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THE GIFT OF
Rev. H.A. Jump.
Dr. Charles E. Ide
Redlands, Cal.
The Living Christ.
The Living Christ

The Vital Force in Pulpit and Pew

BY

REV. GEORGE H. IDE, D.D.

Twenty-two years Pastor of the Grand Avenue Congregational Church, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Life and religion are one thing, or neither is anything.

GEORGE MACDONALD

A minimum of theology and a maximum of simple common sense

GEORGE ADAM SMITH

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To My People

My Brothers in the Ministry
And All Truth-seekers
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THE LIVING CHRIST
THE VITAL FORCE IN PULPIT AND PEW
THE LIVING CHRIST

THE VITAL FORCE IN PULPIT AND PEW

What sort of a being must Christ be in order to be a vital force in pulpit and pew to-day? To say he is the living Christ is hardly sufficient to satisfy the demands of a force, energizing here and now, unless we read into the word "living" something more than the bare fact of continued existence. There is no doubt that the patriarchs, apostles, saints and holy men of all ages, are "living;" for God is not the God of the dead but of the living; but they are not reckoned as a vitalizing energy, pervading and transfiguring the lives of men at the present hour. They have left behind them an influence which, more or less, affects the historical trend of things; but it is an influence gauged and measured by what they were in character, while living in the world, hundreds and perhaps thousands of years ago. We are getting the echo of their lives, rever-
berating down the path of the centuries, and reaching us in forms of reminiscence and memories of glorious achievements. We do not think of them, to-day, as in vital contact with the spirit of man. They are living, but not living in us, as the quickening force of our lives. When we speak of the living Christ, we may mean more or less by it. Suppose we think of him living, as we think of departed great and good men, "still living." What then is his relation to us? How does he touch us? What do we receive from him? A post-mortem influence. This holds true, however much we may exalt and magnify the historical Christ, while, at the same time, we consider his work as belonging exclusively to the past.

There are certain theories concerning Christ's person, which seem to me to cut the nerve of faith in an ever-present Christ, in living touch with his people. Some of these theories start by denying the preexistence of Christ, except in some ideal form. How did preexistence ever come to be associated with the person of Christ? We are told that, in the rabbinical schools, not only distinguished persons, as Adam, Enoch and Moses, but distinguished objects, as the
tabernacle, the temple, the tables of the law, were figured as having had heavenly archetypes, that is, they were figured as preexistent. Why did men think of persons and things in this way? It was through the desire to express the inner worth of a valued object, in distinction from its inadequate, outward form; and its essence being hypostatized, or made a person, was raised above space and time. Such a preexistence is, of course, a mere phantom. It is thought, however, to express a "judgment of value" for the person or thing thus exalted. The person is supposed to have the worth and merits of a preexistent being, though he has nothing to show for it but the time limit of an ordinary human being. Thus it came to pass that the predicate of preexistence was only one of several ways which the early Church took to express its sense of the abiding worth and felt mystery of the person of Jesus. One way was to think of him as having a supernatural birth; another way was to think of him as the incarnation of the divine Word; still another way, was to think of him as preexistent. But these ideas subsisted independently of each other, and along side of each other, as distinct but unequal attempts to ground
the mystery of the life of Jesus in its divine origin. All this means that the preexistence of Jesus was a mere deduction of faith, on the part of the first disciples. It was a "judgment of value;" but the trouble with this judgment is, its assets are not equal to its liabilities! The assets are a being in time; and there is no juggling with ideals that can answer the liabilities of a being who belongs to the eternities! A "judgment of value" must rest on what is real, not on what is ideal.

The time comes in a scientific age like ours, when a deduction must not be infinitely larger than the facts will warrant. There is no use at the present time of talking about a preexistence which never was, except in the form of a subjective value-judgment, entertained by the first disciples. It has no normative value for the church to-day. But what has to be done in order to maintain that the preexistence of Jesus was only subjective? We have to deny the historical reality of the records, concerning him. Consequently, according to the Ritschlian school of critics, to whom all religious conceptions are but "judgments of value," the revelation of God in Christ closes with the cross. But what about
the resurrection, which, according to the records, immediately followed the cross? It is eliminated. The resurrection is not to be regarded as a historical fact, but simply a value-judgment placed upon him by those who were greatly impressed with his personality. The power of his personality over us is quite independent of the correctness of the details as contained in the records. Help lies, for us, not in what we make of the story, but what the story makes of us. But since the revelation of God in Christ closes with the cross, how does Christ avail for us today? We receive the impress of his inner life "as it is portrayed by those who were lifted by it into communion with God, and as it is interpreted for us by the living church around us." But when we have found this inner life, through the mediation of others, we become free even of their mediation, by the significance which that life has for our own experience, and we ask no more questions regarding the trustworthiness of the evangelists. What if these evangelists introduce into the records stories concerning the miracles wrought by Jesus? How shall we regard them? Why, a miracle is simply a religious name for an event which awakens in us a
powerful impression of the help of God. But we are not to think of it as an event that actually took place. We must keep to the scientific doctrine that nothing can interfere with the unbroken connection of nature. It would not be unscientific to believe that Jesus was crucified, but it would be very unscientific to believe that he rose from the dead! All knowledge of Jesus, then, ends at the cross. But where is Jesus now? What became of him when the curtain dropped at the time of his crucifixion? Was that event followed by extinction? Not quite that; as one has said, "We cannot think of his personal life as something that could be given over to annihilation. The same faith that sees that God is present in him, must also grasp the thought that Jesus lives now." He is living now, but what is he doing? Has he any thought of us? Yes; he knows how near we come to him, or how far we are from him, and he is taking part in our battles, with all his human sympathy and power. How do we know this? It is only the affirmation of our religious experience. But, (and here is the tremendous negation involved in this view,) we do not hold communion with the exalted Christ! We are
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But compelled to think of him as living and interested in us, in order to complete our faith in God; but we cannot think of him as present when "two or three are gathered together in his name."

