

What's Wrong with the Church?



**IS THE CHURCH
WANING ?**



A MESSAGE

BY 

REV. E. SALTER

**SECRETARY OF THE
BIBLE SOCIETY**

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CRITICISMS

"Carefully written."

THE AUTHOR.

"Logical."

E. SALTER.

"I believe every word of it."

SECRETARY.

"I think it will do good."

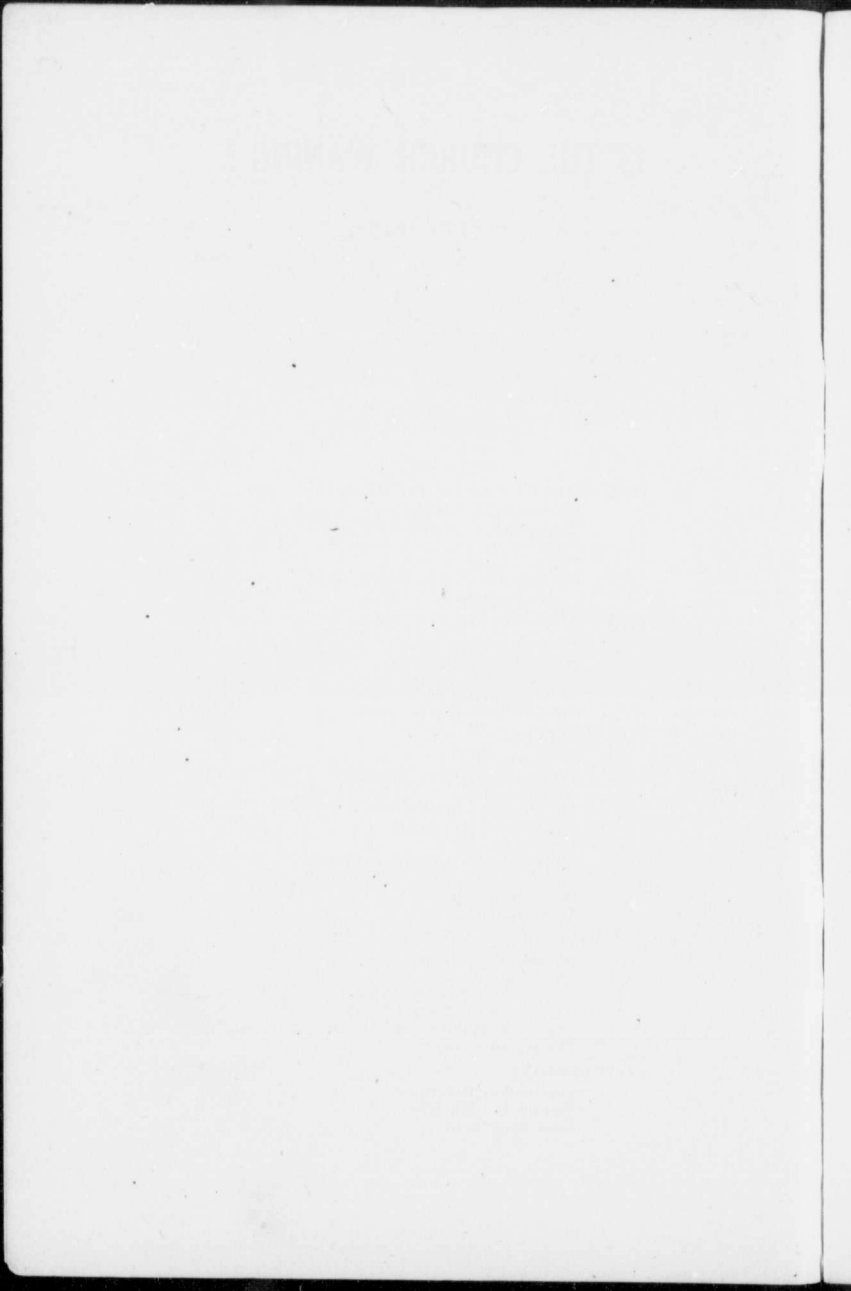
E. J. B. S.

Other criticisms will follow.

IS THE CHURCH WANING ?

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What's Wrong with the Church?

FIRST—THE STATEMENT.

THERE seems to be but one opinion. A tidal wave has swept over the Church carrying all before it. The ship has not yet foundered, but is foundering. There is no pilot on board; the crew are incompetent, and a leak is slowly allowing the waters of ruin to fill and sink the ship of salvation. No friendly star points out the course to steer; fog and mist are everywhere. "We wait for light, but behold obscurity, for brightness, but we walk in darkness." The planks of theological standards have been as ruthlessly ripped up as though they were but a party promise. Machinery is there, but no fire, heat nor steam. Everything is wired for lighting, but there is no dynamo. The ship floats, but in a stagnant sea, and the very atmosphere is too sleepy to fill the languid sails.

Many pictures of the captain exist. Nor is there ever any deviation from his simpering and sexless features. Clerically attired, with hair parted faultlessly in the middle, surrounded by ladies—not healthy domestic ones—he appears incapable of a thought, action or expression worthy your attention. To complete the unhappy metaphor, the rudder is without control, and whenever an evil wind up blows, she will be driven on to the rocks which await her complete destruction.

The formula "What's wrong with the Church?" goes without challenge. No defence is forthcoming but, instead, an answer is sought to the question without any enquiry into the truth of the proposition.

It is the business of this pamphlet to take up this proposition and to answer this question.

There have been many books written lately on this subject. Most of them are novels and doubtless remunerative to their authors. Such books as "Holy Orders," "The Soldier of the Future," "The Master Christian," and "The Inside of the Cup" were written to illustrate the weaker side of the Church, and one worthy of mention as occupying a higher plane is "The State of the Church," by Andrew Murray. It is cheaper and better, more sympathetic, more practical and doubtless less remunerative to the author than the others.

But all seem agreed that the Church is dying out, and is no longer able to cope with conditions. Her ministers are represented as standing aghast at conditions they are impotent to ameliorate.

One other feature follows nearly all these productions. While the Church is criticised, the only practical remedy offered is the altruistic example of the author who secures one dollar and fifty cents for his or her effusion. In writing a statement of the case at this time, it is likely to occur to someone that Uzza reached out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it—and God smote him for his error. But this our effort is no attempt to uphold a tottering fabric, but a statement of fact to strengthen feeble knees and to comfort those who are afraid.

Recently I passed through a town where an evening had been spent in a Church! in a public discussion on the subject, "What's Wrong with the Church?" During the whole evening while many

suggestions of various sanity and practicability were made with a view to improving the Church, nobody seemed to hint at the fallacy of the proposition, but accepted it as axiomatic. This yielding by Christian people to any accusation made without proof is what I wish to protest against, and would like the traducers of the Church to be more accurately informed. Either the sources of their information are unreliable, or they accept as a fact, without investigation, what popularly is indicted. Again the fallacy has the undoubted effect of discouraging many from the Christian way who fear their experience would prove unsatisfactory, or their faith inoperative. I wish, therefore, to challenge the statement that the Church is waning, that Christianity is less or that the outlook is gloomy; and to further express my conviction, drawn from sound premises, that the social, moral and spiritual elevation of the human race rests with the Church and her allied forces.

