is the explanation of all this strange, dark riddle of the incompleteness of human life—the fragmentariness of even the fullest earthly career? If man is at the beginning of his existence, all is plain. If he is at the end, all is midnight darkness. I know of no philosophy that gives us a ray of light except that of Hugo, who completed the passage which I have quoted from him by adding: "When I go down to the grave I can say, like so many others, 'I have finished my day's work,' but I cannot say, 'I have finished my life.' I shall begin again next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare. I close on the twilight to open with the dawn."

With this philosophy of life, all is luminous. Fragments that are parts of larger wholes we can understand. Beginnings that are meant to go on until some worthy end is reached, we can understand. We can understand incompleteness that is on its way to completeness. But fragments that have no meaning, incompleteness that ends with itself, beginnings that were never intended to be anything else but beginnings, throw us into utter intellectual confusion. We are dazed and dumb. We have the sense that all intelligence has gone out of the universe, and that the rational foundation of things has given away.

5. This brings me to a fifth reason why I find myself simply compelled to believe in immortality for man.

It is that I may keep my faith in the *rationality of nature*, or, to express it better, in the *reasonableness of God's work*.

Wherever I look in the heavens or in the earth, there are signs of a divine wisdom. Indeed with such wisdom the whole universe is ablaze, from mightiest sun down to tiniest molecule. Order is everywhere; adaptation is everywhere; harmony is everywhere; law is everywhere. All this means that reason is at the heart of things.

But if this be so, then must man be immortal. For it is impossible to believe that rationality holds everywhere else and breaks down when it comes to man. Everything below man has its *raison d'être*; does man have none? Everything else has its clear aim and purpose; was man, the highest of all, made only to be destroyed as soon as completed? Everywhere below man there is progress. The inorganic prepares the way for the organic. The organic rises to the psychic. The psychic culminates in man, a being who can reason, and thus put himself into relations with the Infinite Reason; who can think God's thoughts after Him; who can know, and admire, and consciously put himself into harmony with God's laws; who can understand justice, righteousness and truth; who can aspire and worship, and meet God's love with an answering love, as a child responds to the affection of a parent. Can we believe that God, having through an evolutionary process of millions of years, and at an expense so vast that we can only call it infinite, brought into existence a being so high, so near in nature to himself, has nothing for that being but death and extinction as soon as made? Then the rationality of the universe breaks down. God is less intelligent than even a man; for no man would do anything so utterly without reason as that. If a man should plant fruit trees and cut them down as soon as they began to bear fruit, or paint pictures and destroy them as soon as finished, or build ships never intending to send them to sea, we should say he had lost his reason, and call him a fool and not a man. But even such folly would be as nothing compared with that which could bring man into existence as

the crown and culmination of nature's infinitely vast and infinitely expensive evolutionary process, only to blot him out as soon as made,

No, I am compelled to believe that man will not be destroyed—that God has made him to partake of his own divine nature and be as immortal as himself, because I believe in the reasonableness of God's work. Faith in God seems to me necessarily to carry with it

"faith
That, some far day, will be found
Ripeness in things now r. the,
Wrong righted, each chain unbound,
Renewal born out of scathe.

I have faith such end shall be.
From the first, Power was—I knew;
Life has made clear to me
That, strive but for closer view,
Love were as plain to see.

When see? When there dawns a day,
If not on the homely earth,
Then yonder, world's away,
Where the strange and new have birth,
And Power comes full in play."

Here then for one I rest,—rest and find great peace. I cannot believe the universe idiotic. I cannot doubt the wisdom or the fidelity of God. That God's work of creation means something great and worthy, I do not even know how to question. Much more easily could I question my own sanity. But if it *does* mean something great and worthy, then man is safe, and safe for all the future.

6. This brings me to my last point. Must we not believe that God has made man and put him in this world, not by accident, and not with indifference, but because he loves him, cares for him, and needs him? Yes, I say needs him, and will need him forever?

Good men in this world are co-workers with God. Does he not care for that? What has he made us co-workers with him for—willing and conscious co-workers—if

he has no interest in the matter? And if he wants co-workers now, in this world, will he not want the same in the next?

Reverently I say it—I do not see how God could be happy in heaven without men. Has he not created us with a nature like his own, to know, to obey, and to love him? And could he destroy us, and blot out our love for him, without a pang? Could you be happy without your children? Could he without his?

Oh, I think God is the most to be pitied of all beings in this universe, if the best life that he has created ends in death.

RIZPAH

We weep over the story of ~~Judith~~ and her slain sons. Our tears fall for Niobe and her children dead. Should we not weep more sorely still for the Creator and Father of men, if his children all must die! Alone in his universe! bereft! bereft! No, no! God will not part with his child. Man has cost too much to be allowed to perish. God cannot afford it! The universe cannot afford it!

Do men build splendid palaces, spending on them years of time and millions of treasure, only to burn them as soon as they are completed? Then how can we believe that the Infinite Intelligence has built man's soul at a cost that is simply inconceivably great, only to destroy it as soon as it is finished? What right have we to think of God as less intelligent than we?

Do you say that God suffers *other* things to perish? Yes, but nothing whose cost bears any comparison with that of man, or whose intrinsic greatness is to be mentioned beside man's.

It is not strange if a sculptor throws away the chips that fall from his chisel as he cuts his statue of beauty. But will he throw away the statue when that is done?

In a world where Evolution was the law, it was inevitable that man's body must die. But what need for his soul to die? The destruction of his body was a slight matter. The death of his soul would be an infinite loss.

Man's soul, dwelling for a little while on this earth in

a perishable body, is like a splendid diamond placed for a time in a frail setting. When the setting is broken or worn out, will the jeweler throw the diamond away? Not so; it is too precious for that. Rather will he preserve it from harm, and give it a new, a finer and an enduring setting.

WHY AM I A UNITARIAN?

I am asked to speak upon the question, "Why am I a Unitarian?" In setting out to do so, I take as my text the memorable words of St. Paul, uttered by that great apostle when he was on trial for his religion and his life:

"This I confess, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers."—Acts 24:14.

It has always been the case that religions advance has been called heresy, by those who have refused to move forward.

Thus Abraham, when he left the polytheism of his people, and advanced to the worship of One God, the Creator of all things and the Infinite Spirit of Life, was regarded by his idolatrous kindred as a heretic.

The Old Testament Prophets were heretics to the masses of the people, who clung to their worship of Baal.

Socrates was a heretic, an infidel, and even an atheist to a large part of the Athenians of his time, because he entertained a higher idea of God than was held by them.

Jesus was put to death for heresy, and Paul suffered more than death; and in both cases it was because they believed and preached religious truths in advance of their age.

Luther was the arch heretic of his century: and to-day the Roman Catholic church points to him as the worst heretic of the modern world. Calvin was a heretic in his time. So was Wesley.

It is not strange therefore that Channing and Theodore Parker, and Emerson and Martineau, and the Unitarians, have been called by the same name.

Perhaps as prominent as any heretics we have to-day are Dr. Briggs, the great Presbyterian scholar of this country, and Ian Maclaren, the great Presbyterian preacher and novelist of England.

Thus you see that to be called a heretic is at least to be put in excellent society; indeed, it is to be given a place in the great company of those noble men and women who have done the most that ever has been done, in all ages and lands, for the advancement, purification and enlightenment of religion in the world.

One need not be greatly troubled at being a heretic in such distinguished and honored company.

If a short-sighted to-day stones its prophets, a wiser to-morrow comes with reverent tread to build them costly tombs.

"Though Truth's portion be the scaffold,
And upon the throne be Wrong,
Yet that scaffold sways the future,
And, behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow
Keeping watch above his own."

All this shows that the main concern of us all should be, not with the question of what men will think of us, or even do unto us, but with the infinitely more important inquiry, What is true?

Why am I a Unitarian?

I might answer very summarily, and say, I am a Unitarian because I cannot be anything else.

If you will pardon me for entering somewhat into personal experience, I will add, that nobody ever tried harder to be something else than I did for many years.

I was brought up in orthodoxy; I was educated in orthodoxy; I began my public work as a preacher in an orthodox pulpit. I loved the church of my childhood with all my heart and all my soul. My eldest brother was a preacher of its faith. My sister next in age to myself, the beloved companion of all my early years, went as a missionary of its gospel to a foreign land. Most of my companions in college, and all in the theological school, were members of it. With it were bound up all my hopes. Why did I not stay in the old fold?

Because the time came when it was no longer possible for me to accept its main theological teachings as true.

That experience came to me which is coming to tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of thoughtful and earnest minds in our time,—an experience corresponding, I suppose, to that which Abraham is said to have had in the ancient days, when he heard what he believed to be the voice of God speaking to him, and saying, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee."

Very early in my college course, doubts began to force themselves into my mind regarding one and another and another of the religious doctrines that I had always been taught to believe. In the light of the scientific studies that I was taking, and my contact with other minds, and the independent thinking that I was beginning to do for myself, certain features of the old faith began to seem unreasonable, incredible, and even immoral. I was troubled. I was pained. I sought relief in earnest reading of the Bible, and in prayer. I fought my doubts by every means within my power. But they would not down. Rather, they increased and grew more serious.

Still I was not in despair, for I believed that all that was necessary to allay them was more light. I had no question but that when I reached the divinity school (for I was studying with the ministry in view), and there under able teachers took up the various theological questions which troubled me, for careful and thorough study, all my doubts and difficulties would quickly disappear.

I entered the Divinity school. I went through its three years of study under able instructors. I read eagerly the strongest books in the libraries in support of the old faith which I so earnestly wanted to find rational and ethical justification for. What was the result? Alas, the exact opposite from what I had hoped and expected. My course of biblical and theological study confirmed my doubts, instead of removing them. The explanations which I so earnestly sought for my difficulties, from teachers and books, did not explain.

One further hope remained. Two or three trusted

friends said, Your difficulties are largely theoretical. Go into the practical work of the ministry; throw your soul into that, and your troubles will disappear.

I followed the advice. I went into the ministry of the old church that I loved. For two years I threw my whole soul into practical work, preaching on practical subjects, and avoiding as fully as possible all doctrinal themes. But it was of no use. What is a man's intellect given him for, only to use? I found that every practical theme sends down its roots into great truths and principles. A man must have a philosophy of life. If he is going to teach religion he must have a philosophy of religion. My two years of practical work had shown me that my old philosophy of religion was gone. Nor could anything bring it back.

And now we come to the significant and important part of my story.

The old had faded away; but had nothing come in its place?

I had been eight years in beating my music out. Was it really music that I had found? Or was it increasing discords? Or was it nothing?

I can only say that to me at least—to my reason, my conscience, and all that is deepest in my religious nature, after the long struggle of doubt and fear,—it was music that I had reached. If the old had gone, something far more satisfactory had come in its stead.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the Ptolemaic theory of the Universe, which had been accepted for 2,000 years, broke down before the advance of knowledge, there were thousands and thousands who could see nothing in the break-down but the most terrible disaster to religion and man. But were their fears realized? On the contrary, in the place of the old theory of the universe came an infinitely better new. Indeed it was because facts and laws looking in the direction of something larger and better, were coming to men's knowledge, that they were driven to surrender the old.

Exactly the same is the situation to-day in religion.

In those centuries when the Ptolemaic theory of the universe held dominance in Christendom there grew up a system of theological thought exactly in harmony with it, largely created by it. What is happening now? That system of theological thought is breaking down. Does its decay mean that religion is failing? Instead, it means that religion is broadening to vastly larger horizons. The whole religious philosophy of the thinking world is moving out from the small and artificial Ptolemaic universe in which it was born and has always lived, into the Copernican universe of modern science and modern knowledge, in which its future is to be.

This was what those eight years of doubt and questioning and struggle helped me to see. The experience of those earnest years—tragic they often seemed, as they went by—was a process by which I grew aware of God's new order, and slowly learned to adjust myself to it.

Thus you see how I became a Unitarian.

For what is Unitarianism? It is simply this new order of things, carried out into the world of religion. It is simply religion transformed from Ptolemaic to Copernican conditions. It is simply Christianity moving forward, out of centuries of darkness, and credulity, and mental bondage, and dreams, and dogmatisms, and miracles, into our modern age of light, of science, of law, of proved knowledge, of larger freedom, of higher spiritual ideals.

Unitarianism is nothing more nor less than the world's growing cry for reason in religion; for reality in religion; for soul-liberty in religion; for ethics in religion; for the dominance of the moral and the spiritual over the creedal and the formal in religion; for a religion free to grow; for a religion whose primary business is to build up God's kingdom of justice and love on the earth here and now.

This is what the tremendous seething of thought going on in the whole religious world to-day means. It means higher ideas. It means readjustment. It means God calling the world forward. It means not something poorer for

religion, but something better; not something lower, but something higher; not something smaller, but something infinitely larger; not something less secure, but something more secure,—built on foundations sunk down and down to such solid rock of moral and spiritual fact as the past has never known.

Of course I do not mean that all of this growing and deepening cry of humanity takes the Unitarian name. By no means! No single name can either define it or confine it. Thank God, the cry is beginning to be heard, at least in faint lisplings, under every religious name, inside of every religious body, and outside of all. I only mean that in Unitarianism it comes to freest expression and fullest self-realization. I only mean that in Unitarianism we have the one organized and historic form of Christianity in the world which accepts the new order, makes no apology for it, believes in it as of God, and lifts up the banner of it boldly where all men can see.

Thus you see, in some measure at least, what I meant when I said that I am a Unitarian because I cannot be anything else.

However, the ground that I have gone over is only the beginning. The reasons why I am a Unitarian are many. Let me begin with the Bible.

One reason why I am a Unitarian is because I believe Unitarianism to be the central and vital religion of the entire Bible.

Go to the Old Testament. What do you find there? You find the declaration that God is one, that God is holy, and that he demands of man a pure heart and a right life. I believe this sums up the ethical and spiritual teaching of the Old Testament.

Do you find any such dogmatic theological system as that of modern orthodox Christianity? Certainly not. Do you find any of its more important doctrines, as the trinity, the deity of Christ, salvation through faith in an atoning sacrifice made by a dying God? All Jewish scholars answer No; and they ought to understand their own sacred book.

Practically, all independent Christian scholars also answer No. Certainly, with all the study that I have been able to give the matter, I have never found a syllable in support of any of these doctrines. Men who interpret the Old Testament in the same rational, straight-forward way that they do other books, do not discover them. I think nobody ever finds them except men who interpret them *into* the Old Testament out of their own minds.

Matthew Arnold says the whole Old Testament culminates in the one word, *righteousness*. If you doubt this, go to Moses, and read the Ten Commandments. Go to the Psalms, and read:

" Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?
Or who shall stand in his holy place?
He that hath clean hands and a pure heart."

Go to Isaiah, the greatest of the prophets, and ponder his burning words: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord? . . . Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well: seek judgement, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."

Go to the prophet, Micah, and hear his emphatic declaration: "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

And now, what is this religion that thus lifts up righteousness heaven-high above all forms, all ceremonies, all possible theological doctrines and schemes? this religion of the pure heart and the right life? this religion which identifies salvation with character, and serving God with serving men? It is simply clear and clean Unitarianism, nothing more and nothing less. This is what Unitarianism means.

Turn now to the New Testament. What do we find there? I think we find Unitarianism, and only Unitarianism, if we interpret the books as we should, as literature and not as dogma.

Is the New Testament a theological treatise? Certainly not. What is it? A book to teach men how to live. Does it ever exalt creed above deed, or doctrine above life? Never, but always the opposite. Says Jesus, He that doeth the will shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God. Jesus asks men to believe in him. But mark well, it is in *him* that they are asked to believe, not in speculative theories *about* him of which he had never dreamed, and of which no man had ever dreamed until generations after his death. It was in *him*, *him*—the kind of a man he was, the character he bore, the spirit he manifested, the love he showed, the truth he taught, the pure and unselfish life he lived, the noble and heroic death he died for truth and right. *That* is believing in *him*. And that is Unitarianism. For who in all the ages have ever believed in *him* so deeply, so strongly, so tenderly, so lovingly, so earnestly as Unitarians? Their refusal has been to believe the things *about* him that seem to them to destroy him, by transforming him into a theological figment. Says Emerson, "Do not attempt to elevate the New Testament story out of humanity by saying, 'this is not a man'—for then you confound it with the fables of every popular religion. . . . Whoever thinks a story gains by the prodigious, by adding something out of nature, robs it more than he adds. It is no longer an example, a model, no longer a heart stirring hero, but an exhibition, a wonder, an anomaly, removed out of range of influence with thoughtful men."

The cruelty of the men who crucified Jesus upon a Roman cross seems to have been slight compared with the cruelty of those who have crucified him for so many centuries since, upon trinity doctrines, atonement schemes, and deification theories. The first crucifixion brought him near to men; the last has banished well-nigh out of the world.

I am asked, Is not the doctrine of the trinity in the New Testament? I answer, Where? There used to be a text that seemed to teach it, in the 1st Epistle of John, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father,

WHY AM I A UNITARIAN?

the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." But scholars have long known that this text was spurious, being found in none of the oldest and most reliable manuscripts. Accordingly the Revised Version, and all versions made to-day, drop it. Thus the only clear trinitarian text in the entire Bible is gone; and as for the word trinity, that never was in the Bible.

Does not the New Testament teach that Jesus was God? Where? I do not know where. We must bear in mind when and how the New Testament was written.

Paul, the earliest writer, did not know Jesus personally.

The earliest account we have of Jesus is undoubtedly that of Mark. But even that was not written for a whole generation after Jesus' death. However, Mark's gospel is the best testimony we have. How does that represent him? Everywhere and always as a man. There is no hint of deity. Indeed many things are inexplicable on the supposition of his deity; as for example, his being tempted. Can God be tempted? His declaration that there were things which he did not know. Are there things which God does not know? His exclamation on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken men?" Can God forsake himself? His praying to God, as to another. If all the while he knew that he himself was God, what could such praying be but a pretense, and a make-believe?

One of the strongest proofs of the deity of Jesus is his supposed miraculous birth. But not a word of such a birth is found in the earliest gospel. Even most of the miracles connected with the resurrection are wanting. The explanation seems to be that these miracle stories were legends which later grew up around the birth and death of Jesus, as we know similar legends grew up about Buddha, and Moses, and Alexander, and Cyrus, and many other great characters of the ancient world. The gospel of Mark seems to have been written before these two groups of miracle legends concerning Jesus came into existence, or at least before they had obtained acceptance, hence they do not

appear in that gospel. By the time the later gospels are written they have come on the scene.

Thus, when we get back as near to Jesus as we can—within thirty or forty years of his death, we find him understood to have been born as other men are, as well as to have been in every other way a man. True, he is represented as working miracles, and as rising from the dead; but others also are declared to have risen from the dead, who certainly were men; and miracle working was common to characters inside the Bible and outside.

It is plain that a movement began very early in the Christian church to exalt Jesus in the direction of the supernatural. There are many traces of it in the New Testament. The earliest books show it least, the later most. By the time the New Testament canon was closed it had progressed far. When such late books as the Apocalypse and the Fourth Gospel were written, Jesus had come to be thought of by the writers as much more than a man, as a being who had an existence before he came into the world, and upon whom God had conferred great honor and power. But he is not God. Everywhere God is represented as above him, giving to him all his power and all his glory. Not until many generations had passed, indeed not until the beginning of the fourth century, did the movement reach the point of deifying Jesus, and placing him upon the throne of the Universe. And the full doctrine of the trinity came into existence even later than that: while the atonement scheme, as we have it to-day, was born centuries later still.

But, if the New Testament does not teach a trinity, or the deity of Christ, what does it teach? I believe, and the Unitarian church believes, that the heart of the religion of the whole New Testament is love and duty and discipleship to Christ. And I believe, and the Unitarian church believes, that the true test of discipleship to Christ is just love and duty, and not the acceptance of any dogmas, theological schemes, creeds, or so-called plans of salvation wrought out by theologians and ecclesiastics many centuries after Jesus had gone from the earth.

Do you know that there is only one definition of pure religion given in the whole New Testament? What is it? "Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep one's self unspotted from the world."

I believe, and the Unitarian church believes, that that is the heart of New Testament religion.

Turn to Paul. What does he say? Paul declares that the greatest thing in religion is love. "Now abide faith, hope, love: but the greatest of these is love." Unitarianism takes its stand beside Paul, and plants itself as a religious movement squarely upon the supremacy of love above everything else.

Turn to Jesus. What does he declare to be supreme in religion? Trinities? creeds? forms? orthodoxies? Happily we are not in doubt. On one occasion a man went to him and said, "Tell us plainly what is the great command." What was his reply? You all know what it was; simply and only love. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

What is Unitarianism? Just this. The Unitarian church, the world over, takes its stand with Jesus, in declaring that these two commands embody the highest Christianity and the highest Religion.

Some of you know the story of Lincoln, how he said to one of his biographers, that he had never joined any church because he could not subscribe to the doctrines that they asked him to accept. But if any church would come to him prescribing no condition of membership except these two great commands of love which Jesus laid down, that church he would most gladly join. Is there any Christian church which erects no conditions of membership except these two? Yes, the Unitarian; and also the Universalist, which, though bearing another name, is in fact Unitarian.

Next Sunday is Easter. Probably every Unitarian and

Universalist society in America will open its doors on that day to receive new members. Who will be welcome? All who accept as the ideal of life, toward which they would strive, love to God and their fellow men.

So then to the question before us to-day, I answer, I am a Unitarian because I believe that Unitarianism is the highest teaching of the Old Testament; because I believe it is the central teaching of the New Testament; and especially because I believe it is the heart and soul of the teaching of Jesus.

But this is not all.

I am a Unitarian because I believe that Unitarianism is the most reasonable form of religion.

Unitarianism accepts reason as of God. It believes that religion should everywhere be tested by reason. It refuses to accept as true, in religion or anywhere else, what is clearly irrational. It believes that no better service can be done to religion than to bring to it everywhere the light of reason—which is God's instrumentality for driving out ignorance, credulity, bigotry, fear, and superstition, from religion, and purifying and ennobling it.

I am a Unitarian because I believe Unitarianism to be the most *ethical* form of religion. Unitarianism would bring all religion to the ethical test, as well as to the rational. Its contention with orthodoxy is largely here. It rejects certain doctrines of the popular creeds because they seem to it unethical, as it rejects others because they seem to it irrational. It believes that we shall never reach the final or highest religion, until we get a faith that is through and through ethical as well as through and through reasonable.

I am a Unitarian, and in a Unitarian Church, because the Unitarian Church is one where a religious liberal can be *honest*.

A man may be a liberal in an orthodox church, if he will cover up his liberalism. He may think what he pleases, if he will not say much about it. He may disbelieve the creed, if he will support the church that is founded on the

creed. He may tell his friends at home that he no longer accepts such and such outgrown doctrines of the past, if he will only go to church and take part in prayers and creeds and liturgies that retain them all.

Is such a course honest? In anything except religion if a man says one thing in public and another in private, or supports a cause with his money and his influence which he does not believe in, is he thought to be pursuing an upright or honorable course?

I do not wish to speak severely or uncharitably of any. But I will say that I am glad there is one church in which there is no temptation to such a double life. And I am glad that I am permitted to belong to that church.

I am a Unitarian because I believe in *progress*. Unitarianism is distinctly faced forward. I think that is the right way to be faced. I am glad to be associated with a religious movement which believes, and dares to say it believes, that God has better things for his world; which believes and dares say it believes, in living inspiration; a movement whose flag, flung to every breeze of heaven, bears the motto,

"Revelation is not sealed;
Answering unto man's endeavor,
Truth and right are still revealed."

I am a Unitarian because I believe in a *wide fellowship*. I do not see why we should not be quick to see and appreciate whatever good there is in all forms of faith,—inside Christianity and outside Christianity. And why should not religious people fellowship one another on the basis of what they have in common? Unitarianism says they should. I like that. I believe it to be the spirit of Christ. I know it to be the spirit of a broad-minded and noble humanity.

I am a Unitarian because Unitarianism is pre-eminently the religion of *education*. Other religions bodies have done much for education, and deserve much praise. But at the head of all, in proportion to its numbers, stands the Unitarian. And the education that Unitarians promote is of the broadest, freest, most progressive, most unsectarian

kind. They have always been the staunchest friends of our public school system, and of our state universities. Every important form of education has received their aid.

Who gave that great Peabody fund for education in the South, which has been of such simply inestimable service in enabling the Southern States to establish public school systems? George Peabody, of London, the Universalist.

Who established the Cooper Institute in New York, the finest educational institution for the working people in that great city? Peter Cooper, the Unitarian.

Who was the pioneer and for many years the most important leader in introducing the Kindergarten system into this country? Elizabeth Peabody, the Unitarian.

Who established Washington University, in St. Louis, the most important institution of learning in the Mississippi Valley outside of the state universities? Unitarians,—the first Unitarian church of St. Louis alone giving to it more than two millions of dollars.

Who founded Cornell University? Ezra Cornell, the Unitarian.

Who established the Lowell Institute in Boston, that noble pioneer among the great public lecture foundations on this side the Atlantic? John Lowell, the Unitarian.

Who established the great Pratt Library in Baltimore? Enoch Pratt, the Unitarian.

Who have built up Harvard University, to be the first institution of higher learning in America? And who have given to it its splendid equipments and endowments? Mainly Unitarians.

Is it no honor for a religious body to have such an educational record as this? And is it strange if one who believes in education is attracted to such a body?

I am a Unitarian because Unitarianism is pre-eminently the religion of *philanthropics and reforms*.

When Jesus described the scene of the future judgment, whom did he place upon the right hand? Those who had fed the hungry, clothed the naked, ministered to the sick, visited those in prison. Unitarians have always believed

that such service to one's fellow men in need, is the truest service we can render to God. Hence their prominence everywhere in works of charity and beneficence.

Who organized the first Peace Society in this country? Noah Worcester, the Unitarian.

Who established the first public ministry to the poor in this or any land? Dr. Joseph Tuckerman, the Unitarian.

Who was the President and organizer of the great Sanitary Commission, which at the time of our civil war did a work of such vast and inestimable benefit to our sick and wounded soldiers? Dr. Henry W. Bellows, of New York, pastor of the first Unitarian church.

Who created the Western Sanitary Commission, which did a work for our sick soldiers only second to that of the National Sanitary Commission? Dr. Wm. G. Eliot, pastor of the first Unitarian church of St. Louis. Who did that beautiful and almost angelic work for the suffering soldiers of the Crimean war, which the world will never tire of commemorating? Florence Nightingale, the Unitarian.

Who was the prime mover in establishing asylums and hospitals for the insane in this country, by her own almost superhuman efforts securing the erection of the first nineteen? Dorathea Dix, the Unitarian.

Who established the first society for the prevention of cruelty to animals in this country? Henry Berg of New York, the Unitarian.

Who established the first Flower Mission in the world? A lady missionary at the Hollis street Unitarian church in Boston.

What were those great leaders in the anti-slavery cause, Channing, May, Theodore Parker, Sumner, Hale, Adin Ballou, Emerson, Lowell, Gerrit Smith, Giddings, Geo. W. Julian, and hosts of others? Unitarians.

Do you wonder that one is drawn to a religion that has had such a leadership in the good works of the world?

We are sometimes told that Unitarianism is not Christianity. If a religion which has such a history as this is not Christianity, then how is Christianity bereaved!

I am a Unitarian because I believe that Unitarianism is the direction in which the *best religious thought and life of the world is tending*, even in the orthodox churches themselves.

Go into the ranks of orthodoxy and point out to me the leaders of its best thought and life. Who will they be? Will they not be such men, of the generation just gone, as Phillips Brooks, and Henry Ward Beecher, and Dean Stanley; and of the present generation, Lyman Abbott, and Washington Gladden, and Heber Newton, and Dr. Rainford, and Dr. Gunnar, and Dr. John Watson?

But where do these men stand theologically? Far along the road that leads away from orthodoxy proper, according to any of the standards; and,—there is no escaping it—far along the road that leads towards Unitarianism. Every one is suspected of heresy. And what is the heresy? In every case it is Unitarianism. That is the goal toward which all the religious advance of our time seems to be moving.

Phillips Brooks was charged constantly by the narrower men of his denomination, with being at bottom a Unitarian. So was Beecher, so was Stanley. So to-day is Abbott, so is Newton, and so are all the rest. The other day the Y. M. C. A. in Philadelphia would not let Dr. Abbott speak in its hall because of his Unitarian utterances. It is only a little while since there were rumors of a trial of Heber Newton for his Unitarian heresies; and now over in England they are after Ian Maclaren, because he has been giving the world a Unitarian creed. Here it is: "I believe in the Fatherhood of God. I believe in the words of Jesus. I believe in the clean heart. I believe in the service of love. I believe in the unworldly life. I believe in the beatitudes. I promise to trust God and follow Christ; to forgive my enemies, and to seek after the righteousness of God." Could there be a finer statement of Unitarianism? Do you wonder that Unitarians are circulating it everywhere?

Now all this is tremendously significant. Does anybody suppose that these men will go back from the advanced positions that they have taken? Does any one doubt that

others are going to follow them, and in ever increasing numbers?

Thus you see what I mean when I say that the best thought and life of the Christian world, even inside of the so called orthodox ranks, is moving steadily toward Unitarianism.

And now, add to all this, the fact that the higher criticism of the Bible, the study of comparative religion, the doctrine of evolution, science, philosophy, free inquiry, and literature, are all tending strongly to justify the Unitarian position, and you will easily see how assuring to a Unitarian is the present condition of things in the worlds of thought and religion.

But my time is gone.

I wanted to call your attention to the heart side of Unitarianism. It is often charged that the Unitarian faith is heartless and cold. A mistake could hardly be greater. I believe there is no religion in the world in which love, sympathy, tenderness for human suffering, helpfulness, practical human brotherhood, are more central, permanent and vital elements than they are in Unitarianism. Does a cold and heartless religion create and carry on such charities, such philanthropies, such works of practical love, as I have pointed you to?

I wanted to call attention to the spiritual side of Unitarianism—its power to kindle piety and devotion. Here again it is often declared to be wanting. But do you know that a large part of the finest books of spiritual thought and devotion in this age are being produced by Unitarians? Where can you find nobler, deeper, tenderer, more uplifting prayers than those of Theodore Parker, of Beecher, of George Dawson, of Frances Power Cobbe, of James Martineau? The Christian church has never produced their superior. And the very finest, most devout and most spiritual hymns of our time—do you know that of these no church is producing anything like so many in proportion to its numbers, as the Unitarian? And these noble, tender and inspiring hymns are finding their way into the hymn

books of all denominations. But a religion wanting in piety and spiritual depth does not write the devotional literature of any age.

Finally, I wanted to call your attention to Unitarianism as a religion to live by,—putting a simply tremendous emphasis as it does, always, upon the good life; and as a religion to die by, taking away, as it does, the horrors from death which the old, cruel theology has surrounded it with, and giving in their place a peaceful trust in him whose care and love are over us in death as in life, and who will never leave us in any world to which death may open the door.

Here I close.

I have given you some of the reasons why I am a Unitarian. Judge for yourselves whether they have weight.

PRESENT DAY SCRIPTURES.

"They must upward still and onward,
Who would keep abreast of Truth." —LOWELL.

"Revelation is not sealed ;
Answering unto man's endeavor,
Truth and right are still revealed."

—S. LONGFELLOW.

"God is not the God of the dead,
But of the living." —JESUS.

It is common for men to-day to think of all Scripture as having an ancient origin. But why necessarily ancient? Is the ancient world the source of all the truth man possesses, or all the good he enjoys? Is God dead, or is He less near to humanity now than formerly? Has the modern world no flowing fountains?

Jesus believed in present revelation, and in growing truth. Why should not we? "God is not the God of the dead," he said, "but of the living." To those who would limit the present and future by the far away past, he declared stoutly in favor of advance, saying, "It hath been said by them of the old time," so and so ; "but I say unto"—something distinctly different, something larger, something better.

Of course, we must not overlook our great debt to the ancient times. Much that comes down from the past, and the far distant past, is of great and priceless value ; as, for example, spoken language ; the use of fire ; the taming of animals and their employment in the service of man ; the discovery of the process of smelting iron, and the use of the metal to serve human needs ; the invention of letters ; the discovery of the fundamental principles of mathematics and mechanics ; the establishment of the family and of peaceful government ; the be-

ginnings of law, of settled morality, of religion. These and hundreds of other legacies from a very far away antiquity are of permanent and untold value to mankind.

And yet, because so much of good has come to us from the early world, are we to think of that world as the source of all good, or even of all highest good? Quite the contrary. A little research shows us that the ancient times were comparatively crude times; civilization was comparatively low; much was then unknown that now has been found out. Go back to the early ages of the world and we find simple and crude agricultural implements, crude means of travel and transportation, crude houses, crude and superficial educational methods, crude legal and moral codes, crude systems for administering justice. Why then should we necessarily look back to those ages for the most perfect scriptures, or for the revelation of God's highest truth to men? In all other directions the world has grown as the ages have advanced. Each new age has kept the knowledge bequeathed to it by its predecessors, and added some new discoveries of its own. Thus in invention, in physical discovery, in man's conquest over material nature, in the practical arts of life, in science, in education, in law, in all departments of life outside of religion, there has been progress. Why should we not expect progress also in religion? And if there is to be progress in religion, must there not be progress in religious teaching? In other words, must not the sources from which men are to draw their supplies of truth and inspiration be enlarged and deepened, and adapted to the needs of growing minds and advancing civilizations? Must not revelation be continuous and progressive? Must not every age have something to do in adding its part to the ever-growing scriptures of the world—to that great, divine, all comprehensive Bible, which through the agency of all the loftest minds and purest souls of the ages, God is writing for all mankind?

If we are going to talk about revelation at all, it seems as if some such thought as this is the only one that is great enough to be adequate to man's need, or worthy of God?

Why then should we not have present day Scriptures?

Some one tells me the old Scriptures are enough. But how can they be enough? As I have said, they came to the race in what was comparatively its childhood. But the needs of childhood are not the needs of maturer years. A revelation adapted perfectly for to-day would not be perfectly adapted for to-morrow unless to-morrow had made no advance beyond to-day.

The Bible was written two or three thousand years ago. We live now, not then. The Bible was written by men of the Semitic race. We are of the Aryan race. The Bible was written mainly in Asia. We live in America. Ours is a new world compared even with the world of 300 years ago. What then is it compared with the world of the time of Paul, or David, or Moses?

Try the experiment of teaching to-day exclusively the science of those old ages; or of governing the people of the United States to-day exclusively by the laws then in vogue. Would you find your science or your laws adequate?

This helps us to see whether it is possible in the nature of things for a book of religion written in one land and one age to be adequate and sufficient for all other lands and all subsequent ages.

Every new age demands to have its science new written, its philosophy new written, its poetry new written, its music new written, its art new created. That is, the world's intellectual and moral life must be a flowing stream, not a stagnant pool. The activity is its life. To stand still is to die.

It is the same in religion. For religion to live in the past alone is to turn to stone. There must be the present oracles, the open vision, the continuous revelation, the word that speaks to-day.

This is the great lesson that the Quakers have taught the modern world. In the midst of a Christianity, looking solely to the past for its scriptures, and unable to hear God's present voice, these faithful men and women have lifted up their voices to declare, "God's truest word was never written in a book and never will be. It is the living utterance of the Divine Spirit in the souls of living men. This is God's revelation first hand. No book can ever be more than a revelation to men second hand."

This is not saying that the Bible is not a precious treasure to the world. Such a treasure it certainly is, if men will not pervert it and turn it to wrong uses. Used aright, it is calculated to be a great and permanent help to men's moral and religious life. But it must not be used as a finality. It must not be employed to make men live in the past instead of the present. It must not be allowed to blind men's eyes and shut their ears to the presence of God in the world now, and to the Scriptures which he is writing to-day in history, in the marvelous world of nature, in human lives everywhere, and in your soul and mine.

Why should we think of the Genesis legends of the Creation—interesting and beautiful as poetry, but far removed from the facts—why should we think of those legends as truer scripture than the teachings of modern science showing the method by which God actually did create the earth and the heavens?

Why should we think that the Old Testament books of Chronicles, Judges and Joshua, with their interminable and cruel wars, are better word of God than the records of our councils of arbitration by which we are learning to prevent appeals to arms, and the noble literature of our peace societies pleading with the nations of the world to sheathe their bloody swords?

Why should we think of the old Levitical laws, sanctioning and regulating human slavery, as more divine than Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, which abol-

ished slavery in a great nation, and turned four millions of slaves into men?

Why should the tale of the cruel plots of the vengeful and jealous Queen Esther to get her enemies put to death, be thought to be more fit to be read in churches on Sunday, and taught in Sunday Schools to our children, than the beautiful story of Florence Nightingale ministering to the wants of the sick and wounded soldiers in the Crimea, or the equally beautiful, tender and heroic ministries of Clara Barton and Mrs. Livermore in our own wars?

Why should we call the words and deeds of the old Hebrew prophets inspired when they denounced wrong in ancient Jerusalem and tried to purify that city from its sins, and not also call inspired the words and deeds of our modern prophets of righteousness in New York and Chicago and San Francisco and Oakland when they denounce wickedness here and try to purify these American cities from corruption?

Why are our eyes open to see inspiration in the great and noble poem of Job, and not also in the great and noble poems of Emerson, Browning and Wordsworth?

Why should we say of the imprecatory Psalms, praying for vengeance on enemies, and even for direct calamities upon innocent children, or of the Book of Ecclesiastes, with its pessimism and rank materialism, declaring a man to have no pre-eminence above a brute, that they are truer Bible than are the lofty sermons of Phillips Brooks, Edward Everett Hale, glowing white hot with the prophet fire of God's present inspiration, or the devout hymns of Whittier which lift the souls of men into the very presence chamber of God?

Why should we be able to see God in the record of Elijahs' slaughter of the priests of Baal, not because they had committed any moral wrong, but simply because they believed in another religion, and not be able to see God a good deal more in the record of that marvelous Parliament of Religions in Chicago, which brought

together the disciples of a score of the most widely sundered religious faiths of the world, not to slaughter or even to reproach or condemn one another, but to sit together as brothers, as fellow-seekers after truth, as fellow-worshippers of the same God, though under different names?

While we should be deeply appreciative of, and profoundly grateful for, all that is beautiful and good and true in the old Bible of our fathers, that comes down to us from the ancient world, let us not call error truth or evil good, because it happens to have a place in its pages; let us not forget that the modern world is God's as much as was the ancient; let us remember that all truth is a part of God's growing 'revelation to men; and that all good deeds done, and all noble lives lived, to-day, are just as beautiful and just as precious to heaven as if they had been done or lived 2000 years ago.

God's new Scriptures—how large they are! The old are large also, but the new are larger. The old are precious, but the new are not less precious.

Where are the new Scriptures to be found? In many directions. There are Scriptures new *to us*, in the great Sacred Books of the world outside of our own. These have been in existence long, and have long given nourishment to the spiritual life of millions of those whom we have called heathen. But through our ignorance or prejudice we have not recognized them as true Scriptures. But the wisest and devoutest souls of our time are beginning to see that they are Scriptures of God, and are bringing them to the knowledge of the Christian world. Hence we may count them as in a sense a part of the new Scriptures of our time. By the side of the lofty teaching of the Hebrew Psalmist,

“Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?
And who shall stand in his holy place?
He that hath clean hands and a pure heart,”

We must place the high teaching of the Persian Avesta:—

"Holiness is the best of all good.
The will of the Lord is the law of holiness."

To the Golden Rule of Jesus we must add the teaching of the Koran, "None of you can be a true believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself."

To Paul's, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good," we must add Buddha's, "Let a man overcome anger by love, evil by good, the greedy by liberality, the liar by truth."

But the Scripture that God is giving to the modern world is not confined to sacred books.

It is being written in the history of mankind. The great principles of human justice and the mighty laws of human retribution, as they work themselves out on the scale of nations, peoples and civilizations, are mighty chapters in the great Bible that God is writing for the instruction of the world.

Literature is a mighty Scripture producer. In the nobler literature of our century the Bible chapters are as stars in the sky for number. Perhaps our men and women of pre-eminent inspiration are our poets. Scripture is being written by them that reaches the hearts and consciences of men as almost nothing else in our day does,—Scripture that the future will not let die. Possibly next after our poets follow our novelists. Some of these write that which is trashy enough. But some write with an ethical and spiritual insight and power that make had men tremble and good men rejoice.

Science is writing mighty chapters in the great Bible of God. In the past, religion and science have feared and fought each other. They are beginning to learn better. The Scriptures of the past have chained and imprisoned science. The Scripture of the future will find in her a valuable ally, and invoke her friendly aid.

More and more the future is going to see in all nature a revelation of God first hand. Jesus saw in the lily and the sparrow and the growing corn such a revelation. Why should not we?

"We lack hut the eye and ear
To find the Orient's marvels here,
The 'still small voice' in Autumn's hush,
Yon maple wood the 'burning bush.'"

James T. Field tells the story of a walk he took with Tennyson in the pastures one spring day. In the midst of the walk, without giving any warning, the great poet suddenly dropped down on all fours and buried his face in the grass. Field stopped and gazed on the prostrate man, wondering if he had gone crazy. Presently Tennyson glancing up and seeing his companion still on his feet called out "Down on your knees, man, down on your knees! Violets! Violets!" Do you think those violets that brought Tennyson to his knees were not to him holy Scriptures?

Writes Wordsworth,

"To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

Read Robert Burns' lines "To a Mountain Daisy," or Longfellow's "Flowers," or Thoreau's Note Books, if you would understand what Scriptures of life flowers may be to human souls.

Thus it is that all nature, wherever we turn waits to become to us a revelation of God and a teacher of the deep things of the spirit—if only our souls are alive to its meanings.

"In holy books we read how God hath spoken
To holy men in many different ways;
But hath the present worked no sign nor token?
Is God quite silent in these latter days?
The word were hut a blank, a hollow sound,
If he that spoke it were not speaking still;
If all the light and all the shade around
Were aught hut issues of Almighty Will.
So, then, believe that every bird that sings,
And every flower that stars the elastic sod,
And every thought that happy summer brings,
To the pure spirit is a word of God."

But not in nature alone does God reveal himself. There is a revelation higher and nearer than that. It is in human life—in all the love, and duty, and pity and patience, and fidelity, and self-sacrifice, and justice and heroism of humanity.

The dying Niebuhr said to his wife: "In thy face—O, dearest one, have I seen the Eternal."

Where is the mother who, in pressing her babe to her breast, and feeling all the sweetness and wealth of a mother's love, has not felt that God was making to her a divine revelation infinitely precious?

Where is the man who, in hours of solitude, by the sea, or under the night heavens, has not had communings with his own soul that have lifted his whole life up to higher levels?

The highest and holiest Bible that was ever written or ever will be is the Bible of the human heart, the human soul, the human conscience. This Bible God writes new and authoritative every day. And he gives it direct to us, not round about by way of centuries past, and hundreds of generations of men whom we have never seen. We should learn to read it and heed it, as something divine and priceless.

Let no one misunderstand me. In saying all this, I speak not in disparagement of the past or of the old. As I have taken such pains to point out, the old has a value that is inestimable. The past is the mother of the present. Mothers should always be loved and honored.

What we need is not the throwing away of any truth already gained, but a firm faith that more awaits our search.

The old Scripture needs purging. Many eminent religious teachers and clergymen, in the churches called orthodox and evangelical, as well as in the liberal churches, have urged the need, for religious uses, of an expurgated Bible—which should keep the externally true and good, and lay aside the outgrown. Two distinguished Episcopal clergymen have actually prepared and

published such a Bible.* Such Bibles are a universal need, especially for use in Sunday Schools and in the religious education of the young.

But even more than we need to have our Scriptures purged, we need to have them supplemented, deepened, enriched by the opening of new mines of God's spiritual truth. The world grows. Civilization advances. What was adequate for the ancient world is not adequate for the modern. We want the help in religion of all the new moral forces of our time. Do not forget that Jesus was a believer in the new. He declared that his wine was new, and even the bottles to hold it must be new.

Our modern doctrine of evolution furnishes the true principle for our guidance. Evolution does not drop the past as useless. Rather it gathers up and conserves all the good of the past, adds the rich and living new of the present, and thus, from the two, builds the still nobler future.

So must modern religion do, if it is to keep abreast of modern progress, and accomplish the great and living work for the world that is demanded of it.

So must this church do. So must we all do as individuals. We cannot live upon what has been. We must rise and go forward to better and ever better things yet to be. Religion is a living thing, or it is nothing. Let us make it a living thing with us all. Let us open our souls to the living touch of God, the living inspiration of God, the inflowing of the very life of God into our being.

God is not far away. He is here. He waits to go with us where we go and stay with us where we stay, our protector, our comforter, the inspiration of our lives, the light of all our day. May we so live that the world shall be luminous with his presence, and our hearts always full of his love and his peace !

* THE SCRIPTURES, HEBREW AND CHRISTIAN, by Edward T. Bartlett and John P. Peters. 3 vols. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

IS THE BIBLE INFALLIBLE?

The popular mind is full of the idea that, as regards the Bible, the alternative is, "all or none": we must either accept the volume entire, as in every part "a perfect and infallible revelation from God," or else "throw it all away."

That such an alternative seems to any to be strange or unreasonable, does not alter the fact that it is in the public mind. The great majority of the people hold it as firmly as any other article of their religious creed.

No class of persons is more severely lashed from many pulpits, and by a large part of the religious press, than those advanced biblical scholars and critics who, as the charge is, "cut the Bible to pieces."

Says Dr. Talmage: "The Bible is either all true or all false." Mr. Spurgeon declared the same. Mr. Moody went so far as to affirm that "unless every word and every syllable, from Genesis to Revelation, is true, we have no Bible, and we may as well gather together what we have been calling our Bibles and make a bonfire of them, and build a monument heaven-high to Voltaire and Paine." Prominent denominations continue to depose able, scholarly, devout, and honored men from their ministry for denying the doctrine of

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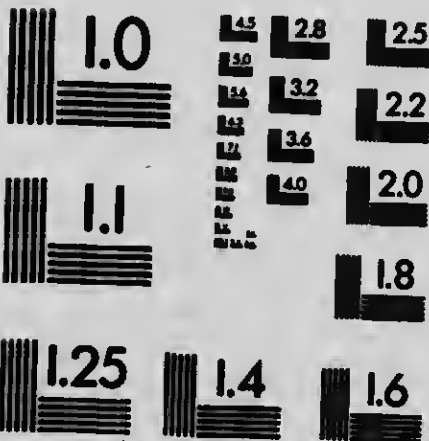
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Bible infallibility; and nearly all orthodox denominations maintain the doctrine as a prominent part of their creeds.

Thus we see that the question before us is not a light or a far-off matter. It is intensely living; it is everywhere pressing upon public attention. It is one of the subjects that thinking young men and women are making earnest inquiry about, for most of them have been taught from their childhood that to admit the possibility of mistake in the Bible is to invalidate and destroy the book. We may well, then, attempt to give it a careful and candid examination.

If one has not been educated to accept the alternative concerning the Bible of "all or nothing," the first thing that is likely to strike him when he meets it is its strangeness,—its utter unlikeness to what men say about anything else.

Concerning everything else we discriminate, discern, use judgment. The mind that can see nothing but the two opposite extremes of a matter—that can discern no gradations between—we set down as a defective mind. If one studies the sun, he does not begin by forming a theory that it is either all bright or else all dark; and when the telescope reveals to him the fact that there are dark spots upon a face otherwise bright, he does not say, No, I will not have it so: to admit the existence of any spots will destroy the sun.

When a man is about to travel through a

strange country, he does not decide beforehand that it is either all fertile or all barren, and then go through it with his eyes closed to everything that is contrary to his preconception.

When a man undertakes the study of Shakespeare, or Dante, or Plato, or Homer, he does not say, I shall "accept all or throw all away." He sees that such a resolve would be folly.

Why, then, should men, when they approach the Bible, adopt this canon of judgment, the folly of which they see instantly when applied to anything else?

As a fact, the broadest and most intelligent minds do not accept any such view.

Let us see what a few leading scholars and religious teachers say.

Says Professor Ladd, of Yale: "No course is so wise, safe, and really loyal to the Bible as that which admits, without hesitation, the possibility of historical errors in the sacred writings, and then proceeds without disturbance of faith and in the spirit of fairness to determine to what extent such errors actually exist."

Says Professor C. H. Toy, of Harvard: "Great harm has been done by the indiscriminate defence of crude biblical statements and ideas, historical inaccuracies, discrepancies, and imperfect scientific and ethical ideas."

Says Archdeacon Farrar, of the Church of England: "The limitations of human language and the disabilities of human infirmity

were not miraculously removed from those who were chosen as the channels of divine revelation."

Says the distinguished English biblical scholar, Dr. Samuel Davidson: "Inspiration properly belongs to persons, not to books. The authors of the different works contained in the collection called the Bible — of most of whom we know little or nothing, sometimes not even the name — were men of various intelligence and endowments. Possessing unequal gifts, their productions are of unequal value. As infallibility belongs to God alone, none of them was infallible in what he said or wrote. Each wrote according to his light and the purpose he had in view. Contradictions, inconsistencies, errors both intellectual and moral, are observable in their writings."

Says Dr. R. Heber Newton, the eminent Broad Church Episcopal clergyman of New York: "Our sacred books are not superhuman but human works, natural and not supernatural in their origin; for most part by no means certainly the productions of the authors to whom they have been assigned traditionally, and very certainly of considerably later date than that thus assigned to many of them; the historical works, assuredly, as they now stand, the result of several hands and many re-editings; all of them manifesting the limitations of ordinary literature in their reasonings, their historical references, and their interpretation of earlier sacred writings."

Says Professor Briggs: "So far as I can see, there are errors in the scriptures that no one has been able to explain away. . . . If such errors destroy the authority of the Bible, it is already destroyed for historians. Men cannot shut their eyes to truth and fact. But on what authority do these theologians drive men from the Bible by this theory of inerrancy? The Bible itself nowhere makes this claim. . . . It is a ghost of modern evangelicalism to frighten children."

Now shall we accuse these eminent Christian scholars of attempting to destroy the Bible? Indeed is there any reason for believing that their love for it is any less real than that of Mr. Moody, Mr. Spurgeon, Mr. Talmage, the prosecutors of Dr. Briggs, and the rest, who tell us that every word within its covers is from God, and that we must either accept it all or reject it all?

How many of us know the story of the great biblical critic, Ernest Renan, how in his young manhood he came to leave Catholicism? He was a student in the famous Roman Catholic theological seminary of St. Sulpice, in Paris. The career opening before him in the Church was a most promising one. But as he went forward with his careful studies of the Bible, he found to his surprise that it is "no more exempt," to use his own words, "than any other ancient book, from contradictions, inadvertencies, and errors." He discovered in it unmistakable evidences of fable and

legend, and other traces of purely human composition. He found proofs, not to be gainsaid, that Moses did not write the Pentateuch. The last part of the book of Isaiah he saw must be ascribed to a different hand from that which produced the first part. He came upon "irreconcilable divergencies between the synoptists (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) and the Fourth Gospel, and between the synoptists compared with one another." Especially was he disturbed by the evidences which modern critics had brought to light that the book of Daniel, so called, could not have been written by Daniel, or at the time of the exile, as the Roman Catholic Church taught, but really was a composite structure, apocryphal in its character, and dating as late as the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, in the year 169 or 170 before Christ,—that is to say *after* some of the events which it was supposed to predict *had taken place*.

Well, with all this new light regarding the nature of the Bible, what could the young student at St. Sulpice do? Ought he to have thrown the book away, since he could not any longer accept it all? But that would have been as dishonest, nay as impossible, as to accept all; for large parts of it he found to be reliable. Its devotional poetry was the finest in the world; its morals and religion were of inestimable value, and were independent of the theory of Bible infallibility; and Jesus was the one character in history for

whom he felt the profoundest love and reverence. His course soon became plain. He must leave the Church where mental freedom was denied him, and take an independent position where he would be at liberty to follow the light of truth. This is the way the world came to have its Renan, the independent Bible scholar.

How many of us know the still more interesting and impressive story of Bishop Colenso, of the Church of England? Colenso was a learned, devout, and trusted clergyman of that Church, the author of books on mathematics and other subjects which brought him much fame. Having been appointed Bishop of Natal in South Africa, he undertook among other labors the translation of the Bible into the language of the Zulus. While he was at work translating the stories of Genesis, he had the question of Bible infallibility forced upon his attention as it had never been. Previously he had taken the infallibility theory for granted. Occasionally he had felt some of its difficulties, but had put them aside. But now it was forced upon him in a way that allowed him no escape. The story is best told in his own language. He says: "While translating the story of the flood, I had a simple-minded but intelligent native,—one with the docility of a child, but with the reasoning powers of mature age,—look up and ask: 'Is all that true? Do you really believe that all this happened thus,—that all the beasts, and

birds, and creeping things upon the earth, large and small, from hot countries and cold, came thus by pairs, and entered the ark with Noah? And did Noah gather *food* for them *all*, for the beasts and birds of prey, as well as the rest?" Says the Bishop: "My heart answered in the words of the prophet, 'Shall a man speak lies in the name of the Lord?' I dared not do so. My own knowledge of some branches of science, of geology in particular, had been much increased since I left England; and I now knew, for certain, on geological grounds, a fact of which I had only had misgivings before,—namely, that a universal deluge, such as the Bible manifestly speaks of, could not possibly have taken place in the way described in the book of Genesis, not to mention other difficulties which the story contains. . . . Knowing this, I felt that I dared not, as a servant of the God of truth, urge my brother man to believe, as a historical narrative, that which I did not myself believe, and which I knew to be untrue."

Now under these circumstances what ought Bishop Colenso to have done? Should he have told that earnest Zulu, who trusted him, to throw the Bible all away? And then should he have thrown it all away himself, because he could not accept the legend of a universal deluge as a historic fact? Or ought he to have exercised reason and judgment in the matter, as he would have done in other things?

As a candid and honest man, he adopted

the latter course, and as a result gave up the old theory of Bible infallibility, which he saw had no basis of truth, and adopted a view in harmony with the facts: a view which makes the inspiration of the past not a fetter upon men's souls to-day, but a liberator and a quickener; a view which teaches that the Bible is a great and precious light shining on man's path, but that God is greater than any possible Bible, and that the real foundations of religion are in God and the soul of man, and therefore cannot be overthrown by the mere discovery of the fallibility of texts, inside the Bible or out.

In the face of such experiences as these of the devout and noble-minded Bishop of Natal, how shallow seems the view that would identify the foundations of religion with a book; and especially how shallow seems that conception of a great and many-sided literature like the Bible that would apply to it the cheap and senseless rule, "all or none,"—"accept the whole or reject the whole"!

One of the most difficult of all things to account for is the fact that, with the Bible itself before men's eyes, so that they need only look to see its imperfections, the doctrine that it is an infallible book, with no imperfections, could ever have come into men's belief. How did the doctrine arise?

I suppose it is generally taken for granted that the Bible itself *claims* to be infallible. But this is a mistake. There is much in it

that negatives such a claim. The biblical writers turn us in upon ourselves, bidding us to "prove all things," casting out the evil and retaining the good. Jesus says, "Why of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" Both the Old Testament and the New abound in appeals from external authorities of all kinds, to the reason, the hearts, the consciences of men. The imperfections of the various Bible characters—even some that are most distinguished and honored—are freely pointed out.

We think of David as one of the inspired writers of the Old Testament. Yet David's sins are portrayed as many and black. Plainly the prophet Nathan had no idea of David's infallibility when he confronted him with a foul murder which he had committed, and declared to him sternly, "Thou art the man."

We think of Peter as one of the inspired writers of the New Testament. But it is clear that Matthew did not regard him as infallible when he wrote the record of Peter's denying three times that he was a disciple of Jesus.

It is plain, too, that Paul did not know of any such infallibility when he wrote of Peter on one occasion, "I withstood him face to face, because he was to be blamed."

There are several passages of scripture which are often quoted as proving that the Bible claims to be infallible. But I think a moment of careful looking at each shows that they prove nothing of the kind.

(1) One is that terrible passage (terrible is not too strong a word) found at the end of the Apocalypse or Revelation, the last book in our New Testament. This is the passage: "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, which are written in this book." About this passage several things are to be said.

First, the intelligence, heart and conscience of man cannot permanently accept any such curse as a part of a true revelation of God. The Church of England is getting ashamed of the curses of its Athanasian Creed, and its best men are trying to get them laid aside as unworthy of anything calling itself Christianity. The curses or imprecations in the Psalms the world has outgrown; we now see that they sprung from the imperfect moral development of the age which produced them, and that it was a mistake ever to have thought them the word of God. Precisely the same is true of this curse by which the writer of the book of Revelation thinks to prevent anybody from making any changes in his book.

Dean Trench pens truer Bible when he writes: —

"I say to thee, Do thou repeat
 To the first man thou mayest meet
 In lane, highway, or open street,
 That he and we and all men move
 Under a canopy of love;—
Blessing, not cursing, rules above."

By the very fact that it is a *curse* this Apocalypse passage condemns itself, and compels its own rejection as the utterance not of God, but of a very imperfect man.

Further, the book of Revelation, which contains the passage, is one of the most doubtful and disputed of all the books of the Bible as to its canonicity or right to be in the Bible. Many of the Christian Fathers and of the early churches rejected it. Some councils refused to accept it. Even the Council of Laodicea (363), which is affirmed by some to have settled the canon, cast the book out. In all the Christian ages it has been a question among scholars whether it has any right in the New Testament. Luther was decidedly of the opinion that it has not, so was Zwingle. Even Calvin denounced it as unintelligible, and forbade his pastors at Geneva from all attempts at interpreting it. We see, then, how little weight ought to attach to an utterance, especially to a curse, found in this writing.

But even if we attach weight to the passage, and believe that God really will curse any who add or subtract from "the words of the prophecy of this book," the "this book" re-

fers *not* to the *Bible*, as some seem to suppose, or even to the *New Testament*, but only to the *single book of Revelation*, or the *Apocalypse itself*. The New Testament did not exist at that time. Only a part of its books had been written, and those that were written had not been gathered together into one collection. To get the New Testament in any such form as *we* have it, the world had to wait more than a century longer.

(2) Another scripture passage often quoted to prove that the Bible claims to be infallible, is that found in Second Peter: "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Of this text two things are to be said.

First, it is found in one of the most questionable of the New Testament books, many authorities having always regarded the Second Epistle of Peter as ungenuine. Professor Hilgenfeld says: "The composition of this Epistle by the apostle Peter is out of the question. We must look [for its date] to the second half of the second century. It is not till the third century that we find the first trace of any knowledge of this Epistle; and even as late as the beginning of the fifth century the majority rejected it." So much, then, as to the right of the passage to a place in the New Testament at all.

But, further, even if we admit the passage to be true scripture, it does not prove the infallibility of the Bible or of the men who

Speak to us through the Bible. Go into a meeting of Quakers or Friends, and you find all waiting for the moving or prompting of the Holy Ghost before they speak. Indeed, not only among the Quakers, but in all Christian churches holy men to-day claim to speak as moved by the Holy Ghost. But they do not for this reason profess to be infallible.

(3) But the passage that is oftenest quoted as proof that the Bible claims to be infallible is found in 2 Tim. iii. 16. In our common version it reads: "All scripture is given by inspiration¹ of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

The first thing to be pointed out regarding this text is the same that has had to be pointed to in the case of each of the others: It is found in one of the unauthentic and in every way most questionable books of the New Testament. The book stands in our common English Bible with the heading: "The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to Timothy"; and it begins with the words, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to Timothy, my dearly beloved son." But scholars believe this to be unreliable. Professor Pfeiderer says of the Epistle: "The tradition of its Pauline origin may be traced back as far as the second century, A.D., but may nevertheless be proved by adequate historical evidence to be erroneous." He thinks the second century is the true date of the Epistle.

But this is more than a generation after Paul's death. Davidson, expressing not only his own view, but that of many other scholars, says, "We rest in the conclusion that the author was a Pauline Christian who lived in Rome in the first part of the second century." This, then, is the first thing to be borne in mind in considering the passage before us: it is at least very questionable whether it came from Paul, or any apostle, and therefore whether it has any proper claim to a place in the New Testament.

But even if we should concede it to be a genuine utterance of Paul, it does not teach the infallibility of the Bible. It has long been held by the best scholars that the passage as it stands in our common version is a mistranslation of the original Greek. And now if we turn to the Revised New Testament, we shall find that even so conservative men as the authors of this revision discard the old translation as incorrect, and give us this instead: "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction," etc.,—an utterance which nobody doubts, and which cannot possibly be used as proof that the Bible is infallible. *Of course every scripture that is inspired of God is profitable*,—whether it be found in the New Testament or the Old, or even if it comes to us through wholly other channels than the Bible.

So much, then, for the passages which are

most often quoted as proofs that the Bible claims to be an infallible book.

The truth is, as already stated, that it claims nothing of the kind. On the contrary, various things in it go to show that some of its most important writers and teachers understood that it was not infallible.

Paul teaches over and over, and with the greatest emphasis, that the whole Old Testament sacrificial law and ceremonial system were imperfect and have been abolished. Even the "Ten Commandments" of Moses, which we should regard as sacred if any part of the Old Testament is, he calls "the ministration of death written and engraven on stones," which is superseded by the law of Christ, written "not on tables of stone, but on fleshly tables of the heart." Could Paul have written in that way if he had regarded the Old Testament as infallible?

Jesus goes nearly or quite as far as Paul in breaking in pieces the infallibility idea. In his Sermon on the Mount, referring to various teachings in the Old Testament, he declares, "It hath been said by them of old time" so and so, "but I say unto you" it is so and so,—different, even the very opposite in important respects from what the Old Testament teaches.

No, the doctrine of Bible infallibility does not come from the Bible itself. The old Testament knows nothing of it; the new Testament contradicts it. Nor is this all: the

early Christian Church knew nothing of it. In the rigid form in which it has been taught by modern Protestants, it was unknown until the time of the German Reformation. The Roman Catholic Church has never taught it; Rome locates her infallibility in her Church, not in the Bible. The theologians of the Protestant Reformation, finding themselves confronted by the declared infallibility of the Romish Church, in self-defence set up a counter infallibility in the Bible. But they had no more ground for theirs than Rome had for hers; that is to say, there was no ground for either. Indeed the *earlier* and *greater* reformers did not hold to Bible infallibility at all. Some of the strongest utterances against it that we have from any source, come from Luther.

It requires only a very slight examination of the way in which the Bible came into existence, and of the manner in which it has come down to us, to see that any claim of infallibility for it can be only words without meaning.

If the Bible were a single book, the case would be different. But it is not: it is a *collection* of *sixty-six* books,—representing different lands, different languages, different ages, some of them a thousand years apart, different degrees of civilization, different conditions of life, different stages of religious development,—and made up of legend, myth, history, biography, laws, predictions, pro-

erbs, poetry in various forms, ecclesiastical rituals, didactic teachings, indeed almost every known form of literature. It is a collection of what survives, or of the best of what survives, of the many-sided literature of the Jewish people for a thousand years,— literature which came into existence in the same *natural* ways in which literature always arises, and which bears exactly the same marks of the ages and the men and the circumstances that produced it, that literature always bears.

The authorship of the majority of these writings is unknown, as would naturally be the case. There is great uncertainty about the dates of many. Some are collections made nobody knows by whom,— as the book of Psalms, which is the Jewish hymn-book; and the book of Proverbs, which is a collection of pithy sayings current among the people. Many of the books are compilations; some are compilations of compilations, as the Pentateuch, and one or two of the Gospels. Does all this look like infallibility? *

Consider the manner in which the Canon was formed; that is, the way in which it was decided what books should be regarded as true scripture and what should not. The whole process was a most uncertain and hazardous affair.

The Jews assigned different degrees of

* For a more extended treatment of this subject, see the author's book, "The Bible: Its Origin, Growth and Character," chaps. iv. to xiv.

value and authority to the books of the Old Testament; and some which we rank highest, as the Psalms, they ranked lowest, and hardly thought of them as sacred scripture at all. The Old Testament Canon was never really closed. Some books were left out whose moral and religious value is much higher than that of some which are in. The Roman Catholic Old Testament contains fourteen more books than does the Old Testament of Protestants.

Almost equally haphazard was the formation of the New Testament Canon. Probably few if any of the New Testament books were written with any idea on the part of the writers that they would ever become Bible. They were written simply to meet certain needs. For a long time such information as was conveyed to the people about Jesus was given by persons who remembered him and the things he had said. But as the generation that heard him passed away, the need began to be felt for written memorials of him. Hence one and another wrote down what he remembered. Out of these fragmentary memoranda came our Gospels.

Paul, when he had established churches in various cities distant from each other, naturally wrote them letters for their instruction and guidance. Naturally, these letters, or the more important of them, would be preserved, and to some extent would be copied and sent to other churches for their reading. Such

was the origin and early use of Paul's Epistles.

It was natural, too, that some historic account should be written of the labors, travels and sufferings of the other chief apostles in planting the seed of the New Christianity. Such an account we have in the book of Acts.

Not less natural was it that sooner or later efforts should be made to *collect together* these precious memorials of the beloved master, and these prized records and epistles of the first apostles of the new faith, and that the collections made should be much prized. This was just what happened. But of course the collections did not all agree. And as the churches were far apart, with little communication between them, and as printing was unknown, and as great numbers of spurious gospels, and writings falsely purporting to be the work of apostles, came into existence, and as the age was uncritical, it is not strange that much uncertainty arose as to what writings were authentic, or that into the best collections some found their way that were not genuine.

The New Testament Canon, as well as the Old, was never really settled at all. It was a matter of dispute all through the history of the ancient Church. The Church Fathers differed among themselves as to what books ought to be in; and the councils that voted upon the matter came to conflicting decisions.

Thus it happens that we have in our New Testament to-day, side by side with books that are genuine and certainly from the hands of apostles, other books claiming to be apostolic, which our best scholars are practically a unit in declaring cannot have come from apostles or even from writers living in the apostolic age.*

These facts alone, as to how the books of the Bible were written and gathered together, surely are enough to show the utter baselessness of the doctrine of scripture infallibility. Yet these facts are only a few out of the long array that passes before us as soon as we open our eyes and really begin to look into the matter.

The Hebrew language at the time when the Old Testament books came into existence, and for some centuries after, was not capable of becoming the medium of an infallible revelation. That language was written in consonant outline only: its vowels are all later additions. It is easy to see that infallibility could not have been secured through such an imperfect written vehicle.

