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THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

BY

M. J. SAVAGE

He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red.

And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times? — MATT. xvi. 2, 3.

BOSTON

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1889

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BREAK-UP OF THE OLD ORTHODOXY:

WHY MEN DO NOT BELIEVE IT.

In taking up a series of subjects like this which I propose under the general title "Signs of the Times," I have something far more important in mind than merely to amuse you by the treatment of topics that may be uppermost in the popular mind; something more important than merely criticising my neighbors, finding fault with or commending them; something more important than the giving of lectures. It seems to me that the one great thing which thoughtful, earnest men to-day need is to understand the age in which they live and of which they are a part. The influence we can exert may be comparatively little, and to us, in the modest estimate which we set upon ourselves, may seem so insignificant as to make us feel that it is hardly worth while to trouble ourselves as to the direction in which this influence is cast; yet, if you think a moment, you will see that the tendency of the age, the great trend of influence that means either decay or progress, is simply the resultant of these individual influences of ours. And which way the age shall move is a mere question, so far as we are concerned, of the majority influence,—as to whether more people shall be intelligently interested in having the world go in the right direction than in the wrong. It is, then, of vast importance that we comprehend, so far as may be, the age in which we live, and understand the forces and the movements around us. It

is not strange that we get confused, that we find ourselves drawn this way and that, that men mistake the eddy for the main current; for we are ourselves in the midst of this current. It sometimes seems to us that we are hardly more than a chip or a fragment of bark floating on the current, swirled about by it, turned this way and that whithersoever it will. It needs, then, that every man for himself, or else some one that he can trust for him, should gain some higher point of outlook if possible, should be able to look before and after, should know which way the world has been moving for certain centuries, so getting in mind the sweep of things, being able thus to separate between the main current and the eddies, and so discover which way lies the hope of mankind. It is some general work like this — an attempt, as far as may be, to help you comprehend what is going on, the meaning of the great forces and movements of which we are a part — that I have in mind. It is not for speculative ends or to satisfy your curiosity, but to help you know which way you ought to think, which way you ought to move, which way you ought to try to turn the thought and effort of others. It is for some such end as this that I have undertaken the work which now lies open before me.

We have not to go back very far in the history of the world to find a time when substantially all the people in Christendom believed about the same thing. They looked out with substantially the same eyes. They had substantially the same conceptions of God in their minds. They believed substantially the same things about the origin, the nature, and the destiny of mankind. They were at one on all main points. They answered, in some rough way at least, to the definition of the Catholic doctrine which has been held for many years. There was this homogeneity of belief at least throughout Christendom. But now what do we see? The

Church, whether people were loyal to it or not, whether people attended the services or not,— the Church then stood for and represented what were practically the common ideas of all Christendom. But to-day what? We have only to open our eyes and look about us, we have only to listen to the complaints that come to us from the pulpits, from the reviews, from the religious and secular newspapers, to see that the Church no longer holds the position which it once did in either the faith or the reverence of mankind. Men used to believe that the Church held the gift of salvation. The majority of people to-day perhaps believe nothing of the sort. They believe that the Church is a good thing, that it stands for certain high ideas, that it exerts a certain fine, elevating influence in society. Many people believe that the doctrines of the Church do really embody the one God-given plan for human salvation. But there are very few people who think that it is absolutely necessary to be a member of the Church or even to attend church, in order to please God or to serve their fellow-men. The Church, in other words, has no longer any such hold as it used to have on the belief, the reverence, or the practical obedience of men. There is a great break-up. The fragments are moving, and taking shape in this direction and that. The Roman Church itself feels the change. There is a process of disintegration going on within it. I shall have occasion to treat of this by and by. I only call your attention to it this morning.

The old Protestant Orthodoxy is being divided into innumerable sects. That was true a hundred years ago; but there is a change going on now by which one form has come to be representative of Liberal Orthodoxy,— a new kind of Orthodoxy, which the old does not recognize. The thoughts that it stands for are creeping into the work of foreign missions. They are disturbing the foundations of theological

institutions. They are at work in the minds of ministers, leading them to practically neglect or overlook the doctrines no longer acceptable to their congregations. The human element is coming forward. This great change of thought has also touched Unitarianism, which we in a way represent. There are Free Religion, Ethical Culture, Scientific Materialism, Ingersollism, Agnosticism in all its departments. Then, the head of man having become puzzled in its attempts to solve this great universe, the heart, too, finds itself hungering for spiritual food. There are signs on all hands of reaction from the extreme materialistic or purely agnostic tendencies; and so people, having lost their faith, are borrowing the old-time faiths of the East, and we find people rushing back not only into old organizations, but importing Theosophy, Metaphysics, Christian Science. Then that heart-hungering of the world for some whisper from beyond has given us Spiritualism. I simply refer to these things this morning as indications of this great break-up of the old beliefs. We are in the midst of the confusion and the conflicting demands of a thousand people, who are telling us that this way or that or the other lies the hope of mankind.

My purpose this morning is to help to answer the question as to why this condition of things is upon us. What has happened? Are the movements of which we are a part to-day indications that there is nothing true, nothing certain? Do they mean the decay of religion? Do they mean the loss of faith? Do they mean the dying out of reverence? or do they mean that mankind is ceasing to aspire, to care for spiritual satisfaction, that it is going to be content hereafter with this little world, and the common business and social engagements of life? Does it mean a revolution against recognizing and acknowledging truth? Is it impiety, this lack of

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reverence for, or faith in the old churches? Is it because the world is more ignorant than it used to be? Or, if there has been an increase in knowledge, as we love to boast, has there gone along with it a spiritual pride, which refuses to bow the neck to God's truth merely because it does not like it? Is the world, along with its wisdom, growing morally worse? What is the matter? What has happened that these old faiths should be no longer believed?

In answering these questions, I shall be obliged to re-handle, in another way and for another purpose, some points with which my preaching in the past years has already made you more or less familiar. Yet there are some truths so fundamental, so important, and that it seems to me are so little felt and appreciated by the majority of even liberal men, that perhaps I should not go astray if I repeated them over and over again until they had become familiarized, every-day, matter-of-fact truths to the common consciousness of the world.

We need to start with the thought that this race of ours began in childhood, weak, helpless, ignorant, in the midst of a universe that we have found to be practically infinite. That is, the race began knowing nothing practically,—a little weak, infantile race, looking this way and that, imagining something here, building up its little theories, getting its ideas as best it could from its limited experience, finding out that it was wrong, trying to correct its errors, to get new and better thoughts. And so tentatively, through its struggles age after age, this race of ours has been growing slowly from the beginning. That is the point that you need to keep in mind as the key of this whole great problem. You need to remember that at first it was inevitable that the child-world should have childish thoughts about the world, about God, about itself, about man, about the future. So

that instead of doing as men have been taught to do, accustomed to do for ages, look backward for wisdom, we ought to look backward for childishness. The common idea, that has been almost universal for hundreds of years, that the faiths and the beliefs of the old-time people, of the former times, of the patriarchs, of the prophets, were somehow nearer to God and nearer true than the beliefs of to-day, has sprung out of the theory of things which taught us that the world began in perfection and fell away from it. But, since we have found out that it is not true, we must simply reverse that old conception of things. We must remember that the old age of the world or the mature thoughts of the world, those thoughts that ought to be treated reverently because of their presumed merit, those that are more likely to be nearer the truth, are the thoughts of the grown-up world of to-day and not the thoughts of the childhood world of the olden time. Paul says, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things." So the world, when it was a child, spake as a child, understood as a child, thought as a child; and in the child-understanding, the child-speaking, the child-thinking of the antique world, is the birth of all old religions. From that day until this, however, the world has been growing,—growing through youth, through early manhood, towards mature age. For I wish you to understand that it is my serious conviction that it is only here and there that some little fragment of the world deserves even yet to be called civilized. The people who shall be alive a thousand years from to-day will look back upon and talk of the crudeness of this nineteenth century, with as much grown-up compassion as we regard to-day the crudeness of the Middle Ages, and with equal reason. I speak of this simply to emphasize and enforce

this thought: that this humanity of ours is God's child, born in weakness and in ignorance, but that it has been growing all these ages, these thousands of years, and is yet far from having got its growth. This, then, is the key that we need to keep in mind. We need to remember that every religion has simply been the attempt of this child-world to think the truth about its world, about its God, about itself, about the relation in which it stands to God. For every religion the wide world over from the beginning till to-day has been nothing more nor less than the attempt on the part of man to get into right relations to the Unseen, the Infinite Father. Every religion has made that attempt. And, if Christianity be a grander religion than any that the world has ever seen, it is simply because it is the religion of the most civilized races, the ones that have come nearer to having true thoughts about the universe and God, because it is the religion of those races that have been the most highly developed as to morals, because they have come a little nearer to the truth, not because there is anything exceptional or miraculous about them, not because they stand apart in a class by themselves as having the one true religion, looking down upon all the others as false.

I wish now to have you keep this one thought in mind: that, the farther back you go, the cruder, the more barbaric, the poorer the religion you find; and this is just what you ought to expect. As a race develops, as it becomes wiser, as its social experience gives it higher and better moral ideas, you find religion improving. There is a nobler thought of God; he is looked upon as a better and wiser being. There is a nobler conception of man; and the attempts on the part of man to come into right relation with God are wiser and better and more humane. People no longer think that they can please God by butchering an animal, or by butchering one of

their fellow-men, or by burning one of their children in a furnace, or by casting a baby into a sacred river. These barbaric and cruel ideas belong to barbaric and cruel times; and they are left behind as the world grows wiser.

Now I wish to outline for you, for the sake of clearness and consistency in the treatment of my theme, the scheme of thought that the Christian world has substantially held for centuries. Then I want to explain to you how inevitable it has been that that scheme should be outgrown and left behind. It is only a few hundred years, two or three hundred, — we need not go back of the time when the city of Boston was founded to come to a period when the theory of the universe generally held throughout Christendom was substantially that theory which is figuratively and poetically set forth in Milton's "Paradise Lost."

Suppose I draw here, in the air, a circle. Let that represent the boundary of everything. Let me cut that across the centre by a line that may look like an equator. In the upper half of the circle is heaven, the home of God and the angels and all the celestial hosts. Below, in the lower half, before the world was created, was chaos. But something happened in this heaven. There was rebellion there. We do not know why, except that Milton guesses that, on the day when the Christ, the Son of God, was selected to be placed as ruler under God, a sort of vicegerent over all his creation, Satan rebelled because of pride against that, and led one-third part of the angels into this revolt. He was cast out, and so hell came into being. It was in the lower part of this great circle. If you should draw a line like an antarctic circle near the bottom of this hemisphere, hell would be below that. This was made the home of these rebel angels. Then God determined to create man to repair the loss in heaven; and Jesus was made the minister of God in this work of creation. If

now you draw a small circle, the upper edge of which shall almost touch the equator, and the lower edge of which shall extend half way down to the dome of hell, you will have what we are accustomed to speak of as this solar system, the universe. At the centre of this is the earth, a little fixed spot, though the largest body of the whole, and round it nine concentric, transparent, crystal spheres. To these spheres were attached the moon, the sun, the planets, and to the outer one the fixed stars. These revolved, carrying round the sun, moon, and planets as they moved. The one object of creating this world was to make it the scene of the probation of man who should be placed on it. But he had not been here long before he also was seduced into revolt; and he became the object of the curse and wrath of God instead of his love. Then God determined to redeem this lost race; and he sent his son in the likeness of a man to live and teach and suffer and die here on this little earth. Then we have the miraculous Bible, a revelation, teaching man this love of God, the history of his fall, and giving an account of the work and sufferings of his son, authenticated by miracle. So you will see that the whole plan, the whole scheme of doctrine, fitted this little world, this conception of the universe which was called into being for it; and there is not one single doctrine of all the old Orthodoxy that has not come into being merely for the sake of helping to deliver man from the results of this supposed catastrophe brought about by his fall. This is the kind of world that was believed in for hundreds of years. You will notice that every religion that has ever existed from the beginning has been fitted in this way into the kind of world in which men believed.

Now, the whole orthodox scheme of salvation, with its outcome of heaven for those who accept the redemption offered

and of hell for those who reject it, and its eternal duration,— all these belong to this theory of things. They are all part of it. They have all come into existence because men believed in a great catastrophe called the "Fall"; and this theory of things grew up as the method by which men were to be delivered from its effects. Why cannot we believe it? I wish to tell you of three things that have happened as a reason why we cannot.

I. Remembering that this was a childhood world, in which childhood ideas were accepted, the first thing that we need to note is that there has sprung up in the modern world a science of criticism, which makes it impossible any longer for men to believe that which they used to accept as perfectly credible. The story of "Robert Elsmere" is instructive in this direction. The book turns on this question of historic criticism. The author makes Robert undertake the work of writing a history of France; and, as he studies the authorities to see why men believed thus and thus in the Middle Ages, he is forced to apply the same kind of principles that he applied to the history of France to the history of early Christianity. He found that there was no reason for believing in the miracles of eighteen hundred years ago that was not equally cogent in favor of the miracles reported during the Middle Ages, that the whole thing turned on the same kind of human testimony. He found himself in a world in which it was perfectly natural and easy for people to believe things which in a grown-up world were no longer credible. If you go down the centuries,— for it is *down* as we go towards the beginning,— if you go back down the centuries, you will find that people were ignorant of the laws governing this universe, that they lived in an imaginary, magical world. They had no intellectual difficulties concerning the possibility of this or that happening, any more

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than a child has when it sits delightedly listening to a fairy tale. The child has developed no philosophical, critical, logical difficulties with which its imagination is disturbed; but the moment that man learns what is the kind of universe in which he is living, what are the forces and laws in accordance with which the world is governed, then he suddenly discovers that he can no longer believe those things which he once easily believed. These principles have been applied to the Bible; and we have found out that bibles grow as naturally as grass and flowers, that all the religions of the world have had their bibles that they look upon as miraculous. We have found out that they have been authenticated by miracles, that each has its own cycle of myth and miracle, and that there is no adequate reason why we should set our Christian history and Christian miracles up by themselves, and say that we have reason for faith that the others have not; but, in the early childhood of the world, it was perfectly natural that people should believe certain things that a grown-up world cannot accept. So we found that the creeds of the Church, instead of having a miraculous and infallible origin, have sprung up, just as the Westminster Catechism, the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, the Andover Creed, and all the creeds of the world have sprung up. Men have simply been feeling after the truth, as best they could, in the midst of controversies and struggles; and their belief became the orthodoxy of the time. That is the way every creed has grown. The application of the critical principles to the ease with which they accepted these things, to the growth of the Bible, to the miracle, to the creed,— these things have made it impossible for us any longer to accept the old theory of the universe, the old scheme of supernatural salvation.

II. Then something has happened in the scientific world.

I wish I had time to outline it adequately. I must only point out a few things here and there. I should class it under three different heads: —

1. This old theory of things told us that the world was created only a little while ago; but geology, within the memory of living men,— think how modern that is! — has discovered that this world is millions and millions of years old, proved it beyond a question. For example, we know that chalk is made up of the remains of little creatures that were once alive. We know that it is being deposited to-day, as it was a million years ago, on the sea bottom. We know that it must have taken at least a hundred thousand years to deposit the chalk cliffs of Dover, England. This only as a hint in one department as to the results of geological demonstration. The world, then, instead of being a few thousand years old is millions of years old.

2. Then there has sprung up the science of archæology, of antiquities. We have been studying the remains of human life on this planet; and what do we find? That man, instead of having been created perfect six thousand years ago, has inhabited this planet two hundred, perhaps three hundred, thousand years. Two hundred thousand is probably the lowest limit that competent men would assign to the life of man on this planet; and some have adduced very good reasons for thinking that he must have been here at least three hundred thousand.

3. Then comes another department, called "Biology," the science of life, that which deals with the origin and nature of man. It has been demonstrated beyond question that, instead of man's having been created perfect, he has been developed from the lower forms of life through the lapse of thousands and thousands of years; that there has never been any perfect Adam; that there has never been any

Garden of Eden; that there has never been any serpent, any temptation of the race as such; that there has never been any fall. The very basis of the beliefs of Christendom has been shattered by this science; and, instead of this little, tiny universe, in which this mysterious and wonderful drama of creation and probation has been going on, this heaven and hell in which it has been played, we find ourselves lost in an infinite universe, of which we can imagine no beginning, boundary, or end.

III. There has been a development of the humane quality in man,— that which we call humanitarianism. Man has grown as a moral being, so that it is morally impossible for the human race, the highest and most highly developed parts of it, any longer to accept as true that which it once used to accept without a question. Dr. Channing used to argue out the essential goodness of human nature, and say that it was incredible that man should be totally depraved. But it is not so much on that point that I should lay the stress of moral argument. It is that, in the process of civilization, man has grown so tender-hearted, so loving, so sympathetic, has developed such a keen sense of that which is just and fair, that it is impossible for him any longer to believe in the kind of God that men used to worship without a question. You will not be surprised at this, if you are familiar with human history. Just think of it! Go back to only a few years before the Revolution in France, and what do you find? You find a king on the throne, jolly, good-natured, selfish, thinking that the whole kingdom was made for himself, so that, when they spoke of the State, he says, "*I* am the State"; who gives to one of his followers — a favorite, perhaps — *carte blanche* authority to arrest anybody that he does not like, and cast him into the Bastile, and he lies there, going in a young man perhaps, and starves and

rots year after year until he is gray and haggard and perhaps insane. This does not trouble the king in his pleasures. He does not lie awake nights thinking of the suffering he has caused. This kind of cruelty, this kind of barbarism, this lack of sensitive sympathy concerning the suffering of others, used to be practically universal; and the king was looked upon as having a perfect right to do with his subjects anything that he pleased. It was out of such a condition of things, out of such social barbarism, that sprang up the popular conception of God as a supreme, selfish egotist and despot of the universe, who could sit on his throne and arrange everything for his own glory, appointing this one to heaven simply to illustrate the beauty of his grace and to sing his praise forever, and that one to hell simply to illustrate the severity of his own justice and his power to punish with infinite cruelty. It was natural that out of that social, barbaric, cruel condition should spring such a conception of God as that. It was natural enough then that men should believe it; but to-day men cannot believe it. Were there no criticism to tell us that the Bible is not infallible, to tell us of the natural origin of all religions; were there no criticism to tell us of the natural origin of creeds; were there no science to tell us that the old conception of the universe was as a baby's playhouse compared to the infinite majesty of what we now know to be true, to tell us that man has been on this planet hundreds of thousands of years; had it not been demonstrated that man has been developed from lower forms of life,—were these things all unknown, the growing civilization of the world, the goodness of the human heart, would have made it impossible for the world any longer to believe in the cruel egotist sitting on the throne of the universe, and governing all merely for his own glory. The world is too good for that kind of a God any longer.

So you find that the churches of every name, though they claim to hold the creeds, do put on one side more and more those things that the reverence and tenderness and sympathy and love and goodness of the human heart will no longer bear. And so we hear men like Whittier saying,

> "But still, my human hands are weak
> To hold your iron creeds."

The revolt of the heart demands at last that the infinite God of the universe should be as good as a good man. These are the reasons why there is a break-up of the old Orthodoxy, why men do not any longer believe in and accept it.

And what is the significance of these reasons? Does it mean that the world is less religious, less moral, less reverent? Does it mean degeneracy, decay? It means that this human race of ours, starting as a child, is on the road towards manhood; that it is growing, that it has grown, too intelligent, too tender-hearted, too good, any longer to bear the intellectual contradictions and puerilities and crudenesses and cruelties of the old theories of religion. We shall find, I believe, that the world has not outgrown religion, not even outgrown the Church or the church idea, but that all we love, all we care for, not only remains, but is to go on, becoming ever more and more.

THE ROMAN CHURCH.

In the summer of 1883, I stood in the well-known church of St. Paul's without, at Rome,— so called because it stands outside of what used to be the walls of the Eternal City. This church is one of magnificent wealth and beauty. It has many pillars made of very rare and valuable stones, the gifts of cities, states, nations, and kings. But the one thing that attracted my attention more than all the rest was a long row of portraits above the painted glory of the windows, portraits of the popes of the Roman Church. The series began with that of Peter; and it came down through all the ages from that time until the present, leaving vacant circular spaces to contain those who should occupy the papal chair in the coming centuries.

This, you will note, is typical of the claim which the Roman Church has always made. It stands as representative of the one true Church of God from the beginning until now. Its claim is that it has been presided over by an unbroken series of popes, reaching back to him into whose living hands the Son of God himself gave the keys of universal dominion both on earth and in heaven. A magnificent claim; and magnificently, we must confess, has the Church endeavored to substantiate and carry out that claim.

But is the claim true? It is a serious question on the part of scholars whether Peter ever saw the city of Rome. We know, beyond any question, that the old first church of

Jerusalem was a Unitarian church; for any thought of a trinity had not yet dawned upon the Church's horizon. We know that there was no organization then in existence like the Church at Rome. We know that its doctrines, most of them, were not in existence. We know that there was no bishop of that first church. We know that Peter, during his lifetime, was never recognized as having any sort of primacy among the apostles. If he was ever in Rome at all,— and this is a point worthy of your serious attention,— he was there as the organizer of a faction in opposition to Paul, who occupied the field before him. We know that Paul was there; that he organized in Rome one of the most important of all the ancient churches,— that church to which he addressed the most important of all his epistles. We know that Paul represented a new departure in the church; that he was opposed by the older apostles, by all those who believed that they had received the final word from the Master. Paul claimed to have received a later revelation. At any rate, he preached a broader, more humanitarian gospel; and if, as I said, Peter was ever in Rome, he was there at the head of a faction which opposed and attempted to discredit the work of that apostle who had preceded him, and not as the first organizer of Christianity in the Eternal City.

Perhaps it is worth my while at this point to raise a question concerning this passage of Scripture that the Roman Church has always made the basis of its claim and as establishing the primacy of Peter.

It seems incredible that if, in the presence of the other apostles, Peter had had any such power conferred upon him by him whom they all reverenced as Master, whatever their theory of his nature and origin, under those circumstances this primacy should not have been acknowledged at the time. But we know, as a matter of historic truth, that it was an

afterthought; and I believe that it can be established as the result of sound criticism that these verses themselves were an afterthought,— not part of the original gospel, but interpolated, invented, for a special purpose in after years. For we have an example of such a thing, which shows clearly the spirit of the age, and what the men who were reaching out for power and supremacy in the ancient church were capable of. There was a whole series of what claimed to be the decisions and decrees on the part of the Church of Rome, settling controversies that had arisen in different parts of the empire; and it is now settled beyond any sort of question that almost every one of these decretals, as they are called, were forged,— forged for the purpose of establishing the primacy of Rome, forged that they might be appealed to in testimony of the fact, which then began to be claimed, that Rome had always been acknowledged as the head of the Christian Church.

As a matter of fact, then, we know that during the first two or three centuries, before Christianity attained its supremacy in the Roman Empire, it was bitterly persecuted; and during those ages of persecution the Church had no desire, even if it had had the power, to make itself a grand organization. Its policy was rather to hide itself out of sight until the storm of persecution should blow over. And it was only after the persecuting age had passed by, after the conversion of Constantine, after the Church had climbed to the throne, that it approached anything like the organization which it represents to-day. There were only scattered churches in Corinth, in Ephesus, in Rome, in the different great cities of the empire, with here and there handfuls of believers in the smaller places, the belief growing gradually, but growing all the time,— growing as the grasses and the flowers grow in spring, out of sight, until the sun of pros-

perity had risen in the sky, and they could show themselves without danger of being frost-bitten and killed.

Then the Church organized itself. Then there were bishops, claiming individual power to rule over these separate churches. And very naturally the bishop of Rome and the church at Rome would arrogate to themselves the supremacy, superiority over those bishops that were at the head of smaller organizations or in less important cities. The bishop and the church which were at the capital of the empire would naturally be looked up to as occupying at least a more significant position than the bishop of any other Christian organization.

But the time came when the seat of empire was changed. Constantine moved his capital to what for the time was called New Rome,— Constantinople. Then the bishop of Rome, who had already begun to claim the supremacy over all other churches, who had begun to claim the power to settle disputes both as to doctrine and as to organization, ritual, practice,— disputes that might rise between churches, between bishops,— began to press more strongly the primacy of Peter. Not that the claim did not exist before; but he emphasized it, because there was danger that the metropolis, the new capital on the Bosphorus, would supersede his power. But the claim had been allowed for so long on the part of the neighboring churches that it was not easy to dislodge the power that had been established on the banks of the Tiber; and the neighboring bishops naturally appealed in their disputes to him who was recognized as the most important one, at least in all that region.

At last the time came — I pass over the steps in detail, because it is not necessary that I should go into particulars now, as well as because I have not time — when the Roman emperor sided with the Roman bishop, giving him the advan-

tage which was so decisive at that time, of the temporal power, the emperor back of the bishop. Of course, after that there was no power that could dispute the claim of the papal see.

This power, then, grew as the ages went by, until universal Christendom submitted. No, not quite. The pope of Rome has always claimed, at least in modern centuries, to represent alone the Church of God; but the whole Greek branch of the Church split off from the Roman, refusing to recognize its claim. It charged the Roman see with heresy, and refused to recognize its power, so that there has never been a day from the first when the claim of the Roman Church to be universal, catholic in the broadest sense of the word, has ever been true. But it did assert its supremacy over nearly all Europe, over nearly all that had constituted the great Roman Empire.

Now I wish, not at all in a spirit of opposition, but as sympathetically as I can, to note some features of the Roman Church during its grandest days.

The Roman Church in the main rightly ruled Christendom, because it summed up and represented in itself at that time all the best there was in Christendom. In those ages, the Church perfectly satisfied the intellect of man. There was no battle then between philosophy and the Church, or between science and the Church, between the thoughts of men and the claims of the papacy. Nearly all the intellect in Europe was in the service of the Church. Science wrought within the limits of her claims. Philosophy speculated only within the limits of her claims. Art lived apparently only to serve the Church. Music only attempted to give expression to the aspirations of the Church. So that the whole intellect of the time was satisfied with the Church's theories, the Church's conception of the world, the Church's thought

about God, the Church's thought about the nature and origin of man, the Church's thought about destiny, about all the great things that concern human life. The Church's thought at that time was substantially man's thought, so that it existed by virtue of the grandest of all rights, the right of summing up, expressing, and satisfying the thought of the world.

Not only did the Church satisfy the thought: it was the natural, legitimate, fitting expression of the religious aspirations of man. There was no emotion, no hope, no fear, no worship, no prayer, that the human heart seemed capable of that did not find fitting and complete utterance for itself through the channels of the Church. It not only satisfied man intellectually, it satisfied him religiously.

One other thing. Whatever may be true of the Church to-day, we must remember that in those ages, for some hundreds of years, the Church stood for humanity. It was the grandest humanitarian organization on the face of the earth. It stood for democracy. It stood for the essentially human as against race, as against feudal power, as against kings and emperors.

Consider for a moment the magnificent power of the Church during these centuries and the magnificent way in which she wielded it. Think how it stood for man. It was an organization spread all over Europe,— not Roman, not French, not Spanish, not German, not English, simply human. In her churches, kings and beggars knelt on one footing in the presence of the one Supreme Being whose greatness dwarfed and blotted out all our petty human distinctions. Consider the educative power of the fact that at that time the papal see itself was freely open, as our presidency is to-day, to the lowest-born peasant in all Europe. It was not an uncommon thing for a peasant to become pope. Brains, character, the natural power of leadership,— these in the

Church during those ages came to the front, so that, when a man reached the papal chair, whether he was good according to our standard or bad, wise or ignorant, you might be sure that he was there by virtue of natural powers of leadership, not because of birth or any distinction of nationality or of any other type or kind of power.

The Church, then, during these ages was the great representative of man. It claimed and it exerted also supreme power over all kingdoms; and, in the main, it exerted it wisely. In the main, it exerted that power for the benefit of humanity. It beat down the tyrant, the oppressor, him who was so mighty that there was no other power in Europe that could match him. It stood up for the weak and the oppressed. It was the champion, the ally of man against kings, against lords, against despotisms of every kind. The Church, then, in these three great regards — intellectually, religiously, and so far as the humanities were concerned — represented the best there was in Europe.

Let us now note one or two things that can be said about it in some other respects. The doctrines, the creeds, of the Catholic Church, were substantially those which came to be the creeds of Protestant Orthodoxy. And I am free to say that, in many of those points wherein the papal doctrine to-day differs from the orthodox Protestant, I am compelled to sympathize with the Church of Rome. Let me give you one or two illustrations for example.

The doctrine of the Roman Church concerning inspiration, concerning the Bible, seems to me much more rational than that of Protestant Orthodoxy. The Church claims that it is not the Book primarily that is inspired. It is the Church — the living body of God on earth — that is inspired by the presence of the Spirit of God, which is its breath. It claims that the Bible is only one utterance of the

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Church, of no more authority than any utterance which it may give of its beliefs or aspirations to-day.