I look upon the Church as the representative of God and I further believe that through this institution God will work his plans for the salvation of mankind, for the uprooting of evil forces, and for the bringing in of the Kingdom of Christ.

Before undertaking the responsibility of so serious a subject I secured the opinion of a wide scope of critics as a foundation on which to build my superstructure. Choosing my men from various quarters I asked the unvarying question: "What's wrong with the Church?" and I was not long left without a cloud of witnesses against her. The first indictment was serious. My informant gave his evidence to the effect that the Church was too much absorbed in the affairs of men's souls. Meanwhile, he asserted, their bodies were neglected, hence the Church was a failure in this practical age. My next interview was with a good soul returning from a class meeting. He had had a heavenly time and the question brought him down to earthly things. "I will tell you what's wrong with the Church. She has ceased to be concerned with the souls of men and gives time, energy and thought entirely to material things. Institutional Churches have sprung up, clubs for literature and music, and even entertainments with chicken and bun feeds are held more often than enquiry meetings. The Church acts as though man had no soul."

Thus edified I went to one who held an office to investigate cases of distress. It was his opinion that the Church created paupers by indiscriminate giving; that she was an easy mark, and any person with a hard luck tale could get around the Church. She was the prey of all, but could bring none to self-reliance or even to repentance. In other words, she was too easily sympathetic.

The next time the question was asked it was to a representative of many organizations as his emblematic buttons testified. His answer revealed to me that the Church does not fulfil her whole duty. She leaves it to Societies outside her communion to give to the poor, the sick and the needy. If she took care of these there would be an end of many of her problems, and people would believe in her, but until that time others must take her place and share her honors.

"The Church is too ancient," said another. "Times have changed. The Church has perpetuated the first century and projected it into the twentieth. What hope is there for an institution so backward, so behind the times?"

"The Church is too modern," said a saint of the old school. "New theology, modern ideas, modern communion cups, modern criticism have combined to bring us to the condition where they have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid Him. One would think the mission of the Church is to keep up to date all the time."

"I cannot go to Church any more," reported a business man. "I am tired of dogmatic doctrinal assertions. The Churches all maintain their respective doctrines by the Bible, all have prooftexts to substantiate their claims, and until the Church quits preaching a doctrinal Christianity, and takes up practical issues I must remain away."

"Nay," said another, "I go to Church regularly, but, alas, the day has passed when our souls were fed with doctrinal sermons. I have travelled the whole city but every Church is given to discussion of the issues of the day, and a glance at the subjects for Sunday as advertised in the Saturday newspaper reveals not one doctrinal pulpit under the ministrations of which I can be fed."

So I went to the man on the street. What is his view? "What's wrong with the Church? Well, I will tell you. The preachers are afraid for their lives and places. They see corruption but dare not oppose it. The labor question, the political intrigue, slum life and general corruption they will not soil their hands with. They are a set of cowards and the Church is afraid of offending its members whose craft would be thus in danger. The minister can get the biggest place who keeps the most silent on the evils of the day."

"Wrong?" said a political boss. "Wrong enough. Why don't the Church keep to her gospel? It is broad enough. But nowadays every preacher must go into politics and meddle with matters which do not concern him. The ministers are mixed up with the labor question and with elections, and the larger the Church the wider do they make their influence felt. Every minister is tampering with temperance legislation and reform. When the ministry quits this business it will have more time for the gospel."

"The Church has lost her influence," I was informed by another. "She would gladly clean up politics and municipal affairs, but she is a joke to evildoers and is powerless."

"The Church has too much political power," another volunteered. "She stands behind the governments and is thus their bulwark, so the honest man cannot get a square deal."

I once had a headache and was recommended to take a sedlitz. I first prepared the powder of the white paper in one glass and that of the blue in another. So far all went well. But when I put both together they demolished each other. I would like to see one meeting composed of the above men of wisdom. I would sit back and listen, and hear them argue against the Church and afterward I would go to Church proud to belong to an institution against which no better arguments could be adduced.

SECOND—THE APPEAL.

It would be well to be clear at once on the nature of the issue before us. Our enquiry is not to go so far as to decide whether the Church has fulfilled her high and holy calling, nor as to whether she receives the approbation of her divine Founder in all things, but it is this: Is the Church waning? Has she retrogressed? An enquiry of

this nature would include the Church as a whole, her general tenor and her widest influences. None but men of the smallest calibre would bring into this discussion any evidence adverse or favorable that merely recorded the actions of individual professors or ministers. No apostle or apostate shall withdraw our eyes from the main subject which we are considering on its merits.

My original idea had been to cast the present treatise into the form of a court of law and to call upon each accuser to state his case and bring in his evidence. But the further I advanced the more difficult became the task for lack of evidence. All the accusations either lack information or refer to individual cases, and not to the institution. The idea of a court had to be abandoned. My next idea was to formulate a debate and create sides. But the same objection held. It was difficult to represent a sneer, a shrug of the shoulder or a merely bitter remark. It was more difficult to dignify these into the appearance of evidence or argument. So the only course open is to follow a matter of fact way and to answer statements and weigh objections.

The formula which introduces this subject usually runs: "In my boyhood days—but now." "The Church was once—but nowadays." "The Church can no longer, etc." and by this means the past is glorified to the disparagement of the present.

Recently meeting one of these Jeremiahs I ventured to enquire of him to which age he referred that eclipsed the present. He at once replied "The early Christian Church." To which I responded, "Which Church?" Is it the Church of Corinth to whom Paul wrote saying, "I thank God I baptized none of you," and of whom he further said that they came not together to edification when they celebrated the holy communion by drunkenness and gluttony while others stood by hungry and unattended. "One," said the apostle, "is hungry and another is drunken. What, have ye not houses to eat and to drink in or despise ye the Church of God and shame them that have not? What shall I say unto you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not." Is this the Church we are invited to return to? "No, not this," he replied. "Well," I continued, "which one? Is it the Church of Galatia to whom Paul wrote saying: 'O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you that you should not obey the truth?—Are ye so foolish, having begun in the Spirit are ye now made perfect by the flesh?' Is this your Church?" "No." Perhaps it was the Ephesian Church to whom our Lord sent word saying, "Thou hast lost thy first love," or the Laodecian to whom He sent the rebuke, "I know thy works that thou art neither cold nor hot, I would thou wert cold or hot. So, then, because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot I will spue thee out of my mouth." Will these answer? or the Church at Philippi where they quarrelled so scandalously that Paul besought Euodius and Syntyche that they be of one mind in the Lord? No, none of these answered. The fact is the position was untenable. The early Church was often composed of new converts recently heathen and who were totally unacquainted with the requisites of a healthy Christian life. They had much that was commendable, they had gifts, graces and virtues, but their abuses were also frequent and scandalous. It was even largely on account of these evils that the epistles were written by holy men of God, moved by the Holy Spirit. They were written to

improve their manners and to guide ours. One of them states its purpose is "That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God."

If the present day accusers of the Church had referred us to the Apostles and the Fathers of the early Church who were ordained of God to set the pace we would be silent, but for the fact that this is no discussion of individuals or we too would quote names—modern ones—but these illogical depreciators credit the early Church with all the virtues of their best and debit this age with all the vices of our worst.