Jesus probably spoke Aramaic. Thus his words required translating into Greek before they found a place in the Gospels; and to reach us in English they must be translated again. Are we to suppose that God has miraculously guarded these translations against possible error?

* On the origin of the Old and New Testament Canons see the author's "The Bible: Its Origin, Growth," etc., chaps. xv. and xvi.

I ought to speak of the great uncertainty that attaches to the transmission of literature by the process of hand-copying. All the books of the Bible were transmitted in this way for many centuries — in the case of some of the Old Testament books, for more than fifteen centuries. Think how great was the liability for interpolations and errors of copyists to creep in. The variations in such ancient manuscripts as we possess reach the enormous number of hundreds of thousands. Most of these variations, of course, are comparatively trivial; but some of them are very important. For example, that passage in the First Epistle of John about the "three heavenly witnesses," which has been regarded as the strongest bulwark of the doctrine of the Trinity, is not found in the oldest manuscripts, and the Revised Version omits it. In the two oldest manuscripts the last twelve verses of the Gospel of Mark are wanting. So, too, most of the ancient manuscripts omit in the Gospel of John all from the seventh chapter and fifty-second verse to the eighth chapter and twelfth verse.

Thus we see that the task of getting an infallible Bible is one beset with difficulties that are simply mountainous. Indeed, to get such a Bible requires not only that every book, chapter, verse and word of all this vast and varied mass of literature should have been infallibly written, but also that it should have been infallibly preserved for centuries, infal-

libly copied by all the tens of thousands of scribes who have had to do with it, infallibly gathered into a canon, infallibly translated, and infallibly handed down to our day.

And even with all this, it can practically amount to nothing unless we are given also an infallible interpreter. If a dozen of us interpret a text of scripture in a dozen different ways, as is not uncommon, what good is there in the claim that the book from which it comes is infallible? Or if the Christian world is divided into two or three hundred sects, as in fact it is, all understanding the Bible differently, what does it avail for each to hold a so-called infallible Bible in its hand?

But it is in the *errors, contradictions, and imperfect moral teachings* of the Bible, that we see most clearly of all that the theory of the infallibility of the book is utterly without foundation.

There is no use trying to evade it; the Bible contains errors of many kinds.*

It contains incredible stories, as for example those of the talking serpent, the speaking ass, and Jonah living three days in the fish.

It contains historic inaccuracies, as the statement in Luke that the governor of Syria at the time of the birth of Jesus was Cyrenlus (Quirinus), when in fact it was Quintus Sentius Saturninus.

It contains contradictions, as when in connection with David's numbering of Israel we

*On the errors and contradictions found in the scriptures, see "The Bible: Its Origin, Growth," etc., chaps. xx. and xxi.

are told in one place that it was the devil and in another that it was the Lord that tempted him to do the numbering.

It contains exaggerations, as when the statement is made that Jeroboam, the king of only about one-half of little Palestine (the whole of Palestine was smaller than New Hampshire) went into a certain battle with 800,000 picked men, and of that number lost 500,000, a number twice as large as the combined armies of North and South at the battle of Gettysburg.

It contains contradictions of science, as when we are told of the sun standing still for some hours; of a universal flood; and of the creation of the world in six days.

It contains cruel, unjust and immoral teachings, as in the imprecatory Psalms (cix. and cxxxvii.); the injunction to establish slavery (Lev. xxv. 44-46); the permission to sell bad meat to strangers (Deut. xiv. 21); and the command, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live."

It contains morally degrading representations of God, as in Exodus (vii. 13 and xi. 10), where we are told that God hardened Pharaoh's heart that he should not let the children of Israel go, and then punished him severely for not letting them go; and in Joshua x. (28-41), where the leader of the Israelites is commanded of God to murder inoffending women and helpless babes.*

* See "The Bible: Its Origin, Growth," etc., pp. 237-246.

Now, what are we to say to all these vastous and overwhelming proofs that the Bible is not an Infallible book? It does no good to say they do not exist. They do exist. They confront us, and we cannot escape them. Standing face to face with these evidences, can any man who cares at all for the Bible propose the alternative, "All or nothing: accept the whole volume as from God and infallible, or throw it all away"?

It is hardly possible to conceive of a proposition more absurd or more dangerous to the Bible. It makes us realize with painful force the truth of the saying that there are no such enemies of any cause or institution as its short-sighted "friends."

Is it not high time an appeal were being made, loud and long, to thoughtful and honest people everywhere, to rise above all this strange unwisdom, this folly of speech, this intemperance of claim, and begin treating the Bible with the same honesty, candor and intelligence with which they treat other books? Does our duty to the Bible require us to lie for it? or to make pretences about it which intelligent inquiry shows are not true? or to shut our eyes against facts? Are we afraid of truth? Shame on such scepticism! Let us have no fear lest the Bible cannot endure the light. If it cannot stand without being bolstered up with make-believes, it ought to fall.

But we need have no fear of its falling if

we let the honest truth appear. It has too solid worth for that. It is not an infallible book, but it is a great book. And never did its real greatness so plainly appear as since the higher criticism of our day has begun to dispel the cloud of imaginary supernaturalism and fictitious inerrancy that has so long wrapped it about, and to reveal it to us as what it really is, the richest and highest creation of the religious life of man that has come down to us out of the great past,—a book at once human and divine, as man is both human and divine; God's book, because so profoundly man's book; and because man's book, therefore reflecting on the one side man's weakness, and on the other his strength; on the one hand his ignorances, mistakes, failures, sins, and on the other hand his knowledge, growing larger with the advancing ages, his deepening insight, his rising ethical and spiritual ideals, his battles with his lower self, his longings, his heroisms, his faith now weak and fitful, now triumphing over sense and time and death, and laying hold of the very omnipotence and eternity of God.

Why should we fear to know or to speak the truth regarding such a book? Grant that in the light of the Higher Criticism we see the Bible to contain a large element of legend, as it certainly does, what of that? The same scholarship shows that it contains a still larger element of reliable and very valuable history. And the legends themselves become

of great value as soon as we confess them to be legend, and give up the foolish task of trying to make history out of them. Then why not accept both for exactly what they are? *

Grant, too, that the Bible contains mistakes, historical, statistical, scientific, and others, as we have seen. What of that? When we remember the great size of the book, or in other words the great extent and variety of the literature that makes up the book, the long time it covers, and especially the early and uncritical age of the world from which much of it comes, the real wonder is, not that it contains mistakes, but that it does not contain more.

Grant, as we are compelled to grant, that there are predictions in the Bible that have never come to pass, and some which in the nature of the case never can come to pass. Shall this blind our eyes to the fact that prediction is not the largest or most important element of the prophetic literature of the Old Testament? Wipe away all prediction that even suggests a miraculous character, and the moral and religious teachings of this literature remain practically undisturbed. The truth is, the Old Testament prophets as a class are among the most sincere and heroic reformers the world has ever seen; and, in spite of the failure of many of their predictions, much that they have written has passed

* See "The Bible: Its Origin, Growth," etc., chap. vii.

into the permanent moral and religious life of the world.*

Go still further, and grant, as we must, that there are in the Bible imperfect moral teachings,—savage war songs; brutal imprecations against foes (so different from Jesus' "Love your enemies, bless and curse not"); selfish proverbs; sceptical, pessimistic and materialistic philosophizings and maxims of life; representations of God as cruel, vindictive, jealous, deceitful, unjust,—a being almost infinitely removed in character from the righteous and loving Heavenly Father of Jesus. Must we throw away the Bible on account of these? Yes, if these represent the whole Bible, or even its prevailing teachings. But every student knows that they do not.†

If we are intelligent and honest, when we come to the imperfections of the Bible, we shall do two things.

First, we shall accept the facts, whatever they are, denying nothing and suppressing nothing that is true.

Second, we shall seek and find our explanation of these imperfections partly in the fact that the volume is not a single book, but a *vast and miscellaneous literature*, and partly in the still more significant fact that it is a record of the life and thought of a people during *a thousand years of growth, progress, evolution*, from barbarism up to high civiliza-

* See "The Bible: Its Origin, Growth," etc., chap. viii.

† Ibid., chaps. xix. and xxi.

tion; from intellectual, social and moral conditions scarcely above those of the cruel and degraded polytheistic nations around them, up to the ethics of the Golden Rule and the religion of the Lord's Prayer. Of course a literature that is the truthful outcome of such an evolution must contain views of nature that are unscientific, records of events wanting sometimes in historical accuracy, morals low as well as high, and views of God unworthy as well as worthy.

Thus we are no longer surprised or troubled by the imperfections we find in the Bible. We see that it would not be truthful if it did not contain just such imperfections.

Instead of saying that the moral and religious teachings found in such books as Joshua and Judges and Samuel are infallible truth and wisdom, and such therefore as we ought to shape our lives by to-day, we must say, No, they came from a half-civilized age and people; they represent the moral child-stage of the Hebrew race; they are conceptions which even the Jewish people themselves outgrew, passing on from them up to the higher and truer conceptions of the later prophets, of the better Psalms, and finally of Paul and Jesus. So that instead of our being bound to accept them, we are bound not to accept them; the Bible itself teaches something higher and better.*

Not very long before the death of Phillips

* On the progress or evolution of religious ideas in the Old Testament, see "The Bible: Its Origin, Growth," etc., chap. xix.

Brooks I had an opportunity to hear a sermon from that great preacher in Trinity Church, Boston, where he had so long ministered. He took for his text one of the terrible imprecations found in the Psalms, and went forward in the name of truth and of religion to tell us, without the slightest hesitation, that the Psalmist's prayer for curses and evil to fall upon his enemies was not to be regarded as from God,—it was simply the imperfect and mistaken utterance of a man who lived in a darker age than ours, whose thought of God had advanced only to that point; but the growth of the world since, and especially the influence of Christianity, have carried us forward to where we see that the old conception was crude and imperfect and must be laid aside. We must be guided by those writers of the Old Testament who show the greatest clearness of moral and spiritual vision, and especially by Jesus and his apostles in the New Testament, not by the men of less moral elevation and insight. In other words, we must discriminate. The Bible has its precious truths; but it has also its errors and imperfections. Hence we must carry to it the same open eyes and discerning judgment that we do to everything else in life.

Now why did Dr. Brooks say this? He said it because he was obliged to say it as an honest man. It was what not only his own studies, but the scholarship of the world, compelled him to say; and what ere long no man

who values his reputation for candor and integrity will think of denying.

Our conservative friends seem often to insist on the alternative "all or none" with the purpose of compelling persons to accept the Bible in its entirety who otherwise would not. They know that few are willing to throw it all away; so then, if they can convince the people that there is no alternative but that of rejecting it all or accepting it all, of course many will be driven to accept it all. It is a sort of coercive process.

But what are its results? They are melancholy enough. It tends to make hypocrites; under this pressure, many will profess to believe all who do not and cannot.

It tends to kill thought and inquiry, and to make men narrow bigots; for the only way men who have once opened their eyes to the imperfections of the Bible can ever again accept it all as truth, is to intellectually stultify themselves.

It tends to produce utter rejecters of the Bible and religion. Many, too honest to pretend to believe what they cannot believe, take the preachers and religious teachers at their word, and say: "Very well, if it is accept all or reject all, then we reject all. Think, we will; reason, we will; if the Bible and religion require us to fetter our intellects and believe black is white, we prefer to turn our backs upon the whole thing, and go with Mr. Ingersoll." And that is largely the reason

why the followers of Mr. Ingersoll are numbered by the tens and hundreds of thousands. This foolish, this baseless, this wicked alternative, urged by short-sighted and ignorant preachers and others, drives men into unbelief and rejection of all religion. And nothing can ever bring them back but rational views of the Bible and religion, such as are urged in this paper. These can do it, are doing it.

This is the immensely important work given to the independent, fearless, truth-loving scholars, and to the liberal churches, of our age to do,—to preserve reverence for the Bible and for religion in the thousands of thinking people of the land whom the dogma of Bible infallibility, especially this dogma in its most short-sighted form of "The Bible, all or none," has pushed far off toward permanent infidelity and indifference, if not hostility, to everything religious.

No, the Bible is not all true; but neither is it all false. It cannot be all accepted, unless one is willing to shut his eyes, push aside the scholarship of the world, and trample on his own reason and intelligence. But much of it can be accepted, ought to be accepted, must be accepted, unless we are willing to violate every principle of correct literary and moral judgment, and deeply injure ourselves and mankind.

That moral and spiritual element in the Bible, which grows ever brighter and brighter in the Old Testament, and which shines with

such splendor in the New, especially in Jesus, is its own evidence. Nobody can gainsay it; nobody wants to gainsay it. It commends itself, and forever must commend itself, to the best judgment and conscience of mankind.

The simple truth is, there are two Bibles. One is the old and outgrown Bible of tradition, credulity and ignorance. The other is the new, fresh, living, imperishable Bible of inquiry, scholarship and intelligence.

The old Bible of a darker past, which fettered reason and hindered progress — the Bible of declared verbal infallibility, of miracles and marvels and supernaturalisms literally believed, of crude morals and low views of God accepted without question — is dead, and ought to be buried. The science, the criticism, the free inquiry, the growing intelligence, the rising ethical standards of our time, have slain it. It cannot be again brought to life. And it is fortunate alike for civilization and for religion that it cannot.

But in place of it a new Bible is appearing, — a new Bible which is in every way nobler than the old; which is literature, not dogma; which is as natural as Homer and as fresh as the unspoiled human heart; in which incredible stories are softened into legend; in which impossible history is transformed into myth and poetry; in which all low morals and unworthy views of God are seen to be simply the imperfect conception of an early time, — a new Bible which reveals in a way

that finds no parallel in history or literature the growing ethical sense, the rising spiritual ideals, the ever deepening God-consciousness, the marvellous, the providential, the thousand-year-long religious evolution, of an extraordinary people. This new Bible—which is the old interpreted in the light of a larger intelligence, and born into the higher life of the spirit—will never die, and can never lose its power among men.

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MR. INGERSOLL ON "THE BIBLE."

On last Monday evening Mr. Ingersoll spoke to a very large audience in the Opera House of this city, on "The Bible." In the lecture, which it is scarcely necessary to say was able and brilliant, he epitomized clearly and strongly his well known views upon a theme which has long been a favorite one with him. I have invited you here to-night to listen to some thoughts in review of the lecture, because the subject is one of great importance, and of course of great interest, in every Christian community, and because I think the treatment given it was seriously one sided and misleading.

While what I say will have a direct reference to the recent lecture, it will apply at least indirectly to all Mr. Ingersoll's utterances upon the Bible, since all cover pretty essentially the same ground, and the spirit and method that run through all are the same.*

□ Mr. Ingersoll is a very brilliant pleader. He can defend with great eloquence, and he can arraign with great power. For this reason one who listens to him, or reads one of his productions, is not likely to be left in a state of mind to judge very impartially of the matter treated.

The great difficulty to-day in the way of ascertaining what is true about the Bible, is to find treatments of it that are not from special pleaders, either against or for. It is easy to exalt the Bible to the sky, if one sets out so to do. It

* I have taken pains in my representations of Mr. Ingersoll to be as accurate as possible, not depending alone upon my own memory and notes, but having the lecture to which I reply, before me in print, in an edition published with the sanction of the author. I have also before me most of Mr. Ingersoll's other writings upon the Bible and religion, which I have read with care, with a view to as full and correct an understanding as possible of his position.

MR. INGERSOLL ON "THE BIBLE."

is possible to make a very terrible arraignment of it, as Col. Ingersoll did last Monday night, if one sets out for that. But where lies the real truth? This is what the fair and honest mind wants to know.

Is there no way of finding out? Is there no direction in which we can look and find information given us not by advocates and special pleaders, and defenders of preconceived theories, but by broad-minded, competent, reliable investigators and scholars—whose only aim is truth?

Fortunately we are getting at last a body of biblical scholarship which begins to rank in independence, scientific quality, and value, with the best scholarship in other departments of knowledge. He, therefore, who wants to know the truth about the Bible to-day, can find it out. He need not be at the mercy either of ignorant and narrow-minded men who make claims for it that are without foundation, or of hostile and prejudiced men who make charges against it that are without adequate basis.

We see then what must commend itself to every thoughtful mind as the true way to answer Mr. Ingersoll.

It is *not* the true way, to resort to the too common practice of calling hard names.

Of course it is easy to denounce him as an infidel and a blasphemer. It is just as easy for him to denounce us as bigots and fanatics. But what good can come of such name-calling and such denunciation? Instead of helping us toward the truth, it will only put us in a frame of mind in which discernment of the truth will be impossible.

Nor is the true way to answer Mr. Ingersoll, that of mere denial of what he utters. Much that he says cannot be refuted. It is a simple statement of facts that are patent to every careful and unbiased student of the Bible. Many of the things that he utters, which seem most startling to persons who have always thought of the Bible as an infallible book, are exactly in line with the teaching of the most trustworthy, reliable and reverent biblical scholarship of our day; though of course the spirit in which he utters his declarations, the flippancy and the sarcasm which he mingles with

them, and many of the deductions which he draws from them, are very far removed from what we find in connection with reliable scholarship.

As an argument to show that the Bible is not a supernatural, perfect, and infallible revelation from God, Mr. Ingersoll's recent lecture was unanswerable. But as an estimate of the worth of the Bible, on any plane, the historical, the sociological, the ethical, or the religious, it could scarcely have been more inadequate, or farther removed from the conclusions of reliable and unbiased scholars and thinkers. There is a place for such lectures; and such lectures will continue to be given, so long as Christian people continue to make the unfounded, the foolish, the morally harmful claim of Bible infallibility. But let this claim, which the Bible nowhere makes for itself, and which does not rest upon a single grain of evidence of any kind, be laid aside, as it ought to be laid aside, and as all scholars of any standing have long ago laid it aside, and then there will no longer be any justification or demand for such lectures as this of Mr. Ingersoll. Mr. Ingersoll himself will not care to deliver them; and if he does, the public will have no interest to hear. It is the unreasonable claims for the Bible made by the creeds and theologies of our day, that call into existence the Ingersolls to refute the baseless claims. So long as we have one class of men vehemently affirming that the Bible contains no errors or imperfections, and sending to perdition all who say to the contrary, we shall have another class rising up to point out those imperfections; because the imperfections exist.

We do not have men giving popular lectures to crowded houses on the imperfections of Homer or Shakspeare. Why? Because nobody affirms the infallibility of those great writers. To spend an evening pointing out the shortcomings of great literature, is about as noble and inspiring work as to spend an evening describing the swamps, sand-hills, barren places and filth of a land. But let great multitudes of people all around us take it into their heads to affirm that Shakspeare and Homer have no

shortcomings, and that anybody who says they have is an infidel and must go to perdition, and we shall have men rising up in short order, on every hand, to show to interested thousands that both Homer and Shakspeare have imperfections enough.

Thus, we see, it is really the orthodox doctrine of bible infallibility, which creates Ingersollism, and prevents that broad, intelligent appreciation of the Bible which is given to Shakspeare and Homer,—which Mr. Ingersoll himself gives to Shakspeare and Homer, and would just as gladly give to the Bible were there no irrational and unfounded claims made for it.

How then shall we answer Ingersoll? I repeat—not by hard words, or denunciations. Not by denials of any truth which he has to present. But by rising to that higher and larger view which an unbiased scholarship is slowly giving to the world, which attempts to sink the pleader, whether for or against, in the judge, and which, accepting thankfully Mr. Ingersoll's fragment of truth, undertakes to fit it into the place where it belongs in the vastly larger whole.

And now, with so much by way of introduction, we are ready to go forward to an examination, in as much detail as the time permits, of Mr. Ingersoll's lecture.

In doing so I shall ask you to notice with me, first what seems to me the *truths* of Mr. Ingersoll regarding the Bible, and then what seem to me his *errors*.

I. The more important things said by Mr. Ingersoll, which scholarship bears him out in, are the following:—

Moses did not write the Pentateuch. This is acknowledged now by all scholars of any standing. These so-called "books of Moses" were not written until many centuries after Moses' day. They came into existence by degrees, as a growth, as did so much else of the literature of the Bible, Old Testament and New.

No one knows the author of either Joshua or Judges, Ruth or Samuel, Kings or Chronicles.

As to the Psalms, Mr. Ingersoll says David did not write them. This statement is a little sweeping and dog-

matic; though scholarship is agreed that David can have been the author of only a few. Ewald thinks he wrote eleven; Hitzig fourteen; Delitzsch forty-four; Robertson Smith, two; Kuenen, Reuss and Toy none. Driver thinks he may have written a few, but only a very few.

Ingersoll says Proverbs was not written by Solomon. A more exact statement is that the book as a whole was not. Some of the individual proverbs may have been, and very likely were. The book is made up of a number of collections of Hebrew proverbs current among the people. These collections were formed at different times, some centuries apart; the first may have been formed by Solomon.

The so-called Song of Solomon was almost certainly not written by Solomon. We do not know the author of Job, or Ecclesiastes, or Esther.

The statement of the lecturer that we do not know the writer of any old Testament book except Ezra, cannot be sustained. The authorship of at least twelve or thirteen of the prophetic books is unquestioned; although a number of these books contain portions added later, and not by the main writers.

The lecturer's statement that we do not know who wrote the New Testament, is partly true, but only partly. We are as certain about the authorship of some of the Epistles ascribed to Paul, as of almost any ancient writing.

It is undoubtedly true, as Mr. Ingersoll said, that nobody at first regarded any of the writings which are in either our Old Testament or our New, as miraculously inspired or as sacred Scripture; and that the men who finally formed the Bible canon, and thus decided what books should be regarded as sacred and what not, were uninspired men, and some of them very ignorant and superstitious men, so that their decision can have about it no warrant of infallibility.

Mr. Ingersoll is entirely justified in saying that Genesis contradicts Science. Its account of the creation of the physical universe is not borne out by astronomy and geology. Its account of the creation of man and the lower forms of life, is not borne out by geology and biology. Ita

story of the creation is not self-consistent. Indeed, there are two distinct and different accounts of the creation attached together, which contradict each other in a number of particulars.

The story of the Flood is unhistoric. The Genesis account represents the flood as universal, covering the whole earth. But there never has been a universal flood; indeed a flood covering all the lands and mountains of earth is an impossibility, for the sufficient reason, among others, that, if all the moisture in the atmosphere or that the atmosphere is capable of holding at one time, were precipitated, it would form a layer of water over the earth only a few inches in depth: whereas, to cover all the high mountains, as the Genesis story represents, a layer of water would be required about five miles in depth. A score of other marks about the Flood story show it to be mythical, not historical.

The story of the Tower of Babel, and of such an origin of the different languages of the world as is there represented, science declares to be myth and not fact.

Mr. Ingersoll is right in saying that most of these Genesis stories came from ancient Chaldea, and are thousands of years older than the Old Testament book that contains them; and that similar stories are found among many peoples—all the stories being equally mythical.

He is right in claiming that the stories of the quails and the manna in the desert, and the water following the Israelites in the wilderness, up hill and down, and Balaam's speaking ass, and Elisha's iron axe-head that swam, and Hezekiah's dial that was turned back fifteen degrees, and many more stories of a similarly miraculous character, bear the marks of legend and myth, and not of historic fact.

He is right in saying the Bible contains many contradictions, not only in Genesis, but in other parts, even in the Gospels. For example, the synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke, are at variance with John in important points, which have never been harmonized, and cannot be.

There are many interpolations in both the Old Testament and the New—passages which show that they were

written long after the main portions of the books to which they are added, were composed. It would be easy for any bible student to make a list of scores and hundreds of such passages.

Mr. Ingersoll is right in saying that the Ten Commandments are not the source of human law or justice, but that murder and theft and bearing false witness have been regarded as wrong ever since human society had its origin. Thus we see that God laid the foundations of human right and duty earlier and more deeply than the writer of the book of Exodus seems to have understood, namely, in the very nature and soul of man.

The current orthodox and evangelical theology of to-day teaches that Jesus was God. But Mr. Ingersoll is right in saying that the Gospels do not so represent—especially the first three, which are the earliest and most authentic.

Notwithstanding the fact that we have stories in Matthew and Luke representing Jesus as born of a virgin, yet the weight of testimony even in the Gospels themselves is that he was really the son of Mary and Joseph, and that the stories about the miraculous birth were legends that came into existence late, and were added to the Gospel accounts late. Both Matthew and Luke trace the ancestry of Jesus through Joseph—something which is ridiculous unless Joseph was his father. Mary herself calls Joseph the father of Jesus; and there is not so much as an intimation anywhere in the New Testament that any of the disciples dreamed of their master being anything else except the son of Mary and Joseph.

Mr. Ingersoll is right in affirming that Jesus acted as a man acts; grew in knowledge as other men do; made mistakes, as other men; was sometimes disappointed, as other men; confessed that there were things that he did not know; mistakenly thought, in common with his countrymen, that insanity was caused by the afflicted person being possessed of a devil; showed that he was ignorant of many things,—for example, of all modern science. If he was a man, this was a matter of course. But if he was God, then

what? Was God ignorant of modern science, and other things?

Mr. Ingersoll claims that those who came in contact with Jesus all understood him to be a man; and points out the steps by which, as time went on, the idea that he was superhuman came into existence, and finally, in an ignorant and credulous age, found acceptance.

In this connection Mr. Ingersoll very pertinently declares, that if Jesus was God, and if the salvation of men depends on their believing that he was, as orthodoxy says, then he had no right to leave the world in doubt about the matter. But he has left the world in doubt about it; nay, he has left the evidence such that the majority of the world believe he was not God.

If the doctrine of the trinity is true, Jesus ought to have said so. But he never mentioned such a doctrine.

If the only way man can be saved is through belief in the blood of an atoning sacrifice, then he ought to have plainly told men that. But he told them nothing of the kind. On the contrary, the way he represents men as being saved is by purity of heart, by virtue of life, by loving God and their brother, by feeding the hungry and clothing the naked, and not by any such scheme as the theologies and creeds teach.

Mr. Ingersoll made a long and most serious arraignment of the Bible on the score of its *moral* teachings. In this was he right?

Yes, and no.

If he meant to say that the central or prevailing teaching of the Bible is immoral,—and I cannot but think that to his hearers generally he conveyed that impression,—then he was about as far from the truth as it is possible for a human being to get. No man who is unprejudiced can read the Bible through and receive such an impression. And certainly, scholarship does not for one moment assent to such a conclusion.

But, on the other hand, if he meant only to assert that the Bible contains here and there, as subordinate or excep-

MR. INGERSOLL ON "THE BIBLE."

tional, that which the morality of our day condemns, then he was correct.

The Bible certainly contains immoral teachings. This, however, is not saying that it is an immoral *book*. On the contrary, the overwhelming preponderance of its teachings and weight of its emphasis, are on the side of virtue. Matthew Arnold is right when he says that the great word even of that Testament in which nearly all that is morally objectionable in the Bible appears, is "righteousness."

Yet it is folly to deny that it contains an immoral element.

Mr. Ingersoll was right as to his facts—however wrong he may have been as to the inferences he drew from them, when he pointed out that in certain parts of the Old Testament, polygamy is sanctioned, slavery is enjoined, wars of extermination are justified and even ordered, Jehovah is represented as commanding that in certain conquered cities unoffending women and innocent babes should be slaughtered. He was right in his facts, when he pointed out to us representations of Jehovah as commanding human sacrifice; as permitting the Jews to sell bad meat to strangers; as ordering husbands to denounce and assist in killing unbelieving wives. He is right in holding up the teaching of the 109 Psalm as black and awful in its immorality, and in declaring that if it is inspired, then it is by the devil; it cannot be by any God that is worthy of human worship.

He is right in criticizing, both on grounds of morality and religion, such stories as that of Achan and his innocent family, his flocks and his herds, slain by Joshua at the command of Jehovah; the story of King Agag "hewn in pieces" by Samuel "before the Lord"; the story of Joseph hoarding grain in the time of famine and letting the starving people have it only on the condition that they would give up all their money, all their property and their land, and finally themselves and their families to be slaves; the story of David's census, in which we have God represented as slaying tens of thousands of innocent people as a punish-

ishment of David's sin, and letting him, the real offender, go free.

Is the morality here set forth, perfect? Is it such as we want our children to learn and to practice? Are these representations of God, high, and pure and worthy? You and I know they are not. Every intelligent person, who dares to think, knows they are not.

What then shall we say of a book that contains these? That it is a perfect and infallible revelation, to be received as in all parts divine, and to be obeyed by all men forever? Mr. Ingersoll says No. And he is right in so saying.

The Old Testament may contain ten thousand other things that are good, that are true, that are morally beautiful and noble. But these things are not good. These things are bloody and cruel. They represent the morality of a barbarous age. The world has risen at last to something better. The Jews themselves rose at last to something better. To believe that God ever commanded such things is to degrade the divine character. When we read such representations of God in the Old Testament must we accept them? If we have any reverence in our hearts for God, we must deny them, and say the men who wrote them were mistaken. They thought them to be right, and to be the will of God, only because they saw with the darkened eyes of an ignorant and cruel time. Since then twenty five centuries have come to the world, to roll it forward into the light. Since then Isaiah and his brother prophets, and especially Jesus, have lived and taught, and a thousand other influences have conspired, to lift humanity's conception of God up out of all this cruelty, injustice and revenge, to justice, mercy and love.

So much, then, for that side of Mr. Ingersoll's lecture to which we may more or less fully assent.

We may not—we certainly cannot—agree with many of the inferences which he drew; we may not—certainly cannot—admire the flippant and irreverent spirit in which he said many things; but I think that any competent and unbiased bible scholar who heard his lecture of last Monday

night will confess that the lecturer's statements regarding the points which I have mentioned were substantially true, and in harmony with the conclusions of the best biblical scholarship of our time.

II. I come now to the other side of the lecture,—for, I am sorry to say, there was a very large other side. With that side, I for one, cannot for a moment agree: because, as it seems to me, it was extravagant; it lacked in candor; it was a special plea; it was not in harmony with scholarship; it suppressed or dropped out of the account important facts: it drew conclusions which were wholly unwarranted. All this in addition to its irreverence.

Let me show you what I mean.

One of the most eloquent of Mr. Ingersoll's passages was one in which he denounced the Bible, on account of its *evil influence in the world*, in causing persecution of the wisest and best men, in stopping the progress of the human race, in poisoning the fountains of learning, in hindering freedom, in sowing the seeds of hatred, in fanning the flames of war, in corrupting parliaments and courts, in enslaving woman, in opposing science, in founding Inquisitions, in building dungeons, in forging chains and instruments of torture, in piling fagots at the feet of the just.

Let us see what truth there is in this terrible arraignment.

Does not Mr. Ingersoll know that these cruel and awful things which he lays at the door of the Bible, as a fact have nearly all occurred, not in ages when the Bible has been most read, but in ages when it has been least read? Why then charge them upon the Bible? In our own age and land, in which the Bible is circulated and studied and read as never before, these cruel things are almost wholly unknown.

Why was he not fair enough to tell us that the ages of dungeons and fagots, have been dark and cruel ages, entirely aside from any influence of the Bible? Why heap upon the Bible, cruelties and crimes which are plainly traceable to other causes?

Why did he not call to mind, that in ages of religious persecution, the Bible has generally been chained,—kept in the hands of priests and not allowed to go to the people, and that dissemination and free use of the Bible have almost invariably been followed by a diminution if not an entire cessation of religious persecution?

Why did he not tell us of the unquestioned *beneficent* influence of the Bible, as well as of the opposite,—the influence for peace, and gentleness, and kindness, and justice, that has gone out to all communities and nations where it has been circulated and read, from its teachings of mercy and love and brotherhood, and from the words and life of its gentle and loving Christ?

Finally, why did he not tell us that if in any case such evils as he denounces have come from the Bible, it has always been among men whose minds have been poisoned by the infallibility dogma? It is the infallibility dogma therefore that should be arraigned, and not the Bible. A Bible put into men's hands to be read and judged of with intelligence and reason, as men read and judge of other books, never built dungeons, never lighted fagots. The evil Bible, the only evil Bible, is the one which is put into men's hands by an ecclesiastical power with the command to accept it as an infallible book, and obey its every word as from God, no matter what the word may be, or from what source it may have come, whether from bloody Joshua, or the Prince of Peace.

Mr. Ingersoll made some severe strictures upon Jesus. Not I believe upon his character. Of that he spoke highly. And yet he complained of several things; among others, that Jesus never married, and that "he held human ties in contempt." Where ground can be discovered for such complaint, I do not know. I believe there is no such ground. True he did not marry. But was that a wrong? Think what a mission was his! And remember that he died at only a little more than thirty. He honored marriage. He honored the home. He taught the highest and purest morality between the sexes. No one ever

treated woman with more respect, more tenderness, or more chivalry.

Mr. Ingersoll's main complaint against Jesus however is directed to his teaching. He thinks Jesus both failed to teach things which he ought to have taught, and taught other things whose wisdom was more than questionable.

Some of the things he failed to teach, were, patriotism, science, art, political economy, duties of nation to nation, and of kings to people, freedom of speech, intellectual liberty.

Are we sure he did not teach these things? Some of them I think he taught in the most effective ways possible. Freedom of speech he taught both by word and example. He taught his disciples to speak always without fear of man. He himself insisted on speaking the truth as he saw it, even at the cost of his life. He said, "For this was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness to the truth." Could a man teach freedom of speech more powerfully than this?

He taught intellectual liberty. He said to his followers, "Why of yourselves judge ye not what is right?"

Duties of nation to nation and of kings to people he taught in his great doctrines of justice, and universal human brotherhood.

Patriotism he taught in perhaps the most effective manner possible under the circumstances, by showing in a thousand ways his own love for his country and his people, and by doing all for them in his power.

But what if there were things that he did not teach? Can any one man teach all the things of value in this world? There were a thousand things of value that Shakspeare never taught; yet Mr. Ingersoll does not think of that as a lack in Shakspeare. Shakspeare did the one work for which he was born, that of writing poetry, and he did it supremely well. And so all the world gives him loving honor. Jesus too did the one work for which he was born—that of preaching the way of life, teaching the highest ethical and spiritual truth. A loftier or more important

life work than that no man ever undertook. And he did it supremely well. Why then should we complain?

But Mr. Ingersoll criticises not only the omissions but the commissions of Jesus. Indeed his severest animadversions are poured upon certain sayings found in the Sermon on the Mount. These sayings, full of poetry, figures of speech, and oriental imagery, Mr. Ingersoll takes up, insists on interpreting them with as bald literalness as if they were rules of arithmetic, and then complains at what he gets out of them.

For example, he reads the saying, "Take no thought for the morrow," and declares it folly. But wait; is it folly? Is there any man so superficial that he cannot see a great and needed lesson for humanity in it? The Greek, which our common version translate "take no thought," means take no anxious thought; do not worry about to-morrow. Do your work to-day and peacefully leave your to-morrow with God. Is that folly? Tell me, rather, is it not the highest wisdom? Is there any lesson that a hurrying, worrying, bewildered world, with aching head, and still worse aching heart, more needs to learn, than this beautiful divine lesson of trust and peace, from the lips of Jesus?

Again, Mr. Ingersoll finds the teaching "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you," and concerning this, straightway exclaims, again, "Foolishness! no man ever did or ever will love his enemies; I hate mine, all men hate theirs; to pretend anything to the contrary is hypocrisy."

But is this a just judgment? Are the words of Jesus foolishness? Is it indeed impossible to love one's enemies? It may be to you or me, or to Mr. Ingersoll. Was it to Jesus? Was it to that great pagan (if I may call him pagan) brother of Jesus, Buddha? Has it been to thousands of followers of both Buddha and Jesus, in all the generations since those great teachers went up on high? No, friends, there have been men and women who have loved their enemies, who have returned blessing for cursing, kindness for injury, love for hate. I have known such. I know

such to-day. Do not you? Jesus was not speaking foolishness when he uttered these great words. This is not the devil's world. Man is God's child, not Satan's. We can love all men. Sometime we *shall* love even our enemies, if we have enemies, *or else* we shall *dwell forever outside the gates*. For hate is hell. Love is the only key that unlocks heaven. It will require a love true enough and strong enough to include even foes, to open to us any heaven that is very high or very desirable.

But if Mr. Ingersoll failed to appreciate Jesus, still more if possible did he fail to understand or appreciate the earlier Hebrew prophets. Indeed for these he had not a word of praise or honor; he could see in them nothing but "howlers" and "insane dreamers;" his attitude toward them was that of antagonism and contempt. And yet who were these men thus treated? They were some of the bravest and noblest of the moral leaders of the world. They were patriots, reformers, heroes, men who dared to oppose kings and priests and popular mobs, in the interest of national righteousness and purity, and a higher religion for the people. True, judged by the standards of our time, they were not by any means perfect men: in common with all great reformers, they sometimes made mistakes; they sometimes went to extremes, and showed signs of what cool, calculating persons are fond of calling fanaticism. Yet they were men far above and ahead of their fellows. They were the Savonarolas, the Luthers, the Theodore Parkers, the Garrisons, the John Browns of their time. They were the men of mighty earnestness, of ethical passion, of spiritual insight, who, by their courage and zeal carried the people forward from the idol-worship, the degrading conceptions of God, the cruelty and the low morality of Israel's earlier history, to the pure and lofty Ethical Theism voiced for all time in the twenty-fourth Psalm--

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?
Or who shall stand in his holy place?
He that hath clean hands and a pure heart,"

and in Isaiah,

"Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me;
Your hands are full of blood.
Wash you, make you clean.
Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes;
Cease to do evil, learn to do well;
Seek judgment, relieve the oppressed;
Judge the fatherless, plead for the widow;"

and in Micah,

"What doth the Lord require of thee
But to do justly, and to love mercy,
And to walk humbly with thy God?"

Why has Mr. Ingersoll no words of appreciation or praise for such a religion as this, and for the men who through struggle and tribulation and death gave it to the Hebrew people and to mankind? The Hebrew prophets were the men who lifted the religion of Israel out of the very limitations and the very imperfections of which Mr. Ingersoll so bitterly, and in a sense so justly, complains, up to a spiritual elevation and a moral purity that had no equal in the ancient world. Alas! alas! that he has no worthier recognition of such men than a sneer!

Mr. Ingersoll's treatment of the various books of the Bible was scarcely less satisfactory or fair than that of its great characters. If I remember correctly, of only two books in the entire collection of sixty-six that make up the Old Testament and the New, did he have a single favorable word to utter. What were those two?

The answer is scarcely less than startling. They were the two whose moral, not to say religious character, is quite as questionable as any in the entire Bible. One was the agnostic and pessimistic book of Ecclesiastes, which it is widely believed ought not to be in the Bible at all; whose author represents himself as living a fast life until all joy has gone out of existence for him, and he thinks life is scarcely worth living; and whose philosophy of life is, that "a man has no pre-eminence above a beast"—"as the one dieth so dieth the other": "all is vanity and vexation of spirit." The other book of the Bible that Mr. Ingersoll was willing to

praise was the so-called "Song of Solomon," a book which, though probably pure in its motive and intent, is yet written in language of such voluptuous and questionable imagery that it cannot be read in public,—a book which the Jews permitted no one to read until the age of thirty.

Does it not seem very singular that Mr. Ingersoll should have singled out these two books, and these two alone, for commendation, passing over every other book of both the Old Testament and the New—in no case giving them a word of praise, and in many cases expressly declaring them worthless, and yet, many of them, books full of courage and hope, and of the noblest conceptions of man and God and life, and crowded from first verse to last with pleas for justice and love, for virtue and truth? What does it mean—so strange a distortion of judgment as this?

Mr. Ingersoll told us in his lecture that "miracles are always a badge and brand of fraud." Thus he would have us understand that the Bible, so far as its miraculous element is concerned, is a dishonest book.

I do not care to make any argument in favor of miracles, for I do not regard them as forming any part of religion, or as having any necessary connection with religion. I believe the attempt to hold on to them is a weakness to Christianity. The Golden Rule needs no miracle to give it truth. The Lord's Prayer rests on no miracle. The religion of love to God and love to man, which is to be the coming religion of the world, will need no miracle to convince men that it is divine. It will be its own witness, and its own evidence.

But I cannot agree with the statement that a miracle is of necessity a badge and brand of fraud. Whether miracles are realities or not, he knows little of history and little of the human mind, who does not know that there are men who honestly believe that they have seen miracles, and men who honestly believe they have power to work miracles. Miracles do not necessarily originate in deceit.

The most prolific parent of miracle is legend. Nothing is more common, especially in an ignorant and credulous age, than for events which as they really happened were

purely natural, to be told over and over, from person to person, and from one generation to another, until they have grown and changed, and taken on miraculous features. This is unquestionably the way in which a large part of the reputed miracles of the past have arisen. But you see there is no "fraud" about this. Whatever conclusions any of us may reach regarding the miracles of the Bible, we have every reason to believe that the Bible is an honest book.

Mr. Ingersoll's lecture was vitiated by three fundamental mistakes which ran through the whole.

1 First, he asked us to judge the entire Bible by its worst parts. His method of treating the Bible was, to go through it, from beginning to end, first the Old Testament then the New, and call out the most objectionable things he could find, hold them up, paint them in the blackest colors, give them no benefit of extenuating circumstances, and then say to us, Now these are samples; from these learn what the whole book is. In this way he condemned the Pentateuch, the historical books, the Psalms, the prophets, and even the New Testament Gospels.

Now could anything be more unfair?

Of course as a method of showing that there is no truth in the doctrine of bible infallibility it was perfectly legitimate to pick out the worst things and pile them up, until men are compelled to see and acknowledge them. And, as I have already said, we shall continue to have men doing this, in public lectures and in many other ways, until the doctrine is laid aside with the other superstitions of the past.

But as a method of giving men a correct understanding of the Bible, or of helping them to a just judgment as to its value, nothing could be more misleading.

Suppose we set out to write a man's life in that way! Go through his career, public and private, gather up everything concerning him that can be found which is in the least degree questionable, mass all together, exaggerate every story, distort all, paint all in the blackest colors, make no account of any palliating circumstances, and then say, "See,

here is the man." What would you say of a life written in that way? How would Mr. Ingersoll like to have his life thus written? Doubtless a life of Mr. Ingersoll written on that plan could be made very spicy, very amusing to an audience, if the audience cared only for sensation and had no regard for justice. But a life thus written would be an outrage. Every right minded man would condemn it. And yet, that is exactly the way Mr. Ingersoll deals with the Bible. Every man who heard his lecture of last Monday night knows it is. He himself knows it is.

Mr. Ingersoll believes in the home. Few men now before the public have made more eloquent pleas for the home, as an institution of simply priceless value to the world, than he. But what an arraignment of the home could be made, if one chose to deal with it in the way in which he deals with the Bible! Go over the domestic life of any people for a thousand years, and gather together all the vices, the crimes, the cruelties, the brutalities, the villainies, that have been perpetrated in the homes of that people during that long period, and can any imagination paint the blackness and awfulness of the picture that we should have before us? Do you not see what a basis a sensational orator would have in such a picture for an arraignment of the home, as the pest of human society, and the worst enemy of man?

Suppose Mr. Ingersoll should find a man thus going up and down the country misrepresenting the institution of the home, and trying in this utterly unfair and unjust way to undermine public respect for it; what would he think?

Yet this is precisely the way he is treating the Bible. He asks us to judge of it all by the worst that he can find in it,—ignoring, passing by as scarcely worthy of a word, its whole vast side of good—a hundred times more extensive and important.

Here, then, is the first fundamental weakness of Mr. Ingersoll's lecture.

2. The second is, he judges everything he finds in the Bible by the standards of to-day, ignoring time, forgetting

to take into the account the progress which the world has made in its ethical and religious ideas in the 2000, 2500, 3000 years which have elapsed since some of the things which he condemns in the Bible's pages were written.

Deeds which should be severely condemned if done to-day, in the broad light of the nineteenth century, and in the midst of Christian influences, are to be judged of very much more leniently when appearing in an early age of the world, in a land of only a little enlightenment,—a thousand years before Christ or Christianity began to shed their moral illumination among men. If Mr. Ingersoll bore this in mind, his judgments concerning the morality of the Old Testament would be much more fair and just than now they are.

But if he forgets the difference of moral standards between the time when much of the Bible was written and now, he also forgets to notice the progress in moral ideals which appears in the Bible itself. He treats the book as if its moral standards and ideals had remained always the same—as if there were no moral growth from Joshua to the great prophets, and from the prophets to Jesus. So that when he finds a cruel or unjust thing in the earlier part of the Bible, while the Jews were yet in semi-barbarism, he says "See, this is the morality of the Bible." As a fact it is simply the morality of a small part of the Bible—of the part that comes from the earlier and cruder ages of Jewish history, and which was later in the main outgrown and put away.

The morality of the Bible is the morality of a changing and growing civilization. It begins low; it rises slowly, but it does rise, until it becomes at last something very high and noble. Why should we not expect a low morality among a people just emerging from barbarism, as the Hebrew people were when they first appear on the Old Testament scene? Nothing about the Bible is more interesting than the fact that it takes us back to the very beginning of that long ethical and religious ascent, which began in polytheism, in idol-worship, in brutal animal sacrifices, nay,

actually in the practice of human sacrifice, and ended in the worship of God as a heavenly Father, and in the recognition of all men as brothers,—showing us in detail all the thousand year long—the twelve or fifteen hundred year long struggle, necessary to climb from one to the other. The Bible is the record, the literary product, of that struggle, that marvellous ascent. How then could it do otherwise, than show us men making mistakes a hundred times over, moved sometimes by their lower passions, thinking of God sometimes imperfectly, representing him often after the manner of their own imperfect conceptions, attributing to him often characteristics akin to the barbarisms in themselves which they had not yet outgrown? This is exactly what we find in certain parts of the Old Testament.

If the Bible stopped with this, or contained nothing but this, then we might justly complain of it as teaching a religion unfit for our time. But it does not stop with this: it does not stop until it reaches the lofty ethics and religion of the prophets, and Paul, and Jesus.

Why does not Mr. Ingersoll tell us this? Why does he show us the low beginning, but not the high ending? Why does he point us to the lily's roots struggling in the mire, but not to the glorious blossom opening in the sun—the joy and the delight of the world?

3. The third fundamental weakness of Mr. Ingersoll's lecture lay in the fact that it ignored the whole spiritual side of man's nature.

It judged the Bible from the standpoint of one who believes only in this world; one to whom God is only a perhaps, and immortality only a dream; one who laughs at prayer; one who regards religion as the world's age long superstition; one whose philosophy of life recognizes nothing higher to live for than enjoyment in this little inch of time on the earth. Can such a man by any possibility do justice to the Bible?

Can a man whose philosophy shuts out God and the whole realm of spirit, do justice to the great spiritual book of the world,—a book whose central, ever-present, and all-

else overmastering themes are God, religion, worship, immortality, and the spiritual life of humanity? As well ask if a man who has no belief in the possibility of music or art, can do justice to a symphony or a cathedral, or to such mighty masters of art and music as a Michael Angelo and a Beethoven. As well ask if a man born blind can do justice to the beauty of a rose, or to the coloring of a splendid and glorious sunset.

Goethe was not a very religious man, but he was religious enough and great enough to write:

"The high veneration which the Bible has received from so many peoples and generations, is due to its intrinsic worth."

Matthew Arnold was not very religious, as the world commonly understands the word, but he was great enough to see and to leave behind him the judgment, that "so long as the world lasts, all who want to make progress in righteousness, will come to Israel for inspiration, as to the people who have had the sense of righteousness most glowing and strongest. As well imagine a man with a sense for sculpture, not cultivating it by the help of the remains of Greek art, or a man with a sense for poetry, not cultivating it by the help of Homer and Shakspeare, as a man with a sense for conduct, not cultivating it by the help of the Bible."

No, friends, the verdict of an intelligent and thoughtful world, that prizes the higher things of human life above the lower, the eternal above the temporal, has not yet pronounced against the high and permanent value of the Bible; and it shows no sign of thus pronouncing. The Bible still remains the most important religious and ethical book of mankind. Much as Mr. Ingersoll, or any one else who forgets God's part in the drama of human history, and the divine side of the nature of man, may dream to the contrary, the days of the Bible are not numbered.

The days of its tyranny over man's intellect, doubtless are drawing toward a close. I think Mr. Ingersoll is doing something to help them take their departure.

The days of the Bible's superstitious and bad uses, growing out of false claims made for it, that it does not make for itself, are plainly tending to pass away.

But when those days are gone, what then? They will but leave the Bible free, unweighted, unhindered, to enter upon a greater and more beneficent career of service to man than the past has known.

Then shall come the really *great* day of the Bible's usefulness and honor; and of that day *there shall be no end*.

WAS JESUS GOD?

HOW CAME HE TO BE WORSHIPPED?

Jesus of Nazareth, a *man* approved of God, among you. — SAINT PETER.

To us there is but one God, the Father. — SAINT PAUL.

I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and unto my God and your God. — JESUS.

Jesus Christ belonged to the true race of prophets. One man was true to what is in you and me. He saw that God incarnates himself in man, and evermore goes forth anew to take possession of his world. He said, in this jubilee of sublime emotion: "I am divine. Through me God acts; through me, speaks. Would you see God, see me; or see thee, when thou also thinkest as I now think." The understanding caught this high chant from the poet's lips, and said in the next age: "This was Jehovah come down out of heaven. I will kill you if you say he was a man." The idioms of his language and the figures of his rhetoric have usurped the place of his truth; and churches are not built on his principles, but on his tropes. Christianity becomes a Mythos, as the poetic teaching of Greece and of Egypt before. — EMERSON.

I INVITE you to a consideration — I hope it will be a very candid consideration — of the questions, Was Jesus God? and, How did he come to be worshipped as God?

The impression seems to be quite common that to regard Jesus as not God, but as a man, is to degrade and dishonor him.

I think, on the contrary, that it is to lift him into truer and really greater honor. For — did you never think of it? — a God pinched and compressed into the limit of our finite humanity becomes thereby of necessity a very meagre and small God. Jesus, born as a babe, and in a few years dying; during his boyhood growing in knowledge as you and I do; after he was a man sometimes

disappointed; trying to accomplish ends, and again and again failing because of opposition; declaring that there were some things that he did not know,—furnishes a picture of a God so meagre, so inadequate, so like the little gods that the heathen believe in, that we instinctively push it aside, and demand for our worship something simply infinitely higher and larger, lifted wholly out of the category of this finiteness.

Jesus as a *man* commands the honor and homage of all the world. None can look upon him without feeling the beauty, the greatness, the essential divineness of his life. But clothe him in the garments of deity, and how quickly does his greatness disappear! You have put upon him robes a thousand times too large for any possible finite being. Thus, however good your intention, you really but mock him. How much greater is the honor done him by pushing aside all this childish folly, this ecclesiastical and theological fiction of the ages, and letting him stand up in the strength and winning grace of his incomparable manhood!

But not only do we most honor Jesus by accepting him as just what he claimed to be, a brother man to all of us, but I think that thus also we bring him closer to our humanity, and make him far more helpful to us all as an example, as a guide, as an inspirer in life, than he can possibly be when thought of as a deity. How can a deity be an example to us? We are not deities. God cannot sin; how, then, can God's example of sinlessness help us in our sin? God cannot be tempted; how, then, can his example in resisting the tempter help us in our temptation? But a *man*, who has been tempted as we are, who has suffered as we suffer, and yet who has overcome, and out of it all has risen up into obedience and purity and peace,—such a one can be an example and an inspiration to all men.

"Since he is mortal, even as am I,
And yet so God-like, may not I control
My earthly nature, and lift up my soul
To Christ's, our perfect standard, if I try?

"I hold that he stands nearer to all men,
And fills a higher and more useful place,
Than when he wore a supernatural grace, —
What man has done, that man may do again."

So, then, I think that not only loyalty to truth, but also reverence toward Jesus and desire to make his life practically serviceable to men, unite to urge the importance of the inquiry which we have before us.

In endeavoring to find an answer to our question, Was Jesus God? I shall interrogate: (1) Reason, or Common Sense; (2) The Bible; (3) History, Secular and Church; and (4) I shall endeavor to find the *real origin* of the *idea* that Jesus was God.

I. First, then, what does calm, unbiased reason have to say upon this subject, judging of general principles and from the nature of the case?

If we could only strip ourselves of our conventional habits of thought and the influence of early education, I apprehend we should require but a very short time to arrive at a conclusion. Familiarity with an idea has great power to blind us to its strangeness, its absurdity, its inherent incredibility. Many an idea which, could it come to our minds freshly and for the first time, would seem unworthy even of consideration, may be carried in a mind which has become familiar with it from childhood without a perception at all of its irrational and essentially absurd character.

So I ween it is with this idea of the infinite and eternal God, who inhabits all worlds and holds all power in his hands, "whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain," coming to this little world of ours, being born as

a babe, living in a human body for thirty-three years or so, and dying upon a cross. Surely it would seem as if the very statement of the idea would, to any rational mind, carry its own refutation.

And it does carry its own refutation, instantly, whenever we see it in any form in which we can judge of it without bias; as, for example, when we see essentially the same thing in connection with other religions, outside of our own.

Go back to the days of the old Roman Empire, and you find the Roman people declaring their emperors to be gods, and worshipping them. What do you do? You turn away, pronouncing it superstition and folly.

Go among the various peoples of central and eastern Asia, where Buddhism prevails, and you find men there to-day worshipping Buddha as God, just as Orthodox Christians worship Jesus.

Go among the Brahmans of India, and they will tell you that God has been incarnate in the world, but it was in their Hindu Krishna.

Go to Thibet, and there you will be told that every one of their Grand Llamas is a special incarnation of God.

Do you believe these people? Certainly not. Yet they all present to you what seems to them strong evidence for what they affirm. To you it seems no evidence at all. Now turn round and present to them your reasons for your belief that Jesus was God, and it will seem to them no evidence at all. Yet you accept it. What is the explanation? This: each has been educated from childhood into his own belief, and so he does not see the absurdity of it. But when he comes to see the very same thing in a different dress and under other circumstances, its unreasonableness at once comes to view.

It is worth our while to ask ourselves this question: If so astonishing an event did really happen on our earth

nineteen hundred years ago as the special and personal residence here for thirty or forty years of the infinite and eternal God,—an event, if true, the most astonishing that it is possible to conceive; an event beside which the lives and careers of an Alexander, a Cæsar, a Mahomet, a Charlemagne, a Napoleon, and a Washington, all combined, are as nothing,—I say, if such an event actually did occur, how does it happen that so little comparatively has come of it?

Grant that Christianity has resulted; yet Christianity, even when it has had eighteen hundred years of time given it in which to grow and expand, is not yet the predominant religion of the world. Buddhism has a still more numerous following, while two or three other religions are not very far behind. Now, to say the least, this would seem a marvel, that the religion which the infinite God himself had come down and lived on earth a third of a century on purpose to found should still, after almost two thousand years, be second in number of adherents to Buddhism, founded by a mere man, and not very greatly in advance of Mohammedanism, founded also by a man.

But, furthermore, as we inquire into this matter of the coming of God to live and die as a human being upon the earth, we discover that quite as strange a part of it as anything was the object that he is said to have had in view in thus coming. When people tell us that the Almighty did thus come to our world, what object do they say he had in so doing? They tell us that his object was to save the human race from perdition in an eternal hell. Well, has he saved the race from that hell? How large a proportion of the race has his coming resulted in saving?

Our Orthodox friends, with their theological views, find themselves obliged to make the proportion very

small, — possibly one-fiftieth part of all who have lived on the earth from the creation up to this time, or possibly one-tenth ; I suppose few would put the proportion higher than one-tenth. But, now, this is all very strange. You can hardly call an effort a success which succeeds in accomplishing only one-tenth of what it aimed to accomplish. So, then, the Almighty was not successful. Thus it would seem. I do not see how to escape the conclusion. Moreover, it seems a very singular proceeding, to say the least, that a God of infinite power and wisdom and love should have *created* an eternal hell, should have decreed that every being who sinned should go there, and then deliberately should have peopled the earth with a race of beings whom he knew would sin. Nor does it seem any less singular or unreasonable when we are told that to try to remedy matters he afterwards came himself to the earth as a human being, and suffered and died, and as a result succeeded in saving, say, *one in ten* of the race.

No, friends, look at it how we will, the idea that the infinite, eternal, and all-wise God, who made the heavens and the earth, "in whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning," has at some time come to our world and assumed a special human body, in the person of the great Teacher of Nazareth or of any other human being, for the purpose of saving the race from some supposed perdition, or for any other purpose, need only to be candidly and fairly looked at, as it seems to me at least, to appear to the very last degree unreasonable. It is one of those things which we can but marvel should be believed by any intelligent person, and which would not be believed by any intelligent person except for the fact that people are taught it when they are children, too young to perceive how utterly irrational it is.

II. I proceed now, in the second place, to interrogate

the *Bible*, and see what it has to teach. I cannot, of course, touch all the arguments or all the scripture passages supposed to bear upon this subject. I shall try, however, to pass by nothing that is vital to the question at issue.

Let us look first for a moment at the Old Testament. It is claimed that there are Old Testament predictions of Jesus which prove that he was God; but scholarship is more and more showing that these claims are without foundation. By far the most clear and weighty of these so-called predictions is that found in Isaiah ix. 6. It reads in our Common Version: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

Concerning this passage two things are to be observed. First, there is no reason whatever to believe that the prophet had Jesus in mind in uttering it, but much reason to believe the contrary. Second, the highest scholarship shows that our English version gives a faulty translation of the Hebrew, and that a correct translation makes the passage descriptive, not of an incarnate deity, but simply of a human king. The words in the passage which seem to indicate deity are "Mighty God" and "Everlasting Father;" but the best scholars, even in Orthodox ranks, leave these words out, and give us others in their place which refer plainly to a man. Instead of "Mighty God," Dr. Briggs gives us as the correct translation "divine hero," and instead of "Everlasting Father," "distributor of spoils." President Harper gives us as the true renderings "a god of a hero," or "a very great hero," and "distributor of spoils." Professor Robertson Smith, of England, agrees with these renderings, as do the greatest European scholars, such as Dr.

Kuenen. Says Robertson Smith, "Isaiah's ideal is only the perfect performance of the ordinary duties of monarchy." Thus fades away the passage which is by far the strongest quoted from the Old Testament in support of the deity of Jesus.

Let us come now to the New Testament. It is sometimes claimed that Jesus must have been God because of the stories of his miraculous birth found in the opening chapters of Matthew and Luke. Is this claim well founded? I reply: First, even if we grant that these miraculous birth stories are historically true, they do not prove the deity of Jesus. They show that his nature was extraordinary, and 'perhaps superhuman, but they do not take him out of the realm of the created and the finite. They carry no necessary implication that he was the uncreated and omnipotent God, but rather the opposite.

Secondly, and still more important, these birth stories bear evidence of being legendary, not historic. They are found only in Matthew and Luke; they are not found in Mark, which is almost certainly the oldest Gospel. This fact is suspicious. It suggests for them a probably late origin, after the completion of Mark. Quite as suspicious, too, is the fact that Jesus himself never refers to any such miraculous birth; and nobody during his lifetime seems to have known anything of it. If God, and not man, was his father, and if his birth was heralded by angels and attended by miraculous presences, why were his brothers and relatives so long in believing on him? Even his own mother seems not to have known of the story that he had no human father, for she represents Joseph as his father. When the twelve-year-old boy is lost in the Temple, and Mary and Joseph find him, she says to Jesus, "Thy father Joseph and I have sought thee sorrowing."

These miraculous birth stories seem to be simply a legendary accretion that gathered about the history of Jesus long after his death, and subsequent, as I have said, to the compilation of the Gospel of Mark. The Gospels were slow in coming into existence. For a long time there were no written records of the great teacher. As time passed away, and his impressive figure faded into the distance of years, one and another of his followers wrote down what they could remember of his words and deeds. Then began the process of gathering together these precious *memorabilia*. We get traces of various compilings and editings, the final results of which were our Gospels, Mark, Matthew, and Luke. But forty, sixty, eighty years had elapsed. It is not strange that by this time a legendary element should have crept in.

Legends have grown up around nearly all other great men of the past, especially great religious leaders, — as Buddha, Zoroaster, Mahomet, and Moses. Why should they not around Jesus? Especially is there a tendency to associate the miraculous with the *birth* of the great. Buddha was born of a virgin; so was Fo-hi, the ancient founder of the Chinese Paradise. Zoroaster was miraculously conceived. Romulus, the founder of Rome, was son of the god Mars. Alexander the Great had a human mother, but his father was the god Jupiter. Cæsar was called the son of the goddess Venus. There is nothing strange, therefore, that similar legends of a miraculous birth should have attached themselves to Jesus, or that some of them should have crept into the accounts of him that have come down to us. But can any one fail to see that such stories no more prove the deity of Jesus than they do the deity of Cæsar, or Alexander, or Zoroaster, or Buddha?

Turning now from the legendary to the historic parts

of the Gospels, what do we find there regarding the question before us?

Grant, for the sake of argument, — though I do not grant this in fact, — that there are two, or three, or four, or even six passages in the biographies of Jesus which seem, on the face of them and isolated from their settings, to teach that he was God. Shall we let them outweigh the fact, no more to be evaded than the sun at midday is to be evaded, that the entire New Testament, from beginning to end, in every discourse and every act of Jesus, in the whole story of his life, and in every exposition of Christian doctrine made by the apostles, declares, or else necessarily implies, that Jesus was inferior to God, and was not himself God? If Jesus had been God, and had been known to be such by the writers of the biographies we have of him, we should expect the fact, so transcendent in its importance, to have been made clear and unmistakable everywhere from first to last, and not to rest for proof upon, to say the most, half a dozen passages, every one of them, moreover, capable of being interpreted in such a way as to lose all value as proof.

It will certainly be a marvellous thing if Abraham Lincoln shall go down to coming ages having no clear evidence of the fact that he was President of the United States during the War of the Rebellion, coupled with his name in the histories of his life and time that shall be preserved. Yet this would not be a hundredth part so marvellous or so unaccountable as that the supreme God of the universe should incarnate himself in Jesus of Nazareth, or in any other human being, and dwell on the earth thirty-three years on purpose to make himself and his salvation known to men, and then should allow the histories of the time and the biographies of the man in whom he had incarnated himself to be so written as to

convey to future ages no clear indication of what he had done, — indeed, to be so written as to convince a large proportion of the ablest scholars and most intelligent minds of the world that no such special incarnation had ever taken place.

But let us look carefully at the biographies and see just how they do represent Jesus.

The narratives of the life of Jesus that we possess are four in number, — Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Of these the first three, called the Synoptic Gospels, are regarded by almost all the reliable critics as much more certainly authentic than the Fourth. Indeed, a large number of the most eminent biblical scholars have long entertained grave doubts as to whether the Fourth Gospel came from the pen of John, or any disciple; and many go as far as to affirm that the evidence is irresistible that it did not.

Now, Jesus in the first three, — the most authentic of the Gospels, — certainly never *says* that he is *God*; but, on the contrary, he does over and over again say what is at least equivalent to the declaration that he is *not God*.

Even going forward and adding the Fourth Gospel, it is essentially the same. So far as I know, there are only two passages purporting to come from the lips of Jesus even in this Gospel which are ever quoted in proof of his supreme deity. One of these is, "I and my Father are one." But this he sufficiently explains when he afterwards prays for his disciples that "they may be one even as we are." Certainly we can find no proof that Jesus was God in a passage which simply says that he and God are one in the same sense in which he prays that his disciples may be one.

The other passage sometimes quoted from this Gospel in proof that Jesus represented himself as God is, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." But does this

teach that Jesus is God? Surely not; for, mark, it teaches that if Jesus is God at all, he is God *the Father*. But not even our staunchest Trinitarian friends hold that Jesus was God *the Father*. The passage evidently intends to teach that in Jesus was seen, in a certain spiritual sense, the image, or likeness, or representation, of God's nature and character, just as it is a very common thing for us all to say of a boy, "If you have seen him, you have seen his father," or of a family of children, "If you have seen one, you have seen all." Precisely thus those who had seen Jesus had seen God, his Father and ours, shining out as it were through him, in his love, his purity, his truth, all the beauty and excellency and divineness of his character. Hence the deep and beautiful significance of his saying, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

These two passages, I say, are the only passages in all the Gospels which, so far as I know, are ever quoted as declarations by Jesus himself of his supreme deity; and yet neither of them, as we see when we come to look carefully, teaches anything of the kind. Whereas the declarations from the lips of Jesus to the effect that he was not God are numerous in all four of the Gospels. Among them are such passages as these: "My Father is greater than I," "I can of mine own self do nothing," "The words which I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me [as he dwells in all his human children] he doeth the works," "My meat is to do the will [not of myself, but] of *him that sent me*," "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." Can God say of himself that there are some things which he does not know? "Why callest thou *me* good? There is none good *but one*, that is *God*." Could God have said that? "I ascend unto my Father

and your Father, to *my God* and your God." Could God have said that?

We see, too, that Jesus constantly prays to another as God, teaches his disciples to pray to that other and not to himself, and nowhere does he teach or intimate that he is a being to whom any one is to pray, now or in any coming time. Surely this is all very marvellous, if he was *deity*!

Nor is this all. When a youth, we find him spoken of as "increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." But can God increase in wisdom? Can it be said of God that he increases in favor with himself? When the young prophet sets out upon his public lifework, we find one of his first experiences represented as being that of a long and very severe temptation: the devil tempts him by offering him, among other things, all the kingdoms of this world. But can God be tempted? Especially can he be tempted by the devil with an offer of the petty kingdoms of this world when all worlds are already his own? We find Jesus always mingling with men as himself a man. He suffers as others suffer. He weeps as others weep. He is disappointed as others are disappointed, —as, for example, when he comes to the fig-tree expecting to find figs, and finds none. But can God be disappointed? Jesus has his hours of discouragement and gloom as other men have. For example, on the cross he exclaims in agony, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" But can God be discouraged? Can God forsake himself? If Jesus had been God, would not such language have been mere pretence? Nay, would it not have been out and out deception?

Is it said that at least the miracles of Jesus prove him to have been God? I reply, the Bible represents man as working miracles. Elijah and Elisha go so far as even to raise the dead.

No, friends, whatever else Jesus may have claimed, if the Synoptic Gospels are true, he did not claim to be God. Nor do the Gospels make such a claim for him. Everywhere in their pages he is portrayed as a man, a brother of all other men, and a child of the infinite Father, as all other men are.