Then take the doctrine of the Catholics concerning miracles. The Protestant claim is that there was a little time during the first century when miracles were performed; but all that we have to-day by which we can authenticate them or attempt to do so is a record that says that certain people saw such and such wondrous things performed eighteen hundred years ago. Who they were that performed them, who saw them, or who it was that made the record concerning them, of these things we are mainly ignorant. What does the Church claim? The Roman Church claims that this living body of God on earth, inspired by the eternally present spirit, is capable to-day, when there is occasion for it, of exercising miraculous powers precisely as it did in the earlier centuries; and this seems to me of the two much more the rational claim. These only as illustrations.

One other point I wish to mention, and that is the magnificent organization of the Roman Church. Never in the history of this world has there been anything to match it. The only thing that in any way can be spoken of as a parallel is the wondrous organization of the Roman Empire; but that was secular, political. Never has a church been so wondrously, wisely organized for power, for dominion, as is the Roman Church. Consider, for a moment, how strong that is where all Protestant organizations are weak. It had a place within its limits and a work for every man, every woman, every child, who cared to consecrate himself to it. The woman of fashion, weary of the world, widowed, perhaps left dependent in mid-life, had her refuge, her work, and her consolation in the Church. The old soldier, weary of fighting, weary perhaps of dissipation, having drunk the cup of life to the very dregs, was offered an asylum in the

Church,—a place to reform, to cast off his old life, to live a new life of consecration and of hope. So there was not a single power, faculty, or aspiration of the human heart that the Roman Church at that time did not in a measure, at any rate, appeal to and satisfy.

One thing more I must mention,—one service that we have no right to forget. After the Roman Empire was broken up, Europe was inundated, swamped, by barbarism; and to the Church we owe it that the wrecks, the fragments, all that was left of the ancient learning of the world, was preserved in its ark, and carried across the flood, to be landed on that new continent that represents the modern world. The Church was at that time the preserver of the world's learning and its hope of a future. In the monasteries up in the mountains, on Mount Sinai, in deserts in Asia, in the forests of Northern Europe, clear to England, these pious, devoted, learning-loving monks spent their lives in copying and caring for the masterpieces of ancient literature, keeping them for the time when Europe should wake up from its long sleep and desire to quench its thirst once more at these perennial fountains of living waters. And just here in this service which the Catholic Church rendered to the modern world lay the seeds, at any rate, of its decay. For one thing you must note; for it is so important that the whole argument turns upon it. Unfortunately for the Catholic Church,—and yet it could never have been the Catholic Church on any other terms,—it had advanced the claim of absolute infallibility. It represented God on earth. Its theological utterance was the very voice of God. Its theories concerning the world, concerning God, concerning the past history of man and his destiny,—these theories it announced, not as guesses, not as speculations, not as the result of the best study that could be given to the subject, but as the

undoubted and eternal truth of God. And yet what were these theories? The theory of the earth, of the heavens, of the creation and nature of man, of God, the purpose in creation, the method of redemption,— all these things were either inherited legends that had come down from an uncritical and ignorant barbaric past or they were the speculations, the guesses, of people then living, the philosophic attempts to render the best account of things that they could. But, whatever their origin, the Roman Church accepted these as infallible revelations of God, and committed its claim to infallibility to the test of their truth.

Then what happened? This ancient learning that the Church had been preserving began to be studied when the old conflicts were a little lulled and the people had time for thought. Schools sprang up in the East, in Spain, in Paris, at Oxford, where this ancient learning was studied anew. People were roused again to the interest which the old Greeks had begun to show in science and in philosophical speculations. Then Columbus sailed, and the flat world became round. The mariner's compass was invented, gunpowder came into use as a mode of warfare; then the printing-press followed; and the intellectual enthusiasm of the world was aroused. The world had begun visibly to grow.

What was the result? The inevitable result that the hard and fast and infallible theories of the Church were burst through on every hand; and the Church began its long battle, which it has kept up from that day to this, for intellectual supremacy. It could not admit a mistake. It could not change. Therefore it must fight. It must fight the discoveries in astronomy. It must fight the new light that had come into chemistry. It must fight the new physics, the new geology, the new biology, the new political economy, the new social ideas of the world. So it is perfectly consist-

ent and in keeping that almost the last thing Pius IX., the first pope declared to be infallible in his own person, should die just as he had launched his universal curse against all modern learning and modern civilization. But, mark you, it is no fault of the Church, except that the Church made the mistake of claiming to be infallible. It only means that the world has outgrown the Church at every point, so that intellectually it no longer satisfies the thought of man. New knowledge of this world, of God, of man and his origin and nature, new knowledge concerning all these points that the Church had declared forever settled, has sprung up; and the Church with its infallible theories simply cannot adopt these without suicide. It must protect its claim to infallibility or accept the modern world. It is nothing less than a duel to the death between the intellect of man and the Roman Church. And those who believe in God and in truth have very little question as to where shall lie the victory.

On the other hand, the religious nature of man began to expand. It desired to express itself through new rituals, new creeds, to give utterance to new thoughts about God and to these new and higher aspirations. It began to have a better thought of God than that which had been embalmed, like a mummy, in the old creeds. It began to have a better thought about man, about society. So there was this revolt in the interest of this determination to be free, to utter and express these grander and higher religious aspirations of the world. So Luther led off half Germany; so England broke away from the Catholic Church; and so all the highest and finest thinkers of the world, with few exceptions, have followed or are following their example.

Then, once more. I said that one of the grandest things about the Church at the time when it held its supremacy

over everything was the fact that it stood for man against tyrants and kings. The attitude of the Church has been reversed, and reversed with perfect naturalness and of necessity. The Church had claimed to be infallible, to have a right to supremacy; and, when that supremacy was challenged, when its right was denied, then it began to reach out after power to enforce its supremacy. What must it do, then, but ally itself with those powers that it had once defied? It must have kings and lords and nobles at its back, holding the temporal sword while it wielded the spiritual. So the Church, in a perfectly natural, logical way, instead of being the champion of humanity, became its tyrant; and it has played the part of repression, attempting to keep the people down, ignorant, submissive to its decrees, for the last several hundred years.

Through this process which has now been going on for a long time, what has happened in Europe? I wish to hint at one or two things. And, if there is anybody in Boston who is still trembling as to the possible plans, projects, and machinations of the Roman Church, I wish he would carefully note a few historic facts. It seems to me utterly incomprehensible how any man who has an intelligent idea of the history of the Catholic Church for the last five hundred years can stand in any sort of awe or fear in regard to its future. Why, it was only a little while ago that Rome held Europe in its grasp. Where is it now? All the leading thinkers, the leading people of Europe, look upon it with half-contemptuous pity as an antiquated and outgrown thing.

How is it in Italy, its seat and home? Colonel Ingersoll said in an address some years ago, when he was inveighing bitterly against the Church, as is his wont, that the Roman Church had "reduced Italy to a hand-organ and Spain to a guitar," which is substantially true. And, if Italy to-day

is coming to be something more than a hand-organ, it is because of Victor Emanuel and United Italy. It means the taking away of the temporal power of the pope and the establishment of the capital at Rome; taking the education of the people out of the hands of the clergy and intrusting it to the secular power; the disestablishing of monasteries and seizing their revenues and lands and applying them to the use of men instead of to the Church. There is no place on the face of this earth to-day where Rome is weaker than at Rome. And yet people are trembling with fear because, apparently, they do not know history.

How is it in France? Those who claim to know will tell you that France is made up of two things,— popular superstition and acquiescence in the rites of the churches, so far as observances go, and wide and almost universal irreligion.

How is it in Spain? I have been there this summer. What is the history of the Church in Spain? Spain used to be the mightiest power on earth, and the Catholic Church was at the head of its power. What is it to-day? Even in Spain, which is most Catholic of all Catholic countries, the churches are rich, the people are poor. The people are ignorant, superstitious; and this great Catholic country is so weak that Europe, the great civilized nations of the world, never even stop to pay it the poor compliment of asking its opinion on any live subject. Spain is counted out. It lies one side of the great onward march of the world. Why not? The Catholics drove out the Moors with their learning. They drove out the Jews with their learning and enterprise, and for hundreds of years cut off the head of any man who dared to give utterance to a new thought. According to its own claim, that the best, the most intelligent, the most virtuous people are those who are serving the Church in official capacities, for centuries it has carried out its programme of

making them celibates, and letting only the meanest, most ignorant, and most superstitious and vicious people have any children. What can you expect of a country after a policy like that, continued for ages? Naturally enough, the end is the "guitar" and the bull-fight.

The power of Rome, then, is broken in Europe.

But what of this country? Thousands of people are afraid that it is going to be re-established here. Why? Has Rome converted in America any great leaders, political, religious, or intellectual? Note one thing. What the wise people think in one age the common people are going to think in the next. What are the wise people thinking in America? The number of Catholics is increasing in America, it is said. Of course it is, and for two causes,— chiefly through immigration; and, when they reach here, these people have children that they train in the Church. Is it increasing in any other sense in this country? When you bring a man from Europe who was a Catholic before he left Europe and land him in Castle Garden, you do not double the number of Catholics in the world. You simply move one from one place to another. If I had a pile of pebbles on this platform, and should carry them from one side to the other, there would be no more pebbles when I got through. These are the ways in which the Catholic Church is increasing.

Now let me attempt fairly and simply as I may to forecast what probably is to be the future of the Church. The Roman Church will exist perhaps some centuries yet. I do not know. It will exist, and it ought to exist, so long as it best satisfies the thought, the religious aspirations, and the moral needs of any class in the community. The only way that religions are killed is by being outgrown. They never are killed by direct attack, by argument, by abuse; and cer-

tain persons of this city who are wasting their time and their temper in the abuse of the Roman Church would do well to learn this fact,— that abuse of this sort only results in reaction. It touches the pride, the character, the race prejudice and religious enthusiasm of the people, and welds them together. Almost the only fear I have of the Roman Catholics in the next few years in this country turns not upon what the Roman Church itself is likely to do half as much as what other people are likely to do concerning it. If you only leave them free, treat them justly and fairly, they are subject to all the influences of this modern world.

I would make only one exception to this general tolerance. If it be true that certain priests, Jesuit or otherwise, have taken a solemn oath of political allegiance to the pope of Rome, while they have come here to become citizens, they are guilty of perjury; and, if they engage in any external acts of positive disloyalty, then I would treat them,— not on account of their religion at all, but on account of their criminal attitude towards our great country and its interests,— I would treat them exactly as I would any other disloyal persons, restrain them of their liberty or banish them from the land. Otherwise, leave the Roman Church to precisely the same freedom that we claim for ourselves. I believe that the spirit of our democratic ideas, the growing intelligence of the world, the growing liberality of thought concerning that which makes up the essential thing in religious life, the nobler conception of God, the higher ideal of man, of society, the brighter hopes for the future,— these are destined gradually to disintegrate the Church. It will exist, as I said, for many years perhaps; but it is going through a process of change.

Take as significant the attitude of the Catholics in Ireland. The pope published a bull interfering with what they re-

garded as their political rights, their attempt to gain Home Rule. What did they do? They were on the eve of revolt. They said: "We will take our religion from Rome, but not our politics. The pope has gone beyond the limits of his rightful claim." And what did the pope do? The pope, perhaps for the first time in history, explained to Catholic Ireland that he did not quite mean what they had supposed. Did the pope ever do that before? Did a Catholic people like the loyal, warm-hearted, enthusiastic Irish ever dare to take that attitude against a pope before? There may be a few similar cases in history. But just now they are significant of a temper that even the pope cannot tamper with prudently.

And how is it here in this country? I believe that nine-tenths of the Catholic parents of America are in their hearts as loyal to America and to the public-school system, for instance, as we are. Now and then, under the influence of a few enthusiastic leaders, they attempt to galvanize into life the parochial schools; but, when the test, the strain comes, the Catholic parent says, "I take my religion from Rome; but, in the matter of educating my children and how I shall vote, that is my own affair." In other words, the power of the Church is weakening. It dares not assert its old-time claim in its old-time way. Democracy, education, social growth, those things that we mean by the world's advance, are anti-Romish of necessity; and the Church is feeling their power. When a frost comes in spring and freezes over the little lake or pond or river, you do not think that the glacial age is coming back again. It was only a cold snap of a night. You know the sun is coming north, and that spring is in the air. So, let there be a Romish reaction here or there, who fears? God's sun is wheeling into the heavens, and its influence is telling on all the earth.

I know not how I can set forth my conception of the past and the probable future of the Catholic Church better than by comparing it, so far as the comparison will hold, to the history of an iceberg.

Away up in the north, the place of eternal snows, the glacier gradually flows down from the mountain and out over the land until a huge fragment of ice hangs over the sea. The law of gravity by and by severs its connection with its parent glacier, and the iceberg is free. Hard and blue, and towering and grand, but threatening, it drifts towards the south. There is no change apparently day after day, week after week, month after month. The sunshine is on it; free, warm winds are blowing against its sides. Warmer waters begin to surround it. If it strikes against a ship, woe be to those who are sailing the seas! But gradually a change comes on it. It is honeycombed at last by the almost imperceptible effects of those influences that are playing about it; and some day, though it look almost as mighty as of old, anything,— a pistol-shot, a wind, a change of current,— and it totters and disappears, and the sea is open for the commerce and the pleasure of the world.

LIBERAL ORTHODOXY.

I HESITATE somewhat in electing to preach upon this subject, because, as I face it, I see two dangers to which I am exposed. In the first place, I must, perforce, do something which I am very loath to do,— I must repeat myself. I must take up and handle again, though from another point of view and with another purpose in mind, certain points of doctrine with which you perhaps regard yourselves as already sufficiently familiar. My theme, however, will compel me to do this, because I cannot define Liberal Orthodoxy and try to tell what it is in any other way.

Then another danger confronts me. I fear lest my purpose, my motive, in it all may be misconstrued, lest I may be looked upon as an accuser of my brethren, lest I may not be regarded as speaking from a stand-point of earnest human sympathy.

In spite, however, of these dangers, I see not how I can pass by a great theme like this. My purpose in this whole course of sermons is to bring you into acquaintance first, and so into sympathy, with the great phases of religious thought and life that make up the present time. I wish you to comprehend this age. I wish you to see what are the religious forces at work, and to understand, so far as I am able to teach you, which way human progress lies,— what you ought to help, what you ought to oppose, that we may co-operate with God in helping on the coming of that "far-off

divine event to which the whole creation moves." For, though as I grow older I am more and more convinced that the influence which any one of us may possess is comparatively small, sometimes even discouragingly small, I am also convinced that, since the movement of an age depends upon the majority force of the individuals that make up the world at any particular time, so it is our bounden duty to see as clearly as we can, and cast our influence in the direction of hope and growth for man.

In introducing this theme, I must remind you once more of certain things with which you are familiar, though perhaps the illustrations which I use will not be repetitions of any that I have used before. I want to suggest to you the great change of theologic climate, so to speak, which is going on.

It is within the memory of some now living that the late Abner Kneeland was arrested in Boston, prosecuted, and imprisoned for his religious and theological opinions. And we are glad, for the credit of our Unitarianism, that the gentle, wise, strong, the foreseeing man, Channing, was the one clergyman in the city who came forward for his defence, — not at all because he sympathized with him or believed in his views, but because he believed in his right to honestly hold and to honestly express his views, whatever they might be. But this is the significance of the point that I have in mind,— that hundreds of men are holding and expressing much more radical and heretical views than those maintained by Mr. Kneeland, and nobody thinks of raising a question.

Something like twenty years ago, a personal friend of mine, Rev. Henry Powers, was settled as a Congregationalist minister in the State of Connecticut. For the first time, as I believe, in history, he departed from the settled, or established, usage, and invited not only the Congregationalist churches, but, I think, the Universalist church of the town

where he was to be settled to sit in the council and Rev. James Freeman Clarke to preach the installation sermon. This was a very hopeful sign, though it was not at all a logical thing to do. But we are not discussing the logic of it at present. We are simply noting the changes going on. He was so far ahead of his time, however, that measures were taken to prosecute him for heresy; and he would undoubtedly have been so prosecuted and possibly expelled, if he had not opportunely been called to Brooklyn, thus escaping from the jurisdiction of his prosecutors. Only a little while ago,— note the change,— when a Congregationalist minister was to be settled in Springfield, the Unitarian and Universalist ministers were invited to sit in the council, and, so far as I know, nothing more has happened than that two or three of the stricter churches that were invited declined to join in the movement. But nothing like prosecution has even been threatened.

I have here on my desk a book called "The Kernel and the Husk." I brought it simply to hold it up to you as one of the signs of the times, one of the indications of this great change which is going on. It is written by Dr. Abbott, one of the scholarly and critical men of the Church of England. So highly is his scholarship regarded that he was the one who was selected to write the critical article in regard to the composition of the Gospels for the Encyclopædia Britannica, one of the most learned works in the world. All the different departments are committed to the hands of specialists. And what is this book, "The Kernel and the Husk"? In it, the author attempts to strip off the husk, that he may find the kernel of truth. And what does he strip off? He strips off the whole story of the creation of the world, the Garden of Eden, and the fall of man. He clears away completely the doctrine of the Trinity. He makes Jesus a purely

human being, born like the rest of us, dying like the rest of us, the only peculiarity being that he was so completely filled with the spirit of God that he is inclined to regard him as having been perfect,— the ideal man,— worthy even of worship, and to be looked upon as an authority in regard to spiritual matters, but only a man. He strips away all the miracles. He thinks that they are simply accretions that have grown up round the central kernel of truth. And of course he is no believer in any doctrine of everlasting punishment. He has only a message of grand hope and trust for the world.

Only a little while ago, a very significant volume was published by certain ministers of the Established Church in Scotland, in which they took substantially the same ground occupied by Dr. Abbott. And I hold in my hand a report of part of the proceedings of a great meeting held by the ministers of the Established Church of England last October, in Manchester. Canon Farrar on that occasion spoke in the strongest way concerning the Church's old attitude on the subject of the nature and the destiny of mankind. He published a volume only a few years ago, called "Eternal Hope," in which he argued against the old doctrine. He says here that this for a time brought upon him no end of opprobrium; that he was looked upon in many quarters as a heretic, and he says, what many would be glad to forget and many go so far as to deny, that it is not long since it was authoritatively taught by the whole Church that those not within its fold were to look forward to a destiny of endless material suffering; and he denounces that doctrine with all the power of which he is capable, and rejoices in the fact that a barbarism like that is being outgrown. Canon Farrar is one of the scholars and mouthpieces of the Church of England, being connected with

Westminster Abbey and one of its most popular preachers. At this same congress, another prominent clergyman spoke of this doctrine as a hideous nightmare from which the world was at last beginning to awake.

You are familiar with the fact that the attendants at large numbers of our churches to-day, those called "Orthodox," will say to you as you meet them: "Our minister is almost as liberal as yours. He no longer preaches the old doctrine of foreordination; he does not preach the old ideas about the Trinity; he does not preach everlasting punishment any more. He is a very liberal man." Now and then, they will admit, he brings out some one of the old doctrines merely to let the people understand that he knows that it is still in the creed, or to satisfy some who are not content with the more humanitarian preaching; but the staple of his preaching, they will say, is pure humanitarianism, love to God and love to man,— his duty here in this world and this hope for all mankind. No matter for the present whether the man is logical in so preaching, whether he ought to do it occupying the position he does; I merely note the fact.

Only a short time ago, in connection with the discussions with which you are familiar in the American Board as to the preparation for going as a foreign missionary to the heathen, one of the best known clergymen in this immediate neighborhood made the statement that, according to the decision of the American Board as to what constituted fitness for the work of a missionary to the heathen, there was but one Congregational church in the city of Boston whose minister was so qualified. In other words, this clergyman in a public address made the statement that every one of the Congregational ministers of this city was a liberal orthodox, with the exception of one. And I know well, by personal conversation with ministers here and there, how this old scheme of

Orthodoxy is suffering a "sea-change" into something "strange," whether it be "rich" or not,—into something unknown to the fathers and that would not be recognized by them.

Now I wish to define Liberal Orthodoxy, and make it clear to you just what it consists in, that we may see the meaning, the tendency, the drift, and what perhaps is to be the outcome.

If you study a minister who occupies at the present time a Liberal Orthodox position, you will find, as I have already hinted, that he is distinguished, so far as the fact of his church creed is concerned, more for the things that he does not preach than for anything else. The first impression that he will make upon you is one of question, possibly surprise, that, occupying the place he does, he no longer touches certain doctrines which have been recognized as a part of the orthodox scheme from the beginning. He lays his whole emphasis on trying to make men better; that is, as you would say, he is practically a Unitarian. He is preaching for this world; he is trying to build up human society here; he is trying to make men honest, true, kind, helpful towards their fellow-men.

Now, in order that I may clearly define the position of men like this, I must encounter the danger of repetition. I must take two or three of the great historic doctrines of the Church, and let you see what they are, and then tell you the position that Liberal Orthodoxy holds concerning them.

In the first place, let us look at the Bible. What was the old orthodox view of the Bible? You know well enough. A hundred years ago, it was looked upon by all orthodox churches as an infallible book, a revelation miraculously given to the world, just as miraculously as though it had been handed down by the hands of God himself out of the

clouds, as tradition said that the tables of stone were given to Moses. They believed that the words of the Bible were as literally written by God as though they had been the work of his fingers, as it was said the ten commandments were written on tables of stone. Some of the old Puritans, soon after the Reformation, went so far as to say and teach that every word, letter, and every significant point that played a part in the punctuation or emphasis, was inspired. You will see that that was a perfectly consistent, logical doctrine. The moment that a point like that is surrendered, those who give it up are, as they say we Unitarians are, all at sea. But it was found that this could not be held. For example, Professor Park used to make a point like this. He referred to the passage in John, where it describes the disciples sailing over the lake near Capernaum, when Jesus is said to come to them, walking on the water, after they had rowed five-and-twenty or thirty furlongs. Professor Park used to say that they had rowed either twenty-five or thirty furlongs; both statements could not be true, and the Holy Ghost knew which it was, but he chose to express himself in this indefinite, human fashion. He used to refer to the inscription placed over the head of Jesus. Even the casual reader knows that these inscriptions are not alike in the different Gospels. Of course there was really but one inscription; it was not both, or all three. But, of course, the Holy Ghost knew which it was; and, if there had been a verbal inspiration, he would have reported it with precise accuracy. Points like this compel a modification of the old verbal theory. It was then changed into the plenary theory,—the theory that the Bible was all God's word, and that it taught all necessary truth with no admixture of error in any vital matter. This was the plenary theory of inspiration, and this is the one declared in all the standards pub-

lishing the orthodox doctrine still concerning the Bible; yet this theory is given up by all those men who call themselves Liberal Orthodox. They admit that the Bible is full of errors. They admit that it has mistakes in its history; that it is wrong in its science; that it is full of myth, legend, allegory; that it is full of misconceptions, human ways of looking at things.

I hold in my hand a book called "The Heart of the Creeds," by an Episcopal clergyman of this city. His purpose is to state what are the doctrines of the Church, giving the historic creeds in the light of modern knowledge. He does not claim to surrender any of them: he simply remoulds them in the light of higher and better thought. But it is one of the most curious, most naïve pieces of work that I have ever seen; for there is not a single one of the doctrines that is not so modified as to modify it out of existence and leave something utterly unlike it in its place. He here admits, what I have just said, that the Bible is full of legend, myth, allegory, mistakes in history, in science, in all sorts of directions; but he holds that, in spite of this, it somehow and somewhere contains all essential truth,— all that it is necessary for a man to know. But, the moment you take a position like that, who is to decide as to what is the essential religious truth that all men need to know? It comes simply to this. The moment that theory of the Bible is maintained or attempted to be maintained, this is the result: men go through the Bible, and select such things as they like or such things as they think ought to be true, and decide in their own minds that that is what God really meant to teach. Of course, you will see how utterly foundationless, how utterly illogical, is such a position; for, the moment you accept that, you have as many Bibles as there are readers.

Let us contrast the doctrine of the old creed and of

Liberal Orthodoxy concerning the nature and condition of man. You know what the old belief was,—that man was created perfect in the beginning and has fallen, and that now he is at enmity with God, corrupt through and through, incapable of doing right, a rebel against God, deserving his eternal wrath, and sure to feel its infliction, unless he escape in the one special way. But this book and the most liberal preachers to-day teach nothing of the kind. They have modified the doctrine of the fall of man until it is only an allegory, a legend, a tradition, a bit of poetry.

I was talking, not a great while ago, with some one who said he still believed in the fall,— not in any actual fall of the race, such as the Bible tells us about as occurring several thousand years ago, but something like this: he believed that each one of us, as we come to consciousness, wake up to an experience of the fact that we are sinful beings, imperfect, that there is evil in us; and this is the fall,— a fall occurring not to all of the race at once, but occurring in the consciousness of each individual as he develops a knowledge of right and wrong. But do you not see how utterly misleading it is for a man to face a general congregation and say to them that he believes in the fall of man and to talk about the fall of man, when this is what he really has in mind? The plain matter of fact is that he has utterly surrendered what the creeds mean when they speak of the fall of man, and he has put something entirely unlike it in its place.

These liberal orthodox do not believe in any total depravity, in any ruin of the race. They believe that we are sinful, imperfect beings,— we all know enough about that,— that we are not ideals, that we are struggling and are battling against the lower nature and climbing up into the higher life. This is what they mean by the doctrine of the fall.

Come to the doctrine of the Trinity, and see what changes have passed over that. I need not stop to tell you the old ideas. If you care to go into it, you can look at the authoritative statements I published in my book on "Religious Reconstruction." The definition of the Trinity was that there are three distinct and eternal personalities in the one God. What, now, is the belief concerning the Trinity? I do not risk contradiction in making the statement that there is not a single one of these liberal orthodox preachers who believes the doctrine of the Trinity at all. I mean the Trinity as stated and as it stands in the acknowledged authoritative creeds of the Church.

What do they believe in place of it? They believe in a sort of threefoldness in the nature of God, just as they say there is a threefoldness in man,— body, soul, and spirit. They say that God manifests himself now as what they call the Father. Looking at him in another way, he is the Son. Looking at him in a third way, he is the Spirit. Jesus, on this theory, is only the manifestation of the divine in the sphere of our human life. Here is not one shred left of historic Orthodoxy. I have no fault whatever to find with that kind of a trinity. If that is Trinitarianism, then I am a Trinitarian. I not only believe in the threefoldness of the nature of God, I believe in the manifoldness of the nature of God, and that he manifests himself by a million personalities. For what does the word "person" mean? Originally, it meant the mask of an actor. He took on a particular mask standing for a special character; and, while he wore that, he represented that person. He might wear a thousand masks, and present himself in a thousand personalities. God in history, in the stars, in the clouds over our heads, in the beauty of the dawn, in the beauty of the sunset, in the history of humanity, in human love, passion, struggle, ambi-

tion,— in a million different ways, the divine manifests itself. But all this is only playing with words, and to call anything like this the doctrine of the Trinity is simply an abuse of the dictionary.

What did they believe in regard to the atonement? You know what it was in the old time. It was a belief that man was utterly lost, and that an infinite penalty must be paid. God's righteous law must be upheld by infinite suffering. Man must be purchased by the blood of an infinite one. And so the second person of the Trinity was sent forth to be born, to suffer, to be put to death, that those who believed in him and accepted this substitution might share in the merits of this being and so be saved.

But now what? Jesus is only a man, according to many liberal orthodox. With others, he is something a little different,— they hardly know what,— a little more than man, a little less than God,— something hanging, like the kaaba, that holy stone of the Mohammedans, between heaven and earth, but strictly the whole of neither. Some hold an ideal like this of Jesus. Others say that he is only a man; but, whatever the theory of his person or his nature, they hold that his work was simply the manifestation of the love of God to the race and a revelation of the universal and eternal law of sacrifice. They say he teaches us that always, not he, but we, if we wish to become divine, must accept this law of sacrifice, sacrificing the lower in us ever to the higher. The atonement has come to this. It is utterly unlike the old doctrine in almost every respect.

One more doctrine will I notice, and that is the doctrine of the destiny of man. It was a logical part of the old system that those who did not accept the terms of salvation should not be saved, but should suffer forever and ever. But this doctrine is now either questioned or is scouted

openly as barbaric, as unworthy of God, as subversive of the very scheme of divine salvation itself; and this not by those who have left the Church, but by those who still stay in it and still claim to represent and give utterance to that which is the old original doctrine.