One point appatently in the favor of the early Church is their community of goods they "Had all things common and sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men as every man had need." "Neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own." "Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them," etc.

It is with the greatest caution I would wish to state that while the disposition was admirable and the enthusiasm and brotherly love commendable, yet it is not the only time when even a religious revival has lacked the guiding hand of wisdom. Closely connected with this act is another in Paul's career where he asked a contribution for "The poor saints who are in Jerusalem." They had parted with their goods too soon.

Perhaps one would expect that in subsequent ages the Church would be able to set us an example, but facts again disappoint the hope. Remembering that we are not considering Thomas a Kempis, but the Church he dignified with his connection; not Luther, Knox nor Wesley, but the Church of their respective ages, we still search in vain for a pattern for the twentieth century Church. It is sufficient testimony of any age that it tolerated Dean Swift, Wolseley or Thomas a Becket, and of this age that it is increasingly intolerant of every form of corruption or legalized vice. "Oh, but," I am informed, "you must make allowance for these past days." If so, we must make allowance for all ages, our own included. We are, however, looking at this subject on its merits, and without any allowance are searching for a better age in history past, than we see in this day when history is being made.

And here, let me remark, lies the illustration of that statement, "The Church to teach and the Bible to prove." The iconoclasts would reject with one contemptuous statement all the combined and accumulated experience of the Church and would make each age, nay each individual, *de novo*, the sole authority on the most vital matters. Whereas the Scriptures can be read by the most ignorant reader to his enlightenment, edification and salvation, the deeper truths are best seen in the light of history and especially Church history.

When the Church announces a doctrine or belief every person should have a copy of the Scriptures with which to substantiate or repudiate that which so vitally concerns him. If he has not the Scriptures he is at the mercy of false Christs and false prophets. If he has, he is doubly assured of the truth. The foil to false doc-

trine and an arrogant Church lies in the continual judgment made by the hearers who can compare the early teaching with the present.

This is the reason the Church of today supports the Bible Society. As the pillar and ground of the truth, the Church stands more ready than in any past age to be judged by the Word. The Bible is the asset taken to heathen lands which saves the situation when it is understood that the same standard holds good at home and abroad. The Church that rejects the Bible takes from any people to whom it ministers the means of getting at the truth and robs them also of the power to grow in grace and knowledge.

So the Bible Society supplies all missions with the Word of God. With every confidence a missionary can now appeal to the Book which is the same authority for all believers in all places.

The Bible Society thus ministers to the Church's missions in between four and five hundred languages, and the missions of all Churches receive from the Society, without cost to mission or missionary, whatever Scriptures are needed to make their work successful. The motto of the Society is "To supply every man with the Holy Scriptures in his own mother tongue."

THIRD—THE EVIDENCE OF THE CHURCH.

Would it not be remarkable if the age which is reputed by so many to be the age of degeneration should be the age of the greatest advancement in every form of altruistic work? Nobody dares rise to dispute the claim that missions are being supported now as never before. Men and women are giving their means and their lives; studies by even the youngest are being pursued to discover what has been done and what can yet be done for the benefit of mankind in every relation. Nor is this confined to our own district or even to our own country. The remotest countries are the subjects of these studies and the objects of this benevolence. For fear any critic should be laboring under a false impression as to what is the business of the Church it would be well here to state what she considers her mission. The main features of the work of the Church of the twentieth century are here given in their order:

- The proclamation of Christ;
- The regeneration of the individual;
- The transformation of the State;
- The regulation of education;
- The elimination of mere theology;
- The consummation of the Union of the Church.

Now this is no small programme. How does the Church of today measure up to this standard?

We feel it to be a fact that this age excels in making Christ known. Everything is judged by this standard. Christ's relation to the social problem, to the individual and to the State, is the burden of a large number of our books. Credal differences are brought to their minimum today, and we are not so much seeking points of contact and union in our beliefs as we are making Christ the centre of our union. The regeneration of mankind was never more believed in and sought than now, and this is the more noteworthy since arbitrary rules, methods and products are now no longer insisted on. The

individuality of the individual is allowed for and his conversion is not so much gauged by his uniformity to a pattern as by the relationship he sustains toward his divine Lord, and his human fellows. The relation of the Church to the transformation of the State is apparent to all who see and read. Since the advent of Christian missions a steady influence has been exerted till an atmosphere has been formed which thrills the whole world. A vision is appearing before men never before seen—a vision of love, of unity, of altruism, a demand for better conditions; that all men have a chance. We all are awaiting nervously the word which will direct our forces in a reasonable way against the abuses mankind suffers. The abolition of slavery, the care of insane, and of prisoners; the recognition of the dignity of children and the amelioration of conditions, generally all follow the wake of the gospel and its advocacy by the Church. And so far-reaching are the influences felt by the Church that even hygiene invariably follows the evangel.

The atmosphere has changed and is changing by the same means. A comparison of the infidel books of a hundred years ago and those of today will reveal the fact that infidelity has lost that individuality it once had. Its peculiar feature a century ago lay in its advocacy of suicide, lust and theft. Rapine, plunder and deceit were its advocated doctrines. But the shining of the sun during the last century has made it impossible for them longer to live in these dark and pestilential dispositions. The works of men of the type of Ingersol reveal the fact that this class of individual has imbibed freely the spirit and phrases which the Church learned from her Master and has been so long proclaiming to a benighted world. Their profession is even toned down to atheist, agnostic or sceptic. Their books either take the form of a tirade against Christians or an exaltation of the virtues which the Bible was the first to proclaim to mankind. True, they either deal with these as original or as common property, but the Church alone has brought them from age to age till at last even infidels have accepted them as axiomatic.

Societies, too, have sprung up. But we are informed by every exponent they are founded upon the Bible and recognize Jesus Christ.

The divine founder of the Church is claimed by every institution that wishes any place in the world, whether religious or social, all of which bears out our claim concerning the influence of the Church of today. And let me add that every school in the Orient where girlhood and womanhood have learned to read, every hospital worthy the name, every physician with scientific practice, have all been planted and maintained in the Oriental world by the funds raised by the Church at the home base. So abroad as well as at home, this influence is felt.

It is not only the regenerated individual who profits, but through his vision all men see. As the light shines so it lights every man. There is not a religion on earth today that has come in contact with Christianity, but has become modified. So largely is this so that it could almost be said that you cannot practice any other religion in the civilized world today but Protestant Christianity.