Is the living Christ a vital force in pulpit and pew? Not if this conception of Christ prevails. When we teach that the preexistence of Christ was not real, we are compelled, by the very necessity of our assumption, to contract and minimize his postexistence. The preexistence of Christ is the foundation stone upon which rests the belief in his divinity. Remove it, and we have left a Christ living, in the sense of continued existence, but not a Christ with us "alway, even unto the end of the world." We have left a "heavenly man" surpassing, in excellence of character, a Moses or an Elijah, surpassing in excellence the greatest and grandest of those who have had part in human history, but not the Christ who confronted Saul, the hot-headed zealot and persecutor, on his way to Damascus, and enveloped him in the blinding light of heaven out of which came a voice, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" A being who never had preexistence cannot be magnified
into divinity, or enlarged into a transcendent Christ. He is a subsequent creation and must be reckoned as a creature on the plane of humanity. Mankind was through with him, and he was through with mankind, so far as being a present vital force is concerned, when he was led “as a lamb to the slaughter.”

What sort of Christology is this, that puts the author of our religion out of actual and living touch with the souls of men, to-day? This is not the Christology of the Scriptures; it is not the Christology of the Fathers of the church; it is not the Christology of Christian experience. The Christology that has turned the world upside down, and transformed society, and upon which has been reared a Christian civilization, is the one in which the Christ has been adored and served as the Eternal in time. And he who is eternal in time is not the Christ whose divinity is merely ethical; that is, having such participation in the divine nature and life as can be experienced by any believer in a certain degree; not the Christ whose preexistence was merely ideal, the outgrowth of the fancy of the early disciples; not the Christ whose deity is subjective, having no place in the realm of realities, but
THE VITAL FORCE

supported by a play of the mind's own sentiments and reflections. No; he is a Christ with actual divine power operating in human life, accepting whom, by faith, we put our lives under the transforming power of a living, present Saviour. It is not enough that God should send us a prophet, even though he be the greatest of all prophets and bear a fuller and clearer message than any other. It is not enough that God should send into the world a supernatural intelligence to speak to us of himself and heaven. It is not merely a message from God that we want, but God himself. In Jesus Christ, God is—if we may so speak—translated into terms of human life. In him we have the actual residue and operation of God in human life and history. In other words, the living Christ, who is to be a vital force in pulpit and pew, must be "the Son of God," eternally preexisting in a state of glory with the Father, who, in the fulness of time, moved by love, became incarnate for our salvation.

Suppose that the prevailing and dominant conception concerning the person of Christ, came to be, that, while he had a true humanity, he had not a true divinity. What would be the
practical effect of this view, as a working theory?

I have read how a farmer's wife, in the Province of Ontario, many years ago, went searching the woods for a stray cow, and, becoming thirsty, stooped to get a drink from a spring. Slipping, she fell against a small, loose rock, which rolled to her feet, and which proved to be a twenty-pound nugget of almost pure gold. The effect of that accidental find was that, within six months, a city of five thousand inhabitants was built. An immense quarry of purest white marble was discovered near by, and the city was built largely of marble. Probably the town of Bridgewater is the only town in the world that has a hotel, church, schoolhouse, court-house, and the majority of its buildings constructed entirely of white marble. Strange to say, however, though vast sums of money were spent in search, no other gold of any amount was ever taken from this region, and the city has been depopulated and deserted. All enthusiasm was gone, as soon as the gold was exhausted.

We live in a world where we see the relics of many deserted enthusiasms. But there would be another deserted enthusiasm to put on
record, if it should come to be the commonly accepted belief, that the nugget of pure gold, which we find in the person of Christ, was not quarried from an inexhaustible mine! No matter what beautiful structures of pure white marble are built on the strength of the prospect; no matter how the city expands and multiplies and gleams with the splendor of cathedral spire and temple dome; no matter that the centuries have come and gone in which there has been no abatement or cessation of interest in the search; no matter, I say, what has been achieved on the strength of the prospect. Let it be understood that the prospect is not grounded in reality, that our gold mine is not inexhaustible, and our beautiful city, reared by Christian hands, will quickly be depopulated and deserted. Enthusiasm for Christ ends, when it is discovered we have not an inexhaustible Christ.

The central principle of Christianity is the person of its Founder. But Christianity is the religion of the present hour. What sort of a Being must he be, who is the heart and soul of Christianity to-day? He is one whose greatness must ever and always be the surprise of the centuries; the last hours of time must have for
their romance the fresh unveilings of his majesty; and the perpetual delight of the everlasting future must be the ever grander discovery of his significance. After humanity has learned of him, to the limit of its growing capacity, the residue of his being will still be infinite. This is the inexhaustible Christ; and he can evoke a never-ending enthusiasm. This is the living Christ, that answers to the demand for a vital force in pulpit and pew.