As a specimen of the kind of transformation going on, I must read you one note from this "Heart of the Creeds," by this Boston clergyman. It touches on the nature of Jesus, but the lesson of it equally applies to any of the doctrines I have named. I wish you to notice these words very carefully. "When we say of Jesus 'conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, and went into the place of departed spirits,'— when we say this, we simply mean to declare our belief in the facts of his history, whatever they are." Why should not I come back from a journey and report that I saw something which was black and white, and then add that what I mean by saying that is that the color was whatever it should be found to be?

This is the kind of transformation through which these doctrines are passing; and I can think of nothing to illustrate it so simply and so perfectly as that brief and familiar dialogue between Hamlet and Polonius. The wily courtier must see things in the light of him who is his prince and superior. He did not dare to contradict or disagree with him, and so his eyes must see after the pattern that is cut for him: —

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel?
Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.
Ham. Methinks it is like a weasel.
Pol. It is backed like a weasel.
Ham. Or like a whale?
Pol. Very like a whale.

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So these doctrines assume in shape apparently that which the dominant authority for the time seems to make necessary.

Now I am going into no wholesale denunciation of these men. I only wish you to understand their attitude and see the significance of it, and note it as one of the signs of the times. I shall say, and say with all the emphasis of which I am capable, that it has no right to this name. It is not Orthodoxy. It is no more Orthodoxy than the doctrine which I represent upon this platform is Orthodoxy. I bring no railing accusation against men occupying this position. I do not even say they are dishonest. I only say I should be, seeing things as I do, if I occupied such a position.

But there is one thing that touches the human side of men in my position now and then. It is a little irksome once in a while to have a man who occupies this position, who is as clearly an out and out rationalist as I am, stand on a pedestal, a little superciliously, and look down on me as a heretic and outcast. It is not always altogether agreeable, and particularly when a man like this will confess to you, in private, all these beliefs, and you know that he does not speak them from his pulpit, and, when his people are round, you know that he does not even speak them to you. But one can afford to smile at these weaknesses, which are common enough, and recognize and be glad for all the good there is in this general attitude.

I wish to make one more remark about it. I cannot regard this as having any logical basis. It certainly has no basis in the Bible. It has no basis in history, no basis in any scientific theory of the world, no basis in criticism. It is in a position of ecclesiastical and spiritual vagabondage, "without visible means of support." It is only a transition stage towards something else. But, recognizing it as such,—

recognizing it as being what it is,— then I am glad to recognize it, glad to note its significance, glad to read in it the promise of a better time. As a matter of fact, there are only a few people who are really logical or who care much about logic. They drift along, following, as all forces do, the line of least resistance, getting on flounderingly, but getting on; and that, after all, is the principal thing. So I recognize this Liberal Orthodoxy as a sign of growth. It means that the old religious life is not fixed, not hard, not fast, not unchangeable. It is the same kind of prophecy that we see in the spring just after the snows have gone away and when the sun begins to get warm over our heads. Still, the trees all look as though they had been fixed in their places hard and fast forever. But some morning you note a little flush between you and the far-off blue sky. You can see the buds are starting, tiny leaves are opening, and you know that the eternal life is mightier than the fixity of all forms, and that things, whether they will or not, under the impulse of the infinite wisdom, power, and love of God, are growing. And so Liberal Orthodoxy is a sign of growth. It means dawn. The sun is not in sight yet. The tiny rays are creeping up the sky. The hilltops catch the light here and there, and the shadows are beginning to stir a little uneasily and lift themselves. In this period of dawn-twilight, it is no wonder if people do mistake the shape of the mist itself for the eternal and changeless Rock that it merely clothes for the time. So, many of these beliefs are only changing forms of mist. Stirred by the sun's rays, they will lift themselves, and show the real beauty and glory of the real world of God.

So this Liberal Orthodoxy is a hopeful sign of the times. It does not mean the decay or the passing away of religion. It does not mean the decay or the passing away of the

Church. It does not mean the loss of the Bible. It does not mean the loss of Jesus from his grand place in the religious life of the world. It does not mean the loss even of religious rites and symbols. It does not mean the loss of anything that is vital to the growth of man. It only means that the one eternal God-life in the past is in the midst of all the growth and change. It means that he reshapes, remoulds things age after age; and, while they are in the process of remoulding,— while they are neither the thing they were nor the other and better thing that they shall be, — they must perforce seem to us illogical, unfinished, out of place in the world. But wait. "God's in his heavens," God is in his world, God is over all and in all and through all.

One word, however, I would speak, if I could reach the ear and the heart of every Liberal Orthodox man in America and Great Britain; for they are as numerous there as here. It would be to remind them of the voice said to have been heard by Moses as a command when he stood with his people on the brink of the Red Sea, Pharaoh behind, the impassable waters before, the people trembling and afraid, not knowing which way to go. If I could, I would utter in the ears of all the liberal orthodox people of the world this command: "Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward."

UNITARIANISM.

In the narrower sense of the word "Unitarian," Unitarianism is a very ancient belief. If we take it as connoting merely the unity of God, then in the line of our own spiritual ancestry it is at least as old as the earliest of Hebrew prophets. How much of belief in this divine unity there may have been underlying the obvious idolatry of many of the other religions we may not perhaps be quite certain today; but there are traces,—at least in the esoteric thought, the thought which the priests kept as their own peculiar heritage, of many of the old religions,—of this belief that God, in spite of the diversity of manifestation, was really one.

The Jews were Unitarians in this sense. So were and are still the Mohammedans. There is no sort of question that the old first Church at Jerusalem, the first Christian Church, presided over by James the brother of Jesus, was a Unitarian church; that the churches founded by Paul were Unitarian churches. Nearly all the Christian churches for the first three centuries were Unitarian. This does not mean, however, that the trinitarian belief was not beginning to manifest itself here and there, gathering headway for the time when it should be finally declared the orthodox faith of Christendom. This, as you are aware, was about the first quarter of the fourth century. At that time, however, we know that Unitarianism was put down, and that Trinitarianism came to the front, largely from the personal influence of the

emperor himself. It is a question to-day as to which would have been declared orthodox had it been left to a popular vote of all the Christian churches of the time. But, after Trinitarianism was declared to be the religion of the empire, of course Unitarianism in all its forms was declared a heresy, and the whole effort of the Church and of the empire combined to stamp it out. Yet Unitarianism in some form lived from the beginning until to-day. Here and there throughout the Middle Ages was some grand mind, some free, brave man, who dared to think for himself, and dared to risk his life for his thought, and to hold by the life of God's eternal truth concerning this matter as fearlessly as concerning all others. And in almost all cases this type of men were Unitarians, handing on the torch of truth from one to another across the dark waste of the Middle Ages.

Unitarianism sprang into being again as the result of the freedom that came with the Reformation. And it has existed in an organized form for more than three centuries in South-eastern Europe, and has a vigorous and flourishing life there to-day.

That which concerns us this morning, however, is the more modern movement of Unitarianism, which means something more than a belief in the unity of God as opposed to the trinity, and which sprang up simultaneously in England and in this country. Of course, we shall devote ourselves only to its manifestation here.

It was inevitable that Unitarianism, this new movement of religious life, should manifest itself, just as inevitable as is the morning, just as inevitable as is the sprouting of the grass and the blossoming of the flowers in spring; for Unitarianism is merely one indication of the fact that humanity is growing. It is the result of that growth, it is an opportunity for the manifestation of it. It indicates that humanity

has grown in two particulars especially; and it is these two particulars which I wish to notice.

Unitarianism indicates, in the first place, a growth of the human heart, a higher manifestation of that humanity which we call specifically humane,— tenderness, pity, compassion, love, sensitiveness to that which is right, to that which is just. Unitarianism was, I think, in the beginning, more than anything else a moral protest in the interest of this higher and tenderer sense of justice and right. The early Unitarians declared that the old scheme of doctrine which was held to be orthodox in that day was an unjust scheme; that it was not righteous on the part of God to do what the creeds declared that he had done; that it was not righteous on his part to have created a world as it is said that he created this, to have created man and to have subjected him to temptation, to have permitted him to fall and then to link with this first representative of the race his descendants, all who should ever come to be born, so that they all on account of that fall should be under the wrath and curse of God. They said that this scheme, including the fall, the method of redemption, the destiny of those who were not saved, was unrighteous. The heart protested against it. They could not and they would not believe it. This was not because they had discovered proofs that it could not be true, but because the heart of humanity had grown too tender, too humane, to believe such things of the Father in heaven any longer. It was said, you know, in the first place, that the difference between Universalism and Unitarianism was that the Universalists believed that God was too good to damn men forever, while the Unitarians believed that man was too good to be damned forever. I think it is nearer the truth to say that the Unitarians held to both these positions. Both of them sprang out of this revolt of the human heart against

these teachings concerning God and man. They declared that God should be at least as good, as tender, as true, as merciful as they were. They demanded that the conception of goodness which was held here on earth should be the conception which should be applied to God in heaven, or else, they said, goodness can have no meaning. If God be not good as we are, and as we expect our fellow-men to be good, then in no sense that can have any meaning to us is he good at all. This was the revolt of the human heart.

There was an indication of growth not only of the heart, but of the intellect, the growth of the mind of man. Men came to demand that religion, like everything else, like every other department of human thought and life, should be treated as reasonable. They declared their belief in the integrity of the human mind, in that reason which God has given us, asserting their faith in it as the measure of the reasonableness of that which was presented for their acceptance. They did not occupy the absurd position of saying that they would not and could not believe anything true that they could not understand. No one was ever quite so unwise as that. We believe to-day, on the basis of scientific demonstration, a thousand things that we cannot understand; but we know they are true, rationally and scientifically demonstrated to be true.

The early Unitarians had no idea of rejecting all mystery. They simply said that they had a right to think, that they had a right to subject whatever was brought to them for their acceptance to the test of reason, to find out whether it were proved to be true, and to reject it if it were not so proved. So it was a development of the human heart and the growth of human reason out of which Unitarianism was born.

Think, for a moment, how right they were concerning this

matter of the supremacy of reason. If a man stand in the presence of two roads, wondering which he shall take, he decides whether he will take this one or that one for some reason. If there is no reason why he should take one more than the other, then the whole matter hinges upon chance, impulse, and there is no reason involved in the matter at all. If a man accepts a reason for being a Christian, by that very act he asserts the supremacy of reason. If there is no reason why a man should be one thing any more than another, then he may as well be a Buddhist, a Hindu, a Mormon, as to be a Christian. The very minute, then, that any man assents to the idea that reason is to decide his course, that very minute, by implication, whether he will or not, he is a rationalist. Unitarianism, then, was born out of the higher development of the heart and the mind of the world.

At first, it was traditional and textual. It did not occur to the early Unitarians to question the infallibility of the Bible, its authority as a divine revelation to the world. Some of their early scholars, indeed, did trace here and there human, fallible elements in the Old Testament; but the New Testament nearly all of them practically accepted as infallible authority.

It did not occur to them to question miracles, to question the utterly unique, miraculous position of Jesus. Many of them believed in his divinity while denying what was called his deity. Many of them believed in his pre-existence,— that is, they were Arians,— but they all believed that he was miraculously sent as God's special messenger, guide, and Saviour of the world. They occupied a position, then, inside the New Testament. It was a battle of texts between them and their opponents. This position to-day, I think, we all recognize as illogical and untenable.

For what is the Bible? The Bible is simply a great relig-

ious literature. If they could find a text that proved the unity of God, their opponents could find a text which at least appeared to hint the trinity. If they could find a text which proved the goodness of the nature of man, their opponents could find a text to teach his innate and utter depravity. If they could find a text to prove the universal fatherhood of God, their opponents could find a text by which they could prove that he had been a Father to the Jews and Christians in a peculiar sense, in which he was not to the rest of mankind. If they could find a text by which they could prove the eternal mercy of God, and so build a basis for eternal hope, their opponents could find a plenty of texts which appear to teach the endless doom of the majority of mankind to endless pain. It was then, as I have said, a battle of texts, an illogical and utterly untenable position.

The Bible, as I have said, was simply a religious literature, composed by a large number of people during a period stretching at least over a thousand years. It represented the opinions of a vast number of different men, so that there was no consistent teaching to be found in it, as a whole, concerning God or concerning the nature of man, concerning the nature of Jesus or his mission to the world, and the destiny of mankind. It was full of conflicting testimony, as was natural. This phase of Unitarian life was the first step, the utterance of the right of reason.

But the fathers did not fully see to what lengths that assertion would logically carry them. They were not prepared for the next step. Who ever is? Will the world ever outgrow the tendency to think that it is safe to go only as far as it has gone? that the man who dares to take the next step ahead is to be persecuted and put down? It is disheartening to read history in the light of this thought.

The great leaders of the world, the great liberators, hailed by a few, persecuted by the many, at last establish their grand positions; and then their very followers treat them as though they had taught the last word that God intended to speak to the world, and are ready to persecute the next man who in the same spirit of this divine leadership declares the next word in that unfolding revelation that began when life began, and that is never to end so long as there is the possibility of the growth of thought.

These early Unitarians were not ready for the next movement. It came in with Theodore Parker. I do not think Parker was the inventor of it: he was its voice, its manifestation. It was in the air. No man ever creates an epoch. Rather it is the epoch which creates him, which makes him its mouthpiece. Theodore Parker was one of the grandest souls that ever lived, a man religious in every fibre of his being from his earliest boyhood up; a seer, reverent, truthful, loving, tender; a man all alive to the touch of the enveloping God; a God-intoxicated man; a man who saw, felt, heard God everywhere. He could not believe that God was done speaking to the world. He was as ready to listen to his voice this morning as was the old prophet in Judæa two thousand years ago. This was the kind of nature that the man possessed,—a nature so tender and sympathetic with all men, so full of love to all mankind, that he thrilled at the thought of any and every injustice, that he felt himself God-appointed to right every wrong.

Theodore Parker preached a sermon which marked an epoch, on "The Transient and Permanent in Christianity." This was in 1841. The result was the withdrawal of fellowship from him on the part of every Unitarian minister in Boston, with the exception of two. Those two names ought to be mentioned reverently and in honor to-day, be-

cause they dared to stand by his side for the right of freedom of religious utterance,—John T. Sargent and James Freeman Clarke. This sermon, "The Transient and Permanent in Christianity," might be preached in any Unitarian church to-day without raising one single word of comment. Indeed, it might be preached in many a so-called Orthodox church without raising a ripple, so mild does it seem. But it was radical at the time.

What did Parker? He freely announced the new step which Unitarianism must take by criticising the New Testament as well as the Old, criticising any and all Scripture not only, but applying reason to the matter of the authenticity, the authorship, and the correctness of texts. He announced that, from that time on, truth and truth only was to be taken for authority, that there was no authority above truth, that truth and truth only was the voice of God. Not only then did he apply this freedom of criticism to the Old Testament and to the New, but he took another step, which then seemed little less than sacrilege. He dared to announce his belief that Jesus was purely and simply a man, natural in his birth, natural in his death, superior, supreme, perhaps, over other men, but only by virtue of his openness to the inpouring of the spirit of God.

He also impugned miracles, not only as touching the nature and career of Jesus, but in all directions asserting the divineness of the natural order of the world, asserting his faith in the ability of God to govern his world by means of and through this natural order, leaving no necessity for magic or miracle. He recognized the miraculous in the marvellous order of nature. He abolished by a stroke the distinction between the natural and the supernatural, making the universe a unity, not denying that which had gone by the name of the supernatural, the spiritual, and the divine, but

enlarging the definition of nature until it included all things in heaven above and in the earth beneath.

You see how radical the change was. It was nothing more nor less than setting Unitarianism free from the bondage to text, a bondage to the old-time habit, a bondage to this illogical attitude, and making it free to face the great facts of the universe of God and of man.

I wish now, as briefly as I can, after this little sketch of what Unitarianism has been in the past, to tell you,— mark the distinction,— not what Unitarianism is of necessity, but what I am convinced it ought to be and must become. I shall not attempt to define the attitude of my brethren. I define merely my own.

Unitarianism has reached a point in the history of the world's moral and intellectual development when it can and ought to plant itself squarely on this one position, the essential religiousness of the natural order of the universe. It must declare, it has declared, that this universe is not one of creation, fall, and recovery, not one of catastrophe, but one of natural order and of normal growth. The natural order of this world is a divine order. The world is not secular, under the wrath of God, to be redeemed and reclaimed. The natural order from the beginning till to-day, and as far as we can trace it running out into the future, is, as God meant it to be, a divine order, appointed, led, lifted, guided, by the hand of God himself.

What, then, does religion become in a universe like this? Not a scheme of salvation, not a plan of redeeming man from the result of a catastrophe. It becomes a work of adjustment, bringing man into right relation, within the limits of his own nature, to his fellow-men, and in right relation to God. This work is in the individual, where the faculties, powers, passions, go to make up the man. It makes the man himself a divine order, to start with.

Again, it is the work of reconciling man to man, of bringing about the perfect social order of the world. It is bringing man to recognize and obey the divine laws that underlie human society, and in accordance with which it must be lifted up and led on toward perfection.

It brings about the reconciliation of man to the facts of his environment in the physical universe and to the facts of his environment in the spiritual universe, man as soul related to God just as truly as the body is related to the physical universe about him. Religion is the discovery of this divine order in the world, and bringing men into accord with this order. It means making man broader, developing the individual, society, government. It means the perfection and the divine mystery of all that is human,—the perfection of life here in this world and of course its further growth and progress forever.

In the first place, in order to attain this knowledge by means of which the reconciliation can be effected, it means the declaration of utter, absolute intellectual freedom in religion. We have heard freedom talked about a good deal in the modern world, but we are apt to forget how new a thing it is. Do you know, until the liberal churches of the modern world were organized, there never was a religious organization on the face of the earth that did not treat free thought as a sin? Do you know that? Do you know how modern this freedom is? Every religion, every pope, every council, every synod, every religious organization, from the beginning till modern times, has treated the free-thinker as an outcast, an enemy of God and man. We want no freedom for the mere sake of freedom. We want freedom, because we believe that only through the result of free investigation can the truth be found; we want freedom for the sake of the discovery of truth; the discovery of truth we want for the sake of the

culture and development of man. Modern Unitarianism, the Unitarianism that is to possess the future, must stand for utter individual freedom. We believe there is no truth in heaven or on earth, no truth in the past, no truth in the present, the discovery of which will not redound to the glory of God and the honor of man; so we must be free to search.

In the next place, this position of intellectual freedom puts us in a position which we ought to be proud to occupy, a position that no other religious body with which I am acquainted has,— the position of religious leadership to the world's intellectual leadership. There is no reason why we should not be in perfect sympathy with all the intellectual lights and leaders of the world; why we should not welcome all their light, all their truth, interpreting it on its religious side for the uplifting of man. We are fitted, if we are brave enough, strong enough, broad-minded enough, to be the religious leaders of the world's intellectual leaders, to take our place as guides toward the future religious development of mankind.

And yet this need not take away from the ministry to the poor, the ignorant, the common people, the masses of men. I hold a different opinion, indeed, on this point from that which I hear expressed by my brethren. I do not believe that Unitarianism is specially or peculiarly fitted to be the religion of the masses,— not because there is anything the matter with the religion, but because of the lack of taste for the simple and the highest on the part of the masses. If you study the attitude of the uneducated masses of the world in any direction, you will find that it is not towards an appreciation of the simple, not towards an appreciation of the highest. They do not choose the simplest and the finest in art, in literature, or in any department. Something that appeals to the love of mystery appeals to them more strongly.

There must be growth on the part of people to be free from fear and to enable them to appreciate the simple as the divinest before they can be ready for the leadership of our Unitarian faith. But they are coming more and more rapidly to do this, so that we need not despair of ministering to all classes and conditions of men. But we can only minister to them by as much as we teach them to be free, to be independent, to think for themselves, and to appreciate that which is best and highest.

Occupying this position, on what basis can we organize ourselves? We cannot be organized on the basis of a creed, as have been all the religious organizations in the past, though not at all because we object to creeds. I have no objection to a hundred creeds. I am perfectly willing to write one out this morning, or as soon as I have time, of any length that any one can desire, giving expression to the belief I hold this morning. Only this is the position of Unitarians: we declare that the world is growing, that to-morrow a man may discover some new truth that no one knows to-day, and, if he does, that is a divine truth that belongs in our creed, and so the creed must be perpetually revised. We do not object to creeds because we have no definite belief, or because we are not willing to give expression to what we do believe, but because we are not willing to give bonds to any man that we will not learn anything new. We hold ourselves perfectly free to go on to the discovery of new truth in every direction.

What, then, can we organize ourselves upon? We have a sufficient basis for organization, as I claim,— the basis of a common purpose to find the truth, to live the truth, in the conviction that this only is true religious service. This we call devotion to God, loyalty to him, and loyalty to man. This is the basis of all the scientific associations of the

world. We can indeed incorporate into our creed as unchangeable so much as we have demonstrated to be true beyond a question. But, concerning anything beyond that, we must hold it open to revision.

But suppose we organize on the basis of a common purpose, to be truth-seekers and truth-lovers, to find all we can of the laws and the life of God in the universe and incorporate that as fast as we can in the growing life of humanity: then I hold that we need no other basis of organization. The brotherhood of man,— not, parrot-like, echoing back and forth from city to city and State to State, and nation to nation and hemisphere to hemisphere, the words without any regard to what they meant when they were first formulated, but to see that they utter a living conviction to-day, the sympathy of men all over the world, facing forward, trusting in God, trusting in the universe, trusting in the integrity of the human intellect, trusting in the growth of human society; facing forward, recognizing as true all which has been demonstrated to be true, and cheering each other on in the endeavor to discover that which is new and better than the old.

I have only one brief word of criticism on the average attitude of Unitarianism in the past and as it seems to me in some directions to-day.

I think I have noted a too great anxiety on the part of Unitarians to minimize the difference between them and the attitude of the older churches; to try to believe that there is not much difference; to try to keep the sympathy of the older churches; to feel out for a hand-clasp from some man who, if he is honest, has no business to give us a hand-clasp; to seek the patronage of the older faith; to rejoice over any token of sympathy in that direction.

Why, friends, if we are very much like the older churches, then it is a crime for us to exist. We have no business to

exist unless we are so much unlike them as to make a reason for our coming into existence as some new thing. If I believed that they were doing the work that God calls for in this age, I should not be in a Unitarian pulpit, and I should not believe that you had any business in Unitarian pews.

My final word is the conviction that we ought to assert the position to which we are called as one to which we are divinely sent. I believe that the welfare of the world in the future depends on the promulgation and the general acceptance of the idea for which Unitarianism is standing, and is coming more and more to stand. There has never been any catastrophe in the past calling for the kind of salvation still offered by the older churches. They have misread the old universe. I believe that we, for the first time in history, are comprehending what kind of a universe this is, and what has been the origin, the nature, and the method of growth of humanity. We stand, then, for a new revelation of God's truth, a new gospel to mankind. We have no right to stand for anything less than this; and, if we stand for this, we should earnestly, faithfully, in most consecrated fashion, assert this day by day. We should live for it, give for it, work for it, if need be, die for it, as the grandest souls of the ages have been willing to die.

If we stand for anything less than this, then this schism which we have created in Christendom is wrong; and we ought to go back to the old churches. But, if we do stand for new life, light, leadership for mankind, for a new revelation of God, then, not egotistically, not with self-glorification, not for the sake of building up our denomination, but, like a prophet burdened with the seriousness of the task imposed on him, let us go forth proclaiming this new truth,—not ours, but God's,—stand for it, work for it, live for it, day by day.

I do not believe — and in the light of what I am saying you will not think me illiberal — in working for the support of a system which you are convinced is wrong. That is not the one to help. I do not believe that you have a right to contribute your money to the support of schemes of thought and life which you are convinced are not fitted to help the world. You have little enough strength, little enough time, little enough money, little enough service, to offer for what you believe to be God's truth, that on which depends the welfare of the world. It is not working for yourselves, for your own little body: it is working for the glory of God, it is working for the deliverance of the world.

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FREE RELIGION AND ETHICAL CULTURE.

In the year 1865, the National Conference of Unitarian Churches was organized in the city of New York. Because it was the occasion of the formation of the Free Religious Association, I wish to read to you two or three words from the constitution which the National Conference adopted. You find in it the phrase, which is the only important thing, "the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ" and "the building up of the kingdom of his [that is, God's] Son"; that is, the Unitarian Conference, speaking for all the Unitarians in the country, put themselves in the position of being disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, and announced as the great work before them "the building up of the kingdom of God's Son." The Free Religious men, those who came to represent the Free Religious Association, objected to this language for two reasons. The objection at first sight may seem to you slight and trivial, and you may question whether there was sufficient reason for the Free Religious Association's coming into existence; but, whether we agree with the earnest men who were foremost in that movement or not, we must recognize the fact that they were earnest, that they were devoted, that they were high-minded, and that they meant to be what they charged us Unitarians with not being, logically consistent. They said this declaring ourselves subject to the lordship of Jesus is a limitation of perfect intellectual liberty. They did not object to any one's coming to accept this lord-

ship as the result of the intellectual liberty, but they did object to being bound to that from the outset; for they said, — and they said it, mark you, in the spirit of Jesus himself,— We will call no man, not even Jesus, "Master" in this sense: we will be utterly free. You see, and this is the point I have in mind, that they were only logically carrying out the principle of perfect intellectual liberty.

They objected to it, however, on another ground. They said the attitude of the ordinary Unitarian towards Jesus is simply a traditional attitude, and is inconsistent with the declaration that he is only a man, and savors at any rate of idolatry. It is making a man the object of a reverence that at least borders on divine worship, putting him between the soul and the one Father, God of all. You will note that I am not now uttering my own sentiments. Whether I agree with them or not is entirely one side of my purpose. I am attempting, as clearly and simply as I may, to outline the position which the Free Religious Association then assumed; for this Association was the result of the insistence on the part of Unitarians on the use of these phrases, which they regarded as a limitation of human thought.

When they organized themselves, they declared their purpose in the following words: —

"The object of this association is to encourage the scientific study of religion and of ethics, to advocate freedom in religion, to increase fellowship in spirit, and to emphasize the supremacy of practical morality in all the relations of life. All persons sympathizing with these aims are cordially invited to membership."

The Free Religious Association, then, was organized as a protest against what these men regarded as a halt on the part of Unitarians. They said the Unitarians are not consistent with their principles. They have not carried them to

their logical outcome. These men, I believe, were actuated by the noblest religious enthusiasm, by the noblest love of their fellow-men, and by the noblest loyalty to truth.

A protest, if it succeeds, dies even in the hour of its victory; for in the very act of death there is resurrection to eternal life of the principles for which it stands, and that come to be so universally recognized that there is no longer place or use for the organization itself. It seems to me that this expresses in very brief words substantially the outcome of this Free Religious movement. It has been limited in its range. It has organized only a few societies; and to-day those few, I think it is safe to say, are either dead or dying, and the work of the Free Religious Association is practically at an end.

As a recognition on the part of Unitarians of the success of this protest, I wish to read just a few words from the clause added to the original constitution of the National Conference: —

"While we believe that the preamble and articles of our constitution fairly represent the opinions of the majority of our churches, yet we wish distinctly to put on record our declaration that they are no authoritative test of Unitarianism, and are not intended to exclude from our fellowship any who, while differing from us in belief, are in general sympathy with our purposes and practical aims."

I read these last words to show you that practically the great principles for which the Free Religious Association organized itself have been recognized, and the National Conference itself has declared that it means to put no limit to intellectual liberty, and that it does not intend to exclude from its fellowship any man who is in general sympathy with its purpose and practical aims, whatever his special personal attitude may be towards any claims of lordship or any declaration that calls Jesus the only Son of God.

This Association, if it did nothing more, has left a heritage to free thought of certain very notable names, a galaxy of stars in our intellectual firmament that it is worth our while, in passing, to glance at for a moment and name. For years its president was O. B. Frothingham; and among those associated in the work and who frequently stood on its platform were men like Ralph Waldo Emerson, John Weiss, David A. Wasson, F. E. Abbot, T. W. Higginson, women like Lucretia Mott and Ednah D. Cheney, with a host of others hardly less well known. Persons such as these we are proud to honor, and proud that we have grown enough so that we can work in full fellowship with them to-day, however much they might have differed from us in the past, however much any of us may be disposed to differ from certain personal opinions which any of them may hold to-day.

The Free Religious Association was a protest; and, having succeeded in this protest, it has died into eternal life: and there for the morning we will leave it, and turn to that which, while having no definite historical connection perhaps with it, we may yet regard in a certain way as its child and successor, the Ethical Culture movement.

As I have already hinted, I do not mean to assert that the president of the Ethical Culture Society would recognize any historic connection between the movement for which he stands and the Free Religious Association; but it seems to me that it is definitely and distinctly the logical carrying out of one, at least, of the tendencies which were represented in the older society. Many of those connected with the Free Religious Association were theistic; many of them were agnostic. The entire basis of the Ethical Culture Society is agnosticism; and so I believe that it represents the logical outcome of that wing of the Free Religious Association.