There is a point in most systems where civilized law calls a halt, whether it be at the Suttee or the Auto da fe. The one religion which enlightened mankind is becoming more and continually more

ready to endorse is that religion of which it is recorded that the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Against such there is no law. Certainly it is true that all else has become emasculated and attenuated while this alone remains the standard. The Koran is being published with footnotes from the Bible. We all remember the missionary who used to visit our home towns in our childhood days to lecture on the abominations of India and Hindu religions. With tears in his eyes he informed us of the Suttee, an institution where a living widow was cremated with the body of her husband, that her soul might go out with his, and eternally serve him in the next world. Pictures were also drawn of women who threw their children into the sacred Ganges river, giving the fruit of the body for the sin of the soul, hoping by this means to propitiate the gods. The car of Juggernaut was represented to us as an immense building on wheels, under which, devotees threw themselves as it rolled through the streets of Bombay, Calcutta, or Lahore. But what do we hear now? Are missionaries less sympathetic because they come home with light and joy and tread to tell us of "Heathen nations bending before the God we love?" No, there is a reason for their behavior. These religions have been shorn of their peculiar features and attenuated down to their ceremonies. Further, the advancement in these places is so great that we usually find it necessary to modify our speech and speak of them as "So-called heathen lands." And while these religions have been reduced to a ritual, the Christian religion has been concentrating on the Spirit of life and the disposition of the worshipper. A Hindu priest has even been discovered who found his Savior through reading the Scriptures in his own language. Not being instructed otherwise, he did not see the necessity of making any change in the ritual of his service, but simply added Christ as a Redeemer and saw nothing inconsistent in his behavior. He added Christ and made the genuflection devotional in His name. Many religions, as practiced, illustrate St. Paul's words where he said "An idol is nothing." It can neither pollute nor bless. The fact that the Chinese republic, ignoring even Confucius, asked the Christian Churches, world wide, to set aside a day to pray that China might be guided by our God in the hour of her crisis, shows still further advance.

The Bible has been a silent yet vital factor in all this work. Missions conducted where the Bible Society has not yet invented for the people a form of writing, or where a priesthood has been successful in opposing the introduction of God's word which gives light, have so far failed to elevate the people or to ameliorate their conditions. Thus South American missions have produced harm rather than good. Had these been conducted by a Church, which spread the Bible, as in Uganda, that country had by now flourished with every virtue and all prosperity. But the restrictions which keep the Bible from a people also keep from them the power to think, to learn, or to advance. In all South America the combined efforts of missions and Bible Society have produced the Scriptures in but three or four native languages; whereas in North America they are published in twenty-nine native Indian forms of writing. This speaks for itself.

This leads naturally to the next point, which is the regulation of education. It is our privilege to have national schools. This is the

legitimate and natural result wherever the Bible is published and diffused in the language of the people and is used by the Church as she makes Christ known. Although the main work of the Church of missions and of the Bible Society is not the spread of education, yet these alone practically and primarily give any people an education. After the agencies of the Church have given the groundwork in any country governments see the value of it, and, counting it an asset, add it to the number of those things accepted and adopted by the State for its present and future welfare.

The Bible Society annually brings ten or twelve languages to a written form that were only spoken languages before. No nation, no government, no agency, apart and separate from the Church of Christ and her allied forces, ever undertook this task. I have searched in vain for any records which tell of any people getting their first literature through any other source, but a glance at any missionary reports, and especially those of the Bible Society, will reveal at every move and in every land the fact that the presence of this herald of Christ makes for education where none existed before, and a higher education where the initial steps are already taken. An alphabet is formed and writing prepared prior to inventing a type for the purpose of giving them the Scriptures. To make permanent a work so well begun, wherever possible, the Scriptures given them have been electrotyped, and the type thus released given the nation for their further intellectual development. By this means scores of countries have begun a newspaper. Thus the type which was first used to print their Bible is now used to diffuse further knowledge.

Archdeacon McKay is thus printing at Battleford, Saskatchewan, for the Cree Indians, a newspaper called "The Truth." Thibet published her first newspaper the year after she received her first Bible, and Uganda rejoices in the possession of a literature which is owing entirely to missionary effort. Today the Bible Society is furnishing the Word of God in hundreds of languages, the majority of which were by them translated often without a written form to begin with. And none doubts that this leads to a changed thought coming over the whole nations thus supplied. Every year advance is marked along these lines and more countries put in possession of a literature, but in every instance from the same source. Nor is this multiplying of the sources and resources of literature confusing, for whereas there are about 60 alphabets in which the world's peoples express themselves through writing, the efforts of the present day are tending to unifying all forms of writing down to one alphabet, and that the Latin. Already the Bible is being published in dozens of languages in this one type, and efforts are on foot to get a recognition for this form of printing from all countries.

I need not remind the reader that higher education, even in our own lands, is largely in the hands of the Christian ministry.

And thus on every count is the Church showing her ability and disposition to organize her forces for the welfare of mankind and her superiority over any age that has past.

The next evidence the Church will give for herself is in her attempts to eliminate all that is merely theological. While the fundamental facts abide in our minds as ever, and underlying principles

are unchanged; while the background of the picture continues forever before us, the foreground and dress of the subject is forever changing. Men have died for things which we do not consider worth contending for, and secondary matters have in the past been exalted to matters of greatest magnitude.

We consider our bodies worth more than raiment, and spirituality of greater value than the dress of methods. To him who would know what we consider the principles of our faith we would answer our God, our Christ, our Bible, our Faith and our brother. Let a man lose faith and he is himself lost, but to lose a phrase or a pet expression which is threadbare with use and misuse often is a gain to the loser.

Of course some, even professors and teachers, perhaps ministers, think it not shame to deal with fundamentals in a cheap and unappreciative way, but it is not so with the great leaders nor the average humble Christian, and these are the criteria of the condition of the Church.

One thing more. Church Union. It comes but slowly, yet the more surely. No rapid popular sweep will turn the head of the Church and cause a rapid union on terms which will be later repented or need a reconstruction. Yet, while every enterprise, mercantile or financial, is continuing to overlap and increasing its duplication, the Church alone of them all is seeking a means of co-operation by which all waste of men and means will be eliminated.

It is but little known or appreciated that already this has been accomplished in missionary lands. The world has been divided for missionary purposes among the respective Christian Churches each agreeing to evangelize a certain number of millions of people. Each Church has respected the territory of the other and at home the same programme has been in part accomplished.

Already from a large number of places the smaller of the two has moved out by mutual arrangement and all this is pending the time when there will be a union of all the Christian forces under one general head.

The only exception to the above is the fact that since the Bible Society is the sole source of supply to missions when Scriptures are needed, the Society is represented in every place. Wherever there is a mission, regardless of its denomination, the Society supplies the Word of God. Hence the annual report of the Bible Society touches, as no other report of any description touches, every corner of the earth, and the missions of every branch of the Church.

All this and these advancements have occurred at a time and in the age which is reputed as being the age of retrogression and suppression. Verily some men's arguments are past finding out.

FOURTH—THE REPLY.

But I must introduce here the general answers I have received in rebuttal of this evidence. The most frequent reply to the above comes in the form of an objection and a question: "Is it not true that a larger proportion went formerly to the Church? Has not the Church lost its hold upon the masses?" This half truth we will consider. It is a fact that there was a former period when everybody went to Church—or jail—they preferred the former. What is the cause

of the defection? Well, first, a large portion of the population do today what they wanted to do then. Liberty—great word that—has taken the place of compulsion. In the next place it is an undoubted fact that slaveholders, distillers, brewers, sabbath breakers and workers of every form of political evil, stood both in society and in the Church, on a level with other citizens and with Christians. But with the advent of abolition societies the slaveholders quit the Church in proportion as the Church adopted the principle. Societies for the protection of our sabbath as a day of rest; moral reform societies, organized for social uplift; and temperance organizations, have all been adopted as children of the Church. With their advent thousands have left the Church. At every stand the Church takes on moral issues hundreds leave the institution which is increasingly sounding a higher and yet higher note on moral and political issues.