It is plain, too, that the disciples of Jesus did not believe him to be God. For note: if he really was the Almighty Jehovah, and if his disciples really regarded him as such, there must have been some particular time when they first found out this startling and stupendous fact. And when they found it out, it must have produced in them, one and 'all, feelings of the most overwhelming amazement and awe; and from that hour their conduct toward him must have been utterly changed, and they must have shown in every act and word their feeling of humility and homage in his presence.

But as we examine the accounts that have been handed down to us, what do we find? Any record of such a discovery made by them at any time? None. Any sign of such changed conduct toward Jesus? None whatever. They all continue to treat him to the end with the familiarity of a fellow-man, and give no intimation that they even dream that he is other than human. At one time Peter took occasion to rebuke Jesus. Does this look as if then he thought him God, the Almighty? In the Garden of Gethsemane all the disciples forsook Jesus and fled. Does this indicate that they had yet found out that he was the Supreme Jehovah? During the trial of Jesus, Peter denied him. Would he have done so if he had thought him omnipotent? He would not have denied Cæsar at Rome. How, then, could he have denied one whom he believed to be more powerful than a thousand Cæsars? At the sepulchre the disciples wept, disconsolate, believing that their leader's cause

had failed, and that all their hopes were blighted. This surely shows they had not yet found out that he was God. When, then, did they find it out?

Was it after the resurrection? There is no record or sign of its occurring then. On the contrary, the accounts represent the disciples as continuing their former familiar manner of intercourse with Jesus up to the very morning of the ascension. Indeed, their conversation with him on that very morning does not differ at all in character from those of earlier times. Nor is there any sign even on the Day of Pentecost that they had yet made the stupendous discovery. If at that time they had been possessed of this astounding knowledge, do you think it would have been possible for Peter so to hide it and so to dissimulate before the people as to have coolly begun his sermon on that great occasion, "Jesus of Nazareth, a *man* approved of God among you, by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him"? Nor is there any account or indication of this knowledge ever coming to them at all.

Now, is such an amazing omission for one moment credible? Could we not more easily account for the omission from the Gospels of anything else whatever than the omission of the record or announcement of an event which, if true, was beyond comparison the most important in the world's whole history?

Let us now leave the Gospels and pass to the Acts and Epistles, and see if here we can discover any evidence that the apostles believed Jesus to have been God. What do we find in these books? We find still Christ spoken of as a created and subordinate being. True, he is often referred to in very exalted terms. It is plain that as the years went by he became lifted up in the minds of his followers to a great height, and surrounded with a very splendid halo of idealization. Evidently the

exceedingly mystical Logos doctrine of the time had come to some extent into the minds of some of them, — at least the author of the Fourth Gospel, — and the general philosophical and religious thought of the age, which was mystical, and which tended to wipe out the line between the human and the superhuman, between men and gods, — evidently all had had its effect in causing the apostles to portray Jesus, certainly not as God, but sometimes as a being whom we, with our sober, scientific, less imaginative, less dreamy, more clear-thinking minds find some difficulty in putting always in the category of the human. But this is as far as we can go. This said, all is said. To claim these occasionally idealized and more or less mystical representations of Jesus as proof that he was God, or that the apostles thought he was God, would be utterly unwarrantable, as will be seen clearly by simply referring to a few of the large number of declarations which are not entangled in any mysticism, but which are clear, cleau-cut, unmistakable. "Him hath *God* ordained," "him hath *God* set forth," "him hath *God* raised up," is the constant burden of apostolic teaching. God was over him, guiding him, inspiring him, helping him, giving him wisdom and power. This is the constant representation. How many times do the apostles designate the Almighty as the *God* as well as the *Father* of Jesus Christ! Saint Paul says, "There is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the *man* Christ Jesus." Saint John says, "God loved us and sent his son to be a propitiation," etc. How misleading are such words as these, if that son was himself God! What deception am I guilty of if I say, "I sent my son," meaning I went myself!

That old passage in 1 John, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one," — a passage which far

more than any other has been the corner-stone of the doctrine of the Trinity,—is now universally cast out as spurious, there being no longer even a shadow of a reason for believing it to be genuine. Every respectable scholar now omits it. If you will look at the Revised Version of the New Testament, made a few years ago by a committee of scholars of all Protestant denominations, you will find there the passage left out as spurious.

Perhaps nothing in all the writings of the apostles has more light to throw upon the question of the deity of Jesus than the Epistle of James. I wish you would read it with this question in view. James, the writer of this epistle, was probably the brother of Jesus, son of the same parents, brought up in the same home. Surely he, if anybody, then, knew if Jesus was God. But read the epistle, and you will not find the slightest intimation of any such thing. Now, how are you going to account for this? If Jesus had been God, do you think his own brother would not have known it, or would not have thought it a thing of enough moment to be worth mentioning? Do you think he would fill his epistle full of other things, and not mention or hint the fact of most importance in all the history of the world? You see it is simply incredible.

This, then, in brief, is the testimony which the New Testament has for us bearing upon the question, Was Jesus God?

And now let me ask in all candor, Is it proof? Does it begin to be proof? Does it even show that any of the New Testament writers *thought* that Jesus was God? If it did that, still that would not be certain proof that he was; for we know how easy it is for people to be mistaken even nowadays. How much more easy was it in a credulous, uncritical age like that in which Jesus appeared! We are told in the Acts that the people of

Lystra thought *Paul* was a god. Yet none of *us* think he was. So that I say, even if the New Testament writers had *supposed* Jesus to be a deity, and had so recorded, still that would be only slight proof that he was such. What, then, shall we say when we find, as we have found, that the New Testament writers, as a whole, teach nothing of the kind, but the opposite. No one of them, with the possible exception of the author of the Fourth Gospel, who has to be thrown out of the account in a discussion of this kind, because we do not know who he was, and because he wrote his Gospel almost certainly as late as near the middle of the second century, after the work of deifying Jesus had begun, — I say, not a single New Testament writer, with this one possible exception, seems even to have dreamed of Jesus being the Almighty God. His neighbors all speak of him and treat him as a man; his parents and brothers and sisters do the same; his disciples do the same. It is plain that the idea of his being a deity was the invention of a later time. How and when and why it arose we shall see presently.

III. Leaving now our interrogation of the Bible upon the subject before us, shall we next turn for a very few moments to *History*.

There are two different and distinct branches of history which have testimony to give, negative or positive, with regard to this question which we are studying.

The first is *Sacred* or *Church History*. Did the early Christian Church regard Jesus as God?

In reply to this inquiry I unhesitatingly answer, No. The evidence is clear that the early Christian Church was Unitarian. The doctrine of the Trinity — including, of course, the doctrine of the deity of Christ — came into being, as is well known, in the second, third, and fourth centuries, having had its origin unquestionably in the

speculative and exceedingly mystical neoplatonism of Alexandria. A theological battle arose over it, which raged throughout Christendom, tearing in pieces the Greek and Latin Churches in the most terrible manner, and awakening everywhere alienation and hatred where before had been comparative peace and harmony. The Council of Nicæa, which established the Trinitarian doctrine as orthodox and to be henceforth the faith of the Church, for a long time hung in doubtful balance over it. And when at last the council decided in favor of the doctrine, the real influence which turned the scale seems to have been the Emperor Constantine, a man who shaped all his course and conduct by what he thought policy, having several different times in his life changed back and forth between Unitarianism and Trinitarianism. And so but for the influence of the crafty emperor, who happened at that moment to be training with the Trinitarian party, Unitarianism, the prevailing belief of the Church up to that time, — including, of course, this doctrine of the non-deity of Jesus, — would doubtless have been the prevailing belief of Christendom to-day instead of Trinitarianism with its doctrine of the deity of Jesus.

So much, then, for our interrogation of Church History. Let us turn now for a moment's look outside of the Christian Church, and see whether the *Secular* or *Profane* History (so called) of those early times has any light to throw upon the question before us.

To revert to a thought which I have already slightly touched, it really would seem incredible that the Creator of the Universe should have come into human form and dwelt for a term of years upon this earth without its being known at least to the age in which the event occurred. Very well, then; *did* the age of Jesus have any sort of *suspicion* even that in Palestine there was an event of such stupendous magnitude transpiring? That

whole age is well covered by numerous and reliable histories. The most important political and social events occurring within the bounds of the Roman Empire are preserved to us in detail. As to Palestine, the country in which the occurrence under consideration is said to have taken place, it was a country lying far inside the boundary lines of the empire. Men well known at Rome and among the great men of the time had for a considerable term of years been its governors. Greek learning had for three centuries flowed freely through it. Certainly the Jews themselves must have been familiar with the notable events going on within its borders. What, then, do we find in the annals of the time regarding an event so much more astonishing than anything in the history of Rome or Athens, or than anything that had gone before it in the history of Palestine? Surely we shall find the histories of the Greeks and of the Romans, and especially of the Jews of the time, crowded with it, giving everything else a secondary place in comparison.

But when we turn to the histories of the age, what do we find? Three Roman writers — Tacitus, Pliny the younger, and Suetonius — mention Jesus, thus proving that there was such a person, and that he originated the Christian movement. But that is all. Not the slightest intimation is given that there was reason to believe him to be the eternal God, or that he was anything else but a man.

Turning to Jewish historians and writers of the time, we find Jesus mentioned in very derogatory ways in the Talmud, by those who were evidently his bitter enemies; and also we find him somewhat favorably mentioned in two short passages by the eminent historian, Josephus. One of these passages is probably wholly spurious, and the other partly so; and yet, even if we accept them both as fully genuine, they give no intimation that the

historian, Jesus' own countryman, and born only two years after the Crucifixion, believed the teacher of Nazareth to be God.

And these are absolutely *all* the mentions which history, outside of the Bible, makes of Jesus, — Roman history, Greek history, or Jewish history.

So, then, we have reached very quickly the answer to our question as to whether the age of Jesus knew anything about the Almighty and Eternal God dwelling incarnate in its midst.

No, history drives us to affirm either that Jesus was not God, or else that an event, as I have already said, incomparably more startling in its character and more towering in its grandeur and significance than any other in the history of mankind took place absolutely in a corner, — unknown to the world, unknown to the nation among whom it occurred, unknown to anybody except a little company of a dozen obscure men, and, as I think I have shown the overwhelming evidence to be, unknown to a single one of them.

So much, then, for the testimony of *History* as to whether the contemporaries of Jesus believed him to be God.

I said in the beginning of my lecture that I should interrogate first, Reason; second, the Bible; third, History, — to see what answer each would make to our question. I have now finished the inquiry in each of these three directions.

Only one thing more remains for me to do, — namely, to attempt to throw a little light, if I may, upon the question of how it was that men came to suppose Jesus to be divine. Where did the idea of God's incarnation in him come from? We can hardly believe that such an idea could of itself and independently have leaped into existence in the minds of so large a part of the Christian

Church! there must at least be an explanation; there must have been a producing cause. Can we discover them?

I think we shall be able easily to find an explanation and a cause, which at the same time will be an additional argument in proof that the supposed deity of Jesus was only a speculation or superstition, and not a reality. But let us see.

I have already called attention to the fact that the ideas of gods incarnating themselves in human forms and of men becoming gods, are not new ideas in the world. On the contrary, the oriental world from the earliest times has been full of such ideas, floating nebulously in the minds of men. Indeed, there was hardly one of the oriental nations existing at the time of Jesus, but had its legends and popular beliefs of one or more of the gods coming down at some time or other and assuming the form of a man, and dwelling on earth.

Rawlinson in his Herodotus tells us that the Egyptians believed that their god Osiris had incarnated himself in human form and dwelt among them.

The Chinese have the popular belief that Lao-tse existed from all eternity, but descended to earth, was born of a virgin, lived a human life, and when his work of beneficence among men was done, ascended up bodily into heaven.

Brahmanism is full of the incarnation idea. Vishnu is believed to have been incarnated nine times.

I have spoken of the belief among the Buddhists that Buddha was an incarnation of God, and the belief in Thibet that the Grand Llamas or Pope Emperors of that country are all incarnations of God in human form.

In the Greek and Roman world, too, in the midst of which Christianity had its birth and early development, we find essentially the same thought everywhere. The

minds of the people were full of belief in gods whose forms were those of men; and also of men deified, or raised up to the condition of gods. The founders of Rome were deified and worshipped as gods. All the Roman emperors for a long period of time were raised to divine honors. Suetonius tells us that the people fully believed in the divinity of Julius Cæsar. Marcus Aurelius was still worshipped in the time of Diocletian. Antinous was adored in Egypt a century after his death. From Cæsar to Constantine sixty persons in all were deified. Constantine was doubly deified; he was apotheosized by the pagans and canonized by Christians, and coins were stamped having on them a monogram signifying Jesus, Mary, Constantine; all three seemingly being put on a level as equally divine.

Here, then, we have a picture of the thought of the age — and of the religious beliefs of the age — in which Jesus appeared, and in which Christianity began its career in the world.

Thus we see that the incarnation idea was not something unknown, something that can be accounted for only by supposing that God did actually come to earth and dwell in human form in Jesus. On the contrary, it was a common idea, entertained among many peoples, and in many forms, familiar at the time of the rise of Christianity to everybody in the Roman world. What is more natural than that in such an age Jesus too should have been lifted up to divine honors, as well as so many others? An age that could deify Grecian lawgivers and Roman emperors, why should it not deify Jesus? An age that could believe in incarnations of gods in animal forms (as in the sacred bull of Egypt), and in human forms (as in Buddha, Lao-tse, Osiris, and Krishna), — what more natural than that such an age, as time went on and the real human Jesus faded into the background,

should, little by little, speculate itself into the notion that he too was an incarnation of God.

Moreover we must not forget that the Christians who were converts from Judaism, from the very first identified Jesus with the being whom the Jews expected would come as their Messiah. But the popular notion of the Messiah was that he was going to be a man who in some way would possess supernatural power,—a king who would set up an earthly and yet a supernatural kingdom. Right here, then, in this attempt of his earthly followers to make him fulfil the vague, speculative, and supernaturalistic messianic idea, we have the first step toward making Jesus a god.

Then came surging in upon this all the Gnostic and Neoplatonic and oriental philosophical speculation of the time, full of these ideas of incarnations which I have been describing. And finally the Christians were brought into contact all the while with a government which raised its emperors into objects of worship. Where, then, is there anything strange in the thought that the Christians should have soon come to think of their master also as a divine being—a god incarnated in human form—or a man by his purity of life and suffering elevated to be a god?

Surely nothing could have been more natural. All religious doctrines are more or less the outgrowth of their age. What doctrine concerning Jesus and God could have been more exactly and perfectly the child of the age in which Christianity had its origin and early history, than this doctrine that Jesus was God? And such a doctrine once distinctly formulated and incorporated into the creeds of the church, of course would stoutly and long hold its place against no matter how much of new light. And so we have this doctrine as a part of all the confessions and creeds of so-called Orthodox Christendom to-day.

But enough. I have now answered as well as a single discourse will allow, the questions with which I set out — Was Jesus God? And, How did he come to be worshipped?

Just a word more in closing.

Are there any here who say to me that in undertaking, as I have done this evening, to show that Jesus was a man and not God, I am dishonoring Jesus, and tearing down the time-honored religious belief of a large part of the Christian world?

To the first of these charges, I can only reply again as in the beginning of my discourse: No, I deny that it dishonors Jesus — rather do I affirm that it lifts him up into the truest honor — to insist on his humanity, and to refuse to wrap the garments of a fictitious deity about him. As God he is petty, insignificant, pitiful. But as a man, words are too poor to express the grandeur and greatness of his nature. As a deity, he fades away into a shadowy myth. As a man, he is the most real, living, and influential character in history, — the topmost, finest flower on the tree of our great humanity.

As to the second charge, that I am tearing down that which to many is a cherished belief, I reply. Yes, in a sense I am, just as I should be tearing down a belief which many cherish if I urged that Buddha or the Virgin Mary are not proper objects of worship. But is there no justification? Is truth not to be spoken unless all men assent to it? I simply tear down a great, hurtful superstition, that grew up in a dark and credulous age, and has ever since cast its shadow across the face of God, robbing him of his honor, hiding him from sight, and dividing Christendom into warring sects.

The real work that Jesus did in his day was to reveal God, — to reveal him more clearly than any other great religious teacher or prophet had ever done. Alas, that

men in their superstitious and mistaken zeal should have lifted him into the place of God—the creature into the place of the Creator—the one who taught men to pray to his Father and ours, up to the throne of the universe, himself to be prayed to; thus making of him instead of a revealer of God, a concealer, a usurper of God's place! Do we shrink from worshipping idols? How then can we consent to take a created being, no matter if he be the pure, wise, noble Jesus, and raising him aloft in our imaginations, bow down in worship before him, instead of bowing in worship always and only before the God above him and above us all, up to whom he never failed humbly and earnestly to point his followers?

No, friends, I do not touch thoughtlessly or rashly any religious belief held sincerely by any human being. I do not pull down except to build better. I only say to men, "Do not worship Jesus," in order that I may the more emphatically and earnestly say, "Worship him whom Jesus worshipped, and taught men everywhere to join with him in worshipping, as our common Father in Heaven."

Tenderly let us love Jesus; sincerely let us honor him; gladly and gratefully let us sit at his feet, to learn wisdom from his gracious lips and his matchless life. But let us not follow in the path of the ancient pagan peoples and deify the man we would honor, even if that man be the great and incomparable Galilean. Rather let us be his so true and faithful disciples, that, in all worship, we shall be pointed by him ever to *his Father and our Father, to his God and our God!*

Words are inadequate to paint the evil results that have come to religion and the world from the deification of Jesus. It was this that brought into the Christian Church the reign of creeds and dogmas which for so many centuries has blighted Christianity, and which, alas!

is far from over yet. So long as Jesus remained a man, the aim of his followers was to love him and follow him in deeds of helpfulness and mercy. When he became a god, all minds turned to the task of framing right theories about him; and woe to any who dared to think differently from the opinion of the majority. Thus Christianity became changed from love to belief, from conduct to speculation, from a life to a theology, — with the inevitable consequences of divisions, strifes, heresies, endless multiplication of sects, hatreds, religious wars, persecutions, untold bloodshed.

When will these evils pass away? Never, until their cause is removed. Jesus the god has always been, not only a usurper of his father's throne, but a sower of seed of endless speculation, contention, and strife among men. But Jesus the man — the man whose teaching and life were love and helpfulness — has always been an influence in the world for love and peace. And so in the nature of the case it must always be.

It is plain then that the salvation of Christianity lies in going back from the deified Christ of the creeds and the theologies to the loving, living human Jesus of the Gospels.

It is hopeful that already in many quarters the cry is being raised, Back to Jesus! the *real* Jesus of the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord's Prayer, the Golden Rule, the two great Commandments, and the incomparable Parables! And well may this cry be heard, because this means back from fiction to truth, back from mythology to reality, back from creed to deed, back from speculation to love, back from division and strife to unity and peace.

And such a going back as this means *going forward*, — forward to such an *advance as Christianity has never known*.

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"Was Christ a man like us? Ah! let us try
If we too, then, can be such men as he!"—*Matthew Arnold.*

It is hardly possible to estimate the power of ideals in human life. I am disposed to think there is no one who does not *have* his ideals, conscious or unconscious. Some there may be who are not clearly *aware* that they possess them, just as we all breathe and do many other things which we are not conscious of. But I am disposed to think that absolutely every human being really does have, hung on the walls of that room of his mind where dwells the wonderful faculty which we call the imagination, pictures, dim or clear, of what seems to him the most desirable kind of life—pictures of persons, whom perhaps he knows, or may be has known in some past time, or if not that then persons dreamed of, who represent to his thought the kind of life he would like to be able to live.

It is these pictures that largely shape men's conduct, just as the painter's mental conception of what he wishes to embody guides his brush, and makes the picture he paints turn out this or that. As the courses of ships over the sea are determined by the ports they seek, so are men's careers and characters determined by their ideals.

We have all read tales of persons led on, perhaps to some great good, or perhaps to their destruction, by a vision of some beautiful, may be some seemingly angelic form, appearing to them and beckoning them to follow its lead. These legends are really pictures of our own histories. We are all following visions—we go through the world following visions, angelic or devilish, that lead us up or down—to

salvation or ruin. These visions are nothing less nor more than our ideals.

Fortunate the persons who early in life form noble ideals! Fortunate those boys and girls who are blessed with *parents* so wise and true as to become ideals to go before them, as the star before the wise men from the East, and not by commanding but by gracious shining guide the young feet in wisdom's ways. Happy the young who find *teachers* so noble and inspiring as to become to them ideals!

He who reads the history of Rugby school when Arnold was its Head Master and thinks what a place that fine and chivalric spirit made for himself in the hearts and lives of the hundreds of young men who came under his influence, will know what I mean when I speak of a teacher wise and noble enough to become an ideal to the young.

Happy are they who find worthy ideals in books! But woe to young men or women who read books that give them ideals that are false and morally unworthy!

The great patriots, heroes and benefactors of the world perhaps do their greatest good to mankind, not while they live, by their actual deeds, but after they are dead, by becoming the ideals and inspirers of those who come after them.

In the same way, conspicuous and brilliant bad men and women are likely to harm the world most by vitiating its ideals.

Undoubtedly the world's greatest creator of lofty and inspiring ideals is religion.

The galaxy of noble characters that religion has lifted up before men for their emulation is large and rich. And even in cases where those lifted up had in their actual lives many imperfections, religion in lifting them up usually idealizes them, so that what she points men to for their emulation is likely to be high and pure.

There are few to dispute the claim that the very loftiest ideal of life and character that religion has ever given the world is that which we have in Jesus of Nazareth.

In saying this I do not mean to disparage other biblical characters, as Moses and Isaiah and Paul. Certainly these were great and noble persons; and the reverence that men have paid them has been not only deserved, but it has been elevating and ennobling to those who have paid it. Yet few certainly would think of claiming either of these men as the equal of Jesus.

Neither would I wish for a moment to drop out of eight or disparage such great and honored religious teachers outside of Jewish and Christian history, as Socrates, Marcus Aurelius, Zoroaster, Confucius, Buddha, and even Mahomet. Marcus Aurelius is certainly one of the finest religious spirits of the world. So, in many respects, is Socrates. Mahomet is a strong character, with some fine traits, and it is not difficult to see how he obtained a personal following, and became an ideal to millions; though when we to-day place him beside the other religious teachers whom I have named, it is easy to see that he is morally and spiritually, if not intellectually, their inferior. Zoroaster is veiled in much historic obscurity: yet there seems to be ground for believing that he was a pure and lofty soul that taught one of the purest and loftiest forms of religion that the world has ever known. Confucius was an exalted character, worthy of admiration not only from the Chinese but from all men. And if his teaching was hardly more than *morality*, lacking certain essential elements of *religion*, at least we must confess that as morality it is high and worthy. Buddha was a character exceedingly winning. True, the outcome of his religious thought is dismal, but as a man he undoubtedly stood on a very lofty height. His unselfishness seems perfect; his sympathy with humanity has perhaps never been surpassed. I do not wonder that he became an object of enthusiastic admiration and finally of worship to a large section of mankind.

But, by the side of all these noble characters, we need not fear to place the great Galilean. It used to be feared by some that a study of the other great religions of the world and their prophets and teachers might dim the lustre

JESUS AS HUMANITY'S IDEAL.

of our own. But the fear has proved groundless; at least it has proved groundless so far as the character and teachings of Jesus are concerned. Wherever knowledge of him has gone he has won the homage of mankind. To see him has been to confess the beauty and greatness of his life. Men do not need to prove to others that the sun gives light, or that it is superior in brilliancy to the moon, or stars, or a camp fire. Let each shine; that settles it all. So it has been with Jesus among the world's great religious teachers.

And now, does any one fail to see the moral value there is to mankind in having such men as all these that I have named, lifted up into the positions of examples and moral ideals to their fellows? We may object to their being accounted gods, and worshiped, as has been the case with Buddha and Jesus; for thus religion becomes degraded into superstition. But all that can be done to lift up pure and noble *human ideals*, and to lift them up in connection with religion, as object lessons and shining examples for men in their upward striving, is surely good. Better could the world afford to have its stars of first magnitude stripped from its physical firmament than its great moral and spiritual saints and prophets from the sky of its ideal life.

Let us ask the question with some definiteness, just how it is that Jesus has benefitted the world.

The benefit which Jesus has conferred, and is conferring, upon mankind, I believe to be primarily two-fold: first, that of a teacher; second, and even more important, that of inspirer.

As a teacher of truth he certainly occupies a very lofty place in the world—a place probably second to none. The truths about which he concerned himself were of the very first order: they were the truths of the soul, those truths which pertain to the strengthening, the enlarging, the ennobling of man's nature. Such truths must always be ranked as of the highest importance.

True, much that he taught had been set forth more or less clearly by Jewish prophets and seers before him, and even by great teachers of other nations; for no age or race

has a monopoly of light or knowledge; and, as Paul says, God hath not left himself without witness in any land. Truth is a plant: its seed is dropped often from an unknown source; the winds and rains born of many climes water it; the sun over all gives it warmth. So it grows, and by and by blossoms, and at last bears fruit. Thus the truth that rose to finest blossoming and most perfect fruitage in Jesus was from seed sown, God only knows how far back in the world's spiritual history, and nourished by influences, God only knows from how many ages and lands. All we can say is that the vision, which others before him had seen in part, it was given him to see more perfectly; the words which they had spoken stammeringly it was given him to speak with such clearness and grace and power that they thrilled all who heard, and took their place at once as a part of the richest treasure of the world's moral and spiritual wisdom.

And yet, important and even revolutionary as were his teachings, especially his teaching of God's Fatherhood and men's brotherhood, I think his life—his life culminating as it did in his heroic martyr death—was more important and powerful still, both in its influence upon those who knew him and those who came after him. His utterances alone—at least as they are reported to us—can by no means account for the profound impression he made upon his time and the powerful religious movement he was able to set in operation in the world. It is plain, judging from the biographies we have of him and from the effects that have flowed from his life, that he must have been a singularly strong, unselfish, loving and heroic soul,—possessed of a character both winning and commanding in the very highest degree.

This would seem to be the rational explanation of what certainly happened. For no sooner was he dead and gone out of their sight than he became to his disciples and followers their ideal. They did not worship him; on the contrary they spoke of him steadily as a man; but their enthusiasm for him and their sense of his nobleness and worth

seemed to overtop every other feeling, and their loyalty rose to such a pitch of enthusiasm,—steady, unflagging enthusiasm,—that they would willingly die for the things he taught, and for the honor of his name.

Nor did this personal loyalty and devotion stop with his immediate followers, but it communicated itself to those who came after them. The ideal which had risen with such splendor before their eyes, and with such power over their lives, they were able to bequeath to their children and the generations following; indeed it has never faded or lost its charm and power; rather, has it extended its influence; from being the ideal of simply a handful of personal followers, becoming the ideal of thousands, of millions, of nations, of races, until unquestionably, to-day it, more than any other, is the ideal of the civilized world.

Here, then, I think it is, that we find the way in which Jesus has most benefitted the world. He not only taught truth—truth the loftiest and most important that the mind can conceive—but, what was vastly more important, he lived it, and thus became its incarnation among men. Truth merely spoken is ever comparatively cold and dead. Live it, and you increase its generating power a hundred fold. Character impresses as no words ever can. He who speaks truth is a voice—nothing more. He who lives truth becomes an example, an ideal; and it is ideals that move men with a power greater than any other known in the moral world, lifting them upward and ever more upward if the ideals are noble, but dragging them downward and ever more downward if the ideals are base.

Notice some of the lower ideals which compete with the Christ ideal in the world—ideals which degrade and injure men, but which the ideal which we have in Jesus tends ever to correct.

One of these lower ideals is the *military*. How many ages have been dominated by the thought of military glory! The man before whom all bowed was the great captain. The career to which the young man looked as the most attractive and glorious that his imagination could paint was

that of the hero in battle or the commander of armies.

Even in Christian ages and lands this military ideal has been a widely prevailing one. And yet ever, even when the war spirit has run highest, another ideal has lifted itself up silently, by the side of that of conquest and blood and glory. It has been the ideal of the gentle Christ, who said, "put up thy sword";—the Christ whose whole life was love; at whose birth-hour the legend says angels sang, "peace on earth, good will to men." Cruel enough has been the havoc of war since Jesus lived and died. But who can tell how much worse it would have been, had not the ideal of the Prince of Peace, of him who loved even his enemies, and who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, hung as a sacred image in the thought and heart of thousands, to restrain their cruelty, and to woo them to mercy and peace! It is sad to think how much of war there is yet, even in Christendom, and how many professedly Christian nations are armed camps. And yet to-day it is plain that the military hero nowhere stands in so high honor as once he did. Just in the degree in which the Christ ideal rises in its beauty, the military ideal shrinks away out of sight, as an ugly, horrible thing of the darkness.

The military ideal has had in this century an unfortunate revival, mainly as the result of the career of one man. Near the beginning of the century there arose in Europe an extraordinary military genius. From the humblest position he quickly leaped to the head of the armies of a great nation. Then the ambition fired him to become the conqueror of Europe and the world. He led his armies in all directions. Nothing could stand against him. Thrones tottered and fell. Nations threw themselves at his feet. At last, however, his conquests came to an end, but not until death had reaped its harvest of millions of the best lives of the civilized world.

This extraordinary career of Napoleon raised high once more in Europe the waning military ideal of life. To-day all Europe is an armed camp. France now has an army larger than ever Napoleon led. Germany compares every able.

bodied man within the limits of the empire to give some of the best years of his life to the army. Nearly every other nation of Christendom follows in the wake of these. So that everywhere in Europe taxation and militarism have become a burden almost too great to be borne.

In all this we see the terrible effect of a false ideal of life, set up by a brilliant and bad man. This military ideal which Napoleon bequeathed to France and Europe cannot always last; but it is terrible while it does last, and no one can tell the suffering that is likely to come before Europe recovers from this set-back, this reversion for the time being to a lower type of political and social life. But the Christ ideal—though hidden out of sight for a time by forts and cannon and the paraphernalia of war, is not dead; nor can it die. It is God's ideal; it is humanity's true, eternally true, ideal; therefore men cannot permanently rest in anything lower or poorer.

Another low ideal of life, which is even more wide-spread than the military, and which, equally with it, wars with that which we see in Christ, is that of *wealth-getting*,—I mean wealth-getting for mere wealth's sake, or for ends of selfishness.

The wealth-ideal is a very fascinating one to-day, particularly in this country. Young men around us look up to the millionaire with something of the same envy that the youth of three or four hundred years ago looked up to the knight, or the baron, or the great captain. Perhaps the temptation to sell one's soul for wealth, that is, to let character and manhood go for the sake of getting wealth, was never greater than now. But it must be resisted.

Not that wealth is necessarily an evil. If honestly obtained, held as subordinate to things that are higher, and used for worthy ends, it is a good. But he who has come to think of the getting of it as the supreme object of life, is far on the way toward perdition, if he has not already crossed its threshold.

The gospels give us a legend of certain temptations that were said to have come upon Jesus, from the devil. One

part of the legend runs: "The devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them: and he saith unto him: All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." A very small price to pay, surely, for such boundless possessions! Did Jesus yield? Sternly he replied, "Get thee hence, Satan." Here is a lesson for millions to-day. The true man must say, "Get thee hence, Satan," to many an offer of wealth, and honor, and preferment, and worldly good that involves dishonor. In the stillness of the night the Christ-ideal speaks to you and me and all men saying: "He that seeketh to save his life (that is, liveth for self) shall lose it; but he that loseth his life for truth and right and duty, shall save it."

Another ideal of life, closely related to wealth-getting, is that of *pleasure seeking*. But a greater delusion never fell upon men than that of thinking pleasure a worthy, or in any sense whatever a satisfying object to live for. To live for pleasure is to chase a mirage, and die famished in a desert. But he who lives the life of the Christ-ideal will, with this ideal, find the noblest and most enduring pleasures that this world has to give. He will not find them, however, because he selfishly seeks for them, but because, forgetting self, he lives for love and duty and God.

One great value of the Christ-ideal is that it forms a standard whereby to test all the false and the doubtful ideals of the world. If I set my clock by my neighbor's it will not be at all certain to be right. But if we both set our clocks by the sun, neither will be likely to be far wrong.

The great tendency among men everywhere is to follow the standards and ideals that are dominant in the particular society in which they happen to move. It is a great thing to have a standard that overtops my little circle and yours, that can be seen from community to community, from nation to nation, from age to age. Such a standard has the Christ life come to be. Not because anybody has decreed that it should be so, but because that life is in itself so intrinsically beautiful that when men have seen it



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they have felt its beauty, and enshrined it in their hearts.

It has been urged that the final standard in all judgments is the "consensus of the competent." Very well, in Jesus we have the consensus of the competent objectivized in matters religious, just as in Shakespeare, Beethoven and Angelo we have the consensus of the competent objectivized in matters poetical, musical, and artistic. The world seeks for its best. When the men and women whose judgments are of most value, everywhere, with almost perfect unanimity point to Angelo in art, and say, "He is best," and to Beethoven in music and Shakespeare in poetry and say, "They are best," we gladly accept the verdict, lift them up into places of honor, become learners of them, make what they have done a standard, whereby to test and measure and correct our poorer work. So it is in morals and religion. Here too we ask, "Who is best?" that here also as in art and poetry and music we may have our ideals and standards and masters to teach us. With a unanimity quite as great as in the cases already referred to, the word comes back, "Jesus is best." And so we take his life and lift it up on high, and say, "It shall be a standard by which we will correct the lower and poorer standards which we have set up for ourselves; it shall be an ideal to inspire us to better things than we have yet reached; it shall be a luminary in our sky in the light of which we will walk."

"As when the valleys all in shadow lie,
And shadowy shapes of fear still haunt the night,-
Some mountain peak reflects the coming light,
And waiting lips break forth with joyful cry
For gladness that at last the day is nigh,—
So when some soul, that towers afar, is bright,
The souls that sit in shadow, at the sight
Grow sudden glad to know 'tis light on high!"

"And when these mountain-towering men can say,
'They see, though it be hidden from our eyes,'
We can believe in better things to be!
So, though the shadows still obscure our way,
We see the light, reflecting from the skies,
That crowns thy brows, O Man of Galilee!"

Thus it is that in his light we see light. Thus it is that in his light the ages have been walking, and shall walk, finding safety, and wisdom and great hope.

Quite the saddest and darkest side of Christian history is that which records the wanderings of the church away from the simple Christ ideal. For centuries the church called by Christ's name, strayed away into deserts and wildernesses of forms, ceremonies, theological speculations and dogmas utterly foreign to the teachings and the life of him from whom Christianity came. Nor are those wanderings over yet.

Hence the continued barrenness of the Church as regards practical fruit. Hence too its pitiful divisions into warring sects and factions, where should be one great brotherhood of good works and peace.

To-day there is nothing in Christendom more hopeful than the signs appearing in a few quarters at least, of a desire to return from these disastrous wanderings to the simple and beautiful Christ-ideal again.

No unimportant part of the mission of the Church that calls us together for worship here this morning, and of the whole Unitarian fellowship which it represents, is to do what they can to help bring about such a return. This has been a distinct and constant aim of the Unitarian movement from the beginning. And this aim it can never relinquish until it is attained, until Christianity, freed from its long slavery to creeds and ecclesiastical systems that Jesus did not teach, becomes once more the simple religion of love and duty, which its great founder taught and lived, and which in him so charmed the world.

Oh, for a new revelation of the Christ-life to men! It would transform the church. It would win mankind. Who could resist it? Who would desire to resist it, any more than to resist the beauty of flowers, or the light of day?

For the theological Christ the world has no need. Too long has that abstraction, that spectre, created by the minds of priests and dogmatists, darkened and cursed religion.

But for the real human Christ who lived and taught in

Galilee; the Christ of the Sermon on the Mount, and the Golden Rule, and the incomparable Parables; the Christ who loved his fellow men so tenderly, alike the rich and the poor, the good and the bad, and spent his life going about doing good; the Christ who was faithful in all duty—faithful even unto death; the Christ who had such matchless power to impress himself upon others, communicating to them his spirit, and making them to feel the beauty of holiness, the nearness of God, and the divineness of humanity; the Christ who has been the inspiration of so much of the world's best beneficence, bravest deeds, and loftiest consecration, in all the ages since he trod the earth; the Christ whose life among his fellows was so transcendently pure and noble that those who saw it lifted it up on high as an ideal for themselves and for all men—for that Christ, the world, the Christian Church, and all of us as individuals, have a need greater than any language of mine can tell.

I took as my text the words, "Looking unto Jesus." It is not speaking extravagance, but only what the experience of eighteen centuries confirms as the simplest truth, when I say, that the world has never found any other human source of inspiration and strength to which it can look with so much profit.

And his help is for all. It is for rich and poor; it is for the strongest and the weakest. It is for you and me. Let us avail ourselves of it. In our temptations, our discouragements, our perplexities, our fears, our sorrows, we may look to him and find in his example new courage and hope; we may touch him and draw from him new moral life and power.

No, friends, it has not been an accident or a mistake that has caused so large a part of the world to choose as its ideal of life, and its leader in the things of the spirit, the prophet of Nazareth, the martyr of Jerusalem. May we all be wise enough to shape our lives in the light of his.

THE TRUE CROSS OF CHRIST.

"God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."--Paul.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."--Jesus.

"The higher life begins for us when we renounce our own wills, to bow down before a divine law."--George Eliot.

What did Saint Paul and the early Christians see in the cross of Christ that gave it such power over them?

I think the true answer is: They saw in it a most tragic symbol of self-sacrificing love. They saw in it the most impressive possible reminder of a great and noble life, whom they profoundly loved and honored, sacrificed for them. "Greater love hath no man than this," said Jesus, "that a man lay down his life for his friends." Jesus had laid down his life for them. And not as a supernatural being, far removed from them in nature, who had simply by dying fulfilled a function or discharged an office, for which he had come into the world. He had laid down his life for them as a friend for his friends, as a brother for his brothers, for love's sake!

We shall be able to understand this better if we take a rapid glance over the career of Jesus, to see what there was in his life that led to this tragic end, and what was its real meaning.

The situation was something like this:—

There arose among the Jewish people a singularly strong, tender, wise and heroic soul—one fit to be called of the line of those prophet souls, who appearing from age to age, had made glorious the history of Israel. In him religion was the most real thing in life. His sense of the nearness of God, of the love and care of God, and of the harmony of his own will with that of God, was most profound. His sympathy for humanity, too, was as ardent as his faith in God was strong.

Reared in a quiet village in rural picturesque Galilee, and the son of an artizan, he had spent his childhood and youth at home, with his mother and father and brothers and sisters, working with his father at the bench, attending the village synagogue with his parents on the Sabbath, learning to read, studying the Law and getting such other knowledge as the simple school afforded, learning the lessons which the hills and fields, the birds and flowers and skies, the simple life around him and his own heart had to teach. Thus he grew up to manhood, natural, thoughtful, reverent, earnest, his nature unspoiled by the artificialities of the world, his devotion to truth and duty and love, perfect. But a nature so genuine and sincere could not fail early to discover and be moved by the sad side of human life.—and a peculiarly burdened, troubled and anxious age of his people it was into which he had been born. The nation had lost its liberty. Struggles many to regain it had proved futile. The foot of Rome was heavy on the neck of his countrymen, crushing down their national spirit, and extorting the most burdensome and cruel taxes.

The fires of the old Messianic hope burned up fitfully from time to time and then died out in deeper darkness than ever. Religion, in the hands of an ecclesiastical class, had hardened into formalism, devoid of moral or spiritual life. Outside the ecclesiastical class a materialistic and money-worshiping spirit was in the ascendant. The poor and unfortunate had few to befriend them. Truly the people were as sheep having no shepherd.

Of all this the young Jesus grew gradually conscious. And as he came to understand it the iron of it all entered deep into his soul. He pondered and prayed, and pondered again. Could he do nothing to help his stricken countrymen? At last the conviction rose in his mind like the dawning of morning light, and as the months and years went on, grew steadily clearer, that there was help for them, but that it did not lie in the directions in which they were looking,—indeed that it did not lie in any mere changes of external things, but in something deeper. It lay in them—

selves; it lay in God. It lay in such an improvement of their own internal condition, as would lift them above the power of circumstances. If they could have heaven within them, then it would matter little that Rome had stolen their national scepter, or that the exactions of the tax-gatherer were heavy, or that their external lot was hard in many ways. But how to do this, was the question. What is heaven? Jesus' own experience had taught him what heaven is. From those years of thoughtful communion with his own soul and with God, in the home, the workshop, the synagogue, the fields, he had learned that the essentials of heaven are Trust and Love: he who can feel that above all the dark and troubled scenes of life there is a Divine Wisdom and Goodness shaping all things to permanently best ends, has gone far toward the attainment of that peace of soul which the world can neither give nor take away. Add to this the spirit of self-sacrificing love,—that spirit which feels that it is more blessed to give than to receive,—which forgets self in its loving interest in others—and the essential conditions of heaven are fulfilled—such a soul can defy external things; the pains and afflictions of earth become to him of small moment, because he carries an antidote to them within himself.

This was the solution which in those quiet years Jesus wrought out to the problem, how to help his down-trodden, suffering countrymen.

And not only his countrymen but the world. For everywhere among men, as far as his knowledge reached, was fear, suspicion, selfishness, greed, oppression, unholy ambition, pain, suffering, sorrow.

If he could only lead men to have faith and trust—such as he himself felt—in God's paternal love and care, there would be light for them in their darkness, and their sorrow would be turned into joy. And if he could only teach them that they are brothers—children of a common Father—their interests one—then their antagonisms, and hatreds, and rivalries, and selfishnesses, and unholy ambitions, and oppressions, would pass away, and in their place would

come love, justice, peace, mutual helpfulness. And thus the kingdom of heaven would be formed on earth.

This was the great thought that slowly took shape and grew to clearness in the mind of Jesus. This was the mission that he came more and more to feel that somehow God had put him in the world to fulfill.

At last the conviction grew so strong that he could doubt no longer—he must set out upon the mission of definitely preaching and teaching this gospel of the kingdom of heaven on earth—a gospel which he cared most of course to give to his hurdened, suffering, distracted countrymen,—but a gospel for all men.

He began in the villages of his own neighborhood in Galilee. You know the story. Wherever he went multitudes came out to hear his gracious and inspiring words. He went to the larger towns. He made circuit after circuit among the principal villages and cities of all northern Palestine. At last he went into Judæa, and to Jerusalem, the capital and seat of ecclesiastical authority.

Now serious trouble begins. I have said that the religion of the country had largely hardened into an elaborate and lifeless formalism, administered by an ecclesiastical class. This ecclesiastical class are not pleased with the new gospel of the young and ardent reformer; and they begin to put obstacles in his path, stir up popular prejudice against him, and lay plots for his destruction. At last it comes to the crisis: he must either give up his mission, close his lips permanently, or else pay the penalty, which will be arrest, trial, and probably death.

What does he do? There is only one thing he can do. He believes his gospel is the truth, and truth of the highest possible importance to his countrymen and the world. He would gladly save his life, yet what is his life compared with the salvation of men from selfishness, sin and sorrow? Perhaps if he dies for the truth he has to teach, his death may at least make his message more impressive. Thus if they will not let him live to preach it, he can at least die for it.

So in the face of danger and death he goes straight forward—turning neither to the right nor the left. The arrest comes: he does not falter. The trial comes: he does not falter. Sentence to the most cruel, and ignominious of deaths—that of crucifixion—and with two common malefactors, comes: still he does not falter. He dies for truth. He dies for duty. He lays down his life for his friends. He pours out his blood as a ransom for many. He sacrifices himself that others may be saved.

This then, as I understand it, is the meaning of the cross of Christ. You see how tragic it all is; how heroic; how noble beyond words. Do you wonder that it stirred his disciples and all who witnessed it? Do you wonder that it added an almost superhuman impressiveness and power to those teachings which were before so winning and powerful? Do you wonder that the cross became thenceforward a symbol sacred to all the followers of Jesus? Do you wonder that Paul should write to his brethren: "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world?" For Paul saw that the spirit which had carried his master to the cross is the spirit that overcomes the world.

Do you wonder at the power of the cross in all the ages since? Do you wonder at its power to-day? Do you fail to see that in all the history of the world there has been nothing nobler or diviner, and in the very nature of the case never can be? The cross of that Calvary martyr stands for a devotion as heroic and as perfect as human thought can conceive, to truth, to conscience, to God, to man,—a devotion which can never fail, therefore, to thrill men with admiration and homage, and kindle in them something of a like spirit, as long as the story of it is told to the coming generations of humanity.

I have now given you the bright side, the inspiring side, of the story of the cross,—the story of Jesus' life and death, and the origin and real meaning of the cross symbol.

But alas! there is another side which is not so bright,

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not so inspiring. It is the story of the degrading uses to which the cross symbol has often been put, and the dogmas and ecclesiasticism, so contrary and so destructive to its real spirit, which in different ages have attached themselves to it.

I think a brief glance at these perversions will help us better to understand the true spirit of the cross, both as it was manifested in Jesus, and as it waits to-day to find an embodiment in your life and mine.

1. One of the most important and serious perversions of the cross idea in Christendom is that connected with the history of *Asceticism*. Not, however, that asceticism is peculiar to Christianity. Buddhism and many other religions exhibit it in very exaggerated forms. But it early associated itself with the Christian idea of the cross, and in connection with the same has run a great and in some of its developments a very wild career.

There are traces of asceticism in ancient Judaism. The Nazurites were an ascetic order who practiced abstinence from wine and strong drink, and let their hair grow long. The Essenes were an ascetic body existing in Palestine at the time of the beginning of Christianity, who undoubtedly exercised considerable influence upon the new religious movement.

But asceticism did not take a seriously extravagant and evil form in connection with Christianity until about the third century, when the idea arose and spread widely that the truest holiness of life was to be obtained by going out from society into the deserts or the mountains, and there living solitary lives of privation and self-mortification. In this way multitudes of the Christians of those times believed the spirit of the cross could be best manifested: in this way they could most effectively crucify the world unto themselves and themselves unto the world. Impelled by this belief, the Christians of the countries around the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea flocked to mountains and deserts by tens of thousands, until in some provinces it was said that well nigh half the population were living the lives of idle, fast-

ing, praying, self-torturing hermits. Anthony of Thebes, a young man of education and wealth, sold all his possessions, went to the desert and spent his life there, wearing only a coarse hair shirt, never bathing, living on the scantest and coarsest food, practicing the most rigorous austerities. Simon, called the Stylite, spent thirty seven years on the top of a stone tower sixty feet high, exposed to sun, dew, rain and storm, with no shelter; his neck loaded with a heavy iron chain, and his body bent in almost constant prayer. Thus these men became more famous than kings, and were thought to have attained a purity such as angels might covet.

Gradually the tide of popular sentiment changed, and the solitary hermit life began to give place to an *associate* life of similar asceticism. Thus by degrees arose the different orders of monks, and the whole system of Christian monasticism, which still continues, and which for fourteen or fifteen hundred years has kept vast numbers of able bodied men and women in all Christian lands in monasteries and nunneries, living unnatural celibate lives, often idle, not infrequently falling into serious vices, shut out from the healthy associations and the real duties of the world, their manhood and womanhood stunted and narrowed down to the dimensions of their poor little world of bead-counting and alms-begging.

Of course it is easy to see that all this asceticism of Christian history has a noble side to it. It has a certain real connection with the cross idea; indeed, often the spirit of the cross finds in it very beautiful and impressive manifestation. Therefore it is not to be indiscriminately condemned, or thought of as wholly false. It is rather a distortion, a perversion. Jesus taught that the body with its appetites and passions should be kept in subordination to the reason, the will, the moral nature. But he did not teach that the body is in itself evil, or that there is any virtue in mutilating or starving, or inflicting pain upon it. John the Baptist came practicing asceticism, but Jesus came eating and drinking as other men, wearing such clothing as other

men wore, enjoying the blessings of life and grateful to the beneficent Giver for them all. He taught that the kingdom of heaven is within the human soul, and the way to realize it is by trust and love; but the way he pointed out for manifesting that trust and love was not by abandoning the work of life, slinking away selfishly to some desert place or monastery, and there devoting one's self to prayer and the effort to save one's own soul, but by taking up the work of life whatever it may be, and doing it earnestly, gladly, self-forgettingly, as a sacred task assigned by our Father in heaven, as a duty we owe our brother on earth, and then, having been faithful in doing our part, leaving the outcome and all anxieties about to-morrow, trustfully with God.

Jesus himself suffered and died on the cross. But he did it not because he desired to die, or saw any merit in suffering pain. He simply accepted the martyr's fate rather than be unfaithful to duty as he saw it,—that is to say, rather than turn back from the work of proclaiming truth which he believed would inexpressibly bless his countrymen and the world.

Thus we see that it has been a perversion of the real doctrine and spirit of the cross that has led men to abandon the world in order to be followers of Christ. The true way for men to take up their cross and follow him was to stay in the world, and throw themselves unselfishly with all their might, as he did, into the work of saving their fellows from their ignorance, their fear, their greed, their manifold evil and sorrow,—willing and glad if need be in order to accomplish this, to sacrifice self.

2. Another perversion of the cross-spirit on a great scale we see in the *Crusades* of the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Beginning with the fiery preaching of Peter the Hermit, who had traveled in Palestine and brought back exciting stories of how Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem were maltreated, and how the holy shrines were desecrated by unbelievers, a passionate desire, reaching to the height of a mania, rose, and raged all over western and central Europe for two centuries, to deliver the Holy Land and

especially the Holy Sepulchre from the hands of the "infidels." Following the preaching of Peter two church Councils were held, at the second of which a crusade was definitely resolved on. When Pope Urban addressed the great assembly and recommended the movement, those who heard, wild with excitement and joy, shouted *Deus vult* (God will it),—which words at once, by command of the pope, were made the war cry of the enterprise, and every one that embarked in it put on from the outset as a badge, the sign of the cross,—hence the name crusade, from the latin word *crux*, a cross.

The Crusades were a great and mighty movement, in the name of the cross of Christ. But how unworthy the name of the cross, was the object they had in view! On the movement swept, devouring the motely throngs of men, women and children that pressed toward Palestine—20,000 under Walter the Penniless, 40,000 under Peter the Hermit, 15,000 under the German priest Gottschalk, 200,000 in various companies without definite leadership; then the magnificent armies of Godfrey, Robert of Normandy, and their allies, 600,000 strong; then the enormous armies of Louis VII of France and Conrad III of Germany, 1,200,000 strong; then the trained forces of Frederick Barbarossa, Philippe Auguste, and Richard of the Lion Heart; then the armies of Baldwin of Flanders, and Frederick II of Germany; then the great companies of children crusaders, it is estimated 70,000 in all; then the splendid armies of Louis IX of France, and finally those of Edward I of England.

Thus Europe sacrificed the lives of millions of her people, many of them her noblest and most heroic sons,—what for? In the attempt to wrest the spots in Palestine where the feet of Jesus had trodden, from the possession of the Mohammedans—a people by the way, who regarded Jesus as a great and true prophet,—and to place those spots under distinctly Christian control. For centuries the crusader was the conspicuous cross-bearer of the Christian world. The command to take up one's cross and follow Christ was supposed to find its best fulfillment in girding on one's sword, placing the sacred cross symbol on the shoulder, and

setting out for Jerusalem to fight the infidel and deliver the Holy Sepulchre.

To-day it is easy to see that all this was a perversion and degradation of the cross-idea—that the real Cross of Christ meant something vastly other and higher than those old crusaders understood.

Not but that there was much of the cross spirit in the sacrifices they made; for wherever there is really unselfish sacrifice there is the spirit of the cross. But to what poor ends was it directed! How little understanding was there of the gospel of Christ!—that it is love, not hate; peace, not a sword; that its aim is to save, not to destroy! How poor a conception was there of the Kingdom of Heaven!—a kingdom not of this world; that cometh not with observation; is not external, but internal! If Jesus had been on earth how would he have rebuked those crusaders and the church that sent them forth! “What!” he would have said sadly, “are you going forth in my name, armed, to kill my brethern, that ye may accomplish the worthless task of erecting a cross of stone above my empty grave? Is that all my love, my life, my teaching, my death, mean to you? Throw away your swords! take to your arms as brothers those you have set out to kill! ask God’s pardon and theirs, that you ever cherished a moment’s feeling of murder or hatred toward them! Go home! Erect in your own living hearts the cross of love—a love as wide as the world is round. Thus, but only thus, shall ye be truly my disciples.”

3. We come now to a third form of perversion of the cross-idea—the form which is doubtless more conspicuous to-day than any other. Indeed one can go nowhere in christendom without meeting it. It is that which appears in the popular doctrine of the *atonement*, or, as it is very commonly expressed, salvation through the “blood” of Christ.

According to this theory man is a fallen being.

“In Adam’s fall
We sinned all.”

From the guilt and ruin of that original fall, and from our

own personal sins as fallen beings, we cannot deliver ourselves. Neither can God deliver us consistently with his own justice and the majesty of his righteous laws, without some ransom—some ransom of infinite value; the payment of an infinite price to discharge the debt; an infinite satisfaction, so that the law shall stand inviolate! God provides a ransom in Christ. That is to say, God comes to the earth in human form, suffers and dies on the cross for man, and thus by his infinite sacrifice pays our debt, satisfies the law, and becomes able to be just and yet the justifier of all who believe in him. This it is that the cross symbolizes, we are told. This we are taught is the doctrine of the cross. To glory in the cross is to rejoice in the scheme of redemption thus consummated. To take up one's cross and follow Christ, is in some way to make profession of faith in this redemptive scheme. To preach the cross, is to preach this scheme.

In commenting upon this view, little more need be said than has been said already. In the beginning of my discourse I traced for you, in contrast with this theory, the circumstances under which Jesus arose; what seems to have been the development of his thought; his love for his people; the truth so living and precious to himself which he set out to teach, to the end that they might be saved, by rising to a higher life, by becoming citizens of the kingdom of the soul; then, the opposition that very soon arose to his preaching; the alternative of abandonment of his mission, or death; his heroic fidelity and martyrdom, of which the cross became the impressive and lasting symbol.

Thus the two views stand before you, side by side. And now the question is, Which seems more reasonable? Which best harmonizes with the facts of human nature? Which best accords with the simple story of the gospels? Which appeals most deeply to what is highest and best in us all? The theories cannot both be true. Which seems like the natural, and which the artificial? Which the original and which the later perversion?

Strange it is, if the redemptive scheme was what Christ

came into the world to work out and to teach, that he should not somewhere have mentioned it. But go to the Beatitudes; no redemptive scheme is there. Go to the Prayer he taught his disciples; no word about it is there. Read through the whole Sermon on the Mount, the longest collection we have of his teachings; no hint of it is given there. Search through his parables; no one of them intimates anything of the kind. At the time of his death nobody seems to have dreamed that his mission in the world had been to work out any such redemptive plan. In the writings of the Apostles, dating thirty or forty years after his death, there are a few doubtful expressions which the theologians of later ages have been able to use as in some sort pegs to hang what is known as the doctrine of redemption upon. But the doctrine itself does not make its appearance until long after Jesus' death; indeed in the form in which it is commonly taught in Christendom to day it is wholly the product of the mediaeval and modern church, the first distinct statement of it which we have in history being that made by Anselm (in his *Cur Deus Homo*) more than a thousand years after Christ—near the beginning of the twelfth century.

But if the silence of Jesus concerning any scheme of vicarious atonement is suspicious, more damaging still is the fact that we find the scheme based primarily upon a fiction, a myth,—I mean the fiction or myth of the fall of the race in Adam. The science of the past hundred years has taught us the impossibility of any such Adam as the Genesis story represents, and consequently the impossibility of any such fall of the race as the atonement scheme implies. But, with Adam and the fall gone,—with the race not a fallen race, but one that has been steadily rising from the beginning, the redemptive scheme falls, too; there is no longer any occasion or room for it; there is nothing that we can do with it except to let it fade out of belief, and to classify it with the mythologies of the past.

But the *real* doctrine of the cross—that which makes it simple *love and fidelity to truth and duty*—does not tend

to pass away. Founded on no myth or fiction, but on what is noblest in human nature, the growing light of intelligence in our day only makes it shine with new lustre. With this view, Jesus is no longer an anomaly, an abnormal and strange being whom we cannot comprehend or classify; now we understand, and hence can love and honor him; now he takes his place among, and easily at the head of, the world's great teachers of religion and those who have died for men. And so men have no longer to be exhorted to believe in him; they cannot do otherwise than believe in him when they see him as he really is, any more than they can help believing in flowers when they see their beauty, or the sun when they see its light.

The cross of Christ becomes beautiful and glorious, as all fidelity and all self-sacrifice for noble ends are beautiful and glorious. And discipleship to such a leader becomes something which commends itself to all noble men and women,—indeed to *all* men and women so far as they let that which is best and noblest in them speak.

I hope I may not be misunderstood as to my thought regarding the doctrine of the atonement. I believe the doctrine to be a perversion of the thought and intent of Jesus—the substitution of an artificial, elaborate and baseless fabric of speculation for the simple but great realities of duty, truth and love which he had in mind and heart in his living and his dying. But, in saying this, I would not be understood as implying that there are no elements of truth in the doctrine. I think there are in it such elements. Indeed I think there is no doctrine that has ever found a wide acceptance among men that has not had in it elements of truth. The doctrine of the atonement has been one way by which men have sought to teach such great and important truths as God's love and paternity, the pardon of sin, and the beauty of self-sacrifice for others. But, it was a bungling and artificial way, only adapted to ages full of beliefs in miracles and marvels, and having far less knowledge than the world possesses to-day. We to-day see, as Jesus seems to have seen, that man's relation to God can be

THE TRUE CROSS OF CHRIST.

no such strained and artificial one as that implied in the so-called redemptive plan; that pardon of sin requires no atoning sacrifice, but only a penitent heart; that loving self-sacrifice needs no supernatural sanctions to make it beautiful; that God's love for man is taught a thousand times better by such a simple parable as that of the Prodigal Son, than by all the atonement schemes that men ever devised.

We to day see that whereas a cross which symbolizes a dying God can only perpetuate a myth and a superstition, a cross that commemorates a man dying for men—a martyr for truth and love—becomes a symbol as high, as worthy, and as permanently inspiring as the world can conceive.

And now with this high and I believe true understanding of what the cross of Christ really means, I think we must all feel that it assumes new relations to us and to our age. It rises into new sublimity and beauty. It asks and commands new respect and attention. It comes close to us all personally. I think we must all feel with Paul that we ought to "glory in the cross of Christ"; and not only that, but that we ought to take up our own cross—the cross of our own duty, our own life-work, whatever it may be, with the same spirit of absolute fidelity, with the same loving, self-forgetting devotion, that made the life and death of Jesus beautiful and glorious.

With this view, how are we to become Disciples of Christ? There is only one way: by taking up and hearing with courage, with fidelity, with self-forgetfulness, with trust in God, in the place where God puts us, *our* cross—of work, of duty, of trial, or of sacrifice, even as Jesus, with bravery, with love, and with fidelity, in the place where God put him, *bore his heavier cross*.

Christendom has long been accustomed to associate with the cross the thought of salvation. . . In a sense it was right, only its thought was too limited. The cross is assuming to the world to-day a larger meaning than it has had in the past. Doubtless it is true that only by the cross will any of us ever be saved. But the cross that can save us will not

be Christ's, it must be *our own*. From Christ we may learn how noble and glorious a thing a cross rightly borne may become, and thus draw incentive and strength from his example. But the example must awaken in us the same faith in truth, the same devotion to duty, the same love of our fellow men, the same willing obedience to God, or else it will avail us naught. Nothing that any other has done—he that other even the glorious cross-bearer of Calvary—can be substituted in place of what we ourselves ought to do. If his cross-bearing stirs not within us a like spirit of heroic duty and self-forgetting love, then it will prove to us not a savor of life unto life, but of death unto death.

So, too, it is only by the cross that the *world* will ever be saved. But, the cross of the world's real salvation is not to be found in any far past century, nor yet on any a hill of crucifixion in distant Palestine. It is a thing of to-day and of the near at hand. It is to be found, if at all, in the home, and the market place, and the human heart. The statesman who dares to suffer reproach rather than stoop to deceit; the lawyer, the physician, the journalist, or the preacher, who stands up before the bar of his own conscience and declares, Whether I succeed or fail in the eyes of the world, God helping me, I will be true to my own manhood; the trader who staunchly says, I can sacrifice money if need be, but I will not sacrifice honor; the young man standing at the beginning of his career, who deliberately chooses a life of hardship, with service of his fellow men, rather than one of ease or pleasure or self aggrandizement; the teacher who counts not his life dear unto himself only so that he may help his pupils and inspire within them noble ideals; the mother who self-forgettingly lives for her children; the strong who gladly help the weak; the rich who count themselves only stewards of their wealth, and use it for the benefit of their generation; the poor who in their poverty share with those of deeper need,—*these and such as these* are the real cross-bearers who are saving the world. We may well think of Jesus as the glorious leader of the glorious host; but without the host itself, what can avail the leader?

No, friends, if ever this world is to be saved from its sorrow, its ignorance, its suffering and its sin, you and I must have a part in saving it. Do we want such a part? Then let us take up our cross daily and follow him whose earthly career was an embodiment of love and self-forgetting service of his fellow men. Let us make his exalted life-motto our own: "Not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give our lives a ransom for many." Let us be willing to suffer with him, that we also may be glorified together.

The truth is, nobody in this world can escape the cross. Crosses of greater or less bitterness of agony must enter into every human life.

"Upon some cross of pain or woe
Each son of God must lie;
Each soul redeemed from self and pain must know
Its Calvary."

The question each one of us has to answer is, Will we take the pain and woe, and lose the redemption? Let Jesus point us to the answer. By the spirit in which he met the cross of crucifixion he triumphed over it! Nay, he transformed into a throne of more exalted honor and more enduring power than any throne of earth. Let us learn to meet our crosses in his spirit. Thus shall we find that God has sent them to us, not in anger or cruelty, but in wisdom and in love; and more and more what had seemed crosses we shall discover have become transformed into golden ladders, let down from God out of heaven, that up their shining rounds we may climb to patience, to love, to peace, to victory over our lower selves, to that higher life of the spirit which it is the privilege of us all to live, with Christ, in God.



"Here Let no Man be Stranger."

. A .
College Town
Pulpit

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UNIVERSALISM AND UNITARIANISM.

The two religious bodies which appear to be the most nobly and therefore the most happily named of any in our time, are the Universalist and the Unitarian.

I mean, these two names seem to have a larger, deeper, richer, more commanding, and more distinctly spiritual import, than any other names of churches or religious movements that are at all prominently before the Christian world.

This is a source of strength which neither Unitarian nor Universalist should overlook.

What is the origin, and what is the meaning, of the Universalist name?

As is well known, the name Universalist sprung from the fact that the movement which it represents was a protest against the dogma of orthodox Christianity that a part of the human race will be hopelessly and eternally lost. The men who led and organized the movement said, "No such doctrine as that of eternal perdition is taught in Scripture; no such doctrine can be accepted by any one who really believes in the justice or love of God. The Bible teaches, the Gospel of Jesus Christ certainly means, and the conception of God as Father necessarily implies, the final well being of all men,— that is, "universal salvation." And hence they come naturally to be called Universalists, or universal salvation people. This was the historic origin of their name.

But now, what has happened, as time has gone on? While it is still a true description, as far as it goes, is it a *sufficient* description of the Universalist Church to day, to say that it stands for universal salvation? I think I am justified in answering, No. This is one of its teachings, and an important one, but it is *only one*. Those who in the beginning emphasized this great doctrine soon found that it belonged to a new order, to a new conception of

God, of man, and of the Universe, to a new theological system. They tried to make it fit in with the old atonement scheme, but it would not fit; with the old doctrines of the trinity and the deity of Christ, it would not fit; with an infallible Bible, it would not fit. They had broken one link of the old chain,—the whole chain must go. They had let in the light of reason upon one doctrine; they could not stop with that; everything was disordered and out of relation if they did. They must go on and let in the light upon all the rest.

Thus, without being aware, they had begun a reconstruction upon a higher rational and ethical plain, of their whole system of religious thought. The great idea of the *universal*, admitted at one point, would come in at another, and another, and another, until at last it found recognition in all. So that besides universal salvation, and as a necessary correlate of it, they found also, to use the words of one of their own eminent writers, "*the Universal God, the Universal Man, Universal Providence, Universal Inspiration and Revelation, and the Universal Christ.*"

This is what Universalism stands for to-day, in the minds of its broadest and best thinkers,—not one universal but *all* the universals, not universal salvation simply but *Universal religion*.

I trust this makes clear what I mean when I speak of Universalism as one of the two forms of Christianity in our time that are best and most nobly named. It has a name that means the largest possible things, the highest possible things. It is a name which can never be outgrown. Religion will grow more and more toward the universal, but can never get beyond it. As men rise to higher and larger conceptions of religion they will more and more see how grand and how adequate for a religious movement this name is.

Probably few, if any, of those who chose it, saw at the time its full import. They builded better than they knew, as men who are faithful to the light that is given them are so likely to do in this world. The revelation of the universal

in one direction was given to them. They were true to it, though it cost them dear to be so. The result was that the vision enlarged and enlarged until at last it became full orb'd; and they had no longer universal salvation merely, but this with all its correlates.

The other form of Christianity that seems to me as nobly named as Universalism is Unitarianism.

Unitarianism, to be true to its great name, must be the religion of the *Eternal Unities*. It cannot be less.

What are the unities of religion? They are those elements, actual and potential, which all religions have in common. They are those elements which constitute *religion* as distinguished from *religions*. Certainly it is in the direction of this large interpretation that Unitarianism is tending, and has been more or less clearly tending throughout its entire history since the name first appeared among our Transylvanian brethren in the Reformation period.

Perhaps those who first employed the great word did not fully understand how great it was. They seem to have been given to see the unities of religion clearly in two or three directions. They were true to these, and their descendants were true to these, and so the vision widened as the years and the generations went on, until it became complete, and our leading minds to-day are coming to see that this word "Unity" is as great a religious word as there is, or ever can be,—having a significance as profound, as wide-reaching and as vital as it is possible for the human mind to conceive; and therefore that the religion which we are invited to, nay pledged to, by our very name as Unitarians or unity people, is the highest, the broadest and the deepest of possible religions, that is to say, is nothing less than the one *ultimate, uniting, and eternal religion of man*.

There are some among us who object to the Unitarian name, because it seems to them too small and too dogmatic. As for myself I could as soon think of the universe or of God as being small, as of Unitarianism, legitimately interpreted, being so. And as to the word being a dogmatic one, I think it is such only to those who approach it in the

dogmatic spirit. That spirit turns everything to dogmatism, not only in religion but in science.