Thus Jesus Christ is a great deal more to us than a remote and external figure in history. He is still a living person in the closest possible relation to us. He is a person who, while human, has yet, in virtue of his divinity, access into the innermost parts of our being, into the very roots of our personality. Alive in heaven, he is thus alive in us, dwelling in us, by the Spirit whom he hath given us. His Spirit is made our spirit; his life is poured into ours. "The life eternal is in the Son." "He that hath the Son hath the life." Our eternal life is rooted, grafted, embodied into the Son. And this, in a sense that a Christ not in us is the same thing as a Christ not ours. This truth of the immanence of Jesus Christ, by the Spirit, in
the heart of the believer, is the vital force in preacher and hearer, that sustains and extends the kingdom of God in the world. Any other than an immanent Christ would leave the soul to its own resources, and extinguish "the hope of glory" which is declared to be "Christ in us."

I am aware it might be said that, while Christ's work ended at the cross, nevertheless he put us in possession of a knowledge of God which can satisfy all the demands of an immanent deity. Here we forget, that, when we lose the living Christ we lose the living God. Whatever enfeebles the hold of Christ on the world now, relaxes its sense of God. If the assumption be that there is nothing but a historic Christ, then we have been receding from him for two thousand years; we are escaping from him. If Christ grow dim and distant, the sense of a living God fades from the soul, and the power of God decays from life. Christ is needed, to-day, for a living God—for the reality of a living God. Faith in Christ keeps alive our belief in God. Christ did not come to earth to perform certain preliminaries of salvation, and then pass into nothingness, after having satisfied the conditions. On this supposition, we
should have in him neither the salvation nor redemption that we need. As one has said, "We need a living Redeemer to take each one of us to God, to be for every one, to-day, all that he could have been upon earth to any one, in the great yesterday, and to be forever what he is to-day."

Thus it is that we have an immanent Christ. His relation to us is not ideal but real; so that, when we speak to Christ, we are not speaking into the air; but, dwelling in us, he answers us, gives us peace of conscience, strength for suffering and for righteousness, and the immediate knowledge of God.

For the pulpit to be a power in our day, it must emphasize the objective character of Christ’s work, and the reality of our relations to him. If there is a subjective aspect of religion that needs recognition, it is even more essential not to forget its objective, divine basis. Religion is not merely the play of man's spiritual nature within himself. There may be a measure of value in this, for the religious life; but the tendency to lay stress on this alone, issues in a one-sided subjectivism, which can never do justice to the great Biblical truths of reveala-
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tion and redemption, nor create a vital force that subdues and conquers the innate corruption of the human heart. It needs to be preached first, last, and always, that religion is a divine process, and that, apart from Christ, we “can do nothing.” The words, “without me ye can do nothing,” mean that he is the Author of all that is true and good and beautiful in human life; that, apart from him, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, beneficence, faithfulness, do not exist; that he is the fount and inspiration of all the moral forces in the world; that, if goodness is discovered anywhere on the face of the earth, at any time, or in any place, he has prompted and encouraged it; that he stands at the door of every human heart and knocks, and, on faintest recognition of him, he enters and sets up the beginnings of his kingdom; that he dwells in every longing for a better life, and lives in every earnest purpose for truth and righteousness. We are to think of the great movements of the ages as processes of his Spirit, and the great enterprises of education and reform, of charity and beneficence, which characterize our time, as among the fruits of those divine influences, which, mysteriously, penetrate our life
from God in Christ. We are to believe that these mighty tides of spiritual power will continue to rise and sweep over the world, until there is fulfillment of the promise that the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ. "Without me ye can do nothing!" This characterization is not hyperbole; it fits the truth and reality of things.

We talk about the improvements in society and the advances of civilization. How shall we explain these changes that are carrying the world forward in lines of progress? I have stood upon the shore of the Bay of Fundy and watched the rushing tide as it poured in from the ocean, covering all the pools and stagnant waters and shaggy boulders in the bed of the harbor, rising in arching masses of crystal splendor, until the largest ship that sails the ocean could ride, securely, upon that heaving, billowy flood. How shall we explain the sweeping in and lifting up of these watery hosts? By the grip and pull of the vast orb of night. Without that orb there would not be a tidal wave on the shore of any sea on the face of our globe. How shall we explain that tidal wave of prog-
ress which is lifting society, slowly but surely, into higher and nobler forms of civilization? What is the dynamic that grips and pulls and makes for righteousness? There is a vast orb of moral and spiritual power, and all the paths of progress are converging toward that majestic figure which once stood on Olivet, bidding his followers go forth and disciple the world, and declaring, on another occasion that, "if I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me." This is the living Christ, at work, redeeming the world that he died to save!

But how is the living Christ to become a vital force in the pew? How are we to reach the masses? We can't do much for the pew, if there is nobody in it! The masses belong in the pew, and ought to be found there. How can they be gotten there, how can they be reached? That is the question. Now, whether men can be reached depends, I think, upon what we attempt to reach them with. I do not think that much success is gained in endeavoring to reach the pew with "pink teas," or with preaching whose main object is entertainment and a display of ingenuity in the treatment of texts. We are sometimes told to "Preach the Gospel," the
meaning of which is not always definite. Some men have curious notions of what constitutes the "gospel." I tell you, we must have the living Christ to preach, if our religion is to be a vital force in the pew. But a living Christ who only ruled his kingdom in the unseen, by general laws, is not sufficient for our need. A living Christ, personal to the man in the pew, is the Saviour to be preached! What the man in the pew needs to know most, is, that the living Christ is his Saviour, in his situation, his needs, his loves, his shames, his sins. He needs to understand that the Saviour not only lives but mingles in his life; that the Christ is not so handicapped by general laws that he cannot change himself to the need of a man's soul. He must be made to feel that he has not only the risen Christ, but the returned Christ; not only the historic Christ, but the spiritual, the intimate Christ of the soul in its daily conflicts.