I ask you now to consider with me for a moment what this stands for,— the excuse for its existence as put forth by its representatives. I am not authorized to speak for the Ethical Culture Societies of America. It is possible I may use language which they would repudiate. I shall try, however, to be as clear, simple, and fair as I can; and, if I misrepresent, I shall be the first one to correct the misrepresentation when it has been pointed out to me.

I am in thorough, hearty sympathy with so much in this Ethical Culture movement that it is easier to praise than it is to criticise. It sprang out of this fact: There are three main elements of religion as it is incorporated in the great historical religions and churches of the world. Churches are frequently so characterized that they lay special and peculiar emphasis on some one department of this rather than on the others. These three elements are doctrine, ritual, and conduct. The Ethical Culture men made the charge, and make it perpetually by the fact that they exist, that there has been too great an emphasis laid by the religions of the world upon doctrine and ritual; and they propose, for the time being, to leave these chiefly out of sight, and call the world back to this matter of practical conduct, on which, they say, rest the entire welfare, prosperity, happiness, and future of mankind.

Let us consider, for a moment, how grave the charges are that can be made by these men. Consider the fact as to the excessive emphasis laid on the matter of doctrine,— how important it has been considered, how over-important, and how, on account of this importance, matters of conduct have been neglected; not only neglected, but an emphasis has been laid on doctrine which has led to radically wrong conduct. Matthew Arnold says that conduct is at least three-fourths of life. The Ethical Culture men would say that the

practical purposes of life make up at least seven-eighths, that is, almost the whole. Doctrine is of importance only as it leads to conduct. Ritual is of importance only as it bears on conduct; and, when men emphasize doctrine and put it in the place of chief importance, they are wronging the world. When they emphasize ritual and put it in the place of chief importance, they are wronging the world.

Glance at one or two illustrations. Go back and find the old warfare, bitterness, and persecution between the Jews, and the Christians,— a persecution that has lasted to this century; and for what? Entirely from questions of doctrine. When, a few years ago, the grand old centenarian saint, Sir Moses Montefiore, died, a man illustrious his whole life long for the sweetness and amiability of his character and the magnificence and breadth of his charities, the question was raised in hundreds of churches as to whether to-day he was not suffering the torments of hell. Why? For any question of good character? Not at all. Simply on account of the differences of doctrine between the Jew and the Christian.

There has been an age-long feud between the Greek Church and the Catholic Church. No one doubts that there are as good men in the Greek Church as in the Catholic, as charitable, kind, loving, and patriotic and public-spirited men; yet there is a bitterness between those two churches that puts a gulf between them wider than between either of them and paganism. Why? One cause is that the Catholic Church holds that Jesus was made of the same substance, or was of the same substance, as the Father; while the Greek theologian said he was not of the same substance, but only of like substance. These questions and others like them split the Greek Church and the Catholic, and created this antagonism which has lasted for centuries.

And then think of the persecutions of the Protestants on

the part of the Catholics. Nobody has ever raised a question as to whether these Protestants were good and true men in their character and their daily life. It was such as whether they believed in transubstantiation, whether they believed in this or that doctrine. And so the world has fought and persecuted and hated, and rivers of blood have flowed, and cities have been razed to the ground, whole populations have been made homeless, simply on account of these quarrels over what the Ethical Culture man is ready to say nobody knows anything about or is ever likely to know. And this they offer as one reason for saying, We will cease utterly to have to do with these questions; we will turn to the practical matters of life.

Then take the matter of ritual. Curiously enough, men and women have been trained in such a way that they will lay more stress on some little form of service than they do even on a doctrine or the most serious questions of character and conduct. If I had time to trace the origin of these ideas, you would find how natural they were, how inevitable they were, in certain stages of human culture. But the Ethical Culture men believe that the time has come when sensible people, at any rate, ought to know better, and ought to turn to something of more importance than these questions.

Let me give you an illustration of what I mean. Go back to ancient Rome, before Christianity existed, and you find that, under the guidance of the priesthood, the extremest emphasis was laid on such questions as this: as to just where the sacrifices to the gods should be rendered; as to precisely the nature, the character, the physical peculiarities of the victim; as to what kind of wood should be burned in making the fire; as to what kind of knife should be used in slaying the victim; as to just how the priest should stand in the performance of the ritual; as to whether he should face to one

point of the compass or the other. At one place in the ritual the priest must stand on one foot: which must it be? He must go through certain motions and gestures. He must intone the words that he pronounced in his religious service in a particular way. All these matters in the ritual were fixed hard and fast; and the people came to believe that the gods they worshipped would not hear their prayers, would not grant the favors they desired, would not ward off the calamities they feared, if there was a mistake, even an unconscious mistake, in any of these little petty peculiarities of the ritual, so that it became of much more consequence than the character of the people. A priest might be utterly unworthy in his character and yet prevail with the gods, if he were exact in the ritual. But let him be the veriest saint that ever lived, if he made a mistake in the pronunciation of a word, in a gesture, his whole service went for nothing. We have not outgrown such ideas yet, even in the Christian Church. You are familiar with the fact that the city of London, and since that time the city of New York, in church quarters, have been convulsed by controversies that lasted for years over the question as to the robe that the priest should wear,— whether it should be of one color, or one pattern, or another. You know that the churches have quarrelled over the question whether the priest in saying certain prayers should face the east, take the eastward position, as it is called, or whether it were permissible to face in some other direction,— an old relic of sun-worship surviving and mighty still in Christianity. And you know also that there are persons — I fear they are not entirely wanting even in the liberal branch of the Christian Church — who place more emphasis on a question of ritual — of attendance at church, of reading the Bible, as to just how the Sabbath shall be observed — than they do on some very important

questions of character and conduct. I think I know certain liberals in good standing who would be troubled over what they would regard as an infringement of Sunday; and yet they are not troubled over the fact that they pick their neighbor's character to pieces in a very slanderous way, are guilty of unkindness, of uncharitableness, of hard feelings, of hard speaking, guilty of a hundred things that interfere with the peace, the beauty, the growth of society. But, as Jesus said ages ago, they are very particular about the tithing of mint and anise and cumin. Jesus did not say that these were of no importance, but he said that other things were of a good deal more importance. And so the Ethical Culture men have said, Whatever others do, we propose to leave the other world out of account for the present. They take the position of Thoreau when he was dying. Parker Pillsbury sat by his bedside, and said, "Henry, as you get close to the border, do you see or hear anything from the other side?" And Thoreau replied, "One world at a time, Parker." This is the position of the Ethical Culture men.

But let me interject a sentence here in which I express my own opinions. Whether it is wise or not,—and I do not believe it is wise,—in any case this strange, contradictory human nature of ours is such that it never will consent to take one world at a time. And, to my mind, this is the grandest thing about man, that he feels within himself throbbing, pulsing, however blindly, something that he is convinced transcends this world; and you will never get him to take one world at a time.

But this was the position of the Ethical Culture men. They said, We do not think it is worth while to fight over the question whether the bread on the communion table is turned into the body of our Lord or the wine into his blood, while there are hundreds and thousands of people who have

bread of no description to eat. We do not think it is worth while to quarrel over the robes of priests, while thousands of people are suffering for the want of the ordinary clothing of life. And they carried out this idea, and said, We propose to devote ourselves to the work of saving this world, to the work of bringing it to a time when wars shall cease, when slavery shall be no more. We propose to reform business, to go into hospitals, heal the wounds, bind up the sores of those who need such care. We propose, if we can, to stay the flow of human tears, to heal the broken-hearted, to set at liberty those that are bound. We propose to devote ourselves to this world, to making it better, to lessening its burden, and to helping people live right here. And they said, We say nothing about any God. We do not propose to talk about him. If there be none, we will try to do the work that he would do if he existed. We do not propose to trouble about any future life. If there be one, we shall be ready for it if we try to live properly here. If there be none, then we will try to make this world, while we go through it, as comfortable as we can.

This is the position, then, as I understand it, and the work which these men propose to themselves.

Now I wish to offer, hardly in the way of criticism,— and yet it is criticism when you differ from a man and tell the reason why,— two suggestions touching the Ethical Culture movement which shall constitute an explanation as to why I cannot join with them.

I do not believe that they have taken a step towards breadth, towards depth, towards height. I regard the Ethical Culture movement, as compared with the position which I try to occupy to-day, as a narrow, contracted position, as one bounded and hampered. I believe that I have basis, ground for all that is noble and grand in the Ethical Culture movement and something more.

In the first place, I do not think that Ethical Culture, if you confine yourself simply to that, has an adequate explanation for its existence in an agnostic theory of the universe; that is, in the theory of the universe which leaves out God as the source, the author, the inspiration of the moral life. I do not believe there is any adequate explanation for this fine and high enthusiasm which these men possess and manifest.

Let me try to make myself clear, if I can. There is no difficulty, as we study human history, in tracing the origin and growth of the world's ideas of right and wrong. When two people stood face to face with each other, and recognized by the power of intelligent sympathy that each had equal rights, that each was capable of suffering, each was capable of enjoying, that each desired to possess certain things, then morality became recognized on the part of both of them. As society has grown in complexity, breadth, depth, height, as men have touched each other at more points, they have recognized more and more the delicacy of these questions of ethics, the questions of right and wrong.

If, for example, people are to live together and own property, theft, of course, cannot be allowed. If they are to live together and transact business, indiscriminate and universal lying cannot be allowed. There must be a basis of trust in society; and it is no very difficult feat of logic for a man to say, Since I live and enjoy life and would not like to be put to death, therefore I have no right to put another to death who also likes to live. So all these questions of practical ethics are plain and easy, no matter what theory of the universe we have, whether there is any God or not, whether there is any future life or not. These questions are plain enough.

But here is the difficulty, and one that deeply concerns

this marvellous human nature of ours. The origin of any idea of right or wrong, the conception of myself as an imperfect being, the desire to grow and expand, to become something more and better,—all this has sprung from the fact that man is this curious being, the only one on earth, so far as we know, who dreams, who has an ideal of something finer, something more beautiful, something better than ever was. Where did he get it? Where did he get this dream? Where did he get this ideal? Unless there be a power, a life, adequate to the dream, then it is something utterly unexplainable; and if you say there is no God, and the dream came somehow out of matter, earth, soil, why then you must change your definition of soil. You must have a kind of earth that thinks, feels, recognizes the principle of justice, that can pity, that cares for peace on earth, that knows what it is to be tender and kind and loving, and that can blossom into a Jesus. And, when you get that, I defy anybody to tell me the difference between that and what I mean when I say spirit or God. If, then, man is a moral being, if he dreams of something that transcends him forever and makes his life an eternal pursuit, that demands something that the Ethical Culturist philosophy says must be left out of account because we do not know anything about it, I differ from the Ethical Culture men right there.

I differ radically in another way. I do not believe that the Ethical Culturist can give me any adequate reason, any adequate motive, for the kind of life he wants me to live. If there is no future, if, when we lie down in the dust, that is the end of us, and if, after a certain length of time, this whole world and all that we see are to come to an end, and there is to be nothing but what we call dead matter again, then on that theory of the universe there is no adequate motive for the kind of moral life that the finest of these

Ethical Culture men both illustrate and demand. When I hear Felix Adler, for example, at his best, I think I am listening to one of the old Hebrew prophets,— a man inspired, a man on fire with the noblest enthusiasm, and a man who, by the way, at every third sentence, as it seems to me, implies what I believe in of God and the future, and denies his own premises. So much finer must I regard his spiritual nature than the logic of his position.

It is true, if the world is only going to live for one day, and then we are to sink into nothingness — true even then that it would be better for people not to steal, not to be unkind, not to be cruel, not to cut each other's throats, to obey the practical principles of morality; but, if there is no grand future, then I say a practical, adequate motive for doing these things seems to me to be wanting. Morality would last, but it would entirely change its nature.

Take an illustration. Suppose I knew that I am to live just one year from to-day, and then am to die. I should lay out my life on a scale adapted to that brief period. If, on the other hand, I could be sure that I am going to live twenty-five years more, do you not see how natural it would be for me to lay out my life on another scale? It would change the whole purpose, scope, and emphasis of my life. So I believe, if this world is the end, it would still be better, if you can get people to see it, for them to live true, noble, moral, and helpful lives; but the grandeur of the motive is taken away. I think the finest thought from the agnostic point of view in our literature is that wonderfully sweet and beautiful "Choir Invisible": —

> "O may I join the choir invisible
> Of those immortal dead who live again
> In minds made better by their presence: live
> In pulses stirred to generosity,

In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues.

"So to live is heaven:
To make undying music in the world,
Breathing as beauteous order that controls
With growing sway the growing life of man.

"This is life to come,
Which martyred men have made more glorious
For us who strive to follow. May I reach
That purest heaven, be to other souls
The cup of strength in some great agony,
Enkindle generous ardor, feed pure love,
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty,—
Be the sweet presence of a good diffused,
And in diffusion ever more intense.
So shall I join the choir invisible,
Whose music is the gladness of the world."

This is the song of the agnostic, the song of the Ethical Culturist, as she would undoubtedly have called herself had she been here. But it seems to me that here is the flame of a religious fire kindled on the altar of faith in a future life; for all the way through it carries the implication that somehow she is to be there, rejoicing in all this glory that she has helped to create. Yet, on her theory, she is to be simply a memory then, and know nothing of all this grand thing that came to be.

To face the matter frankly and squarely, I think we have a right to ask the Ethical Culture men to tell us why. Why should I do? If there is no God, if there is no intelligence, no goodness, no life in the universe, then my happiness is just as important as the happiness of a man who perhaps will live five hundred years from now. When he comes, if he

dares to be happy, it will be just as wrong as it is for me to be happy to-day. Why, then, should I go without? Why should I suffer, why should I sacrifice, why should I crucify myself to make him have a pleasant time when he is born, when the end after all is that both of us will cease to be, and there is nobody to know and nobody to care? It seems to me that the mainspring and motive for sacrifice are taken away. Why should a man be a martyr, extinguish life itself? Why, Ethical Culture exists simply to make life as comfortable and pleasant as possible. Martyrdom is its *reductio ad absurdum*. It is a contradiction of the very purpose for which it exists. Why should Jesus go to the cross, if that is the end of Jesus, simply that somebody else might not suffer the pang that was inflicted upon him? Why should the men in the East End of London to-day be quiet, orderly, well-behaved, and let the Duke of Westminster, who owns almost acres of the city of London, ride in his carriages and eat his dinners in perfect peace, when he has never lifted a finger or done one stroke of work to earn that which he enjoys and for the lack of which they starve? If there is nothing beyond, if there is no hope to buoy them up, if there is no grand purpose in bearing up, why not nihilism and rebellion for the sake of getting whatever of the world's enjoyment they can before we all go into the dust together, and the tragical farce is done?

The Ethical Culture men say that doctrine is of importance only as it leads to conduct, that ritual is of importance only as it leads to conduct. I say there is something more important than doctrine not only, something more important than ritual not only; there is something more important than conduct even. The doctrine and the ritual and the conduct are means to an end, exist for something that transcends them all. What is that something? Life. The

greatest men of the world have been athirst for the infinite life. They have been lifted up by this unquenchable instinct, this insatiable thirst for the infinite life. And this thirst must be satisfied. You must have a theory of the universe that will explain it, or you have no true theory; and it can be explained only when we suppose that the infinite life of which we are children, in the silence of the soul is calling to us and saying, "Be ye perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect." This theory, and this alone, I believe runs a line of light and rationality through the long struggle of the world. I believe that the one thing for which every soul exists is to eternally thirst for and find God.

"Rivers to the ocean run,
Nor stay in all their course;
Fire ascending seeks the sun,—
Both speed them to their source.
So a soul that's born of God
Pants to view his glorious face,
Upward tends to his abode,
To rest in his embrace."

SCIENTIFIC MATERIALISM.

It does not seem to me at all strange that there should exist, as one of the signs of the times, this fact of scientific materialism. In the break-up of the old faith, men will naturally reach out in this direction and that, trying to find some consistent theory of things. For all people who think at all must try to think things through far enough, at any rate, to discover a place of mental rest. There are thousands in the modern world who are half inclined to a materialistic theory of things, but who have not thought it through to see just what it means, to find out whether they can explain the more important facts of life on that theory. They are confused and troubled as they try to think and believe in God. The world is not governed as they would suppose it would be by an all-powerful, all-wise, and all-loving being. They begin to wonder whether there is any other way of explaining it.

Livingstone somewhere tells of a conversation that he had with an old Bechuana chief in Africa, a man who must have been much superior to the ordinary members of his tribe. He says that the old chief said to him: Sometimes I leave my kraal and go out and sit down on a stone, and think and wonder. I look up to the sky, I see the clouds floating overhead, and try to make out what they are, where they came from, where they are going, who made them. And at night under the stars I wonder what all this means: Who am I, what am I, where did I come from, what is my nature, where

am I going, what does all this scene of the world and of mankind mean? Others besides the Bechuana chief have asked this question, and others besides him have been puzzled for an answer. We are far enough advanced in our thought to-day to see that the answer must be in one direction or the other: it must be God, or it must be scientific materialism,— one or the other, which?

The progress of human thought has been from the first towards unity. You know that it is a part of the formula of evolution to state the fact that all growth is from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, from the simple to the complex. This is illustrated well enough in the case of the growth of the oak. Here is an acorn, perfectly simple, apparently of similar substance all through. You plant it. There comes up a little sprout first from the earth, one stem. This stem divides and branches this way and that until there are a thousand twigs and leaves: the growth is from the simple towards the complex.

As we try to explain the meaning of life, we reverse that process. We begin with the multiplicity of things, and we think towards unity. We try to find some simple force, power, cause, out of which all these things that we see may have been developed; and the question is whether this one substance, if we can find it, is spirit or matter, God or the world without God.

I wish to illustrate how, in a few departments, this process of thought has been carried on. The companions of the old Bechuana chief, barbaric men in all ages, have explained the multiplicity of things by the multiplicity of causes and powers. There have been as many gods in their imaginations as there have been facts and forces in the world around them. Thousands of things, thousands of deities as the causes of those things. But the intelligent part of the world

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has progressed far enough to see one God, one force, one element, and to look for one far-off event, whether divine or not, and divine or not according to the theory you hold.

The same process of seeking for unity has gone on in other departments of thought. There is a multiplicity of nations; but we know that these nations, many of them, have sprung from some common source. So we trace back towards the twilight of the world; and we see fewer and fewer, until the conviction is forced upon us that, if God has not made of one blood all nations who dwell on the face of the earth, at any rate they have been developed from one blood, that all peoples are one, have one essential nature. So in regard to a thousand of the great facts of the world. The tendency everywhere is towards unity, towards finding some one common substance underlying the diversity of form, towards finding some one force as the explanation of the multiplicity of forces. We find this same process going on in chemistry. There used to be supposed to be no end of elements. Chemical investigation has reduced them to fewer and fewer. It has been found out that the diversity of form, of taste, of color, of force in every direction, while it exists, does not mean necessarily so wide a diversity of substance, but that these various forms are the result only of the various combinations of a few simple elements. We cannot understand how it is, but we know the fact. We know that the combination of precisely the same elements in some mysterious way produces the most marked diversity of result. We know that a bit of coal and a diamond are composed of precisely the same elements. It must be some curious variety of arrangement of the particles. We do not know what it is that produces the difference, but they are the same at bottom. So we know it is a chemical fact that there are certain substances that are healthful and some

that are deadly poison, but yet they contain the same chemical elements. How it is that they produce such diverse results we have not as yet been able to discover. One of the most magnificent discoveries of the scientific world tends in this direction. We talk about light, heat, magnetism, electricity, and they seem as different as different can be. Yet we have discovered what is called the law of the transformation of energy. We know that all these different forces are one. They are nothing else but different modes of motion. So the tendency, as I said, in all directions of investigation is towards unity. When we consider the fact that the physical scientist has achieved so much, has attained such wonderful results in his different departments of thought, we must not wonder if he becomes a little proud, apparently arrogant, if he fancies that he holds in his hand the key of the explanation of everything. He has unlocked so many doors that he sees no reason why he should consider that there is any door which he cannot unlock, until it be proved to the contrary.

The old Greeks speculated as to how all the universe, as we see it, might have been produced as the result of the movements of little atoms. Some of the Roman philosophers speculated in the same direction; but, when Christianity came, it for a time absorbed into itself all the scientific and philosophic minds of the civilized world, and turned them aside from these paths of physical investigation. But, with the growth of scepticism in these recent centuries,— scepticism concerning the finality of what has been called divine truth,— scientific men have taken up this old speculation once more, and are beginning to discuss the question whether the universe, including men, all we are and all we may be, is not explicable in the light of a purely physical theory of things.

The scientist deals with matter and force. He is ready to say, Give me matter and force and unlimited time, and it is conceivable how out of this may have come all we know, all we see, all we hope for. Tyndall within recent years has raised a discussion in both Europe and America by declaring it as his opinion that matter contained within itself "the promise and potency of every form of life." Right there, then, is the question, Does matter contain the promise and the potency of every form of life? Has the clod beneath our feet within its mysterious depth the fountain and source of the soul, our dream of God and immortality? This is the question. Only if you come to the conclusion that scientific materialism can explain these things, then you must remember,—though I would not have that prejudice you against a careful search as to just what is true,—you must remember that it precludes any belief in God, any belief in immortality. For, if life be the result of organization, then, when organization ceases to exist, of course life ceases to exist with it. Gautama believed this so far as the individual was concerned, and compared himself to a chariot. A chariot is of such a form and color and such construction. It moves under the impulse of the appropriate power. It is what it is by virtue of the relation of its parts to each other. Take it to pieces, and there is no chariot any longer. So he believed that, when death, when the force of disintegration, took man to pieces, that man as an individual ceased to exist.

If this theory then be true, we are only the products of this mysterious material force round us, just as are flowers and plants. The beauty and the promise exist for a little while. Then frost nips them, and they go back to dust; and that is the end of the individual flower. Other flowers will bloom next year; but that flower never appeared before in all the ages, and never will appear again to the end of time.

I speak of this that you may understand the question at issue, because, as I said, I think there are hundreds and thousands of people who speculate carelessly and crudely in this direction or that without having thought the thing through to see clearly what the issue involved must be.

A man who starts with this theory of scientific materialism assumes generally that he knows matter and knows force. People very commonly delude themselves with this idea. They know what a brick is. They know what a bowlder is. They have seen a brick. They have handled it, and know how solid, how hard, how real it is; but they say, Nobody ever saw a soul, nobody ever saw thought, nobody ever handled a feeling. These they regard as evanescent, elusive, shadowy, flitting, coming and going, and so, unreal. But they say, I know matter. I know what that is. That is something I come in contact with every day.

Here I wish to call you to consciousness of the fact that just precisely the reverse of this is true. The only things that any man knows, ever did know, ever can know, are the facts of consciousness. I know I think, I know I feel, I know I hope, I know I fear, I know I love. But what do I know about this desk? The existence of the desk is merely a matter of inference. I reach out my hand, and touch what I call this desk; and I feel something that seems to me hard. I feel a force that resists my pressure; but what is it? This feeling of resistance is only a fact of my consciousness. I look at it, and I see what I call shape and color; but what are shape and color? Facts again of consciousness. Suppose I attempt to lift it. I say it is heavy. What do I mean by heavy? I mean and can only mean another fact of consciousness. Something resists the pull of my muscles; and the pull of my muscles is simply an expression of my will. All we know directly of any force in this universe is

the force of the will. The source then and the root of this wondrous show of things,—these are only inferences from facts of consciousness; so that what we really know is spirit, what we really know is mind, what we really know is thought, is consciousness. Suppose you take the bowlder that you think you know so much about. Apply a sufficient amount of heat to it, and you can make it molten; more heat still, and it evaporates as steam; more still, and it has disappeared in the air, is absolutely lost to the cognizance of every one of our senses. Where is it gone? Pursue an atom. Scientific men themselves confess that they do not know what an atom is; they have never seen one. They are too small to be seen or touched by the most delicate instrument of scientific investigation. What is an atom? Nobody knows. Pursue the atom, and all you can find is what Faraday, one of the most famous chemists of the world, called a point of force. What a point of force is even Faraday did not know. So this matter that seems so solid, so real, so simple, fades off into the infinite mystery; and all you know again are the facts of consciousness.

Suppose for a few moments we consider this matter as something very real. Let us treat it in the ordinary common-sense way. Let us take matter made up of atoms aggregated into molecules, and so into larger aggregations until they are piled into mountains and massed into stars and solar systems. If all that exists is merely the result of certain modifications of these atoms of matter, then what? Then it seems to me that we must change our definition of matter so completely as to make it identical practically with spirit. For we know, as I said, that thought exists, feeling exists, consciousness exists; and we know that whatever exists as a fact to be observed must have existed in the cause that produces that fact,—that is, the mind demands an ade-

quate cause as the explanation of any result. If, then, matter is identical with soul, with thought, with feeling, with fear, with love, with hope, with consciousness, then matter is spirit and spirit is matter; and it is no matter which term you use.

I propose now to raise two or three objections to the theory of scientific materialism,— objections that seem to me absolutely unanswerable. If we assume that matter and spirit are practically identical, then that means the death of the theory of scientific materialism once for all.

Considering matter, then, in the ordinary way, it seems to me utterly impossible for us, on the theory of materialism, to explain the fact of life. No scientific man has ever yet been able to trace the origin of the lowest form of life to anything except some pre-existing form of life. Life the parent of life always and everywhere. Life never yet said father and mother to that which was dead. The difference, then, between the smallest particle of protoplasm and the smallest pinch of dust, one of them being alive and the other not alive, is an impassable gulf, which cannot conceivably be crossed by the human mind. Indeed, the wisest scientific men of the world admit this. They say that, while thought corresponds to and, so far as we know, is inseparable from certain molecular movements in the brain, that yet the thought is no part of these molecular movements, does not seem to be the product of them, and is utterly inexplicable in the light of these movements. Tyndall himself admits — I have quoted him on one side, and I will now quote him, in substance, on the other — that the difference between feeling and matter has never been explained and cannot conceivably be explained, and that modern science is no nearer to the solution of the problem than was the earliest man who ever asked the question. Life, then, cannot be explained in the light of this theory of scientific materialism.

One other thing it seems to me utterly impossible to explain on that theory, and that is the fact that men talk about certain things as right and certain other things as wrong. How does it happen, if man is only a temporary aggregation of particles of matter, produced without any will, produced without any consciousness, produced without any moral sense, without his own will or consciousness or moral sense, any thought of which he is the outcome, how does it happen that this clod of matter should stand upon its feet and look into the sky, look round over the world, and criticise other aggregations of matter as good or as bad; should look into the sky and feel like demanding of some power an explanation for what it feels to be the evils of life? On that theory there is no court to which an appeal can be sent up. Nobody is responsible for it; nobody did it; there is no mind to think about it, no heart to care about it, no hand to make anything better, no purpose to plan a result that shall be grander.

How does it happen, then, on this theory, that the thought of the distinction between right and wrong should ever exist? I will warrant that no bowlder in the field ever had any accusation to bring against any other bowlder. No flower ever found fault with any other flower. No wild animal in the woods ever had a conception of justice in the relation in which he stood to any other wild animal. It is only when we come up to self-conscious man that there is the dawn of this grandest of all faculties, the moral sense of right and wrong, the thirst for justice, the desire for the betterment of the world's affairs.

Then there is another thing that, it seems to me, materialism utterly fails to explain; and that is the essential fact of religion, the fact of worship, the recognition of something above man that seems to him admirable, that fills his soul

with awe, with glory, that lifts him, that thrills him with the thought of the sublime. In those very familiar lines of Byron you remember he says: —

> "There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
> There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
> There is society, where none intrudes,"—

What pleasure, what rapture, what society, if Byron was merely an aggregation of material particles, and if he stood only in the presence of certain other aggregations of material particles? Why should one mass of matter look with reverence and awe on matter of precisely the same kind and quality?

Then, what I have many times pointed out, but something that sweeps over me more and more every time I think of it, man is the only being on earth who dreams things better than ever were. Where did he get the dream? How, if he is simply the product of material experience, does he transcend that experience? How does he create an ideal world so much finer than this that he calls it the kingdom of heaven? And then, gathering all the resources of his own brain and heart and imagination and enthusiasm, bring them to bear on the work of realizing the kingdom of heaven?

No, friends, these things, it seems to me, find no answer, not even an approach to an explanation, in any materialistic theory of the world.