Of course the earlier thought of Unitarianism was inadequate, as was the earliest thought of Universalism. It was so because it *was* the *earliest*. It was only the babe in the manger. It was only the acorn in which the future oak lay hidden. It wanted time to unfold the infinite meanings which slept in the heart of that greatest thought that had ever come to man—*God One*.

The dogmatist says, Unitarianism originally meant simply anti-trinity, therefore it must always be defined as this and nothing more,—never being allowed to grow. But why should it not be allowed to grow? Must the babe be condemned to remain forever a babe? Shall we accept evolution everywhere else and reject it in religion? If we are to insist that Unitarianism must never mean any more than it meant at first, then let us be consistent and apply our rule to everything. For example, let us insist that because a star originally meant to men only a mysterious torch or lamp hung up in the night sky, therefore it must be defined as that forever. And let us insist that the earth must forever be described as flat because that was man's first conception of it. But no! a man would be set down as a fool who insisted upon such interpretations outside of religion. Why then insist upon them inside? We must not. We must treat religion with the same fairness and reason that we do everything else. So, then, even if it were true that Unitarianism in its early undeveloped child stage meant anti-trinity, it would not follow that it must continue to mean that and nothing more now. On the contrary, the vast progress of knowledge and thought since then ought to have carried it forward to larger meanings. And so it has.

As a fact, however, I do not think that Unitarianism ever meant to any of the broader minds that espoused it, simple anti-anything. Whatever negating it did was the negating of a negation. It saw in the trinity doctrine a denial or breaking up of the great conception of God as

one. It denied the denial. It saw in the trinity-thought a dividing element, where there should be only Unity; an irrational and self-contradictory element, where there should be only reason and harmony. It could not mightily affirm the reason, the unity, the harmony for which it stood, without denying the dogma which marred and destroyed these. But, however much limitation we may grant as having attached to the earlier Unitarian conception, the great thing to bear in mind is, that it was at least a true conception so far as it went, and therefore it opened inevitably, as time went on, into larger and larger truth.

In this respect our history has been like that of our Universalist brethren. As their doctrine of Universal salvation has been leading them on steadily toward universal religion in all its aspects, so our great doctrine of the unity of God has been as steadily leading us on to other unities, large and deep and great, which it is more and more certain are to be the fundamentals of the religion of the future. And everything indicates that when we come to see clearly what all these great unities are, we shall find them to be the universals of religion, as well as its unities—the very same universals toward which the Spirit of all Truth has been steadily leading our Universalist brethren.

What are the Unities which Unitarianism in its growth and onward progress has found itself inevitably and necessarily accepting? Some of the more important are,

1. *Unity in God* (God one). And, as consequents of this,
2. *Unity in Humanity* (mankind a brotherhood).
3. *Unity at the heart of all the world's Religions* (religion one).
4. *Unity between Reason and Faith* (the supposed antagonism fictitious).
5. *Unity between Love and Law* (the antagonism here also fictitious).
6. *Unity between Love and Justice* (justice fulfilled in love).
7. *Unity between Religion and Ethics* (each the complement and crown of the other).
8. *Unity in the Universe* (no place in which God and Love will not sooner or later be triumphant).

Are not these unities also the universals of Religion?

If the world is ever to have a religion in harmony with

truth, with reason, with science, with philosophy, it must be obtained through the door of the unities and the universals. So, too, if we are ever to have a religion in harmony with what is deepest in the moral and spiritual nature of man, it must be obtained in the same way. The religions of the past have been based upon dualities, partialisms, discords. The religion of the future must be based upon unities, universals, harmonies.

Science is teaching us that the universe is one. If religion is to continue to hold a place in the universe, it is plain that it must harmonize with the universe. God is not divided. Truth is not divided. God does not hold in his right hand the truths of the soul and in his left the truths of nature, that they should fight each other. Unitarianism and Universalism are the rising vision of all this. When completed they will be in full vision of all this. Therefore they will be the one scientific religion of the world; the one philosophic religion of the world; the one undogmatic religion of the world; the one theistic and spiritual religion of the world; because rooted in the Infinite Reason, the Infinite Life, the Infinite Justice and Love.

Says Emerson, "There is a statement of religion possible which makes all skepticism absurd." Unitarianism and Universalism are to be that religion. How do I know? Because they build upon unities and universals, which allow no schism between reason and religion, between the soul and God.

How priceless a possession then have Unitarians and Universalists in their great principles!

But not in their principles only. They have a possession almost equally valuable in their *names*. Their names are the greatest known. They are arguments. They are half battles. As their signification comes to be fully understood they can hardly fail to carry conviction to any thoughtful mind. These very names are the greatest of creeds,—and creeds with all the dogmatism and evil that attaches to the ordinary creed left out. These names fulfil

Emerson's condition—"statements of religion that make skepticism absurd." These names are banners, which promise certain victory, sooner or later, to all who dare march under them and be true to their great meanings.

Compared with these great names how strangely superficial and meager seem those by which most of the religious bodies around us seem content to be limited,—such names as Episcopal, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Congregational, *Roman Catholic*, Lutheran, Calvinist, Wesleyan,—names which so far from having sprung from the central life or larger aspects or eternal elements of religion, or having any necessary connection therewith, have taken their rise from accidentals and fragments and accessories, as from a man, or a locality, or a form of church government, or an ecclesiastical rite, and signify nothing whatever that is essential or permanent in the faith, or worship, or spiritual life of humanity.

We sometimes say, "Things are all, names are nothing." But when we have names that signify the greatest things known to man, and toward which the best thought of the world is steadily tending, should we think lightly of such names?

Is it not significant that the two main liberal movements of our land and time, bear names, not only so great, but so essentially identical in import? Should not this give us great confidence? Can we both be mistaken in believing that the true religious progress of the world is, and must be, away from the partial to the universal, away from the dividing to the uniting?

The universals of religion are of necessity its unities; the unities of religion are of necessity its universals. This means that the Unitarian and Universalist movements are and forever must be, in their deeper meaning, one. How close then should be our fellowship, and how hearty our co-operation! And how great is the mission in the world that God has given us to work out together!

IS LIFE A BLESSING?

"The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."—Psalm 145.

"God's in his heaven,—

All's right with the world."—Brownlog.

"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—Paul.

I talked with a friend the other day, who asked me if I really believed that life is a good. I shall try to answer his question this morning.

Is life a good? The question is very serious and very deep. Let me answer it as earnestly and carefully as I can.

Let not the question be confused with other questions which sound somewhat the same but are not the same. I do not ask, Have we anything to be thankful for? I am sure my friend meant something more than that. Even very shallow observation shows us that there is no human being whose life is wholly devoid of blessings. The most wretched, the most debased, the most forlorn, experience some good—much good. But my question has to do with the sum total, the whole outcome, of life.

I do not wish even to confine my inquiry to ourselves, or to any class. Sometimes we hear men around us saying: "Oh God, we thank thee that while others are sick we are well; while others have been called away in death, we still live; while others have gone where hope and mercy can never reach their case, we are still on praying grounds and interceding terms with thee." I do not mean, have we reason for this kind of thankfulness,—thankfulness that we are better off than others. That is a poor kind of cause for gratitude. The really noble soul under such circumstances is pretty likely to forget very much about gratitude for himself in his pity and sympathy for the others who are with-

out the blessings. Indeed the Buddhists conceive of men noble enough not to be willing to accept happiness in any world so long as one human being anywhere in the universe remains miserable.

My inquiry is almost as radical as that. I wish to know if we have reason to believe that the goodness of the Lord is over absolutely all his creatures: if all men everywhere, rich and poor, high and low (as men count high and low), the sick, the suffering, the sorely tempted, the deeply sinning, the heathen to whom Christ was never preached, and even persons who have passed on into the next world, all have reason to be grateful to God that he gave them their being, and in such a universe as this.

Of course this is only another way of inquiring, if we have reason to believe that life itself is a blessing, or that the universe is good.

To this question, it must be confessed that there are some who say, No, the universe is not good; life is not a blessing.

We call those who thus declare, pessimists.

Perhaps the most prominent schools of pessimists in our day are two. Neither one is large, and yet both are worthy of attention. From somewhat different premises, and by different processes of reasoning, they both arrive at essentially the same dark conclusions regarding the meaning and worth of human life.

Perhaps we may name as the head of one school, Edward von Hartmann, a German. Von Hartmann reaches his conclusions, we may say, by cataloguing the good and the evil in human life, and then placing the two catalogues side by side, and deciding that the evil makes the larger showing.

The other school is that of Arthur Schopenhauer, also a German, a more original and stronger thinker than Hartmann. Schopenhauer is not satisfied with putting the joy and the sorrow, the pain and the pleasure, the good and the evil of life into opposite scales of a balance, and deciding in favor of that which seems the heavier, but he boldly declares

that life itself, in its very nature, is an evil, entirely aside from its fruits. Life is a disease he says: the cessation or extinction of life is the only remedy.

His argument is this: Man's life is full of desire, unrest, dissatisfaction. He wishes for what he has not, and is miserable if he does not obtain it. Let him obtain it, and he at once just as earnestly wants something else beyond. Thus he is ever lured and tantalized on, from the cradle to the grave—ever seeking, never finding satisfaction to his want. Thus is he mocked and made miserable all his days; and there is no help for him so long as he wills to live. For in the very nature of things the finite cannot be happy. The finite human will is ever hedged about, limited, crossed and baffled, by the forces of Nature, or, as he looks at it, by that great, universal, blind, unconscious Will, which is infinite and absolute, and which ever pushes on to have its own way in spite of him, or his puny will in the matter. This blind, universal, infinite Will, or power of Nature, man cannot resist, but must be overborne by it. It is folly for him to try to resist it. The only wisdom is in acquiescence: the going out of existence, absorption in the universal. The great, primal evil is existence—at least organized existence. Our coming to be, was the great radical mistake, the only adequate rectification of which lies in ceasing to be.

These, then, in brief, are the views of what I think may be called the two most important schools of pessimists, as represented by their greatest leaders, Von Hartmann and Schopenhauer.

The positions, you see, are somewhat different; and yet, for our purposes they are the same. Both schools agree in holding that the world is bad and life is an evil, and that ceasing to be, is the only good. They mainly differ in the standpoints from which they survey the problem, and their methods of reasoning upon it.

To all this, what shall we say? There is much to say. First, it is to be noticed that this conclusion of the pessimists is at least contrary to the general verdict of mankind. Plainly it is not, and never has been, the opinion of the

human race generally, that life is an evil—something less desirable than death. On the contrary, in nearly all lands and times, life has been regarded as the most precious of all possessions, and death one of the most sad and lamentable of evils. The world over, men have always been willing, as a rule, to give more to save their lives than for any other purpose whatever, and the severest punishment decreed upon evil doers is reckoned that of death. What does this mean, only the world's profound and ineradicable judgment, that life, in spite of the sorrows and hardships that may more or less attach themselves to it, is not in itself an evil, but a good?

Is it said that this natural clinging of men to life comes solely from an unwillingness to go through the mere physical agony of dying? No, that this cannot be the case, is seen from the fact that ways are known of taking life without pain. But all the same men cling to life, and are unwilling to give it up.

Is it said that it is the fear of something after death, that makes men cling to life? To some extent, or with some persons, this may be so. But yet how inadequate an explanation this is, will be seen, when we bear in mind that among persons or peoples whose thought of what may be beyond death is not dreadful, there is essentially the same love of earthly life and unwillingness to surrender it. Is it not plain that this could not be, if men generally felt that life is an evil—if it was the general experience and judgment of mankind that life has in it more of bitter than sweet, more of sorrow than joy, more of curse than blessing, and that the sooner we get to the end of it the better?

No, the very great rareness of suicide in the world, is a standing refutation of pessimism. So is the fact that almost universally suicide is classified with crimes and sins, or, if not, then it is charged to insanity. But it could not be a sin to escape from life if life were an evil and death were a good. Nor would such an act be an evidence of insanity, but rather the opposite. *They* should rather be regarded as the insane who did *not* take means to escape from an evil.

Thus, in these various ways, do we get evidence that the claim of the pessimist is contrary to the general experience of the race, opposed to the almost universal judgment of mankind.

And especially does it fly in the face of the spirit of our modern times, and of our European and western civilization. In Asia or Africa, amid old, stagnant civilizations, where life is a monotony to an extent that we can hardly conceive, such a theory would not seem so strange. But in our modern world, it seems an alien indeed; as it would have been an alien in the noble civilization of ancient Greece. The spirit of our modern age is one that calls out, not for death, not for less life, but for more life. Greater rapidity of action, greater intensity of thought, wider ranges of knowledge, more variety of experience, the making of one year now to equal two last century years, or a hundred of Methuselah's day—this is the spirit of our modern age.

"'Tis life not death for which we pant,
'Tis life of which our nerves are scant,
More life and fuller that we want."

This seems to be only another way of saying that the higher and nobler the civilization the higher is the estimate it puts upon life, and the less it is inclined to any pessimistic theories.

And I think the same is true of individuals. Go through any community and find the man who inclines to the view that life is an evil and death is the only good, and what will he be? The well man? The man with a sound mind in a sound body? The man whose judgment you want to trust? Instead, he will probably be some misanthrope, like Schopenhauer, or some man sick in body or mind, or some man whose mental processes has been warped by a great sorrow, or disease, or by a peculiarly unfortunate temperament. Will you not find the man of health, and clearness of mind, and balance, telling you that life is good—the greatest of blessings, the most precious of gifts—the thing to be most sacredly prized and guarded of all man's earthly possessions?

Some one has wily said, "The question whether or not life is worth living depends upon the *liver*." Others with not less truth, if with less wit, have declared pessimism to be another name for indigestion. Certain it is that if any of us ever have moments when we are inclined to berate the world, or life,—when for the time being we are tempted to complain, like the pessimist of Hebrew writ, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity," or in the cynical language of Byron to murmur,

"Count o'er thy days from anguish free,
And know, whatever thou hast been,
'Tis something better not to be,"

it is in hours, not when we are on the clear-visioned heights of life, when we are our best and truest selves, and our judgments are most reliable; but when we are in the low valleys, amid fogs and damps and miasmas of misfortune and dyspepsia and melancholy, when we are our poorest selves, and our judgments are weakest, most jaundiced, most worthless.

Indeed it is difficult to think that even professed pessimists themselves believe their doctrine in their best hours. It is very difficult to think this of Hartmann, and especially difficult of Schopenhauer. I do not wish to be understood, by this, as expressing doubt as to the honesty of the writers named. I only call attention to the fact that men do not always really believe what they think they do. Through all Schopenhauer's years devoted to the attempt to prove that life is an evil and death the only good, he clung to life with an eagerness seldom seen. He would fly from place to place for fear of epidemics or contagious. He would never let a barber shave him. He always slept at night with dagger and pistol by his side, and was alarmed by every unusual noise.

Nor does it seem that pessimists generally are any less likely to cling to life than other men. Of course this cannot but compel the question, "Do they really believe their own doctrine?" Doubtless they do in a sort of intellectual,

philosophical way, but isn't there something still deeper in them that doubts—nay, which says that the doctrine is not true?

Do you remember the story which Dr. Channing tells of himself—how that when he was a boy his father took him in the family chaise one Sunday morning to a neighboring town, to hear a celebrated preacher? The sermon was a powerful one, depicting in right orthodox fashion the fall and ruin of the race, the hopelessness of all without the aid of divine grace, the need of earnest prayer—of immediate crying to God for salvation from the impending doom. The impression made upon the sensitive and sincere boy was profound. The service closed. As they went out of the church he heard his father remark to another in a decisive tone, "Sound doctrine, sir!" "Then it is all *true*," said the boy to himself, in deep concern. As they returned home he waited for his father to speak to him on the momentous subject. But as they rode on and on, his father said nothing, but presently began to whistle. Arriving, they went into the house. "He will surely call the family together," thought young William, "to lay before them the awful truths we have heard." But instead, his father quietly took off his boots, put on his feet toward the fireplace, and began reading a newspaper. The boy was shocked. He instantly said within himself, "He doesn't believe it. None of them believe it."

And from that moment William Ellery Channing's faith in orthodoxy was fatally shaken. He afterward came to understand more fully than of course he could then, that his father was not necessarily to be called a hypocrite. He *thought* he believed. His intellect, his logical faculty assented. And yet there was a deeper and a truer self, that did not believe at all. And that was why he could whistle or read his newspaper after hearing such a sermon.

And does not charity compel us to conclude, that persons about us to-day, who profess to believe that they have loved ones in hell, and other loved ones standing on the

brink, liable at any moment to be lost, are able to go on as they do, enjoying life, eating good dinners, laughing with their neighbors, sleeping well nights, and so on, because they really don't believe the things they profess, but only *think* they believe them?

On the ocean there is sometimes seen the following strange phenomenon, namely: At a point where a surface current is running in one direction, a ship, under bare poles, and with no wind blowing, will be observed drifting in the exact opposite direction. What is the explanation? It is, that at that point there are two currents, a surface current and an under current, flowing in opposite ways, and the lower, unseen current is the stronger. So that while the surface water flows north, the ship, because her keel reaches down through the surface water into the deeper current flowing south, herself moves south. So it seems to be in men. Plainly there are currents below currents, in men's mental natures—in their thinking, in their believing. Hence a tender hearted, loving mother can think she believes, or really can believe with a sort of surface belief, that her child is in danger any moment of being eternally lost, and yet herself go on living a happy and cheerful life. Hence, too, the professed pessimist,—the man who declares, and very likely thinks he believes, that life is an evil and death the only good, can go on enjoying life, living daintily as Schopenhauer always did, and, instead of courting death, seek in every way possible to evade it. Instead of believing, must we not say that such persons only believe that they believe? Their pessimistic philosophy, or their orthodox philosophy, is simply a *theory*—not a deep conviction of the soul. While the surface currents of their logic set toward the cold north of eternal hopelessness and despair, or the abandonment of life as an evil thing, the deeper currents of their real faith, their feeling, their life-experience, their unconscious moral judgment, set toward a sunnier south region where life takes on lovelier and truer aspects, and becomes a thing to be desired, and where hope sings her ever-lasting song.

So it is that pessimism, as well as many another hideous, unnatural philosophy in this world, contradicts itself, refutes itself. Men really cannot believe it because it is not natural,—at the bottom it is not rational. It is a mere ingenious cob-house thing built up by the logical faculty, which a truer logic tends to correct, and especially which all that is deepest, sanest, highest, best in men's moral nature revolts against as neither true nor worthy.

Of course in saying all this I am not denying, I am not even shutting my eyes to, the vast amount of sorrow, suffering, and evil there is in the world. No one has any right to shut his eyes to these darker sides of human experience. I am not sure but that such writers as Schopenhauer and Hartmann do a real service to the world—in holding these up sternly to view. For in order to remedy evils we must see them, and see them in strong lights.

But this said, we are in a condition to protest all the more emphatically against the assumption that life is in its nature bad, or that it contains more evil than good.

Those who make such claims strangely overlook the conditions of human development—strangely overlook the fact that evil is often only good in the making.

Pain is spoken of as if it were bad and only bad. So too with sorrow. So with disappointment. So with struggle and hardships. But what is the truth in the matter? The truth is that out of these very so called evils come some of the very greatest blessings known to man. These have been the stairs by which he has climbed. These have been the spurs that have urged him on. That man is not to-day a savage, is due to the fact that cold, hunger, struggle, a desire to escape inconvenience and suffering, have driven him to labor, to think, to discover, to invent, to make the physical forces of nature his servants, to combine with his fellow, to develop society, to form governments and institutions for mutual protection and helpfulness, and so to rise into an ever wider and nobler life; and in all this he has found a constant joy and satisfaction, as well as enduring good. It would be easy to fill a whole discourse with

illustrations of all this—illustrations showing how it is that out of what are called evils, and what our pessimistic friends consider nothing but evils, the most beneficent and valuable results forever come.

So too with the dissatisfaction and unrest of man's life. Schopenhauer points to these as evils, evils only. But here also there is a most important other side. Man's very unrest is a sign of his nobility. Would it be a good for man to be always satisfied with what he is or has attained? Not so. That would be to doom him to remain forever in his ignorance and poverty. That were to cut him off from all growth, or progress, or improvement. The unrest, the dissatisfaction in man's heart, considered by itself alone, is doubtless an evil. But when we consider it in its results, lo, a marvellous change! The dry rod has budded; the desert has blossomed as the rose. It is man's dissatisfaction with his present attainment that suggests something better, and gives him strength to reach it. Instead of being, as Schopenhauer urges, a mere worm to eat out the joy and value of life, it is the voice of a higher self ever calling one to come up to higher things. And so again, we find that which superficial looking calls a curse, turning, under a deeper gaze, into a great and lasting blessing.

Indeed the great trouble with our pessimistic friends—with all those who insist that the world is evil and life a misfortune—seems to be, that they ignore perspective, they take no account of development, and especially they cut off all considerations of a life, or the possibility of a life, beyond the present world.

The idea of reaching an end by means, they seem not to be able to conceive. They would have all consummations reached instantly—as primitive people have very generally supposed the world to have been created by some sudden fiat.

Their scheme has in it no place for growth. An apple must be of full size and ripe, immediately, as soon as it exists at all, or else the whole plan of things connected with the apple is bad. That a plan of things can be good which gives us an apple first as bud, then blossom, then small,

hard, green, and as yet worthless fruit, and then finally, in its time, full-grown, rich, ripe fruit, they seem unable to understand.

They would have the oak on the hill side grow rugged without battling with any winds and storms. They would have human muscles develop without the trouble of exercise. They would have man possessed of foresight without any experience in life to call it into existence. They would have a child become a man without growing, and possessed of a man's knowledge without acquiring it. They would have nations attain civilization without going through any of the experience or discipline by which alone civilization becomes possible. They would have the race become in this little infant school of time of a brief seventy years, all that we can imagine it ever becoming in an endless existence. And because all this cannot be, they call the world bad.

Their quarrel really is with the nature of things. They complain because the impossible is not possible; because two and two cannot make five; because there cannot be a valley without two hills; because black must be different from white, and cold from heat. In other words their complaint is really against the law of cause and effect everywhere operative in the universe—the plan of things through which the universe always reaches its ends gradually and by the use of means, and according to rational methods. As if all this were not good! As if all this were not itself the very pledge, and groundwork, and heart of beneficence!

No, from whatever side we approach it the pessimist's theory that life is an evil or that the universe is bad, breaks down. Half the labor and pains which he expends to give a slender and delusive show of plausibility to his dismal doctrine, ought to suffice to bring any rational man to his very knees in wonder, admiration and awe before the universe, because of its marvellous exhibitions everywhere, not only of power, but also of wisdom and good; and still more before the human soul, because of its greatness and grandeur, and the consequent value to itself of its own existence, and especially the wealth of prophesy and promise wrapped

up in itself of nobler realizations of good yet awaiting it, of which all it has experienced in this world are but as first streaks of eastern dawn to the full day.

I say prophecy and promise wrapped up in the soul itself, of nobler realizations of good awaiting it beyond the present scene. So far, I have spoken only of this world. The facts and arguments that have passed before us in evidence of the value of life and the goodness of the universe, have presupposed only necessarily the earthly existence. But how much stronger do they become when we lift the veil upon the possibilities—shall we not say probabilities, of the future?

The truth is, the more we study man's nature, and his life in this world, the more he seems to be standing in a vestibule; the more his life here seems to be only a fragment—a single figure or part of a figure of a larger pattern—a stone or two of a great temple; the more the present existence seems to be a sort of primary school. Something seems to be beyond it; something more seems to be implied by it. This is the philosophy which appears incomparably more rational than any other,—which solves incomparably more difficulties than any other.

The skilled naturalist from a single bone, or piece of a bone, of an animal, will tell you what the animal must be, its nature, habits, sphere of life. In like manner take any faculty of man's mind, or any bit of his intellectual or moral nature, and try to draw a rational inference from that as to what man is, and was made for; and can you do otherwise than picture him as designed for a history more extended than a brief three score years and ten, and a sphere larger than this little island of earth?

Take his hope, that leaps out into an infinite future, and claims that future for an inheritance; take his trust, that lays hold of the feet of God, and looking up in his face, says, "Thou hast eternal life and everlasting good in thy hand. I know they are for me, thy child." Tell me, do not such hope and such trust signify that man is more than an ephemera?

Take man's thought, that flies from world to world and grasps almost a universe, and tell me if the mind thus thinking is not formed on too vast a plan for an inch of earth and a moment of time?

Who shall say that the real meaning of the dissatisfaction and unrest in man's heart is not that he is a stranger in a strange land?

The mistake of those who call life evil is that they take means for ends; fragments for wholes; processes for completions; what their poor, short-sighted eyes can see for all there is. They judge of a fruit tree in June as if it were October. They look at a single part of a great machine and because they can see no good in it by itself they say the part is useless and the whole machine is a failure.

I stand beside a great building under process of erection—how easy it is for me here to be a pessimist! Here are piles of stone of all sizes and shapes. "What good is there in these?" I exclaim. "These are not a building." I see lumber and brick, and lime, and lath and slate, and iron beams, and piles of earth on every side, in utter disorder. "What are they good for? There is no building here. The whole affair is a mockery." But, one who is wiser approaches me, and quietly says, "Wait." And on another day, he brings me again. The disorder has not disappeared, indeed in some respects has increased; and yet, in the midst, here is a wall, and there is a column, and there an arch. And he says, "See, the building is coming; these are prophesies of what shall be." Again, after longer delay, he brings me once more. The disorder and confusion are gone; the building stands complete, beautiful.

Friends, believe me, there is no philosophy for a moment worthy of your attention or mine, that does not come into the confusions and hasty judgments of earth to man, "Waite. Be patient. Perhaps humanity is just a building of God. Perhaps each individual human life is a building of God."

Buildings of God! Ah! with that thought, what light comes! Surely that is what they must be—buildings of God!

Everything indicates that. And if they are, then what matters it that we see incompleteness to-day, confusion to-day, toil and burden-bearing to-day, even pain and struggle and sorrow to-day? Isn't all this incident to building? The completion waits. But we also can wait God's time. It shall come by and by.

Here at last we have a philosophy which is one with the profoundest and loftiest faith. Here we have a faith that is one with the deepest reason. This is religion's voice. This is the voice of Jesus, and Paul and the prophets, and all the saintliest men and loftiest spiritual seers of the ages. This is the voice of your soul and mine.

And oh, how the shadows lift, with such a view of life and its meaning as this! How horizons widen! How the stars of eternal hope shine out! How lightness comes to our steps! songs to our lips! joy to our hearts! How sorrows pass away, as we chant, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning!"

And now as we have ground for hope and trust and joy, so too have we for gratitude and thankfulness. And not for thankfulness, either, simply of that poor kind which rejoices in favors received at the expense of other, saying: "Oh, God, I thank thee that I am well while others are sick, that while others are in want my wants are supplied, that while others are left in heathen darkness I have the gospel, that while others are gone beyond the reach of hope and mercy I still live and enjoy thy favor;" not, I say, for such poor, miserable, unworthy, selfishness as that, but ground for a thankfulness, large, noble, unselfish, worthy, honoring to God, namely, thankfulness for the universe as in its central meaning good, thankfulness for life in every form in which it comes to men, as a blessing unspeakably precious.

This, then, is our answer to the question with which we set out. Such are the reasons why it seems to me we cannot, as rational men, as men who listen reverently to all the voices that speak to us out of human experience, and out of our own souls, accept the theories of the pessimists, or of those

who doubt God or despair of men; but, instead, find ourselves compelled to believe that the power which formed the world and placed humanity here, is benevolent not malevolent, and therefore that

"Good shall fall,
At last, far off, at last to all
And every winter change to spring."

Such are some of the reasons—I cannot but think weighty and solid reasons why—even though standing amidst earth's clouds and shadows, we yet may confidently believe in an Eternal Sun over all: why, even though finding ourselves living in the early, frosty, changeful, stormy April of imperfect human justice, we yet must believe that a warmer, sunnier May and June will come by and by in God's sure season; why, though face to face with the struggles, the sorrow's, the sufferings of humanity, we yet must believe that these are educational and disciplinary, and therefore planned for man's ultimate good, and not his permanent harm.

So, then, as the result of our study together to-day, I think we have reason to go home, not with fear or despair in our hearts, but with hope and trust and great courage, singing with Browning:

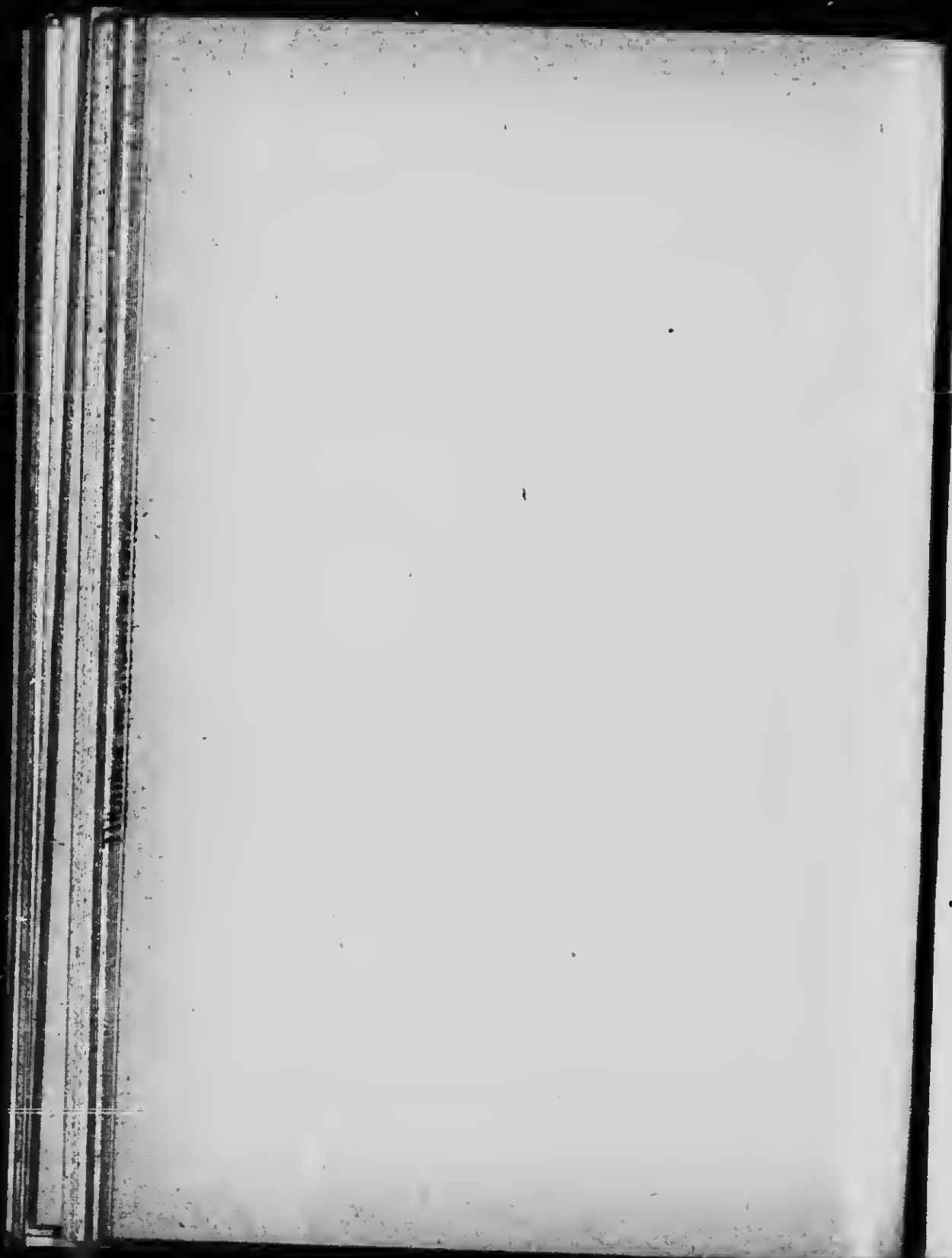
"God's in his heaven,—
All right with the world; "

Chanting with the old Hebrew psalmist,

"The Lord is good to all,
And his tender mercies are over all his works; "

our hearts thrilled with the exultant declaration of Paul,
"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

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IF I WERE TWENTY AGAIN, WHAT WOULD I DO ?

As regards the question before us, it takes only a very little thinking to make several things clear.

One is that none of us can go back and become twenty again, when once we have passed that very inspiring time in human life. There are no eddies or backward currents in the stream of time. We may pray never so persistently,

"Backward, turn backward, O Time in thy flight,
Make me a child again just for to-night,"

but the flight of time is only onward.

A second thing that is clear is, that if we *could* go back to our past, unless we could have greater wisdom than we had then, or be differently circumstanced (in which case it would hardly be our past), we probably should not do very differently from what we did. So that it would be idle to wish to have a chance to try life over again, unless we could do it with the help of greater wisdom or better advantages.

Still a third thing grows clear. There probably isn't one of us who has passed on beyond youth who has not found life bringing to him gifts which he would not, on any consideration, consent to surrender, even for the privilege of going back and being young again. Where is the father or mother who would give up his or her children? Where is the true husband or wife who would give up the other, the dearer self? Where is the man or woman who does not have friendships which have grown and deepened and taken on added sacredness with the years, until they could of no condition be parted with?

All this helps us to see that youth does not possess all the good there is in life, or all the attractiveness. Youth has its own charm, as the spring has. And it is a very rare charm. But one would not want the year to be all

spring. It is better that summer and autumn and winter should come in their place. Each brings its own great wealth of good, and its own satisfactions.

The truth is, the glory of life lies in the full roundness of it,—in going through all the rich and precious experiences of every season of life, from the earliest spring-time to the latest autumn,—from light-hearted childhood in the nursery as life's morning sun begins to climb the eastern sky, to peaceful old age by the fireside, as life's evening sun sinks in the west.

With this much by way of introduction, to prevent misunderstanding, let me come to the question that is before me, "If I were twenty again, what would I do?" Let me suppose it possible to go back to that age, and begin life again at that point with my present knowledge and experience. How would I shape my life? In what respects would I do differently from what I have done? What rules or principles of life would I adopt?

Of course these are large questions which can only be imperfectly answered. But perhaps we may be able to get some thoughts on the subject not wholly without value. Let me speak first of one thing that I would *not* do.

If I were twenty again, I would *not be in a hurry*. Perhaps there is no time in life when one is more likely to feel in haste than at twenty. Youth is gone; manhood and womanhood are upon us. We begin to feel stirring within us strange new powers and ambitions. We grow eager to get out into the world,—to plunge into its battles, to work out careers for ourselves. We begin to feel old. I doubt if I have ever felt so old since, as I did at twenty or twenty-one. I now see how very young I was.

The reason why I would not be in a hurry if I were twenty again, is, that that independent, responsible life upon which one is soon to enter, is so large, so many sided, so serious a thing, that one needs the largest and best possible preparation for it—a preparation much

larger and deeper and more thorough than anyone can possibly get who rushes into it in haste.

It so happens that some of the greatest and most momentous decisions in life have to be made soon after one sets out upon an independent career.

One of these is the business or calling in life that one is to follow. It is immensely important that he shall choose that business or calling wisely. Success or failure is likely to hang upon the decision. It is plain then that in so serious a matter there should be no undue haste. In the case of some young persons, the choice of a calling seems to make itself—if I may use the expression. That is to say, the young person very early develops a decided taste for some calling, or shows a strong aptitude in a certain direction, which is nature's way of pointing out to him what he can do best. In some respects young persons are fortunate who are born with such a natural bent or taste or aptitude. They are saved the anxiety and risk of making a choice of a calling for themselves.

But in many, perhaps a majority of cases, young people are not aided to a choice of a vocation by any such clear and decided indication in themselves. They have to canvas the whole field of callings open, study their own nature as best they can, study the nature and the possibilities of the various callings, and thus decide between them. It is not an easy matter. In many cases it is exceedingly difficult. A false step taken in haste or ignorance may prove a life-long disaster.

Hence the importance of waiting before taking the step, until one has some maturity of judgment, and some knowledge of himself and the world. Here comes in the value of the years spent in school. What is a course of high school study? What is a course of college study? Each is a voyage of discovery, made with two distinct objects in view. One object is, that the student may discover nature,—I mean, find out all possible about the world he lives in; the other is that he may discover

himself,—I mean, find out and develop as fully as possible his own faculties and powers. Now when a young man has made honestly and earnestly one or both of these voyages of discovery, and thus found out what they have to reveal to him about himself, the world, and human life, do you not see how much better prepared he is to make intelligently and wisely such a great decision as that of what his career or work in life shall be?

But a choice of a vocation is not the only one that he has to make. *Other* decisions almost as important follow. Shall he marry? If so, whom shall he marry? No decisions can be more serious than these. How great is the need of wisdom, maturity of judgment, knowledge of human nature, knowledge of one's self, in order to make them safely!

Nor yet may we stop. Launching out upon independent life not only means decisions to be made as to one's calling, and concerning marriage and the home, but much else. Life's many-sided responsibilities at once confront him. He must take his independent place in the community. He must assume the duties of citizenship. He must become a member of the social order, and adjust his life accordingly. If he is to be a business man, will he set his standard of business high, and hence do something to maintain a standard of honor and integrity in business circles around him? In society will he be an integer, or a cypher? Will he become a factor in the community for the elevation of its intellectual and social life? Or will he simply drift with the tide? As to religion, what will he do? Will he support and help it, or will he be an indifferent? Or, will he sneer at and oppose it? And if he supports religion, will he support a kind that is most enlightened, most elevating, and best, or a kind that is allied with ignorance and that tyrannizes over the human mind?

These are some of the questions of grave import, both to himself and to society, which crowd upon a young man when he launches out upon independent life. He

must meet them and in some fashion settle them. Shall he settle them wisely, or foolishly?

You see how great is the need of intelligence. You see how serious a matter it is for him to hurry into life before he has the intellectual furnishing of knowledge and judgment to enable him to settle them properly. You see the need of that discipline of mind and that knowledge of the world, of human nature and of himself, which the school and the college are calculated to give. You see why I said that if I were at twenty, with my present experience, I would not be in a hurry to get into the work and responsibilities of life, until I was as well as possible prepared.

If I were twenty again, while setting out to give my intellect the best training possible, I would not neglect those other kinds of training that are equally important, namely, training of the will, the conscience, and the heart.

As to the will, I would discipline myself to the making of prompt decisions, and clear and strong resolves, not to be shaken.

As to conscience, I would say, it shall be my king. What it clearly commands, that I am to obey without question. Integrity, even in the smallest things, is to be the inviolable rule of my life.

As to the heart, I would set out to keep all its holy fountains of love and sympathy open, that their waters may make green the waste places of life, for myself and all with whom I have to do.

If I were twenty I would look out very carefully what habits I formed.

Habits are like a statue that an artist moulds in clay. While it is fresh it is plastic: he can change it as he pleases. Let it stand a while and it hardens, and changes become very difficult. In early life it is comparatively easy to correct bad habits, or to form good ones. The young person who is wise will look very carefully to the habits which he allows to fasten themselves upon him.

If I were twenty, I would set out to keep clean lips

and a clean heart, as not less important than a clean face or clean clothing. I would try to provide myself always with pure air to breathe. But at the same time I would try to remember that it is quite as necessary to have the moral atmosphere one breathes sweet and wholesome, as to have the physical atmosphere so. I would as much shun the moral poison of unworthy companionships, as I would the physical poison of malarial swamps and pest-houses.

If I were twenty again what would I read?

I would not be narrow in my reading, and yet I would not read indiscriminately, and certainly I would try to exercise some common sense in my reading. Is there anything more amazing than to see men and women all around us who would not think of eating and drinking everything they saw, wholesome or unwholesome, fit to be eaten or filthy, yet *reading* absolutely *everything* that comes in their way, no matter how worthless or how debasing it may be? If I were twenty again and didn't have a vein of idiocy or lunacy running through me, I don't believe I would do that. I don't believe I would fill my mind with the weak and worthless and often wicked stuff that offers itself to us in so many of the popular books of the time, especially the novels, and in our great daily papers. If I thought my stomach too good to be filled with trash I think I would regard my head as too good to be similarly filled. Of course I do not mean that I would discard all newspaper reading, but I do mean that I would try to read only the best; and I would limit myself. I would no more allow myself to read habitually the sensational records of scandal and gossip and vice and crime and prize-fights that crowd and blacken the pages of some of our great dailies, than I would allow myself habitually to drink from a sewer.

Beyond a limited amount of periodical reading, I would be a reader of *books*. I do not know that I would absolutely adopt Emerson's rule to read no book until it is a year old; but I would not read books merely because

Mrs. Grundy was talking about them. Above all, I would read *great* books. My motto should be few books and noble. I would choose a few great minds—the greatest—and these I would know as I know my nearest friend. If I were to select three books out from among all the rest in the world, they should be the Bible, Shakespeare and Emerson; the Bible as the world's greatest book of religion, and the book woven into all our civilization as no other is; Shakespeare as an epitome of the whole world in one glorious volume; and Emerson as the greatest seer and illuminator of life that God has given to our modern times. To be at home in these three books is to possess the best culture known to man.

If I were twenty again, I would take care to lay for myself the best foundation possible of physical health. I would remember that a sound mind needs a sound body to make its activities effective. I would ride a bicycle, I would play tennis, I would row a boat, I would swim, I would take long walks; I would do physical work where opportunity offered. If I had muscles like an ox, and plenty of money to pay surgeons to set my broken limbs, perhaps I would play football. I would certainly endeavor in all rational ways to build up for myself a strong, vigorous and healthy body, as a physical basis for my life work in the world. I would not willingly violate any of the laws of life and health. But I would make myself intelligent as to what those laws are, and then I would obey them as the holy laws of God.

If I were twenty I would greatly prize worthy friends and friendships, and would set out to make much of them for all life. That should be counted a great day when a new and noble friendship was formed or an old one deepened. Nor should I have any fear lest friends might not be true. I would determine myself to be true, and that would be sufficient guaranty that they would be.

If I were twenty again I would set out to keep my

life in close touch with nature. I would be an observer and a student of nature. "Nature never did betray the heart of him that loved her." I would be her lover fond and true. I would know the secret nooks of the wild flowers, and their times of blooming. I would know the friendly trees and their habits. I would know the birds around me and their songs. I would know the stars above my head, and the mysterious phenomena of the clouds. I would know the winds and the waters. All these should be my associates and prized friends. For nothing, like companionship with nature, can keep the eye bright, the step elastic, the heart young, and make us wise with that wisdom that never grows old.

If I were twenty again, I would set out to lead a simple life—a life as little enslaved as possible by the artificialities and the conventionalities of society. I would make Emerson's motto mine, "Plain living and high thinking," for there is not much high thinking in this world except where there is plain living. I would aim at simple tastes and simple habits; simplicity in clothing, simplicity in food, simplicity in enjoyments. Simple things wear, they do not pall. They are new every morning and fresh every evening. Whereas the elaborate and the artificial give pleasure for a little while, but soon tire us, over-burden us, wear out our lives.

If I were twenty again I wouldn't smoke. I would save the thousand dollars which smoking would cost me by the time I reached middle life, and put the money into books. I would preserve a sweet breath, instead of manufacturing for myself a foul one. I would keep my blood pure, instead of filling it with tobacco. I would keep my pulse strong and my heart-beat vigorous, instead of wearing out my pulse, bringing on myself what the doctors call the tobacco heart, and needlessly shortening my life.

If I were twenty I wouldn't drink. I would adopt strict total abstinence as a principle. I would do this

partly for my own sake—as in every way the safest, wisest and best thing for my own health, power of work, and happiness; and partly I would do it for the sake of others, desiring to exert what little influence I possessed in favor of temperance, and against what is clearly the worst evil of modern society.

If I were twenty, and looked at things as I do now, I certainly would not bet; I certainly would not gamble; I certainly would never buy a lottery ticket. I don't believe I would play billiards; and I don't believe I would play cards. Not that there is any harm in billiards of themselves. The game is one that might be commended if it could be disconnected from its associations. But it is hard to conceive of a game more generally associated with drinking, with smoking, with betting in a small way—and sometimes in large ways—and with society that is far from the best. If a young man knows how to play hilliards, that very knowledge opens the door and almost drags him into low associations. Can any self-respecting young man, whose time, money and character are worth something, afford it? I don't believe he can.

Much the same seems true of cards. Of course cards of themselves are as harmless as any other bits of pasteboard, except for their use. And we can easily conceive of their being used in ways wholly unobjectionable. But two or three things are to be said of them. They are the common instruments of gambling, so that if a young man is a good player it is much more easy than it otherwise would be for him to fall into gambling habits. Still further, card-playing affords to the player no physical exercise; it is not carried on in the open air, as such games as tennis are; it is an enormous waster of time; it seems actually to kill intellectual life wherever it goes. There are hundreds and thousands of communities all up and down this country that seem mentally dead; you can't stir up an interest in any intellectual thing; and the cause is cards. The people go to innumerable

progressive euchre and other card parties, and the result seems to be the impossibility of creating an interest in anything higher.

It is these evil effects that seem everywhere to be associated with card playing, that makes me class it with billiard playing, and incline me to believe that, on the whole, it is a serious evil, and that the best way to deal with it is to let it alone.

If I were twenty, with my present knowledge and thought, would I dance? I think I would. I know dancing may be carried to an extreme. And there are certain evils much associated with it—as late hours, and company not always carefully guarded. But in its favor we may say that it is a very beautiful form of recreation, that late hours are not universal, and certainly not necessary; and that it is easy to find in most places, with only a very little care, society in connection with dancing that is in every way unexceptionable.

If I were twenty again, I would learn to sing—if I had any musical capacity at all; and if circumstances would allow, I would learn to play an instrument. Music is such an excellent recreation; it fills so important a place in the social circle and the home, and it is such a joy and inspiration in all human life, that I cannot but think young people make a serious mistake who neglect it.

If I were twenty again, I would make distinct provision for the joy side of life. Not that pleasure-seeking is the highest aim of existence. The man who lives simply for pleasure will fail of his object, or he ought to. Nevertheless, pleasure is legitimate in life. It ought to be scattered all along through life. We should not willingly neglect any fitting opportunity to smile, to laugh, to sing, to play with little children, to enter into the joy of others, to notice beautiful objects, to catch the sunshine, to make others happy, and thus find happiness for ourselves.

If I were twenty, with my life yet to be lived, I would set out to walk through this world on my own feet. My

feet may not be very good, but they are better than crutches. My intellect may be inferior in strength and vigor to some other man's, but it is the one that God has given me, and I would trust it. "Self-respect" and "self-reliance" are words to be written on the banner of every life, that proposes to achieve worthy ends.

If I were twenty, and knew what I know now, I would dare, I would *dare* to an extent that few young men do. But I would dare in directions in which daring is worth while, and not in those where it is contemptible. There is a kind of daring popular in some quarters that is simply weakness under another name.

A young fellow is challenged by another to fight. There is no good reason why he should fight. To do so will be silly and brutal. But his companions look on and laugh and shout that he is afraid. He hasn't courage to withstand that laugh, and so fights. It is his cowardice that makes him fight, not his bravery.

Splendid as was the heroism of the men who fought the war for the reunion, the anti-slavery reformers were more heroic. It took higher courage to be a Garrison, a Wendell Phillips, or a Theodore Parker, than to be a Grant a Sherman or a Sheridan.

The supreme sphere for bravery in this world is that of the *moral*. There is no other such heroism as that of *duty*.

If I were a young man again, I would set out upon life daring to be on the side of what seemed to me true and right, at whatever cost. No matter how unpopular a cause might be, if it commended itself to me as just, and in the interest of humanity, it should have such support as I could give it. Since God has given me but one life, I would try to make of it something worth while. And that can't be done by playing the shirk or the coward.

If I were twenty again, and saw things as I do now, I would not live for myself alone. I would begin at once planning for some distinct service of my fellows. Many young people of good intention make a mistake

here. They wait; they postpone efforts at service. They say, Now we must give all our time to our studies, or to getting a start in business. When study is passed, or when we are well established in business, then we shall have time to plan for the helping of others. But will they have any more time then than now? Will they be any less selfish then than now? The very delay will tend to dry up their sympathies. The probabilities are very strong that any of us who allow ourselves to live for ourselves alone now, and to forget others now, will not much improve in any future. Now is the accepted time. Now is the day of salvation. If any of us believe in helpful and unselfish lives, the only safe thing to do is to begin living such lives to-day, no matter where we are, or what our circumstances may be.

If I were twenty again, what attitude would I take toward religion? I answer, What attitude could I take except that of interest in it, as something which represents the highest side of human life?

What would my religion be? It could be only one thing, if, going back to twenty, I carried with me the light and experience which I now have. It would have to be that reasonable, that natural, that beautiful religion of the spirit which Jesus taught and which is gathered up into diamond points of flashing light, in the Golden Rule, the blessing craved on enemies, the Lord's Prayer, and the commands to love God and our neighbor. This is the religion which satisfies the reason, the conscience and the heart of man, everywhere, to an extent that no other religion known to the world does. Certainly this is the religion which all that is best within me welcomes, with satisfaction and great joy.

If I were twenty again, would I be afraid of religious inquiry? A thousand times No. Can we believe that God has made it safer for a man to go through the world with his eyes shut than with them open?

If I were twenty again what church would I interest myself in? I would make myself intelligent concerning

all. I would try to study all with an open mind and a sympathetic spirit. And then, whichever one I found the freest, and in line with the best intelligence and soundest conscience of the time ; whichever one I found teaching most clearly and exemplifying best the pure, simple, noble religion of Jesus and the human soul, that church should be my church, and to it, with all my heart I would pledge my adhesion, my love, and my life-long loyalty.

Here I close.

Such, then, is my answer, fragmentary and incomplete, but as full as time permits, to the question, What would I do if I were twenty again ?

I shall not become twenty again. God allows none of us to go back to re-tread the road over which we have once passed. Doubtless it is best that He does not. It is better to go forward than back. Courage for the future rather than regrets for the past, is the need of us all. But if any of us who are a little farther along the path than some of the rest, can call back words of suggestion, or warning, or cheer, surely it is well.

WHAT IS UNITARIANISM? It is the religion of Jesus. It is the religion of reason. It is the religion of the living God in living souls. It is the Christianity of the Beatitudes, the Golden Rule, the Lord's Prayer, and the two Great Commands of Love to God and Man.

THE MOTTO OF UNITARIANS:—

"They must upward still and onward,
Who would keep abreast of Truth."—*Lowell.*

LINCOLN AND UNITARIANISM. Abraham Lincoln, on being asked why he had never joined a church, replied: "It is because I have never been able to give my assent without mental reservation to their long and intricate statements of theological belief. But when any church will inscribe over its altar, as its sole qualification for membership, the Savior's two commands, in which he summed up both the Law and the Prophets, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself,' that church will I join with all my heart."

The Unitarian Church "inscribes over its altars as its sole qualification for membership" exactly these commands.

THE AIM OF UNITARIANS:—

"To build the Universal Church,
Lofty as is the love of God,
And ample as the wants of man."—*Longfellow.*

WHO ARE UNITARIANS? Such representatives of what is highest and best in American intelligence and character, as Franklin, Jefferson and Adams; as Hawthorne, Sumner and Motley; as Horace Mann, Agassiz, and President Eliot of Harvard; as Mary A. Livermore, Helen Hunt Jackson and Julia Ward Howe; as Channing, Freeman Clarke and Starr King; as Emerson, Lowell and Longfellow; as Robert Collyer, Dr. Savage and Edward Everett Hale, and scores and hundreds more of the greatest and best men and women that this country has produced.

A Religion believed by such minds is worthy of attention.

KEEP YOURSELF PURE.

What I want to say in this lecture may be fittingly introduced by a poem written by one of the best of our living American writers. The poem is entitled

THE STATUE OF INJUSTICE.

I dreamed I was a sculptor, and the king
Who loved me well, and knew the Greek at heart,
Bade me to carve for him, who loved the art,
A statue of Injustice. Quick the wing
Of fancy flew to every ancient thing
That e'er from that fell crime did living start,
And come to be of human life a part,
And from whose monstrous form new wrongs did spring.
But never old-time wrong, like one I knew
Strong and triumphant in the world to-day;
And so a man and woman I did mold,
Sinful alike, and waiting sentence due,
While the stern judge the woman frail did flog,
And bade the man depart, free and more bold.

Is there in the world an exhibition of more flagrant injustice than such opposite treatment of sin in man and woman?

We shall not make much further progress in civilization until we learn that virtue and vice in one sex are virtue and vice in the other. Man and woman must rise or fall together. It is useless to attempt to make woman pure so long as man is impure.

Of course I know, and every one who has been long in the world knows, that as soon as one utters a sentiment of this kind he enters upon a battle-ground. Many go so far as to declare that purity in men is impossible, even if it were desirable. But let no young man be deceived by such utterances. Personal purity is not only as desirable, it is also as possible, for men as for women. It has to be confessed with shame that multitudes of men are impure.

But it is also true that multitudes are pure. All the better ethical codes of the world condemn vice in both sexes. These codes have not been formed by dreamers, but by practical men who knew what they were doing. All the higher religions of the world, like the Buddhist, the Zoroastrian, the Jewish, and the Christian, have enjoined upon men personal purity. Of course many of the believers in these religions have failed to keep the command, just as they have failed to keep other commands. But many have not failed; multitudes have reached the standard of a perfectly pure life. And we may be sure that more and more are reaching and are going to reach it as the world advances in its development, and rises above the plane of mere animalism to the higher plane of the intellectual and the moral.

Those who tell us that personal impurity is a natural vice, and therefore cannot be overcome, forget that man's nature is many-sided, and that if one part of his nature tends to mere unlawful, animal indulgence, another part tends to something better; and manhood consists in control, intelligent guidance, the subjection of the lower to the higher, the subjugation of the beast to the angel.

" So high is grandeur to our dust,
 So near is God to man,
 When duty whispers low, 'Thou must,'
 The youth replies, 'I can.' "

One of the most specious and fatal thoughts which panders to evil instil into the minds of young men, is the notion that sinful indulgence is necessary to health.

It is one of the disgraces and perils of the age that there are books and pamphlets printed and industriously circulated teaching this body-and-soul-destroying doctrine, just as there are books and pamphlets defending gambling, and lotteries, and saloons, and every other form of vice. Men like to find excuses for agreeable wrong. Hence many grasp eagerly at this. But believe me, it is hollow and false. The whole history of humanity proves it false. The high-

est medical authority declares it false. The very suggestion is an insult to human nature.

There are no healthier men, there are no men of more perfect physical development, than men of perfect continence. Every intelligent physician knows this. Every person who has to do with the physical training of men knows it. While on the other hand every one whose eyes are open at all to the subject knows that incontinence, both in the form of solitary vice and that of crime with others, is one of the worst known underminers and destroyers of health.

Said Sir Galahad, the noblest of all King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table,

"My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure."

To be sure it has to be confessed that there are physicians who speak lightly to young men of sexual vice, and even encourage them in it. But who are the physicians who do this? They are the same that speak lightly of smoking and encourage the formation of that habit, when they know that it is slowly sapping the wealth and strength of thousands of young men. They are the same that encourage the drinking habit, when none know better than they its dangers and ravages.

The truth is that to form correct judgments concerning any matters like these, personal virtue and self-control are as necessary as intelligence. The physician who is himself not virtuous, or who himself yields weakly to his appetites, and indulges in what is harmful, for want of self-control, is by that very fact disqualified to form a correct judgment. His personal habits and indulgences are almost sure to bias him. He does not like to condemn his own practices. Instinctively and almost unconsciously he learns to look for excuses for himself. Little by little he forms the habit of seeing facts not as they are but as he wants them to be. His own indulgences blind the eyes of his mind so that he very soon becomes incapable of being a judge, and in the

nature of the case can henceforth be only an advocate. Young men should understand this. Then they will see how worse than folly it is likely to be to go to a smoking or wine-drinking doctor to get advice about the use of tobacco or liquor, or to any physician other than one who to large intelligence adds a character of spotless purity, to get advice regarding the subject of chastity.

One of the most dreadful facts that confront us in society to-day is that of the immoral physician.

While no profession contains nobler men, or men more worthy of honor and confidence than that of medicine, it is also sadly true that none contains worse enemies to public and private virtue. None more than the better class of physicians themselves feel the deep disgrace of the undeniable fact that hundreds of physicians gain a livelihood by pandering to vice, especially the vice of private and social impurity. That is what the wide-spread practice of the crime of abortion means. That is what those abominable advertisements mean, found in nearly every paper one takes up, of "Lost manhood restored," "Dr. So-and-so, specialist in diseases brought on by youthful indiscretion"—and the like—advertisements that any decent paper should be ashamed to have on its pages. What dependence can a young man put upon the counsel of men who make their money and grow rich out of the evil lives of others, and whose pecuniary interest it is therefore to encourage vice?

Thus you see why it is unsafe in all such matters as these of which I am speaking to trust any physicians except those of known high moral character.

What will physicians advise, who, in addition to being intelligent, are morally pure and sound, and are therefore to be relied on? Be sure they will always and everywhere tell you that purity conduces to health and strength of both body and mind, while impurity conduces to physical, mental and moral weakness and disease.

Some years ago fifty leading physicians of Philadelphia declared over their own names: "There is neither physical

KEEP YOURSELF PURE.

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nor social necessity for men or women to yield themselves to a life of evil." *

The diseases that connect themselves with, and grow out of social impurity, are not only among the most foul and revolting known, but they are among the most insidious, dangerous, and difficult to control or eradicate. Nor do they stop with the wrong-doer. They are among the most certain to communicate their dreadful effects to offspring, generation after generation.

This is perhaps the most solemn thought connected with the whole matter. Not only is it true that "Whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap," but others also—others who are innocent—must reap of the baleful harvest. So true is it that no man liveth unto himself alone, or dieth unto himself alone. There is no surer destroyer known, of both body and soul, than the confirmed habit of personal impurity. It is like a fire inside the walls and ceilings of a house, that spreads and eats, out of sight, until the whole structure is aflame; and nobody can tell

*Quotation from a protest sent to the Pennsylvania Legislature against licensing prostitution in that State, 1874. See "State Regulation of Vice," by A. M. Powell, p. 75.

At a meeting of the New York Academy of Medicine (Section on Public Health, Legal Medicine, etc.), held in that city March 18, 1891, to consider the subject of prostitution, Dr. E. L. Keyes spoke strongly against the assumed necessity of vice on the part of men. The following resolution was moved by Dr. H. F. Junor and seconded by Dr. Keyes:

"Resolved, That it is the opinion of this section that sexual indulgence is not necessary to the preservation of health in any condition of sexual impulse, and that advice by physicians to such illicit acts to young men is not sanctioned by medical science."

The resolution nearly carried, in a meeting of between three and four hundred physicians. On technical grounds it was laid on the table. But not a single physician ventured to assert the physiological impossibility of continence, or the permissibility of license.

how many other beautiful structures must go, too, before the disaster ends.

Thus, young men, you see some of the reasons why you ought to keep yourselves pure, and listen to no temptations to the contrary, come from whatsoever source they may.

You should do so for your body's sake. Who are you that you may abuse this marvelous physical nature that God has given you? Says St. Paul: "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit?" And again: "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy."

But it is not alone your body that is concerned. You should preserve your personal purity for your mind's sake. I can think of hardly anything more dreadful than to be compelled to go through life with a mind filled with impure imaginations and foul memories. You would be ashamed to hang your room about with evil pictures. Even more important it is that your minds be kept clear from such. But only by a pure life can you keep your mind free from such abominations.

You should keep yourself pure for the sake of your mother, who loves you; and your sisters, if you have sisters, who love you too,—all of whom would be dishonored by any stain upon you.

Sacredly should you guard your own purity for the sake of her whom you may one day call by the holy name of wife. When that day comes you will expect purity of her. Can you, for shame, ask of her what you cannot give in return?

Perhaps most important of all, you should keep yourself pure for the sake of the young lives that God may sometime give you. Pure bodies and white souls should they bring into the world. Will you let them do so? Or will you dim the whiteness and soil the purity by evil allowed in yourself in these fateful years? This is a most serious matter. Many, probably most, of you who hear me, will some time be fathers. Know that you can give to your children natures no higher, in body, mind or character, than

your own. Oh, then, young men, even if you do not respect yourselves, live manly and pure lives for the sake of the unborn.

I am certainly speaking within bound when I call social impurity one of the greatest evils of our time. One of the most serious things about it is that it is present almost everywhere, and often most dangerously and fatally when we recognize it least.

I know of only one other evil of the modern world that is to be compared with it. That is intemperance. But of the two it is believed by many who seem most competent to judge, that social impurity is more widely prevalent, that it strikes its roots deeper, that it bears fruit even more corrupting and destructive to the nation, the church, the home, the individual, the present generation, and the generations coming.

Think of the fact, absolutely appalling in its terrible-ness, that there are estimated to be in the city of London 80,000 fallen women, in New York and vicinity 40,000, in Chicago 30,000, and as many or more fallen men.

What do these vast armies of fallen women mean? They mean disease and death, physical, mental, moral, spiritual, for themselves and all with whom they have to do. Hand in hand with their evil work goes drinking. So does much other crime. The poor, miserable women soon lose their beauty (for lasting beauty is ever 'the child of virtue'), soon lose their health, soon lose their friends, and in about four or five years (such seems to be the average) die the most degraded of human beings. I know of nothing more awful; I know of nothing more pitiable. And to think that every one of these wrecks was once an innocent girl,—a sweet bond from which the rose of a pure and noble womanhood ought to have blossomed for the joy of the world! But, instead of this, each has become an ugly, repulsive, poison thing, poisoning every one whom she touches,—a physical and moral pest in society.

And what do the vast armies, even more than 30,000, 40,000, 80,000 strong, of fallen men mean? Anything bet-

ter? As a superficial society sees, perhaps yes; but as truth sees, and as God sees, I suspect no. Are they purer than the women whom we despise? No. Are they less guilty? No. It is to meet their demands that all this wreck of womanhood exists. Moreover as poisoners of society, as spreaders of the contagion of impurity, they are vastly worse than their fallen sisters. When a woman becomes bad public sentiment isolates her; society casts her out. Thus her influence for evil is minimized. But we have not yet got far enough on in civilization, far enough up in Christian development, to isolate impure men, to cast them out of society. Thus they go about, living lepers, freely carrying their contagion everywhere, lowering the tone of public virtue everywhere.

Probably there is nothing that tends so much to perpetuate social vice, certainly there is nothing that stands so much in the way of every effort at public reform, as the idea, so widely prevalent in the world, that, as regards personal virtue, men and women are to be judged of by different standards,—that in a man a lower degree of virtue is admissible, and to be expected, than in a woman. Thus what is not pardonable in a woman, is easily pardoned in a man. When a woman falls from virtue she is cast out of respectable society; but if a man falls from virtue he may still move in good society nearly or quite as freely as before.

It is easy to trace this idea of a different standard of virtue for the two sexes, back to its origin in a distant and barbarous past, when woman was subject to man and held as his property because she was physically weaker than he, and when therefore it was natural that he should prescribe for her such a moral standard as he chose, and for himself such another as suited his convenience and pleasure.

But are the relations which existed between men and women in those old and barbarous times proper for our times? Is woman to-day to be regarded as only man's property? As between the two, does might still make right? Is he at liberty in this civilized age, in this enlightened

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century of Christian history, to make one standard of morals for her, and because he has the power, hold her to it with awful penalties, while he makes a lower and easier for himself?

We are told that when wrong is done between man and woman the woman's guilt is greater than the man's, and therefore she ought to be held to sterner retribution. But how can her guilt be greater? Certainly the wrong act is his as much as it can possibly be hers.

If two persons are equal partners in murder, or robbery, or arson, we do not meet the penalty all upon one, and let the other go free. We punish both alike. Why should it not be so in sexual sin? In such sin the only way the woman's guilt can in any possible sense be greater than the man's is by her having a lower incentive or motive than that which actuates him. But is her motive usually lower than his? What actuates him? Desire for mere selfish pleasure—pleasure of the lowest, basest, kind. What actuates her? Sometimes of course it is the same. But any one who gives much attention to a study of this dark and saddening subject soon finds out that with her there come in other considerations of many kinds, and some of them of a nature not lower but vastly higher than those which actuate him, and therefore calculated to make her guilt, if different from his, lighter not heavier.

When a woman falls from virtue, generally it is the man who is the tempter; she is the tempted. The greater sin must therefore be with him.

Think, too, in how many forms temptation appeals to her. Seldom does a woman sin from sheer natural badness, or even from a desire to gratify selfish passion. Generally there are other reasons.

Often she is thoughtless and giddy, and does not realize the full meaning of what she does, because her early training has been defective. An eminent woman physician who has had large experience in reclaiming fallen women and girls tells us that nothing so makes her heart bleed as to find how many of those who fall into sin are without mothers to

teach them what is right and what is wrong, or to shield them from the dangers that lurk ever in their paths. It is these inexperienced and defenceless girls, of course, that fall easiest prey to bad men. That there are men cruel enough, base enough to take advantage of such inexperience and helplessness, is one of the darkest facts connected with our humanity.

Many girls and women fall through desire to please those whom they love and trust. Deceivers, having gained their affections and their confidence, lead them on to their ruin by lying promises of marriage, and then heartlessly desert them. Of course the guilt of the woman is not to be excused in such a case; but how incomparably less black it is than that of her deceiver and betrayer!

Perhaps most important of all to be remembered is the large part that poverty and hardship play in causing women to give up their virtue. It seems on its face incredible that in a Christian civilization like ours the alternative could ever present itself to any woman to starve or sell her womanhood. But that it does, in all our large cities, we have but too abundant proofs. Indeed want, caused on the one hand by scarcity of employment and low wages, and on the other by high cost of living, is almost everywhere one of the most prolific causes of social vice.

Think of girls and women in cities and towns where rent is high, and board and all other expenses of living are high, and where the demand to dress well is imperative, being compelled to work for six dollars, five dollars, four dollars, three dollars, two dollars, and even less than that per week, with everything—board, room-rent, clothing, postage and stationery, street-car fare, everything—to be paid for out of that! You see the situation becomes desperate. Persons simply cannot live on these sums. They must earn more in some way or they must steal or starve. What wonder, under these circumstances, that the temptation is often too great to be resisted to turn to that possible resource, ever open, of eking out their scanty resources by the wages of sin? It is inexpressibly pitiful that on the

back of any woman the lash of such a dire necessity or seeming necessity should fall. But exactly this is the explanation of the fall of thousands.