Let the living Christ be preached in all the length and breadth and depth of meaning, which really belongs to such a being, and he will become, indeed, a vital force in the pew, begetting a living faith, which shall wear the lineaments of the "inward Christ."
THE VITAL FORCE

The final thought on this subject is best expressed in the words that came to John the Revelator as he fell at the feet of his exalted Lord, who, laying his right hand upon the prostrate and trembling disciple, said: “Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore.”
BIBLE HUMOR
BIBLE HUMOR

The Bible is regarded as such a serious book, that many have the impression, it would be quite out of place to suppose that there is anything in it bordering on the humorous. As a matter of fact, there is not a book in the world that presents more humorous situations than the Bible. Indeed, it cannot be appreciated or understood without bringing to its study a sense of humor. It is one of the signs of progress in theological discussion, that this element in our nature is getting recognition as of high importance for faith.

A recent writer, who is commanding wide attention in the theological world, has lately said "that the growth of humor may well be regarded with religious interest; for it is a happy sign of increasing mental health and reasonableness." He further says "that it is a force for truth and beauty and goodness. Religion and
art and character, of the highest order, are inconceivable without humor."

What is the use of humor in its best form? What is its office? It is an unerring discoverer of false magnitudes, the revealer of bad perspective. It is also the sense of incongruity. Conceit, for example, is occasioned by bad perspective. Paul tells us that we ought to esteem others better than ourselves. But it is possible for a man to reverse this order of personal consideration and think of himself more highly than he ought to think. He entertains the geocentric mood, and seems to himself to be at the heart of things. The spot where he stands is the center of the circle formed by the horizon, and the zenith of the sky is directly over his head. Now here is involved a false magnitude, and a perspective that is really ludicrous. When a man thinks that he is the whole thing, how is such conceit to be removed? It is the office of humor to set him aright and adjust his bad perspective. A prominent writer made a statement to this effect. When I was quite a young man, I thought myself perfectly competent to pass sentence upon the universe. But as I grew older, painful doubts of my infalli-
bility sprang up within myself; and these doubts were encouraged by the persons with whom I conversed. This is like the saying of another, that there comes a time when a man suspects himself a fool; and this is followed by another period, when he knows it.

Education renders a great service in reducing false magnitudes and in removing bad perspective. A young man goes to college or the university and begins to brag and put on airs, and at once he becomes the laughing-stock of all the students. All conceit is soon taken out of him. It is the humor of the thing that does it. A person cannot move among his peers, and set himself up as a superlative magnitude, without stirring the risibilities.

It has been said, that probably no wise man has ever been able to estimate his debt to humor; and it is more than probable that no man became wise without the aid of the world's humor. It is humor that gives us the sense of incongruity.

Our colored brethren have the habit of calling themselves by great names, such as appear in American history. It is George Washington this, and Abraham Lincoln that. It is some-
what humorous to find such a name attached to a colored individual who is lazy and shiftless, and lives on the chickens which he borrowed without asking.

Canon Liddon tells the story of a certain minister in England, who, in behalf of Queen Victoria, and in her presence, offered this prayer: "Grant that as she grows to be an old woman, she may be made a new man; and that, in all righteous causes, she may go forth before her people, like a he-goat on the mountains!" A man with any humor in his nature, any sense of incongruity, would not mix things up in that way!

Why is it that certain ideas about the universe fail in securing general assent? There is no doubt that the sense of humor has much to do about it. Here is atheism, for example. Why are there so few people that ever give their assent to this doctrine? It is owing, in a large degree, to the fact that most men have some measure of sanity in the perspective of things. Atheism says, there is no thought or mind behind the framework of the universe, there is no God. Everything just happened to be as it is. Now, to assume that universal order can come
from universal disorder and confusion, or that an intelligible world, with all its laws and forces, as exact in their working as a mathematical demonstration, has risen from a source which has neither thought or a directing will, is, as it has been called, "the superlative speculative joke." Atheism, to any person gifted with a sense of humor, is just as credible as would be the supposition that nothing more is needed for the production of Homer's Iliad and Odyssey than to keep tossing the Greek alphabet in the air. Great epics are not produced in that way. Where there is order, there is an orderer; where there is law there is a lawgiver; where there is thought there is a thinker. An intelligible world is not the offspring of confusion. We reject atheism, in part at least, because it is ridiculous! Its whole scheme is transfixed by a shaft of humor. If a man should come to us and say that he was an atheist, we would laugh, if the case were not so pathetic.