Consider for a moment. Man in all ages, crude where he was crude, barbaric where he was barbaric, ignorant where he was ignorant, cruel where he was cruel, man in all ages of necessity has dreamed God. Man in all ages has dreamed soul. Man in all ages has dreamed immortal life. Now, these dreams, the most flitting fancy that ever passed like a cloud across the horizon of the human mind,— these are

facts, these are realities. These are parts of human nature to be accounted for, to be explained, as much as a table, a bowlder, or a mountain. If there be no facts in the universe corresponding in any way to these grand dreams, then how were they born? No one ever saw the north pole. We know indeed that what we call the north pole of the earth does not point precisely towards the true north. No one ever saw any true north. Yet we know there is a true north, because the magnetic needle points forever towards it. The needle proves the existence of the power that controls it. This human heart has always pointed Godward, soulward, immortalityward, justiceward, truthward. It has always pointed towards these high ideals, and it seems to me absolute demonstration that there must be somewhere in this universe something adequate to these; or else they are facts without a cause. Let me look at a coin, let me examine the impress of it, the figure, the words, the date, and do I not know, though I never saw it, and though it may have been destroyed a thousand years ago, that there was once a die corresponding to them?

We stand in relation to this universe as the coin to the die, and whatever is in us has been put there as a result; and there must be in the universe somewhere something creatively corresponding to these, something corresponding to my ideal of God, my ideal of the soul, my ideal of immortality, my dream of justice, my hope for progress, my thoughts of the good and the beautiful. There must be something in the universe corresponding to these to have created these.

So it seems to me, after the best thought that I can give to the subject, that materialism as an explanation of you and me is what Mr. Fiske has declared it to be, crude science and exploded philosophy. Not only is it hopeless, not only

does it put us in the hands of an iron and careless necessity, not only does it mock our dream of perfect justice on earth, not only does it lay its cold hand of repression on every high ideal, not only does it quench the light of human dreams, not only does it turn all our ideals to folly, but it is condemned in the light of the facts of human nature as unworthy the clearest and finest thought, as it is unsatisfactory to the noblest hearts of the world. Not only that; for I believe with those who are seeking a monistic explanation of the universe that at the bottom the universe is one, that thought is one, that life is one, that spirit is one as God is one. And, if that be true, then dream and hope and love and strive on still, for you cannot dream anything so grand as the reality, you cannot imagine any high ideal of justice that shall not be within grasp, you cannot have any hopes too fair, you cannot have any desires too high; for if God, life, truth, love, justice, goodness,—if these are the heart of things, then, though it still doth not appear what we shall be, we know that, in spite of our present imperfection and discouragement, we shall some day "be like him." The prayer of the ages will be answered that we may be perfect even as our Father in heaven is perfect.

INGERSOLLISM.

THE ideas of which Colonel Ingersoll is at present the most prominent exponent in the country are not new. I suppose he would not claim that they are. Neither are his methods original, except in so far as they spring out of his personal characteristics and peculiarities. His ideas are very largely those of Voltaire, of Gibbon, of Hume, of Thomas Paine, of Thomas Jefferson, of Benjamin Franklin, and of a good many other of our Revolutionary heroes. And, curiously enough, they are largely the ideas of many of the most intelligent Biblical critics of the modern world. Many of these Biblical critics are still nominally connected with the orthodox churches. Colonel Ingersoll's ideas of the Bible, for example, are largely shared by such men as Bishop Colenso, Professor Robertson Smith, the famous Scotch divine and critic, and by many another whom, if it were worth while, I could name. The ideas, then, are not new; but he has so identified himself in the popular mind with these ideas that they have come to take his name, and so he stands before the world as one of the marked Signs of the Times. Perhaps it would be fair to say that these ideas are his in the sense in which Hamlet belongs to Shakspere. Shakspere borrowed the story and almost all its incidents; yet to-day, when we speak of Hamlet the Dane, it is not the historical character, it is the creation of Shakspere, that we have in mind. So, when we deal with this subject, we do

not go back to the sources whence Colonel Ingersoll has derived these ideas; but we naturally and inevitably think of him, because he has made himself their popular, prominent exponent. I propose to deal with him therefore, personally, only so far as is necessary to understand the Sign of the Times which he represents. But he has woven his own personality into his work to so large an extent that we shall have to deal with this personality. What sort of a man then is he?

He is, in the first place, a prominent and successful lawyer. He was an officer in the army. I first heard of him when he was practising in Peoria, Ill. Thence he went to Washington; and he is now living in New York. I have heard only one charge ever brought against him, outside of his religious opinions; and that I perhaps should note very briefly. I speak of this because there are those who feel that the character of the man who stands as the exponent of a religious — or, if you choose to call it so, an irreligious — movement is a large factor in that movement. It has been charged upon Colonel Ingersoll that as a lawyer he became connected with a cause which has left a stigma and stain upon his name,— his defence of two of the men who were implicated in what was popularly known as the "Star Route Frauds." I shall not undertake either to accuse or to defend him in this matter. I confess to you I do not know enough about it either to condemn or to vindicate. I only know this: that I believe Colonel Ingersoll to be an earnest and sincere man; and when, some years ago in Washington, I asked him about his connection with this case, he answered me, even with flaming indignation, asserting that, according to his own conviction, the part he had played had been an honorable and true part. And I know enough of him to know this: if he believed that he was acting a manly part,

the accusations, the indignation, the howls, of a whole country at his heels, would only make him defend his position the more tenaciously.

What else is he? He is beyond question, in my judgment, the most remarkable popular orator to-day on earth. I do not say in this country: I say anywhere, so far as I know. I have heard the best speakers of this country; I have heard some of the best speakers in England, including Mr. Gladstone; and I do not know of a man living who has such mighty mastery over a popular audience as has he. And the secret of his power is not far to seek. He is master of expression, wonderful in his power to mould and shape words to the utterance of his thought. Then he is a poet. I have brought here a book of selections from his utterances. I would like to read extracts illustrating the points I make if there were time. I could read you little bits, six or eight or ten lines, that are prose poems, not only rough gems of thought, but fine-cut jewels of expression, beautiful as flowers, and fragrant with lovely ideas.

Then he has what any popular orator must have,— a deep, high, broad sympathy with whatever is human. I shall touch on this later. I only wish to say now that there is nothing that touches the interests or the welfare of men that does not find echo in his heart and brain. He feels with a power that is simply colossal; and this I believe to be the key to his character more than anything else with which I am acquainted.

He is, then, the mightiest popular orator of the world to-day in my opinion, and this without any regard to the subject that he touches. He is not popular merely when he deals with the question of religion. The first time I heard him it was a political address; and I found myself shaken with laughter and moved to tears, just as he chose to play

upon me, quite as much as when I have heard him upon any other theme.

Another quality that gives him popular power, and that he possesses in an unsurpassed degree, is wit, humor, such as very few other living men possess. It is not of purpose, of malice aforethought, that he ridicules. The wit and the humor bubble up as naturally as do the waters of a spring. He does not hunt for his humorous expressions and witticisms. I have heard him for an evening through in private conversation, rippling and bubbling with humor and wit as naturally as the sunshine shimmers on a summer sea. He is one of the most entertaining men in private conversation that I ever have seen.

These are the qualities that make him so mighty as a popular exponent of anything that he chooses to advocate.

Is he an honest man? Does he believe himself to be a reformer, or is he only a vulgar, cheap sensationalist, who is prostituting these divine gifts to which I have referred for the purpose of making money? This is the common charge that is made against him. And let me note here that this is almost the only charge that is made against him, and for the very significant reason that there is no other that can be made, even for a moment, to stick. I claim no authority in answering this: I only express an individual opinion. I believe, however, that he is as honest and earnest as was ever John Calvin, or Richard Baxter, or Jonathan Edwards. I believe he is as sincere in whatever you choose to call them, his religious or his irreligious opinions, as any man that ever lived or ever spoke.

Consider for a moment. Does he need to lecture on religious subjects in order to get money? If he had no other resources, or if he could earn thrice as much in this way as in any other, and devoted himself exclusively or

largely to this, there might be some basis for the charge. It is true that, if he is advertised to speak on any religious subject, in almost any city in the country, without anybody except his own agent to advertise the fact, with no manipulation on the part of committee or manager, he can pack the largest halls at almost any price that he chooses to charge. But he is able to make money as a successful lawyer; he is overrun with business. He can make money, and he does, all that he wishes or needs, in other ways. He can make money as a lecturer equally well, whatever his subject. I came across a noteworthy slip from a newspaper, describing an evening spent by Mr. Abbey, the well-known theatrical manager, at a *soirée* where Colonel Ingersoll had been talking about Shakspere. Mr. Abbey expressed it as his opinion that, if the ideas uttered that evening in private conversation were embodied in a lecture, it would be the grandest lecture on Shakspere that the world ever heard; and, furthermore, he expressed his opinion as a business manager by saying that he would be willing to guarantee Colonel Ingersoll one hundred thousand dollars a year if he would go over the country lecturing for him, and let him act as his manager. So it is not simply as a religious disputant that he is competent to make money enough to live on. Then it seems to me that, so long as the great majority of ministers feel the divine call to leave a small parish and a poor salary to go to a large parish and a large salary in some city, it is not quite safe for them to trust to the attempt to blacken his character by charging him with being under the influence of pecuniary motives. I believe, then, that he is honest and sincere.

Not only this. I believe he has sacrificed, and sacrificed largely, for his opinions. The story goes that, when he was a lawyer in Peoria, a friend came one day into his office.

Looking over his library, he came across a copy of Paine's "Age of Reason." "How much did this cost you?" he inquired. The answer came quick, "The governorship of Illinois!" Whether said or not, this is doubtless true. No man in the country to-day is more conspicuously gifted with all those qualities that make a man popular than is he. And, in my judgment, there is no office in the gift of the people, not excepting the White House itself, that he might not have reasonably expected to gain, provided he had been willing to even keep still. He need not have changed his opinions: it would have been enough if he had done as many others do,— covered them up. But he has chosen to pay the price of appearing what he is. In an age of so much dodging and posturing for effect, let us at least appreciate and honor the honesty that dares to speak its mind.

Now what is his religious position? What are his antecedents? His father was a Presbyterian clergyman. By the time he was sixteen years of age, he was thoroughly conversant with the Old Testament, and had begun that criticism of it which is so familiar now to the world; and his father confessed that he did not know how to answer him. The confession of his father will do very well for the confession of most other people who have attempted to answer him since then, so far as these points are concerned.

There is one little glimpse of his boyhood that I heard him give once in a lecture, which I will attempt to reproduce, not in his own words, but in mine, showing what the boy was thinking of, what the tendency of his mind was even at that early time; and there is such a sympathy with that kind of boyhood in my own heart, as I look back to my childish experience, that it touched me very deeply, whether it will touch you or not. He said: I remember one afternoon in spring. I was out in the orchard. I looked up

and saw the bright blue sky with clouds sailing across it. I listened, and the air was full of bird-song. I leaned up against an apple-tree that was all a-blossom over my head, filling the air with fragrance. I stood there, that sunny, perfect afternoon, and thought of — hell. That is what was pressing upon his heart. How many times do I remember a similar experience, lying on my back in the grass, watching the sky and the clouds, half listening to the birds, and thinking eternity, eternity, eternity, until I almost swooned with trying to grasp the conception, and thinking what it would be to endure eternal pain! This is the kind of childhood that thousands and thousands of boys have gone through in this country, and in all the past of Christendom.

His father was a Presbyterian clergyman; and it has been charged against him, over and over again, that he was utterly lacking in reverence, even for his parents, in attacking Presbyterianism so bitterly as he has done. I wish to give you his idea of honoring his father and mother. He says: "You never can honor your father by going round swearing to his mistakes. You never can honor your mother by saying that ignorance is blessed because she did not know everything. I want to honor my parents by finding out more than they did."

I think that is sufficient answer. It is exaggerated and unwise honor to parents that has created China the stagnant nation that it is. Suppose the human race had begun back in the stone age to honor father and mother in such a way as to consider it wicked to learn anything that they had not known, we should be in the stone age still. The way to honor father and mother is to try to make a better world for their grandchildren.

We are ready now to consider the religious position that this man occupies. I wish to try fairly and simply to inter-

pret it to you as best I can. He is known, fairly I think, more than for anything else, as the great red-hot antagonist of those teachings of the Church which he regards as incarnate cruelty. The great thing he attacks is the orthodox belief in hell, because he thinks it crushes the human heart, blots out human happiness, makes people afraid to think, turns the brain into a dungeon, and prevents human progress.

Now let me refer to what I hinted a little while ago, his sympathy. This I said, and I repeat it, I look upon as the key to his character and career. I have never known a man more tender, more easily touched, more easily moved. He is as responsive to all the movements of life and thought about him as the leaves of a poplar tree to the movements of the air. As an illustration,— you will pardon the personality,— some years ago, when I was preaching in Washington, he was living there, and he thought that I was either so good or so bad — I never asked him which — that he desired to come and hear me preach. He had not been into a church for a good many years. He sat about four pews from the front; and, as I preached, I naturally watched him. He seemed to me to have completely lost himself, to be as unconscious of himself as a child at a show. Whenever there was a sharp remark, a smile would play over his face; and, when anything tender was said, tears would start and run down his cheeks, while he was so absorbed in listening that he did not rouse himself to consciousness of their presence even enough to wipe them away. He seemed to be an instrument to be played on, as perfect in that direction as he has found the hearts and brains of other people instruments on which he can play. This tremendous power of sympathy turns him into a flaming hatred of anything that seems to him causeless, inexcusable cruelty. So this one great, hor-

rible, world-shadowing dogma of eternal hate has been the one thing that he has devoted his life to fighting.

Let us note a few of the things that he believes and a few that he does not believe, without special regard to logical order.

What does he believe about God? He is not an atheist. He is only what Huxley and Herbert Spencer and a great many of the best scientific men of the world are to-day, an agnostic. You ask him if there is a God in the universe, and he says, "I do not know." He only feels sure that there is no such God as the one which has been set forth in the creeds of the orthodox churches. He does not fight against God. He fights only against certain partial, incomplete, unworthy, unworshipful, cruel conceptions of God. I heard him say, humorously, once: "I do not know whether there is any God. I live in one of the rural districts of the universe, and I do not know anything about it." But he frankly confesses that he can conceive of no God that satisfies either his brain or his heart. So there he is an agnostic.

What about the future life? I must, whether there is time or not, read you one or two brief extracts indicating his ideas in regard to death; for, leaving aside certainty of the future, I know of nothing more beautiful than are these expressions of his. In a tribute to his own brother, he says: "Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud, and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry. From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead there comes no word; but in the night of death hope sees a star, and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing."

Then, again, in his remarks at the grave of a child of a friend, he says, "We do not know whether the grave is the end of this life or the door of another, or whether the night here is not somewhere else a dawn."

Again, he says: "The idea of immortality, that, like a sea, has ebbed and flowed in the human heart, with its countless waves of hope and fear beating against the shores and rocks of time and fate, was not born of any book, nor of any creed, nor of any religion. It was born of human affection; and it will continue to ebb and flow beneath the mists and clouds of doubt and darkness as long as love kisses the lips of death. It is the rainbow,— Hope, shining upon the tears of grief."

Short of knowledge of the future, I do not know of anything in literature more sweet and beautiful than words like these. He is an agnostic here, then, simply saying, "I do not know"; expressing, however, his belief that, if there be any future, the only way to be ready for it is to live a noble, sweet, and true life here.

What is his attitude in regard to the Bible? According to popular opinion, he is spending a large part of his public life ridiculing the Bible. He has never uttered one single word of ridicule for the Bible itself! He has only ridiculed certain unfounded conceptions of the Bible which he regarded as standing in the way of human freedom and the progress of human thought.

What is his attitude towards Jesus? He of course does not accept the theological Christ. But, had I time, I could read to you from this book a loving, tender, reverent, admiring tribute to the man Jesus of Nazareth, rejected, cast out, persecuted by the same kind of bigotry whose sting his own heart has felt.

What else does he teach? What is his positive teaching? I do not know anywhere in the world grander and finer teaching concerning such great topics as human liberty, justice, patriotism, honesty, the character and possibilities of women, the beauty of home, than his. He does not wor-

ship, as he says; but, when he talks about worship, what he means is that which I should repudiate myself. He does not believe in singing hymns to or uttering words of praise to an infinite being. He thinks it belittling to the conception of God himself to suppose that he wants that kind of fulsome flattery. Again, had I time, I could read you glittering sentence after sentence on this very theme of worship, expressing what he means by it,—worshipping that which is beautiful, that which is true, that which is high, that which is noble in life, the consecration to duty in the midst of darkness, of difficulty, of sorrow.

If we leave one side the question of God and the future, if we simply concern ourselves with this life here, then I hardly know of any man who has voiced its duties, who has expressed its poetry, who has appreciated its sublimity and faithfulness more thoroughly and more completely than he.

I wish now to raise the question, which seems to me a perfectly legitimate one, What is the cause of a career like this of Mr. Ingersoll's? What has thrown him into such extreme reaction? I believe that he is a legitimate, natural, necessary outcome of the time. He is a product, by repulsion, of that type of religion, of theology, which he has devoted his life to antagonizing so earnestly and so successfully. Given the teachings concerning God and man and destiny, given the old creeds, and given a man who thinks, and who has a heart to be touched, who has a sense of justice, who is brave enough to speak, and you have a man like Ingersoll,—the natural, necessary reaction from the old creed. And I am willing to put myself on record as saying this, and saying it with all the emphasis of which I am capable,—and you know I do not agree with Mr. Ingersoll concerning some of the points which I regard as of unspeakable importance,—must I choose between the

conception of the world, of God, of man, of destiny, set forth in any of the authoritative creeds of the orthodox churches of to-day and the position of Colonel Ingersoll, I would take my place gladly, lovingly, tenderly, by his side, and await the outcome, whatever it might be. Rather than hold such a view of God, of his relation to his children, and of the future, as is set forth in the old creeds, oh, I would infinitely rather try to lighten human burdens for a little while here, lift off the weight from some heart that was crushed, wipe away a tear from some eye that was so blinded that it could not see the way, do some little thing to make the world better and brighter, and then sleep forever. I would thank God for the dust and the worm and the darkness and the utter silence infinitely more than I would thank him for his heaven, with me at his right hand, while away over yonder the smoke of "their torment" should "ascend forever and ever."

At the risk of repeating what I may have given you before, and to show that I do not hold these ideas alone, let me read to you a few lines from Tennyson, of the Church of England, and one of the finest poets of the modern world. In his poem called "Despair," he sets forth the fact that a man and his wife, who had been attending one of the dissenters' chapels in England, had come to doubt the kind of God and man and destiny there preached. Having lost faith in God and in the future, reaction sets in, and the man and his wife agree that they will get rid of their burden by committing suicide together. For that purpose they go down to the sea, and walk into the waves. The woman is drowned, but the husband is swept ashore, where he finds the minister of the little chapel bending over him; and a part of the poem is devoted to conversation between them, and the man expresses his ideas and, of course, the idea of

Tennyson, as is plain enough. You would think I were blaspheming, if I were not quoting: —

What! I should call on that Infinite Love that has served us so well?
Infinite cruelty, rather, that made everlasting Hell,
Made us, foreknew us, foredoomed us, and does what he will with his own;
Better our dead brute mother who never has heard us groan!

Hell? if the souls of men were immortal, as men have been told,
The lecher would cleave to his lusts, and the miser would yearn for his gold,
And so there were Hell forever! but, were there a God as you say,
His Love would have power over Hell till it utterly vanished away.
Ah yet — I have had some glimmer, at times, in my gloomiest woe,

Of a God behind all — after all — the great God for aught that I know;
But the God of Love and of Hell together — they cannot be thought,
If there be such a God, may the Great God curse him and bring him to naught!

Blasphemy! whose is the fault? is it mine? for why would you save
A madman to vex you with wretched words, who is best in his grave?
Blasphemy! ay, why not, being damned beyond hope of grace?
Oh, would I were yonder with her, and away from your faith and your face!

Blasphemy! true! I have scared you pale with my scandalous talk,
But the blasphemy to *my* mind lies all in the way that you walk.

So far Tennyson. And I utter again every word that he says. For, if I were compelled to choose between a life of human helpfulness here without God or hope, followed by an eternal sleep and the God of the old creeds, I would not hesitate long enough to give utterance to my eagerness in choosing the first; and, if I have a friend on earth who

would not choose to go with me on those conditions, I hope he will never tell me so, for I could not respect him so much afterwards.

And now I wish to say a few words by way of criticism and to make a little more clear what I regard as the defects of Mr. Ingersoll's position. His defects are almost entirely negative defects. I do not know one line, one word, one syllable, of positive teaching on the part of Ingersoll concerning any great question of secular interest that is not noble and fine and sweet and true, as healthy as the air and as fragrant as the lilies of the field. I do not know one word of positive teaching concerning our life here that he need wish to blot.

And his home life is as sweet as a poem. Those who have had inside glimpses of his household have learned that, if nothing else is worshipped there, at least he himself is — by his wife and children.

But it is said he has no reverence. Perhaps here it may be well to quote what he says of Voltaire: "In the presence of absurdity he laughed, and was called irreverent." The matter of reverence is a relative one. No man reverences those things that he regards as not worthy of it. And most certainly no man shows more reverence for all that is humanly worthy than does he.

And is it not well for us now and then to recognize the fact that even the Bible itself, in its finest parts, puts humanity first? Jesus teaches that so long as we are out of right relation to our fellow-men we can offer no acceptable worship to God. (See Matt. v. 23, 24.)

And the prophet Micah puts the doing justly and the loving mercy *before* the walking humbly with God. And John questions the sincerity of professed love to God where the love for the brother is not apparent. Charles Sumner used

to say, speaking of the two great commandments (love to God and love to man), that he was afraid he did not know much about the first, but he tried to keep the second.

But I said I was going to criticise. Let me come then to a few hints in that direction. I cannot regard Colonel Ingersoll's philosophy of the universe as a profound philosophy. I cannot think that he grasps it as completely as one might. I believe with my whole soul in God as the necessary key to the explanation of what is. I regard his philosophy of evil as not profound. For if there be God, purpose, outcome, then that evil which troubles the tender-hearted colonel becomes a shadow, a morning mist that flees away in the presence of the eternal sunrise. I cannot think his philosophy of human nature, this wonderful mystery of the human soul, to be profound or complete. He deals too much with the surface of things. I cannot think that he has estimated at their true worth the indicators that point, as it seems to me, with practical certainty towards the outcome over there beyond the shadow that shall redeem all the littleness, all the misery, all the pain, all the cruelty, all the darkness, of the past of human history. One more defect I wish to mention. I think that in his lectures and in his writings he makes the mistake of identifying religion and theology, which is only the theory of religion. He finds the one so faulty and so easily overthrown that he seems to imagine that religion is only a passing phase of human life and is destined to vanish away.

If now any one is anxious to take away the power and destroy the influence of men like Colonel Ingersoll, there is one sure way. Take away the false, the untenable, the absurd, the unjust, from the religious life of the time, and help build a religion that is reasonable, humane, tender, and true. True religion cannot be ridiculed, for it is not ridiculous.

And now, at the close, I wish only to say that if the colonel is mistaken in his doubts as to a future life, I do not believe he will be sorry to confess his mistake. If I meet him over there, I believe that his true heart will respond to everything true. As he now admires that which is admirable, he will easily flame out into worship; and he will be the readiest to confess the limitations of his thought here, and to go about fearlessly proclaiming the truth, earnestly trying to perform his duty, being faithful and true to friendship and to love as he is here below.

RELIGOIUS REACTION.

In any age when there is a forward movement, whether religious or otherwise, there will always be noted along with it signs and movements of reaction. Perhaps it is safe to say that the intensity of the one fairly gauges the intensity of the other. Yet, when the representatives of this forward movement note these signs of reaction, there is apt to be a feeling of discouragement, a questioning as to whether the progress that they believe in really exists, whether the world is moving forward as fast as might reasonably be expected. When we see intense activity on the part of the representatives of the older types of thought, when we see a scholarly and religious man like Dr. Huntington leaving the new movement and going back to the old, when we see a man like John Henry Newman, whose intellect and character command the reverence of the world, leaving the forward movement and going back to the old, it is not strange if people raise the question whether they are right. People say to me: Here is so and so, a good man, an earnest man, a seeker of the truth, a scholar, and he is going in precisely the opposite direction from what you are taking. I am earnest, I desire to know the way, but I am not a scholar: how shall I know which of you is right?

These signs and tendencies of religious reaction, then, need to be noted, to be understood, and to be assigned their

place, so that we may comprehend what they mean and not be overmuch disturbed by them.

When the children of Israel went out of Egypt, the story tells us that they came in a short time to the borders of the land of promise. Here they paused for a little, and appointed twelve trusty representatives, one from each tribe, to go over and investigate the country, to find out its condition, its desirability as a place of residence, and the difficulties in the way of conquest; and the story goes on to tell us that, in spite of the fact that they had the definite command of God to go forward without fear, that this was the country destined to be theirs, that they were not to be afraid of the stories of giants and of impregnable fortifications, still ten out of the twelve voted against that forward movement. There were only two of that high faith and trust that dared go forward. And I suppose it is true that the world never stood on the borders of any promised land but the majority voted, at first, at any rate, against the forward movement. The majority is never quite up to the highest, finest, and noblest things.

When I was a boy, I lived on the banks of a beautiful river. I learned to love the river, and I learned to be familiar with its habits; and I noted the fact that in the summer when the water was low, when the tide flowed on with a peaceful, gentle, almost sluggish, motion, the stream was always forward, or almost always. There was rarely an eddy, rarely a backward current, or, if there was any at all, it was so slight, it had so little force, that it could hardly float a chip upon its surface. But I noted another thing: in the spring-time, when the snows were melting up in the mountains towards the north, when the river swelled in its banks and there was a flood, when the tide was mighty and resistless in its force and in its forward motion, then the

eddies, the backward currents, were quite as marked, quite as forceful. There was power enough in them sometimes to seize some great tree that was floating down the stream and sweep it for a time backward up the river. So I learned a lesson,— that the force of the eddy, the force of the backwater, is in correspondence with the force of the general current that sweeps onward towards the sea.

I wish to call your attention now to a few illustrations of the fact that religious reaction always accompanies any great time of definite and distinct forward movement. Just at the time when Christianity was first becoming a force among the Hebrew people, there was also along with it the most intense devotion to the ritual, to the keeping of the old Mosaic order. There was an activity in the old religious life such as had hardly ever been seen in opposition to that which seemed to threaten its permanence and to all that promised a new and larger life for the world. And in the fourth century, after Christianity had conquered the Roman Empire, after Constantine had made it the religion of the court, the authoritative religion of the State, and it seemed supreme, there came, under the reign of Julian, one of his immediate successors, his nephew, a wide-spread revival of the old Paganism such as the world had hardly seen for centuries. New temples were built, old temples were repaired. Altars were raised, sacrifices performed. The old rites and ceremonies took on the appearance of life such as they had rarely known. It seemed like the upflaring of a fire, more brilliant than ever just before going out.

When the Reformation came, wounding to the death as it did the Romish Church, in connection with that movement there was a grand revival of Romanism. There was a marshalling of its forces, a gathering of its powers to meet this threatened attack, so that Romanism never seemed

more alive than it did in its opposition to the young Reformation. And when a few years ago at Oxford the "Essays and Reviews" were published, marking a sort of renaissance of liberal thought, a new birth of the brain and scholarship of England, there went along with it a movement that has taken the name of Dr. Pusey, and the time was marked by the reaction of John Henry Newman and some of the leading minds of the English Church. At this point of time, when human thought was rousing itself to these new conquests, just then these great lights and leaders went deliberately back and vowed their allegiance to the older faith.

So to-day we find, on the one hand, the movement of religious thought that promises emancipation to the world, that promises a new heaven and a new earth; yet, on the other, we find books published and elaborate schemes of thought set forth for the older ideas. We find men on every hand turning back to these, trying to prove that there is some way by which they may remain loyal to the old faith, in spite of the new light that is coming into the world. We find intense religious activities, popular revivalism, under marked and mighty leaders over the world, such as have rarely been seen. We find men leaving the older types of a severe Orthodoxy because the doctrine hurts, laying the emphasis of their lives not on those doctrines, but going into some form of Episcopacy, some established Church, where they can lay the emphasis on the rites, on the ceremonies, where they can forget the doctrinal conditions, where they can lose themselves in those charitable works that absorb so much of their time.

In conversation with a clergyman of the Church of England last summer, I asked him about the tendency of the younger thinkers in the church; and he said that many and many a man — and he spoke of it as quite a general move-

ment — as the necessary and logical outcome would do one of two things. They would either stop thinking, because afraid to follow thought to its logical conclusion, and turn their attention to the work of practical charity and human service, or else they would take refuge in the High Church forms and rituals, where the emphasis could be placed on these things, and where they might escape from the struggle and conflict of the modern world.

These are sufficient as illustrations of the tendency towards religious reaction.