And even where the alternative of sin is not absolute starvation, the pressure may be very severe. There is nothing more cruel or wrong about our civilization than on the one hand the miserably low wages paid to women for many kinds of work, and on the other the senseless but inexorable demands of fashion as regards her living and especially her dress. Three or four times a year, without any good reason, yet remorselessly, the styles are changed, in hats, bonnets, dresses, cloaks, all kinds of clothing. A young lady must at least measurably follow up these senseless and costly transformations and keep herself at least approximately in the fashion, or else she forfeits her place in society, and even in the store or the office where she may be employed; and so, what can she do, if she has no income except what she earns? You see the temptation is terrible to resort to evil practices to obtain the money necessary to keep her dress equal to the demands made upon her.

Now what do all these facts show? They show that the motives which impel women to the sin of unchastity are in many and probably most cases, I do not say justifiable, but I do say less base and less reprehensible, than those which impel men. As I have said, man is nearly always in the first instance the tempter, woman the tempted. The motive that impels him is the lowest kind of animal indulgence—a desire for pleasure that is not only supremely selfish but absolutely brutal in its disregard of the awful consequences that it entails upon women; while the motives that impel her seldom descend to the low level of his, and often rise into something which compared with his are almost as heaven to hell.

If then either should be judged more leniently than the other when man and woman sin, it should be woman, not man; his should be pronounced the deeper guilt, not hers.

Yet, in society around us, how is it? It is exactly the reverse. The old, barbarous, double standard, set up when

man was lord and woman was slave, of purity for her and license for him, still largely prevails.

Let two sin together, and through all ranks of society, except among a few exceptionally intelligent and brave and noble persons who dare see things as they are, the general verdict will be, even to-day, after nineteen centuries of Christian civilization:

"Stone the woman—let the man go free!
 Draw back your skirts lest they perchance
 May touch her garments as she passes;
 But to him put forth a willing hand
 To clasp with his that led her to destruction
 And disgrace. Shut up from her the sacred
 Ways of toil, that she no more may win an
 Honest meal; but open to him all honorable
 Paths, where he may win distinction.
 Give him fair, pressed-down measures of
 Life's sweetest joys. Pass her, O maiden,
 With a pure, proud face, if she puts out
 A poor, polluted palm; but lay thy hand in
 His on bridal day, and swear to cling to him
 With wifely love and tender reverence;
 Trust him who led a sister woman
 To a fearful fate.

Yes, stone the woman—let the man go free!
 Let one soul suffer for the guilt of two,
 Is the doctrine of a hurried world,
 Too out of breath for holding balances
 Where nice distinctions and injustices
 Are calmly weighed. But, ah, how will it be
 On that strange day of final fire and flame,
 When men shall stand before the one true
 Judge? Shall sex make then a difference in
 Sin? Shall He, the Searcher of the hidden
 Heart, in his eternal and divine decree,
 Condemn the woman and forgive the man?"

Let me quote from an address given by the Head Master of one of the colleges of Cambridge, England, to a great audience of university students:

"The wrong to women, inflicted by the selfishness and vice of men, is so great, that it is almost impossible for young men to realize what it is. They may see those poor creatures in the streets laughing and looking merry. There

never was a ghastlier saying than that which describes theirs as 'a short life and a merry one.' It is the most miserable of all possible lives. If it were possible to paint to you the real life of one of these poor creatures, you would be overpowered with compassion. Think of some pure English girl, led away by one of those paid agents who make a trade—a regular slave trade—of English girls, and sell them—I am speaking the plain truth—sell them from a village to a town, and from one town to another, until they become the property of some brothel keeper; think of her let out for hire, unable to escape, having not a penny she can call her own, belonging body and soul to this wretch who keeps her, until at last she is rejected and turned out into the streets to die. It is the most miserable and awful of lives that can be imagined. And that is going on in Christian England. Oh, if men could realize the degradation and wrong which the self-indulgence of man inflicts upon women!

"Now, it is possible that there may be some one of you university young men listening to me here who is fired with a noble but unformed ambition. I will tell you what one noble ambition would be. You have read about Howard, Wilberforce, or Lord Shaftesbury devoting themselves to the prisoners, to the slaves, to the ill-used factory children, and you know what fame and what true greatness those men won. If one of you is fired with the same splendid ambition to do a great work before he dies, let him take up the cause of these English girls. He must count the cost. He must not go with ten thousand against those who come against him with twenty thousand. It will be the career of a lifetime of patient work, trusting in God, working on against all sorts of abuse, all sorts of difficulties. He must have the fire of an apostle, and the doggedness of a bloodhound, to hunt out these men and make their trade impossible. But he will find life interesting—so interesting, that when he comes to the end of it he would wish to have it all over again, that he might go on with such work. There is no more splendid career in England than saving these English girl-slaves."

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Aye, and is there any more splendid career in America than that of saving the girls and women of America, who have so many to plot their ruin and so few to help them to stand; or who, having fallen, have so many to push them lower still, and so few to help them up?

Some of you ask me what you can do now, while you are in college, to help the cause of social purity. I answer:

Has not the time come when there should be in this and every other college in the land, a White Cross Society, or some other form of social purity organization, and when all who feel the importance of this work should join hands to make their influence felt through that?

But entirely aside from such an organization there is much that you can do.

First and most important of all, keep yourself pure in life. This is the first step.

Keep yourself pure in speech, too. Yes, and more than that: never allow a word that is not chaste to be uttered in your presence without rebuke.

Still further, guard your thoughts. Never allow yourself to read any form of literature that is not pure and clean, and show no countenance or indulgence to the circulation of such.

Patronize no theatre or play where impurity in man or woman is made attractive, or where purity is made light of, or where anything is done or any word is spoken calculated to kindle an impure thought in any mind.

Treat a young man whom you know to be fallen, just as you would a fallen woman.

Insult no pure woman by introducing to her such a man.

If you can personally help him, I mean help him to repent in bitter shame of his sin, and to reform his life, of course do that gladly. But, unrepentant and unreformed, you should no more introduce him into good society than you should introduce there a wolf or a viper.

Stand like a rock everywhere for a single standard of morals.

Do what you can to elevate public sentiment, especially among young men.

Determine ever and always to be a friend and protector of women.

All these things you can do, now and as long as you remain in school. And the influence of them will be greater than you know.

When you get out into the world, other things also you can do.

Most important of all, you can exert your influence to secure better laws for the protection of girls and women. In most of our states, to ruin a woman, to bring upon her a calamity worse than death, is not in the eye of the law a crime at all, unless it be accompanied with violence. More disgraceful still is the condition of our laws as regards the protection of young girls. What is known as "the age of consent" is fixed in most of our states at from ten to fourteen years of age. In some states the law allows a villain to ravish a little child of ten years, and go scot free, if he can make it appear that, coaxed by candy or otherwise, she consented to his act. Not until she is eighteen does the law allow her to sell the ribbon from her neck; but at ten it allows her to sell her virtue.

Such are the black, the cruel, the infernal laws, that men, for their own gratification, for their own protection in vice, have put upon our statute books, and keep upon our statute books.

These are some of the wrongs that wait for the correction of noble young men.

I close with a few words as to man's attitude toward woman in view of the fact that he is physically stronger than she.

Should man's attitude toward woman be that of a tiger toward its prey?

Yes, if he is a beast. No, if he is human.

The fact that man is stronger than woman and therefore in a measure has her in his power, should make him ashamed with an inexpressible shame, to prey upon her

ever, or ever take an undue advantage of her. Rather it should make him leap up with pride and eager joy to the privilege of being her defender,—her defender at all hazards to himself, against every form of wrong.

Says Adam Bede, as he thinks of poor, wronged Hetty and her heartless betrayer:

"I'd sooner do a wickedness as I could suffer for myself, then ha' brought *her* to do wickedness, and all for a bit of pleasure; and if he'd had a man's heart in him he'd ha' cut his hand off sooner than ha' taken it. What if he did not foresee what's happened, he foresaw enough; he'd no right to expect anything but harm and shame to her. No, there's plenty o' things folk are banged for not half so hateful as that. Let a man do what he wills if he knows he's to bear the punishment himself; it isn't half so bad as a mean, selfish coward who makes things easy to himself, and knows all the while the punishment 'll fall on somebody else."

I am sure these words of Adam Bede wake a response in every noble breast. There is nothing so base as to purchase pleasure by another's pain. Especially is there nothing so despicable as to take advantage of weakness or helplessness—betraying where one ought to protect and defend.

In a wreck at sea the men put the women and children into the life-boats first, and accept no place of safety till the more helpless are safe. That is the spirit of real manhood.

In a time of danger the true man will defend his wife and children—aye, any women or children, with his life if need be.

There is no truer measure of the nobleness of any man than that of his attitude to the defenseless, and especially to women.

The poet Spencer, desiring to draw the noblest picture possible of King Arthur, tells us that the humblest and most unprotected maiden could feel that

"All the while he by his side her bore
She was as safe as in a sanctuary."

I know of nothing in history more beautiful than that feature of the old Knight errantry of the middle ages, that sent the Knights out into the world to right wrongs, to shield the defenseless, and especially to protect women. If I could establish an order of chivalry in our day, it should be of young men pledged in the noblest spirit of ancient Knighthood to woman's defence against all who would soil the purity of her honor or her name, or in any way do her wrong:—pledged not only to the protection of sister and wife and mother, but of woman as woman everywhere, and especially the poor, the weak, the unbefriended, the plotted against and preyed upon, as so many are, by ogres wearing the form of men.

It is not for me to establish such a chivalric order, for the day of such orders is past. But the day of chivalrous impulses and deeds is not past, nor the day when womanhood demands from man honor and protection. It is for me, therefore, to ask every young man who feels within himself the old Knightly spirit, to rise to the nobleness of vowing in his soul before God, that womanhood shall always and everywhere be to him sacred; that nothing calculated to dim its whiteness or lower its honor shall ever be looked upon by him as trivial; and that whenever he finds a woman needing a friend or protector, no matter how poor or unbefriended she may be, and all the more because she is poor or unbefriended, or even fallen, she shall find a protector and a friend in him.

Such young men need belong to no external order of chivalry; they are already Knights as true and noble as ever mounted horse or set lance in rest,—Knights of that New Age, of which it is written:

“Then comes the statelier Eden back to men;
Then reign the world's great bridals, chaste and calm;
Then springs the crowning race of human kind.”

The Bible: Its Origin and Growth, And Its Place Among the Sacred Books of the World.

By J. T. SUNDERLAND, M. A.,

Author of "What is the Bible?" "A Rational Faith," Etc.

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THE DIVINE INCARNATION.

"God was in Christ."—II. Cor. V. 19.

"If we love one another, God dwelleth in us."—I. John IV. 12.

THE doctrine of the Divine Incarnation is of great importance in religious thought, whatever form of faith we may hold.

There are in the Christian world to-day two widely and in some respects radically different forms of this doctrine. Let us inquire what they are, study them as candidly and carefully as we can, compare them with each other, and try earnestly to find out where lies the truth.

In inquiring what the two forms are, we quickly get an answer from the two texts which I have cited.

The Apostle Paul says: "God was in Christ." One view of the incarnation bases itself upon this text, and stops here, saying, This is the doctrine, the whole doctrine—"God was in Christ"—*only* in Christ,—the incarnation of God is confined to one person, supernaturally born, who lived and died in Palestine, some nineteen hundred years ago.

The other view does not *deny* this one, except as to its *limitation*. It says with Paul, "Yes," "God was in Christ." But, it goes on from this, and adds, with John, the very important declaration, "If we love one another, God dwelleth also in us." In other words, it affirms the divine incarnation not only in Christ but also in all humanity.

Nor does this latter and larger view of the Incarnation really array John against Paul. For, when we look further, we find that the larger thought is just what Paul also teaches, if we take his teaching as a whole. Turning over to Ephesians iv: 6, we read the following declaration, as strong and unequivocal as words can make it: "There is one God and Father of all, who is

above all, and through all, and *in you all*." Paul's real teaching, then, as well as that of John, is, that God was not in *Christ alone*, but that he is also "*in you all*."

In thus teaching, both Paul and John agree with Jesus, who taught, it is true, his own unity with God, but also just as strongly the unity of all men with God. If he said, "I and my Father are one," he did not stop there, as so many teachers of Christianity to-day so strangely do, but, going on, he added the other half of the truth: "That they may be one, even as we are one."*

One of our poet preachers has well expressed, in the form of a prayer, this union of all with God which Jesus taught.

"O Thou Infinite One!
 Let me Know myself as one with Thee;
 Let me feel in my soul the vibrations of Thy Life.
 Fill me, O God, with Thyself;
 Let the Law that is in Thee
 Come as truth into my soul.
 Let the order that shapes Universes
 Become the conscious Law within me.
 Let my deeds and words
 Take form from Thee as the stars do.
 Let my actions be of Thy Law
 As are the motions of the planets.
 O God, fill, permeate, inform me,
 That I may be one with Thee
 Even as was Christ of old."

*Jesus draws no line separating himself from humanity. Instead, he most unequivocally classes himself with humanity, making his relation to God the same as that of other men. He calls his disciples his "brethren." (Matt. xxviii: 10, John xx: 17). Paul calls him "the first born among many brethren." (Rom. viii: 29). In II Peter (i: 4) we, as well as Christ, are declared to be "partakers of the divine nature." If he is called the "son of God," so again and again, both in the Old Testament and the New, are we also called "sons of God" and "children of God"; and God is declared to be "our Father" as well as the Father of Jesus. On this point Jesus himself uses the strongest possible language, speaking of God to his followers as "my Father and your Father, my God and your God." (John xx: 17). Thus we are taught most explicitly that in whatever sense God was in him, in the same sense God is in us. "Beloved now are we the sons of God." (I John iii: 2). "Every one that loveth is begotten of God." (I John iv: 7). "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God dwelleth in him." (I John iv: 16). "Even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us." (John xvii: 21).

We have now the two views of the Divine Incarnation before us.

One view limits the incarnation; the other does not.

One view sees God incarnate in Christ alone. This is the teaching of the so-called "orthodox" creeds, and of all the churches founded on those creeds.

The other sees God incarnate not only in Christ, but also in all Christ's brethren—in all the rest of the children of the common Father. This is the view, not only of the Liberal Christian churches, but of a steadily growing number of the broader and freer minds in all the creedal churches, in spite of their creeds.

Nor is it strange that this larger view finds increasing favor; for biblical scholarship is making it more and more clear that this was the teaching of Jesus and his immediate disciples; and historic study that this was the doctrine of the early Christian churches. I believe also that philosophic and scientific study is making it increasingly clear that this view has its foundation in fact and reason as the narrower view does not.

Let us examine the commonly received doctrine of a limited incarnation in Christ alone, and see to what extent it stands the test of investigation.

The first thing to be observed concerning it is, that it was born late—long after Christ—and in a very dark age, when a majority of men believed that God was to be seen only in the unusual, the limited, the exceptional, the irregular, the supposed miraculous;—before it was understood that all things are governed according to law.

Since we have learned that we live in a law-ordered universe, we are fast attaining to a larger view of God and of his ways of manifesting himself. We are learning to see him in the steady on-going of nature. We are discovering that the *regular* displays him far better than the irregular; the normal far more clearly than the abnormal; the orderly far more surely than the erratic; the universal better than the limited. Indeed we are

learning that order and law are themselves the clearest of all possible illustrations, the most irrefutable of all possible proofs of him. For what are law and order in the universe except the Universe-Power working intelligently, and therefore beneficently? And that is just what we must mean by God,—the Infinite Power at the heart of the universe, operating in all, and through all, and forever intelligently and to worthy ends. Order therefore is simply his symbol; law is simply his sign his path of light as he pursues his majestic way. This is the manner in which men are learning to think of God in our age of growing knowledge and reason.

What then is to be presumed as antecedently *probable* regarding an incarnation? If God is to incarnate himself, will it be *likely* to take place in manner different from anything else in nature,—in a corner; in some one special age; in some single special land; in a little special town in that land; in some one human being born in an unusual and exceptional way? Is that according to the manner of God's great works and ways?

I think we must say that at least the presumption is against an incarnation in such a special, limited, and unnatural manner.

The case may be illustrated, I think, in some such way as this: Suppose some person should go away to some great mountain valley in Asia or Africa or Australia, and there find a single tree—perhaps the largest tree in the world—but one single tree among millions, hidden away in that one remote valley,—and should say to you, "There, in that tree, and in that tree alone, God manifests himself, so far as trees are concerned." Would you believe him? He might urge that the tree was the largest and finest known. That would make no difference to you. He might even bring you reports, believed by multitudes, that the tree had been planted by an angel from heaven, or by inhabitants of another planet, or by God himself in a manner different from that of any other tree that ever grew; but all the

same you would say, "No, I cannot accept your claim. Not any *one* tree can monopolize the manifestation of God. Do you say, God planted this tree? The God that I believe in and worship planted all trees,—and not by the poor expedient of special miracle either, but by his great, wise, perpetually operative and unfailing nature-methods. So far from this tree being the only manifestation of God, I believe that God is the creator and the very life of all the trees in all the lands of earth, and that every one of all their millions is busy day and night, in every leaf and bud and blossom and rootlet and fiber, in showing his handiwork, and manifesting his power and wisdom." I think this is essentially the reply you would make to one who should attempt to convince you that God's sole manifestation in the trees of earth is in some one single, special miracle-tree.

Turn now to the Divine Incarnation—God's manifestation of himself in *humanity*—and must we not say essentially the same thing? When men come to us attempting to confine God's incarnation to a single generation of humanity's long history, and to a single land and province and village in the midst of earth's vast continents, and to a single life in that little village do we not see at once that they are thinking not according to twentieth century methods, but methods of a darker past? And that the conception of God involved, is the conception of the centuries before law in nature was known, and when the whole universe was limited in men's thought not only to this earth but to a few countries around the Mediterranean Sea?

How are we to account for this strange idea, that God's incarnation or manifestation of himself in humanity is confined to one man?

I suppose we may say that this astonishing limitation is based upon the story of the miraculous birth of Jesus. We are told that Jesus was born of a virgin. He had no human father. God was his Father. This is

cited as proof that he was a special incarnation of God—different from any body else.

Well, let us briefly examine this story of the miraculous birth, and see whether it really belongs in the Bible,—whether it is any part of the real gospel, or is only a later addition—a legendary after-growth;—and therefore whether it affords any basis for the belief that God's incarnation was different in kind in Jesus from what it is in humanity as a whole.

It should be noted that two of the four gospels, or biographical accounts which we have of Jesus, say nothing about any miraculous birth. These two are Mark and John; and Mark is pretty generally conceded now by the best critics to be the earliest of all the Gospels. But now here is something very strange. If Jesus was really born differently from any body else, and if this was the primary proof that he was God, it seems unaccountable that two of his biographers, and one of them the earliest of all, and therefore the one nearest to Jesus in time, should have omitted this crucial fact, this fact upon which everything else depended. Yet neither one gives any hint of a supernatural birth.

Nor is this all. Turn to the Acts of the Apostles—the book giving an account of the things which the early disciples preached, as they went forth to lay the foundations of Christianity. What do we find here? Any account of the great teacher, whose word they proclaimed, having been miraculously born?—born differently from others, and therefore not really a man? Not a word. Peter begins his great sermon on the day of Pentecost: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a *man* approved of God among you." No hint is given here or elsewhere in the whole book that Jesus was born otherwise than as all men are.

Turn over still further, to the Epistles of Paul. If Paul knows of Jesus being born miraculously, with God as his father, and himself God, we shall of course find his epistles all aglow and ablaze with the great the

unparalleled fact. What do we find? In all of Paul's writings not one word of anything of the kind. It is plain that Paul does not know any such fact concerning Jesus.

Turn back now to the Gospels, and let us examine a little more carefully what we can find there. Matthew and Luke give the story of the miraculous birth. But there is reason to believe that it is a late legendary accretion,—something which formed no part of the earlier and more reliable biography. That it is a late addition is indicated by the fact that it is contrary to so many things in the Gospel narratives. For example, we read in Matthew that the friends and acquaintances of Jesus said of him, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" Evidently they had never heard but that he was the son of *Joseph*. Luke represents them as saying, "Is not this the son of *Joseph*?" John makes their question still more explicit, "Is not this Jesus, Joseph's son, whose father and mother we know?" Several times we read, in different places, of Jesus' "father" and "parents." His disciple Philip calls him "the son of Joseph."

Mary, his own mother, declares that Joseph is his father, saying to him, of Joseph and herself, when he was a boy, "thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." Surely this should settle the matter.

But even these things are not all. We have two separate genealogical tables given us in the Gospels both tracing the ancestry of Jesus through Joseph,—something not only in the highest degree absurd, but positively misleading and dishonest, if Joseph was not his father.

True, the different New Testament writers greatly exalt Jesus in many ways, but never, with the exception of the two passages already referred to in Matthew and Luke, in a way to teach or to imply that he was miraculously born,—much less that he was God. The Gospels represent him as working miracles: but the

working of miracles was believed to be common ; not only men, but even bad men, are represented as workers of miracles. The Gospels call Jesus lord ; but that was an appellation given to many besides him, as in England to-day men are called lords. The Gospels speak of him as the Jewish messiah. But to the Jews the messiah was not to be God, but simply a man having exalted power given him of God. The Gospels represent Jesus as dying and then rising from the dead. But others too are declared to have risen from the dead. If Jesus ascended into heaven, so had Elijah ; and if his disciples expected him to return again, so had Elijah long been expected to return again. And Elijah was not God, but a man like other men. If Jesus is called "son of God" and "begotten of God," so are others spoken of as "sons of God," "children of God," "begotten of God," as we have already seen.

None of these declarations or representations imply an unnatural or supernatural birth, or that he was God. Nowhere save in the opening chapters of Matthew and Luke does the New Testament anywhere hint at such a birth. And even this is contradicted and corrected again and again, by the genealogies and by the utterances of those who knew him best. Everything indicates that Jesus himself claimed no supernatural birth ; and that nobody claimed it for him while he lived, or for more than a generation after his death. Even forty years or so after his decease, when Mark, the earliest of the Gospels was written, the story of such a birth seems not yet to have been in existence, or else was not credited. For if it had been known and generally believed, surely it would have found a place in Mark.

How then did it arise ? Let us see.

A full generation of time had gone since the crucifixion. Those who knew Jesus personally were fast passing away. He had left nothing behind him in writing. The recollections of those who remained were growing a little dimmed with the lapse of years. It was natural

and inevitable that legends about him should begin to spring up. In a little while there was a multitude of such. Indeed a whole volume of them, called the "Apocryphal Gospels," has come down to us. What could be more natural than that some of these numerous legends which time and distance wove about him, and especially about his birth and childhood, should make their way into the Gospels which we have in our New Testament? What was there to keep them out? We do not know certainly the writer of a single one of these Gospels, or its editor in the form in which it comes to us. It is well nigh certain that each Gospel passed through several re-adaptations before it reached the form in which we now have it. By the time Matthew and Luke received their final revisions, twenty years or more after the writing of Mark, the legend of the miraculous birth had come into existence; and as such a story seemed to add to the luster of Jesus's fame and name, it became in some way incorporated into these two Gospels. Once in, there was not in that age, the careful scholarly criticism to cast it out. And so we have it to-day as a part of the New Testament.

This seems to be the explanation of the fact that we find at the beginning of Matthew and Luke the story of the birth of Jesus without a human father,—a story similar you know to what we have in connection with the birth of Buddha, and a number of other oriental characters.

Thus do all lines of testimony seem to unite to make it clear that the story of the supernatural birth of Jesus, was a late and legendary accretion, and no part of the original and real history of the life of the great Teacher of Nazareth.

What, then, follows from all this? Does it follow that God was not in Christ? By no means. Does it follow that Christ was not divine? Far from that. What follows is, that Christ's divineness of nature was not different in kind, but only in degree, from yours

and mine. God was in him ; but also, God is in all *humanity* ; Jesus was simply the tallest soul among his brethren ; one in whom the divine spirit rose to an unwonted fulness and power of manifestation ; a man of rare genius, nobleness and strength, but whose crowning spiritual quality lay in his seemingly perfect union in mind and will with the mind and will of God, so that he was able to say with a deeper and loftier meaning than had ever been given to the words before, " I and my Father are one."

If Jesus was " Son of God," in this he was not exceptional. His sonship lay not in any such questionable claim as that of being born of a virgin, and therefore differently from his brethren, but in the deep and essential divineness of the nature of man. It lay not in his being less a man than others, but more a man than others. He called himself " Son of God " and " Son of Man,"—shall we not say he was pre-eminent as Son of God because he was pre-eminent as Son of Man ?

What is incarnation ? As the word signifies, it is God manifesting himself in the flesh, that is, in the highest form of his creation. But is there any part of his creation in which he does not manifest himself ? Surely not ; for creation is just God—the Infinite Power and Life and Goodness that is behind all nature—objectifying himself, coming forth into manifestation. Thus the sun shines by his light ; Saturn and Uranus pull by his strength ; the flower smiles by his beauty. If *we* " live and move and have our being in him," so do the birds, so do the planets, so do the constellations.

Emerson puts it well in his Wood Notes :

" Ever fresh the broad creation,
A divine improvisation,
From the heart of God proceeds,
A single will, a million deeds.

Once slept the world an egg of stone,
And pulse, and sound, and light was none ;
And God said " Throb," and there was motion,
And the vast mass became vast ocean.

Maker and original,
The world is the ring of his spells,
And the play of his miracles.

As he giveth to all to drink,
Thus or thus they are and think.
With one drop sheds form and feature ;
With the next a special nature ;
The third adds heal's indulgent spark ;
The fourth gives light which eats the dark ;
Into the fifth himself he flings,
And conscious Law is King of kings.

Thou seek'st in globe and galaxy,
He hides in pure transparency ;
Thou askest in fountains and in fires,—
He is the essence that inquires.

He is the axis of the star,
He is the sparkle of the spar,
He is the heart of every creature,
He is the meaning of each feature ;
And his mind is the sky,
Than all it holds more deep, more high."

Do you ask, How is God in all things? I think we must answer : In the lowest objects, that is, in the whole inorganic world, he is present as simply *Force* or *Energy*. In objects higher, that is, in the organic world, he is present as *Force* or *Energy and Life*. In man his manifestation is still more complete and on still higher planes. That is to say, in man God is present as *Energy*, as *Life*, and also as *Self-Consciousness*, *Will*, *Moral Nature*, and highest of all, *Love*. Thus while God is no more truly in a human being than in a stone, his manifestation in the human being is far more full and in far higher ways than it can be in a stone. A man does not manifest God any more really than does a flower. But a man manifests God on a higher plane than the most beautiful and perfect flower can do. A flower is only a thing. It cannot think, it cannot know, it cannot will, it cannot love. But man can do all these things. Hence man partakes of the moral and spiritual nature of God, as the flower does not. As we rise from the lower to the higher objects of nature we rise from lower to

higer manifestations of God,—the highest of all being *man*.

But in man himself there is also gradation. In the man who is grovelling and selfish, and who lives in material things, God's manifestation is down on a plane only a few steps higher than that in which he manifests himself in the brute animal; whereas in the moral and spiritual man it is up almost on the plane of the angel. In other words, as we rise in intelligence, in virtue, in love and moral attainment, the incarnation of God in us becomes more full and complete.

It follows that God's incarnation in the world is perpetual and growing. This is what Evolution means. God did not come into the world once and then retire. He did not create the world in six days and then retreat back into some far away heaven to rest. His creation is eternal. It was going on further back than our thought can reach. It is going on still. Not only are new worlds being created in the skies, but this world on which we live is being all the while created anew—re-created to higher and higher ends. Especially is God's creation on the earth going on in the realm of the intellectual, the moral, and the spiritual. Here its progress is more rapid than ever before, as seen in the constant rise of man.

There never was a time when God was not in his world, the very life of all its life. But his manifestation *grows* in splendor—especially it grows in splendor with the progress of the human race. So that God's incarnation was never so glorious as now. And as the ages go on, and the race advances, and man rises to still greater heights of moral and spiritual attainment, what will that be except the fuller and more perfect manifestation or incarnation of God in humanity?

How much higher and more full of meaning does this view of the incarnation make everything! In the light of it, all nature and all human nature become manifesta-

tions of the divine, each in its degree. The sunshine which wraps the world in its warm embrace, is a manifestation of God's loving and gracious presence. All exhibitions of power are his power. All life is his life. All beauty is his beauty. All right and goodness on earth are finite manifestations of Eternal realities, whose fountain and whose fulness are in God.

Especially what glory does this view of the Divine Incarnation shed upon human nature, and how does it fill all man's future with hope! Christ was not a strange, solitary, abnormal manifestation of God in human form, once in all the ages, with nothing in any way like it before or after. He was a type of our humanity. He was a foretaste of what waits for the race. The sleeping possibilities which are in your soul and mine came to full blossom in him. He is a prophesy of what God holds in store for all humanity, sometime, somewhere.

This, friends, is the new, the larger doctrine of the Divine Incarnation which is coming to our modern age.

Am I not right in claiming that this doctrine is in harmony with science, in harmony with philosophy, in harmony with the thought of evolution and a law-governed universe, in harmony with the real teaching of Jesus and his disciples? May we not justly claim that it is the teaching of the New Testament restored to the world?

And does it not meet the needs of the human soul as the old doctrine does not? It removes the distance between us and God. It lifts the human up to the divine. It makes our very life the life of God in us. And thus it teaches us to say with Jesus, "I and my Father are one."

And how much nearer it brings Jesus to us! Now, with this view, he is no longer the strange, the far off being that we have been taught,—incomprehensible, foreign to all our experience, half man, half God! Now he is our brother—true, real, human, with nature like

ours, with joys and sorrows like ours, with battles to fight like ours :—our strong brother, clear-headed, great hearted, noble, brave, gentle, waiting to take our weak hands in his strong hand, and lead us up to hope, to trust, to peace, to the loving heart of his Father and our Father, his God and our God.

Yes, "God was in Christ." That is a great and precious truth. We cannot prize it too highly. But there is another even better, that crowns it, that completes it, that gives it full significance and glory ; and especially that brings it into practical touch with our lives. That other truth is, "Every one that loveth is begotten of God." "If we love, God dwelleth in us." Thus our limitations, finiteness and poverty become re-inforced from the Infinite and Eternal Fountain of all Power, Wisdom and Love.

It is much to recognize God in nature ; it is more to recognize him in human nature. It is much to see him in Christ ; but it is most to see him in ourselves.

Said Channing : "All minds are of one family."

Wrote Emerson : "If a man is at heart just, then in so far he is God : the safety of God, the immortality of God, the majesty of God, do enter into that man with justice."

William Blake, England's mystical and strangely gifted artist-poet of the eighteenth century, wrote a poem entitled "The Divine Image," which contains these profoundly suggestive lines :

"Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love,
Is God our Father dear ;
And Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love
Is man, his child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart ;
Pity the human face ;
And Love, the human form divine ;
And Peace the human dress."

Two great illuminating and inspiring thoughts are rising like morning stars in the sky of Christianity in

our time. One is the Humanness of God, the other the Divineness of Humanity.

Said the dying Baron Bunsen as he looked up in the face of his wife bending in love over him : " In thy face have I seen the Eternal."

In the First Epistle of John we read : " Beloved, now are we children of God, and it hath not yet been manifested what we shall be. But we know that when it shall be manifested, we shall be like Him."

Thus we see the barriers fall away which have seemed to separate the human from the divine ; more and more clearly the vision draws that all is divine.

In the book of Revelation it is written : " Behold I stand at the door and knock ; and if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me."

Oh friends, let us know, that whenever truth or duty, or pity or tenderness, or justice or aspiration, or any high thought or pure desire, knocks at the door of our hearts,—but especially when love stands knocking there it is God asking to be let in. And if we open the door he will enter, and become more and more fully incarnate in us. Thus our darkness will pass away ; a rainbow of hope will illuminate every storm ; our tears will be dried ; our weakness will turn to strength ; the peace of the Eternal will be ours ; and we shall know what it means to dwell in heaven while yet we are pilgrims of earth, even as Jesus did ; because God, whose Presence is Heaven, has taken up his abode within us, the Life of all our life.

THE HISTORY OF THE

LOYALTY TO CONVICTION.

"Sweet it is to have done the thing one ought."—Tennyson.

"To thine own self be true;
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

—Shakespeare.

"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness to the truth."—Jesus.

The words last quoted help us to see that Jesus was in the highest degree loyal to his convictions. He believed that he had a message of truth for his fellow men. To the delivering of that message he made everything else subordinate. He conceived of himself as in the world on purpose for this. Accordingly for this he lived and for this he died. This was perfect loyalty.

The men whom the world accounts its greatest benefactors, and whom therefore it most honors and reveres, have all been deeply loyal to truth and right, as they understood these. Their views of what right and truth were may not always have stood the test of time, but about their loyalty to the highest they saw, there is no question. What they saw, too, was always in advance of their age, so that it required courage to speak it, as it always does what is higher than the common thought.

As illustrating this high loyalty, and the honor in which it is held among men, there will readily come to your minds such great names as Socrates, most revered of the Greeks, who by living and dying for his convictions proved himself a true brother of Jesus; Buddha, greatest of the orientals, who, to carry his gospel to his suffering fellows, surrendered a throne and gladly became a beggar; Elijah, Isaiah and all the grand old Jewish prophets, who dared face kings with their messages of warning and reproof; Paul, hardly second to his master in devotion to truth as he saw it; the long role

of Christian martyrs, who all preferred death rather than be disloyal to their faith; Luther, who dared to defy the whole ecclesiastical power of mighty Rome, rather than be untrue to the light which God had let shine in his reason and heart; Servetus, and Priestley, and Murray, and Channing, and Parker, and a host of others, who, following the path of Luther, dared carry his principle of soul-liberty to its full consequences, in the face of opposition scarcely less severe than Luther met, and often from his own professed followers. Or, if we go outside the field of religion to that of political liberty and social justice, the names of the men whom the world honors because they have been loyal to their convictions of right between man and man, and between governments and the governed, are scarcely fewer or less conspicuous, from the dauntless Judas Maccabeus, who half a dozen generations before Christ won a brief interval of glorious liberty for his Jewish people in the midst of their long oppressions, down to our own Washington and the heroes of our Revolution who won national freedom and independence for us, and still later, to Garrison, Lincoln and the rest, who won freedom for the American slave.

And now, as we join with the world in the honor it accords to these great ones of the earth, for their noble fidelity to truth as God gave them to see the truth, and for their heroic loyalty to justice and right, when loyalty cost something, the question arises; Has it all no lesson for us? Is all this splendid loyalty simply to be honored, and not to be emulated? Is our part done when we have laid our meed of praise at the feet of these true and brave ones? Or, is the spirit which we see in them, one which we are bound—bound by the fact that it seems to us beautiful and noble—to cultivate in ourselves?

Is there any life into which the opportunity to be loyal to conviction does not come? If not, then is there any life upon which the obligation to be loyal does not rest? Can it be possible that there is a law in this matter that is not universal—a law that holds with the high and not with the low, or with any one class and not with another? Can we be-

lieve that Channing, or Luther, or even Jesus, was under any more obligation to be true to the truth as he saw it, than you and I are to be true to the truth as we see it?

These are serious questions. They open up the whole subject of loyalty to conviction not as a speculative or far off matter, but as something near, practical, pertaining to your life and mine; and moreover as something which we cannot escape, if we are going to live our lives upon any high plane, or make them of any moral strength.

What is the value of loyalty to conviction?

A little thought will show us that it has a two-fold value: *First*, to those who practice it: *Second*, to the world. Let us see how this is true.

I. Loyalty brings valuable returns to the loyal man himself.

If we understand that the true wealth of life is internal not external; is intellectual and moral, not material; is that which develops and frees the soul; is of the character, not of the purse; builds up manhood as more important than even a bank account,—then we shall not find it difficult to see that loyalty to one's convictions brings large and solid good to the man who practices the loyalty.

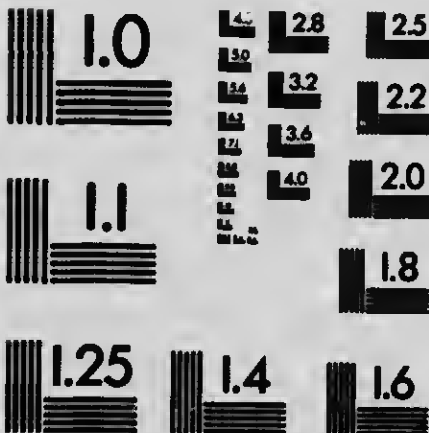
If I see truth and am not loyal to it, what is the result? I shall see it less clearly next time. But if on seeing truth I accept it, prize it, and put it in practice, I shall see it next time with increasing clearness. Thus it is that loyalty to truth clarifies the intellectual vision, while disloyalty dulls it.

Much the same is to be said of the will and the moral nature. Every time we resolutely do the thing we know we ought to do, our will power is strengthened, and the moral fibre of our nature is solidified and built up. As physical exercise strengthens the body, so does moral exercise strengthen the will. If we are resolutely true to duty to-day it will be easier to be true to-morrow. If we listen to conscience to-day and obey its behests, its voice will speak more clearly to-morrow, and obedience will grow to be a second nature and a delight. With every act of loyalty to truth and right comes an increased sense of self-respect, of manhood, of peace with one's self, and with God. By such



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loyalty one enters into conscious partnership with all the forces of good in the universe; and what joy can a man know that is greater than that?

On the other hand, to fail to be true to one's convictions is to miss all this good; nay it is to gravitate downward.

How many melancholy illustrations of this have we all witnessed! I can point you to cases in this city where it is plain that such a process of moral degeneration is going on, and has been going on for years: cases of men and women who to-day are doing what ten years ago they would not have done, and openly defending courses of conduct which then they would in no case have defended. The explanation is, they failed to be loyal to their convictions; as a result their convictions, little by little passed away, and their lives have come to be governed, mainly if not entirely, by considerations of popularity, ease, pleasure and selfish interest, and not by conviction.

If such cases are melancholy in the extreme, they are, alas, far too common. We may call them cases of atrophy of the moral nature—a disease which is well nigh certain to follow any long continued failure to listen to the voice of conscience and to do that which one knows to be right.

The subject before us bears especially close relation to education. No part of educational work is so important as that which develops the will and the moral nature. These are at the basis of character, and without character the most brilliant intellect and the finest learning are worthless and worse. To students pursuing studies in connection with the University here I have no other message that I so much care to emphasize as this: Go right, in this matter of loyalty to truth and duty, and the central thing in life is gained. Go wrong, and the result is well nigh fatal.

It is inexpressibly gratifying to see so many young men making their educational career one of moral growth and steadily increasing moral influence. They are able to do this because they are wise enough to begin by being true to their convictions. From the very first they resist those insidious temptations to temporize and trim, and to cover

up their real thought when it is not popular, which, if yielded to, leads to all forms of moral weakness. Thus, faithful in small things, it becomes easy to be courageous and strong in large.

But alas! all are not so wise. Too many students I see entering, almost before they are aware, upon a course of moral degeneration. They begin their college career by permitting themselves to be less than perfectly loyal to truth and duty. Certain things they know they ought to say and do, but they sometimes fail to say and do them. Certain lines of conduct they know they ought to carry out, but they do not always carry them out. They hold convictions, but they sometimes cover them up. It is easiest to drift with the current. Popularity is sweet. So they weakly yield, betray their better nature, sell their manhood for a little ease and good fellowship, and go away at the close of their educational course possessing a little more knowledge, but considerably less moral character and strength and ability to benefit the world, than they had when they came.

A little while ago I was talking with a prominent citizen of Ann Arbor, who has been in very close relations with the University for thirty or forty years, who pointed out with sorrow the fact that similar cases of moral atrophy are not unknown among teachers. And then he told me of a number of young men, who at one time and another during these thirty or forty years, had entered the University faculty of instruction, bringing with them high ideals, a strong sense of right and wrong, earnest convictions regarding such matters as temperance and the moral welfare of the students; but who allowed themselves to temporize, did not wish to be unpopular with anybody and so kept still; hesitated about letting their convictions be known; saw the wrong and did not protest against it, saw the right and did not do it, until they became mere indifferents, mere men of policy, and lost forever the splendid opportunity for personal moral development, and for moral leadership and influence among others, which was offered to them.

Whether this gentleman was correct, or whether he was

mistaken in his judgments of the particular cases which he had in mind, certain it is that cases similar in nature are to be found in nearly all departments of human life. The law is universal, that wherever a human being fails to be loyal to truth and duty as God has given him to see these, a sure and heavy penalty falls upon him—the penalty of gradual loss of moral discernment, atrophy of conscience, deterioration of will, the fading out of sight of the high ideals of life which once shone in his sky and beckoned him forward and upward. A greater loss than this there is not.

Is it sad to do wrong? It is infinitely sadder not to know or care that it is wrong, or to desire a right.

Disloyalty to art makes one unable to discern good art; disloyalty to music vitiates and corrupts one's musical taste, so that one's musical judgment becomes worthless. In the same way disloyalty to truth and right dulls and deadens the moral nature.

I suspect that right here we have the real "sin against the Holy Ghost." Is it terrible to lose one's eye sight? It is much more terrible to lose one's moral sight.

So much then for the effects upon ourselves, of loyalty and disloyalty to convictions.

II. But the effects do not stop with ourselves. If they did, the matter would be much less serious. They pass on, to our children, to our friends and associates, to all who know us or are influenced by us, and even to generations unborn.

If we live loyally, our children will catch the loyal spirit from us. The noble contagion of our fidelity will spread on every side. It will continue after we are dead. Thus by the moral strength of our lives we shall strengthen innumerable other lives.

But if we are weak and untrue, then our influence does not bless others: it curses them. It weakens our children; it makes all who know us a little less faithful and true than they would be but for us; it lowers the moral standard in the community in which we move; instead of helping on, it

does a little to hinder, the moral progress of the world.

Who of us wants to live in a way to leave such results as these behind him?

I wonder how many of us have ever stopped to think what the progress of the world really means, and how it is effected?

We are not living in a world fully created: we are living in one which is as yet only half created. Humanity is not yet born; it is being born. Man is rising from the brute to the human—from barbarism to civilization. We are not yet civilized; we are simply moving, slowly and painfully toward civilization. None of us are yet clear from the brute; some of us are a very great way from clear. Just as you see in this man's face and that, the look of a fox, of a wolf, of a hound, of a bull dog, of a swine, of an eagle, of a cat, of a fish, of an owl, so in the souls of us all there are more or less of the qualities and characteristics of these animals—cruelty, cunning, greed, grovelling instincts and propensities. We are only on the way toward the real man—who will be brave without being brutal, who will be strong, true, pure, generous, chivalrous, unselfish, self-centered, noble. We are on our way toward a better society, where the cruel, bitter evils that now are here—ignorance, bigotry, superstition, tyranny, unrelieved and hopeless poverty, suffering, crime—will be at least in large measure gone, left behind as the hideous spawn of a darker past.

But what are the agencies by which all advance is effected? They are two. First, insight; second, loyalty. First must come insight—new views of truth and right. But these of themselves can accomplish nothing. That a son of the race is intellectually or spiritually taller than the rest, and therefore is able to see farther than his fellows, avails nothing, unless through him they too are helped to see. For a dweller upon the mountain top to catch a more glorious vision of things than dwellers in the valley enjoy, is not enough. The dwellers in the valley must also be shown the vision, that they too may be blessed.

The history of the progress of the world has been the

history of the men whose new views of truth have grown and deepened into convictions—mighty burning faiths—which they not merely speculatively believed with their intellects, but practically believed with their hearts;—believed so deeply that they must and would declare them—must and would give them to their fellow men;—believed so earnestly that they could not put the candle of their new truth under a bushel, but, as Jesus said, on a candlestick, where it would give light to all around. It has been the men of this spirit who have led all the world's intellectual and moral advance in the past. Only such men can lead the advance of the future.

So then it is easy to see why we ought all to be loyal to convictions. Not only is such loyalty of the highest importance for our own moral life, but it is indispensable for the world's advance. The question whether we will be loyal to the truth which we see, is simply the question whether we will join the honored company of those who are rolling the world on from night to day; lifting man from the brute to the full human; carrying society forward from barbarism to that nobler civilization, whose banners are already beginning to wave in the morning sky.

Of course, I know that the part which any single individual can play in the world's advance is very small—so small that it is hardly strange if sometimes we think it insignificant and unimportant. But thus we must not allow ourselves to think for a moment. For the *fidelity* of our actions, not for their results, are we responsible. If we are loyal and true, God will see to the rest.

No soldier is required to win the battle; he is only required to do his single part.

No single drop of sap in a tree, or particle of chlorophyll in a grass blade, can bring the glory of a spring. But each sap drop, wherever you turn, and each chlorophyll particle, wherever you look, is loyal, and so in due time the splendor of spring comes.

No stone in a great building is much, by itself; but its importance as a part of the whole is immense. It is the

stone's *loyalty* that tells. Let it fill its own small place well, and the structure stands strong. Let it be disloyal—that is, let it fail to carry out its promise by crumbling or cracking or disintegrating, and the whole edifice is weakened.

The man who is disloyal to truth and duty in society, is what a rotten stone is in a wall.

We can none of us do much, we say. And yet how vast is the influence of the smallest things! The little band at Marathon—insignificant in number compared with the great armies of the world—has put courage and patriotism in to the hearts of millions. The widow with her mite, and Mary breaking her box of ointment to anoint the feet of one she loved, told in the simple gospel story, have comforted and strengthened untold multitudes of discouraged hearts in all the ages since. The one humble man, who was absolutely true to the divine voice in his soul, in Nazareth and Capernaum and Jerusalem, nineteen hundred years ago, and who rather than turn aside an inch from the path of loyalty would let the Roman soldiers nail him to a cruel cross, has by his perfect fidelity given new moral life to half the world.

In the presence of such examples as these how dare any of us speak of great or small? To the Infinite Wisdom and Providence nothing is small. God watches alike over the fall of a sparrow and the destruction of an empire. He protects as carefully the hydrogen atom, which no microscope has ever been able to discern, as the mightiest sun in the heavens. To accomplish the greatest results he often chooses what seem to us the most insignificant means. Thus we see that our concern is not with the results of our deeds or our words, but only with our own fidelity. When God gives us a duty to do, it is ours to do it, if the heavens fall. But let us know that doing it is exactly what will prevent the heavens from falling.

“When God commands to take the trumpet
And blow a dolorous or a thrilling blast,
It rests not with man's will what he shall say
Or what he shall conceal.”

But I fancy I hear some of you reply: Yes, doubtless you are right. We grant your claim. Duty is indeed the "daughter of the voice of God,"—therefore we may not disobey her. Convictions are sacred: therefore we ought to be loyal to them. But this is vague; this is indefinite. Will you not tell us *how, where, in what directions and ways* we should and can be loyal?

I cannot answer this demand in a way to cover the whole ground except by saying: Duty commands men to be loyal to their convictions *absolutely everywhere*, and in respect to *absolutely everything in life*. She is satisfied with no divided service.

If you ask me to be more specific, then I say:

First, be loyal in all matters of *personal conduct*. Do you have ideals of life? Cherish them; resolve, God helping you, to realize them. Dare to be yourself. Be not afraid to think your own thoughts, or to shape your own career. Seize fast hold of the tiller of your life's boat; steer, do not drift. Hear the words of the old prophet—"Son of man, stand upon thy feet"—*thy* feet, not another's.

Secondly, be loyal to your convictions *in society, in business*, and in your ordinary *relations with your fellows*. It is easy to be a sheep and go with the flock. It is not so easy to be a man, and stand alone. But there comes into every life, times when we must stand alone, or be untrue. Do not *seek* to stand alone—there is no virtue in isolation, or in oddity. But *dare* to stand alone if you *ought*.

The easy thing is to let one's self down to the moral level of the community in which one lives, or of the persons with whom one happens to be. Let yourself morally down never; hold yourself up to manhood, truth and honor, always and everywhere; for it is for these things that you have your existence. Conform to all customs that are harmless; conform to none that are evil. Help others to be true and strong by being true and strong yourself. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Thirdly, be loyal to your convictions *in politics*. Have

convictions, and then yield them to nobody. There is hardly anything so disintegrating to our whole moral life in this country, as our abject subserviency to parties. Political names blind us as completely as if bandages were about our eyes. We excuse the worst evils if they are within our own party. We condemn the best measures if they are in an opposing party. We run with shut eyes to elect the most unprincipled men to office, and to give our influence in favor of the most corrupt legislation, if our party leaders so command. So important a thing do we hold loyalty to party to be, and so light a thing loyalty to truth and honor and political righteousness! So weak and cowardly are we in political matters! Shame on us! Let us have courage. Let us be independent. Let us refuse to follow the leadership of base men, planning for base ends. Let us put purity, principle, the moral character of the men we choose to office, and the welfare of the public, as high above partyism as the heavens are above the earth.

Fourthly, and finally. Be loyal to your convictions in religion. As this is the last, so it is probably the most important form of loyalty. The reason why is, religion goes deeper, or ought to, than anything else. So then if we are sound and honest and true in religion it will go far toward insuring that we shall be sound and true in all life; while, on the other hand, if we are weak, or insincere, or false; if we hide our real convictions and go with the crowd for popularity's sake; if we keep silent when we should speak; if we let ourselves appear to men to believe what we do not believe, and outwardly assent to what our hearts deny, then we undermine in the most serious way our own character, and make that which ought to minister to our moral life minister to our moral destruction. The terrible thing about all religious disloyalty or insincerity is, that it not only destroys our own religious honor, and paves the way to our own spiritual death, but it injures in the deepest way the cause of religion in the world. Men soon see through our pretense, and because of our hypocrisy they turn away from religion itself with distrust and contempt, saying it is a fraud and a delusion.

Think of the condition of religion in England which drew from Carlyle such an utterance as the following:

"The position of the clergy is one of ignominy and deep degradation. The spectacle of a body of enlightened men solemnly, and in the face of God and man, professing their steadfast faith and belief in that which they know they do not steadfastly believe in, is enough to make any thinking man sick at heart. What enlightened man can conscientiously in these days tie up his reason by formulas and articles drawn up centuries ago, and say, 'I believe,' whilst the inner soul of him all the time is exclaiming, 'I do not believe—it is a lie?'"

Have matters in England changed for the better since Carlyle's day? Who dares to say yes? Or, are matters in this country much better? Let these lines answer:

I asked a priest, "Do you believe all *true*
 You teach the people?" "O dear, no," said he;
 "But then, 'twould never do to speak, you see,
 For though we don't believe, the *people* do."

I asked a working man upon the street.
 "Do you believe what priests say, to the letter?"
 "O no, we are not fools, and we know better;
 The *priests* do."

Does any one doubt that if we could have taught in all the churches of this country a religion in harmony with the real convictions of the majority of both the preachers and the laity, it would be so different from the religion of the standard creeds and confessions of faith, that an intelligent observer would scarcely recognize the two as related?

Edward Everett Hale has recently made in print the following statement: "Almost any Unitarian would tell you that the practical creed of every-day laymen in all the Protestant churches in America is Unitarian. We really believe that it is only the clergy of the evangelical churches who believe in the doctrines of the Westminster Confession. For the rank and file, we really think that their religion would be summed up in the statement that they believe in God and worship him, that they believe in heaven and hope

to go there, that they try to do right among their fellow men, and that they believe that Jesus Christ was a teacher sent from God to tell men to do this. I said this to a large audience of Presbyterians in Saratoga last September. As soon as I had done, a Presbyterian clergyman came to me on the platform, and told me that I was right in this statement."

It is well known that every orthodox denomination is honeycombed with disbelief in the very doctrines for which the denomination stands. And not alone in its laity either, but in its clergy as well. There is nothing which is so popular in orthodox pulpits to-day, as Unitarianism, if only it wears the orthodox name.

It is plain then that the duty of religious honesty, sincerity, outspokenness, courage, loyalty to conviction, is one that needs to be urged everywhere.

The fact that religion is so sacred a matter, and is so closely connected with man's moral ideals, makes absolute honesty in connection with it, more imperative than perhaps anywhere else.

Rightly do we condemn the hypocrite and the deceiver in politics, in business, and in society. But nowhere else does he deserve so severe condemnation as in religion, because religion ought to stand for the very highest, purest and noblest there is in human life. When the whitest robed of all the angels of light draggles her garments in the mire the sight is peculiarly painful. You remember that Jesus condemned no other class of men so severely as hypocrites. In harmony with this view, we find the Mohammedans teaching that there are seven hells, and that hypocrites are consigned to the lowest and hottest of the seven.

But religious loyalty does not consist simply in honesty, essential as this is. It includes also *unselfishness* and a desire to *share with others* the good which one has himself received.

The man who has come into possession of new truth which seems to him valuable, and makes no effort to give it to his fellow men, is not loyal to it. He wrongs both it and them.

I have just been reading the Autobiography of Frances Power Cobbe, one of the most fascinating, as it is one of the noblest and greatest books of the past year. In it I find a passage bearing upon this subject of religious loyalty which I cannot excuse myself from quoting, so well does it express the duty of passing on to others the truth which has been given us.

Writes Miss Cobbe: "Few of us but have much to regret in the way of unworthy silences which, if caused by tenderness, were weak,—if by any fear, cowardly and base. . . . The simplest principles of benevolence require us to share with our neighbor the truths which have been vouchsafed to us, and, if he will not accept them from us, to set them before him freely with all the attractions we can give them. Each religious truth is an aid to virtue; it is a thought to enlarge the mind and make it better. . . . Who knows what fires we may kindle if we will but speak that which we know. . . . Be our powers small or great, they are *those which God has committed to us*. We are more accountable in his sight for not exchanging this talent of truth than for hoarding all the gold in a miser's coffers. There is no measuring the consequences which would ensue if we all took to heart this duty of 'casting our spiritual bread on the water.' Twelve fishermen changed the world's history by possessing a truth, and believing that God required them to *spread it*."

We sometimes hesitate to speak a truth which has come to us and which seems to us precious, because we say, Perhaps men are not ready for it. But who is to be the judge whether men are ready for truth or not? What is the basis of our hesitancy? Is it not really skepticism as to the safety of truth? If we really had faith in truth would we fear to give it to men? Can it be possible that we really think falsehood may be safer for some minds than truth? Alas! what infidels we are!

Let us ponder these very weighty words of Herbert Spencer, found in his "First Principles." Perhaps no man in our day writes with more deliberate judgment, or is less

given to extravagance on a subject like the one before us, than this great English thinker. But so deeply does he feel it to be the duty of all persons who hold more intelligent views than those which are commonly current, to be loyal to them, and to do what they can to propagate them, that he writes as follows:

"Whoever hesitates to utter that which he thinks the highest truth, lest it be too much in advance of the time . . . must remember that while he is a descendant of the past, he is a parent of the future; and that his thoughts are as children born unto him which he may not carelessly let die. He, like every other man, may properly consider himself as one of the myriad agencies through which works the Great First Cause, and when that Cause produces in him a certain belief, he is thereby authorized to profess and act that belief. . . . Not as adventitious, therefore, will the wise man regard the faith that is in him. The highest truth he sees he will fearlessly utter; knowing that, let what may come of it, he is thus playing his right part in the world."

I know not how one could more strongly, or, as I think, more truthfully put the sacred obligation that rests upon us all as holders of an advanced form of religious faith, to do what we can, and all we can, to give it to the world.

Spencer but expresses in fuller and more philosophical form the great and solemn thought of Jesus: To this end were we all born, and for this cause came we all into the world, that we might bear witness to the truth, as each one has been given to see the truth.

Noble souls are glad to share their treasures. Only the sordid and selfish refuse to impart what they have received.

Do any of us believe that in the great Providence of God a higher, truer, and nobler form of Christianity has been given to us, than that which a darker past has been contented with, or than is generally current about us to-day? What then is our duty in connection with it? Surely there can be but one answer. First of all, our duty, as well as our privilege, must be, to trust it, to prize it, to take the joy

and strength of it deeply into our own lives; and then, beyond this, as not less imperative, to identify ourselves unequivocally with its fortune; to give it our pecnniary and moral support; to teach it to our children; and to do what in us lies to give its truth to those who do not now possess it, and to make it spread and prevail in the world.

Surely nothing less than this is reasonable. Most surely nothing less than this is generous or noble. Therefore we may be certain that for this, and for nothing less than this, God and our fellow men will hold us responsible.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

Oliver Wendell Holmes was born in Cambridge, Mass., only a little way from the grounds of Harvard University, in a quaint and famous old house, with gambrel roof and wide chimneys. The house had come down from pre-revolutionary times, and was full of historic associations and interesting old reminiscences. In it Artemas Ward, of revolutionary fame, established his headquarters after the battle of Lexington; and in one of its wide old chambers the battle of Bunker Hill was determined upon and planned. Here Washington was entertained, and here Benedict Arnold received his first commission. Its floors were indented by the butts of the muskets of Continental militia. When it was torn down twenty-five years or so ago, there was a general feeling of regret throughout all Cambridge.

Holmes' father was a minister—the pastor, for thirty-five years, of the First Congregational church of Cambridge. He was orthodox in his theology, antiquarian in his tastes, and very dry as a preacher. One of his deacons declared of him that he fed his congregation saw-dust with a spoon.

It has been said of Vermont and New Hampshire, that they are good States to emigrate from. Young Oliver Wendell early became convinced that the theology of his father—a somewhat modified Calvinism—was a good theology to emigrate from. Accordingly very early in his manhood he migrated to the sunnier and more attractive, and as he believed, the healthier and more fertile, land, of a more liberal and rational faith.

He fitted for college at the famous preparatory school of that day, Phillips Academy, Exeter, and entered Harvard, graduating with the famous class of 1829—when he was twenty years of age. Among his Harvard classmates were James Freeman Clarke and William Henry Channing, the distinguished preachers and writers; Benjamin Pierce,

the great mathematician; Benjamin R. Curtis, of the United States Snpreme Court; and George T. Bigelow, Ohief Justice of Massachusetts. Snch names are enough to make any class famons. Bnt what, more than anything else, has attracted the attention of the country and the world to the class, has been the poems written by the incomparable poet of the class, on the occasions of its re-unions. Turn to a volnme of the collected poetical writings of Oliver Wendell Holmes and yon will find nnder the heading "Poems of the Class of 1829," no fewer than thirty-two pieces, of many lengths and many metres, and ranging through almost the whole gamnt of human feeling, from the most rollicking fun to the most sonl-stirring patriotism, and from that on again to the tenderest memories that bring tears to the eyes.

What college man in America has not laughed and cried over "Onr Boys," written by Holmes for his thirtieth class re-nnion? If there is one I pity him.

"Has there any old fellow got mixed with the boys?
If there has, take him out, without making a noise.
Hang the Almanac's cheat, and the Catalogue's spite!
Old Time is a liar! we're twenty to-night."

At the fortieth re-nnion of his class he writes:

"Here's the old cruiser 'Twenty-nine,'
Forty times she's crossed the line;
Same old masts and sails and crew,
Tight and tough and good as new."

How many were on board when the cruise began forty years before?

"Crew of a hundred all aboard,
Every man as big as a lord.
Gay they look and proud they feel,
Bowling along on even keel."

How many of the crew are left, now that forty years are passed? Only

"Thirty men, from twenty towns,
Sires and grandsires, with silvered crowns!"

Yet, once together, they are boys again.

"Thirty school-boys all in a row,
Bens and Georges, and Bill and Joe!"

Here is the beginning of another class poem, in a soberer vein:—

"Yes, the vacant chairs tell sadly, we are going, going fast,
And the thought comes strangely o'er me, who will live to
be the last?
When the twentieth century's sunbeams climb the far-off
eastern hill,
With his ninety-winters burdened will he greet the morning
still?"

After graduating from college young Holmes studied law a year; but did not like it. He liked writing witty poems far better: and in this he had already won some success. To one profession, however, he felt himself drawn. That was medicine. Accordingly to medicine he turned his attention, studying in this country two years and a half, and in Europe three years. His medical studies completed—at the age of twenty-nine he was chosen Professor of Anatomy and Physiology in Dartmouth College. Nine years later he accepted the same chair at Harvard, where he remained, doing steady, laborious, efficient, and in many respects, brilliant work, for thirty-five years. When he began his work at the Harvard Medical School, that school was small, and he was obliged to make his lectures cover a wide range. Speaking of it later, he said that he occupied at that time, not a *chair* in the Faculty, but a *settee*. But he stood by the school and labored on, until he saw it one of the strongest in the world.

It is hard for us to think of Holmes as a doctor of medicine, or as a scientist. Yet a large part of his life was given faithfully to his chosen profession, and he attained a rank in it excelled by only a few.

It was not until the year 1857, when he was forty-eight years of age, that he wrote anything that gave him any

considerable fame in the literary world; although he had published several small volumes of verse before that time, and much prose.

When the *Atlantic Monthly* was started, in the year just named, Lowell, its editor, who knew Holmes' brilliant gifts as a writer, asked him to become a contributor. Holmes complied, and began the series of papers called "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," later published in book form. From the first the papers were immensely popular, and their author literally leaped to fame at a single bound. From that day on, there was no more popular prose writer in America than Oliver Wendell Holmes.

"The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table" was followed three years later by a similar series of papers entitled "The Poet at the Breakfast Table," and ten years later still, in 1870, by a third series called "The Professor at the Breakfast Table." All these papers carry out one and the same general idea, which is, the reporting of a series of imaginary conversations, on a very large number and variety of subjects of popular interest, by a company of persons representing various orders of minds, degrees of culture and positions in society. The result as wrought out by Dr. Holmes is a series of books at once wise and witty, fascinating in their interest, brilliant in their literary style, and appealing to a very wide reading public.

The Autocrat is as authoritative as Dr. Johnson, as full of rollicking humor as Father Prout, as sweet as Goldsmith, as dainty as Leigh Hunt, as tender as Washington Irving, as brilliant as Sheridan. At last we have American humor that is not raw and in chunks, not coarse, not made up largely of bad grammar and bad spelling. It is difficult to imagine a more rapidly moving or more splendid panorama of wit, drollery, humor, learning, wisdom, insight into human nature, satire, ridicule of humbugs and stupidity, pathos, sentiment, logic, idyls of love, and brilliant monologue, than sweep past us in these delightful books.

There are critics who think they can detect a falling off in power and originality in the later volumes, as compared

with the first. For myself I am disposed to doubt the correctness of their judgment.

If there is any difference noticeable, I think it is, that in the last volume of all there is a little more of that sweetness, that rich mellowness, that ought to come to human beings with added age, as epicures say it comes to old wine.

Some years after the Breakfast Table series was finished Holmes again took up his pen and wrote in a similar vein a volume called "Over the Tea Cups." Even here there was little diminution of the old power and versatility. Yet naturally something of the old freshness was gone.

Dr. Holmes' fame as a poet was of a much slower and steadier growth than his fame as an essayist. While yet in college he wrote poems that gave his classmates great faith in his future. His reputation spread from his class through college circles, then to Boston, and gradually over the land. For wit, and epigram, and satire that does not wound nor rankle, he has no equal among American poets, and no superior among English.

Perhaps no one has given a better portrayal of Holmes, at least on his witty side, than Lowell in his "Fable for Critics." He writes:

"There is Holmes, who is matchless among you for wit,
A Leyden jar always full charged, from which flit
The electrical tingles of hit for hit.

His are just the fine hands, too, for weaving you a lyric
Full of fancy, fun, feeling, or spiced with satiric,
In a measure so kindly you doubt if the toes
That are trodden upon are your own or your foe's."

I need hardly say, Dr. Holmes was not a poet of nature. He was pre-eminently a poet of society. He loved to be with men. It was men that interested him. He could describe society, and understand society, and praise and satirize society with a keenness that was inimitable.

He was especially gifted as a writer of occasional poems. Indeed, here I think he stands absolutely unrivalled in our century. Said Bayard Taylor: "He lifted the occasional into a classic." He was born for a poet laureate. For say-

ing in happy and sparkling verse exactly the thing that everybody wanted said but that nobody else knew how to say, on all sorts of notable occasions, he had a readiness and a facility that amounted to genius. Thus he was called upon to write poems upon almost every occasion of importance connected with the history of Harvard College, of Boston, and we might add of the nation, for fifty years. Indeed, his poems might almost be read as a text-book in American history. Only, they lack one seemingly necessary quality of a text-book, they are not dull. They would interest, and awaken the enthusiasm of students in a way which I fear might alarm parents and teachers.

Many of these occasional poems, or poems of history, can hardly fail to live, they catch so admirably the spirit of the time. Men in future ages who want to know not only what was done in our day, but in what spirit, and with what impulse, will go to our poets Whittier and Lowell and Holmes quite as much as to our historians.

Some of our Autocrat's poems of wit and humor too, I think must live a long time, they are so inimitable and so perfect of their kind—such as "The One Hoss Shay," "How the Old Horse Won the Bet," "The Spectre Pig," "A Farewell to Agassiz," and some of his class poems.

Nor do some of his serious poems, such as "The Chambered Nautilus," "The Voiceless," "My Aviary," and "The Silent Melody" seem less certain of immortality.

In still a third direction Dr. Holmes won literary fame. It was as a novelist—through his three works of fiction. Of these "Elsie Venner" is the best known and perhaps the ablest. All three are novels with a purpose. All of course contain much good writing: they could not fail to do this and come from the pen of Holmes. But they lack those elements of dramatic power which are found in the novels of Hawthorne. Holmes' genius is epigrammatic, descriptive, perhaps lyric, not dramatic.

Even with fiction his busy pen did not rest. To his essays, his poetry, and his novels he added two biographies, one of the historian Motley and one of Emerson; and, last

of all, a book of travel, giving a most delightful account of the journey which, in his old age and in the ripeness of his fame, he made to Europe, where he was received as a king—the king that he truly was, in the mighty realm of letters.

Then, after a little waiting—waiting filled in with much miscellaneous work, the end came. And what an end it was! so serene, and ripe! his work done! and the toiler ready to take his well earned rest!

To the last he carried a young heart. He well exemplified his own saying, that it is better to be seventy years young than forty years old. He loved life; he loved his home and his friends; he loved the beautiful world in which God had permitted him to live. And he was content to stay until the Good Power that placed him here should call him hence. But he feared not to go. He believed that God's love and care may be relied on with as much certainty in the world to come as in this.

When he went he left a trail of light behind him. The whole world was a little happier and better because he had lived.