There is hardly a municipal or provincial election that deals with a moral issue but the Church seeks to influence the decision of the electors; and every reform thus sought by the Church raises a storm of protest from corrupt politicians, grafters, bosses and heelers, who, finding the arguments adduced unanswerable, retaliate by recriminating against the Church as a political machine. The weight of their opposition and displeasure is felt in the Church they asperse, and by the shortsighted and unstable people they influence. Also many whom the Church is influencing are turned aside by these aspersions and persecutions. The aggregate which this has cost ministers in this age and in this country alone in members, helpers and dollars, illustrates not only why the Church has lost hold of many who formerly attended, but also proves to him who sees that the Church is not waning, but attaining her ideal.

The next reply we receive is an acceptance of our conclusions of advancement with the explanation "But all this is but the natural progress of the human race; man, as a continually progressive being, must advance, and the Church only seizes this occasion to claim credit for the development." Our reply is, "It is a most remarkable fact that these advancements have only come to countries where the Christian religion has taken hold. Unevangelized lands are as far behind the van as they were in Abraham's day and I am not aware of any thought we have received from any of them. In the whole range of our ideas there is not one thought we think, that we owe to Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Zoroastrianism or Mohammedanism. I am not slandering these or building up my side at their expense. I do not undervalue any virtues or beauties they possess, but we are not indebted to them for one thing we think, know or enjoy."

"But," I am asked, "do not our countries stand foremost in evil as also in good?" This is a more serious indictment because it is true. It is inevitable in any land where the race is elevated, that not only the well disposed but also the evil receive the benefit. This enlarges the capacity for indulging vice and lends color to the accusation. This necessitates also a continuous ministry and evangel in all lands where Christ is already known, in order that man thus enlightened may not fall to evil practices or carry his enlarged powers with him back to former practices. It is well to remember in this connection that liberty is an accompaniment of the gospel and only a

limited restraint by force is made upon those whose privilege it is to live under the advancement of gospel enlightenment; hence evils also flourish and the ultimate aim of the Church is to carry weight enough to eradicate these evils. But she has no part nor fellowship in producing them.

But one of the most triumphant charges brought against the Church today is the accusation of lethargy. We are asked if we will not at any rate confess that there is no such enthusiasm as formerly, nor such stalwart defenders of the faith as Bunyan and Knox. There are two things I should like to say by way of reply: First. It must be brought before us continually that we are not considering these individuals but the Church of their age, which allowed the one to go to jail for twelve years and the other to be a galley slave for his faith. And second. If the Church has lost enthusiasm is there not a reason? Has not that which called it forth ceased? In times of war we expect men to show their colors and participants to arise and act with energy. But in time of peace nothing would bring men into contempt much quicker than to be valiant and to exhibit flag and weapon in the face of every observer. There was a day when war was declared and the leaders rose to the occasion. Luther, Latimer, Ridley, Wicliffe, Tyndall and others had to forfeit the leisure and study which they preferred and go forth to battle. Had they lived in our times they would have been as tame as ourselves. They did not choose the demonstration which made them prominent. Today the world has ceased from its rage. No longer does a Paine or a Voltaire either reason or ridicule against the standards which are dear to us. No Pope now threatens with his former violence and power calling forth our energy of mind and body to withstand his encroachments.

The latent spirit of a persecuted people rose to the occasion in days that tried men's souls, but no laws now threaten, no priests invade, the peace of our lives. We are allowed to live, and excitement is not living. We watch our adversaries as also did our fathers, but as they have all changed their tactics to less violent measures, we, on our part, likewise stand in our trenches watching and waiting to inflict a mortal wound or to repel an attack. We have not lost our enthusiasm, but we have abated our demonstration.

But surely we will admit that the Church has failed to bring about such a peace as prohibits future wars?

Argumentum ad hominem. So it is the Church's business to do this, is it? That is a great concession. You say rightly. It is her business, and there will be no peace till it comes on the terms she dictates. Her message for two milleniums has been disregarded by the nations or observed only in selected spots. The sorrows of the world are caused in consequence of this rejection and its joys come as a natural result of its obedience to those commands. But our claim is nothing short of this, that every advancement made will be in consequence of one more command obeyed. It must be remembered the business of the Church is not force, else she too would add her pronortion to the world's bereavements; but her influence on the world comes by the slower and better

process of instruction. Hence she does not intervene to stop a war, but continues her testimony and will do so till she gains the ear of mankind.

I suppose there are many more such objections but they are all of a class that can be as readily refuted.

FIFTH—THE REALITY.

It would appear to some that I have been holding a brief for the Church, and have been aiming at a conclusion demonstrating her triumph and her perfection. But a careful return to the proposition will remind us that this is not the subject at all, hence it is now our place to look at the facts of the case.

The prayer book of the Church of England has a notable statement in its preface. "It hath been the wisdom of the Church of England ever since the first compiling of her public liturgy to keep the mean between the two extremes of too much stiffness in refusing and of too much easiness in admitting any variations from it."

This is as sane a position as we can occupy, the failure to recognize which has hindered many from seeing the virtues of the Church. Whenever, therefore, the Church finds any practice edifying and therefore continues it, many conclude her to be ritualistic or antique, and cry out "Stagnation." Whenever she finds any rubric or ritual has outlived its usefulness and thereupon makes an alteration, others cry out "Innovation." Whereas, if both were considered they would unite in eulogy of the wisdom of the Church which through all changes retains all the underlying principles and is still the pillar and ground of the truth.

I am no optimist. There is too much sin, suffering and Satan. I am no pessimist. There is too much goodness, gladness and God. But I am a realist, seeing both man's ruin and the remedy and can see both the militating and the mitigating circumstances and I wish to show here that if they were considered, there are some things which would modify the acerbity of those who are thoughtless and satisfy the hopes of those who are earnest.

And first, consider man as a failure everywhere. Man is a blunderer. We used to think bankers, teachers and merchants the embodiment of wisdom and of resource. We regarded councils and kings correspondingly capable in all matters entrusted to their control. But, alas, the banks do not "accommodate" when we need it as much as when we do not; our teachers have often been found ignorant of matters they should know, using poor grammar and causing us to lose the encyclopaedic teacher of our youth; merchants, also, have made no advance in the transportation and supply of human necessities, which are increasingly higher as their business increases. Even our wisest statesmen have evolved no way of conserving the national forces and have allowed the valuable assets of the land and the deductions of science to be given into the hands of a few to divert to the general destruction through war rather than to the conservation through peace. What, then, do you expect of man in the Church? Taking humanity into consideration generally, the evidence will prove that the aggregate of people united within the Church have made a greater success in fulfilling their mission than the aggregate of those who are without.

Consider what the Church is. It is a home. You may expect children there and you have them. For slightest reasons scandal is caused even in the Church by her members of lesser calibre and the best of her work hindered at times even by the passions and jealousies of her ministers. It is a hospital. No scandal attaches to an hospital because its death rate is higher than that of any other institution. Let no scandal apply to the Church. Her boast is not that she has no lame, halt, blind or even withered, but that of all institutions she alone is patient to all men and cares for the sick and the ready to halt.