I wish now, if I can, to offer you, in a spirit of perfect fairness and kindness towards those with whom I am dealing, some suggestions as to causes. What is the reason for this religious reaction, this going back to the older thought and to what you and I are accustomed to think of as lower types of religious faith and practice?

I shall mention several causes, but I wish in the first place to call your attention to one of the fundamental principles of the philosophy of evolution. We are familiar with this general tendency of all things to grow and to lift, and this is what we mean by the doctrine of evolution. Things grow from low to high, from the simple to the complex, developing higher and higher. But yet the tendency to degenerate on the part of these types, these forms of life that are not so circumstanced as to make growth the natural and easy thing, is just as much a part of evolution as is the tendency to grow when all things favor development. So along with this growth of things there is perpetually to be witnessed the tendency towards what scientists call atavism,— that is, a reversion towards an older, lower form of the same thing, the same growth; something that had been passed by reverted to again.

We find the same tendency in the animal world. After

the higher and finer species have been developed, there will be now and then a reversal of the process apparently, a falling back and down, a manifestation of some one of the lower forms and types of life. We find this to be a law: that the highest and finest and last development in any direction, vegetable, animal, human, is always of necessity the least fixed, the least stable, the first to feel the effect of any change of climate or condition. It is the last, highest, finest bud on the tree that is the most easily frost-nipped, if the weather changes or becomes unfavorable to its growth. The hardier and older parts of the tree can stand it. They are more fixed in their form.

We find the same precisely in regard to men. This individual reason of ours by which we look over the facts of life and decide as to what we should do in a given set of circumstances is the last and highest development of the human mind. The instinctive life, the impulsive life, we all share with the animal world: this is the older, and consequently less easily disturbed. When a man is old, for example, you will find that he frequently becomes more conservative. He falls back on to the lower, older life,— that which he inherited, that which he was accustomed to as a child. If a man becomes insane, it will be the highest and finest part of his brain that will go first. The lower, the instinctive, remains substantially the same. The automatic part of him is about as it was before. So in the presence of some great overmastering emotion. Let, for instance, a panic take a crowd, and the reasoning faculty, the highest and best part of the man, seems to be swept away; and suddenly he is an animal. He is simply carried away by impulse and passion and instinct. The reasoning faculty for the time is broken down; and the lower, older part of his nature reasserts itself.

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So we find that it is not an uncommon thing for some great, distinguished leader, in the direction of the larger liberty of the world, in his old age to become false to the grandest things he ever said or did. Perhaps a man who has despised the charlatanry of the old priesthood in his old age becomes a child again, and feels too feeble to stand alone, and calls in the aid of the very priest whose work he attempted in his maturer time to overthrow; and the world has been troubled by it. And sometimes this has been used as a proof that the new thought was false and wrong, and could not endure the stress of the last and dying hour, when a man was facing the great facts of God and eternity. What it means, however, is simply that his physical weakness has brought about the decay, the disintegration, of the highest and finest part of his life. There is a reversal, a falling back and down, upon the old, inherited, more stable part of his nature, that which has long endured.

One of the finest touches of nature anywhere in Shakspere that I am familiar with is that where some one, speaking of Falstaff when he is dying, says that he "babbles of green fields." His life as a courtier and soldier and man of the world was all gone. He was a child again for the time, because the highest and last added element of his life was undergoing a process of decay, and he was sinking back into his older and lower conditions. Here, then, is one reason that explains this religious reaction that we find connected with all epochs of the world's progress.

Then there is another reason for turning back. It seems very strange to me, and yet I know it is true on every hand. People think that it is safe for the world to go as far as they themselves go, but they think that there is some hidden danger in taking a step beyond. They make themselves the measure of what is proper in the way of the world's

advance. They seem to be afraid; and I have no question that in most of the cases it is a genuine, earnest, noble anxiety that the essence of the religious life is in danger, if people go, as they say, too far. In many cases, it is a genuine desire to save that which they believe is precious to the world, and on which the world's life depends. Suppose — I think you will see the parallel — that a man had been born and had grown up in a room through which the light entered only by the medium of colored glass or some curiously constructed prism. Suppose he had never seen the outside world, but had learned to love the light, to think of it as coming from heaven,— a precious possession by means of which he could see his way, by means of which he could discern forms of beauty, by means of which he could look into the faces of those he loved, by means of which he could read and study. He had learned to think that light was a precious and blessed thing. If some one, then, should come along and propose to him to open the windows, to remove the glass, to take away the prism, he would undoubtedly be fearful that the light itself might be lost. He could not think of light as being safe in limitless space, of its being lighter still out of doors: so he might even fight against being released from this which was really a prison-house.

Then, again, in other cases I have no doubt that the influence is of that sort which makes us love the old, love that to which we have been accustomed, to feel ill at ease anywhere else. It is not easy for a man to come out from the midst of the circumstances that have cradled him, to be flung over the edge of his nest, to try his new-found wings, to do it fearlessly and freely. The nest is softly lined, it is comfortable, it is home. There is no place to rest in the air: it is filled sometimes with rain and sleet and storm.

No wonder that people love their nests! To be released, to be driven out into this great, wide, wild universe, people feel as though they were lost. We know so very little, after all, we are overwhelmed with the sense of that which is unknown. We feel at home in these quieter, well-accustomed places. No matter what success a man may have had in his life, however beautiful his home may be, he will never cease to dream of the old home where father and mother were. There will seem an atmosphere about it that is lost to his later experience. This atmosphere remains, and touches his heart: it appeals to all that is tender and high and fine. I should not respect him if it were not so. But this same principle works in regard to all religious ideas. There is loss, and a definite loss — I feel it myself — in losing that intangible atmosphere of the religious life which I found in my childhood, with mother teaching me what she believed to be true. I would not for one instant go back; but I can imagine cases where this loving longing for the old is so much stronger than the conviction of the necessity that drives one out, as Abraham went forth under the call of God, as to lead one to go back again for peace and for the sake of finding that older association.

Then — you see how one of these causes springs out of another — people become tired of thinking. I have known many cases of persons who had started out bravely, convinced, as it appeared, of the truth of the new thought, the new ideas, but who became tired of wandering in this wide universe. They felt that they knew so little and that there was so much more that they did not know.

Then it is one of the most difficult things in the world for people to rest in an unsettled state of mind. The very word "unsettled" contradicts the possibility of thought of rest. There are not many who can say, So much I know, but a

million more things I do not know: I will hold my mind open concerning them. It is immensely difficult. Most people feel a necessity for their minds being made up in regard to everything; and it assures a sense of mental relief, of rest, to give up this weary struggle of thinking for one's self, of having opinions of one's own. I feel this myself at times. It is a relief to be able to go to a man of admitted authority, and take what he says about God and about the universe, and let it go at that. Sometimes it would be a relief to those who really think, who really believe, who really trust God, who really appreciate the grandeur of this spirit of truth-seeking, to give up the grand pain of thinking. And undoubtedly this does lead many a man towards religious reaction.

Then there is one other motive, and one that is mighty and strong. It springs out of the very best thing in man. It is his self-distrust, his modesty. He sees the whole great world against him; and the question sweeps over him — what wonder that it sometimes sweeps him off his feet or sweeps his breath away — whether there is not an immense egotism in clinging to the conviction, I am right, in the face of all the ages. Here is this grand consensus of the centuries: what if a man shrink from going out and saying, I am right, and yet I differ from all these? It is magnificent when a man dares to say that "one with God is a majority"; but suppose the question suggests itself to him whether it be not one without God,— then it is anything but a majority. And we must modestly confess that nine times out of ten, when a man starts out to lecture and teach the world, and he is alone and the world is all the other way, the world is right and he is wrong. It is well, indeed, that the world does not listen to all its would-be reformers. We have only to look over the surface of society to-day, and note how

many reformers there are and how many of them would reform the world in entirely different directions, to appreciate the fact that, if the world were ready to listen to them all, the result would simply be universal chaos. The world is right not to listen too readily, and it is not strange if now and then a man questions seriously whether it is safe for him to go alone against the witness of the ages. Cardinal Newman somewhere in his famous book — I cannot quote the words — says, revealing the secret of his own movement in this direction, that at last he has come to a position where he feels safe. Undoubtedly, it was the testimony of the ages that convinced him against his own reason that the proper thing for him to do was to turn back from the sunlight and walk towards the older shadow.

Then there is one more reason on which I must touch lightly. I do not want to lay much emphasis on it, though I have no doubt that it has weight with many. I do not want to emphasize it, because it is so unworthy that I do not like to believe that any large number of persons are influenced by it. This thing is self-interest. Take a man who belongs to the Established Church of England, and what does it mean? It means millions of money; it means social respectability; it means heirship of the past; it means the prestige of antiquity; it means an opportunity for rising through the various grades to a position next to royalty itself. It means all these things in possibility. Think what that must be even as an unconscious bribe, how it must weigh with a man who is doubting, who is questioning as to which way lies the truth.

I had a curious illustration of this idea, with a touch of the ludicrous connected with it, some years ago. A minister out West was talking about some questions of theology that were in the air, and he expressed himself as immensely interested;

and at last he said that he had no doubt that the new ideas were true, that he was convinced, and it seemed as though here was a very hopeful convert to the new ideas in the world. At last, he sat back in his chair, and said, "No, I must reconsider; for, as a matter of fact, all my sermons — and I have all the work of years — have been written on the supposition that the other theory is true, and I cannot afford to throw away the work of a life to follow these new ideas." This simply as an illustration in one direction. These different motives that come in must have weight in the scales of the man's intellect, and help to bear down the balance on the wrong side.

Now, at the last, I wish to turn back again to the hint with which I began, and to call your attention to the significance of these movements in the direction of religious reaction.

What do they mean? They mean that the world is moving, that the current is setting strong towards the future; and the power of the reaction, the force of the eddying tide, is a fair indication of the force and sweep of the onward movement. By as much, then, as you see these tendencies that indicate religious reaction, by so much you may be sure that religious change is in the air, and that the old is passing away.

We should not, then, be discouraged if it seems to go slowly, if it does not come through channels where we expect it to come. Still, let us be sure that it is coming, and that anything which is true has God back of it as the great force that is pushing it onward, and that, however slowly it may come, we need not be impatient, we need not fret. We should earnestly do our duty, standing in the place assigned us, believing that the right must win.

"Say not, the struggle nought availeth,
The labor and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

"If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

"For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes, silent, flooding in the main.

"And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright."

MIND CURE.

THAT general movement which, under the name of Christian Science, metaphysics, faith cure, prayer cure, or whatever it may be called, is attracting so large an amount of attention, is certainly one of the marked signs of the times.

If any one should question as to whether it is a fitting and appropriate theme for a Sunday morning sermon, I think he need only consider two facts. In the first place, this is not in the minds of many of its believers merely a method of curing the body: it is a method also for curing the sin and evil of the soul, so that it takes on the form of a religion to those who hold these features of the belief.

On the other hand, whether we agree with them in this thought or not, we do know that the physical condition, health or disease, does itself stand in most intimate relation not only to physical comfort, but to mental, to moral, and to spiritual states. If I could make all the world well, I should abolish at one stroke not only pain, but most of the vice and the crime of the world besides. So, when we discuss questions bearing upon the cure of even physical evils, we are dealing with those things that are interblended with all the problems of the moral and spiritual life.

I do not feel certain this morning of more than one thing; and that is that in my treatment I shall thoroughly please very few people. I shall not please the extreme thinkers, probably, on either side. Whether I shall even succeed in

pleasing myself is an open question. But I shall try to deal with the matter as fairly, as simply, as briefly as I can, as it seems to me related to the deep-lying principles of human nature as they have been discovered by human experience.

The movement started in its modern form in the year 1866, in Lynn. Mrs. Eddy claimed to have discovered the principle, although there were those who had written, thought, published, on the subject before.* She has set forth her theories and the claims which she has made on behalf of their practical working in many books and pamphlets which are open to the reading of all. Perhaps some of these are familiar to most of you. It is a distinctively idealist movement. The foremost advocates of the principle date it back even to the time of Plato, and his assertion that the real world was the world of ideas, and that that which we see, the phenomenal world, is only a sort of shadow or reflection of that. One of the prominent writers on the subject, and one of the most sensible, it seems to me, is Dr. W. F. Evans, author of "The Divine Law of Cure." I wish to read you just a word as setting forth what he regards as the basic principle of his teaching: —

"The present volume is an attempt to construct a theoretical and practical system of phrenopathy, or mental cure, on the basis of the idealistic philosophy of Berkeley, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. Its fundamental doctrine is that to think and to exist are one and the same, and that every disease is the translation into a bodily expression of a fixed idea of the mind and a morbid way of thinking. If by any therapeutic device you remove the morbid idea, which is the spiritual image after the likeness of which the body is formed, you cure the malady."

You see very plainly, then, the nature of the claims that

*It seems probable that she borrowed it all from Dr. P. P. Quimby, of Belfast, Me.

are made. These, in the light of some of the claims put forth by Mrs. Eddy, seem very calm and wise.

I wish to outline for you, briefly, the theory of the universe as held by the author, teacher, and apostle of what is called Christian Science. Christian Science, by the way, seems to me a curious misnomer; for, after all the study that I have been able to give to it, I can find in it neither science nor Christianity.

She claims that mind is the only real thing, and that there is only one mind, which is God. All this external world, including our bodies, are only thoughts, beliefs, shadows, hardly more real than the fancies of a dream. This one perfect mind, of course, can never be sick. Sickness, then, is only a belief, a fancy, of what she calls mortal mind; for the immortal, the one great mind, of course, is never deluded. But these limited mortal minds dream or fancy the existence of disease and pain. They are not real; and if you can persuade people that they are not real, that they are only fancies, then they quickly cease the kind of existence which might be asserted of them before, and pass away like shadows when the sun is up. Mrs. Eddy claims that in accordance with this she cures all kinds and classes of diseases. I think she carries the matter so far as to say that death itself is only a blunder that need not exist. When considering a theory of the universe like this, I feel like quoting a couplet from Byron that he wrote as a satire on the extreme idealism of Bishop Berkeley: —

> "When Bishop Berkeley says there is no matter,
> It is no matter what he says."

So, if we had only this philosophy of Mrs. Eddy's to deal with, it would really not be worth while talking about on the part of sane or rational people. But we must remember one

thing. When you have demolished a philosophy, a theory, you have not thereby demolished facts, if facts there are which are connected with that theory. A farmer, for example, may, during a certain season, raise a very large and fine crop of potatoes; but if you ask him for his theory of sunshine, and of the laws of growth by which he has produced these results, his answer might be the most arrant nonsense; but the crop is there. So any man may produce a definite and distinct result and yet give you a very foolish account as to how it was done. We must, then, separate certain facts that are palpably undeniable from the foolishness of the theories which have been connected with them.

It would not be fair to the representatives of mind cure to leave this description of the beliefs of Mrs. Eddy as an accurate representation of them. During the last week I had a long and careful conversation, with this sermon in view, with one of the best and most rational representatives of the mind cure; and I assure you that the conversation was in almost every respect extremely satisfactory. She repudiates entirely these foolish and fanciful notions as to there being no such thing as matter, as to there being no such thing as disease or pain. She freely and frankly admits the existence of all these; and yet she makes the magnificent claim that, though these exist, mind is king,—king ever of the body, king of these physical conditions, above all health and all disease, and that the mind has power to cut off the supply of these morbid conditions, and to rally and call back the healthful forces of the system, and so dominate and rule all this kingdom of the physical. This I say without indorsing or contradicting the claim that she makes.

I wish now, after having set forth thus simply the claims of some persons representing this modern movement, to recognize a few facts. I have no sort of question that the

followers of Mrs. Eddy have "cured" large numbers of diseases, that Mrs. Eddy may herself have cured them. I have no sort of question that diseases have been cured by the believers in faith cure, in prayer cure, in every different phase of this theory that you can imagine. But we cannot stop here. We must recognize that cures have been effected by the agency apparently of all sorts of things. You are aware that for ages it was believed that the touch of a king or queen of England had power to cure scrofulous disease, so that scrofula was called the King's Evil. I have no sort of doubt that under certain circumstances real cures have been effected by the touch of a king. I have no sort of question that cures recognized by his followers as miraculous, recognized by us as perfectly natural, were made by Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet. There are perfectly authentic cases on record of his having wrought most wonderful results by his touch or by prayer over those who were sick. When I was in California, a man visited the place where I was living, who claimed to be able to cure all disease by the laying on of hands. I know that people did go to him on their crutches, and came away with their crutches under their arms or over their shoulders. I have no question as to facts like these.

Not only that: miracles such as are reported from the Middle Ages are being wrought to-day under the power of faith by those who are devout believers in the different religious systems of the world. Many and many a person has been cured by the use of the water of Lourdes. There is one authentic case on record where a devout believer came to a regular practising physician, who had recently received a little phial of water from the fountain of Lourdes, that had been brought to him by a friend, as a curiosity. This woman came to the physician suffering from a serious malady, as

she supposed; and she said, If I were only able to go to Lourdes, I feel sure that my disease might be taken away, that the blessed Virgin would hear my prayers. The doctor thought he would try an experiment, and he told her that he had some water from Lourdes, and he would let her try it, and very likely it would produce the result that she expected. But he could not find the bottle; and, not wishing to disappoint her, he took another phial and filled it with water from the faucet, labelled it, and gave it to her. And within a week she was well, believing that it was by the favor of the Virgin that the wonderful result had been brought about.

There have been cases where persons have been cured by the touch of sacred relics; and, in some instances, it has been found — after the result had been reached — that the real relics had been lost, and replaced by bones of a much lower degree of sacredness.

There is another instance that I have in mind, and there is no sort of question about it. A physician had a patient who was troubled, as he supposed, by a very serious disease of the throat. The physician inserted an instrument — I believe some kind of a thermometer — by which to test the temperature of the throat. He found out that the patient supposed that the doctor was administering some sort of treatment. He let the patient go on with that impression; and, in a very short time, he cured the disease completely with nothing but the thermometer. These cases are on record by the hundred, and they ought not to surprise or astonish us. They are perfectly in line with what we know of the power the mind has over the body; for the real agent of cure in all these cases is not the prayer, not the relic, not the thermometer, not the water of Lourdes, genuine or spurious, but the mental power of the patient.

And who shall limit this power? You are familiar with its manifestation in a hundred different directions. A word is whispered in some one's ear, and the face suddenly blushes and is suffused with red. What does it mean? It means that a thought, a feeling, has power to stimulate the action of the heart, and send the blood to the cheeks. Another word is whispered, and the cheek blanches and is pale. What does that mean? It means, again, that a thought, a feeling, has had the power to send the blood back towards the centre, leaving the extremities pale and chilled. A word has power to stretch one fainting at your feet, has power to rouse another who is almost gone, and make him leap to his feet strong and thrilling with life again. What limit is there to this power of the mind over its kingdom, the body? Whether it can cure or not, we know that it can kill.

I wish to give you here one or two illustrations not fanciful, but authentic. They are on the records of the medical experience of the world.

Some years ago, in France, certain criminals had been condemned to death. The physicians were allowed to try some experiments with them, to see the power the mind had over the body. They took two or three of them, and told them that they had been permitted to put them to death without pain; that they would simply let them bleed to death. They blindfolded the men, laid them on surgical tables, telling them they would open a vein in their necks. Thereupon, they simply pricked the skin,— not enough to draw blood,— and had warm water so arranged that it would fall on their throats and trickle into a basin prepared to receive it; and the men thought they were bleeding to death, and they actually died under the operation.

Another test was of a like kind, also on criminals, with whom the physicians were allowed to experiment. They

told the criminals that they were going to put them into beds from which certain cholera patients had been removed, and that they would probably take the cholera. They put them into perfectly fresh beds, but warm and tumbled, looking as though some one had just left them ; and a large proportion of the men actually died with the cholera. These are perfectly authentic cases, illustrating in the most remarkable way what this power of the mind may be in certain instances when it is exercised upon the body.

I wish to give you now a few illustrations in another direction, showing you what tremendous medical resources there are here when they are properly explored and the laws that govern them are understood.

I have studied practically the working of hypnotism upon its subjects. Hypnotism is the modern name for what used to be called mesmerism. It was scouted by the old physicians, condemned by a scientific commission in France; and yet it is now recognized by every competent investigator, and is being put to medical use by some of the most intelligent physicians of the world. The point is here. It is supposed that the power at work is the mind of the subject, and that the operator, instead of exercising some marvellous control over his subject, simply suggests to him certain things after he has put him into this hypnotic sleep.

What is the limit of the power that can be exercised under this condition? It is apparently unlimited. I have seen almost every physical sense perfectly controlled. The operator suggests that the subject cannot see, and he is blind. He tells him that the only sounds he can hear are his own voice and the ticking of the clock; and you may shout into his ear, you may make any noise you please, and he is as insensible as a marble statue. I have seen a person sniff ammonia with the greatest delight, because he had

been told that it was cologne, without its producing any of the ordinary effects of ammonia. I have seen a person holding a little pure water in a glass, when told it was ammonia and compelled to smell it, have the tears run down his face,— the natural effect of ammonia. I have seen a person, with a little glass of pure water, thrown into a perfect ether sleep because he was told that it was ether. I have seen a person who was told that his left side was paralyzed; and I have run a pin into the back of his hand till the blood followed it, and he took no more notice of it than if I had run it into the cushion of his chair. The moment after, when he was told that feeling had returned, he was as sensitive as before. All of the physical senses seem to be under the unlimited control of the mind under certain circumstances and conditions.

This has been recognized by the scientific men of the world. It is being used in France and Belgium and in some cases in this country as one of the mightiest medical forces. There are cases on record of persons completely cured of their love of alcohol by it. They have been put into this hypnotic sleep day after day or two or three times a week for a time, and it has been impressed on their minds that they were not to like the taste of alcoholic drink; and the result of it has been a natural aversion to everything of the kind. Not only this, but people have been cured of moral taints and vices by this process.

I might go on here all the morning telling you cases of cures that I have known. I must hint one or two to show you that the theory, whether it be mind cure, Christian Science, faith cure, belief in the pope or Joe Smith, has apparently nothing to do with it. It only means that you shall believe in the possibility of it,— believe that the thing is going to be done. This seems to be the one grand requisite.

Or, in some cases, there may be no belief about it at all, but only some fresh impulse, something that shall rouse the life force into renewed action.

One of the leading physicians of this city told me in conversation one day that his life was saved by his being made terribly angry. He was a surgeon in the army; and he had typhoid fever, and had passed the crisis and was sinking gradually away. In a few hours he would undoubtedly have died. There was a surgeon of a neighboring regiment, whom he very much disliked, who came walking through the ward, making supercilious remarks, till he stood by the cot on which the sick doctor lay; and in a very flippant fashion he said that probably it would all be over with him very soon. This sort of comment, by this sort of a man, roused his whole nature, till he rose up with what strength he had, and in no very polite language told him that he would live to see the grass green over his grave yet. It only needed this impulse for the life force to rally; and from that moment he began to recover, and is as strong as any man in the city to-day. This means simply that there needs something to thrill the life forces to renewed activity.

I knew a case when I was a boy, in my old home, of a woman bed-ridden for eight years. A man fell in love with her, and induced her to be married. She got up and went to housekeeping, had a large family, and was well for many years.

I know of a man who had not walked for years who was carried abroad in a wheeled chair, to see what travel could do for him. He had on one occasion been taken on board one of the steamers on one of the Swiss lakes, and left by his attendant. As he was sitting there, a cry of fire was raised. He leaped from his chair and rushed on shore, forgetting that he was lame under this impulse to escape from danger.

What does this mean? It means that it is the mind of the person himself that is chiefly concerned, and that it only needs, no matter what the influence may be, some power to give this person confidence, some power to rouse the life force, some power to make one feel that he *can*, and then the sluggish material forces obey the mind that is king.

Now, what is to be the upshot of this movement? I believe that, as the years go by, the extravagant, extreme claims on the part of those who advocate mind cure will be gradually outgrown. And I believe this also: that the real power which is here is to be recognized hereafter more and more, that it is to be recognized by the regular practitioner, that it is to become a part of the scientific treatment of disease. Every one who studies the matter knows that the wisest and best doctors are using less and less medicine every year,— medicine in the old sense of drugs. Doctor Oliver Wendell Holmes said — I can repeat it without any danger of hurting the drug business, because, whether true or not, the world will go on after about the same fashion for some time to come — that, if all the drugs were cast into the sea, the probable result would be that it would be so much the better for men, and so much the worse for the fishes.

This is, undoubtedly, an extreme statement, made for effect. But, as indicating the tendency of the regular practice, I would like to tell you that some years ago I was the guest of the Massachusetts Medical Society at its annual dinner in Music Hall. I sat at the left hand of Surgeon-General Dale, a familiar name in Massachusetts and in other parts of the country. In the course of conversation, he said: The first, the principal thing is that you shall have perfect faith in your physician. Then, if he doesn't give you too much medicine, you will be likely to get along all right. Every physician knows that his case is half won if he can

carry faith into the homes of his patients. And the one thing he dreads more than anything else is gloomy, despondent, discouraging surroundings on the part of nurses and attendants.

When some morbid condition is set up in the system, it becomes a battle between the natural force of health and this morbid force of disease; and if the physical condition is adequate to it, in almost all cases, whether you have a physician or do not have one, the life force — that is, the majority force — in the system will prevail, and the patient will get well.

This is nothing against physicians. If I were ill, I should send for a physician the very first thing possible, as I would turn my watch over to the watchmaker if it needed repairs. Whether he give me medicine or not, if he is a wise man he will know what the difficulty is, and will give me, perhaps, what is better than medicine,— advice. It is the fault of the people if they are drugged. Ninety-nine times in a hundred, if you should call in a wise physician, if he were to give you only advice, though that were all you needed, you would not take it: you would send for another physician, that he might give you drugs. I have known any number of physicians who have given liniment, when they said the only thing the patient needed was friction; but they knew the patient would not rub the part unless something were given to rub in. I have heard a physician say that he gave pills that had nothing in them relating to the disease, because he wanted the person to have confidence that he was doing something for him, otherwise he would send for some other physician.

As fast as the people become wise enough to co-operate with the physician, they will come to recognize more and more these divine laws of cure, and will help on the better days when there shall be less of disease, because there is

less of morbid mental condition out of which so large a part of the disease of the world has sprung.

I wish now to close by hinting two or three points briefly, as indicating what this sign of the times signifies.

In the first place, it means the growing belief of thousands of people that mind is really king. It means a tremendous, world-wide reaction against the old materialism. It has some of the violence, some of the extravagance of reaction, and no wonder. We have been told by wise men for a good many years that there was nothing in the world but matter, and that the soul was merely the product of matter, and its plaything. What wonder that the soul should assert itself at last, even to the point of declaring that there was nothing else in existence but soul, and that this boastful matter was only the shadow and the plaything of the mind? It means a reaction, and I believe a healthy reaction, against the extremes of the old materialism.

For consider how the mind, how thought, has proved itself king of this old planet. Picture to yourself this world two hundred thousand years ago, and then picture it to-day; and what is the difference? Only the difference wrought by thinking; that is, the power of mind to sculpture and recreate the world. And the mind has no less power over this physical system of ours that we call the body. You know perfectly well, you recognize it in all experience, that the mind sculptures the face. After years have gone by, you say that a man has a wolfish, a foxy, or a bearish look; that is, this or that quality is sculptured on his face. What sculptured it there? Thoughts and feelings. It is merely the mind manifesting itself on the countenance; and the mind, I believe, has power not only on the face, but from head to foot to mould and shape our physical condition.

And here is the point we must never forget: the mind

is king, but mind has a kingdom. If you are to destroy the real existence of the world and body and of matter of every kind, then mind is alone in space in the midst of a dream, surrounded by nothing but flitting shadows and fancies. But mind is mighty over real things,— over the real earth and the real body.

And we must not forget that all that the mind has done in reshaping this old earth of ours has been done in accordance with the divine laws. Then recognize this force as real; but recognize the laws as real. All has been accomplished in accordance with facts, with laws, and by obedience to laws; that is, obedience to God. And all that can be done by the mind in curing, in lifting, in reconstructing, in saving the body, must be done by recognizing the real facts and forces of this physical system of ours, and by studying them even more attentively. Mrs. Eddy would discountenance the whole business of even raising the question as to whether you were sick or what is the matter with you. But, if the mind is to have power over the body to heal and save it, we must recognize the reality of its forces, discover the laws of physical action in the physical frame, and must achieve these grand results by obeying carefully these laws. But I believe that the mind has power such as we are only beginning to dream of as yet. And by and by, when the soul, linked with God in love to him, in obedience to him, shall have asserted itself in fitting and blessed results, then that day shall come when the inhabitants of the earth shall no more say, I am sick, and there shall be no more pain, because the former things are passed away.