For many years Dr. Holmes had been a pew owner and communicant at King's Chapel, the old original Unitarian church of Boston. Only a little while before his death it was my privilege to sit by his side on a notable occasion in that historic place. It was from that venerable sanctuary which he loved so well, that he was borne to his last resting place in beautiful Mount Auburn, where, beneath the protecting arms of three majestic oaks, and near the graves of his loved friends, Longfellow and Lowell, his grave has already become a place of sacred pilgrimage to multitudes.

I think we have now before us with sufficient clearness the main outline of Dr. Holmes' life and work, as a man and as a writer. It is time for us to inquire about the central purpose and meaning of his writings and his life.

All the world knows of him as a wit and a humorist. But it is a shallow judgment that thinks of him as nothing more. Below his playful humor and his brilliant wit there was a very earnest man, endeavoring to do a very serious

work in the world. He wrote to please and to delight. But through all his books runs a high and earnest purpose. He would have men laugh, because to laugh is human and good. But he saw in humanity more than a company of grinning apes. He recognized the great object and end of life to be, not mirth or pleasure, or even knowledge, but duty, love, service, and the building up of human character. The supreme motives of life he believed to be those of religion. Here we have what was central and deepest in the man.

He lived a life of conscientious and even severe toil—for more than a third of a century filling his chair of instruction in a great institution of learning, and keeping fully abreast of his profession, while at the same time doing an amount of literary work that amazes us.

His life was one of spotless integrity and honor.

He was a merciless exposé of shams and hypocrisy, and a fearless defender of reality and truth.

He loved his alma mater, his native city, his native state, and his native land, with all his heart.

I regret to say, he did not form one of that heroic group of anti-slavery reformers that made New England glorious. He had a strain of the aristocrat in his blood, that made him shrink from the anti-slavery agitation, and drew him into too much sympathy with the proud slave-owners of the South. But this lasted only until the war began. Patriotism throbbed in every drop of his blood. This is proved by the fact that he gave his twenty-years old boy to his country, to bring back three wounds from southern battlefields.

Dr. Holmes was all his life a deeply religious man. In leaving the Calvinism of his early life he did not leave religion. He left the old that he might find for himself a more reasonable and a more worthy new. This new religion he loved and lived. Of it all his books are full. Often it does not label itself. Often it does not seem even to think of itself as being religion at all, but simply conscientiousness, truthfulness, honesty in business, patience, kindness, helpfulness to those in need, feeding the hungry,

clothing the naked, ministering to the sick, being faithful in all the duties of daily life, and calmly and without fear trusting God for all that is beyond our strength and sight.

But Dr. Holmes had sufficient depth of spiritual insight, and was close enough in touch with Jesus, to understand that, named or unnamed, these things—duty, integrity, love and trust—are religion, and the only religion that can stand the test of a thinking age, that can bring heaven on earth, or that can be leaned upon with the certainty that they will not fail in life or in death.

Dr. Holmes believed in a religion that is reasonable, practical, forward-looking, in harmony with the best thought and intelligence of the world. And he made both his prose and his verse the constant vehicle for his advanced religious ideas. Wherever he saw an irrational doctrine taught in the name of religion, he did not hesitate to label it irrational. Wherever he came in contact with ideas about God or God's dealings with men that seemed to him inhuman, he did not fear to call them inhuman, in plain words. Wherever he found bubbles of religious superstition, he was quick to thrust into them the lance of his keen wit and satire.

Theological novels in our day have become common. In this form of literature Dr. Holmes was a pioneer. Twenty years before Mrs. Humphrey Ward wrote her "Robert Elsmere," the Autocrat had given the world his "Guardian Angel," a story in which the old theology receives one of the most critically severe arraignments that it has ever been accorded at the hands of any writer. Indeed there is hardly one of his books, in prose or poetry, in which he does not show his hate of theological narrowness and dogmatism, and his love of religious breadth, freedom and light. When a divinity student reproaches him with not having a creed, he replies, "I have a creed—none better and none shorter; it is told in two words—the first two of the Pater-Noster."

The Autocrat hears men talk about "getting religion." Yes, he says, but let it be real religion and not a mere make-

believe. Let it be a religion which shall improve men's lives. I will believe that men have "got religion," when

"Berries,—whortle—rasp—and straw,
Grow bigger *downwards* through the box."

He cares little for ecclesiastical forms and ceremonies. He says: "I am no church-man; I don't believe in planting oaks in flower-pots." He gives his impression of much of the ritualism of the time, when he writes, of "high church curates, trained to snap at the last word of the response, so that you couldn't wedge in the tail of a comma between the end of the congregation's last syllable and the beginning of the next petition. They do it well, but it always spoils my devotion. To save my life, I can't help watching them, as I watch to see a duck dive at the flash of a gun, and that is not what I go to church for."

On the subject of Bible infallibility he says: "There is nothing so dangerous to intellectual virility as to have an 'infallible book' to fall back upon. There is no sacred book in the world which has not crippled human souls."

Dr. Holmes was a scientist, and as such he accepted heartily all contributions to knowledge which science is able to make; nor did he fear the effects of these upon religion. Whatever in religion is true, he knew no truth of science can disturb. Whatever in religion is not true, he wanted removed; that we may have a religion of truth alone. At the National Unitarian Festival in 1883 he said: "I think we might fairly claim that our faith (the faith of Unitarians) has gone on to meet science half way."

His scientific pursuits and his faith in science did not make him a materialist. In the very lecture in which he demonstrates the dependence of the soul upon physical conditions so long as it remains in this world, he affirms most decisively that "we do not find Hamlet and Faust, right and wrong, the valor of men and the purity of women, by testing for albumen, or by examining fibres in microscopes." Not until we can "send a statesman his integrity in a package to Washington, if he happens to

have left it behind," will he believe that integrity is only the resultant of the arrangement of molecules or atoms in the brain. All his scientific study drives him to the conviction that spirit, and not matter, is the primal, central and eternal reality—and the causal force in all organic life. Everywhere he finds God; and this because he finds power and wisdom and moral order everywhere. For what are these but God? Thus he sees God alike in atoms and worlds; in the infinitely small and the infinitely great. To him gravity, "that unsleeping, everywhere-present force, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever" is nothing less than "the great outspread hand of God himself."

Dr. Holmes was an optimist. He could not believe that the Power that made this world is malign, or that he cherishes evil designs toward any of his creatures. Nor yet could we believe that that Power is weak, and is thus liable to be defeated in his ends of ultimate good. To the historian Motley he wrote: "I am a man of large faith, and though the devil is a person of remarkable talents, I think the Presiding Wisdom is sure to be too much for him in the end." His optimism, however, was not of that weak sentimental kind that we sometimes see. It did not blind him to the stern facts of nature. He saw the dark side of things as clearly as any man,—the pain, the suffering, the sorrow that everywhere confront human beings in this world. But he saw them in the light of their larger relations and their compensations. "The forces of nature hrnise and wound our bodies," he writes, "but an artery no sooner bleeds than the divine hand is placed upon it to stay the flow. A wound is no sooner made than the healing process is set on foot. Pain reaches a certain point and insensibility comes on,—for fainting is the natural anodyne of incurable griefs, as death is the remedy of those which are intolerable. . . . I see no corner of the universe which the Father has wholly deserted."

No poet or writer has ever taught a manlier faith than Holmes. That religion which cringes and crawls he will have nothing to do with. To him the voice of the old

scripture sounds, "Son of man, stand upon thy feet." With fine spirit he writes,

"I claim the right of knowing whom I serve,
Else is my service idle; He that asks
My homage, asks it from a reasoning soul.
To crawl is not to worship; we have learned
A drill of eyelids, bended neck and knee,
Hanging our prayers on hinges, till we ape
The flexures of the many-jointed worm.
Asia has taught her Allahs and salaams
To the world's *children*,—we have grown to *men*!
We who have rolled the sphere beneath our feet
To find a virgin forest, as we lay
The beams of our rude temple, first of all
Must frame its doorway high enough for man
To pass unstooping;
This is the new world's gospel: *He ye men!*"

Few writers or public teachers of our century have been more unsparing than Dr. Holmes in condemnation of the old dogmas that enslave men's minds and degrade the character of God. Few have been more ardent in their support of the broader faith that frees men's minds and lifts God up to moral perfection and therefore to real honor.

Here is what he says in one of his last articles in the *Atlantic Monthly*, about the doctrine of eternal punishment:—

"How shall we characterize the doctrine of endless torture as the destiny of most of those who have lived, and are living, on this planet? I prefer to let another writer speak of it. Mr. John Morley uses the following words: 'The horrors of what is perhaps the most frightful idea that has ever corroded human character,—the idea of eternal punishment!' Sismondi, the great historian, heard a sermon on eternal punishment, and vowed never to enter another church holding the same creed. When Cowper, at about the end of the last century, said satirically of the minister he was attacking,

'He never mentioned hell to ears polite,'

he was giving unconscious evidence that the sense of the barbarism of the idea was finding its way into the pulpit. When Burns, in the midst of the sulphurous orthodoxy of Scotland, dared to say,

'The fear o' hell 's a hangman's whelp,
To haud the wretch in order,'

he was only appealing to the common sense and common humanity of his fellow countrymen.

All the reasoning in the world, all the proof-texts in old manuscripts, cannot reconcile this supposition of a world of sleepless and endless torment with the declaration that 'God is love.'"

In one of his poems entitled "Love," Dr. Holmes shows how impossible it is that there can be a heaven at all, for any human soul, so long as a hell of hopeless torment exists for its loved ones.

"What if a soul redeemed, a spirit that loved
While yet on earth, and was beloved in turn,
And still remembered every look and tone
Of that dear earthly sister who was left
Among the unwise virgins at the gate,
Itself admitted with the bridegroom train,—
What if this spirit redeemed, amid the host
Of chanting angels, in some transcendent hall
Of the eternal anthem, heard the cry
Of its lost darling
Left an outcast in the world of fire,—
Would it not long to leave the bliss of heaven—
Bearing a little water in its hand
To moisten those poor lips that plead in vain
With what we call our Father?"

Could heaven be heaven for any heart not made of stone, while dear ones writhe in hopeless, endless agony?

Thank God! that horrible doctrine, that black slander upon the character of the Creator, that unspeakable stain upon modern Christianity, is at last beginning to shrink out of sight and hide itself in dark corners, as a hideous creature of the night. At last we are beginning to see that to admit

such a doctrine dethrones God, and turns all heaven into hell. To whom are we indebted for daring to confront and smite that ugly vampire of the past, and for bringing about the blessed change in men's thought that is appearing? History tells us we are indebted to many good and brave souls,—to John Murray, to Hosea Ballou, to William Ellery Channing, to Theodore Parker, to James Freeman Clarke, to James Martineau, to Frederick W. Farrar, to John G. Whittier, to Ralph Waldo Emerson, and many, many more; but occupying a conspicuous and honored place in the list, must forever stand the name of Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Having described Dr. Holmes' creed as the Fatherhood of God, it is hardly necessary to add that his religion was a cheerful one. How could it be otherwise, based upon so great and noble and sweet a faith? One of his heaviest charges against the Calvinism in which he had been reared, was the fact that it was a religion of gloom and despair. He said, If God is worthy of our worship at all, if he is in any sense our Father, then he must be pleased to see his children happy in this world, and he must have planned their ultimate happiness in the world to come. Why then should we not make our religion joyful, and in harmony with everything that is bright and beautiful, as well as everything that is good?

But let us not suppose that because his religion was cheerful, it had in it any place for lazy ease or indifference. It was a religion of lofty ideals, of growth, of strenuous striving for the best. He believed with Lowell:

“They must upward still and onward
Who would keep abreast of truth.”

His motto was that of Paul: “Not as though I had already attained: but I press forward.” I cannot but think that the very finest poem of all that we have from the pen of Dr. Holmes, is “The Chambered Nautilus”—a poem written expressly to teach this lesson. It is exquisitely beautiful as a piece of literary art. But is it just as beautiful in its religious meaning. I must not take time to

read the whole; but I could not forgive myself if I did not recall to your minds at least the last three verses.

"Year after year beheld the silent toil!
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft steps its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old
[no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap, forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathed horn!
While on mine ear it rings
Through the deep caves of thought I hear
A voice that sings:

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting
[sea."

I wonder if we know how fine a hymn-writer we have in Dr. Holmes. His hymns are not numerous, but their quality is superior. One he calls a Hymn of Trust. It is very tender; some of you are doubtless acquainted with it. I will quote only its first verse:

"O Love Divine, that stooped to share
Our sharpest pang, our bitterest tear,
On thee we cast each earth-born care;
We smile at pain while thou art near."

One of his hymns I must quote entire, it is so fine, nay, so great. Whether judged by its literary art or by its spiritual power, I know not where in the whole range of hymnology to look for its superior.

"Lord of all, being, throned afar,
Thy glory shines from sun and star;
Centre and soul of every sphere,
Yet to each loving heart how near!

Sun of our life, thy quickening ray
Sheds on our path the glow of day;
Star of our hope, thy softened light
Cheers the long watches of the night.

Our midnight is thy smile withdrawn;
Our noontide is thy gracious dawn;
Our rainbow arch, thy mercy's sign;
All, save the clouds of sin, are thine!

Lord of all life, below, above,
Whose light is truth, whose warmth is love,
Before thy ever-blazing throne
We ask no lustre of our own.

Grant us thy truth to make us free,
And kindling hearts that burn for thee,
Till all thy living altars claim
One holy light, one heavenly flame!"

What a lyric of insight, beauty, fire! Even Milton never penned more splendid lines.

A single other poem, in hymn form, I must read you, and then I shall have done. It is found in very few editions of Dr. Holmes' works,—indeed, in none printed before his death. It has a special interest because it was the last poetical composition that he ever read in public. Though penned when he had reached the advanced age of eighty-three, and felt himself to be that "last leaf" clinging upon "the old forsaken bough" of which he had written so pathetically, there is no weakness in the thought or expression. Rather is the poem remarkably vigorous and characteristic, and in every way worthy to be his spiritual "swan song."

"Our Father! while our hearts unlearn
The creeds that wrong thy name,
Still let thy hallowed altars burn
With faith's undying flame.

Not by the lightning gleams of wrath
Our souls thy face shall see;
The star of love must light the path
That leads to heaven and thee.

Help us to read our Master's will
Through every darkening stain
That clouds his sacred image still,
And see him once again,

The brother man, the pitying friend,
Who weeps for human woes,
Whose pleading words of pardon blend
With cries of raging foes.

If 'mid the gathering storms of doubt
Our hearts grow faint and cold,
The strength we cannot live without
Thy love will not withhold.

Our prayers accept; our sins forgive;
Our faith and zeal renew;
Shape for us holier lives to live
And nobler work to do."

Here then, we take leave of that great writer, (and shall we not say great preacher?) who has done so much not only for American letters, but also for American character and American religion. By his literary art and genius he has delighted, amused, and instructed the world. But better still, by his ethical elevation and his noble religious spirit and thought, he has broadened, sweetened and deepened its life.

Nor in taking leave of him can we be unmindful that he was the last of that remarkable and glorious band of singers and prophets whom God kindly gave our country in its need—Bryant, Emerson, Longfellow, Lowell, Whittier, Holmes! Only a few years ago they were all with us—not a harp broken—every voice speaking sweet and clear its message of a loftier hope and a larger life for men. Now not one is left. "They have all risen to a place among the stars—a glorious constellation! One star, indeed,

differs from another star in glory; but not even the rich heavens could spare any of these shining ones. It is well worth while to have lived on this planet during the century which held these children of light and song."

The whole world is richer because they have lived and written. The whole world has reason to be grateful for their thought and their lives. How much more have all of us whose privilege and joy it is to share that liberal, that forward-looking, that noble religious faith which they all so masterfully sang and so grandly lived!

And now that we see their faces no more, what shall we say? We can only say. Thank God that they lived so long! and thank God, that, though absent from sight, they do not cease their ministries to mankind, but have only gone

"To join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead . . .
Whose music is the gladness of the world."

PRAYER: ITS REASONABLENESS AND VALUE.

"God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.—John IV. : 24.

"Speak to Him thou, for He hears, and
Spirit with Spirit can meet,—
Closer is He than breathing, and
Nearer than hands and feet."

—*Tennyson*.

WE live in an age of science and reason. We live in an age of growing knowledge. We live in an age when it is well understood that the processes of nature go on according to law. In such an age is there any legitimate place for prayer?

There are some who answer, No.

There are persons, and persons of intelligence, who would cast out all prayer, as a superstition, a wholly irrational and foolish thing. Others would not entirely reject prayer, but would limit it,—limit it to meditation and aspiration,—condemning everything beyond these. Still others,—and these are many,—are in uncertainty and confusion of mind about the whole matter, not knowing what to believe.

Under such circumstances it is easy to see that the need is great for a candid and careful study of the subject, that we may find out where there is firm ground on which to stand.

One thing becomes clear as soon as we begin really to think on the subject at all; and that is, that among thoughtful men, who believe in science and a world governed by law, all those ideas of prayer which came into existence in ancient times, before the uniformity of nature's operation was found out, and while yet God was believed to rule the world in purely arbitrary ways, must be revised. In place of these necessarily crude and imperfect conceptions of the nature and functions of prayer, it is important that they should get others

more in harmony with God's real method of governing the universe, and with all the facts of nature.

Nor need we fear. When once men come to understand what true prayer is, and what it is not; in other words, when once they adjust their religious thinking to the enlarged knowledge of the modern world, I do not, for one, see any grounds for believing that the necessary or the legitimate result is to weaken faith in prayer. Rather do I believe that never did the reasonableness, the value and the need of *true* prayer more clearly appear, than under the light of the highest intelligence and the profoundest thinking of our time.

Let me give reasons for so believing.

Perhaps I can best do this by beginning with the negative side of the subject, and describing briefly the kinds of prayer which I do *not* believe in, because modern thought seems to me to have outgrown them. This done, I shall be the better ready to take up the positive side, telling you what kinds of prayer I *do* believe in, and why.

1. To proceed, then, I do not believe in any prayer whose object, or any part of whose object, is *to give God information*, to enlighten him regarding our wants, or to instruct him as to the best way of carrying on the affairs of the world. Yet there are many prayers offered which would seem to have just this object in view. Perhaps the best comments to make on such prayers, are those searching questions of the prophet Isaiah :

"Who hath directed the spirit of the Lord,
Or being his counsellor hath taught him ?
With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him,
And taught him in the path of judgment,
And gave him knowledge,
And showed him the way of understanding !"

If any of us are wiser than God, we may perhaps with some reason indulge in this kind of prayer. If not, it is plain that the sooner we dispense with it the better.

2. Again, I do not believe in any prayer that is

offered as in any sense *a substitute for work*. That is to say, I do not believe in the lazy asking of God to do for us what we ought to do for ourselves.

Once when they were on a journey in the desert, a companion of Mohammed said to the prophet, as they stopped at night : " I will not tie my camel, but will commit him to God." Replied the prophet : "*Tie thy camel, and then commit him to God.*"

That was the true view of prayer. God is not our drudge. Prayer is no power whereby we can secure the boon of idleness for ourselves. To ask God to do for us what we ought to do for ourselves is not to honor but to insult him.

3. Further, I do not believe in any prayer or invocation or offering, or other transaction with God, the object of which is to get God in any sense into human power, or *to compel him* by the use of forms, or rites, or a magic name, or by importunity, *to do what he does not wish to do*.

The Brahmins of India believe that by practicing austerities, and repeating prayers and sacred words from the Vedas, and by offering sacrifices, one can get the gods to almost any extent into one's power, and compel them to do one's bidding. There is a somewhat similar notion regarding prayer and sacraments and sacred rites, found widely among Christian peoples,—the notion that a sort of mystical charm resides in these which will bring supernatural results to the one who is able to avail himself of it. Thus the Roman Catholic priest claims that by the use of certain forms and prayers, he can change bread and wine into the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ ; and the simple minded Catholic woman believes that the effect of counting her beads so many times is to give her so many merits up in heaven ; and the Protestant believes that by pleading the magical merits of Christ's name, he may get whatsoever he will—the remission of his sins, entrance into heaven at death, or a barrel of flour : for many a man has told me of getting flour and coal in this way.

Now I say, this idea of prayer, which makes it a sort of hand whereby we may reach up and lay hold upon certain hidden potencies of divine magic, to use them for our advantage, I do not believe in. I think it is a degradation of prayer to conceive of it in any such light. These things all have their place in fairy tales, and stories of Arabian Nights, and in the superstitions of the Middle Ages ; but they do not have any proper place in the religion of our enlightened age. Here we want truth, not dreams ; realities, not credulities.

4. Again, I do not believe in any theory of prayer that *expects God to set aside wise laws* by which he regulates the affairs of the universe, to accommodate my poor whims, or your short-sighted notions or selfish desires.

It is easy to see that if God allowed one man, or set of men, to have rain for their mere praying for it, and another, dry weather for their praying for that ; and an army to secure victory by praying for victory ; and a farmer to get good crops by praying for them ; and a merchant to grow rich by praying for wealth ; and the sick man to recover by praying for health ; and the living to be delivered from death by so praying, and so on, the result would be simply to turn this world from a law-governed world into one not governed at all ; indeed, it would be to plunge the world at once from order into chaos and ruin. Certainly, I cannot, for one, accept any theory of prayer, or believe that the growing intelligence of the world will accept any, that means this or anything like this. I cannot believe in any prayer that interferes with a law governed universe, or that does not rise to the height of seeing that law itself is only another name for God's rectitude, and fidelity, and goodness, and love.

So much, then, for the negative side of my thought, or the kinds of prayer that I am not able to believe in. I come now to the positive—the kind of prayer that I do believe in.

What ought we to mean by the word prayer ? Should we mean merely petition, merely asking for things ? That is perhaps what is oftenest meant ; but I think it

is much too narrow a signification. Prayer understood in the large way in which it ought to be understood, I am sure should include a great deal besides petition. Indeed, so far is petition from being all of prayer, that it is a question if it be even the most important part.

Certain it is, that as prayer rises to its best, and as men rise to their best, so that prayer becomes to them more and more a habitual attitude of mind, the petition element tends to become less prominent, and other elements come forward to take its place. It is easy to have prayer, and prayer that is very noble, and very sweet, and very profound in its sincerity, and very helpful, without petition at all. For example, how could the spirit of prayer be more perfectly breathed than in the following poem :

" O Love Divine, of all that is
The sweetest and the best !
Fain would I come and rest to-day
Upon thy tender breast ;
And yet the spirit in my heart
Says, ' Wherefore should I pray
That thou should'st seek me with thy love,
Since thou dost seek alway ?'

" I would not have thee otherwise
Than what thou still must be ;
Yea, thou art God, and what thou art
Is ever best for me.
And so, for all my sighs, my heart
Doth sing itself to rest,
O Love Divine, most far and near,
Upon thy tender breast."

Now here is prayer, perhaps as tender and devout and lofty as the soul can know ; and yet it is so far from being made up of petition, that it does not even include petition. It is simply a prayer of love, adoration, gratitude, trust. Do not misunderstand me as saying that I think petition is not proper. Made for right objects, and in a right spirit, I think it is proper, wholly rational and important. But it is not an *essential* in prayer. Much of the truest prayer in the world is without it.

When I say I believe in prayer, I mean I believe in at least five things, as all included in prayer, in the large

and full sense of that word, outside of and besides petition. Let me name them :

1. I believe in *thankfulness* or *gratitude* to the Infinite Source of all good,—to the Giver of my life and of all the blessings that make my life rich,—to the Giver of my dear ones, and all the good that has come to them. And why should I not be thus grateful? I should think myself less than a man if I were not grateful to my fellows for their kindnesses to me. Then am I not less than a man if I do not teach myself to be grateful to the greatest Benefactor I have? Thus I think it is easy to see that the prayer of gratitude—the prayer which is the sincere utterance of a thankful heart—is natural, is reasonable, is in every way most fitting.

2. Another kind of prayer which seems to me wholly rational, is the prayer of *adoration, reverence, awe, worship*, in the presence of the great manifestations of God's power and wisdom and grandeur in nature. It is the feeling which comes over me when I stand in the presence of Niagara, or the sea, or the starry heavens at night. It is the same feeling which the ancient Psalmist had when he exclaimed reverently :

" The heavens declare the glory of God,
And the firmament sheweth his handiwork.
Day unto day uttereth speech,
And night unto night sheweth knowledge."

" O Lord, how manifold are thy works,
In wisdom hast thou made them all."

I see not how one can go through this marvelous world without such feelings coming to him by day and by night, ten thousand times over. And I can conceive of nothing more natural or right than that these feelings, when they come, should seek expression, as they have ever done, in the language of adoration and worship.

3. Again, akin to the feeling of adoration in the presence of nature, is what we may call the soul's *communion* with Nature. Who has not had such communion, in the fields, in the woods, in the mountains, in the gathering twilight alone, in the still midnight? What was

that communion? It was not intercourse with the mere *matter* around, regarded as unintelligent and dead. No, it was communion with Nature *alive*, and penetrated with a marvellous *intelligence*. It was communion with the *soul* of Nature, with that Universal Spirit whose wonderful and ever-changing time garment Nature is. It was communion with *God* in Nature.

Nor is man's communion with God awakened by external nature alone. It may be awakened by *man*. He who finds the deepest that is in his brother, finds God. He who journeys inward to the deepest sanctities of his own soul, finds God. Here wait for us all, communings as sweet and holy as we can know in this world.

Now all this comes within the province of prayer, rightly understood. All this communion of the soul with its own deeper self, that is, with the God within; and all this communion of the soul with external nature, that is, with the God without, is worship—*is prayer*. We should always teach ourselves to think of prayer as including all this. And if we do, it will help us to see the grounds for prayer; the reasonableness of prayer; for surely all this is reasonable if any action of the soul *can* be reasonable.

4. Still further, prayer means *aspiration*. It means a vision of the unattained, and a desire to reach it. It means a recognition of the ideal shining above one, and a longing to make it one's own. "Be ye perfect," said Jesus, "even as your Father in Heaven is perfect."

To look upward and see the divine perfection, and to feel the divineness of it, and to press toward it, is the noblest of prayers. Yes, and the most reasonable; for what can be so reasonable as to desire and to strive for the best?

5. One more kind of prayer there is, before we reach petition. It is the prayer of trust: trust of ourselves and all our interests in the hands of the Infinite Wisdom and Care that is over us; trust of our dear one's in the keeping of One who must love them even more than we do; trust of the world in the hands of Him who made

it—sure that he means it well, and that somehow and somewhere He will make “good to be the final goal of ill.”

The value, the preciousness of such a trust, when it exists in the human soul, money cannot measure; and wherever it is found nothing is more natural than for it to seek expression.

You see, then, how large and many-sided and rich a thing is prayer, entirely aside from petition. All the realms of *thankfulness*, of *reverence*, of *communion*, of *aspiration* and of *trust* are open to it, and would be even if one never *asked* anything at all. And how beautiful and glorious are these realms! How great is the loss of all those who do not repair thither often, to breathe their diviner air!

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?”

“Devoutly look, and nought but wonders shall pass by thee;
Devoutly read, and then all books shall edify thee;
Devoutly speak, and men devoutly listen to thee;
Devoutly act, and then the strength of God acts through thee.”

I come now to petition—that kind of prayer which asks for something. It is here that most men find their greatest difficulty in making prayer seem reasonable. Some say, *Why ask for anything?* Will not God give what he wants us to have, anyway, whether we ask or not? Others say, He *cannot* give anything, no matter how much we ask him, *because* he rules by *law*; therefore why go through the farce of asking? Let us see if we can find any light upon these difficulties.

There are two kinds of things that may be asked for in prayer. One is temporal or physical good; the other is spiritual good. Let us look first at the *spiritual*, concerning which the difficulties are least.

Indeed, I think there are no difficulties here at all. Such as there seem to be, arise from surface-looking. The truth is, in spiritual things asking and receiving are not different and opposite. They are the same. To ask is to begin to receive.

When we ask God for any *physical* good, without

putting forth physical effort to obtain it, we are asking him to violate his physical laws to accommodate our wish. But, when we ask for *spiritual* good, there is no violation of law involved. For it is the law of our being that the first step toward receiving spiritual good must be desire for such good. We must open our minds and hearts, that it may come in. What is the way to get love, or purity of heart, or unselfishness, or sympathy for others, or a forgiving spirit, or any other grace of the soul? The first step must be consciousness of our lack, and the next must be desire. But this is just what prayer is. It is the mind concentrating its attention upon, and reaching earnestly after, the things that it feels the lack of, the things that are above it. Thus praying for spiritual good is not going contrary to law; it is putting ourselves into harmony with law. It is availing ourselves of the power of spiritual law to reach the spiritual ends we desire.

Surely, therefore, we may look upon prayer for spiritual blessings as not only useful, but as something wholly reasonable, and right, and in the line of our spirit's normal activities and needs. To forbid such prayer is to put the soul in chains. It is to forbid it to be free. It is to rob it of its birthright. It is to prevent its obeying the law of its being. It is like forbidding the bird to sing, or the flower to reach toward the light, or the babe to pillow its head upon its mother's breast.

We come now to the problem where the real difficulty lies. May we pray for *physical* good? Is such asking reasonable?

To these questions, I answer: If we pray for physical things with any idea that our prayer can *take the place* of physical *labor*, we shall certainly find that we are making a mistake. The prayer for a harvest, that God answers, is the prayer of the hand which sows the grain and cares for it, and reaps it when it is ripe. The prayer of the sailor for safety, that God answers, is the prayer of the clear head and the skillful hand in managing his ship. Any prayer of words, or even of good desires and

longings that is substituted in the place of these prayers, of the clear head and the skillful, patient hand, will prove disastrous.

However, this is not saying that prayer of the heart may not go *with* the prayers of the head and hand ; for, as a fact, earnest heart-prayer often has great power to make the brain more alert and the hand more strong and steady.

If I pray for physical good, expecting that God will miraculously change wise and beneficent laws for the sake of answering my prayer ; or, if I pray for such good, and lazily rely upon my prayer instead of upon the labor I ought to perform, then I break God's law by my conduct, and my prayer is an evil. But if laboring faithfully with my hand, I accompany my toil with a sincere prayer of the heart, and always in submission to the will and the wisdom that is higher than my own, then I see not why I am doing a wrong, or even an irrational thing by my praying. Certain it is that if I pray sincerely it will be likely to deepen my earnestness and my patience in my work. Certain it is also that in all my work I am not alone. I am a partner with God : he must make the wind blow that is to fill my sails, I cannot do it ; he must make the seed grow that I plant, I cannot impart to it life. It does not seem an unfitting thing, therefore, that by my prayer I should reverently recognize this divine partnership upon which I am so wholly dependent.

Some one asks : May we pray for such things as our own safety, in time of danger, or for the lives of our children or loved ones in times of severe illness ? I answer : It seems to me that depends upon the spirit in which we pray. Prayer at such a time seems to me both reasonable and right, as well as useful, if only we pray as Jesus did at a similar crisis time, in the filial spirit, recognizing the larger wisdom than our own, and subordinating our wish to that.

Said Jesus in his time of extremity : " If it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not my will,

but thine be done." That was true prayer. Such prayer we cannot but believe God welcomes. And certainly such prayer mightily steadies and girds the one who offers it. Having prayed in that spirit, even if the blow he dreads falls upon him, he will be the better prepared to meet it; for no resource that man has ever found in sorrow, or disaster, or bereavement is equal to that which he finds in God.

Perhaps my whole thought about prayer can be best summed up by a simple picture. Suppose that here is a child born into the home of a loving and excellent father and mother. The child grows up through infancy, childhood, youth, to manhood, dependent all the while upon its parents, supported by its parents, loved by its parents, educated at the expense of its parents, everything possible done by its parents to make its life happy and noble. Will it not be a fitting thing, think you, for that child to recognize its parents, to be grateful to its parents, to appreciate their love and care, to desire to know them and to live on terms of dutiful obedience and affectionate intimacy with them?

Now change the picture just a little—only a little—and we have an essentially correct representation, as I think, of man's situation—your situation and mine—upon the earth, as regards our relation to God. We are all, as I believe, the children of an infinite Love and Care. We are not here because of our planning. We did not create the world in which we live; we cannot sustain it for a moment of time. We did not create ourselves. We cannot furnish ourselves with a morsel of food or a breath of air except as we get it from a source beyond and above ourselves. Our little intelligences are, as it were, candles lighted from the Great Intelligence that shines through all the ordered wisdom of the worlds. Our hearts' affections must have come from an infinite Love-Fountain. And so as we look about us and within we find the situation to be essentially that which I have pictured: We are all children; we have been born into a world which our Father has

provided for us beforehand. This is our home. In this home we pass our earthly days.

Tell me, does it not seem fitting, then, that we should recognize the Source from which we and the home have come? Is it not fitting that we should desire to know and return the Father-love, that has given us all?

I take it that something like this is what all true prayer means. And if this is the meaning, certainly I cannot, for one, conceive how anything can be more reasonable; or more beautiful; or more deeply due from man to his Creator and the author of all his good; or more deeply useful to man himself, than prayer. Can you?

We are none of us so strong or so wise but that we need a divine hand to lead us on our way. Prayer gives us the grasp of such a hand.

We are none of us living lives so worthy but that we need to hear every day a divine voice calling us to come up higher. Prayer opens the soul's ears to such a voice.

A tender child of summers three,
Seeking her little bed at night,
Paused on the dark stair timidly,
"O, mother! take my hand," said she,
"And then the dark will all be light."

We, older children, grope our way
From dark behind to dark before;
And only when our hands we lay,
Dear Lord, in thine, the night is day,
And there is darkness nevermore.

O, friends, if any of us have foolish prejudices against prayer, caused by misunderstandings of what prayer really is, let us put such prejudices aside. Let us look deeper.

If any of us are indifferent to prayer, let us put away our indifference. Let us learn how sane a thing prayer is, as well as how sweet and how blessed.

And let us learn that it is for us all—the young man in his strength, or his temptation; the old man in his age; the mother in her anxieties; the child in his joy. Let us learn that it is not for the church alone, but for

home as well, and for all life. Above all let us learn that it is for the secret hour, when none is present but ourselves and God.

" Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presenee can avail to make !
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take !
What parched ground refresh as with a shower !
We kneel, how weak ! We rise, how full of power !
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others,—that we are not always strong ;
That we are ever overborne with care,
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy and strength and courage are with thee ? "

A PRAYER FOR EACH DAY OF THE WEEK.

BY J. T. S.

SUNDAY.

O God, it is good to think of Thee as a Providence of Good that is over us, and over all our dear ones, and over all the world, now and forever.

It is good to think that the past has been in thy hand, and that the future will be in thy hand also, so that we need not worry or fear. Life is thy gift ; death when it comes will be a part of the wise order of nature, therefore it will be as safe as life. Teach us to leave whatever lies beyond the Great Mystery in thy hands, and be at peace. May our great concern be—our daily and hourly concern—to make the most of the present time, its high privileges and opportunities, and its solemn duties. Reveal to us the vision of what a beautiful and glorious thing the life of every one of us may be, if only we will fill our days as they come and go with love and

service, and trust in the good God who is over us. We thank thee for this day of rest, of release from toil, of leisure for thought about the highest things of life. May it be a day sacred to worship; sacred to high aims and ideals; sacred to worthy thinking and valuable knowledge; sacred to brotherhood, pure friendship, and care for others; sacred to all the endearments of the home and the heart. May all the days of the week before us be filled with truth and duty. May our lives be lived in obedience to thy will. Amen.

MONDAY.

Heavenly Father, thy blessings are new every morning and fresh every evening. They never fail. Though we often forget thee, thou dost never forget us. Teach us gratitude. Teach us to know and do thy holy will.

Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, may we think on these things.

Help us to love and speak the truth. Help us to be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, holding no anger or malice toward any. Help us to overcome our faults, and the sins which so easily beset us. When we are tempted to do wrong may we be strong in thy strength. Lead us to the Rock that is higher than we. O our Father, make us faithful unto death. And when earth is past, take us to thy eternal home. Amen.

TUESDAY.

O, Thou giver of life, who dost measure out to us our days and our years, we lift our hearts to Thee. How swift and solemn is the flight of time! Help us to receive each new day from Thee as a blank page, pure and clean, on which to write some earnest prayer lifted to heaven, some worthy purpose carried out, some temptation resisted, some kind word spoken, some helpful deed done, however small, some loving, tender or sympathetic thought cherished for friend or fellow man.

Our lives will soon be gone ; what we do we must do quickly. So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Amen.

WEDNESDAY.

Thou eternal Power and Love, in whose hands are all things, under whose care are all men : we thank Thee for the progress of the world,—that man has been rising, that light has been shining more and more clearly, that human conditions have been improving, that truth has been clearing itself from error, that justice and right have been gaining a larger sway, that the kingdom of heaven has been coming nearer. We thank Thee for the great prophets and teachers whom Thou hast raised up in many ages and lands to lead the world forward. Especially we thank Thee for Jesus Christ, the light of whose teaching and life has illuminated all the ages since he lived. May his gospel of love purify and inspire our souls. We would be his disciples. We would let him teach us that God is our Father, and that all men are brothers. We would learn from him to do as we would be done by, and to love even our enemies. We would let him take us by the hand and lead us to the fountains of living water. Father, give us ever more the spirit of thy divinest Son. Amen.

THURSDAY.

O, Thou Divine Helper ! Thou knowest the troubles that perplex, the vexations that annoy, the fears that oppress the children of men. Thou understandest the disappointments that discourage human hearts, and the sorrows that shadow the paths of earth. Thou knowest, too, the hopes that shine among the clouds, the joys that spring up like flowers in unexpected places, and the peace that sometimes comes even out of pain. Make us grateful for all blessings, faithful in all duty, brave in all trials, and sympathetic toward others who suffer. Whatever shadows gather for ourselves, for our dear ones, or for the world, may we never doubt Thy perfect wisdom, or Thy unfailing love. Amen.

FRIDAY.

Thou art never far from us, O, God ! And Thine ear is always open to our cry. Why are we ever weak, when with thee is strength ? Why are we ever troubled or annoyed, when with Thee is peace ? Why are we ever cast down, when in Thee we may find hope and joy ? Why are we ever in darkness, when Thy light shines for all ? Comfort us, we beseech Thee, even as a mother comforteth her children. Give us courage in the day and songs in the night. Hold back our feet from wandering in any way of doubt or fear or sin. Shield us in every hour of temptation, and deliver us from all evil. Fill us with love of the true and the good. Gird us with strength to do Thy will. Lead us in the path that shineth more and more, even unto the perfect day. Amen.

SATURDAY.

We thank Thee, O God, that in all the ages Thou hast come near to men. The heavens have declared Thy glory ; the firmament has shown Thy handiwork ; the earth has been full of signs of Thy presence. But nearer still hast Thou come to men, revealing Thyself most clearly in the human soul. In searchings for truth, in voices of duty, in warnings of conscience, in tender affections of human hearts, in all feelings of reverence and worship that have bowed human knees, in all contritions and penitences that have brought tears to human cheeks, in shame for sin and longings for purity and holiness, in aspirations of souls after Thyself, Thou has spoken to men. And still Thou dost speak. Thy inspiration has not ceased. Open our ears that we may hear Thy voice. O, Holy Spirit, enter Thou our hearts, and abide with us forever. Amen.

THE ATONEMENT IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN KNOWLEDGE.

"Go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice."—Matt. ix., 13.

It seems to be supposed by Christian people generally that the ideas of atonement, and sacrificial offerings to God, are peculiar to the Bible. But this is far from true. It takes only a little study of other sacred books, and of religions outside our own, to show us that most of the religions of ancient and modern times, of civilized and uncivilized peoples, are saturated with the thoughts of atonements and propitiatory sacrifices.

The idea of vicarious sacrifice seems to rise naturally among primitive and uncivilized peoples. The primitive man, as soon as he begins to observe and to think, discovers that there are mysterious powers around about him, upon which he is more or less dependent. Sometimes these mysterious powers seem friendly, sometimes they appear angry and hostile; sometimes they do him great service, sometimes they inflict on him serious harm. For example, in one part of the year the sun shines with a delightful warmth, making the grass grow, the trees put forth their leaves, the flowers blossom, the corn spring up to give promise of an abundant harvest. But at another time the sun glares down from the sky with fierce and awful heat, drying up the streams, withering the grass, parching the corn, and bringing famine and death to beast and man.

Fire, that thing of profound mystery to all simple peoples, man early learns to put great dependence on, as a friend. But anon the friend bursts into seeming anger, burns up the savage's wigwam or hut, destroys his simple crops, sweeps like a demon through the woods, destroying all life in its path. And so what was yesterday a friend to-day is a dreadful enemy.

In the same way, winds are to-day wooing and gentle, breathing softly and most gratefully on the primitive man's cheek, making pleasant music for him in the tree top's, or filling the sail of his boat to waft him over the stream; but to-morrow they seize the trees that give him shelter, and, as if possessed of the strength of a hundred giants, tear them up by their roots and hurl them to the ground prostrate; or very likely they overturn his boat and drown his family.

Thus, in whatsoever direction he looks, he discovers objects that have strange power to help or hurt him. What does it mean? When he hurts his fellow-beings he is angry. Are not these great objects or forces of nature, the sun, the fire, the wind, the storm, the lightning, which hurt him, personal beings like himself, which are angry with him? Are not the injuries which they do him signs of their anger or hostility? And may they not be placated, may not their anger be turned aside and their good-will be gained, by some gift or by something that he can do?

Thus in his thought the primitive man fills the world with gods. All objects, and all forces of nature, especially those which have about them most of mystery and power, and which most affect his welfare, for good or evil, become to him divinities. And naturally and inevitably his great concern comes to be to find out, if he can, some means of averting their hostility, winning their favour, getting them on his side. Conceiving them after the analogy of himself, he naturally thinks that what would please him will please them, and what would move him to pity will move them to pity; and so he supplicates them, entreats them, makes vows and promises to them, bargains that if they will do so and so for his good he will make such and such offerings to them. What shall his offerings consist of? Naturally whatever is most precious to him. Whatever he prizes most, the gods must prize most. Hence he offers food, the products of the soil, as corn, cakes, rice, fruits; the products

of his flocks, as sheep, cattle, kids : prized domestic animals, as favourite dogs or horses ; and then, as more precious still, human beings, captives taken in war, slaves, children, eminent men of a tribe or a city or a state chosen by lot.

Taking all lands and ages and conditions of civilization together, food in some form has perhaps been the most universal form of offering to the higher powers—food simply placed before the object worshipped, or before the idol representing the supposed divinity to be propitiated. Closely connected with the offering of food simply placed before the divinity, and perhaps afterward eaten by the priests or the giver himself, comes the offering of burnt sacrifices. Inasmuch as the gods are generally thought of as invisible, and often as living up in the air or the heavens, the burning of offerings, whereby they are changed mysteriously from visible to invisible, and sent up into the skies in smoke and flame, has very generally commended itself to peoples of all grades of civilization as an appropriate manner of offering up sacrifices to the higher powers. Hence altars of sacrifice, of one kind or another, have been blazing all up and down the world from the earliest dawn of history until the present time.

In nearly all ancient nations we find traces of human sacrifice. Among the Phoenicians and Canaanites human sacrifice was common. At Carthage, a Phoenician colony, at one time two hundred of the noblest children were offered up with the hope of averting the ruin of the city. In moments of alarm and danger human victims were sometimes sacrificed to their gods by the Greeks and Romans. And even the Jews, we find were not free from the same dreadful practice—as is seen in the case of Abraham attempting to offer his son Isaac, Jephthah sacrificing his daughter, and Samuel "hewing King Agag in pieces before the Lord." Nor is human sacrifice confined to ancient times. At the conquest of Mexico by Cortez and the Spaniards, it was found that

thousands of human beings were slain in that land as religious offerings in a single year. In the Polynesian Islands and in parts of Africa human sacrifice offering has been common up to a very recent date, if it is not still. And some of you will perhaps remember that even in an enlightened Christian country like the United States we had a case a few years ago of a father offering up his child as a sacrifice to God. I refer to the man Freeman, in Massachusetts, who immolated his little daughter. He was tried for murder, and of course it was murder of a most shocking kind. But he meant it as God's service. His ideas had been so perverted by the superstitious religious teaching around him that he supposed the way to serve God was to give the dearest treasure out of his home, the life of his child. If God wanted Abraham to offer up Isaac, why should He not want men to-day to offer up their beloved children?

Of course these various forms of sacrifice, whether ancient or modern, whether heathen or Jewish or American, whether consisting of food, or of lambs and goats, or of Isaac offered by his father on a holy mountain, or of the child of Freeman offered by her father in Massachusetts, all have the same meaning—they are man's efforts to propitiate the powers above, to turn away their supposed anger, to buy their favor, to induce them to be kind and merciful to human imperfection, and to help men in times of need.

You see, then, what I mean when I say that the idea of atonement or of sacrifice to God for human sin, and to purchase the divine favor, is not something peculiar to Christianity, or even to the Bible. It is far older than the Bible. The heathen religions of the world were full of it thousands of years before either Judaism or Christianity was born. It is pre-eminently a heathen idea. It is Jewish far less than it is heathen, because Judaism borrowed it from heathenism. But it is far less Christian than Jewish, for Jesus, the Founder of Christianity, did not teach it at all, or even countenance it, but taught

instead that God is a Father, and hence needs no propitiation. It is worthy of notice that the New Testament, properly translated, does not even contain the word atonement. The common version contains it in one place, the 5th chapter of Romans. But the revised version wipes even that out, so that we may say that the word atonement is not found in the New Testament at all; much less is it found in any utterance from the lips of Jesus.

Judaism in its best forms tended to outgrow and leave behind the sacrificial idea long before Christ's day. All the greater Old Testament prophets saw that it was a make-shift, a survival from a darker past, something which degraded the character of God and destroyed the ethical and spiritual character of religion. The writers of many of the Psalms saw and felt the same. All these men urged a religion which should put away altars and incense and blood, and such like things, as no part of real worship, and teach instead justice, righteousness and love, as the kind of offerings that God wants. The writer of the 51st Psalm is very clear and emphatic: "For thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; thou desirest not burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." The prophet Isaiah is equally emphatic. "What unto me is the multitude of your sacrifices? I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. Wash you, make you clean. Cease to do evil; learn to do well." Says the prophet Micah, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, or bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings: will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with tens of thousands of rivers of oil? What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

This, I say, was the way all the clearer-visioned and loftier spirits among the Jews, centuries before Christ

were coming to look upon the bloody sacrificial system around them. Jesus, when he came on the scene, took up the same better and higher ideal of religion and built his whole teaching upon it. Discarding utterly the notion of ceremonial worship, and of winning the favor of God or getting any good for man by sacrificial rites, he said, "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." "Go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy soul, might, mind, and strength. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, viz., Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." In these words Jesus as much as said, This is the whole of religion, and there is no room left for even so much as the little finger of your sacrificial system.

But here we come to a strange thing. If Jesus taught a religion containing no sacrificial idea, no vicarious atonement, nothing of this kind, how does it happen that the old idea got into Christianity, and that we have it all around us to-day?

The story of the perversion of Jesus' teaching is a long and painful one. There is no time to go into it in detail here. All I can do is to glance at two or three of the main causes which operated to produce the change.

First of all, it has to be noted that Jesus was followed and interpreted by men far less tall and less clear-sighted than himself. They were able only partly to understand his advanced thought. Hence we find Paul and other of the New Testament writers, who had been brought up in the old Jewish sacrificial system, and naturally had a fondness for it, showing a desire to compromise between the old and new, and to drag into the new Christianity more or less of the old conception. This was the first cause of the departure from the teaching of Jesus.

But something else helped quite as much. It was the condition of religious thought in the Greek and Roman

world, where the first Christian churches were planted. Christianity began its career in Palestine. But only a little while elapsed before the new faith had spread beyond Palestine, and had even made its principal strongholds in Asia Minor, Greece, Macedonia, Italy, and Northern Africa. Everywhere it came into contact with the paganism of the Roman Empire, and, what was more, everywhere prominent in that paganism it found the idea of expiatory sacrifice. The sacrificial rites of Roman paganism ranged "all the way from personal mutilation, more or less severe, to the ghastly performance of the taurobolium, in which the worshipper stood in a pit, below a perforated platform, and was drenched from head to foot in the shower-bath of blood that gushed from the slaughtered bull above," or the cribolium, in which the worshipper stood in a similar pit, below a similarly perforated platform, and was drenched in a shower-bath of blood from a slaughtered ram above. This horrible ritual was held by the pagan Romans to be a ransom from all guilt, and a pledge of blessedness in this life and the next. As the worshipper, reeking and dripping with the sanguinary torrent, passed out through the crowd, others pressed about him, to win some share, by a touch or stain, in the magic efficacy of that atoning rite. Well does Prof. J. H. Allen, in his first volume of "Christian History," declare that "it is this strange custom of later paganism, quite as much as the Levitical tradition of the Old Testament, that gives emphasis to the words written in the Epistle to the Hebrews: 'If the blood of bulls and goats sanctifieth, how much more the blood of Christ!'" This is the real origin of the awful hymn,

"There is a fountain filled with blood."

Here, then, in these gory sacrificial rites of the Roman Empire of the first, second, third and fourth centuries, quite as much as in the less sanguinary and revolting, although bloody and brutal enough, sacrificial system of the Jews, must we seek for the real origin of the so-called Christian idea that the blood of Christ cleanses from sin.

The thought of expiatory sacrifice was everywhere in the mind of the age. And that being the case, it was impossible but that in some form it should become embodied in the new Christianity, whose thought was just taking shape. Even the fact that Jesus himself nowhere countenanced it, but taught a doctrine the exact opposite of it, was not enough to keep it out.

And now we come to an interesting and very suggestive fact of a different kind. The doctrine of a vicarious atonement from the time when it first made its appearance in Christianity has been constantly changing. Not until three or four centuries after Christ did the doctrine take any definite and settled form at all. And then the form it took was one which, to us, seems curious enough. That earliest form of the atonement doctrine taught that Jesus died to pay, not a debt due to God, but a debt due to the devil. Man, by the fall of Adam (so the doctrine taught), came into the devil's power and possession. That is to say, the devil, by causing the fall, had made the race legally his. And now the question was how it could be got out of his possession. At last the Deity devised this plan for outwitting the devil, as explained by Gregory of Nyssa, one of the fathers of the fourth century: "Jesus offered himself to the devil as the ransom which should redeem all others. The crafty devil assented, because he cared more for one Jesus than for all the rest of the human race. But notwithstanding his craft he was deceived, since he could not hold Jesus in his power. It was, as it were, a deception on the part of God, that Jesus, by means of His human nature, veiled his divine nature, which the devil would have feared, and thus deceived the devil by the appearance of flesh."*

That is to say, Jesus made the sharp bargain that he would deliver himself up to the devil, in return for which the devil should give up his claim on the human race. Done. Jesus gave himself up; and the devil relinquished his title to the race. But now appears the sharp

*See Hagenbach. Also McClintock and Strong, article "Atonement."

part of the bargain. Jesus, by reason of his divinity, which he had concealed from Satan under the cloak of his humanity, is too much for his adversary, and hence no sooner does he die on the cross and go down to the underworld where all the dead go, than He exercises His divine power, which he has hidden from the devil, and bursts open the gates of the underworld, and not only escapes himself, but releases the spirits of many of the dead who are confined there, and ascends up on high to Heaven, leading captivity captive, having outwitted and despoiled His enemy the devil.

I say this is the first formulated doctrine of the Atonement that was held by the Christian Church. And this in substance remained the received and orthodox doctrine on the subject until the twelfth century, when the mediæval theologian, Anselm, propounded the new doctrine that Jesus died, not to ransom man from the devil but to pay the sinner's debt to God. This doctrine, unheard of in the Church until Anselm, is the same as that expressed in our modern hymn,

"Jesus died and paid it all,
Yes, all the debt I owe."

Since Anselm's time the doctrine of the Atonement has assumed a great variety of forms. For example, Luther taught that Christ "did actually take man's place in every respect, not only to suffer the punishment due man, but to bear man's sin, in the sense of becoming actually guilty, as man was guilty." "This, no doubt," wrote Luther,† "did all the prophets foresee in spirit, that Christ would become the greatest transgressor, murderer, adulterer, thief, rebel and blasphemer that ever was or ever could be in the world." All this is in order that he might actually take man's place and bear man's sin as well as his punishment. Do you say this is shocking—such a declaration about Jesus? Luther felt himself driven to it in order to get a theory of the Atonement whereby Jesus could die in the place of the guilty.

†Commenting on Galatians iii., 13.

If he affirmed that Jesus was innocent, then to say that he died for the guilty would be to declare that a stupendous injustice was done. How could the penalty of man's sins be put upon one who was innocent? In order that Jesus may be punished justly for man's guilt, he must become actually guilty, sinful to the full extent of man's guilt and sin. So Luther thought. And I am not aware that any subsequent writer has ever been able to help him out of his difficulty.

Of the various theories of the Atonement which are prevalent in our day, there are two which are much more prominent and important than the rest. I must briefly notice these.

One is that which is known as the Governmental Theory. Among theologians this theory has met with considerable favor and a somewhat wide acceptance, although it cannot be said to be the prevailing theory. It declares that Christ did not die in the sinner's stead, or suffer in the sinner's stead, and that there was nothing vicarious in his sacrificial work. According to this theory Christ died simply to maintain the dignity of God's holy law. Man had broken that law. To forgive him without adopting some means to vindicate the law would be to degrade it in the eyes of the whole intelligent universe. Hence Christ comes into the world and suffers and dies so that he may, in the sight of all worlds, pay the penalty of the law, and thus honor it. That done, God is at liberty to forgive men their sins without disastrous consequence to his universe. This is the theory put forth some years ago by the Rev. Joseph Cook of Boston, and illustrated by Mr. Bronson Alcott's school, in which, once on a time, as Mr. Cook informed us, when a certain pupil did wrong, Mr. Alcott made the pupil whip him (the teacher), and thus the dignity of the law of the school was maintained, while the pupil was relieved from the penalty which was his due. To such a theory of atonement as this it is enough to reply that a law which is indifferent as to who is punished, the

innocent or the guilty, only so that somebody suffers, is a law that one can well believe requires to have a deity die for it to maintain its honor, if it is to have any honor, for nobody in this world or any other, where moral distinctions have any meaning, can otherwise have any respect for it.

The second theory of the Atonement, and the one which is far more generally accepted than any other, is that known as the theory of Vicarious Sacrifice. It teaches, to use the language of the distinguished Presbyterian theologian, Dr. Hodge, that "Christ's sufferings were penal, judicially inflicted in satisfaction of justice. The sufferings of Christ were vicarious—He suffered in the place of sinners. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to the believer for his justification."

The Westminster Confession says "He (Christ) underwent the punishment due to us, being made a sin and a curse for us." Says Mr. Spurgeon, "The whole Gospel is wrapped up in one word, substitution. The only reason why I should not be damned is that Christ was punished in my stead." Says Mr. Moody, "There is no sense in the sacred doctrine of the Atonement unless our sins have been transferred to another and put away; all we have to do is turn our sins over to Christ." "Sheltered behind the blood" was a favourite expression of Mr. Moody. And all of you who have read or heard many of his discourses will remember his illustration of the railway ticket, by means of which he makes clear his idea of the Atonement. "Before you get on board the train," he says, "you secure your ticket. Then you go into a car and take your seat. The conductor comes along and looks at your ticket; and it matters not whether you are black or white, rich or poor, so long as you have got your ticket. He looks at that, not at you. The blood of Christ is God's ticket, or token. If you are behind the blood you are as safe as on the golden pavement of Heaven."

"Salvation by the blood" is the great central thought

of all the revivalists, of most of the Y.M.C.A. workers, of nearly all the evangelical prayer-meetings, and hymn books, and Sunday schools of Christendom. "Sheltered behind the blood," "saved by the blood," "cleansed by the blood," "washed in the blood of the lamb"—these are expressions heard everywhere. No hymns are so often sung in all the popular churches as hymns setting forth the same doctrine.

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

"Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee.
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy wounded side which flowed," etc.

Not long ago I spent a Sunday in the city of Cleveland, Ohio. Not having to preach in the evening, I attended a service in one of the largest, most wealthy and most fashionable churches. The church had recently supplied itself with new hymn-books. As I sat there I looked through the book. The following are some of the hymns that I copied :

"For my cleansing this I see,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus,
For my pardon this my plea,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

"Nothing can for sin atone,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus,
Nought of good that I have done,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus."

And so on for eight or ten verses, ending:

"Oh, precious is the flow
That makes me white as snow,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus."

And this :

"Working will not save me,
Purest deeds that I can do,
Holiest thoughts and feelings, too,
Cannot form my soul anew.

Chorus--Working will not save me.

" Done is the work that saves,
Once and forever done.
Finished the righteousness
That clothes the unrighteous one.

Chorus Working will not save me.

" The sacrifice is o'er,
The veil is rent in twain,
The mercy seat is red
With blood of victim slain.
Why stand we, then, without in fear?
The blood divine invites us near.

Chorus Working will not save me.

" Upon the mercy seat
The High Priest sits within,
The blood is in his hand
Which makes and keeps us clean.

Chorus Working will not save me."

These hymns, I say (and there were many others similar), I copied, not from a revivalist or from a Salvation Army hymn-book, where we expect such things, but from a book just introduced into one of the healthiest and presumably intelligent churches of one of the largest cities of America. Nor is this book in any sense exceptional. I have taken pains to look through the hymn-books, service books, prayer-books, Sunday School books, and many leading religious books of all the principal evangelical denominations, and I find (what you will find if you look) that the same doctrine of salvation by putting our sins upon another, salvation by the merits of another, salvation by the blood of Jesus, is everywhere in the forefront. This, then, is the popular and prevailing form which the doctrine of the Atonement takes among evangelical Christian churches in our day. Surely, it seems as if a candid and full statement of the doctrine ought to be enough to condemn it with thoughtful and intelligent people. And yet people all around us, good people, who are thoughtful and intelligent, at least in other things, continue to accept it, to maintain churches built upon it as a corner stone, and to have it taught to their children.

What is to be said regarding this, the most common doctrine of the Atonement in Protestant Christendom to-day?

One thing to be said is, that it is not Christian. Jesus never taught any such doctrine; rather were His teachings both in thought and in spirit opposed to everything of the kind. Its connection, instead of being with Jesus, is primarily with the ancient Jewish sacrificial system, which not only Jesus, but the greatest of the Hebrew prophets before Jesus, condemned. And later its connection is closer still, as I have shown, with the pagan Roman taurobolium and cribolium.

A second objection which appears to this doctrine is its shocking—yes, that is not too strong—its really shocking character. I heard a Presbyterian minister, who was independent enough to dare to speak out, in spite of the danger of being thought a heretic, stigmatize it as a "slaughter-house theory." Was not the characterization proper?

Think of the idea of cleansing from sin by baths of blood, and human blood at that. And yet that is just what the theory teaches and what the popular hymns express. If I were to come before this community with some new form of religion involving rites and ceremonies with baths of blood like those of the Romans, every one would hold up his hands in horror and declare me not only sacrilegious but unfit for respectable society. And yet intelligent men and educated and refined women in all our communities sing without a blush or shudder about being "Washed in the blood of the crucified," and

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."

Now I say all this not in scorn, but only in sorrow—sorrow and wonder, that theological creeds can so blind the eyes of intelligent, good and refined people, to the

shocking, dreadful character of doctrines taught and believed.

These hymns are not Christian hymns; they are heathen hymns masquerading under Christian names. They are the old, shocking Roman taurobolium and cribolium changed a little and associated with the great name of Jesus.

But there are other features of the doctrine of vicarious atonement besides its bloody character, which serious and thoughtful people feel themselves called upon to object to.

First, its injustice; and its injustice in at least three different directions.

To begin with, its injustice towards those who lived in the world during those thousands of years which elapsed before it was made operative. According to this doctrine all men are ruined through Adam. Through Christ as many are saved as believe on him and accept his salvation. But what shall we say of the thousands of millions of human beings who lived on the earth before Christ? There was no atonement, no salvation, that could be operative for them. Why was the coming of Christ put off so long, until these many thousands of millions of people were already lost?

Then, secondly, the doctrine involves injustice toward the heathen world to-day. According to the teachings of this doctrine, nobody can be saved except by faith in Christ. But even now, nineteen hundred years after the Christian era, not a quarter of the inhabitants of the world know anything about Christ. The three-quarters and more that have never heard even his name cannot have faith in him. Are they to be forever cast into hell? They must be if the doctrine of vicarious atonement is true.

Third, the doctrine involves injustice to vast numbers of people in our own land. It makes salvation dependant upon belief in the orthodox scheme of salvation—or belief in Christ as a Saviour according to that scheme. But

thousands and millions of the most intelligent and virtuous people in Christian lands do not believe, and cannot believe, in such a scheme. or in Christ as saving men according to such a scheme. I say they cannot believe anything of the kind, because they see no evidence that it is true. Indeed, the more they look into the matter the more reasons they see for believing that it is not true. Now, what justice can there be in God's devising a scheme of salvation (or salvation and damnation) which dooms these thousands and millions of honest, intelligent and earnest people to eternal misery and ruin because they cannot believe what, with all the light they can get, seems to them not only unproved and unfounded, but utterly unreasonable and unjust?

Still further, if the doctrine of a vicarious atonement is unjust, and unjust in these different ways, many of us also think it immoral in its practical influence upon men. I recollect hearing the Rev. Dr. H. W. Thomas of Chicago, when he was a Methodist minister, say, in the Philosophical Society of that city, that he really thought, and a great many of his ministerial brethren, he believed, were coming to think the same, that the vicarious or commercial theory of the atonement operates to put a premium upon vice. How? By teaching men that however wicked they are, they are only to believe on Christ and their sins will all be pardoned and they will be treated as if they had never sinned. "The essence of the doctrine of the vicarious atonement is in the one word substitution; and though it may be partially corrected by more rational conceptions, the practical inference from it is that there is a substitute for personal virtue. By this scheme Christ as our military substitute exempts us from the moral warfare; and however badly we play this game of life with the devil, we can always check-mate him by moving Christ." This theory of substitution offers a refuge for cowardice, a hiding place from reality, an easy avoidance of the labor of working out one's own salvation.

Only one other objection I urge to the doctrine of

vicarious atonement, and that is, it is degrading to the manhood of those who accept it. James Martineau once rebuked the baseness of those who would not rather go to hell, than be saved by the death and suffering of an innocent being. I believe he was right. I believe that if I were to urge you to try to get to Heaven on anybody's merits but your own I should be urging you to do something essentially base and mean.

"No star shines brighter than the kingly man
Who wholly earns whatever crown he wears."

If it is a disgrace to a man to get into a good place here in this world without being worthy of it, and without having earned it, would it be less a disgrace to be in a good place up yonder without being worthy and without having earned that?

No, friends, what you and I and all men need to think about, is not how we can get into heaven or anywhere else on the merits of anybody but ourselves. The thing we need to think about is, how we can be men, how we can do our work well, how we can be worthy of the rewards of well-doing here and hereafter. For our ill deserts, we ought to be ashamed to desire that anyone else but ourselves should suffer. For our deserts, if we have any, we may be sure that God will reward them according to His wisdom. As for atonements, if God is in any true sense a father as Jesus taught, then He can need no atonements to make Him kind to His human children in this world or any other.

What is the condition of acceptance and reconciliation with God on the part of a human being who has sinned? Can it be the merit of another? Can it be a sacrifice offered by another? Not so, says Jesus. It is penitence, it is contrition, it is a heart desiring reconciliation. Wherever there is a repentant soul, there is a forgiving God. In the Lord's Prayer we are taught to say, not, "Forgive us our trespasses for Christ's sake" but, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

Even to the dying thief Jesus said, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Why? Because he had pleaded the merits of Christ? No; but because he had shown penitence for his sin. Said Jesus, "There is joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth." The sacrifice that is acceptable to God is "a broken and contrite heart."

In a precious old book which some of us learned to love and honor at our mother's knee, I remember there is a precious story which tells that there was once a father who had two sons, and the younger was disobedient and ungrateful, and went away into a far country, and there squandered his money in evil living with evil companions until he became a beggar. And at last, after many hardships and sorrows, he remembered his father's house where there was bread enough and to spare, and he said in deep contrition "I will arise and go to my father, and will say, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants.'" And I remember the story says, not that the father required the elder brother to be beaten or to make atonement for the younger ere the father could be gracious, and receive again the repentant prodigal, but that while yet the younger brother was a great way off the father ran to meet him and fell on his neck and kissed him. Ah! this old story is Jesus' sufficient commentary upon men's cruel theories of atonement taught in his name. This old story is Jesus' sufficient picture of God's everlasting and unchangeable love for every one of his human children—a love which, without propitiation or atonements forever seeks and saves the lost.

But, I hear some of you say, Is there then no sense in which Jesus is a mediator between God and man? Does Jesus have no part in saving men, or in bringing men to God? My reply is, Speech cannot portray the greatness of the work of Jesus in bringing men to God and God to men, or the greatness of his work as a mediator and a saviour, if we will only understand these words in the light of his own teachings.

Suppose a boy in some family that you know has wronged his father. Suppose he thinks his father cruel and unjust, and therefore hates and wilfully disobeys him. And now, suppose an older and wiser brother goes to the mistaken and erring boy in kindness and sympathy, shows him that his father is just and good, convinces him of his sin and brings him back to his father in penitence, humility and love. Do you not see what a work of mediation between the boy and his father the older brother has accomplished?—a work of mediation of the highest possible value! Such a mediator is Jesus. No other religious teacher that the world has ever known has brought God and men so near to each other. The great and precious thought that God is a Father, and that all men are His children, we may almost say is the gift of Jesus to the world. It would be putting the numbers far too small if I said that millions upon millions of human beings have had the alienation toward God that was in their hearts taken away, and have been led to reconciliation with God, to love and to obedience, by the teaching and example of Jesus.

Thus Jesus is truly a mediator; thus Jesus is truly a saviour. But let us not be deceived by words which to one mind may have one meaning and to another another. By Jesus as a mediator we must not mean Jesus as a victim, or Jesus as an atoning sacrifice whose blood was needed to open the heart of God to mercy. We must mean infinitely better. By Jesus as a mediator and saviour, if we use those words, we must mean Jesus as a great teacher, Jesus as a wise, strong, loving elder brother, who in our weakness and sin takes us by the hand and leads us to the Father—his Father and our Father, his God and our God.

Oh, how long and hard was the climb from the old dark paganism which saw in God a being demanding blood, *blood*, up to the high thought of Jesus, which saw in God one who asks *love*, not blood; *a pure heart* and *a right life*, not an *atoning sacrifice*, whether of bulls or goats or

human children, or of a Christ on Calvary! How far behind Jesus is still a large part of his Church!