Think again of what man is capable when turned loose. Let the silent relics of past excesses speak on this subject. Let the French revolution, let Louvain, let Mexico and a thousand other voices remind you that to no nation and its vandalism or its inhumanities can we point in time of peace or war and say that these excesses are national characteristics. It is humanity unrestrained. It is man turned loose. Now the gospel has proven itself individually and nationally the great restraint on human passions. Our present view of morals and reciprocal kindness is the legitimate result of our gospel training. We do not sufficiently credit the Church with the atmosphere we live in today. It is only the message of the Church that can really arrest man, and the cessation of the Church's operations in any land speedily usher in a reign of terror.

Let me further remind the reader that many of the evils peculiar to the day are not innovations which exalt a past age, but relics which reflect upon it. Did you catch this thought? **The evils within the Church today are all relics, not innovations.** Let us trace all abuses and deviations from righteousness back to their origin before we accuse the Church of this age. Indeed we would do well to investigate and see what there is in the Church at present which we all deplore.

One of the most outstanding features which is objectionable is the system of **overlapping**. Five denominations often serve a town where one would suffice. Without repetition of what I said before on this theme I would add that this is a legacy. Also some of us can find in this not an occasion for scandal but for eulogy. For, while in the same town there are also three bankers, lumberdealers, merchants and hotels, the opprobrium is supposed to be only with the Church. Rather let us remember that of all these institutions the Church is the only one that is endeavoring to unify all her forces. Long after Church union will roll away this reproach from the Church, the banks, stores and hotels will continue their cut-throat competitions. I have referred before to individual Churches, but should like to remark that already, indeed, some denominational unions have been consummated so wisely and so well as to be almost forgotten. It is necessary to remind this generation that formerly there were more denominations in Canada than there are now. I am aware that some will even reply here that union has been so long under way that it will never come. Many are iconoclasts anyhow, and cannot wait for reforms to be wisely introduced. The English people once had six translations of the Bible current. When the King James version appeared it took seventy years to make it the standard to the exclusion of others. But it came, and without violating the religious principles of those who held on to the "good old times."

Neither are the other things which we generally deplore novelties or innovations, but relics and illustrations of the weakness of humanity.

Take **Criticism**. In the hands of theological children and fools, whether professors or their imitators, it has created a scandal which has been a great reproach. Undigested truth has been enunciated by a teacher incapable of conveying the idea and has been further bungled by his pupil till the result brings the whole Church into contempt and turns thousands away unfed.

But no thinking man makes this a proof of a waning Church. Equally dangerous has been a **literalism** in the hands of **ignorance** where the beautiful truths of sacred poetry, imagery and experience have been trailed in the dust by mundane and inexperienced Christians. What indeed is new? What does this age offer of folly that is peculiar to the age? We have **overzeal**. So had our fathers. I recently heard a discussion on Church union. One of the disputants remarked, "Our fathers lived, bled and died for the name they gave our Church." I remarked they should have bled and died sooner. We have **lethargy** also. Mentally and physically men would fain be let alone. We have **pedantry**, but nobody who has read the works of the earlier Church but will give them the palm for pedantry. Learned discussions as to how many souls could dance on the point of a needle illustrated the size of the souls of those who debated. We have our pedants and they are fools, but not that far gone. Other evils, also relics of the past, are with us, but no innovating dissabilities will be handed to another generation in consequence of present undigested or premature changes. Our progress will be slow for we deal with human nature not yet fully sanctified. Some members yet necessitate careful handling, many ministers still walk softly for fear of offending one of these little (i.e. petty) ones. A few pastors, too, have to be "handled with care" or they will neither play nor work. This we confess and confess with sorrow. A narrow vision too often causes an individual Church to lose an opportunity for doing good and expanding, by refusing to open the doors to appeals which would make them larger people. (Bible Society.) By refusing this they suffer. For the narrowing of their experience hinders their liberality at home, and their ignorance of the great accomplishments of the Church through her missions (and the Bible Society) discourages them from advancing their work at home. Also we know our appeal is often to the selfish interest of even a Christian. He is invited to a missionary meeting sometimes because he will be entertained or edified. It is still true the bun feed adds to the number of those who attend. We also confess that where there is progress it is often but slow—remarkably slow. But all this and more, while fully and frankly confessed, no more affects the great fact of the Church and her progress than the spots in the sun affect her shining.

Let me remind you of the antiquity of this threadbare objection. Newman in his *Apologia pro vita sua*, speaking of some reason which led to his defection to Rome says, "The vital question was how we were to keep the Church from being liberalized, there was such apathy on the subject from some quarters, such imbecile alarm in others, the true principles of Churchmanship seemed so decayed, and there was

such distraction in the councils of the clergy. . . . The evangelical party seemed to have lost that simplicity and unworldliness which I admired." Again, "I felt affection for my own Church but not tenderness. I felt dismay at her prospects. I saw that reformation principles were powerless to rescue her. She must be dealt with strongly or she would be lost. There was need of a second reformation."

Carlyle said, "In these distracted times the religious principle is driven out of most Churches and either lies unseen in the hearts of good men or else wanders homeless over the world."

Fox, speaking of the beginning of the Sixteenth Century as quoted in the English Bible by Milligen, page 21, says: "Certainly the fervent zeal of those Christian days seemed much superior to these, our days, and times as may appear by their sitting up all night in reading and hearing. . . . To see their labors, their earnest seeking, their burning zeals, their readings, their watchings, their sweet assemblies may make us now in these our days of free profession, to blush for shame."

In a sermon preached July 14, 1833, Keble spoke of the "National Apostasy" which did not speak well for his age, unless he too, had become infected with the same habit of forever decrying today and exalting yesterday.

Pope also, quoting Homer, wrote of "This degenerate age." All ages unite in speaking and writing of a declining religion, and a defective Church. This slogan should now be pentioned for very staleness. They were even using it to the prophets and it was found necessary to put on record the exhortation in Ecc. 7: 10, "Say not thou what is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this." And now, to close this part of the discussion, let us ask, "What has declined?" There are several things which may be considered obsolete or obsolescent. Chief among them is the dress of statement. Phrases were coined in the dark ages which no more express Christian truth than the Bybilline books. Others were true but local and restricted in their meaning. Others, again, both were and are true, but can be expressed better by a modern statement. Some are stale to nausea. These, this generation has abandoned. Peace to their ashes. In changing these expressions has the Church abandoned her faith? No, she has never deserted the undying principle. Agriculture has changed its methods without reproach, so has education, but nobody suspects them of forsaking the original and underlying principle of their origin. They are even applauded for greater efficiency gained through the better method of enunciating the same truths. Theological botany is not Christianity any more than vegetable botany is husbandry. The change of terms no more affects Christ and his Church than the new text books vitiate education.

So with the lines of demarcation. The connection between the spiritual and the secular, or as some invidiously affirm it to be the union of the Church and the world, is very marked. But I do not feel it is altogether a loss. Our age has dignified labor and has not minified worship. We do not regard the Church building as the only place God meets His people, but it is not at the expense of the dignity of the Church, but rather to the increase of the dignity of any place where God is worshipped. Denominational boundaries are broken down, not because this age does not value principle, but

because we see that all denominations have the underlying principle and the barrier was but a barrier and nothing more.