SPIRITUALISM.

THIS is Easter morning. The story has come down to us from the past that eighteen hundred and fifty-six years ago, at about the rising of the sun, certain of the loving friends of Jesus sought the tomb where they had laid him, and found it empty. And I suppose that the vast majority of people in Christendom, not having studied the subject very widely, hold the opinion that that was the first Easter morning of the world; that Easter is Christian, and only Christian, in origin and significance. I have had the question asked me a great many times as to why, not believing in the physical resurrection of Jesus, I celebrate Easter at all. The question betrays ignorance of the fact that the Easter day and the Easter hope are older than Christianity, older perhaps than any scripture, older than any organized religion of the world. For this hope that

> "Life is ever Lord of Death,
> And Love can never lose its own,"

is older than any religion. It is a flower born of human love, and watered by the tears that have been shed on the white faces of the dead.

Easter, then, is human, a human hope; and all the children of the one Father have an equal right to whatever sunshine and consolation may gather about it.

A belief that has come to be practically a religion to millions of people in the most civilized countries of the world

may rightly claim at least, whatever else may be said about it, to be regarded as one of the "Signs of the Times." And this belief is not held by the superstitious, by the ignorant, by the vicious, by the socially reprobated alone. Nor does it find a home among these. For better or worse, it is shared by lawyers, by doctors, by ministers, by philosophers, by men of science, by men in every occupation, in every rank of life. There are believers among the social outcasts of the world, there are believers on thrones, there are believers in palaces, believers among the nobility of every country, believers among diplomats, those engaged in the public service of their respective States. So that for better or worse, as I say, we find this permeating all modern society, in the high places and in the low. And it seems to me significant of one of two things. It is either one of the most hopeful or one of the most lamentable things in all the world. If it be true, then the fact that so many in all walks and ranges of life have accepted it contradicts neither the brain nor the culture of its adherents. If it be only delusion, contemptible, pitiful, superstition and fraud foisted upon so many, then it seems to me one of the saddest commentaries on what we dare to call the civilization of the nineteenth century that here at a time when we had dared to think that the world was coming to be fairly intelligent it is overrun, fairly swamped, with what so many are disposed to regard as merely a survival of old barbaric superstitions.

It seems to me, then, that it is worthy of our careful, earnest, candid attention. If it is true, we certainly want to know it. If it is false, we want to know it, not only for our own sake, but for the sake of helping so many thousands of people out of a pitiable delusion. Liberals, at any rate, at the first blush, ought to be touched with a little feeling of sympathy towards it; for, whatever else it may be, it has

proved itself the most remarkable, the most wide-spread, the most effective solvent of the old dogmas that the world has ever known. Educated people, those who have time for critical thought and study, can be touched and influenced by criticism, by philosophy, by science; but here is a power that has come to work through the affections as well as through the intellects of men, and at whose touch the hideous and horrible dogmas of the past have faded away, to give place, at least in other respects, to what are rational and humane ideas concerning our Father in heaven and the destiny of his children.

When, however, an earnest, candid person wakes up to the fact that such a thing as Spiritualism exists, and proposes to study it, the chances are, unless he is more fortunate than the ordinary seeker, that he will find himself face to face with that which will repel him, will shock him, will disgust him on every hand; for, whether there be anything true in it or not, there is no sort of question that there does exist in connection with it and under cover of its name an amount of palpable and intentional fraud that is simply appalling. There is no question that there is connected with it and under cover of its name also a vast amount of honest and ignorant self-delusion. Certain strange things happen, and people at once fly to the spiritualistic interpretation of them, although to a more careful and conservative thinker there may be no necessity whatever for any such explanation. There is, then, this amount of fraud and delusion which repels one who proposes to investigate for himself, and find out what is true. Words of too severe reprobation cannot be uttered for this side of the movement. But it ought to be said in justice that the honest and earnest believer deplores this state of things as much as anybody, and ought not to be held responsible; but the whip of public

scorn and disapprobation should be applied to the multitude of impudent and deliberate cheats, tricksters, and liars, till they are whipped out of all decent human society. There are those that trade like human ghouls in the bodies of the dead. This business seems to me in all ways to be respectable compared with that of trading in human tears, in human heart-break, in the tenderest and highest hopes of the human soul. I know of nothing more utterly despicable, more utterly inhuman, than this manifestation of a willingness to make money out of the sacred hopes and fears of those who are heart-broken and desolate.

There is also connected with the movement, as is charged, a vast amount of immorality of every kind. I have no sort of question that this charge is true. One thing, however,— I will not dwell upon it,— ought to be hinted as an explanation of it, as an apology for this condition of things. Always in the history of the world, when there has been a general, wide-spread breaking up of an old system of thought, when people are feeling about for an attempted readjustment with the new system, there has been this loss of a firm grip on the deep realities, the ethical principles of human nature. People have lost their old motives and have not found the new. It was true concerning early Christianity. There has not been one single charge made against Spiritualism that was not made by pagan onlookers and observers as to young Christianity. It was said that their love-feasts were only drunken and dissipated orgies. And Paul tells us himself that on a certain occasion, in the church of Corinth, the people were drunken at the communion table; so that we must remember that, though these things are true, it is not the first time in the history of the world that men have passed through a similar phase of experience.

And while people still link themselves with the churches

for the sake of social standing or financial gain, though they do not believe its doctrines nor care for its spiritual prosperity, even modern Christianity cannot very safely throw stones.

I wish now to say that any critic who proposes to consider any great movement of human life or thought is in duty bound, as a fair and honest man, to judge it from its best side, to judge it at its highest.

Let us, then, consider the fact that, in spite of all I have said, there is what I may perhaps properly call a Higher Spiritualism, a complete system of thought, of life, of ethics, of belief concerning God and man and destiny that is clearly wrought out. There is a vast literature that has appeared, in the last few years, setting forth belief in all these phases of opinion; and, if any one wishes to know what it means, or what it claims to stand for on its higher side, he ought in fairness to make himself familiar with the best of its literature.

I propose to define this higher Spiritualism, not to give you my opinion of it, but to tell you what it claims for itself, what it aims to be.

What is, then, the first grand belief? Simply that death is not an end; that it is merely an experience, an incident in the onward and upward struggle and progress of the individual life. It claims to have demonstrated this, to hold it not as a hope, not as a belief, but as knowledge. It teaches that inside these gross physical bodies there is an ether body, that has grown with it, been shaped by it, adapted to it, perfect in every part and faculty; and that this ether body is disengaged at death, like a germ delivered from its sheath, and that it goes on, the soul taking this ether body with it as a perfect equipment in every faculty for the fullest expression of its higher and better life. According to this

teaching, the soul simply goes on with its power to think, to remember, to love just as of old.

It further teaches that this universe everywhere is under the law of cause and effect, and that we begin life hereafter just as we leave it here, precisely what we have made ourselves by our thoughts, our deeds, our words on earth. Therefore, this other life is not peopled with ghosts, with ghastly, thin and unreal beings, such as we have imagined in the past: they are real folks, our fathers, our mothers, our neighbors, our friends, just as we have known them here, only released from these lower physical conditions, but carrying with them the same kind of character, of thought, of personality which they had here.

It also teaches that, under certain peculiar conditions, there can now and then be manifestations of the reality of that life to this life; that sometimes there comes a whisper, sometimes a hand is reached across the abyss, and that they are demonstration of the fact that those we have loved and that we talk of as lost are not lost, but are living as we are living.

This higher Spiritualism is in perfect accord with all the best scientific teaching of the world. It is in perfect accord with the finest and highest philosophy of the world. It is in perfect accord with the finest and highest moral principles that have ever been discovered. So there is nothing that we know that is contradictory to these claims of this higher Spiritualism. Therefore, whether it can demonstrate itself as true or not, it is not in contradiction with any known truth that science or philosophy has to offer, and is in perfect accord with the finest ethical teaching and the highest hopes of man. So much must be said in defence of this claim of what I have called the higher Spiritualism.

Now, I wish to offer a few suggestions of which you will

see the force and drift. I speak not now as a Spiritualist. I am speaking, or trying to, as a perfectly fair and sympathetic critic from the outside. These claimed facts which Spiritualists offer us as proof of that which they declare to be true are not new facts. What is called modern Spiritualism itself is less than half a century old, but these general manifestations of a certain class and kind of facts have been reported down from the very dawn of human history. In the household of old Dr. Phelps, of Connecticut, father of Professor Phelps, of Andover, there were unquestionably certain manifestations of abnormal power that have never yet found any explanation, unless indeed they can find it here. In the home of the Wesleys there were similar manifestations continued for a long period. From almost every nation, every religion, every age, there come to us these stories of abnormal, unusual occurrences; things that usually the people have called miracles, that they were not able to explain. Now here is the point that I wish to emphasize. Are these stories, hundreds of them, told by the gravest and most reliable writers and historians of the world,— are they true? They certainly are not conscious falsehoods. Do they mean that the people who reported these things in all ages were so little to be relied on that they should be constantly liable to this sort of delusion from the beginning of the world until now? I simply wish to say this: if I may believe in the central thought of modern Spiritualism, that fact would run a line of light, a line of sanity, back up the ages through every religion, through every nation, through every tribe, and would give me an added respect for the ability of the average man to observe and tell the truth. It would explain a thousand things that now are inexplicable. It would explain not only the Bible, but the Scriptures of all ages, and the writings of grave old Roman writers, like

Livy, and almost all writers of ancient times. Brush them one side, and put them down with scorn to the credulity of man, and we must believe, what I do not like to believe, that men have been too credulous in all these ages. To believe that there was a kernel of truth in their reports would give an added respect for human nature.

Here also might be found a rational explanation of the ancient oracles, and of such claims as that made by Socrates concerning the *daimon* that was his constant attendant and teacher.

Then what a light it would throw upon the whole Bible! For the Bible looked at from the stand-point of the rationalist is nothing but a spiritualistic book from beginning to end. Its entire significance is in its Spiritualism. It is full to running over with it from one cover to the other. Must we put everything there down to the wildest kind of delusion? Must we not, unless there is some ground for these beliefs? I would like to believe something a little more to the credit of these reporters.

Let me indicate to you one kind of influence it would have on my thinking. I do not believe at all in the physical resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. On the testimony contained in the New Testament, I see little cause for believing even in his spiritual reappearance. The testimony of the New Testament concerning the resurrection of Jesus, if it were paralleled by testimony in a court of justice, would not be accepted, for it is simply the anonymous testimony of people whom we cannot cross-examine as to certain very strange and wonderful things that happened nearly two thousand years ago. One of the strangest things to me is to find people who believe in these stories told in the New Testament, but who do not believe the modern ones. For the modern ones are of precisely the same kind, and have this advantage

over the old: that they have the living testimony of hundreds and thousands of credible men and women, while the old stories are no more credible on their own account than the modern ones, and have no evidence that would be allowed if it were standing simply alone.

In view — and here is what I have in mind — in view of this, if I may be permitted to believe in the visible spirit appearance of any modern man who has died, why then it would be perfectly easy and rational for me to believe that Paul saw Jesus on the way to Damascus. It would not seem a supernatural fact, but a perfectly natural occurrence.

And here let me remove one common prejudice. Spiritualism makes no demand on us that we believe the supernatural. At most, it is only a question of words. A spiritual world, if it exists, is as natural as the physical world. All the mightiest forces are invisible, but not therefore supernatural.

I want to mention to you, also, a thought which strikes me as being of a great deal of importance, as springing out of the doctrine of evolution, as to these modern wonders; for evolution reaches from the beginning to the end, and there is no sort of reason to suppose that its force is spent, but every reason to suppose the contrary. Note one thing of vast significance. The lowest forms of life, worms and fishes, occupy a horizontal position. They have very little development of brain, very simple nervous systems. The force of evolution has tended ever to lift from the horizontal plane up through higher forms of life, reptile, bird, mammal, till you have man perpendicular, standing on his feet, with immense development of brain and nervous power. Does evolution stop there? No, it has left the physical, ages ago. It is not producing marked changes in the structure of the body, but it seizes on the brain and the intellectual power,

and raises that. It seizes on the moral, the ethical nature of man, until to-day, as I have had occasion more than once to tell you, the ethical ideal is mightier than any physical or intellectual force in all the world. But it did not stop there. It seized the spiritual nature of man; and now it would seem to me in perfect accord with the scientific doctrine of evolution to suppose that we may reach still higher yet,— that there is to be a grand, a free, a wide-spread and general development of the spiritual nature of man. If so, then it would be in perfect accord with this teaching that there should have been sporadic and occasional manifestations of this in the past ages of the world, leading up to the moment of its more general recognition.

One other point I must notice and emphasize a little. It seems to me that a great many people are intellectually confused as to the choice they must make between the two great theories of life. There are people who put aside any claims to proof in this direction or that as bearing upon the spiritual nature of man, and yet cling to their own belief in his spiritual nature illogically and without any proof whatever. We are presented with two theories, and we cannot choose a little of one and a little of the other. One or the other is certainly true. One theory is the materialistic. In accordance with that, human life, any intelligent life, is merely a passing, transitory stage, of no more permanent existence than these blossoms that now surround me. Humanity itself, its brain, its heart, its life, its hope, its Jesus, its Shakspere, its Buddha, all the great names of the world, are only curious and strange manifestations of this material world, blossoming as the plants blossom, fading as the plants fade. On that theory,— think a moment what it means,— the world, all the past of the world, is a desert, darkness, a black abyss, just behind us — nothing. All who have ever lived have been

blotted out, and all that great array of figures are only fancies of a dream. And before us what? Night and the dark again. We live, we think, we feel for a little while, and that is the end. Here is this world of ours, with just a few generations that are now peopling it, sailing through space, and this is all; and, when one drops out, he drops into everlasting nothingness. That is one theory. It does not commend itself to me, either to my intellect or to my heart.

The other theory is what? It is that spirit and life are first, supreme; that spirit shaped and controls form, that form only expresses spirit. Why, I have had a dozen bodies since I was born into this life. There is nothing that I know of in any science to make it unreasonable to believe that after the fact which we call death I may still go on clothed with a body as real as is this. This theory teaches us that the universe is all alive. Young, the great scientist who discovered what is now the universally accepted theory of light, who lived just a little after Sir Isaac Newton's time, recognized as one of the most acute and profound thinkers of the world, put it forth as a speculation merely,— he did not claim anything more,— that for anything science knew to the contrary — we now see hints that look that way — there might be no end of living, pulsing, throbbing worlds all around us, a spiritual system of which we are the material counterpart.

At any rate, we must choose between the theory of materialism and a spiritualistic theory. If the spiritualistic theory be true, then death is not the end. I may hope to find my friends once more; and it is quite natural that the spiritual natures of certain susceptible ones of the race should become developed so that they are capable of receiving communications from the other side from those who attempt to come into such relations with them. Does that

not seem to you perfectly natural? If there be such a thing as a spiritual world, if my father is alive, if your brother, sister, husband, wife, is alive, and if they are not very far away, would it not be the most natural thing in the world for them to try, at any rate, to reach us?

I propose now to hint to you a few words as to the proof of these claims which Spiritualists offer. One thing is significant, and is immensely to the credit of this higher Spiritualism. It does not ask anybody to believe with his eyes shut. It does not ask anybody to take the statement of the most truthful person on the face of the earth. It offers, or claims to offer, no end of facts as proved; and it asks you to investigate, and believe or reject on the basis of these claims. I say it is immensely to the credit of this higher Spiritualism that it should put itself on this purely scientific basis as being perfectly in accord with the tendencies and movement of the modern world.

You are familiar in a general way with the kind of facts that are offered as proof. They are spoken of lightly, sometimes sneered at. It has been said, Even suppose a physical body is lifted up or moved by a force that has apparently no connection with the muscular power of any people present,— I have heard this spoken of and sneered at a thousand times,— suppose it is, what of it? One of the most learned men of this country has given this hint as to what of it. I repeat it from him. He makes this point. Everything in this world, so far as we know, if let alone, tends downward under the force of universal gravity. There is no power known in heaven or earth that is capable of lifting even a pin against this force of gravity except the power of intelligent will. If, therefore, it should happen, if it should be demonstrated, that there is any such force that is capable of doing this, here would be the Rubicon, the very dividing line

between materialism and spiritualism, absolute demonstration that here is intelligent will at work. I give you this as quotation, not verbally, but the idea, as expressing the opinion of one of the most learned men in this country as to the significance of such a fact, supposing it ever occurred. And I say to you frankly, in passing, that I am convinced that such facts have occurred and do occur.

I cannot, at this time, even hint at the many proofs that the Spiritualists offer. You can find them for yourselves. You may, however, be interested if I give you one or two brief hints of things which have come under my own observation and which have filled me with most restless and eager questioning.

There has been in the modern world a manifestation in these last few years of certain strange powers on the part of mind as already embodied, such as was not recognized or given any place in science until the last half-century. As I told you last Sunday, a French scientific commission investigated hypnotism and pronounced it all humbug. To-day there is not a competent scientific man who does not recognize its truth. There used to be once great incredulity as to the existence of clairvoyance and clairaudience. To day, I venture to say there is no person of competent intelligence, who has investigated the matter, who does not believe that these powers exist. It was once believed that there could be no such thing as communication on the part of one mind with another, except through the ordinary physical media. The idea would have been scorned and flouted a few years ago. I venture here again to say that there is probably not a man of competent intelligence, who has given it careful and earnest investigation, who does not believe in telepathy, or mind-reading,— the possibility of minds communicating with each other without much regard to space, providing the conditions and circumstances are favorable.

These do not prove Spiritualism at all; but note this one thing. It proves that there has been a tremendous increase and widening of the recognition of the powers of the human mind. They prove what appears to be, at least, a semi-independence of the recognized physical faculties of communication. What kind of mind is this that can manifest itself to another a thousand miles away? Something different from the old idea of mind that used to be generally entertained. Phenomena like these have become so familiar to me that they are no more wonderful now than the telegraph and the telephone. I cannot explain the telegraph and the telephone, but I know they are true. I cannot explain these things, but I know they are true.

But one step more I will hint. Something else has occurred in my experience which puzzles me beyond all words to express. I have no place for it in any scientific theory with which I am acquainted; I do not know what to do with it. In the presence of a personal friend, only two being in the room, I have had communication made to me of certain things occurring at the very instant in another State. Where did it come from? How? I do not know. I simply know that science, according to its present development, has nothing whatever to say to facts like these; it has no place to put them, and must widen its theories before it can account for them. Of course, if I were ready to accept all the claims put forth on the behalf of modern Spiritualism, I should naturally explain these facts in the light of that theory. I frankly say I do not know of any other theory that even promises an explanation.

Perfect candor and fairness compel me to say that some of these communications have about them such traces of the identity of the "spirits" claiming to communicate as fill me with surprise. I have never counted as evidence of "spirit"

activity anything a "medium" might tell me which I already knew. I have said, This may be mind-reading. But, over and over again, until it is commonplace, I have had thus told me things which it was impossible the psychic should ever have known.

But when, as on several occasions, I am told things that neither myself nor the psychic knew, ever did know, or ever could have known, so far as I could possibly discover, then I know not what to say unless I am to suppose the presence and activity of some invisible intelligence. But, were that proved, it would still remain to prove that this intelligence was once embodied as man or woman.

Here, then, I rest. I am in no hurry. The one thing, the only thing that any sane man can desire is the truth. It seems to me the most fool-hardy of all things for any man to object to a fact. If it is a fact, then it is only folly to object; for if indeed it be a fact it will remain a fact after you have objected your life long. The only sane search in the world, then, is for truth. I am so anxious to find the truth that I cannot afford to make up my mind too readily. I must pause, I must wait. I must not only think certain things probable, but I must know they are true.

But this much I will say. It seems to me due to the claims of this higher Spiritualism to say that, if I should ever come to accept the central claim of Spiritualism, I cannot see wherein it would change my belief, scientific, philosophic, ethical, practical, one whit. What would it do? It would simply place under my feet a rock, demonstrated to be a rock, instead of a hope, a trust, a great and glorious belief.

If this higher faith of Spiritualism should ever be universally accepted, what would follow? It would abolish death. It would make you know that the loved are not lost, though they have gone before you. It would make any human life

here, whatever its poverty, disease or sorrow, worth while, because of the grand possibility of the outlook. It would give victory over sorrow, over heart-break, over tears. It would make one master not only of death, but of life. It would make him feel sure that he was building up, day by day here, the character that he was to carry with him on to that next higher level of the ascent that is never to cease, but eternally to rise nearer and nearer to God.

I then frankly say to you friends that, while I am so anxious to find the truth that I wish to know that the dust is the end of me if it is, I would certainly rather believe that it is not. I would rather believe that we are forming the beginning of associations here which are to be eternal. I would like not only to listen to, but to believe the whisper that comes down out of the infinite light: "There shall be no more death."

BREAK-UPS THAT MEAN ADVANCE.

In the first sermon of the present series I considered the break-up of the old faith, stating some of the reasons why it can no longer be intelligently held. This morning I propose to consider another phase of the question of the breaking-up of the old; namely, that which looks upon the break as the condition of a larger and grander building. There are destructions which leave things waste and desolate. There are other destructions which are simply preparations for something finer than that which has been destroyed.

You are familiar with the charge so commonly made against Unitarians, against liberals of every order: that their work is entirely negative, that they tear down and do not build up; that they take away, but do not give anything in place of that which they take away. I propose this morning to consider whether the experiences through which this world is passing to-day have about them anything that ought to take away our heart or courage or hope, or whether they be not rather something to inspire, to lift us up, to thrill us with a grander courage, to take us by the hand and lead us to the performance of a larger duty.

If you were to drive through the country some of these warm days in spring, you would see on every hand beautiful fields, where the fresh, new grass is growing, where buds are unfolding into lovely flowers, and where everything seems thrilling and pulsing with glad life. But here and there you

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would see a process that seems like a destruction of all this fresh, new life of the year. The farmer is at work in his fields; and the ploughshare that he is driving comes tearing along in the midst of the roots of the grasses and flowers, and overturning, with its destructive power, all this fresh life and beauty. But, if you can look at these things with a poet's eye, as did Burns, poet and farmer both, you will sympathize with the stanza in which he addresses a mouse whose nest, or "housie," is overthrown: —

"Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the wins are strewin'!
. . . . . .

"Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
And weary winter comin' fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell,
Till, crash! the cruel coulter pass'd
Out thro' thy cell."

And the same thought that cares for the tiniest form of life takes into its great heart the life of the mountain daisy, and he sings: —

"There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawie bosom sunward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies!"

Looked at from the point of view of the mountain daisy and the mouse, the grasses and the flowers, the process that is going on is destruction, and only destruction. But the farmer knows, and every observer knows, that it is something more than destruction; that it is the preparatory process for a larger, sweeter life; that it is prophecy of the harvest.

This intimates the kind of destruction that goes on in other parts of God's creation besides the fields of the farmer.

The same lesson we may learn from the history of the growth of this planet, this our home. Those who have made a careful study of geology tell us that, ages ago, the earth looked very different from what it does now. The present continent then may have been beneath the sea, and that which is now the ocean bottom may be made of the continents that were green and thrilling and throbbing with life. We know that perpetually a process of wasting and wearing is going on; that the ocean is tearing down the cliffs and wasting away the shore. But we know that this is not destruction that means waste: it is only the process by which God builds a home for his children. Now and then a continent is shaken, and a chain of mountains is heaved into the air. This, again, is only one of the steps of progress by which the world grows, so that here, everywhere, from the beginning until now, has been going on this process of destruction, this prophecy and promise of larger building.

One more illustration to show you that I am dealing not with something peculiar to religion, as a great many people in their thoughtlessness seem to suppose, but that we are dealing with a world-wide, an age-long principle. Let us see what happens in the sphere of government.

The early tribes and peoples organize themselves as best they may. But we know that the first attempts at government are always harsh, hard, cruel, the domination of some war-chief of relentless power, or some despot who lords it over his fellows. We know, also, that, when people become accustomed to the forms of government in which they have been born and have grown up, they are apt to identify government itself with these forms. But what happens? Peo-

ple become wiser. They learn more. They desire their freedom. The conditions that surround them do not favor the best and noblest life that is in them. There is not room for the development of the highest and finest manhood; and yet those who dominate and govern wish to retain their privileges, and they identify these particular forms of government with government itself, and so are not willing to relinquish their hold. What is going on in Russia to-day? The Czar, the nobility, are attempting to keep things as they have been for ages, attempting to repress and hold down this living, rising, expanding power which is in human hearts and brains. So we know they are in danger of revolution every moment of every day. Unless the human race can progress in some peaceful, quiet, natural way, it must by revolution. But when this power asserts itself, when men and women declare that they will have freedom to be the best that is in them, it does not mean the destruction of government. It means only that the principles of a higher, finer power of government are developed within their own hearts and lives, and that the old form is no longer fitted to that larger life.

In the time of the French Revolution, it was perfectly natural that the king and nobility, and all the adherents of the old *régime*, should suppose that the world was coming to an end,— that all government was in danger, and that anarchy, the destruction of all order, was at hand. And yet history teaches us that it was only the people demanding room to grow, room to think, room to live out their higher, finer life.

Note one thing which is suggestive as parallel to what is true too in religion. As the world gets wiser and better, the forms of government — the external display of it — may naturally and safely become less and less, because, as the principles of government become incarnated in the

hearts and lives of the people, they do not need this outward display, this external pressure, to hold them in order. They grow orderly like the unfolding life of a tree.

Come, now, and note the same thing going on in religion. We are passing through a phase of religious life that undoubtedly means the destruction of the old order, the breaking up of the old faith. You have to go back only one or two hundred years in Europe, to come to a period when the Church held the life of Europe in its hands, dominated not only in the airy regions of faith, but controlled the earthly, or secular, matters as well. The Church was the dominant power, not only in the intellectual world, in the moral life, in the Church, but in the State, everywhere. To-day it has lost its grasp on Europe, not showing a capacity as yet to expand its life to meet the growing demands of the people. It has been pushed one side and is being left behind.

In Protestant countries very much the same process is going on. The Church holds no such place in the reverence, in the thought, in the love, of the people, as it did a hundred years ago. The newspaper, literature, science, art, all of these, instead of being servants of the Church as they once were, have taken the position of rivals; and there are thousands of people who feel as though they could get along very well without the Church.

Then those who stand as representatives of the Church do not preach the old dogmas, the old conceptions of things, as they used to. They do not make the extraordinary claims they used to. I suppose there are hardly any ministers of any church to-day who will claim that it is absolutely necessary for a man to be a member of any particular communion, in order to stand in right relations with God, to be "saved." This process, then, of the apparent disintegration of the old faith in religion is going on.

Let us note, for a moment, certain accompaniments of this change, and see whether they can be looked upon as causes.

Is the Church, as organized religion, losing its hold on the masses of men because these men do not know so much, are not so wise, as they used to be? You know very well that there never was a time in the history of the world when the average intelligence of men was so high as it is to-day. Whatever this process may mean, it does not mean that the Church has lost its hold because people are growing ignorant. People are not growing ignorant: they are wiser than they were.

Are they less reverent than they used to be? I cannot think so. The exhibition of irreverence here and there means not that the people do not revere that which seems to them worthy of reverence, but it means only that they regard these things no longer as able to command the reverence of their hearts as they used to. They are shifting their attitude. They do not stand in the same relation to these things. They do not look at them as they once did.

Does the world care less for truth now than it used to? Is that the reason why it has turned away from what the old churches are accustomed to speak of as God's truth? I think that every competent man who has observed the drift of the world will be obliged to confess that there never was a time since humanity existed when men were so eager to find the truth about everything as they are to-day. Men are seeking for the truth with a thirst that only the truth can slake,— the truth in heaven, the truth on earth, the truth of the past, the truth of the present, the truth about everything. Truth is the one thing in whose presence all men are ready to uncover, and at whose feet all people are ready to bow.

Is it because people are not so good, morally, as they used to be that religion is losing its hold upon them? Are they

giving up something and in the place of it taking something poorer, and so as a natural result deteriorating? Every careful student of the world knows that there never was a time in the history of man when the average love of justice, the love of mercy, the love of good, noble, and humane qualities, was so high as to-day. What then?

Whatever this change may mean that we are going through, it is not because of the world's growing less wise, less reverent, less truth-loving, less good; and we who love religion, and believe in it, can we confess for a moment that the cause of the "decay of religion" is the fact that the world is growing wiser and better? If we dare make a confession like that, then it means the death of religion. Humanity is not going to take one backward step in this matter of wisdom or goodness or reverence or love for truth. And if religion is being outgrown by this process of humanity's becoming better, then is it indeed proved to be a thing that belonged only in the childhood of the race, and that can be dispensed with by our grown-up manhood.