No one ever had the sense of humor in greater degree than Jesus himself. It was part of his nature, because he was the most intellectually sane and reasonable Person that the world ever knew. His humor was not of the boisterous
kind; it did not find expression in jokes and trifling witticisms; it was always keen, delicate; it was of the essence and finest life of reason. It had a piercing intellectuality, that could perforate a sham or transfix a folly. "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me cast out the mote out of thine eye; and lo, the beam is in thine own eye?" There would be nothing out of place in smiling at these words of the great Teacher; for there is humor in them. Just examine the figures employed. What is a mote? It is about the smallest thing imaginable; it may be a bit of dust, or chaff, or a speck of cinder blown in through the car window. But even the minutest particle in the eye is enough to cause some irritation. But what is the beam? It is just what it purports to be; it is a beam, a joist, a great big sliver, which one does not have to hunt to find; there it is, plain, visible, something that you can grasp with both hands. Now what do we see? Why this man, with a great big sliver in his eye, which nearly blinds him, comes up to his brother, who has a mote in his eye, and begins to prod him about
it. "Why, sir, there is something the matter with your eye! It has a speck in it; there are signs of inflammation; you have a bad eye, a very bad eye, and you ought not to be around in respectable company, thus disfigured, marring the pleasure and comfort of other people!" And it is this man with a beam or stake in his own eye, who is engaged in all this savage criticism concerning another, whose trouble would be scarcely noticeable if some one were not searching for specks in the eye. Everything in this lesson turns on the humor of the thing. It is simply ridiculous!

How could our Lord have shown the absurdity of our setting ourselves up as critics of other people, while we at the same time are guilty of like sins, or others, it may be, of a worse nature, better than by the method of humor? The person who is constantly passing judgment on other people, and trying to make out a case against them, is not only proving that he has a stake in his own eye, but is also exhibiting himself in the role of the ridiculous. Such conduct is funny; and we hardly know whether to laugh or cry. The incongruity is laughable; but the critic's apparent unconsciousness of his own in-
sincerity and hypocrisy, is pathetic. No person is sincere and honest, who is harsh and severe in judging the conduct of others. It is the pur- est saint that is the most lenient and gentle in his judgments, and finds the most excuses for the weaknesses and short-comings of his neighbors. His sense of humor plays a considerable part in making him charitable and sympathetic.

In many of the parables of Jesus there is evidence of humor, although their matter is so serious that this feature is often overlooked. Take this parable, for example: "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: and he reasoned within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have not where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my corn and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry. But God said unto him, Thou foolish one, this night is thy soul required of thee; and the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?" Here is humor in the sense of bad perspective. Here is a man who has more than he knows what to do with. His
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barns are full; his cellar is full; his garret is full; every building on the premises is full to bursting. Now we see this man worrying the life out of him to discover what he can do next. Great beads of perspiration stand on his face, as he meditates how he can find room for his abounding superfluity of wealth! At last an idea strikes him! He has hit upon something, now, that will entirely relieve the situation! I know what I will do, he says; I will tear down the old barns and build bigger; then I can say to myself, I am all right, and can take my ease and be merry! Now the humor of the situation crops out at two points in the parable. The man had, it may be, a hundred times more wealth than he had any personal use for. But there did not come even a suggestion to his mind that a portion of his goods might be employed for the benefit of others. The poor and needy were all about him; the widows and orphans were crying for bread; but these made no appeals to him; his supreme concern was storage, and more storage, and in such cases it always turns out to be "cold storage."

The humor of the thing consisted in the fact that he did not see that the path of happiness lay
in the direction of human kindness and benevo-

lence. He was saying to himself, O I want to

be happy; I want to be at my ease; I want to be

merry; and the laughable thing about it was his

thought that all this could be gained by having

bigger barns! Then there was a grim humor

in the fact that he was probably an old man, and

could not live long, any way. He might not

live a year; possibly death would require his

soul that very night. But he had never thought

of that. He had never put the question to him-

self; "After I am gone, the things which I have

prepared, whose shall they be?" He had not

thought of the lively times the heirs would have,

in getting the stuff out of the barns and dis-

tributing it! It was not in his mind that a little

wise distribution before death would save a

heap of trouble.

The miserly man is a comical man; comical,

not in his speech, but in his action. Of course

he is not aware that he has a funny way of liv-
ing; he thinks there is infinite wisdom in getting

wealth, and then keeping it intact. A man is

devoid of humor, who, after securing much of

this world's goods, hugs it, clasps it with an iron

grip, parting with as little of it as possible, and
then imagining that he is on the road to happiness. It is bad perspective. His view is narrow and circumscribed. He is like one who supposes the mill-pond to be the ocean!

The man who gives pennies for missions and works of benevolence, and dollars for luxuries and amusements, lacks the sense of humor. It is ridiculous. That he does not recognize the humor involved, shows that he has not that fine sense which is alive to bad perspective.

Let us look, for a moment, at one other parable, which illustrates how a vein of humor often runs through Christ's teaching. It is the parable of the Prodigal Son. In reading this parable, it never occurs to us, probably, that there is a humorous side to the story. There is so much that is sad and pathetic in it, that its fine shade of humor is not easily distinguished. But it is there; and it is one of the most important features of the parable. Let us examine the situation. The younger of two sons, living in a home where every need and comfort were provided by the hand of a kind and loving father, becomes dissatisfied with the conditions, which were the best a grateful son could desire, and requests that his portion of the inheritance
be divided unto him, that he may start out and follow his own bent and inclination. He must be free to do as he pleases, that he may make the most of life.