Nations may extend or restrict their boundaries but the land remains as ever. Nothing changes that. In fact, the Church has all she ever had and more. She sees more clearly the relative values. She has insight, foresight and second sight, and of those great and fundamental things with which she started out on her mission these are what she yet retains. She has a **message** and an **appeal**. The former concerns the Savior of mankind who is the Lord and Master of the Church. The latter is to a sinful people to come eat, drink and live. Both are unaltered.

She has the **unchanging** truth. Many of her theories are gone, others will follow, but their departure throws her more than ever on the eternal truth. That truth is in the **Word**. **Traditions**, however pleasant and acceptable, are not equally reliable, for they did not all come from holy men of God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. So the Church has renounced many of these and holds some others with a loose hand, but our Lord said "Thy word is truth" and the Church has it.

She has **unchanging man** with whom to deal. Man is from one viewpoint changeable, but he is, notwithstanding, always the same. In all ages he is stirred by hopes, sorrows or joys, and the Church has in her pulpit an undying influence over the minds of men in relation to these experiences. Her task to win converts now is no more difficult than formerly. Especially is this true as she has also the **unchanging Man**. Individual ministers have lived, preached and died without knowing Christ. Their theories were perfect, their theology faultless, but they did not know Him. It is becoming increasingly difficult to be a minister of this type and the Man who is the same yesterday, today and forever, and who said, "Lo I am with you always" is becoming more known in proportion as the Church emerges and renounces the untenable and more recent inventions of the monks of the dark ages.

And, again, **she has herself**. The Church yet lives. She is neither voted out by her active foes, nor by her passive friends. Like Moses she lives on, her eyes are not dim nor her natural force abated; like Caleb she is as strong as the day she was sent for war, to go out or come in. Those of the other part have been for years prophesying her final appearance, but she yet stands and she looks forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun and terrible as an army with banners.

SIXTH—SUMMING UP.

We come now to the **summing up** of our whole argument. I think without being accused of making an unproved statement we may at any rate indulge ourselves in the belief that the Church is not waning. Would it not be strange that the institution which was founded by her divine Master, to whom was intrusted all His hopes, should be the one renegade of the earth? Would it not be passing strange that the society that has given the majority of nations their education and their culture should so seriously have declined in the more important factors? Especially as no substitute appears to take her place.

Would it not also surprise you that the only founder of hospitals, asylums, schools and Churches in the Orient should be in such need of a hospital, asylum or school for herself? It would surprise us more that the age of such active progression as the Church can prove she has accomplished among others, should mark her own downfall, like some creatures which die in the act of giving birth to others.

Think what the logical conclusion of this pessimistic cry is, and the tremendous issues that are at stake. It is no slight matter we are seeking to make a decision upon. None but the most shallow and worthless of humanity will treat it lightly. I would ask you to consider what the decision we arrive at means to the **Bible**, to the **Christian**, to **Missions**, and to **Christ** with reference to the **Scriptures**. If the Church is waning it is because the Bible has lost its power and cannot exercise as great an influence when widely distributed as when only the few could read, which also means that its influence was not inherent, but was great because mysterious; it would not bear investigation nor close acquaintance. It means also that the promises and prophecies are without authority for they already have failed. The gates of hell were to be ineffectual barriers against the onslaughts of the Church; but according to this theory the gates have never been even invested as yet, or the forces of the Church, formerly invading, are now in full retreat. The bride of Christ will never at this rate hail with joy the bridal day, nor will Christ ever present to himself a glorious Church without spot or wrinkle. No, the Scriptures must be abandoned as untenable.

As to **Christians**, whether ministers, teachers, missionaries or in any capacity whatever, the argument of the apostle was never more applicable:—"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you, the gospel which I preached unto you which also ye have received and wherein ye stand, by which also ye are saved unless ye have believed in vain." Now, if it be preached among you that the Church shall go on conquering and to conquer, how say some among you that the Church is retreating? And if the Church is declining then is the Bible untrue. And if the Bible is untrue, then is our preaching vain and your faith also vain. Yea, we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified that the Church is progressing, which is not true if the Church is waning.

And if the Church is waning then Christ died in vain. And if Christ died in vain your faith is vain—ye are yet in your sins. Then they who have fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If then our hope is in Christ and His Church alone we are of all men the most miserable. But now is the Church the greatest force on earth, and become the forerunner of all spiritual and mental advancement. And since by Christ came life, by the Church through the word came the knowledge of that life. But everything in its own order. The Kingdom cometh not by observation but the Kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdoms of our God and His Christ and He shall reign forever. And He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. If you believe this, be consistent, and never again be guilty of the slander which is thoughtless, criminal and dangerous.

The Ministry, the missionary and all Church and Sunday School workers as a body have devoted their lives to the welfare of others.

Notwithstanding individual selfish acts, they are living unselfish Christian lives: none more so on earth. See, then, how they are affected. Their whole lives and those of kindred workers and institutions, such as the Bible Society with its thousands of Christian workers all, all are but wasted lives. All are but delaying the fall of a crumbling fabric, and but postponing the miserable day when the Church, sad relic of vanished goodness, will have passed into history. Of course, her downfall will be accompanied with that of all kindred societies whose object is the welfare of mankind.

But may I ask you to consider what this means to **Christ** Himself? Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it. He was to draw all men unto Him. To Him every knee was to bow and every tongue confess. He gave such promises that His defeat forever discredits Him and His great mission. He shall not see the travail of His soul nor be satisfied now. The alleged defeat of Calvary is reproduced today but this time it is a climax. The very Spirit He sent is now inoperative to preserve a declining cause. And the fact that Christ dieth no more, but **once** in the end of the world He appeared, frustrates all hope for the future.

Let me suggest three alternatives, either of which you can choose, but one of which **must** be true. Please give them your consideration. First, Christ is already defeated or is being defeated. This requires no explanation, modification or amplification, and His defeat involves everything connected with Him. N.B.—This is absolutely true if the Church is declining. Or:—

Second, Christ is conquering and will conquer. His disciples are fulfilling their mission and will bring His purposes to pass, but these co-workers of Christ are outside the organized Church, and the apostate Church is by degrees falling to the level it deserves. Or:—

Third, The Church is not waning at all, but even though she is not all she should be and has human faults, yet in the main she is slowly but surely working successfully to the end for which she was founded.

I know of no alternative to add. Which do you choose? I would just remind you if you choose the second that the command, "Go ye into all the world," etc., is being fulfilled only by the **professed** disciples of Christ. That missions, schools, etc., are **within** the organization.

And while you are ruling out the organized Church I would ask what are you going to substitute? What will this lead to? What is the logical conclusion?

The cessation of the activities of the Church today would be the end of all advancement in the line of primary education for benighted nations, of medical benefit worthy the name in the Orient, and of the best inspirations either ourselves or our children get. It would blot out the inspiring hymns and substitute the meaningless doggerel of love songs or the music without words which is often as incomprehensible as the words of vocal music. No society would arise to attend to the moral and social uplift of mankind and of course the Lord's day would be put where the worst element in the land would be glad to have it. Public speech would not die out, but would revive as in the days succeeding the revolution of France—with the same result.