And yet, progress is being made. The old theologies, born in darker ages, are being questioned as never before. Reason is demanding with a new insistency, to be heard. Ethical standards are asking to be applied. The higher biblical scholarship is bringing much new light. The time is not distant when Christian doctrine must be radically recast. When that time comes the pagan doctrine of salvation by blood will pass away, and in its place will come the nobler salvation which is by *truth* and *love*. The atoning sacrifice of Jesus will go, to take its place with the bulls and goats offered on ancient Jewish and heathen altars; and in its stead we shall have Jesus, the great prophet of the soul, the deep seer into the things of the spirit, the mighty lover of men, the elder and stronger brother of us all, the heroic martyr for truth and right and God, leading mankind forward to a Christianity far higher and nobler than the world has ever yet seen.



MIRACLES IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN KNOWLEDGE.

48. "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe."—John IV :

Do miracles happen,—that is, miracles in the sense of violations, or contraventions, or suspensions of nature's laws? Have such miracles ever happened? Does religion need a basis of such miracles to rest upon, as the world has so generally been taught to believe? Rather, is not true religion something quite apart from miracles? are not its foundations natural and eternal, laid in the very soul itself, so that it remains firm and indestructible whether miracles happen or not?

These are questions which are coming more and more to the front in the thinking of our day.

The passage of scripture which I have chosen as my text is a characteristic utterance of Jesus. The great teacher complains, with a touch of disappointment and sadness, that the people are forever seeking signs and wonders, instead of caring for that moral and spiritual truth which he teaches, which needs no signs and wonders for its support, which appeals straight to the reason and conscience and heart of every human being, and is everywhere and at all times its own witness.

This was a difficulty which Jesus encountered all the way through his ministry. He was intent upon helping men to become reasonable, reverent, loving, kind, at one with God and their fellows; while they were intent upon seeing strange things. He cared for a religion of the pure heart and the right life; while they cared for one of marvels and outward show.

The same contrast has been more or less seen in every age, between the highest religion and the lower. Ever the ignorant and worldly demand signs and miracles :

but ever the true prophets of God—those who possess the spirit and deep insight of Jesus,—see that these things are superficial, and that the only religion that can renovate the world is that which pushes them aside as irrelevant, and makes its appeal not to the curiosity but to the consciences of men.

When Christianity came into the world, and for sixteen or seventeen hundred years thereafter, that is, until the birth of modern science, there seemed nothing essentially unreasonable about a miracle, because it was not known that the world was governed by orderly processes. With the discovery of Kepler's laws of planetary motion, however, and Newton's law of gravity, and all the other revelations of modern science which followed, the universe came to assume to men an entirely new aspect. It was not only vastly enlarged, but into it was brought a unity which previously men had known nothing about—viz., the unity of all-prevading, all-governing law. The coming in of this new conception of necessity gave a staggering blow to miracles, although previously few had thought of doubting them.

Indeed in the ages before the scientific conception of nature came on the scene, why should men have doubted? Their fathers before them believed; they had a vast amount of evidence, which in those unscientific and uncritical ages seemed to them good, to prove that the miraculous occurred; the existence of miracles perfectly accorded with what they supposed to be God's method of governing the universe, viz., by direct, personal, arbitrary volition; why therefore should not the men of those times have believed in miracles? For them not to have done so would itself have been a miracle.

But with the rise of the new conception of the universe which modern science and knowledge have brought about, all has changed. When it is understood that God works everywhere according to law, miracles disappear,—there is no longer any place for them. They would be breaks, interferences with established order,

the coming of discord into a great harmony. Hence the phenomenon which we see in Christian lands to-day, —namely, much distrust of miracles among intelligent minds even in the most orthodox churches; while outside such churches, especially among scientists, scholars and men of reading and independent thinking, there is almost universal relegation of them to a place among the superstitions of the past.

But if thoughtful men are coming more and more to look upon miracles as not credible, they are also coming to see that they are not necessary to religion.

The claim has been stoutly made in the past that the miracles of the Bible are a proof of the truth of Christianity. That claim is fast weakening; thoughtful minds are seeing that there is no necessary connection between physical miracles and moral truth; if it were demonstrated that every miracle reported in the Old Testament or the New actually happened, or a hundred times as many, that fact would not prove the truth or the untruth of any ethical or spiritual teaching found in the Bible. If the religious teachings of Jesus are true, they are true; if we grant that he wrought miracles, that does not make them any more true; or if we think he did not work miracles, that does not make them any less true. Suppose I should say to you that hate is better than love, and then should work a miracle,—for instance the turning of this pencil into a serpent—would that prove it true that hate is better than love? Or suppose I should turn a thousand pencils into serpents, or work a thousand other miracles, would they all combined have anything whatever to do with proving that hate is better than love? Jesus said "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Was that true? Why? Because he wrought miracles? Suppose he had not wrought miracles, would it not have been just as true that it is more blessed to give than to receive? Do the Beatitudes rest upon miracles? Does the Lord's Prayer? Does the Golden Rule? These illustrations

help us to see that moral and religious teachings, whether in the Bible or outside of it, in the very nature of the case are unaffected by any supposed miracles.

The abler and fairer minded of the theologians themselves see this absence of connection between physical marvel-working and the establishment of moral or spiritual truth, and try to bridge over the chasm in this way : They say that he who works miracles must get his power so to do from God. But God would not give a man such power unless the man were good and truthful. When therefore the men of the Bible come to us teaching certain things and at the same time working miracles, we are obliged to believe what they teach, because the miracles are, as it were, God's credentials—God's endorsement of their truthfulness.

This reasoning might have some plausibility were it not for the fact that it is founded altogether upon assumptions. In the first place it is an assumption to say that he who works miracles must get his power to do so from God. Our friends who make this argument themselves believe both in a devil and in angels. How then do they know but that this superhuman power through which the miracle working is done, comes from either the devil, or else from some good or bad angel ? When Moses and Aaron went before Pharaoh and performed the miracle of turning Aaron's rod into a serpent, hoping thus to influence the monarch to let the children of Israel go, we read that Pharaoh called in his wise men and magicians, and they did exactly the same miracle ; they threw down their rods as Aaron had thrown down his, and their rods too became every one a serpent. Our theological friends would hardly claim this to have proved that those Egyptian miracle-workers were good and truthful men, to whose religious teachings God gave sanction or endorsement by thus empowering them to work their miracles.

Balaam was not a very good or truthful person, or one on whose utterance it would be safe to put much

dependence, though he is represented as uttering one of the most miraculous predictions in the Bible. Both in the Old Testament and in the New we have accounts of miracles wrought by men who are anything but good or truthful. Jesus himself says (Matt. xxiv : 24) : "There shall arise false Christs and false prophets and they shall shew great signs and wonders" to deceive men. Again he says (Matt. vii : 22) : "Many shall say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you. Depart from me ye that work iniquity." The Apocalypse or Book of Revelation contains many accounts of miracles, some of them very great and startling, wrought by the enemies of God on the earth (Rev. xiii : 13, 14 ; xvi : 13, 14 ; xix : 20) for the express purpose of deceiving men and making them believe falsehood. Thus you see that, by the teaching of the Bible itself, the power to work miracles does not prove that the one who possesses it is good or truthful, or from God, or is necessarily in any way commissioned or sent or endorsed by God. The miracles may be wrought for the express purpose of making the people believe that he is from God when he is not, and that he is speaking the truth when in fact he is speaking falsehood.

I have already referred to the attitude of Jesus toward miracles ; but there is more still that ought to be said upon that subject. Surely if Jesus had regarded miracles as his credentials he would have made it plain. When men showed signs of doubting or disbelieving his words surely he would have pointed at once to his miracles and answered triumphantly : "See, here is the evidence." Did he do that? We read again and again of his drawing the attention of the people away from the things done by him which had a miraculous look. Instead of asking his hearers to base their beliefs upon his miracles, he bids them judge for themselves what is

right. He refuses to work miracles to convince persons of the divine character of his mission. He even shows positive distress sometimes because the people care for these things so much, instead of for the things of real importance; for we read "Jesus groaned in his spirit, and said, Why doth this generation ask for a sign (a miracle)?"

Thus it is that he chides, over and over again, the desire of his followers for miracles as a proof of his teaching, and insists that the teaching is its own proof. Truth is truth, and falsehood is falsehood, all the same whether it be associated with miracles or not. The Old Testament books of Job, Isaiah and the Psalms, and the New Testament Gospels and Epistles do not owe their beauty and truth and helpfulness to the fact that they are bound in a volume that contains records of miracles. These books would be just as full of beauty and moral power and inspiration if no man on the earth had ever dreamed of a miracle. The twenty-third Psalm, the Sermon on the Mount, Paul's matchless chapter on charity, need no proof of miracles. Trying to prop them up or to prove them true by miracles, is about as reasonable as trying to prop up the Rocky Mountains with sticks or to prove their existence by syllogisms.

So that I say, even if we granted the genuineness and historic character of all the miracles of the Bible, or of a thousand times as many, we should not thus furnish any proof whatever of the truth of Christianity. The great life-giving moral and spiritual teachings of Jesus and Paul lie in a different continent, nay a different world, from that of prodigies and miracles, and rely upon a wholly different kind of evidence. This our modern age is coming to see. Thus we need not be alarmed at the tendency of thinking persons to reject the miraculous. It does not necessarily mean that they are losing their belief in religion, or their sense of its value, but only that they are finding their evidence of its truth and worth in a direction which seems to them more reliable

than the old. The question of the miraculous presents itself to-day to scientists and men imbued with the modern spirit, somewhat as follows:—

I. If miracles have ever happened, in Bible times or any other, why do they not happen to-day? But can any one point to a miracle within our generation which has been established by so carefully guarded scientific tests that there is no room for doubt about it? For example, the raising to life of a body which had been so long dead that a commission of scientific experts examining it had found it to have entered upon the process of decomposition;—or the restoring of a new sound arm to a man whose arm had been amputated? Is there any case on record as occurring within our day, of a miracle such as one of these?—or any other equally well authenticated, so that scientific men would have no doubt about it? If not, why not? If veritable miracles—miracles which would have stood the test of the light of our modern civilization and science—actually occurred in the old times of 2,000 or 3,000 years ago, why do not miracles capable of standing the same test occur now?

It is true that we do have reports of miracles occurring to-day. Such reports come to us in great numbers, from Roman Catholic shrines in different parts of the world, from faith-healers, from prayer-healers, from men and women who, with one theory or another, and under one name or another, claims to cure human bodies of their many infirmities by some sort of supernatural agency. But under a very little careful examination by unprejudiced men and by scientific methods, the miraculous element always takes wing.

Doubtless there are things occurring now-a-days that are not fully explained—things which to us with our present degree of knowledge are shrouded in mystery. But mystery is not necessarily miracle. To say that anything really miraculous, that is, anything contrary to well-established laws of nature, occurs to-day, is what at least our scientists and men best qualified to judge ninety-nine in a hundred of them deny.

And now, is it any wonder if this absence of present time miracles, or at least their doubtful character, throws doubt upon those of the past? If what is supposed to be miraculous to-day fades away in the light of scientific examination, is it strange that multitudes of minds find themselves compelled to believe that the so-called miracles of the old time continue to keep their places as miracles only because we are unable to reach and test them, but that if we could get to them and examine them carefully and scientifically as we do the so-called miracles of the present, we should find them, too, quickly losing their miraculous character?

II. Another thing which with many persons casts suspicion upon miracles, is the fact that as we look over the history of the world we find them always seeming to have a sort of affinity for superstitious ages, and low states of civilization. Almost invariably in those ages in the history of any people in which civilization and popular intelligence rise highest, we find not only the fewest miracles reported, but the least belief in those which are reported. Why is this? If miracles are facts, capable of verification, why do they not flourish as much in light as in darkness,—in ages of intelligence and science as in ages of credulity, and among the intelligent as among the ignorant?

III. A third thing that stands in the way of belief in miracles, is the fact that the very classes of persons who contend most stoutly for their own miracles usually deny most vehemently the truth of all miracles outside of their own. Miracles are not peculiar to Christianity; nearly all religions have them in great numbers. Yet the followers of each religion deny the miracles of all religions except their own. They examine the proofs of the miracles of other faiths and pronounce them weak and inconclusive. It is only the proofs of the miracles of their own faith, in favor of which we may reasonably suppose them to be prejudiced, that they conceive to be adequate. This being the case, what wonder if men

who, occupying the position simply of scientists and scholars, and not caring to bolster up any, but simply to judge impartially of all alike, conclude that the proofs of miracles of all the religions of the world are equally inadequate? In other words, what wonder if with the Christians they conclude that the proofs of the Moham-
medan miracles are inconclusive, and with the Moham-
medans that the proofs of the Brahman miracles are
inconclusive, and with the Brahmans and Moham-
medans that the proofs of the Christian miracles are
equally inconclusive?

IV. Again, another objection to miracles lies in the fact that the moment we have accepted any of them there seems to be absolutely no place to stop. We have entered upon a road that has no end, and leads into all sorts of superstitions and credulities. Suppose we say we will accept a few miracles, but not many. What shall these few be? And what shall be the test by which to decide what to accept and what to reject? If we determine to cast out all except those which are corroborated by strong proofs, certainly we shall have to cast out more or less of those found in the Bible. How strong proofs do you think we have, for instance, that Eve was made out of a rib of Adam; or that the ass of the prophet Balaam spoke in human language; or that Jonah lived three days in the great fish, and then was cast up alive and well on the shore of the sea; or that the sun stood still at the command of Joshua; or that the walls of the city of Jericho fell down as the result of the blowing of the ram's horns of the children of Israel? If however we do not cast out any of the Bible miracles, but accept them all, surely we ought to be consistent and accept also the multitudes of miracles outside of the Bible, which present themselves to us based on quite as good evidence. As a result, there would seem to be no end to the miracles which we should find ourselves called upon to accept. The moment we begin to believe miraculous stories, or anything else, without good evi-

dence—evidence that will stand the test of the most thorough investigation—we are lost, we are in a path that finds no stopping place this side of the credulity, superstition and fanaticism which have ever been the curse of all unenlightened religion.

V. It is felt by many that to admit miracles is to degrade the character of God. It makes Him changeable and arbitrary. His government is no longer a perfect government, conducted according to a wise method and a regular order set in operation in the beginning; but it is a government that requires to be interfered with, mended, supplemented from time to time. At best a miracle seems to be a patch. Does God's plan of things need perpetual patching?

VI. Still farther, it seems impossible to reconcile the idea of miracle with belief in the goodness of God. If God's plan of governing the world admits of miracles wherever and whenever he may choose, why is it that he does not work them oftener? We read in the Bible about God working miracles from time to time for the benefit of this person and that. But why so few? If he was good why did he not work them for the benefit of everybody? And to-day, if God is at liberty to set aside his laws and work miracles at any time, why does he allow any pain or suffering in the world? Why does he not cure all the sick, instead of letting them linger on in misery? Why does he not furnish food to all the starving? A great steamer goes down at sea with all on board; a great river overflows its banks and destroys millions of property and hundreds of lives; a fire in a great city renders thousands of persons homeless. Why does not God interfere and prevent these awful calamities? If he is at liberty to interfere, is he kind when he does not? Thus it seems impossible to see how we can keep any ground for belief in the goodness of God on the theory that he can work miracles when he pleases. But if he rules the world by law, and if law is good, then is God good, in spite of

calamities and pains that come to men as the result of their violations of law. The science of our time has learned that "all is law." The religion of our time is beginning to learn that "all is love," because law itself is love. We had feared to admit that we are environed by law lest that might mean that God does not care for us. But we are learning that it is through his laws that he manifests his care. His laws are his encompassing arms, and in those arms of care, of love, of eternal security, he bears us a mother her child.

VII. A difficulty in the way of believing in miracles which is serious, is the famous objection of Hume, that miracles are a contradiction of human experience. Human experience is, that nature's laws are uniform, constant, not subject to suspensions. If we accept the miracles of the Bible or of any past time, it must be upon the testimony of others. Which is the more credible, that human testimony should sometimes err, or that nature at times should forget her uniformity and become irregular? We have experience every day of human testimony being fallible, but none that nature's laws are fickle. When therefore the Bible, or the Vedas, or the Koran, or any other book of the past, comes to us with accounts of miracles, we are bound to test it by this principle. For example, we read in the New Testament that on a certain occasion Jesus turned water into wine. Our experience is (and so far as we can learn the experience of the world is the same) that water cannot be changed to wine, except through the slow, summer-long processes of nature in the grape vine. Therefore we can more easily believe that those who reported this miracle were in some way mistaken, than we can believe that what was said to have occurred actually did occur. Or, to take an Old Testament illustration, we read that the three Hebrews, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, in Babylon, were cast into a burning furnace, walked in the midst of the fierce flames, and at the end came out unharmed. Now we know that it is the nature of flame to

consume organized bodies placed in the midst of it. When therefore we read that when kindled to its very hottest it did not burn these men, we find ourselves obliged by the very laws of our mind, to conclude that there is a mistake somewhere. When it comes to the alternative either to believe that fire did not consume what it is its nature to consume, and what since the world began it always has consumed, or that somebody has erred—observing improperly, or reporting incorrectly, or mistaking a legend for a true story, or something of the kind—there is no room left us for choice; we are simply obliged to believe the latter and cannot believe the former. This is a way of looking at the subject of miracles that prevails widely to-day, and that tends to prevail more and more, especially among scientists.

Such then are some of the modern difficulties in the way of the acceptance of miracles.

Some of you say to me: If we do not accept the miracles of the Bible as historic, what shall we say about them? Are we not compelled to declare them falsehoods, written and palmed off on a credulous humanity for the purpose of deceiving?

I answer, there seems no ground for setting up any such alternative. For one to suppose that such an alternative exists is to show either that he knows little about the origin of the Bible, or else that he only very superficially understands human nature.

The true explanation of the miracles of the Bible clearly is, that they are a natural and an inevitable product of a period in the world's history before the birth of science, and before men had found out that they lived in a universe governed by law. Given, a devout people living in such an age, and you will as certainly have belief in miracles as you will have any other necessary form of activity of the human mind.

To the child everything is miracle; to the unscientific mind everything is miracle. Up to the point where the scientific conception of the uniformity of nature's opera-

tion arises, men believe in miracles as inevitably as in the rising of the sun; and because they believe in miracles and expect them to occur, and none have learned to apply accurate tests, of course they find them; and when they write books, of course the books will contain accounts of them. This is the explanation of the miracles of the Bible. Coming from the times and the people it did, it was impossible but that the Bible should have contained records of miracles,—and records made in all honesty and good faith.

We all know how great is the power of the human imagination to invent,—to convince us that things are external realities, which really have no existence except in the mind. We know too, on how slight foundations stories spring up, even in our age of incredulosity and open eyes. So also we understand how stories grow by repetition, until often they can scarcely be recognized as the same things they were when they started on their rounds.

We must not forget that these so-called miraculous events of the Bible were very few if any of them written down at the time of their occurrence. Instead of being recorded then, as it was indispensable that they should be if accuracy were to be ensured, they were carried in men's minds for years, or handed down from father to son for generations, before being committed to writing. Even the best authenticated of the miracles of Jesus seem not to have been written down for well nigh a generation after his death, while some bear evidence of a much later date. Now is it credible that stories of any kind, but particularly stories supposed to involve an element of the supernatural, and, above all, stories which the persons telling them were interested to make appear as marvellous as possible, could thus continue to be told orally for a quarter or a half century, or more, without change, without material growth and embellishment?

That the narrators and recorders of these stories were interested to make them out as marvellous as possible

becomes evident as soon as we remember that in the popular mind at that time the working of miracles on the part of a religious teacher was regarded as the great proof that he was from God. The legends of Elijah and Elisha were full of miracles. It was the received opinion that the Messiah when he came would perform many miracles. Hence naturally the disciples of Jesus after his death would emphasize everything in his life which had in it any look at all of the miraculous. They would go forth telling the story of his life out of miracles filled with belief in marvels, to other minds equally ready to believe in marvels, and themselves interested in the deepest way to make the most possible out of everything in his life that had the least look of miracle or marvel about it. If time would allow I should be glad to take up many of the individual miracles of both the New Testament and the Old, and trace the successive steps through which we may suppose them to have passed, from the first small germs of fact that probably in most cases lay at their beginning, up and on through growth and accretion and transformation, until at last we have the full grown, out-and-out miracles, as they stand recorded in the Bible. But time will not allow me to enter upon this ground.

From all that I have been saying it is clear that the time has gone by when every body can accept miracles. If a belief in miracles is essential to Christianity, then Christianity has already begun to wane; and from this time forward the best minds of the world in greater and greater numbers are certain to take their place outside of it. But *is* belief in miracles essential to Christianity? We have already found our answer in the teaching of Jesus himself. Miracles may be necessary to certain theological systems which have long called themselves Christianity. They are not necessary to that moral and spiritual Christianity whose soul is found in the Sermon on the Mount and the other teachings of Christ.

The best religious thought of our time is coming to see that miracles instead of being a help are actually

a hindrance to religion; they are about the heaviest weight that religion in our day has to carry.

Wrote John Quincy Adams: "The miracles in the Bible furnish the most powerful of all the objections against its authenticity, both historical and doctrinal; and were it possible to take its sublime morals, its unparalleled conceptions of the nature of God, and its irresistible power over the heart, with the simple narrative of the life and death of Jesus, stripped of all the supernatural agency and all the marvellous incidents connected with it, I should receive it without any of those misgivings of unwilling incredulity as to the miracles, which I find it impossible altogether to cast off."

John Quincy Adams voices the feeling and judgment of thousands of the most intelligent and devout minds of our age. Sooner or later it must come to what he suggests.—the better part of the Christian world will yet take "the sublime morals of the New Testament, its unparalleled conceptions of the nature of God, and its irresistible power over the heart, with the simple narrative of the life and death of Jesus"—these and these alone—as the essentials of Christianity, leaving all questions as to interferences with the laws of nature, and the credibility or incredibility of wonder-stories found in the Bible or elsewhere, to be settled by each man for himself, as being things purely speculative and not touching at all the real heart of religion. If a man thinks he has grounds for believing these things, let him believe them; that is his affair. On the other hand if a man cannot believe them, because the evidence seems to him to be against them, it is not for me or for any body else to say that he must believe them, or that he is irreligious or not a Christian because he does not. If Jesus treated all such things as non-essentials, it is not for me to treat them as essentials. To love God and man, and to do to others as I would have them do to me, that is true Christianity. To reverence God and work righteousness, that is true religion. Compared

with these, all questions of belief or non-belief in miracles is of weight as light as the mote that floats in the sun-beam.

It is strange and sad that the religious teachings of the past have so largely been such as to make us look for God only in events which are extraordinary, and out of the usual course of nature. That is not the direction at all in which to look for God. The place where God really reveals himself is not in a sun which stands still a little while on a particular afternoon in Palestine, but in that sun which never stands still in any land,—which moves on eternally in tireless strength and in obedience to law, carrying day and night and summer and winter forever round the earth. The place where God really reveals himself, is not in a miracle wrought through any single man or on any single occasion, to turn a pot of water into wine for the accommodation of a wedding party, or even to multiply loaves of bread so as to feed a company gathered on the shore of a Galilean lake. God's true revelation of himself, were our eyes only not too blind to see it, is in that perpetual turning of water into wine through the processes of nature which gives the world its every autumn vintage, and that ceaseless multiplying of loaves in the cornfields of a thousand valleys which gives the whole world its food.

It is a mistake, it is all wrong, to think that miracles, even granting their reality, can reveal God better than what is not miracle,—the abnormal better than that which is natural, the occasional better than that which is constant. The new and larger thought of God and religion which is coming to the world has in it no room for anything so petty, so irrelevant, so essentially non-religious as miracle. If we would see the glory of God we must teach ourselves to look for him not in interferences with his own beneficent plan of things, but in law, in order, in the cosmos, in the mighty and harmonious on-goings of nature. Here, not in the trivialities of signs and wonders, God stands full-revealed, in power, in wisdom, in majesty, in goodness.

A REPLY TO DR. TORREY'S ATTACKS UPON REASONABLE RELIGION

My belief has long been (and I know this is the judgment of many ministers not only of my own, but of other denominations) that the work of religion can be carried on more wisely, more constructively, and with results which in the end are far better, by pastors and Churches themselves, than by bringing in professional revivalists, with their excitements, their forcing processes and their more or less sensational methods.

However, although not favoring the revivalistic movement which is being carried on at Massey Hall by Dr. Torrey and Mr. Alexander, I should quietly have left it to take its own course and to accomplish such good as it might, and certainly I should have spoken no public word in opposition to, or in criticism of, it, if it had gone on its own way peacefully and in the spirit of Christian good-will. But it has not done so. Dr. Torrey had hardly begun his work before he gave warning that no quarter would be shown to what is called the "higher criticism," that is, to the broader, more progressive and more modern biblical scholarship. This he stigmatized as 'tearing the Bible to pieces,' or 'cutting the Bible to bits,' and all converts were advised (and the advice has been repeated again and again) to join no Churches where this is practiced or tolerated.

Nor have his attacks been confined by any means to the higher criticism of the Bible, but have been numerous and severe upon all the broader and more liberal forms of religious thought. I knew that this had been to a considerable extent his course in the States and in England, and that thus he had alienated from his work many pastors of Congregational, Presbyterian and other Churches. But I trusted that when he came to Toronto we might see a change for the better. I am sorry to say we were disappointed. As the days have gone on and these utterances have continued, I have

said to myself: Are there none to speak out in protest, as so many clergymen and biblical scholars in England and the United States have done, against this persistent and uncalled-for attempt to arrest the progress of biblical free inquiry and learning, to turn us back to the theology of 300 years ago, to stifle that broadening and liberalizing spirit which is beginning to appear in so many quarters and which is one of the finest characteristics of Christianity in our time, and to revive in place of it a dogmatism of the narrowest and most illiberal type? I wish there were others in Toronto to take up this task instead of myself. But as yet, at least, there do not seem to be. I have no right, therefore, to shrink from the duty.

What is this higher criticism which Dr. Torrey so fiercely assails? It is simply the most competent, the most unbiased and the most reverent scholarship of the Christian world setting itself to the task of finding out as fully and accurately as possible the facts regarding the origin and authorship of the various books and parts of the Bible, the circumstances under which they were composed, the purpose for which they were written, and what the different writers really meant by what they wrote. The scholars who are doing this important work of giving us this new and more thorough biblical knowledge are not infidels, or skeptics or reckless iconoclasts, as Dr. Torrey would have us believe, nor are they confined to any one Church or any one form of Christian faith. On the contrary, they belong to every Church and denomination. They are the leaders of biblical scholarship in the principal universities and theological schools and seats of highest knowledge in the world. They are not only men of far larger learning than Dr. Torrey can for one moment claim to possess, but they are also men whose piety and whose love for the Bible are surely quite as deep as his own. If the great and devout scholars of every Christian land, of whose united labors for a hundred years the higher criticism is the result, cannot be trusted, who can be?

True, here and there a scholar rejects the new scholarship, the new knowledge, the new light; but such rejectors are very

few, and nearly all are among the older men who, because of their age, find it difficult to fall in line with the progressive thought of the time; or else they are men trained in some school of religious doctrine (of which the school of Mr. Moody, to which Dr. Torrey belongs, is a conspicuous type), which closes men's minds against religious advance, believing that thus it does God's will.

Does Dr. Torrey realize, and do the pastors who united to bring him to Toronto realize, how serious a thing it is for a man to come here and spend a month in a persistent effort to shake the confidence of the public in our best and highest biblical scholarship, and to awaken in the Churches of all denominations distrust of the honored men to whom we have committed the training of our ministry and the creation of our religious literature? Will the gathering of a few converts into our Churches make good this wide and lasting injury done to religion?

Dr. Torrey never tires of condemning the higher critics for tearing the Bible to pieces. But is there any higher critic who tears it to pieces so badly as do men like himself, who turn the whole volume into a thesaurus of texts, isolated texts, unrelated texts, texts torn bleeding from their contexts, texts seized upon without any reference to who wrote them or what the writers had in mind, texts gathered from no matter what part of the Bible, and used to confound sinners or infidels with, or to afford fancied support to doctrines which in many cases the writers of the texts never heard or dreamed of? The higher critic at least seeks to find what the original writers said and meant. The preacher or theological debater, whose armory is the Bible regarded as a book of texts, does not aim, in his tearing the Bible to fragments, to find out what the writers were trying to say. His aim is to find in his text what he himself wants it to say, to read into it the meaning that he thinks it ought to have, and then to use it as a stone to build into the walls of his theological edifice, or a pebble for his theological sling, to hurl at some foe. For tearing the Bible to pieces I have never seen any higher critics that came near to equalling Dr. Torrey and Mr. Moody and their school.

As is well known, one can make history teach anything, or any book mean anything, by picking and choosing. You can find in Shakespeare whatever you will, by choosing isolated, fragmentary and unrelated passages. By the same process one can prove anything from the Bible. The explanation of the existence of two or three hundred different Christian sects all drawing their doctrine from the same Scriptures, is found right here, in this evil practice of picking and culling texts to build doctrines on. A man may prove from the Bible the duty of immediate suicide. "Judas went and hanged himself." Matthew 27: 5. "Go, and do thou likewise." Luke 10: 37. "That thou doest, do quickly." John 13: 27. There, you see, I give you chapter and verse. How can you hesitate to obey these plain commands of the Bible? How many preachers sin in this way with texts! But where is there a sinner of this kind that can surpass Dr. Torrey, as we hear him every day in Massey Hall? Truly, the higher critic is not the only man who tears the Bible to pieces.

The Bible ought to be studied rationally, and in the light of the fullest knowledge attainable from any and every source, just as we would study any other book. What is known as the higher criticism is just such study. How can such study injure the Bible? His faith in this great book of the ages must be small who has any such fear. The biblical scholarship of our time may disturb—doubtless is disturbing—certain theories about the Bible, formed in darker ages than ours; but it cannot hurt the Bible itself. Everything in its pages that is true or ever was, everything that ever had any power to help the moral or spiritual life of man continues undisturbed. If anything is purged away it is dross; the gold all remains. Instead of the higher criticism being, as Dr. Torrey affirms, harmful to the Bible and religion, I believe candid study of the matter shows that its influence is to make the Bible a more valuable book of religion and morals; to open the way for its study in schools and colleges; to give us a larger and truer conception of revelation and inspiration; to make religion more reasonable, more broad, more human, more progressive; to elevate the spirit above the letter; to break down sectarian

lines and bring Christians nearer together, and to give Jesus a more central place in the Bible and religion.

This is as much as time permits me to say to-night in defence of the higher criticism. I shall give the subject a more extended consideration in another discourse.

I pass now to my main theme of the evening: Dr. Torrey's many attacks upon reasonable religion. And let me say in the beginning that by reasonable religion I mean the religion of Jesus. I believe the greatest teacher of such religion that the world has produced was the great prophet of Nazareth. And I believe that Dr. Torrey in attacking reasonable religion attacks Jesus and his gospel.

I do not think the gospel of Dr. Torrey is the gospel of Jesus; it is the gospel of the theologians, of the speculative thinkers, of the system makers, of the creed constructors, living in later times, who had wandered far away from the simplicity, the reasonableness and the spirituality of the great teacher. Of course it has in it certain elements that come from Jesus; but not its central elements. That which Dr. Torrey makes central, that upon which he lays an overwhelming emphasis, that which he makes the essential of salvation, namely, belief in a certain theory or doctrine about Jesus, to the effect that he was God, and that by his death as God the Son, he appeased the wrath of God the Father, and paid the penalty due for man's sins, and thus in this sense became man's saviour—that doctrine, or theory, which Dr. Torrey insists upon as the gospel, and acceptance of which he makes necessary to salvation, I do not find anywhere in the teaching of Jesus. As I read the first three gospels, those which go back nearest to the time of Christ, and therefore which are most to be relied on for information as to what he taught, I do not find anything that even looks in the direction of any such doctrine. Read the Sermon on the Mount, the most extended summary that we have of the teachings of the Master; does that contain anything about this theory or dogma of Dr. Torrey? Not a word. Read the matchless parables; read all those utterance of wisdom and love and life that fell from the great teacher's lips; surely they will be full of it, if it was his gospel,

the message that he had come from heaven to deliver. But they are all silent. Nowhere is any such theory or dogma or doctrine taught or hinted. What is it that we do find? The religion of Jesus as it appears in the earliest gospels has in it no theological scheme of any kind. It has nothing to do with any fall of the race in Adam, or any speculative trinity, or any atoning sacrifice of blood to placate God and make him willing or able to be kind to men. It is simply the religion of love, of duty, of pity and tenderness, of the Golden Rule, of the Lord's Prayer, of a divine humanity, of God's Fatherhood and man's brotherhood, of human service, of the pure heart and the right life. These things, just these, were what Jesus preached as his gospel. And how the beauty, the sweetness and the power of such a gospel stirred men's souls in Jesus' day, as it also stirs men's souls whenever it is preached in our day.

The most hopeful sign in the religious world at the present time is found in the fact that there is a growing recognition of this that I am saying. With this recognition the cry is being raised in many quarters, "Back to Jesus!" Many causes, prominent among them the new and more intelligent study of the Bible, have been operating for a generation or more, to open the eyes of thoughtful men all over Christendom to the fact that Christianity has wandered far away from its founder, into regions of spiritual barrenness and death. For centuries on centuries the real Jesus of the gospels and the real religion that he taught, have been largely hidden out of sight under mountains of theological speculations, under systems of doctrine founded not upon his teachings, under creeds formulated with polemic and sectarian ends in view, and under ecclesiastical rites alien to the simple worship which he enjoined. None too soon has a movement arisen to shake off this crushing mountain load, to return back from these disastrous wanderings to the Jesus of the gospels, and to the simplicity, the reasonableness and the spirituality of the religion which he taught. I speak of this as a movement back to Jesus. We must not understand, however, that in the ordinary sense of the word it is retrogressive, or that its

aim is to resist progress. On the contrary, it believes in progress. It goes back to Jesus because thus it is able to shake off the theological and ecclesiastical chains with which Christianity has been bound. It goes back to get power and inspiration to go forward. It goes back to plant itself upon those great intuitions of the soul, upon those universal religious principles, upon those central truths of all ethical and spiritual religion which Jesus recognized as the necessary conditions of progress, and which create progress wherever they appear.

This is the liberal religious movement of our time. It believes in reason. It believes in freedom. It believes in the Bible interpreted in the light of the largest knowledge. It believes in the religion of the open mind, instead of the religion of the fixed creed. It believes in a living God of a living man, and that God's revelations of truth are not all confined to the far-away past. It deeply believes in Jesus, in the life he lived and the religion he taught; and with love and honor and loyalty it takes him for its leader.

What is Dr. Torrey's relation to this movement? It is the relation of opposition—of strenuous antagonism. It must be so, because the banner under which he marches is not that of the Jesus of the gospels, but the banner of the theological Christ—the Christ of the creeds and dogmas and theological systems formed in those dark centuries when the Christian Church had wandered so far away from the simple and reasonable religion of its founder.

What is the relation of Unitarians to this movement? They believe in it, and from the beginning have been active in its promotion. Is it strange then that Dr. Torrey is hostile to them? What is the relation of the more liberal minded and progressive men in other Churches—in Churches calling themselves orthodox—to this movement? They, too, in a greater or less degree are friendly to it, and are helping it on. Is it strange then, that they too, come under Dr. Torrey's lash?

It is encouraging for those who are associated with this movement to reflect that all the influences of advancing civilization are with them. Knowledge is their ally. Science

helps them. Biblical scholarship works powerfully for them. The spirit of inquiry tells constantly and everywhere in their favor. So does the spirit of progress. Reason is on their side. So is conscience. So are the deepest spiritual instincts of free souls. Helped thus by the mightiest and the noblest forces of the moral world, can there be any doubt as to the final outcome of the new movement?

It should be borne in mind that it is teachings like Dr. Torrey's that drive men like Rev. Mr. Horsman of the Walmer Road Baptist Church out of their pulpits. It is teachings like his that inflict on Toronto the disgrace of refusing to open churches to a distinguished and devout scholar like the late President Harper, of Chicago, when he honors our city by coming here in response to an invitation from one of our institutions of learning, to deliver a Convocation address. It is teachings like Dr. Torrey's that drive men like Professor Mitchell, of Boston, out of the theological schools of the Methodist Church, and men like Professor Swing, of Chicago, and Professor Briggs, of New York, out of the Presbyterian Church, and men like Professor Toy, of Harvard, out of the Baptist Church, and men like Rev. Howard MacQueary out of the Episcopal Church, and that tend to put a ban upon honest thinking in all the Churches.

Dr. Torrey tells us that there is no such thing as salvation by character; that to say there is, tends to destroy souls; that if a man possessed the best and most perfect character in the world, and had not done what Dr. Torrey calls "accepting Christ," he would be lost; indeed, that if the world were full of men of such character, and if they were unconverted, they would all go to perdition. In answer to this amazing teaching, let me tell a story. In a certain town where there is a Congregational Church, a new minister who had been called, was to be ordained. A council had been convened for the purpose. After a general statement by the candidate of his religious experience, theological convictions, ideas about salvation and so on, he was called upon, as was customary, to answer such questions as any member of the council might choose to ask, and among those asked was this, which was

addressed to him by an old minister whose theology was much like that of Dr. Torrey: "What, sir, would you say were the chances of salvation of a man of respectable life and conduct who tried to do his duty, and endeavored to obey the commands of God—one whom you might call a righteous man, or a man with an excellent character—but who had never consciously accepted the atonement offered by our Saviour?" A profound silence followed, while the candidate stood for a moment with bowed head. Then he raised it and gave his answer: 'Righteousness is salvation. Character is salvation.' Was he not right? Notwithstanding anything that backward-looking men who get their belief not from Jesus, may say or do, we may be certain that the creed of the future regarding salvation will be just that. Righteousness is salvation. Character is salvation. Every other kind of salvation, so-called, is in its very nature unreal. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto falsehood." "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?" "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven." The test at the Judgment scene, said Jesus, will be not professions, not beliefs, but deeds—feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and those in prison.

Dr. Torrey tells us that the doctrine of God's universal Fatherhood is false. If that be so, of course it follows that the doctrine of man's universal brotherhood is false. Is he prepared to say that all men are not brothers? He declares that the world is divided into two classes, "children of God" and "children of the devil," and that all persons who have not accepted Christ, according to his (Dr. Torrey's) method of accepting Christ, are children of the devil. I think Jesus would have been startled if he had heard that. If there was anything that was dear to Jesus it was the thought of God as a Father—not only his Father, but the Father of all men, all his human brothers, high and low, rich and poor. He taught

all men in sorrow, in disappointment, in weakness, in temptation, in sin to go to God as their Father, for comfort, for hope, for strength, for forgiveness, for help according to their needs. In that model prayer which he gave to the world he taught all men to say "Our Father, who art in heaven." These facts do not look much as if Jesus thought that God's Fatherhood is limited, and that nine-tenths of the human race are not His children at all, but children of the devil.

Paul, too, was as much mistaken as Jesus, if Dr. Torrey is right, for Paul says in Ephesians, "There is one God and Father of all."

By the way, speaking of the Lord's Prayer, reminds me that in none of Dr. Torrey's services that I have attended has he made any use of that prayer. Perhaps it was an accident. For aught I know he may have used it at other meetings. But when I found him teaching that a large part of the people everywhere, and indeed, all outside of his religious set, are not children of God at all, but children of the devil, I wondered if that might not be the explanation of the non-use of the prayer. Of course it would not be proper to teach any of the children of the devil in Massey Hall to say, "Our Father, who art in heaven." Their proper prayer would be, "Our Father, who art in hell!"

Of the thousands of children that have gathered in Massey Hall at the different childrens' meetings, only a fraction are reported as converted. Of course all the rest were children of the devil. What lovely children the devil does have! And how sweetly they sing the praises of God! I think Mr. Alexander must have felt this, even if Dr. Torrey did not.

Is there a mother or a father here to-night who has a sweet babe at home? When you go home to-night, and make your way to its room and bend over it as it sleeps, and kiss its cheek, and thank God with happy tears for his unspeakably precious gift, stop! stop! Dr. Torrey bids you stop, and remember that what you see before you is a child of the devil! Jesus took the young children in his arms and blessed them, and said: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

"Their angels do always behold the face of my Father."
"Except ye become as little children ye cannot enter the kingdom." Which shall we believe, Dr. Torrey or Jesus?

Dr. Torrey tells us that Unitarians have no access to God, and no salvation; and also that Trinitarians who reject his view of the atonement are in the same condition. Well, that means, I think I may safely say, that hell will have some fairly good society, when we come to count among its population William Cullen Bryant, Longfellow, Oliver Wendell Holmes, James Russell Lowell, Julia Ward Howe, Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Senator Hoar, Charles Sumner, Phillips Brooks, Henry Ward Beecher, Edward Everett Hale, President Eliot of Harvard, President David Starr Jordan, of Leland Stanford, Dean Stanley, Dr. Martineau, Frederick W. Robertson, George Macdonald, Benjamin Jowett, Tennyson, Browning, Ruskin, Florence Nightingale, Stopford Brooke—to name only a few; for all these persons belong in one or the other of these two last classes, Unitarians, or Trinitarians who reject what Dr. Torrey regards as the true and the only saving view of the atonement.

Once on a time some one with a belief somewhat like that of our good Massey Hall doctor, published in a Boston paper the declaration that Emerson, if he died would go to hell, because he was a Unitarian. Father Taylor, the famous Methodist sailor-preacher read it, and exclaimed, "Emerson in hell! that good man! Why it would turn the tide of emigration that way."

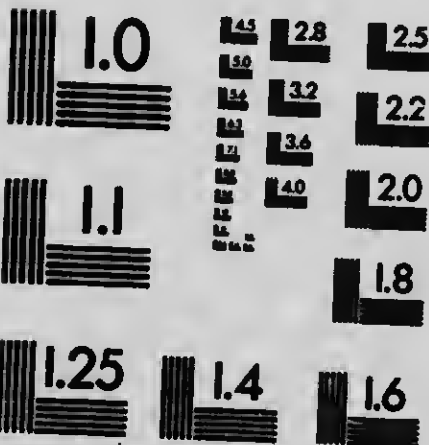
If Dr. Torrey's theology is beyond hope of improvement, it is at least a pity that he does not have some sense of humor, for I think that even that would save him from making some of the statements which he now so recklessly makes.

Before leaving the statement that Unitarians have no access to God, let me ask whether any of you have had your attention called to the very large number of hymns—hymns of the deepest and tenderest devotion—that are the productions of Unitarians, and yet that are being introduced into the hymnals of all denominations, and are becoming universal favorites with devout worshippers of every religious name.



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A few months ago Dr. Washington Gadden, one of the most distinguished Congregational clergymen and writers in the States, said in an article in one of the periodicals of his denomination: "The largest number of the best hymns written within the past twenty-five years, have been written by Unitarians. . . While some of us have been busy hunting heresy, the Unitarians have been trying to find utterance for their religious feeling." Perhaps no other single hymn is so widely sung and so much loved by worshippers of every religious communion, as "Nearer my God to Thee," written by Sarah Flower Adams, an English Unitarian. Hardly second to this in universality of use and popularity is "In the Cross of Christ I Glory," written by the eminent English Unitarian, Sir John Bowring. The hymns of Bryant, Holmes, Whittier (the Unitarian Quaker), Stopford Brooke, Martineau, Samuel Johnson, Samuel Longfellow, Chadwick, Hosmer, Gannett, and many others, are scarcely less in favor. Do men who have no piety in their souls write the hymns of worship of an age? Well, even if we ourselves have "no access to God" we are at least glad if we may be of some service to others in helping them to lift up their hearts in love, in trust, in worship, in devout communion with the Father of all.

In his last address on the Bible in St. James' schoolhouse, Dr. Torrey told a story of a man who had "run around with infidels, Unitarians, Theosophists, Spiritualists, and Christian Scientists until he had become an agnostic."

Well, I pass over the taunt at Unitarians implied in this passage; and I leave Theosophists and Spiritualists and Christian Scientists to speak for themselves, as of course they prefer to do; but I want to say very plainly that any one who says that Unitarianism tends to produce agnosticism, knows not whereof he affirms. The truth is the exact opposite. It tends to cure agnosticism. That is the testimony and the record everywhere. And why does it have this power? First, because it does not send the agnostic to hell, but treats him with respect; and second, because it offers him a reasonable religion, one that appeals to his intelligence and all that is highest and best in his nature.

Nor does Unitarianism tend to produce infidelity or unbelief or atheism, as Dr. Torrey so constantly asserts. To say it does is a cruel slander. The truth is, nothing about Unitarianism is more conspicuous than its influence in leading men to faith. This is what our ministers everywhere find. If ministers of other denominations understood us, they would rejoice in our work, because we are able to lead so many to faith whom they cannot. I speak from a large experience, bearing upon this particular matter. For many years I was pastor of a Church at the seat of the largest of the American State Universities. What did I find among those thousands of students? Hundreds and hundreds of young men who had lost their religious faith. What had been the cause? Most often unreasonable and unworthy views of religion, the Bible and God, similar to those which Dr. Torrey teaches. What was the remedy? In nearly all cases I found it to be rational and worthy views of religion, the Bible and God.

Thinking men do not give up their religious faith from choice. When men turn their backs on the Bible or God, we may know, in nine cases out of ten, that the trouble is with the ideas which have been taught them on these subjects. Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." Wherever Jesus is lifted up before the eyes of men in the real beauty and greatness of his character, does he not draw all to him? So with God—show God to men in the loveliness and perfectness of his character, as Jesus taught us to see Him, and does He repel any? Does He not sooner or later win all? So, too, with the Bible. Teach men true, rational, intelligent, worthy views of it, such as our broad-minded, forward-looking, reverent scholars are everywhere more and more teaching, and we need have no fear of infidelity concerning it. Such teaching will save the Bible, and will save the people. This illustrates the work that Unitarian Churches everywhere are doing. They are not leading men to infidelity. They are saving men from infidelity. By offering them a reasonable religion they are winning men to faith in God and in the highest things that the human soul can know.

Dr. Torrey declares, and repeats the declaration over and over, that Jesus "was either God or else he was an impostor"—indeed, he puts it in much stronger language, and says, he was either God or else "the most damnable impostor that the world ever saw." I don't know why he uses the word "damnable." The man on the street would have said right out "damned," and then Dr. Torrey would have pointed to him as a lost soul. I suppose the revivalist thought that by changing the word just a little he could ease the matter off, and give vent to his not very loving or Christ-like feeling, without quite technically swearing.

I am surprised that an intelligent man who is acquainted with the Gospels of our New Testament could suggest, much less urge, such an alternative. However, it is urged, and it should be answered. I am ready to answer it. But to do so as fully and completely as I should like, would require more time than I have at my disposal to-night. I shall therefore reserve the subject for a full discourse to be given soon. I think I shall be able to show you in that discourse that if an alternative in connection with this subject exists at all, it is not that of "God or an impostor," as Dr. Torrey claims, but the alternative "man or an impostor."

Dr. Torrey last Wednesday told a touching story of a little girl whose father, a bank cashier, had been sent to prison for defalcation. One day at school a companion said to the little girl, "Your father is a thief." It was like a cruel blow in her face. It staggered her. She hurried home. She would not go to school again. She idolized her father; and now to have this awful thing said about him! it broke her heart, and in a little while she died. Dr. Torrey, referring to that word spoken to that little girl, exclaimed: "Oh, the heartless cruelty of it!" Yes, but how light was its cruelty compared with his own cruelty! For what is he doing? Telling thousands of girls and boys wherever he goes, that their fathers and mothers are worse than thieves; for he declares that every father or mother who has not "accepted Christ" according to the theological recipe repeated so constantly in Massey Hall, is guilty of the greatest sin and crime in all this

world. Is not that cruelty? Nor is that the worst. Wherever he goes he tells children whose parents have died without getting his kind of salvation, that those parents are writhing in eternal flames. And the same thing he tells parents about their children, and brothers about their sisters, and sisters about their brothers, and husbands about their wives, and wives about their husbands. Is not that cruelty? The little girl died from the shock of having her father called a thief. How is it that men, women and children by the thousand do not die, die of broken hearts, or else go insane, over the infinitely more shocking things that Dr. Torrey is telling them about their dearest loved ones?

One of the subjects that Dr. Torrey has made most prominent throughout his whole series of meetings is that of hell. It has not been incidental with him, but central. He has devoted several entire discourses to it, and his references to it have been almost numberless. It is the black and awful background of all his theology. The object of his mission is to save men from hell. His most telling appeals are connected with stories of death-beds of men and women and children who either were saved from hell by accepting Christ in time, or else were lost because they delayed too long. Nor is he any more modest in describing hell and its horrors than in declaring who will go there. Some preachers who profess to believe in hell, and a hell of eternal pain, do not very often speak of it, seeming to think it not quite a fit subject for ears polite. When they do refer to it, it is in a veiled and softened way. Not so Dr. Torrey. And is he not right? Is not his course the honest and honorable one? If any preacher or any man believes that a hell of endless torment awaits people all around him, he ought to be as much in earnest and as outspoken as is Dr. Torrey, and if possible ten times more so. Dr. Torrey does not even represent the fires of hell as figurative. He says they may be figurative; but if so the figure falls short of expressing the dreadfulness of the reality. But as for himself he believes the fire is real, is literal fire; and in that literal fire the unsaved—all who do not take Christ according to his formula, will burn for ever, will

have physical bodies provided them, he tells us, of a nature to burn and suffer forever and not be consumed. I say, if a man is so unfortunate as to hold such a horrible belief, the only honest thing possible for him is to cry aloud and spare not, and lift up his voice like a trumpet. But how a man is to be pitied whose life is cursed and whose universe is blackened by such a belief!

Let us look at this doctrine of eternal torments as candidly and fairly and dispassionately as we can.

What are the objections which intelligence and piety find to it? If this doctrine is taught in the name of the Bible (and that is the ground on which Dr. Torrey teaches it—he confesses that but for the Bible he would be compelled to throw it away, it is so horrible)—if it is taught on supposed Bible authority, then it places upon the book which we all love and honor, a burden too heavy for it to bear. But the truth seems to be, the Bible does not teach it, when properly understood. Doubtless the teaching of the Bible is that the laws of retribution extend on into the future life. There will be punishment there, as there is punishment here. But it will be just punishment, not infinitely unjust. It will not be one and the same hopeless doom for all. It will be meted out according to deserts. It will be governed by the law of moral cause and effect. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." "That servant who knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes."

The punishments of the world to come will be disciplinary and for the good of those who receive them, not retaliatory or inflicted from motives of vengeance. They will be the dealings of a Father with his children. And they will come to an end. To continue them for ever would be to defeat all purposes of beneficence, all ends of justice. The adjectives in the Hebrew and the Greek which are translated in our Bible as "eternal" and "everlasting" in connection with hell and future punishment, are words which do not necessarily mean endless, for they are used again and again in other

parts of Scripture to express periods of time which certainly terminate. Says Archdeacon Farrar (and I quote him because he was a distinguished preacher and scholar, not of my own Church but of the Church of England): "I ask you, what would be the popular teachings about hell, if we calmly and deliberately erased from the Bible the three words, 'damnation,' 'hell' and 'everlasting'? Yet I say unhesitatingly, I say claiming the fullest right to speak with the authority of knowledge, I say with the calmest and most unflinching sense of responsibility, that not one of these words ought to stand any longer in the English Bible."

These words of Archdeacon Farrar are fully justified in the light of present biblical scholarship. There can be no question that this doctrine of an eternal hell turns many men against Christianity. Says Stopford Brooke, the great English preacher and writer: "We ought to fight against the lies of this doctrine day by day; for we, who do not believe it, have no notion of the harm it is doing to those who do believe it. We are bound to contend against it if we have any desire that a nobler Christianity should prevail among men, for its teaching drives men into infidelity and atheism." Go to railers against Christianity, and this doctrine of a hell of endless torment inflicted upon men for the shortcomings of this brief earthly life, is almost certain to be their main point of attack. Go to sincere doubters, who are troubled and in darkness over things connected with Christianity which they cannot explain or understand, and usually you will find that the leading cause of their doubt and trouble is this dark doctrine.

This doctrine also breaks the hearts of Christians. Thousands of the best and devoutest souls of every denomination that teaches it, experience anguish that is simply unutterable over the thought of what it means. All that is best within them revolts against it. They only believe it amid their tears and because they feel that they must. Several years ago the Rev. Dr. John A. Faulkner, an eminent Methodist divine, and Professor in the Drew Theological Seminary in New Jersey, published an article in the *Methodist Review*, expressing strongly the conviction that the doctrine that "the great

majority of men are doomed to an eternity of awful torments" has been a fruitful cause of disbelief of the whole Christian system. He declares that "it has made sad the hearts of those whom God has not made sad. It has turned the hopes of thousands of devout believers into ashes, and filled the souls of God's children with tormenting doubts and dark forebodings as to their own salvation and the salvation of their friends." And what wonder? How can such a doctrine fail to have such results with thoughtful and earnest minds? The only occasion for surprise is that men can hold it and keep their reason. Oliver Wendell Holmes says: "Any decent person holding such an opinion ought to go mad; it is very much to such a one's discredit if he does not."

A not less weighty objection to the doctrine of an eternal hell is, that it virtually dethrones God. Certainly it dethrones the God which Jesus taught us to believe in. It no longer leaves us a God of love; it no longer leaves us a God of justice; it no longer leaves us a God whom we can call in any real sense whatever a Father. A Father cannot damn his children for ever.

But even this is not all. If there is an eternal hell of suffering, then there is no heaven; there can be no heaven. Writes Robert Buchanan in his song of "Doom":

"Were I a soul in heaven
Afar from pain,
Yea, on Thy breast of snow,
At the scream of one below
I should scream again."

Could heaven be heaven for any human beings with millions suffering in hopeless woe—and among them some of their own dear ones? Mother, tell me what would golden streets and white robes and golden harps be to you, if your children were over yonder in torments—all of them or any of them? Are you happy on one of these brief earthly days when your child is sick, and turns restless on its bed, moaning and white with pain? How happy, then, could you be in the eternal day with your child in unutterable agonies, and you powerless to render aid?

Do you recollect Gerald Massey's lines?—

"I cannot believe in endless hell
And heaven side by side How could I dwell
Among the saved, for thinking of the lost?
With such a lot the best would suffer most.
Sitting at feast, all in a Golden Home,
That towered over dungeon-gates of Doom,
My heart would ache for all the lost that go
To wail and weep in everlasting woe;
Through all the music I must hear the moan,
Too sharp for all the harps of heaven to drown."

You who have read Geo. Macdonald's "Robert Falconer" will remember that faded, brown letter, written with trembling hand by Mrs. Falconer, just before her death, and which came at last to the lost Andrew. "Oh, Andrew, I feel as if I should lose my reason, when I think that you may be on the left hand of the judge, and I can no longer call you *my love*. . . . I couldn't be happy in heaven without you. It may be very wicked, but I do not feel as if it were, and I can't help it if it is. . . . Before you get this I shall be all gone to dust, either knowing about you, or else trying to praise God, but always forgetting where I am in my psalm, *longing so for you to come*. I am afraid I love you too much to be fit to go to heaven. Then, perhaps God will send me down to the other place, all for love of you, Andrew. And I do believe I should like that better."

Ah, friends, would it not be so with us all? I think earth has never heard such prayers as would go up from every part of heaven to God, from mothers, fathers, wives, children, that in mercy he would allow us to go and share, even if we could not alleviate, the pain of our suffering loved ones.

No, if there is a world of endless, irremediable suffering for any, then the whole race is undone. Heaven is only a name. Hell is all. The knowledge of a world of helpless woe would hush every golden harp. It would break the heart of every inhabitant of heaven. It would break the heart of Christ. All must be saved at last, or else none can be.

But we need not fear. God is not going to be defeated in His universe. His eternal purpose is one of good to humanity,

and it will not suffer wreck. Dr. Torrey is wrong; Jesus is right. Whatever retribution God has for men on the other side of the grave, means love, not hate; it means reform, discipline, redemption, not damnation. God is a Shepherd. No sheep will wander from His fold in any world that He will not seek, and sooner or later find and bring back. God is a Father; we may trust Him for ever, sure that He will watch and wait with deathless love, until the last prodigal among His human children comes home.

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THE RELIGIOUS REVIVAL EVERY- WHERE NEEDED

"O Lord revive Thy work."—Habakkuk 3: 2.

Probably none of us doubt the legitimacy and value of genuine revivals of religion. Is religion a good to men? We all believe it is. Is it always in as prosperous a condition among men as we could wish? Surely not. Then there must be times when to revive interest in it would be desirable.

Revivals are not peculiar to religion. Nature has her times of revival. The spring is the revival season of the year. In the winter the life of nature sinks to a low ebb. Spring comes, there is a renewal; all the life forces of the world start again into activity.

The life of man, too, as well as the life of nature, is full of revivals. Of few subjects do we hear business men talk oftener than of revivals of business. We have frequently recurring times of revival of interest in politics. The approach of an important election is always such a time. Patriotism has its times of revival, as on anniversaries of great historic events that stir deeply the public heart, or in times of public danger. Literature has its periods of revival, as in Greece in the age known as the Periclean; in Rome in the age known as the Augustan; in England in the age called the Elizabethan—all of them times when literature from a preceding winter passed to a spring and a glorious summer. There is one period in the history of Europe which we call the Renaissance. The word means the rebirth or the revival. It was the coming to life again of letters and learning after they had been practically dead for well-nigh a thousand years. Art has had its times of decline and revival; so has music; so has eloquence; so has philosophy.

It is not strange, therefore, that we should find religion following the same general law.

But there seems to be wide misunderstanding as to what a real revival of religion is.

Every great advance that religion has ever made in the world I suppose we may properly call a religious revival.

Non-christian religions have their revivals. The rise of Buddhism in India was a vast and on the whole a very beneficent revival of religion; for deficient as it was in important ways, it possessed many noble characteristics, and was a distinct advance on the Brahmanism which it displaced. For Buddha to come down from a throne, put himself on the level with the poorest laborer, and thus teach in the most impressive manner the beautiful lesson of human brotherhood, was a noble step forward in the history of religion in the world. I suppose, too, that it was a genuine revival and advance of religion in Arabia when Mahomet gathered around him the rude tribes of Arabian idolaters and bound them together in the worship of one God.

But it is revivals in connection with our own religious faith that most immediately concern us. The Old Testament prophets were very genuine revivalists; that is, they were preachers of a purer and better religion than that which was generally practiced around them; and under the powerful exhortations and warnings of those prophets the Jewish people were lifted up to higher standards of justice, mercy and truth, and higher views of God and His worship.

When Jesus declared that God is the heavenly Father of all men, and that all men are brothers, that was the bursting out of a great new religious light for men, and hence may be called a great revival of religion. Indeed, the planting of Christianity was probably the most important religious revival that the world has ever known.

Nor did revival influences cease with Jesus and the early Church. The history of Christianity shows many periods of renewal, revival, advance. What a mighty and grand revival was the German Reformation, which gave birth in modern Christendom to the great doctrine of the right of

independent judgment in the interpretation of the Bible, and in things religious generally.

When in England Puritanism sprung up, with its demand that each Church should be permitted to manage its religious affairs for itself; when Quakerism arose declaring that a religion of the heart is better than a religion of the tongue, and a religion of the spirit than a religion of the letter; and when Methodism came forward with its religion for the poor and the common people, they were all genuine religious revivals. I do not mean that they gave men religion in perfect forms, but they were genuine advances; in them religion rose to newness of life, to greater and more beneficent practical power among men.

The rise of Universalism, with its teaching that good is to be the final conqueror of ill, and that man is made, not for eternal sin and suffering, but for ultimate holiness and happiness; and the rise of Unitarianism, with its insistence upon religious freedom and upon the application of rational methods of inquiry and judgment to all religious questions, were both religious revivals of far-reaching import, which are still in progress and spreading in their silent working far beyond the bodies calling themselves by these names.

For a number of years our Presbyterian friends have been trying to revise their Confession of Faith, so as to leave out its darker parts and make it on the whole more reasonable. Some good people are afraid of this and call it scepticism. But they could hardly be more mistaken. It is the best in men, the noblest and truest, which has been asking to have these revisions of the Westminster Confession made. It is the desire for higher views of God, and for higher ethical ideals, and this means a higher and better Christianity.

Many good men fear the new views of the Bible which are coming to our time under the name of the higher criticism; and here again the cry is raised of scepticism and infidelity. But no! these new views have come at the behest of truth, of reason, of conscience, and that means at the behest of the God of truth and reason and conscience. Hence we see that what

we really have here, also, is an advance of religion toward something higher and better.

The religious thought of our time is being greatly enriched, and the whole conception of God's method of dealing with the world is being greatly enlarged, by the doctrine of evolution, which gives us, not a fallen race, but a rising race; not a divine plan of things which broke down in the first act, involving the eternal ruin of nine-tenths of the human family, but a divine plan which never broke down, which is unfolding as the centuries go on, in a great world-wide drama whose meaning is the gradual elevation and education of the whole human race.

An enlargement and enrichment of religious thought hardly less important is coming from the new knowledge which our age is getting of the great religions of the world outside of our own, showing that piety and saint-hood are not confined to Christianity, but are wide as the world; showing that inspiration and revelation are not limited to any one age or people, or to a single sacred book, but that the Divine Spirit of Truth and Love is universal. God is the God of all ages and lands.

"Wherever through the ages rise
The altars of self-sacrifice,
Where love its arms hath opened wide,
Or man for man hath calmly died,
We see the same white wings outspread
That hovered o'er the Master's head,
And in all lands beneath the sun
The heart affirmeth, 'Love is one.'"

These various signs of progress, growth and enlargement ought to bring joy to all men who care for religion. Distrust of them is the real skepticism of our time. Their appearance ought to show us all that God is in His world, that His truth is advancing, that religion is more and more allying itself with light and knowledge, and therefore is rising to be a more beneficent power in the world than it has ever been in the past. What do all these signs of advance mean but a religious revival of the most profound, far-reaching and uplifting character?

But there are revivals of quite another kind which are not less important. I mean revivals of religion distinctly on its side toward men. In other words, I mean those movements of beneficence and charity, of moral and social reform, which have appeared more or less in different ages and in various lands, but which are becoming such a conspicuous and honorable feature of the modern Christian world. True, to these we sometimes do not give the name of religion at all, but designate them by some such slighting term as "mere good deeds." But this is because our conception of religion is so poor, so superficial, so inadequate, so far from that of all the better parts of the Bible. If, as the Bible declares, true religion is "to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction," if it is "to love our neighbor as ourselves," if it is "to feed the hungry, cloth the naked, minister to the sick, and visit those that are in prison," then surely to create among men new and more wide spread interest in charities, philanthropies and moral and social reforms, is to revive religion in as real, practical and vital a way as can possibly be conceived.

Thus we see that John Howard was one of the truest revivalists that Christianity has ever produced. He revived religion on a side that was seriously dormant and atrophied—the side of love to man. Finding a vast class of persons toward whom society felt no pity, and for whom there seemed no hope, he gave his life to the task of making known the injustices and cruelties heaped upon them, and stirring up feelings of humanity in their behalf.

The anti-slavery movement in England and in the United States was a great and noble revival of practical religion. Slavery in the olden times had been thought right. Indeed, in its origin it was perhaps to be commended. The earlier practice among most peoples seems to have been to put captives taken in war to death. Later came in the more merciful custom of sparing their lives but making them slaves. But Christianity, when it came on the scene, taught principles which could not fail to work the ultimate destruction of slavery; the Golden Rule and slavery could not always go hand

in hand; men could not forever continue to hold men in bondage whom they recognized as their brothers, children of a common heavenly Father. Thus we see that the anti-slavery movement was a mighty quickening, deepening, reviving of religion on its manward side.

The modern temperance movement is a genuine revival of religion of the same general practical character.

The deep and wide-spread stirring of public interest in our day in the cause of labor—the demand, rising like a mighty wave, that labor shall be more adequately rewarded than often it is, and better guarded against injustice and oppression, is a revival of that religion of the Old and New Testaments which requires of men everywhere “to do justly.”

That Christ-like work which was done for so many years by Mr. Henry Berg, of New York, and which is now being carried on by Mr. George T. Angell, of Boston, and so many other noble men and women in different lands, to get laws enacted and associations formed for the better protection of brute animals from cruelty and wrong at the hands of man, and to cultivate humane sentiments, especially in the young, is, on its own plane, and in its way, a genuine revival of religion—the religion of the kind heart, the religion which teaches human beings “to love mercy.” Christianity is far behind both Buddhism and Hinduism on this side of its development. I say this to our shame. But at last we are beginning to make progress. A generation or two more of such work as that done by the noble men whom I have just named, and by our “Bands of Mercy” and our multiplying Humane Societies, will make the contrast between us and our Buddhist and Hindu brothers less painful than it now is. Our religious revival in this matter has well begun, but it needs to extend much farther.

Such are a few illustrations of a humane and beneficent spirit which is manifesting itself in our age in many ways—many other ways besides those already named—for example, in better treatment of the insane; better education and care for the blind, deaf and dumb, and feeble minded; prisoners aid societies; organizations for the purpose of rescuing the

children of paupers and criminals from hardships and evil influences, and giving them such training as will enable them to become good citizens; industrial and reform schools that really teach industries and that really reform; juvenile courts; orphans' homes; newsboys' and bootblacks' homes; homes for the aged and destitute; homes for disabled soldiers and seamen; Red Cross organizations to assuage the sufferings and horrors of war; hospitals and medical dispensaries for the poor; movements for tenement reform; co-operative building associations to help the poor to secure for themselves homes; penny savings banks; free reading rooms and libraries; social settlements in the slum districts of our cities; creches, "country weeks" and flower missions—the list is long and splendid of the different and manifold ways in which the growing spirit of love and mercy in our time is revealing itself. Who shall say that it is not a revival of a very true and noble, as well as of a hitherto strangely neglected side of religion? This is real Christianity manifesting itself in the concrete. It is Christianity loosed from the ecclesiastical and theological ceremonies which too long have bound it, and set to following its Master in his living work of doing good. It is Christianity descending from the clouds and taking up its proper task of making this world the kingdom of God. I think future ages will recognize our time as one distinguished for a splendid revival of religion on this side—this side which certainly Jesus placed constant and powerful emphasis upon—of love to men. But we must not think that it has gone far enough. As yet it has only well begun. And far too little have these things been reckoned as true religion at all. Far too little have the Churches been in this work. They must put themselves into it. Christian men must open their eyes to the fact that their religion is a one-sided thing, a deformed thing, until it includes all this. The Churches must everywhere pour their sympathies and energies into all this, regarding it as just as much a part of religion as is worship. Christianity is both love to God and love to men. Neither is complete without the other. What God hath joined let not man put asunder.