With all his possessions, he took his journey into a far country. Well, what did he do when he got far away from the care, protection and loving counsel of his father? Like a fool, he wasted his substance in riotous living. After he had spent his money in debauchery, what then? There was a famine in the land, and he began to be in want. Did he start immediately for home, under the stress of pinching hunger, where there was bread enough and to spare? Not at all; he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, who sent him into the field to feed swine! And there he was in such straits that he would gladly have been filled with the husks that the swine did eat; but there was no one to offer him so much as a pod or husk. Now there comes a sudden turn in the history of that young man. The pregnant statement is, that he CAME TO HIMSELF! All at once he began to think of the hired servants of his father, who had all they wanted to eat and more, while he was perishing with hunger. He came
to himself! In that expression is the element of humor. What does it signify? It means that he began to have mental sanity and reasonableness. We are to remember that humor in its higher forms represents the finest and richest quality of reason and common sense. It is seeing things as they are, and is keenly sensitive to incongruities and the inappropriateness of conditions. Suddenly that young man was struck with the ridiculousness of his situation. Here I am, he thought, living on pods and husks, just as though there were nothing better for me! I have been playing the role of the "fast young man," and painting everything red, and I thought it was very smart, and that I was having a rattling good time; but I have discovered that the laugh comes on the other side. The butt of ridicule turns out to be myself. I am the laughing-stock, and not the folks at home, as I foolishly imagined!

Many a man would come to himself if he recognized the humor of his situation.

What is it to be a Christian? It is to be mentally sane and reasonable. It is to stand plumb with the realities of things. The great reality of this world is Christ, "the way, the truth, and
the life," a fact so patent that we may say the civilized world accepts it. See, now, the incongruity in adopting some other way of living, which conflicts, or is contrary to, the way of Christ. I ask some one what he is living for, and he answers, I am living to be richer; I am tearing down the old barns and building bigger. I ask again, and the answer comes, I am living to enjoy the luxuries and amusements of the world. Why, I would go ten miles to play a game of whist, when I would not go two blocks to worship God in his sanctuary. I take a jolly view of things. I suppose that religion is a great concern, but it does not concern me very much. Has that man come to himself? Does he see the humor of his position? Does he take in the ridiculousness of making his little perspective of selfish gratification answer for the grand perspective which religion opens out before us? Does he understand that he is engaged in acting a farce, or a low comedy? How funny some people would seem to themselves, if, in some way, the real humor of their lives would dawn upon them!

You ask me why Christianity will live and never grow old and ever remain the supreme
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religion of the world. I will tell you: you cannot laugh it down; the laugh is on the other side. If Christianity could not stand the humor of the world, it could not maintain itself. The religion of Christ has been the object of ridicule; but such ridicule has always been accomplished by caricature and misrepresentation. A man has to lie about it, before he can make fun of it. Men cannot raise a laugh for the real thing. You cannot make fun of mental sanity and absolute reasonableness. Christ is the real Master of the world; and he is seen to be such so clearly, that the rankest infidel shrinks from making a humorous suggestion concerning him. Men sometimes laugh at the inconsistencies of Christians, and the imperfections of the Church, but they cannot laugh at Christ. It is when we choose to live some other way than he would have us live that the laugh comes in. It is when we choose to journey into a far country and live on the husks of the world that we appear ridiculous. It is then that we are beside ourselves; it is then that we are not our true selves; it is then that we spend money for that which is not bread, and our labor for that which satisfieth not.
MIRACLES
FROM THE STANDPOINT OF TO-DAY
MIRACLES

FROM THE STANDPOINT OF TO-DAY

I say "to-day," for miracles have a different standing in Christian thought from what they had in a not very remote past. Miracles assume a different aspect to us, at the present time, in view of the fact that we entertain a changed conception of the universe and of God's relation to it. We say that "God is over all," that he is greater than the universe, that he transcends it; but we also say that "God is in all;" that is, he is immanent in his works, and not to be considered as absent from them. Consider God as having only the one relation of being "over all," and not that of being "in all," and the miracle has not the same standing as when both relations are recognized. Formerly, theological discussion was carried on in regard to miracles on the basis of "God over all," with no emphasis on the fact that he is in all. What
was nature, according to this view? It was a closed, mechanical system, running itself, modified only by interference or irruption from without. That is, God made nature as a sort of mechanism, and introduced into it certain forces which were self-regulating and self-propelling, thus enabling it to go of itself. Whatever took place within this mechanism was called "natural;" and the supernatural, in order to have anything to do with this closed circuit of nature, had to break in, as a meddling, anarchic force. In this case, the natural and the supernatural were mutually exclusive, and, we might say, antagonistic. As a matter of course, anything called supernatural evoked hostility. Theologians had a hard time, in the past, attempting to defend miracles with this conception of the relation of God to nature. Infidels said, "Here is nature, which, according to your own teaching, is a kind of machine made in the beginning, perfect and complete, and, when fairly launched, was capable of running itself." Now, when a miracle was to be wrought, what had to be done? Some part of the machine had to be smashed, in order to make an opening for the manifestation of the supernatural; for the supernatural was
supposed to be found always outside and beyond the machine, or the sphere of nature. Hence a miracle involved the violation of the laws of nature, so called. A man of the rational and unbelieving kind could easily say, I do not believe that God, in order to work a miracle, would engage to smash any part of the machine, or violate his own laws, which he was at such pains to establish. This view of nature has been set aside by scholars and theologians. Nature is no longer regarded as a machine, with power of self-running. Nature runs; but it runs by that same energy that made it in the first place.