I cannot follow this further. The man who is not with me now, never will be by any process of reasoning known to me.

Just a few lines of encouragement. I think we agree as to the value of missions and regarding the great benefit the whole world has derived from the atmosphere of the gospel. Let me state that all this has been done by the friends and supporters of home and foreign missions. Whatever has ameliorated the condition of mankind—whatever will yet usher in the Kingdom, these have done it. To the women's missionary societies, the young people's societies, the officers and collectors of the Bible society branches, to these let me say, you have done it all. Our critics will still do nothing but complain, they will not even read and learn what is being done, but let us, while we see what effect the Word, the Church and Christ have upon mankind, be proud we are a part of that great institution which will stand when,

Crowns and thrones may perish,
Kingdoms rise and wane,
But the Church of Jesus
Constant will remain.
Gates of Hell shall never
'Gainst that Church prevail;
We have Christ's own promise,
And that cannot fail.

Are you not proud? I am.

Jesus Christ began with nothing. He had not a dollar nor a disciple. The laws were against Him, the priesthood rejected Him, the rulers crucified Him. He had twelve disciples, but *per se* they were not worth having. The Romans despised Jews, Jews despised Galileans, fishermen were the least accounted of the Galileans and of some it could be said they even knew not their letters, having never learned. But He sent them forth with His spirit, and He who began with nothing shall end with everything when the kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdoms of our God and His Christ, and He shall reign forever. When our Lord was crucified there was placed over his head His accusation, "This is the King of the Jews." It was written in Latin, in Hebrew and in Greek. It has been said these were the three languages of the world. The Hebrew was the language of religion, and thus our Lord was proclaimed King of religion. The Greek was the language of culture, and our Master was thus proclaimed King of all culture. The Latin was the language of law, and He was thus proclaimed its King. Subsequent events and those yet to come will combine to justify the prediction and to make the prophesy history.

SEVENTH—AND SO TO CONCLUDE.

What ails the Church? Well one thing is that it has stood too long on the defensive. The time has come and now is when it is her prerogative and business to take the offensive and invade the enemies' quarters and when she does so who will be able to stand?

"Gird up thy loins now like a man. I will demand of thee and declare thou unto me. Wilt thou disannul my judgment? Wilt thou condemn me that thou mayest be righteous?" Job 40: 7. What

have you as a critic of the Church been doing all these days? What have you accomplished that enabled you to be a ruler and a judge over us? To what do you belong that has been an ensample to the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity? "Oh," but you say, "I make no profession." Is that all the reply? That is the cheapest yet.

Let me ask you further what you propose to say when you stand before the Judge of all? The obligation is upon all, the work is demanded of all, and a negative life lived in selfishness is a poor excuse for the unselfish life that reaches over boundaries and walls to give ripe fruit to the wearied and hungry travellers on the other side.

What is wrong with the Church? Let me tell you. The fact is that the Church is lacking for want of your hearty co-operation. There is a vacancy in the Church, none but you can fill. God has a place there for you. The Church will always be behind in efficiency while there are those who stay without. Your financial support is no substitute for your better gifts. Your money perish with you if you think that gold will purchase eternal life.

"Wisdom cryeth without, she uttereth her voice in the streets. She cryeth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates in the city, she uttereth her words saying, How long ye simple ones will ye love simplicity? And the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge. Turn you at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you."

When at last the day has dawned for which all days were made, when the last word is said which shall usher in the eternal Kingdom, it will be seen that the only permanent benefactors of the human race were those who by introducing Christ in His Word and in human experience, gave to men that kingdom of God and His righteousness by which all other things were added unto them.

Let others see the faults of the Church. I am proud of her virtues. We have chosen in the Church the better part. And when individuals and nations which have already obeyed so much of the message of the Church, and have reaped so many benefits thereby, obey their divine Lord and King in the demands, as yet rejected and disobeyed, the problems of the day relating to war, morals and inequality will be settled.

The progress of the Church is dependent on the sacrifice of Christians. The progress of the world depends on its obedience to the message of the Church.

I can only close as I began by denying the retrogression of the Church. The ministry of today is not less worthy of respect than that of another age, but is more criticized. This is largely due to the fact that this generation has a larger vision than any other, of what constitutes Christianity. Our eyes are now so opened by present methods of religious instruction we can no longer in decency tolerate what has passed in some other ages for Christianity itself.

And the Church is going on with her spiritual vision—taking hold of all educational, moral and social reforms, feeding the hungry, visiting the sick and the prisoner, but never satisfied with anything short of the transformation of those to whom she ministers into the image

of Christ, and never content till she herself shall be like Him for she shall see Him as He is.

If you feel encouraged to continue your work of faith and labor of love, in what better way could you contribute to the continued success of the Church than by helping her missions? And in what better way could her missions be assisted than by providing the Scriptures for all peoples in their own languages? The Bible Society exists for no other purpose than to translate, publish and distribute the Scriptures in all languages. Already between four and five hundred languages are being supplied by one Bible Society. Practically every missionary in the world gets all his Scriptures from the one source and without any cost to himself or his Society. It takes over eight million copies annually to keep this work going. All soldiers, all immigrants, all settlers in newly opened lands, sailors and others, are supplied liberally and freely. Thirty-five thousand copies were distributed to the soldiers who answered the first call from Canada to the front and all later contingents will be also supplied. The Bible Society is the only institution recognized by every form of Christianity, which is supported by them all, and on which they all depend for their supplies. In twenty-nine Indian languages the Scriptures are now published by the Bible Society, for Canada alone, and also in thirty-five languages for the blind of various lands. Become a life member. Support a colporteur abroad. Pay for one translation in a new tongue. Let us engage a Bible woman to work for you abroad. We will be glad to send you literature.

With a prayer that this essay may prove of value wherever read, yours in the service of Christ, for our fellow men,

E. SALTER, Secretary.

Manitoba and Saskatchewan Bible Society,
184 Alexander Avenue, Winnipeg, Canada.



Friends desirous on contributing to the Society can make use of the forms as shewn below:

SUBSCRIBE FIFTY DOLLARS AND BECOME A LIFE MEMBER

To The Secretary,
Manitoba and Saskatchewan Bible Society,
The Bible House, Winnipeg.

Dear Sir,

Please add my name to the list of Life Members of the Bible Society. My donation of Fifty Dollars is enclosed herewith.

Full Name.....

Address.....

Date.....

FORM FOR BEQUESTS BY WILL TO THE SOCIETY

(May be included in the Will or added as a Codicil)

"I give and bequeath to the Manitoba and Saskatchewan Bible Society the sum of (insert here the amount intended) dollars to be paid to the President and Secretary thereof, as soon after my decease as possible, whose receipt shall be a good discharge for same."

In witness whereof I have hereby subscribed my name this
..... day of..... 19... before.....
and..... who at my request, in my presence,
and in the presence of each other, at the same time have signed
their names as witnesses.

FORM FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS

To The Secretary,
Manitoba and Saskatchewan Bible Society,
The Bible House, Winnipeg.

Dear Sir,

Please add my name to the list of Subscribers to the Bible Society. My donation of..... dollars is enclosed herewith.

Full Name.....

Address.....

Date.....