I am afraid, in order to outline my subject thoroughly and as carefully as it deserves, that I may be obliged to repeat some of the things I have said and possibly some illustrations which I have used in previous years. If I do so, I do it with my eyes open, and because there are some things that need to be repeated and impressed upon the minds of thoughtful people, in order that they may comprehend the kind of world in which they are living.

I wish to raise the question as to what religion is, although I have done it before, that you may see that in my opinion, whatever is happening, it is not the decay of religion.

Religion has always been, from the beginning of the world until now, and always must be the same thing in essence. It only changes its form as men change their conceptions of

the world, of God, of themselves. Religion is and always has been the attempt on the part of men to get into closer, more helpful relations with God, or with whatever power they think of as manifesting itself in and governing the universe. The lowest fetich worshipper recognizes a power outside of him that can help or hurt him, and his religion is praying or making an offering to this power, to ward off his anger, if he thinks he is displeased, or to win his favor, if he desres his help. And the highest and noblest Christian that ever lived is engaged in precisely the same effort. He is trying to do what he believes God wants him to do, whether it is to pray or read the Bible or sing a hymn or engage in a service or preach a sermon or help an unfortunate fellow-man or cultivate a special internal feeling or state of mind. He is trying to do what he believes God wants him to do, for the sake of getting into a closer and more friendly relation with his God. How people will do it, what form of service they will engage in, all the external manifestation of the religious life, must always turn on what people think about God, what they think about themselves, what they think God wants them to do.

You see, then, that religion always has been one in purpose, in essence; and you see that that essence and the effort of science are precisely the same. The scientific man, whether he believes in God or not, believes in a power that is not himself, that is outside of him, that produces him, a dower in relation to which he must live, a power that may help him or hurt him; and so the whole effort of science is simply to find out the nature of this power and get into right relations with it. Science has for its essential idea, purpose, and aim, precisely the same thing that religion has, always has had, and always must have. Religion, then, is simply man's search for the secret of life. It is man trying to get

into right relation with this power that folds him in its arms, — the power in coming into right relations with which he finds life, prosperity, happiness; the power that was here before he came, and that will be here after he has passed away. Religion in its very nature is eternal. So long as there is a universe, so long as there is a man in the universe capable of thinking about the relation in which he stands to it, so long religion must remain, no matter what name it wears or what form it assumes. Religion, then, is one of the immortals. You may be sure, then, that the process we are passing through, however many religions may die, does not mean the death of religion itself.

We are ready now to note what it is that is taking place, and consider whether the process through which we are passing is a discouraging or a hopeful one.

The first thing that has happened is such a growth on the part of human intelligence as gives us an entirely new and enormously expanded conception of this universe that is our home. We are passing through a process of outgrowing one universe and becoming gradually adapted to and at home in another. And the new one is so grand in its dimensions that the first feeling of those who have left the old and are looking out into the new is of being utterly astray and alone.

Thirty-six years after this city of Boston was founded, Milton took out a license in London for the publication of "Paradise Lost." The idea of the universe represented in Milton's poem was the old idea which the world had held for hundreds of years. We talk about the "spheres" to-day; but we have forgotten completely — the most of us — that the meaning of that word "sphere" has completely changed since Shakspere wrote it, since Milton wrote it. What was the old universe? The world, this little planet of ours, was the centre; and outside of it were ten crystalline, concentric

spheres, just as substantial, just as real, as those globes that surround the gas-jets. To these were attached the moon, sun, planets; and in the outer one were all the stars. These spheres revolved, holding the planets and sun and stars in their orbits. And the whole universe was not so large as the at present known orbit of the moon; for it took Satan and his angels only nine days and nights to fall from heaven clear to the bottom of the universe, according to Milton's picture.

Let me now hint a word as to how we are trying to get the universe adjusted to our thought to-day. It takes light eight and a half minutes to travel the 92,500,000 miles from the sun to the earth. When you leave our sun, our nearest neighbor, the very first star beyond our system is so far away that it takes its light three and a half years to reach us. And then where are we? Standing on the threshold of a universe that is infinite. In every direction open out star-lighted vistas that lose themselves in measureless space. This system of ours is part of the Milky Way. It is a little river of light, apparently a sort of Gulf Stream, crossing the ocean of the sky over our heads. Sir William Herschel estimated that, as he looked at and studied the Milky Way, 116,000 suns passed across the field of his telescope in fifteen minutes. On another occasion 258,000 crossed the field of his telescope in forty-one minutes. Think what a change of thought two centuries have wrought concerning this house of God that is our home!

And is it any loss? Think of the immeasurably grander world of which we are inhabitants.

Then what must we think of God? Can we have the old ideas any longer,— of God just a little way over our heads, sitting on a throne, sending out angel messengers to see how things are with us down here on our little earth, and receiv-

ing their reports as a king would send out a messenger to some distant province and receive his message on his return?

Now where and what is God? Where is he not? We may well use the bold poetry of the Israelitish writer, and say that he weigheth the stars as the dust of his balance, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. Suns a thousand times larger than ours attest his power in the far-off deeps of heaven. But he is not there alone. I hold in my hand the tiniest flower that has opened this morning; and I need all of God to explain to me its petals, its tinting, its fragrance. I look into your eyes; and God looks out of them, out of the love, the intelligence, of your souls, into mine. God is not on a throne; but he is everywhere,—the life, power, grace, tenderness, care, of the world, infinitely nearer to us than he used to be when we thought that we could send up a prayer, and he would send down an angel to hear what we wanted, by his hand minister to our necessities. It is God himself that ministers to our necessities every waking and every sleeping hour of every day and every night,—God, all of God, all his wisdom, all his love, all his care, holding us in his arms, leading us by his hand with a tenderness and a grace as complete as though it were all he had to do. This is the God that we are trying to think to-day. Is there any loss about it? Infinite gain, rather, to those who wake up to and appreciate what the growing intelligence of the world signifies.

Then, with this new universe and this new God, we must have a new conception of humanity, not the wreck and ruin of a modern creation,— man young, indeed, compared with the stars, young, indeed, compared with the planet itself, his home, but man unspeakably older than our minds are capable of comprehending. Man has been here on this planet perhaps two hundred thousand years. He began in the

lowest animalism and barbarism, and he has been climbing up a stairway whose steps were tears and heartache and blood; but not these only, joy, also, and hope and love. He has been climbing up by every process that has made him more a man, until to-day he is king of the planet, learning more and more of God's great secrets, grasping more and more the forces we call natural, but which are only the present living God, coming into closer relation with God at every step, being helped by him to a wider, higher, larger life,— man not fallen, man ascending from the beginning, man to ascend still — until the end shall I say? No, friends, though we cannot comprehend it, and the words mean nothing to us, there is no end. Out through the darkness, out through the clouds that seem to mark the limit of life, we are beginning to learn that he goes on, his whole self, as he has developed until the moment that he disappears from our sight, climbing on and up Godward, precisely the same as when here. Our whole conception, then, of the nature of this man and how to deal with him has been changed,— changed by our learning God's truth about him, that is all. It is not a lower conception, not a loss, but an unspeakable gain.

And, then, we are getting a larger and finer idea of God's revelation to the world. He did not send one little book to one little people and leave all the rest of his children, all the nations, the races, of the world, to stumble and fall in darkness. We believe to-day that he has sent under every sky, to every tongue and people, just so much light as they were capable of receiving, and that he is leading them on gradually, slowly, through the ages,— for the Infinite Power in infinite time is in no haste,— leading them on to a grander perception of the ever grander truth. We are learning to think of all truth, whatever its source or however it comes to us, as so many sentences in the ever-growing book of God.

We have changed, then, our entire conception of the universe, of God, of man, of revelation, of destiny. And these changes have come about not as the result of any deterioration. The old ideas are crumbling, being disintegrated, not because of ignorance, not because of immorality, not because of infidelity, as it is used in a sneering sense of any unbelief. The world's infidelity means simply a larger belief. We are outgrowing these old ideas, and finding out that they are not large enough to match the universe of God.

What, then, ought to be the duty of men? To trust in God and love their fellow-men,— not a duty of fear, not a duty of hesitancy, not a duty of looking back with regret. We may have our sentiment, if we will, about the things that the world has loved and cherished so long. I should think less of any man who had no sentiment about his boyhood; but I should think less still of him if he had so little appreciation of his manhood that he wished to go back and be a boy again. Reverence the things that pertain to the childhood of the race, love them, deal with them tenderly, as with old associations, but recognize the fact of your growing manhood and womanhood, and turn bravely, grandly, with a magnificent faith in God, to the day-dawn. I do not believe this world is hastening to decay. We are only emerging from the morning twilight, not descending into the evening. God's great day and humanity's great day are still ahead of us.

What, then, of the duty and work of the Church? Is the Church to become less and less as time goes on? We shall change our emphasis in regard to many things. A great many rites and ceremonies and services that have been regarded as vital will lose all their meaning to us for the simple reason that we have outgrown them. The advancing Church, in the light of the advancing knowledge of the

world, will find grander sanctities, grander rites and services, grander songs, to match a grander world and a grander God. There shall be no less of reverence, of sacredness, of any of the fine, sweet, high things that make up the duty and glory of the religious life.

And the Church will become organized, I believe, by and by into something more magnificent than the past has ever dreamed of. Science, philosophy, literature, poetry, painting, sculpture, music, all these things were once ministers and servants of the Church. They shall be again; for, when humanity has grasped the idea that religion is the grandest concern of the human brain as well as of the human heart, that it means the science of all life in this world and forevermore, then the Church will organize itself round these magnificent ideas, and will call into its service once more all science, all literature, all art, all music, all poetry, and so assert and make good its claim to the utmost reverence and love of all mankind.

And now, as illustrating my faith, I wish to give you what I think is a noble expression of this whole line of thought, put into form by our beloved Unitarian poet, Oliver Wendell Holmes: —

The waves unbuild the wasting shore;
  Where mountains towered, the billows sweep,
Yet still their borrowed spoils restore,
  And raise new empires from the deep.

So, while the floods of thought lay waste
  The old domain of chartered creeds,
Its heaven-appointed tides will haste
  To shape new homes for human needs.

Be ours to mark with hearts unchilled
  The change an outworn age deplores;
The legend sinks, but faith shall build
  A fairer throne on new-found shores.

The star shall glow in western skies
  That shone o'er Bethlehem's hallowed shrine,
And once again the temple rise
  That crowned the rock of Palestine.

. . . . . .

Though scattered far, the flock may stray:
  His own the Shepherd still shall claim,—
The saints who never learned to pray,
  The friends who never spoke his name.

Dear Master, while we hear thy voice
  That says, "The truth shall make you free,"
Thy servants still by loving choice,
  Oh, keep us faithful unto thee!

THE NEW CITY OF GOD.

UNDER the figure of a garden of plenty and peace or of a golden age or of a perfect city, humanity has always been dreaming of an ideal condition for the race. But it is one of the marked signs of the present time that these dreams are coming to be something more than dreams. They are not merely in the air to amuse the idle fancies of a leisure hour, not something thought of — hardly as a possibility, but — only as a beautiful thing, if it might be. In the modern world, these dreams of the ideal have come to be motive forces. They are watchwords, they are rallying cries. People believe more than they used to in the possibilities of human progress. They believe that these dreams can be brought down out of the sky, and organized as realities under the forms of human society.

Since this is so, it seemed to me that I could do no more fitting thing in the last of this series than to consider a little some of these dreams, try to find out which way the forces of the world are moving, so that we may co-operate, if possible, with those forces, and help on the realization of humanity's age-long and long-deferred hope; for we need to know which way the forces of the world are moving, apart from any conscious or purposed endeavor of our own. If I believed, as many loud-voiced reformers seem to, that the universe up to the present time had been all wrong,— wrong from first to last,— that things were deteriorating, that things were perpet-

ually changing to the worse, then I, for one, should have no heart even to attempt the deliverance of the world. Unless the infinite forces are with us, what avail all our puny attempts to construct an ideal earth? Our only hope is in the faith that there has been advance from the beginning, that we are advancing forward and upward to-day; and the only thing that we can do is to find out which way God is moving, and, instead of playing the part of obstruction and hindrance, do what we can to co-operate, help on, hasten a little, the coming

> "Of that far-off divine event
> To which the whole creation moves."

I ask you to consider a few typical examples of this dream of the ideal as it has been indulged in, in the past, so that you may see the changed conceptions of our modern thought as to how these things are to be brought about.

And, first, I call your attention to the dream of John on Patmos. It is evident that he had no conception of any natural social good order here in the world. The earth was under the control of him who is called in the New Testament "the god of this world," — the evil power. Humanity was in a hopeless condition, so far as itself was concerned. So John's dream is of an ideal divine, perfect city, not built on the earth, not the result of any human endeavor, but miraculously let down out of the heavens. His idea was that humanity could be saved only by divine interposition from without. He had no conception of humanity's achieving its own deliverance, of there being any divine force in humanity working to the natural production of any realization of his dream.

A few ages later, we come to the time of Augustine, the great intellectual work of whose life was the book from

which I have taken the hint of my subject, "The City of God." The Roman empire was crumbling, hastening to its decay. Augustine conceived the idea of the Church as a divine order miraculously constructed, miraculously created, which was to be built upon the ruins of the empire, and so be the embodiment of an ideal political and social as well as religious order. But his dream proved to be only a dream, never to be realized; for that Church which he saw growing until it mastered and controlled the whole earth is to-day weaker than it has ever been for a thousand years, and so evidently a thing of the past that its bitterest enemy need not stand in terror of it any more.

For a series of centuries after the time of Augustine, all the kings of Europe put forth the claim that they ruled by divine right. They tried to encircle their corrupt, selfish, oppressive, tyrannous crowns with a halo of divine glory, setting themselves up as the ministers of God for the organization of human society. But all these dreams have faded, and become a thing of the past.

One more attempt was made, which, on account of its peculiar significance, I need to note. When the Puritans and the Pilgrims fled from persecution on the other side the sea, and came to our dear old New England, they came with the avowed intention, the clear thought-out purpose, of establishing here a divine political and social order, nothing less than a theocracy,— a kingdom of God on earth. No one but "saints," church members, were to have any control in political affairs. No one but church members might vote; and, when laws were passed, these laws were, according to their understanding, only translations of the divine law as recorded in the only infallible Book,— translations of God's law into the statutes of our old Commonwealth. And how far did their dream succeed? It succeeded only in making

itself a sad lesson of cruelty, of narrowness, bigotry, persecution, that meant anything but freedom, anything but the development of perfect individuality, anything but peace and joy.

At the present time, you have only to read the reviews and the newspapers, you have only to listen to public addresses on every hand, to be made aware of the fact that there are definite, earnest attempts being made to realize a half-dozen different, antagonistic, mutually exclusive dreams of a perfect social order. On the one hand, men are attempting to bring about a condition of anarchy; that is, a condition not necessarily, according to their ideas, of social disorder, but merely of utter individual freedom,— the abolition of all social constraint. Some of the earnest advocates of these ideas really believe that most of the evils of society to-day are the result of misguided and foolish attempts to control individual action instead of leaving men and women to act out the natures with which they are endowed. On the other hand, you will note that there are those who hold a precisely contrary theory,— the Socialists, Nationalists, who believe that there is too much individual freedom already. If their ideas could be carried out, they would make all of us simply fragments, parts, of a great social machine, where there should be very little of individual initiative, very little of individual liberty of any kind, but where every man, woman, and child should live not for himself or herself, but only for this ideal organism that is spoken of as society, or the nation.

Then there is Tolstoï with his dream of a social order, to bring about which he is engaged in the writing and publishing of books and pamphlets, making use of his great influence in every direction.

There is William Morris, the poet, the artist, the socialist,

whom I had the pleasure of visiting and talking with in London last summer, who has, on the other hand, his ideal, and is as earnest as any missionary propagandist in all the world; who, with all his culture, all his artistic ability, all his power and influence of every kind, goes into the streets day after day, evening after evening, preaching what he believes to be the gospel of the new society to any chance crowd that he may gather to listen to his words.

All these movements, then, are going on, showing the restlessness of humanity at the present time,— restive under imperfect conditions, restive under its burden of disease, of poverty, of crime, haunted by the ideal of a better state, and beginning to believe that it is in the power of men to radically change and better their conditions. They are not dreaming only any longer, but making their dreams motive force for earnest endeavor.

I wish now to attempt — as well as I can in the time that is mine — to give you some hints concerning what I believe to be the ideal condition of the race, concerning what seems to me to be the divine methods as they are apparent in the history of the past, and so to give you some hints as to hopeful directions in which we may put forth our efforts to turn the dreams of our enthusiasm into reality in the days that are to come.

What would be an ideal condition of humanity? I do not want that city that John dreamed of, even if it were possible. In the first place, you will note the great change that has come over our thought. No one any longer believes that this new condition of humanity is to come by any divine interposition, suddenly wrought among us, from without. We all now believe in evolution, in human growth, in the possibility of a development from our present condition into something that is higher and better. The main body of the

churches, indeed, apparently has given up the possibility of bringing about such a condition of affairs in this world. They have postponed their dream to that mysterious country that lies beyond the border-land of death. But, on the part of those of us who believe that a better condition can be brought about here, let us try to see what that better condition is. It may not seem to you half as gorgeous as the picture of the Apocalypse, but let us try to put in plain words just what we would all desire for mankind if we could have our way.

We would not need to change the surface of the earth a great deal. This earth of ours is fair enough, sweet enough, beautiful enough, good enough. But we would like to reach such a condition of society as that wherein every man, every woman, every child, might have opportunity — for what? Opportunity, in the first place,— and there are millions on the earth to-day who do not have this opportunity,— to live healthful physical lives. This is the first, the basis, the foundation of all. If we could realize our kingdom of heaven, we would have first, then, such a condition of things as would enable all persons to live healthy physical lives.

Next, we would have mankind released from their overburden of drudgery: we would not abolish labor if we were wise, but we would abolish too much labor. For, mark you, if humanity is ever to rise to anything above the animal, it must be by finding time, leisure to study, to develop, to grow, to culture one's self. What do any of us mean by living? We would not give a snap of our fingers for bare existence with its contents left out. When we talk about living, we mean food, clothing, shelter, that are at least comfortable, healthful conditions for the body, time enough to cultivate our love of music, to develop at least some taste for art, for beauty of form and color, for the lovely things of human life;

time enough to think, to study and cultivate the brain, to find out what is true and what is false, to understand something, at least, of this wondrous world home of ours, to know something of the past and of the pathway by which this race of ours has come to be what it is to-day. We mean, then, a little wealth,— enough to release us from day-long drudgery, — time for cultivating these higher sides of human nature, these things that we think of as peculiarly manly and womanly. For, if you stop to think of it for a moment, you will see this fact: that, in a condition of the world in which every man and woman should be compelled to labor all his or her waking hours merely for subsistence, anything like a human life would be impossible. It would only be working, eating so that you could work, sleeping so that you could work, the drudgery of a mere animal existence. There must be accumulated capital, there must be leisure, before men and women can rise out of the animal stage and live in the human. This, then, is our ideal condition of the world; and what do we need finer and better? A world where we could all live healthfully, where we should have opportunity to cultivate all the higher, finer sides of our nature, opportunity to live for music and literature, opportunity to think, to study, to remember, and to forecast,— opportunity, in short, to lead a human life.

This, then, being our ideal, let us consider for a little as to whether the world is actually moving towards that. Mr. George has said in his wonderfully interesting book, "Progress and Poverty," that the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer; that is, that the common people are getting worse off all the time. I do not believe that any one can intelligently study the history of the last fifty years without being convinced that there never was a time in the history of the world when the common people were so well

off as they are to-day; that, even under the present oppressions and along present lines, they are growing better and better off every year. But that is not enough. We would like to hasten it if we might. I speak of this because, if I were not convinced of this, I should have no heart or hope to endeavor to make things better than they are.

What, then, is the condition of the world? For, if we are to learn anything about the future, we must learn that lesson from the past. We must find out the lines of progress along which the world has been moving, and then see if we can hasten the process a little.

Millions of years passed by between the fire-mist in which our solar system began and the time when this wonderful earth of ours, mountain-pillared, cloud-canopied, with its green fields and its waters glinting in the sunlight, became a fitting home for man. When it was ready, man appeared,— not man perfect, but man developed, as I believe, by natural processes out of the lower forms of animal life; developing as naturally as the flower, and, mark you, just as divinely as the flower; for the natural to my thought is divine. Weak and ignorant, man had to learn by experience; for there is no other way in which a finite being can learn. Carry it in mind all the way through discussions like this, that the one purpose of God in this mysterious life of ours, the one supreme purpose, is the development of a soul; and the development of souls has not been waiting all these ages until we get a perfect earth and a finished condition of society. That process is going on all the time; and, if the schooling is not finished here, there is time enough and room enough in God's infinite universe to complete it in his own time and in his own way. So let us not think that all the time is wasted because our ideals are not yet realized.

Man has been developed physically, how? By strug-

gle. This world has been a gymnasium for the physical development of man. He has been developing mentally, how? Through struggle, through mistakes, through falling and rising again. This world has been a school-house in which man has been morally cultured and developed, how? After precisely the same method as that by which he has been developed physically and intellectually. People seem to think that the existence of evil is somehow a great mistake, no part of God's plan, something utterly unlike anything else. But I am unable to see how mankind could have been developed morally except through this struggle with evil, through making mistakes and falling and rising again. So here along these lines mankind has been developing through all these ages.

Not only in these ways has man developed, but in political ways, from the time when there was no freedom, when men were subject to the caprice of successful war-chiefs, down through the Middle Ages, when a man was hardly anything but a means of power in the hands of the robber barons, to a time when, in the words of Theodore Parker, quoted and made memorable by Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg, we are "a government of the people and for the people and by the people." You see that the growth, the political development of the people, has been from the very first towards the growth of the individual and more freedom of action for the individual. I emphasize that because I shall have occasion to recur to it.

There has also gone on a social development parallel to this of the physical and political, towards that form of society in which the individual shall count for more and more, and be less under the domination of the social influences that tend ever to repress any movement of individuality and growth.

Parallel to this is the growth in the industrial life of the world. At first, the drudgery of the world was done by slaves and slaves alone, no freedom in it whatever. There was no power of moving from place to place, no choice of masters or of tasks. We have not reached the ideal industrial condition of the world yet, but every step of progress from the first has been towards industrial liberty for the individual; and they who talk about the wage-system as a system of slavery, as being as bad as that which it superseded and of things as going from bad to worse, are either ignorant or grievously misrepresent the past. The tendency I believe to be, in every direction, not towards a socialism that shall repress individual action, but towards another kind of socialism, in which individualism, individual liberty, individual initiative, shall have the largest, the freest, and the most unimpeded course.

What has been attained through a large part of the history of the social development of the past has been the result of what science calls natural selection, which may mean to our minds a blind process, a struggle between individuals in which the strongest comes out ahead. But we have reached a point where it is possible for us to introduce another force, a conscious human selection. We have gone far enough, and have become wise enough, so that we can do something towards creating for ourselves better conditions. You know that science talks a great deal about the influence of environment; and that is wise. There is a constant tendency on the part of all things to be adapted to and shaped by their surroundings. The lower world is helpless in the hands of this force. A bird is able to build a better nest, if you give it a better place and better materials out of which to construct it; but man can do more than that. Man can create new and better and higher conditions, so as to lift in that way the level of the individual and social life.

What and how much can we do? Not a great deal, but we can do a little. We cannot make this development very rapid; and I believe that the thing we need to guard against at the present time is the thought that we can do things suddenly, that we can bring about a perfect condition of the world in only a little while; because just as soon as we delude ourselves with thoughts like this we are only laying up for ourselves bitter disappointment and a loss of courage to do the something that is possible.

In the first place, we can, by social agreement, make knowledge universal. He who is ignorant is the victim of his surroundings. It is only he who knows the forces with which he deals who is capable of controlling them and making them serve him. The next generation ought not to come without every man and woman who is to compose it possessing that accumulated stock of knowledge which the world has in its possession,— all that should enable it to avoid the mistakes, the blunders, of the past, and so control and lift the circumstances that are to surround it.

What else can we do? I believe there is a hint of truth at least in that for which Mr. Henry George is contending. I believe that the natural resources of the earth ought, as rapidly as possible, to be freed from the monopolies of private and individual ownership, at least to the extent of giving every man all possible opportunity.

To illustrate what I mean. Go to England, and there you find a man who never did a stroke of work in his life, who never, in the slightest degree, added to the welfare of the world, possessing and keeping for his own private behoof, in an unproductive condition, thousands and thousands of acres of land. On the other hand, such a condition of poverty as led Mr. William Morris to say to me that there were five hundred thousand people in London to-day

who do not know what they are going to eat to-morrow. There ought to be such a condition of things as to make it unprofitable for any man to control the natural resources of the wealth of this world unused. So far as possible, every man ought to have opportunity to use these springs of wealth and prosperity that no man made, but which are the gift of God to all the world. I am perfectly well aware that every attempt to bring about this condition of things is surrounded by a thousand difficulties. There are inherited and vested wrongs not only, but inherited and vested rights, that must be regarded. If this man has not earned his thousands of acres, he is not to blame for having been born into their possession. It is a manifestly difficult and delicate task, but something can gradually be done in this direction by which eventually the natural resources of the world may be thrown wide open as an opportunity for every man.

One other thing can be done. This will seem to many a very slight thing at first; and yet, in the light of what I have said, you ought to appreciate its immense significance. We can, we ought, we must, shorten the hours of labor for those who depend on their daily labor for their bread. Why must we? For the simple reason that no man can by any possibility cultivate himself in those things which make manhood unless he have at least a little time. The world's work can be done, not only as much as is being done, but more than is done now. More wealth can be created than is being created, and still shorter hours of labor be assigned to those whose daily life is drudgery for bread. Some things in this direction are possible.

Now, at the last, what is the outcome of it all? The outcome, as I have said, is that the tendency of all growth from the beginnings of life on this earth have been, according to the formula of Mr. Herbert Spencer, from the homogeneous

to the heterogeneous, from sameness towards variety, from the social mass towards the individual. So that I believe, if we can learn anything from the history of the past as to what is going on to-day, it is that the outcome of evolution is to be an emphasizing and lifting up higher and a broadening of the range of individual life. The outcome of progress is not to be a solid mass of machinery with the individual only a cog or a spoke in the wheel. It is to be the development of millions on millions of perfected individualities. And all this dream of a perfect society out of imperfect units is absurd on the face of it. You cannot build a perfect house of imperfect bricks; neither can you construct perfect society of imperfect individuals. The first step towards the perfect society is the perfecting of the individual life.

This does not mean the abolition of competition. It is possible to make competition appear to be a very hard, ugly, cruel thing. But look at it for a moment. Competition means not only the cheapening of products, it means not only a perpetual pressure towards discovering new and better things: it means the sharpening of the individual faculty and power. It is the development of the individual life. And for whose good is it? I hear those who are socialists denouncing competition, as though it were the invention of the evil one and had come from the pit. For whose good is competition? It is for the benefit of every man, woman, and child in the world except those who are manufacturing or dealing in the same material. And it is an injury to them only, looked at as manufacturers and dealers. But they are also consumers. Looking at them as consumers, it is for their good. I do not believe that competition is evil or wrong, for it seems to me to be God-ordained; for it has existed from the first, and every step of progress has come under the influence and guidance of competition.

Where, then, is the principle of socialism to come in? Just here. What is a perfect individual, developed to his utmost, alone? Take your perfect individual: let him be a speaker, and he depends on his audience; let him be a painter, and he depends on somebody else so trained that he can love beauty and appreciate pictures; let him write a book, and he depends on some one being cultivated enough to buy and read and appreciate his book; let him manufacture or invent something for human use, and he is dependent for his very life on somebody to buy and use the product of his manufacture or invention. So, when we have attained this perfection of the individualities of the world, springing out of that very condition of individual perfection that has come as the result of free competition, there must exist the most perfect ideal of socialism; that is, the natural, mutual interdependence of all these perfected individualities. So socialism and individualism, competition and co-operation, are no more contradictory than are the forces centripetal and centrifugal that hold the planets in their magnificent orbits. I believe that it is under the play of both these forces that are to come the perfect individual and the perfect society.

When we have realized our "city of God" here on earth, we shall have attained what the churches have always held out before themselves as their one ideal and aim,— we have prepared ourselves for death. For, if we are developed as completely as may be into the image and after the ideal of God, why, then, we are ready for any condition to which we may be called in the days that are to come.

Where, then, are we to look for our ideal city? Not in the heavens, but growing, by processes of natural development, here upon the earth.

From God, down out of heaven,
John saw the city fair
Descend in gorgeous vision,
A city of the air.

By human labor founded
On rock-hewn truths below,
To God, up towards the heavens,
I see the City grow.

Let us, then, consecrate ourselves to the service of our fellow-men, to the service of God, and to labor towards the realization of this age-long hope of the world.


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