Men have entertained schemes for perpetual motion; but they never came to anything and never will, simply for the reason that there cannot be motion without a cause to produce it. Omnipotence itself cannot work the scheme of perpetual motion. If he could, then we should have an effect without a cause, and this would involve an absurdity. You might as well say that God can make two and two, five, as to say that God can furnish perpetual motion with no power behind it.

Scientists teach to-day, that not only all the
worlds in space are in motion, but that every particle of matter, here and everywhere, is in motion. Perpetual motion requires a perpetual cause, and that cause is God; for he is not simply over all, but in all! Hence, the supernatural is not something entirely outside, but inside of nature, as well.

In a word, we have come upon the conception that the supernatural is natural, and the natural, supernatural. That is, the natural roots itself in the supernatural, and the supernatural manifests itself in the orderly forms and methods of experience. We speak of the principle of gravitation as a natural law. It is natural because it is a common, every-day experience; and it is a law only in the sense of being a constant method of operation. But it is supernatural also; because the divine causality is behind it, and keeps its hand upon it, supports and maintains it. We cannot think of nature keeping on its course a moment without the upholding hand of God.

The old prophets and singers were accustomed to speak of God as doing all things that take place in nature. "He covereth the heaven with clouds, he prepareth rain for the earth, he
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maketh grass to grow upon the mountains. . . . .
He giveth snow like wool; he scattereth the hoar frost like ashes. He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold?" This is no longer extravagance, according to the present conception of God's relation to nature. We no longer think of God as apart from his works, but in them, as the fountain and spring of all their movements. The supernatural is involved in the growth of every flower, in the running of every stream, in the breath of every wind. With this view, what about miracles? They are no more divinely wrought than any natural event whatever. We cannot say, God performs miracles, and nature does everything else. For the performance, whatever it is, is a divine performance.

The question might be asked, then, How can we distinguish between what we call a natural event and one that is miraculous? We might answer that a natural event is one that takes place according to the order of nature, as we understand it; and a miraculous event is one that is a departure from the order of nature, as we understand it. The mere naturalist, who claims that nature is the whole thing, tells us that there can-
not be any departure from the order of nature, and, consequently, a miracle is an impossibility. He is right, if we admit his supposition that nature is the whole thing, meaning, by nature, the material world. What do we mean by the departure from the order of nature? If we mean the production of something which nature, left to herself, would not produce, then we say that this man, who is frightened at the very suggestion of a miracle, is a witness of miracles in countless instances.

The order of nature is constantly being interrupted by human volitions. When the pioneers came to this region, they found a wilderness which the woodman's ax had not disturbed. They found swamps and gullies, and a soil which never had been stirred by spade or plow. In those days nature was having her own way; everything was according to her own ordering. And, if left to herself, she would have kept on producing forests and swamps and gullies. Certainly, if left to herself, she would not have produced New York, Chicago and St. Louis as we have them to-day. Here is an effect that cannot be deduced from an antecedent state of physical nature; it is a departure from the order
of nature, and involves interference, interpolation, interjection from without, the very thing that scandalizes the naturalist, who insists that there can never be any departure from the order of nature. But here is the departure, right before his eyes.

Nature, left to herself, does not build bridges, factories, stores, electric railways, expositions. How do they come into existence? They are the product of the human will. Man has power to interfere with the order of nature and produce results which nature herself could not. On this account, Horace Bushnell, in his great work "Nature and Supernatural," reckoned man and all his works as belonging to the supernatural. He said, man is a supernatural being, that is, a being above nature in some degree, because he can manipulate nature, introduce causes which she does not possess and make her do things which she would not do if left to herself. Hence, when the naturalist says there can be no miracle, because there can be no departure from the order of nature, he is flying in the face of patent facts which he witnesses every day.

If man can perform acts that are supernat-
ural, why cannot God do as much—even supernatural acts that transcend the ability of man? We can conceive of conditions when a miracle would be an impossibility. If God did not exist there could be no miracle. An atheistic scheme of things could not yield a miracle. There might be strange happenings, but nothing that could be called miraculous.

Then again, in order to have a miracle there must be an order of nature. For if there is no order, there can be no departure. Suppose everything in nature was at haphazard, with no method of calculation of what would be, no certainty about any occurrence; that we would simply have to wait and see what would happen. In such an arrangement there could be no recognizable miracle. Everything that took place would be a surprise, at least until we got used to being surprised. Order in nature is the very thing that gives to a miracle its meaning. What is science doing? It is engaged in discovering that order; this is its problem, this its work.

It is sometimes said that science has demonstrated the impossibility of miracles, and has shown that miracles have never occurred.
MIRACLES

Now observe that science has nothing to do with the subject of miracles, to show whether they are possible or impossible; these are entirely beyond and outside of its province. Let me tell you what science has proved. It has proved, beyond controversy, that the universe is not chaos and not governed by chance. Science, as such, is not opposed to a belief in miracles; but it is opposed to a belief in disorder and confusion. Science, I say, is engaged in discovering the order of nature, and it finds it everywhere. Have you thought what it means to say that this universe is one where order reigns? It is one of the strongest proofs of the existence of God. Some people seem to think that we should not know that God is present in the universe unless he interposes by a miracle of some kind. Exceptional acts, like miracles, are not the chief proofs of his being. The highest evidence of his presence in the universe is proved by the steady order and unfolding of creation, which would commend him to his creatures if no miracle had ever been wrought.