I think we have now gone far enough to see that it is proper to believe in revivals of religion *if, if only* we mean something sensible enough, true enough, and noble enough by our revivals and our religion. The thing to be guarded against is the danger lest the revival be merely of those lower elements connected with religion which are its dross and not its gold.

For alas! it has to be confessed with pain and sorrow that the history of religion, and of Christianity, contains numberless records of so-called religious revivals which have really been periods of withdrawal from the true work of life, periods of spiritual intoxication—revivals not of intelligent, sane, helpful, practical religion, but of sentimentalism, animal feeling, other worldliness, credulity, superstition, fanaticism, uncharitableness, intolerance, and that whole lower side of religion which men ought to grow away from, and would grow away from, but for these periodical turnings backward of communities to what ought forever to be left behind.

This is one of the darkest sides of religious history. But how prominent a side it has been in the past and is still, may be seen by calling to mind the great fasts, festivals and religious pilgrimages indulged in by Hindu and Mohammedan peoples; and such events and manifestations in connection with Christianity as the asceticism of the early Christian centuries; the monasticism which followed later; the crusades; the dancing mania and the Convulsionists of the middle ages; the rise of Jesuitism; the witchcraft mania; pilgrimages in our day to such miracle-working shrines as Lourdes in France, and the holy coat of Treves in Germany; Protestant revivals which many of us have witnessed or had part in, which have come into communities, stirred up a great excitement for a time, drawn dividing lines through families and through society, kindled a great flame of fanaticism, disturbed the regular healthy activities of the churches, excited the children, filled the air with harrowing stories of deathbeds and lost souls, and with appeals to fear, revived old irrational and cruel doctrines which under the light of intelligence were tending to pass away, burned at a white heat for a few weeks,

and then died down and passed away, leaving the communities morally and religiously veritable "burned districts."

It is with religion exactly as with everything else, its activities may be guided in right channels and thus achieve results which are good; or they may be left to flow in wrong channels and thus produce evil. Hence the need there is for men and women who are thoughtful, broad-minded, sane, wise, to keep themselves ever in close connection with religion, and shape its revivals so that they may be beneficent and not harmful.

I think the *marks* of a revival of sane and true religion are three.

The first is reasonableness. A revival which is calculated really to do good, and permanently to advance religion, will not shut eyes, it will open them. It will not make men afraid to think, but only afraid not to think. It will not make men afraid to look and inquire, but only afraid not to look and inquire, for fear of missing the high and holy truth which sincere and honest inquiry is the heaven's gate unto.

Try revivals by this test. You will find that all the revivals which have ever benefited the world in any deep and enduring way, have been in some manner or other enlighteners, emancipators; they have tended to liberate the minds of men from ignorance, superstition, prejudice, fear, ecclesiastical tyranny; they have led men out into clearer light, live under larger skies, to apprehend something more of that truth which "makes free," and so it will always be.

The second mark of a true revival is, that it leads men from the letter to the spirit, from the external to the internal. from the husk to the kernel of religion and life. The bane of religion has ever been the tendency of its devotees to rest in the external. Men invent rites and ceremonies to give expression to spiritual truths, and then grow attached to the rites and ceremonies for their own sake and forget the truths. Men adopt forms and observances which are at first instinct with life. By and by the life departs, and they become dead things; but long use has consecrated the forms, and so they cannot

be given up or changed. Men take religious books and lift them up into reverence, sacredness and finally infallibility. Then the books from servants become masters and tyrants; from helps to the soul's growth they become hindrances, facing men backward, and making them content with the inspiration of other days, instead of looking for fresh inspiration in the present time. Men organize churches and ecclesiastical institutions as means to an end, which end is the fostering of the life of religion. Time passes; the church or the ecclesiastical institution becomes itself the end, and religion only a secondary matter. Men formulate creeds and theological systems to express living and growing truths of the soul. Ere long the systems and creeds harden into fixed and unchangeable standards, and rule men with rods of iron. What now does a true revival of religion do? Coming into conditions like these, it lifts up a hand of power to destroy the mastery of the formal, to break the tyranny of the external, to waken the dead to life. It takes the side of the inspiration of to-day as against the iron creeds of the past; the side of the human soul as against formal rites and lifeless ceremonies; the side of living, growing religion as against stereotyped ecclesiastical institutions; the side of the spirit of sacred books as against their enslaving letter. The true revival tends to drive men inward to their own consciences. It exalts the soul. It says with Jesus, "Why judge ye not of yourselves what is right?" It preaches a living God. It proclaims a perpetual revelation. It bids men listen to the Divine Voice which speaks to every man. It holds up as the evidences and credentials of religion not what was, but what is—religion's own beauty and truth and intrinsic worth and divineness and elevating power in the life of man to-day. Apply this test, and it becomes easy to see which of the so-called revivals of the past have been genuine and true, and which false. Apply this test to the revivals of the present, and it is not difficult to discover which we ought to aid and which shun.

¶ A third mark of the true revival is, that it aims at nothing short of making good lives. It does not stop with truth taught

to the head, or with emotion kindled in the heart. It aims to quicken the conscience, to move the will, and to transform the character. It insists that the life shall be pure, clean, upright, worthy. To those who would plead atonements, or the righteousness of another, or who rely upon religious observances of any kind instead of upon personal virtue, its word is that of the old prophet: "Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." That is the note always and everywhere of the true revival. Whenever there is any compounding with sin; whenever there is any preaching of theories or schemes whereby the consequences of wrongdoing are escaped; whenever anything like believing or professing is substituted for doing and living, then we may know that we are in the presence of superficialities and make-believes, and not of genuine religion. A true revival always promotes righteousness, both in the individual and in the community.

I think, then, we need not be greatly at a loss to discover the difference between a true revival and a false. We need only open our eyes, and, as Jesus said, "Judge the tree by its fruits."

And now, having in mind with perhaps sufficient clearness what genuine and real religious revivals are, I think we must all be prepared to say: They are good, they are needed everywhere, in all our communities, in all our Churches, in all our homes, in all our individual lives.

¶ This brings us to the question, How can such true revivals be best promoted? Shall it be by the regular agencies and activities of our Churches? or shall it be by outside agencies? For one I cannot but believe that the deepest and most lasting revivals are generally those which grow out of the regular work of our pastors and Churches. True, there will be, there must be, in every Church something of ebb and flow of religious life; no Church is always at its best, as no man is always at his best. Moreover, religion as well as agriculture has its

times of ploughing, seed-sowing, and cultivation of the growing crop, as well as of reaping of the matured grain. But this does not mean that the transition from the ebb to the flow can be effected only by the help of extraneous agencies, or that for the harvests to be gathered in there must be the aid of professional revivalists. In an earnest, active, well-organized and living Church revivals should come as naturally and inevitably as the flood tide of the sea or the harvest of the year.

However, there are persons who believe that it is well at times to put forth extra efforts and to employ agencies from the outside. With such I have no controversy, if only the efforts and the agencies are of a character really to produce the effects desired. But here we are confronted by a serious danger. As a rule, professional revivalists are not men pre-eminent for their religious intelligence or breadth. Indeed, while there are exceptions among them, they are likely to be the very opposite, namely, men of limited reading and knowledge, of a more or less fanatical type of mind, of very narrow and antiquated theological beliefs, and accustomed to employ methods in conducting their meetings which are at least questionable. This compels the inquiry: Is the cause of religion likely to be benefited by the help of such men?

In our own city of Toronto we have recently passed through the experience of having the well-known evangelists, Dr. Torrey and Mr. Alexander, with us for a month of revivalistic effort. Vast preparations were made for their coming. Thousands of dollars were spent in advertising them. A great chorus of five hundred voices was organized and trained. A large proportion of the pastors and Churches of the city banded themselves together to create a feeling of expectancy in the public mind before they arrived, and to give them support in every possible way after their meetings began. The meetings are now at an end; the revivalists are gone. What have been the results?

Many think the results have been good. Many think they have been evil. Many think them questionable. As

for myself I should be very unwilling to believe that no good has been done. But now about the other side? Has no harm been done? Has not the whole religious spirit of the city been made a little more narrow, dogmatic, intolerant, backward-looking, hostile to progress, hostile to biblical scholarship, hostile to religious inquiry and free thought? Has not religion been made to seem less reasonable and less desirable to thousands? Will not the Sunday-schools of the city as a whole, from this time on, do a less intelligent work in the religious education of our children, because of the medieval views of the Bible with which the minds of teachers have been filled by Dr. Torrey? As the result of these meetings will there not be a little less charity and sympathy between the Churches and the great public outside of the Churches, between Christians and Jews, between Protestants and Roman Catholics, between orthodox and liberals?

I do not wish to criticize the past. But I do desire to ask very earnestly, Is there not something better than all this for our Churches in Toronto and everywhere else? Even if we want to bring in outside agencies to assist us in promoting revivals, are there not agencies that are preferable to professional revivalists of the Torrey-Alexander type, or the Moody and Sankey type, or the type which is so generally employed to-day in revivalistic work?

Let me make two or three suppositions.

Suppose that instead of bringing Dr. Torrey to Toronto for a month, to employ revivalistic methods, which certainly many thoughtful ministers and people in all denominations have not approved, to preach a theology of a very unprogressive and combative type, which has alienated liberals, Catholics, Jews, thoughtful men outside the Churches, and the broader-minded men inside the Churches—I say, suppose that instead of bringing here such a man, the Churches of the city had united to bring a man of a wholly different type—one in sympathy with modern thought, one whose interests were spiritual and ethical instead of dogmatic, one who was in sympathy with everything good, under whatever name it

might appear, one whose aim was to lift up religion to its best and to strengthen all the moral forces of the community; for example, a man like Professor Edward Howard Griggs, who happens just now to be giving a series of lectures in this city. Suppose that our Churches had engaged Massey Hall, our largest auditorium, for Professor Griggs, as they did for Dr. Torrey, and had devoted say one half or one fourth as much time and money and energy to advertising him, and working up an interest in his coming, as they did to preparing for Dr. Torrey—what would have been the result? Massey Hall would have been packed every evening for the entire month. No bitterness or hard feelings would have been stirred up in the city. The sectarian spirit, instead of being increased would have been allayed. Minds would have been opened to new truth; new knowledge would have been gained, new thought would have been stimulated. Protestants, Roman Catholics, liberals, evangelicals, so-called infidels, agnostics, persons outside of all Churches, students in our institutions of learning, professional men, clerks, laboring men, all classes of the people would have been drawn, interested, stirred, lifted up, given higher ideas of God, larger conceptions of human brotherhood, worthier ideals of life. All the rest of their lives they would have lived in a larger universe. Of all the thousands that heard him hardly one would have failed to get impulses in the direction of a nobler life. What a religious revival that would have been for Toronto? Such revivals we may have if we will. Such revivals all our cities and communities may have. Some time our Churches will become wise enough and Christian enough to plan for revivals no less uplifting and permanently beneficent than these.

Probably to some minds a man like Professor Griggs might not be acceptable as a revivalist because he is not, as I believe, a clergyman, and because his work has never been stamped as evangelical or evangelistic, so far as I know, by any organized body of Churches. But we are not confined to Professor Griggs. Broad and progressive men can be found

who are clergymen, and who have obtained ecclesiastical recognition as evangelists. F. J. W. Dawson, the distinguished Congregationalist preacher of England, is such a man. Dr. Dawson is a revivalist of deep piety and great spiritual power, who avoids sensational methods, whose thought, instead of being outgrown, medieval and dividing in its nature, is in line, for the most part at least, with the progressive thought and the ethical ideals of our age, and the results of his revivalistic work is uniting and uplifting in a high degree. In an age of intelligence like ours, why should not men of the type of Dr. Dawson be chosen, if revivalists from outside our own Churches are wanted?

There are other possibilities still which are worth consideration.

Suppose the ministers and Churches of our city in planning for a united movement this winter had decided to give it the form of an earnest effort to promote religious education among our children and youth. Surely if religion needs reviving in any direction it is in this. Surely if any kind of revival would produce results of a vital and permanent character it would be this. Suppose then, that our Churches of all denominations had resolved to throw themselves for a month into this kind of work with as great unanimity and earnestness as they have thrown themselves into the Torrey-Alexander meetings, at the same time calling to our aid the best speakers and the most intelligent religious educators obtainable from abroad. Instead of gathering the children of the city into great congregations (according to the method of Dr. Torrey and revivalists generally), to excite them by stories of death-beds, and appeals to fear, and pictures of hell, and thus create in them experiences which are abnormal, injurious to their nervous systems as well as to their spiritual natures, and subversive of their proper religious development,—I say, instead of this suppose we had concentrated all the moral force of our united effort upon the one supreme end, first, of making our Churches and the whole public realize the importance of religious education; second, of disseminating everywhere enlightened views

as to what true religious education is; and third, of setting in operation everywhere in the city, so far as possible, the most effective agencies for promoting such education, in Churches, in Sunday-schools, and especially in homes. What would have been the result? Would it not have been a revival incomparably deeper, saner, more wholesome, more wide-reaching, more strengthening to the Churches, more elevating to the community, more permanent in its moral and religious influence, than the Torrey-Alexander revival has been, or than it is possible, in the very nature of the case, for any revival of that type ever to be? Such a revival would have been quiet; its main results would have lain in the future rather than in the present; it would not have associated with itself much blowing of trumpets, or much parading of trophies in the form of numbers of "converts" or of "souls saved," but its influence would have gone deep and reached far. In securing the better moral and religious education of our children, its effect would have been to purify the very fountains of the community's life, to regenerate society through and through.

Or, suppose that our effort had not been to cover the whole ground of religious education, but only a part. Our age is getting a vast amount of new and very valuable knowledge regarding the Bible. This knowledge ought to be popularized. Suppose our Toronto pastors had combined for a month of systematic effort this winter to give this knowledge to the people, obtaining assistance in their task from able biblical scholars and lecturers living at a distance. Suppose they had planned to have courses of lectures on the new Bible knowledge given in all our Churches; preaching on the subject on Sundays; putting literature into the hands of the people to be carried into their homes and organizing Bible classes in all sections of the city to spread the new light. What a revival influence all this would have been! The Bible would have become a new book. Its power would have become of a distinctly higher kind. This truer understanding of the Bible would have been the beginning of a new and larger religious life in all our Churches.

Or, let me make one more and a somewhat different supposition. Let me suppose that the pastors and Churches of the city could have seen their way to combine for a month in a great practical movement for the moral benefit of the community—to wage an intelligent and earnest war upon the forces in our midst which are degrading the people, and to support such agencies as we possess, and create such new ones as may be needed, for the reform and improvement of the city's moral, social, industrial and political life. Suppose these pastors and Churches had said to one another: We will devote as much time, effort, prayer and money to this as we should have been required to devote to preparing for and carrying on a month of Torrey meetings. And suppose the programme for the month had been laid out somewhat as follows:

The first week to be devoted to moral reforms. The week to begin with hearing reports of committees previously appointed to collect full and reliable information regarding our jails, our prisons, our criminal courts, our police methods, our ways of treating convicts; and also regarding the Woodbine race course, together with the betting and gambling there, the gambling elsewhere in the city, and the moral conditions in our places of public entertainment, and in our clubs and popular drinking places. Then, following these reports, let the rest of the week be spent in arousing public sentiment in favor of reforms and improvements, and in setting in operation the wisest and strongest agencies possible—with the combined moral influence of the Churches behind them—to carry into effect these needed moral reforms and improvements. Let something like that be the programme of the first week.

For the second week let us suppose the plan to be to turn the attention of the public to the charitable and philanthropic needs of the city, with a view, first, to finding out what is now being done, and by whom; then, to devising wiser and more efficient methods of carrying on our present activities; and finally, to arousing the public to the need of doing vastly more than as yet we have undertaken, to the end that we may perfect our associated charities work, enlarge and improve our

general hospitals and make them more available for the poor, extend the beautiful beneficence of our sick children's hospital, carry forward the needed work of providing proper hospital accommodations for consumptives, extend the good work of our hospitals and homes for incurables, and our homes for the aged, improve our treatment of the insane, care more adequately for our defective classes—our deaf and dumb, our blind and our imbecile, support better our excellent Children's Aid Society, and our Humane Society, which is doing such an excellent work so far as its means allow, and, with all the rest, improve health conditions in our schools, and in the homes of the people. I say, let us suppose the second week of our movement to be given to arousing the city to a more intelligent and deeper interest in all these splendid and greatly needed works of philanthropy, charity and beneficence, which appeal to us from so many sides, and which at present receive so much less support than they ought to receive.

Let our third week be given to what? To a study of the great and pressing industrial questions which confront us all; the questions of labor and capital, of poverty and wealth, of just taxation, of public ownership, of protection of the people's rights—questions of the most vital importance, upon the wise and proper settlement of which the very life of the people depends. I say, let us suppose our third week given to a study of these subjects, with the help of the ablest and wisest men that we have among us, or that can be brought here from a distance. Also, in the same week with all this we may well give attention to such other immensely important subjects as peace and arbitration, the purification of politics, municipal improvement, the beautification of the city, and the provision of adequate playgrounds for the city's children.

And now for our fourth and last week—to what shall we devote that? To the establishment in two or three places in the city (one of them to be St. John's Ward), of social settlements, like the Hull House or the Commons in Chicago, or the South End House in Boston, or the Neighborhood Guild in New York, or Toynbee Hall or the Passmore Edwards

Settlement in London. If you know what these social settlements are, and the work they are doing, you will understand what I mean. The establishing of such settlements in our two or three worst slum centres, would mean the renovation of those sections of our city, the healing of those plague spots in our community's life.

Tell me, what would it mean if we could have a concentration of the energies of all our pastors and Churches for four weeks upon such a general, many-sided movement as this for the practical moral regeneration of our city? Would it not be a revival worth while? Do not tell me it would be only a revival of morality and good works. It would be a revival of *religion*—of religion on its side of *love to man*—upon that side to which the Christian Church must pay more attention than it has yet done, if the Kingdom of God is ever to come on the earth.

Friends, I believe it is along some of these lines which I have briefly hinted—that Christianity is going to seek its revivals in the future. Then revivals will not be the questionable things which they now so largely are—things which, with something of good, mingle so much that is backward-looking, dark, out-grown, visionary, unethical, a hindrance to progress and to the higher life of individuals and communities. The more rational, the truer, the deeper, the better revivals that are coming will be an unmixed blessing to the communities in which they appear; and they will be something in which all lovers of the light will be glad to join.

WHO ARE CHRISTIANS?

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."--John 13 : 35.

"Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father."--Matt. 7 : 21.

In a general and somewhat loose sense we may say that all persons are Christians who are born and reared in a Christian country : just as in a general way we call all persons Mohammedans who are born and reared in a Mohammedan country, and pagans who are born and reared in a pagan country. It is not this use of the word Christian, however, that I shall have in mind in the present discourse.

It is common to speak of certain persons in every community as in some special sense Christians, while from others the name is withheld. Nothing is more often heard in all evangelical churches than exhortations and arguments addressed from the pulpit to certain men and women in the congregation, with a view to persuading them to become Christians. Such exhortations are especially urgent in revivals. Thus it is that we find the word Christianity used not only in the broad sense which I have noticed, but in another, narrower and different.

And yet, the moment we come to employ the word in this narrower sense, we find ourselves in a region of great confusion. Let us see if it be possible rationally and justly to divide the Christian world into two classes, one of which may in a special sense be called Christians, while to the other the Christian name must be denied. According to what line shall we attempt to make such a division?

1. Shall it be the line of *church membership*? Some will say, Yes. Indeed there are whole denominations who claim that it is being inside the church—the “one true Christian church” as they call it—that constitutes men Christians.

But a very little observation will show us that if we are going to divide men into Christians and non-Christians by the line of church membership, we shall at least be compelled to drop out from Christianity its moral element. For while the churches contain many of the best people in the world, it is also true that they contain some of the worst. This has certainly been true in past centuries, as every reader of history knows. The ages have known no blacker crimes than those which have been committed in the name of religion, and by men inside of, and influential in, the Christian church. To-day the proportion of bad men in the church may be smaller than in some past ages. I am disposed to think it is. Yet, certainly, it is far too large still. In a speech made several years ago, Mr. W. T. Stead, of London, Eng., said: “The very worst men of our generation are not in our prisons and penitentiaries; they are in our churches. The criminals in our prisons are largely weak men, and men of unfortunate circumstances. The strong, shrewd men, who are without consciences, who are using their power of brain to accumulate wealth and crush rivals, and rob labor of its just rewards, and advance their own selfish interests at any cost to others—but have the wit to commit all their crimes against humanity under the cover of the law—these men—the railroad wreckers and money kings and others—are nearly all in churches, deacons, elders and prominent leaders.”

This statement of Mr. Stead's is a very strong one; possibly it is too strong. But it certainly is inside the truth to say that the churches contain many bad men as well as many good ones. If, therefore, we make church membership the separating line between Christianity and non-Christianity—saying that all outside the

churches are not Christians and all inside are Christians—then, as I have said, we drop the moral element out of Christianity, and confess that men may be Christians without being virtuous. The rogue, the scamp, the villain, the man with a black heart, may be a Christian, while the just and noble man, with a pure heart, may not be. Of course such a definition of Christianity as this condemns itself. Only a hater of Christianity could possibly be satisfied with it.

2. There are some quarters in which we find *belief*--belief of certain creeds or doctrines--set up as a test or line by which to separate Christians from non-Christians. But this is open to as great objections, and largely the same objections, as those which we have found existing against church membership. Belief in creeds and dogmas has never been found to go hand in hand necessarily with moral character or spiritual worth. The worst men have often been the soundest believers. Some of the most hardened criminals ever known have been men whose orthodoxy was unimpeachable. So that here again we must either say that virtue is not an essential of Christianity, or else that Christianity is not to be measured by belief.

3. Do we not find in *conversion* a satisfactory line for dividing society into Christians and non-Christians, the saved and the not saved? This is the line most commonly drawn by evangelical Protestants to-day. This is the line that is always drawn with great emphasis in so-called revivals.

But, unfortunately, here we find difficulties nearly or quite as great as in either of the other cases--some of them difficulties similiar in kind, and some of them new.

In the first place three-quarters of Christendom knows nothing about conversion at all, in the sense in which it is usually preached among us. Go to the great Catholic church, or to the great Greek church, and there you find the door into the religious life to be, not that experience

which the Protestant calls conversion, but connection with and obedience to the church, and participation in its sacraments. Must we then rule out all these millions, the vast majority of the supposed Christian world, as not Christians at all, because they have not experienced what we mean by conversion?

Further, even if we grant that the experience of conversion is necessary to constitute men Christians, who is to decide what persons have really passed through the experience? Suppose that a commission of the wisest persons we know were chosen to decide, how well would they be likely to succeed? Do we say that each person must decide for himself? With this answer the difficulties do not grow fewer. For what is conversion? Scarcely any two persons have exactly the same idea of it. Some say it is entirely supernatural, some say it is natural; some say it is partly one and partly the other. Some say it is an act of God, some say it is an act of the human will. Some say it comes after repentance, some say it comes before repentance; some say it comes simultaneously with repentance; some say it is entirely distinct from repentance; some say it is the same thing as repentance. Some affirm that it is indissolubly connected with baptism; some deny any such necessary connection. Some say it takes place instantaneously. Mr. Moody took this ground and used to illustrate it by the case of Zacheus. When Zacheus was on the limb of the sycamore tree, Mr. Moody said, he was an unconverted man; when he struck the ground he was a converted man; his conversion therefore must have taken place somewhere between the limb of the tree and the ground. Dr. Torrey and evangelists generally, represent conversion as a sudden thing. On the other hand many religious teachers hold that conversion may take place gradually, by a process which extends through years of time. According to some a man can never be converted more than once; according to others he may be converted a score or a hundred times. Often persons, who

for years have supposed themselves converted, afterwards conclude that they have been mistaken, and have never passed through the experience at all; while on the other hand, often persons who have not considered themselves converted, afterward conclude that they are; though they cannot tell when the conversion took place. I have known a number of such cases. Still again, many persons are in doubt and remain in doubt for years whether they have ever been converted or not, and even go through life with this uncertainty in their minds. While others again, and among them many thoughtful and earnest people, affirm that what the theologians call conversion is merely a phenomenon of the mind, partly emotional and partly imaginative, and of the same general class of things as the "getting the power" by the negroes of the south or the rude Methodists of the frontier; or as the seeing of winking madonnas and wafers turned into blood, and various other supernatural manifestations, by superstitious devotees. And so, as soon as we come to look at this matter of conversion we find it as hard to get hold of as a rainbow, or a mirage, or a shadow; the larger part of Christendom, as has been said, rejecting it, in the sense in which our evangelical theologians and revivalists preach it; and the remaining part divided into endless and utterly diverse notions about it, in the ways that I have just indicated.

But the indefiniteness and uncertainty that hangs over so-called conversion, is not our only difficulty, when we come to think of it as a test of the right of men or women to the name of Christians.

Another lies in the fact that when we have got men converted, whatever that may be understood to mean, so many of them—even those who are most sure of their conversion and make the loudest profession of it—are so little better in their real lives than they were before. Outwardly they are more religious. Probably their church attendance is much more regular. Prob-

ably they spend more time than formerly in reading their bibles. Now their voices are likely to be heard in public prayer and exhortation. They distribute tracts. They are generally workers in revivals. But how often is it the case that all this makes them very little, if any, better, so far as moral character is concerned ; little, if any, more generous, or kindly, or charitable, or honest, or honorable in business, or faithful to their duties to society, to their neighbors, to their employers, or to their own families, than they were before they were converted!

Indeed how often is it the case that their so-called conversion actually results in doing little else than transforming them from citizens, neighbors and friends with sunny faces, and warm hearts, and generous sympathies, with willingness to think and inquire, with reasonably broad minds, unpoisoned by pride of opinion, or puritanical intolerance, or pharisaical self righteousness, into religious bigots, into fanatics, into men of one idea, afraid of reason, much less willing to read or think than they were before, sure now that they have got all the truth worth having, and intolerant of any religious opinion or practice but their own. I say, how often is it that what is called conversion produces such results as these ! Not that it always does ; perhaps not that it generally does ! But yet, how often it does, as every one who has mingled much in society well knows.

Now all this shows at least that to take what is regarded as conversion, as the dividing line to be run through society, to separate those who may with right be called Christians, from those who may not be called Christians would be to make a division that practically would amount to nothing, indeed that would be palpably and in the highest degree unjust. It would hardly be a greater folly or injustice to take the color of men's hair, or the number of their given names, as a test of their Christianity ; saying, all who have dark hair are Christians, all who have light are not ; or, all who have two given names are Christians, but all who have only one are not.

Do not misunderstand me as denying that there is any truth in conversion. There is deep truth in it when the word is properly understood. There are real and deep experiences coming into every earnest human life that may well be called "conversions," or if you choose to use the figure of speech, "new births." To convert means to turn, or to change. Whenever we lay aside a false belief for one that is more true; whenever we make a mistake and correct it; whenever we repent of a sin and put it under our feet; whenever we lay aside a habit which we have come to see harms ourselves or others; whenever we turn from any evil way in which we have walked, or curb any unholy desire that we have heretofore indulged, we experience a change, a turning, a conversion, from the lower to the higher,—in a sense a new birth. Every serious, progressive, growing religious life of necessity has in it many such conversions, many such births into higher experiences and larger spiritual realizations. But conversion in this true and real sense is not something miraculous, or incapable of being understood. Nor has it any necessary connection with those theological doctrines with which it is so often associated—a fallen race, vicarious atonement, "salvation by the blood," and eternal hell. It is purely a normal experience. Moral conversions and moral regenerations are as much necessary steps in all moral growth as intellectual conversions and regenerations are necessary steps in all intellectual growth.

Thus we see that no earnest and intelligent religious person can be indifferent to the subject of conversion. But we also see that when we come to understand by conversion such a normal and necessary experience of the developing human soul, we have parted company wholly with the creeds and the professional revivalists. What we have now is nothing that can label or classify anybody; certainly it is nothing that can sharply divide society in Christians and non-Christians, the saved and the lost.

The fact is, this whole idea of drawing a line through society, based on conversion, belief, church membership, or anything else, and saying that those who stand on one side are the elect of God, and those on the other side are reprobates, and cast away, doomed to endless perdition, is a delusion, a snare, and an injury to religion. There is no such line visible or invisible, and none can be drawn. When we try to make such a line it simply results in every man drawing it in such a way as to leave himself and his sect, party or church on the side with the elect. You never find any man drawing it in such a way as to shut himself or his sect out among the reprobates. It is always the other man and not I, the other party and not my party that are the outsiders. This of itself shows the line to be a merely artificial one.

As a fact all men have both good and evil in them; and all churches have in them both truth and error. It must be so in the very nature of the case. No man or body of men have yet arrived at perfection. The tares and the wheat, just as Jesus taught, are going to grow together in every man's nature as long as he remains in this world; and any sect, or church, or clique of men, who suppose that they have passed through some magical wicket gate that makes them an exception to the rest of mankind, and gives them a right to put themselves in a class by themselves as in a special sense the elect of God, and as having a right to appropriate the name Christian to themselves and to deny it to those who have not passed through their wicket gate, are mistaken. Just in so far at least they are bigots and self-deceived persons. They may have certain traits about them that are admirable; probably they have. But the noble virtues of charity and humility are certainly not of the number.

There are three very plain evil results, that come from this artificial line-drawing.

First, it divides society, not only artificially, but in ways that are alienating and harmful. What we need

in the world are influences that will draw men together, not that will separate. We have too many things any way that divide and estrange men, without setting religion at work in the same unholy direction. Human brotherhood, was the great thought of Jesus: men are brothers, and God is the Father of them all. Alas that in the name of religion we should draw lines that break up this brotherhood, selfishly and cruelly pushing some outside, and denying to them a place in the All-Father's love! Do we think that we shall really be able to shut God's heart against any by our exclusion? If so, we are quite mistaken. "All souls are mine," says the Old Testament. God is "the Father of all," says the New Testament. We may be sure that God will never desert his world, or allow our foolish line-drawing to cut him off from a single one of his human children. Calvin may draw a line, and push Servetus over, saying, Go, heretic; go and be damned, you who are not a Christian. But sometime he will find out that both God and Christ are over on the other side of the line, as well as on his side; and up in heaven he will find he must live as a brother with the man he burned, or else go outside until he can.

Another evil that arises from the artificial dividing of men into Christians and not-Christians, is seen in the morally hardening influence that it has upon those who are pushed into the so-called non-Christian class. There is an old saying to the effect that if you give a dog a bad name you may as well kill him. It is well known that one of the most terrible results of being sent to prison is that thereby one has fastened upon him for life the name of a convict. Many an innocent man who has been imprisoned by mistake has found himself ruined for life on his emergence from his confinement, by always being looked upon thereafter with distrust because of his having been in prison. Trying to live a good life he is made to feel at every turn that the brand of Cain is on him, until discouraged and heart broken, at last he gives

up the struggle, and sinks down into that criminal life which he loathes, but which he is driven to by the false and cruel classification of his fellows.

Such facts as these should open our eyes to the terrible wrong we do to thousands by pushing them over an imaginary line which we have drawn, and branding them with names which we intend to be names of reproach, as sinners, unbelievers, the impenitent, not Christians, lost souls, and such like. Is it any wonder if men whom the church habitually calls by such names should become indifferent, and worse than indifferent, hostile, to that religion which turns its back upon and slanders them? Falsely branded as rejecters of Christ, why should they not become at last actual rejecters? Falsely branded as haters of God, what is there strange if at last they become really such? I tell you, if there is anything in this world that will drive men to the devil it is drawing a line through human society and insisting that all who are one side of the line belong to the devil.

A third evil result of this artificial line-drawing, appears in connection with those who draw the line, those who claim to be the elect, the saved, the Christians. Its effect upon this class is almost irresistible to make them proud, self-righteous, pharisaical,—the most unlovely of traits, and the farthest possible removed from the spirit of the real Christianity of Jesus Christ. Every reader of the Gospels knows that if there was any one class of persons whom Jesus in his day lashed with more stinging words than any other, it was the Pharisees,—those men who corresponded to the class known now-a-days as professors of religion. That is to say, it was the class which drew a line and said, "We who stand on this side are more holy than you who stand on that." As a fact it was probably true that the Pharisees in many respects were a pretty estimable set of men; in some respects they were doubtless as a class better than the Sadducees, and in many respects better than the Publicans. But to Jesus this very drawing of a line, and insistence

that they were better than others, an elect class, specially dear to heaven, orthodox, saved, infallibly right, more than over-balanced their good qualities. The pride, the self-righteousness, the bigotry that prompted it Jesus declared to be more degrading to the human soul, and more hateful to him and to God, than even the dishonesty of the Publican.

Only one thing is necessary in order to make it no longer possible for us to draw a line, whether it be that of orthodox belief, or church membership, or conversion, or any other, and to say that all men who stand on one side are Christians and all who stand on the other are not. That one thing is to study Christianity as Jesus its author and founder taught it. As soon as we begin searching, not the creeds, or the writings of the theologians, nor even of Paul, but those parts of the New Testament which contain the teachings of Jesus himself, we discover several things which probably we have not expected to find. And first of all we are struck to discover that the religion of Jesus has no creed and no ceremonial, and is wholly a matter of the heart and the life, of love and service. Nothing could possibly be more simple or natural. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples," he said, "if ye have love one to another." The prayer which he taught his followers is so simple that we teach it to our little children. All the Law and the Prophets he summed up in the two commands of love to God and man. In God he saw the Heavenly Father of all men. God's revelations came to him through nature, through human life, but most richly of all through his own soul. He revered the Scriptures of his fathers, but he had no doctrine of infallibility to teach concerning them. Instead of that he often called them in question. He did comparatively little in the way of expounding them; he seldom even took a passage of scripture for his text; but generally his texts were things, which he and his hearers were coming into daily contact with, or some

event which was transpiring before their eyes, which had within it a practical lesson of life. So earnest and constant was his effort to bring religion down from the region of the fictitious, the ecclesiastical, the supernatural, and the distant, where it had been kept, to the level of the natural, the near, the vital. As to the Jewish sacrificial system he did not include that or any part of it in the religion which he taught, nor did he teach any other sacrificial system in the place of it. "God is a spirit," he taught, who is to be worshipped, not in Jerusalem and not with sacrifices and burnt offerings and forms and liturgies, but with the sincere aspirations of the heart. "The Kingdom of God is within you."

A very important characteristic of the religion of Jesus, is, that it does not represent itself as a finality, but everywhere leaves the door open for new truth, for advance, for expansion. The author of the Fourth Gospel makes Jesus tell his disciples that he will not teach them everything; the Spirit of Truth will reveal more still to them after he is gone; and they shall do greater things than he has done.

The religion of Jesus is broad, free, inclusive. At one time the disciples wanted to censure a man because he chose to go on and work independently. But Jesus gave a most emphatic No. "They that are not against us are for us," he said; thus putting himself hand in hand with everything that is good, and with every body who is trying to do good, whether the good take his name or not. "Other sheep I have that are not of this fold," He said; and in the Roman centurion, a pagan, he declared that he had found faith greater than in all Israel.

A leading characteristic of the religion of Jesus, is the fact that it is pre-eminently a religion of deeds, conduct, life. It counts a manly life better than saying "Lord, Lord;" it puts mercy before sacrifice, and pronounces a gift to man better than a gift to God—or rather the only

true gift to God. It dwells much on the brotherhood of men; annihilates national and class distinctions; says all are sons of God; commands man to love his brother as himself, and bless him, and thus serve God. It values man above all things. Is he poor, weak, ignorant, sinful, it does not scorn him, but labors all the more to relieve him. It sees the child of God even in the servant of sin. It looks on the immortal nature of man, and all little distinctions vanish. It bids each man labor for his brother, and never give over until ignorance, want and sin are banished from the earth.

It sends the devotee away from his prayers, to first make peace with his brother. It makes worship consist primarily in being good and doing good.

It has in it absolutely no place for substitutes, and schemes, and salvation wrought out for one person by another. It offers no magic to wipe sin out of the soul. It assures to no one the rewards of religion who does not share its fatigues. Jesus it makes our friend, not our master; a brother who pleads *with us*, not an *attorney* who pleads with God *for us*; much less does it make him one who dies to expiate sins which he never committed and therefore could not expiate.

And finally, the heaven which it teaches, is doing God's will, now and forever:

"The life above when this is past,
Is the ripe fruit of life below."

Such, when we turn to the Gospel records, we find to be the leading characteristics of the Christianity which Jesus himself taught.

And now, it only requires a moment's looking to see that every one of these characteristics is one that forbids the drawing of any line which shall divide society into two parts, one of which has a right to call itself saved and Christian, and to claim heaven, while it denies the Christian name to the other part, and thrusts it to perdition.

Jesus opens wide the door for everything that is true

in thought, no matter who thinks the thought, or noble in deed, no matter who does the deed, to come in and take its place as Christian. Everything that is good is of God, and everything that is of God he welcomes, saying "Come in; you are a part of true religion."

Of course if the time ever comes that we are able to find a set of men, who have among them all the truth there is in the world, and all the goodness that exists, and another set of men who have among them no truth at all, and no goodness, then we may begin to draw a line and say, These are Christians and saved, and those are not Christians and lost. But until that time arrives we can draw no such line. Looking about us in society and seeing some men and women better, purer, more useful, more full of the spirit of Christ than others, we may say, These are better Christians than those. But not until we are able to discover men and women who have in them nothing that Jesus could commend, and nothing that to God may seem fair and beautiful, may we say that we have found any who are wholly devoid of Christian qualities.

Do you say that in uttering such words as these, I am identifying Christianity with manhood and womanhood, with character, with right feeling and acting, with practical ethics and natural religion? I reply, that is precisely what I wish to do.

A notable book appeared in this country some years ago, entitled, "Christianity the Science of Manhood." It received warm commendations from many devout scholars and leaders of thought in both the liberal and the orthodox ranks. It seems to me that the title of the book expresses a great truth, and one that the age is ripe for. Christianity is the science of manhood. If not, then there is something better than Christianity. But I do not think there is anything better. Certainly there is nothing better than what I for one mean by Christianity; for I mean by it the finest and ripest fruitage of the world's religious

thought and life. Slowly but surely the best minds of the world are coming to see that the true test of Christianity is the fruit it bears. It has been rightly said that Christianity, if it means anything, means sixteen ounces to the pound, three feet to the yard, just weight and just measure. It means honesty in all dealings, purity in all conversation, a charity as broad as the race, unflinching integrity, sympathy, humanity to man, loyalty to God.

A man was heard to say of a certain woman in this city—"How good she is! How kind and helpful to everybody! How beautiful is her character! How much good she does! What a pity it is that she is not a Christian!" Think of such an utterance! As if Christianity were something different from goodness, love and service

Who are Christians? Let such an eminent and broad-minded scholar as Dr. Benjamin Jowett, of Oxford, answer. Says Dr. Jowett: "We should regard all persons as Christians, even if they come before us with other names, if they are doing the work of Christ."

Let Dr. Lyman Abbott answer: "To be a Christian is, according to the New Testament phraseology, to be a 'follower of Christ'—not to think something about him, but to appreciate him, and trust in the help which comes through him for accomplishing the work which he gives his followers to do."

Let a great educator like President Eliot, of Harvard University, answer: "To my thinking he is a Christian who accepts Jesus Christ as the best moral and spiritual guide the world has seen, and tries in his spirit to love and serve God and man."

It is sometimes asked, "Are Unitarians Christians?" By the test of certain creeds not taught by Christ, doubtless they are not. But by the test of the teachings of the Master himself, how is it? Unitarians sum up all religion as Jesus did, in "love to God and man." Is that Christian? The most common bond of union or

covenant, of Unitarian churches is, "In the love of truth and in the spirit of Jesus Christ we unite for the worship of God and the service of man." Is that Christian? The Convention for the Federation of Churches, held in New York, in December, 1905, excluded Unitarians and Universalists. What kind of a Christianity can that be which refuses fellowship with such men and women as Edward Everett Hale, Emerson, Longfellow, Channing, Martineau, Dorothea Dix, Florence Nightingale, and the authors of such hymns as "Nearer, my God, to Thee" and "In the Cross of Christ I Glory?"

Friends, let us not be deceived. The words which we shall all hear one day will speak not of creeds but of deeds, not of theology but of life, not of churches and altars but of justice and integrity, not of ecclesiastical authorities but of shelter and clothing for those in need, not of sectarian line-drawings, but of cups of cold water and human service. If we wish to know whether any persons or any churches are Christians or not—no matter what names they may be called by, Roman Catholic, Protestant, Unitarian, or any other, let us try them by these tests. For these are the tests that are real and enduring.

Of course I know that to some these thoughts which I am expressing will seem startling, just as they did when Jesus uttered those of similar import nineteen hundred years ago.

There are men who as soon as they see one identifying Christianity with goodness, or with the moral and spiritual life, instead of with creeds, and rites, and supernaturalisms, and supposed miraculous conversions, and the like, ask in alarm, Will not this destroy Christianity, or at least greatly weaken and impoverish it? And, as a result, will not the Christian Church lose its power and influence in the world? To such I reply unhesitatingly No! No!

On the contrary, when we make Christianity stand for character and manhood and human service, we make

it stand for the highest things there are. There is nothing else whatever, known to man, so valuable as these. And if the Christian Church becomes, as it ought to become, a school for the building of manhood and character, and for the deepening, ennobling and enriching of human life, then it rises at once to a dignity and importance which nothing else can ever give it. It undertakes the highest work that can be done on this earth.

Under the larger and more adequate conception which identifies Christianity with everything that is noble, beautiful and true in human life, the church does become just this—a school for the cultivation of all goodness among men. Can words express the grandeur of such a mission? Only let the church rise equal to this, her opportunity, and she will extend her influence with a speed never known, and become a power for the regeneration of the world that nothing can withstand.

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THE RESURRECTION.

An Easter Sermon.

"Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is not here : he is risen."—Mark 1 : 6.

"If ye, then, be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above."—Colossians, 3 : 1.

"The real truth in Resurrection
Is not dead matter newly born,
But life arising toward perfection,
New hope, new peace, new love upspringing,
New consecration in each life."

Easter is a particularly appropriate time to study the subject of the Resurrection of Jesus, because it is the day so widely observed as commemorative of that Resurrection.

Many persons believe that the physical resurrection of Jesus, or the resurrection of his body from the tomb, is not only true, but that it is of the greatest possible importance to religion ; that it is our chief assurance of the immortality of the soul ; that it is the central proof of the truth of Christianity ; that if it were shown that the body of Jesus did not rise from the dead, there would be little or no reason for believing that man will live again ; and Christianity would be overthrown.

Let me say plainly, at the beginning, that for one, I do not believe anything of this kind. Unitarians and Liberal Christians generally do not. Indeed, a very large and fast growing number of the most thoughtful, intelligent and devout minds in all Christian churches, as well as outside of all, do not believe anything of this kind. We believe that the question of the raising to life of a physical body has no connection with immortality. The two are on wholly different planes. They have to do with wholly different realms of exist-

ence. Immortality is not of the material body, but of the soul. It is of the spirit, the *ego*, the real man, not of that mere physical garment which a man wears for a few brief years of earthly sojourn.

We believe that the question of the raising to life of the body of Jesus has no connection with the truth of Christianity. True Christianity, Christianity as Jesus taught it, is something wholly unrelated to any question as to what became, or what did not become, of his body, or the body of any one else. The Fatherhood of God is just as true whatever may be the fate of any human body when it dies. The Brotherhood of Man is just as true whatever becomes of your body or mine. The Golden Rule, the Sermon on the Mount, the Parables of Jesus, all his religious teachings, rest on other than physical foundations. The immortality of the human spirit is just as true whether the body of the great Teacher rose to life again, or whether it crumbled away quietly and was mingled with the dust from which it came. This at least is my own view; and certainly this is the view that is fast gaining ground among thinking people.

Is this view true? What are the grounds upon which it rests?

In answering, let me first speak a little about Easter, because many persons express surprise that Unitarians should care for Easter, or join at all in its observance.

The truth is, Easter comes to all Liberal Christians bearing a very large and beautiful significance.

Easter is very old. It is much older than Christianity. Whether one may fittingly keep it or not does not depend very much upon his creed or theology. It depends much more upon a deep sentiment of the heart.

Long before Christianity was born the heart of man had felt joy and gladness at the return of the spring, and in many nations and lands, which we call heathen, had celebrated that gladness by great religious festivals of joy and thanksgiving, of music and worship.

When Christianity came on the scene it did the same. It took this beautiful spring festival, which the rejoicing, the up-looking, the worshipping heart of man had created in many lands and made it a festival of the Christian Church,—associating it, as was fitting, with its thought of the Resurrection of Christ. It is this large, natural and historic significance that Easter has to us as Unitarians. Thus you see that if Easter does not mean exactly the same to us that it does to some Christians around us, its meaning to us is not smaller, but, we think, larger, not newer but older. And we think it is not less deep, not less true, not less rich in spiritual significance, not less helpful to the religious life.

Let me be a little more specific in pointing out just what its meaning to us is.

First, Easter is our Spring Festival of Joy and Hope,—that joy and hope which comes with the passing away of winter and the renewal of life in the physical world. The sun comes back from his journey to the far away South. The snow and ice are melted. The streams are unlocked and make music once more among the hills. The grass becomes green. The birds return, and begin to sing their mating songs. The flowers peep from the sod. The warm air invites us out into the parks, the grove, the fields, to catch the smile and welcome the growing loveliness of the Spring. Everything is full of the spirit of joy and hope, because it is the *resurrection season in nature*, because it is the season when everywhere buds are swelling and germs are starting and new life is appearing.

How can the human heart be otherwise than glad at such a time? How can it be otherwise than full of hope? And in its hope and joy how can it do otherwise than remember God in songs of gratitude and praise as the kind Power that has wakened the earth from its winter's sleep, and by his touch given new life to all nature?

Second, Easter is our Immortality Sunday. Why? Because we believe in immortality. We believe that man was made, not for a brief day, but for eternal years. We believe that what we call death is a sleep, or rather is a transition, and that beyond it is life. Winter seems the death of Nature. But after it comes spring, and when spring arrives we see that Nature was not dead, but only sleeping. We think this is a symbol, a prophecy. The new life of the spring typifies—always has typified to man, and doubtless always will—a life for the soul beyond the winter of death.

"Shall the rose bloom anew, and shall man perish?
Shall goodness sleep in the ground,
And the light of wisdom be quenched in the dust?

"Their winter, too, shall pass away;
They also shall live and bloom again;
Beauty shall spring out of ashes, and life out of death."

It is this splendid faith, native to the human soul, that Easter means to us.

Do you say, Why connect Jesus with this faith? Can any one be oblivious of the fact that the most impressive teacher of immortality that the world ever saw was Jesus? No other religious teacher in all the world's history ever did so much to make clear the great thought that our life, our higher life, is one with the life of God,—so that so long as God lives we must live also. We are not simply God's creatures; we are his children,—partakers of his nature, therefore partakers of his eternity. Such is Christ's teaching. Man is deathless because divine. Partaking of the nature of God,—one with the life of God,—how can death touch him?

So then we gladly and gratefully, and I think most fittingly,—associate our Immortality Sunday with Jesus our elder brother, our great and honored teacher, who by his Gospel did so much to bring life and immortality to light,—that is, out into the light—for us and for all men. Not to do this would be most unnatural as well as most ungrateful.

This brings me to the third thought connected with Easter, which I want especially to dwell upon,—namely that of the Resurrection.

We find in the New Testament many passages indicating that the disciples of Jesus believed that in some sense he rose from the dead. What was that sense?

Such an expression as "Christ is risen," or "Christ rose from the dead," seems at first sight very simple, and capable of but one meaning. But a little thought will show us that it may have several meanings.

First, it may mean a literal resurrection,—the thought that Christ's flesh-and-blood body rose from the tomb, and ascended on high. The creed of one of the great churches of Christendom says: "Christ did truly rise from the dead, and took again his body, with flesh and bones, wherewith he ascended into heaven."

The difficulties in the way of this interpretation are, to say the least, very serious.

In the first place, what are we going to do with the physical body of Christ when we get it to heaven? We suppose heaven to be the home of *spiritual* existences. Are we, then, to suppose that in the midst of the spirits inhabiting that world, all clad in what Paul calls their "spiritual bodies," Jesus has his place, clad in gross material flesh? Surely that would be to make him less favored than the rest. It would be to place him in a bondage from which the rest, we must suppose, are free. Why should Jesus be doomed to carry his cumbersome physical body to the spirit world? Is he less worthy of freedom than the other inhabitants of that sphere?

Moreover, have we any right to believe that it is possible for a body of flesh and bones to enter heaven? The Bible expressly tells us it is not. Says Paul, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." So then, according to Paul, it could *not* have been the literal *physical* body of Christ that rose and ascended on high.

I know many say, It is in this physical resurrection of Christ that we have an assurance of our own resurrection. If Christ did not rise bodily, how do we know that we shall rise?

The reply to this is very plain. The resurrection of Christ's *body*, if it proved anything, could only prove the resurrection of our *bodies*. But who wants our physical bodies to rise, and go to heaven? And then, if we got them there, what could we do with them? If heaven is a spiritual existence, we should have no use for them. We should simply be cumbered by them. When we talk about our material bodies rising and going to heaven, we are met with the same scripture declaration that confronts us when we talk about Christ's material body going to heaven,—“Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.”

There is another view of the resurrection of Christ which has far fewer difficulties. This view is, that it was not the physical body of Christ—his body of flesh and blood and bones—that rose; it was the spirit, the soul, the real Christ. According to this view, we do not know what became of his fleshly body, nor does it matter; as it will not matter what may become of our fleshly bodies when we die. It was the spiritual Christ, the soul, the conscious intelligence, that rose and ascended to heaven.

Just what the view of the immediate disciples was, it is difficult if not impossible to tell. We should not forget that the accounts of the Resurrection which we have in the Gospels were not written at the time, or for at least a generation after the events. Nor were they written by the disciples, nor, so far as we know, by eye-witnesses. At the best they are only compilations from narratives, written or oral, which came from eye-witnesses. Thus we see how much room there is for mistakes, misunderstandings, and inaccuracies to have crept in. This explains the fact that the Gospel accounts do not all agree. They seem to have been written (or compiled) by men who did not quite under-

stand what did happen. In regard to some things they are irreconcilably contradictory. Some of the incidents given seem to indicate that Jesus appeared to his disciples in a real flesh and blood body—a body that could be touched and handled. On the other hand, there are other incidents reported which seem to show that what appeared to them was not a material body at all, but only something having its semblance.

For example, we are told that on one occasion when one wished to touch him (the risen Jesus), he shrank away, and said, "Touch me not." We are told that at one time he appeared suddenly in a room when the doors were shut. At another time he is represented as walking and talking with two of his intimate disciples a long time, and they do not recognize him. By and by they do recognize him and he "vanishes out of their sight." He appears to Mary Magdalene and she takes him for the gardener, even after he speaks. He appears to the eleven upon a mountain, "but some doubted." He *suddenly* appears to the eleven and others. He appears to them, and they think he is "a spirit," and are "terrified." He is manifested "in another form" to two of them. "Their eyes were holden that they should not know him." And, "as they were looking, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight."

Now, these statements are not such as can be applied to a real flesh-and-blood body. The real human Jesus whom the disciples had known so intimately, they would not again and again have failed to recognize, when they were with him and talking to him. A real body of flesh and bones does not appear in rooms "when the doors are shut," and suddenly vanish out of men's sight when they are looking at it, and finally rise from the earth into the sky.

These accounts seem very clearly to show that the writers were by no means certain that the being they were telling about was a real flesh-and-blood man; — they were quite as much of the opinion that he was a spiritual being, who could change his appearance at will,

and could appear and vanish as he chose, unhampered by ordinary bodily conditions.

But it is not until we get to Paul that we find the clearest light. Paul explains with great minuteness just what he understands all resurrection to be—just what he understands to be the relations of the physical to the spiritual, the earthly to the heavenly. According to his thought the physical body is *not* raised. That perishes in the earth where it is laid. What lives and rises to the heavenly world is the spirit, clad in what he calls its "spiritual body." A large part of the fifteenth chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians is devoted to elucidating this subject.

"Some will say," he writes, "How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?" "Thou foolish one," he answers, "thou sowest not the body that shall be. . . . There are bodies terrestrial and bodies celestial; but the glory of the terrestrial is one, and the glory of the celestial is another. . . .

"So also is the resurrection of the dead. . . . It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. . . . As we have borne the image of the earthly, so shall we also bear the image of the heavenly. . . . This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

"But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying which is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

Here, then, we have Paul's thought, expressed in language as plain as language can well be, that resurrection or rising from the dead does not signify the rising of the material body, but the rising of the spirit,—the spirit environed, clothed as it were in what he calls a spiritual or a heavenly body,—that spiritual body clearly

not being composed of matter, at least in its ordinary forms, and not being subject to the ordinary physical laws of matter. This is what Paul understands by the resurrection of men generally; and this is what he understands by the resurrection of Christ.

In other words, if Paul was right, then the real Jesus never died. Death had power over his *body*; but it did not have power over *him*. He, the man, the great soul, that thought and hoped and prayed and loved, when the Roman spear pierced his side and his great work was done, rose into the immortal life with God.

And as *he* rose so also shall *we* rise when our work is done and God shall call us.

I am asked, What then did happen, if the body of Jesus did not rise? It certainly was crucified. What became of it?

Do I think there is a possibility that it did not really die at all? I answer, Yes, I do think there is such a possibility, even if one may not call it a probability. The soldiers seem to have thought Jesus dead. Yet he seems to have been on the cross not to exceed six hours, and it is very strange that he should have died in that short time, since crucified persons usually lived from twenty-four hours to three or four days. One of the possibilities certainly is, therefore, that life may not have been extinct when he was taken down from the cross. He may have been in a swoon, or coma, or trance, or some other condition resembling death, from which later he revived. This would account, of course, for his various appearances, afterward, to his followers. And of course under this supposition all his appearances would have been those of a real flesh-and-blood person. We are told that the body was given by Pilate's order to Joseph of Arimathea, a rich and influential friend of Jesus, who placed it in his own tomb in a garden near by. Joseph may have believed that the body was not dead, and for that reason may have desired to get possession of it. When Jesus revived, what so natural as that Joseph

should have had him quietly conveyed away to some unknown place where he could have the care and nursing needed, and be secure from danger ?

Am I asked, What then can have become of him finally, since he did not preach any more in Palestine ? I reply : Since of course the sentence of death was still hanging over his head, so that he could not again appear openly in his own land, he may have gone into retirement. Where ? Possibly among the secluded Essenes near the Dead Sea, with whom we know he had much in common ; possibly into Arabia, where only a little later Paul went into retirement for some years ; or possibly into Egypt, where the Gospel story tells us he himself had lived for a time in his early life. So much then for the supposition that Jesus physically survived the crucifixion.

On the other hand, if his body actually died upon the cross (which seems to me somewhat the more likely) then the question still remains, What became of the body ? To this question several answers may be made.

One that perhaps has as much probability as any is this :—The Jewish authorities may have caused it to be removed, very early in the morning before the women reached the tomb ; thinking that if they could thus get the body away from his followers, he would sooner be forgotten, and the religious movement which he had started would more speedily die.

Or, the *Roman* authorities, knowing how many followers he had, and seeing the profound excitement which his death had caused, may have ordered the body removed, thinking that the possession and sight of the body by his followers would only prolong and perhaps increase the excitement, and possibly cause a riot ; and believing that the removal of the body to some place unknown would be the best way to allay the popular excitement.* Or, again, Joseph of Arimathea, in whose

*In this connection it may be worth while to call to mind, that after the battle of Khartoum, in the Soudan, when the Madhi had been killed

possession the body was, may have caused it to be conveyed in the night to a secret, quiet place, and buried where it would be safe from molestation.

Any one of these suppositions is reasonable. Certainly there is no ground for saying, as sometimes has been done, that Jesus must have risen physically from the dead, and ascended with his flesh and bones into heaven, because there is no other way to dispose of his body.

The fact is, there is no theory that leaves us in such a helpless and hopeless dilemma in regard to the disposition of his body, as the theory of his bodily resurrection. If his actual body rose from the dead what finally became of it? Did it ascend into the spirit world, as the materialistic creeds say? As we have seen, Paul contradicts that, declaring, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." So then when we get the body of Jesus raised from the dead we have no possible place to put it, and nothing that we can possibly do with it. It cannot go into the spirit world because it is body. Or if it could, it would be alone there, one single material organism in a world of the immaterial. Thus it would seem that so far from being pre-eminent in heaven, Jesus would be the most fettered, burdened and crippled of all the inhabitants of that world—by the fact of his being tied to a material body, while the rest were free. Or, if his body rose from the dead and was not taken to heaven, then what did he do with it? Can any one suggest? Moreover, if it was not taken by him to heaven, what significance or value could there be in its being raised at all?

Thus we see, that whatever way we look at the matter, the doctrine of the literal resurrection of the body of Jesus, instead of clearing up difficulties, makes difficulties interminable. Suppose we could prove it, we have only

and his body had fallen into the possession of the British, General Kitchener, fearing that if the body were buried or in any way preserved, it might serve to keep alive the Madhi's influence and perhaps form a rallying point for a new fanatical movement in his favor, caused his body to be destroyed.

burdened ourselves with a load which we cannot carry. We don't know what in the world to do with it when we get it proved. Suppose we say, as our conservative orthodox friends tell us, that it is the type or symbol of our own resurrection; Jesus rose from the dead as a sign or assurance that we shall rise. I answer, What part of us? If his body's rising is a sign or symbol of the rising of any part of us, it must be our *bodies*. But the moment we begin to talk about our bodies rising, we are in as great trouble over them as we are over the risen body of Jesus. For where are our bodies to go? If Heaven is spiritual and not material, then there is no more room for them in heaven than there is for the body of Jesus. Moreover, we know that it is scientifically impossible for human bodies which have lain in the grave any considerable length of time to be raised. They decay, and pass into other organisms, often other human organisms. The material substance forming a human body which died 5000 years ago may since that time have passed into the composition of hundreds of other human bodies. With many different bodies claiming the same matter in the resurrection, which will get it? This shows how impossible is the resurrection of human bodies, after they have been dissolved by death into their elements and scattered over the earth.

No, the whole doctrine of the resurrection of the body—whether the body of Jesus, or the bodies of the rest of the race, is a doctrine which thoughtful minds must reject. The world has outgrown it. With every new advance of science and rational thought its want of evidence more plainly appears. The immortality which intelligent men care for is the continued life of the soul. Tell me that Jesus never died at all—the real Jesus—the great soul from whom comes the Sermon on the Mount—and your word cheers and strengthens me. I see in this a prophecy that *I* shall never die at all. But tell me simply that Jesus' body rose from the

grave, and I have no interest in what you say ; for you but say words that are full of darkness and folly.

I have now made as plain as the time at my disposal permits, what this Church means, and what liberal churches generally mean, when on Easter Day we sing about a "risen Christ." We do not mean that we believe his material body of flesh and blood and bones came to life again after it was dead, and ascended into heaven. By what we say and sing we express the better faith that he has risen from the earthly to the heavenly life,—from the limitations of life in the flesh, to the freedom of life in the spirit in God's higher home ; that he is a living Christ, and not a dead Christ, as we believe that all our dear ones who have passed beyond the veil are also living with God.

I have already spoken of the fact that many persons believe the doctrine of the physical resurrection of Christ to be necessary to religion. Let me say a little more on this point. How *can* it be necessary to religion? If religion has to do with man's right relations to God and his fellows, how can such a doctrine have any connection with it. If the doctrine affects religion at all does it not injure it, by making it just so much more unreasonable—just so much harder to believe by rational men?

Doubtless the doctrine of a physical resurrection does have a necessary connection with certain theological systems which are widely influential in Christendom. These theological systems are built on miracles, and the physical resurrection of Jesus is held to be the greatest of the miracles. Take away the doctrine of the bodily resurrection, therefore, and you remove what may in a true sense be called the corner-stone from the foundation. But what of that? Religion has outlasted many systems of theology, and will outlast many more. Religion does not rest on miracles or supernaturalisms. Its foundation is in the soul of man ; and never until men cease to love, to feel sympathy, to acknowledge

the claims of duty, distinguish right from wrong, and to hope and trust and aspire and worship, can religion be overthrown or lose its commanding place in the human spirit.

It is marvellous that men so persist in thinking that moral or spiritual truth must rest upon a basis of material fact. As if such truth were not its own best witness and evidence! As if any miracle or all the miracles that it is possible to conceive could make a true thing any more true or any less true; or a good thing any more good or any less good!

Suppose the anti-slavery men of 50 years ago had urged that slaves ought to be freed, and essayed to prove it by performing some feat that had the appearance of a miracle, would the authority of their condemnation of the wrong of slavery have been increased thereby? Suppose I say, "You ought to be truthful and kind to others," and in proof of it make a silver half-dollar hang suspended in the air without any support. Or suppose I say, "God is a Spirit," and to prove this pour a pitcher of water into tumblers and in the process change it into milk or lemonade or wine. Or suppose I urge that murder and theft are wrong; and, as proof, I fly over a house. How convincing will my proofs be? All men will see in a moment that there is no connection between these physical doings, and ethical or spiritual principles. And yet in the old times men really thought there was such a connection. Jesus saw better and taught better. So have the greatest religious teachers and prophets of all countries and ages. But men have been slow to learn. And even to-day in enlightened Christian lands men continue in vast numbers to cling to the old delusion. They persist in saying, "Christianity is true, but the *proof* of it is such physical marvels as water turned into wine at a marriage, or one walking on water, or a human body that was dead coming subsequently to life and ascending up into the clouds. And if these things are doubted it is declared

that Christianity is doubted; and if they are proved not to be miracles, it is declared that religion is overthrown. Oh, blind leaders of the blind! that teach such views, and that discern no deeper foundations or weightier proofs for the great everlasting truths of virtue and religion than these material things.

We want a higher and truer conception of Christianity than all this. We want to understand that religion has foundations a thousand times better than any possible physical marvels or wonders—viz. the foundations which God has laid in the human heart, reason, conscience.

There is an important aspect of the resurrection of Christ which I have not yet touched. It would be treating this great subject with imperfect justice if I did not call attention to it. The resurrection in Palestine 1900 years ago is not the only resurrection of Christ that has occurred, or that humanity has an interest in. If Christ rose then into the heavenly world, he has also risen since in a nearer way. A great resurrection has come to him in this world. What is it? It is a resurrection to influence, a resurrection to power in the lives of men and nations.

It looked at the close of the black crucifixion day, as if everything were lost. It looked not only as if the great Teacher were dead, but as if his influence were utterly destroyed. The seed of precious truth which he had sown with such love and faith seemed scattered to the winds, with no possibility of its growing or bearing any fruit. The beautiful life he had lived seemed lived for naught. The work which he had planned and carried on with such noble courage and self-forgetfulness seemed utterly gone. The "Kingdom of Heaven" which he had preached so earnestly and striven to lay the foundation of in men's hearts, seemed a bubble burst.

But wait! Nineteen centuries have now passed. To-day, on this Easter morning, how is it? Since that dark time, when all seemed lost, lo! what a change! That

condemned, forsaken, crucified one has "risen," risen from his seeming failure,—risen to a place higher than any king the world ever saw. The truth he taught has taken root in all lands, and changed the civilization of nations. His life of self-forgetting love has become more nearly than any other the world's ideal life. That Kingdom of Heaven for which he toiled is the most securely established kingdom on this earth and the most certainly holds the future in its keeping. Thus not only has Christ risen from the death of the body to life in heaven, but he has risen to marvellous moral power and triumph on the earth.

Nor is this all. His influence on the earth enlarges and extends farther and farther with every passing century. In the growing justice, mercy, brotherhood, charity, sympathy, and love that are manifest among men, the Christ-spirit advances and rises. The Christ-ideal, planted in human hearts, is the most fruitful seed that has ever been found for man's regeneration. Yes, Christ has not only risen into heaven, triumphant over death, but he has risen and is evermore rising on earth *in the spirit of a better humanity.*

So then, this too, as well as the other, we have a right to mean, when on Easter day we sing with joy that "Christ is risen."

And now I come to a last thought, and perhaps the most important of all, namely, the practical application of all this to ourselves. If Christ has risen, let us rise with him. For if he rise and we do not, how great is our loss.

How can we rise with Christ? When Paul wrote to his Colossian brethren he had no reference to any far off or future resurrection, that might await them beyond death. He was not thinking about another world at all, but about this world. He wanted them to rise with Christ at once, in this present life. How was that possible? How is it possible for us to-day to rise with Christ? The answer is plain. We may rise into the

same spirit of life that animated Christ. We may rise into obedience to the same ideals that commanded him. We may rise into the same faith and hope and love which shone so resplendent in all he said and did. We may rise into the same life of communion and oneness with God which he manifested so perfectly.

What is the true Christian life except a constant rising with Christ,—rising from the lower to the higher; rising from passion and impulse, to reason and conscience and principle; rising from obedience to self, to obedience to God; rising from following the pattern of the world, to striving after the higher pattern which we have in Jesus? How great is the need for us all thus to rise with Christ in a living and perpetual resurrection!

And how great is the need also for *communities and nations* to rise with Christ! What would that mean? It would mean rising to social virtue and to national honor; rising to governments and civilizations based not on money, or luxury, or pride, or power, or any material thing, but on intelligence and order, on justice and refinement, on virtue and the elevation of all the people. It would mean rising to the triumph of love over hate, of generosity over selfishness, of good over evil, of peace over war, of fairness and right over bayonets and war ships, of humanity over cruelty, of the school house and the church over the prison, of the tear of pity over the stony heart of indifference, of the open hand of the friend over the clenched fist of the foe.

In all this we see what is a true Easter. Easter is not simply a day to commemorate a past resurrection, but to realize a present resurrection. It is not alone a day in which to thank God that Christ arose; it is a day on which to rise with him to a higher life in our own souls, and to set forth with a deeper consecration to give the Christ-ideal to society and to the world.

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