The fact that God is a being of order and not disorder, raises a presumption against miracles, which can be overcome only by showing an
adequate reason for their performance. God will never do an unusual thing, unless there is good reason for it. Many of the miracles, so called, in the Old Testament, seem to be wrought along the natural order of things; for example, the miracle of the plague of locusts, in Egypt. If we had been there, with our present notion of the universe, it would not have seemed so strange to us, as the language used might lead us to suspect. It is probable that the plague of locusts in Egypt would not have looked very different to us from a plague of grasshoppers in Kansas. That is, we might not have called it a miracle at all.

Whether there is a presumption in favor of miracles depends upon the meaning we ascribe to the world and life. Suppose we say that God made the world for physical ends; that spiritual interests are of no concern to him; that he cares less for man than for his material environment. With such a meaning, given to the world and life, no intelligent man would believe in miracles. We cannot believe that God would work a miracle in behalf of nature; nature could not appreciate any special work done for it by the Almighty. But suppose nature, in the di-
vine thought, is meant to serve moral and religious ends; that spiritual interests are the supreme concern of God, and that man is the supreme culmination of his work in this world, since he is an image of his Maker. With such a conception of the world and life, there would be no inherent difficulty in believing in a miracle, if spiritual exigencies demanded it.

The physical and mechanical interpretation of the world is fast passing away, while the personal and moral interpretation of it is in the ascendency. That is, not only Christianity but philosophy now holds that the world was made for man, not man for the world. Living in such a world, God would do something special, something out of the ordinary course, if the spiritual necessities of man required it.

We should understand, however, that Christian miracles must never be judged in isolation, but always in connection with the system of which they form a part. We are never to think of a miracle as an abstract wonder, connected with nothing and leading to nothing, a wonder that would, always, be incredible and worthless.

Professor Huxley once criticized a belief in miracles, by saying, "If we were told that, many
years ago, a centaur was seen trotting down Piccadilly, in London, it would simply be incredible, and no one ought to believe it!” Huxley was right; no one ought to believe such a story. Why? Because it was connected with nothing, and led to nothing: What bearing had a centaur, trotting down Piccadilly, on the moral and spiritual welfare of man? The very idea of Christianity is, that God is revealing himself to man and, if any miraculous event occurs, it will have this end in view. The miracle must fit into the system by which God is making himself known to men, and be harmonious with it, and be seen to further the aim of the system, in order to justify a belief in it. Miracles, apart from the system with which they are connected, would be empty and worthless; but, when they become a fitting complement and setting in the system, they are a part of a worthy and magnificent whole.

Men sometimes ask, “What should we think, if such events as are recorded in the New Testament were recurring to-day?” That would be, to break them from their connection, which gives them their meaning, and would substitute
a fictitious for a historical problem. In other words, such miracles are not needed now; they would be a sort of superfluity; the revelation has been made and there is no need of a repetition. Do we need a miracle to-day, to show us that God is love? Has he not made himself known, already, as such a being?

Who needs a miraculous demonstration to verify the fact that God is our Father and has a loving interest in us all? Are we not already assured of it? Did not Jesus say, "I and my Father are one?" Why should men ask for miracles to demonstrate what has already been demonstrated?

This, then, is the way the matter stands. God has been revealing himself to men, in a long, historical movement. Ages ago he began to make himself known to men, as they could appreciate and understand him. The process was slow, for, in the heart of man were seeds of evil, which yielded corrupt thoughts and desires. But, when the time was ripe, and everything ready for a full and complete revelation of himself, he sent forth his Son and gave him to the world as the final expression of himself. The stupendous miracle of all time was the coming
of Jesus Christ into this world. Here was a departure from the order of nature. Natural laws cannot account for him; the civilization of his day cannot account for him; the education of his time cannot account for him; the ideals of the past cannot account for him. He had ideals of his own, as transcendent as the light of the sun beyond the dimmest star: he was without sin, and without those defects which are found in every common man; he was perfect in word and thought and deed; he was here to help and save man; he was the culmination of that system of revelation which God was making to the world; he was the divine manifested in the flesh.

Now, when I read in the Gospels that he did some things that were miraculous, I am not surprised. I should have been surprised if he had done nothing but what ordinary men could do. Supernatural works came as gracefully from his hands as eloquence from the lips of Demosthenes. And they all contributed to his mission. They were not magical performances. They were not the artifices of a strolling fortune-teller, nor the tricks of a necromancer. They were an essential feature of those works which the Father gave him to accomplish; so
that the very works that he did, whether miraculous or otherwise, bore witness of him that the Father sent him. In a word, the miracles he wrought were always helpful, faith-inspiring, suggesting, to the minds of men, his divine calling as revealing the Father's infinite interest and love for humanity.

Hence we believe in the miracles of Jesus, because they were bound up with a system of religious truth which would have been insufficient and incomplete without them. Christianity, without the miracles of the Advent and the Resurrection, would not be Christianity. It would be emptied of those events that put the seal of divinity upon it, and make it the universal religion of the world. We cease to expect miracles, to-day, for their chief end is gained; and this is only to do justice to the greatness of that end. To expect them, now, would simply indicate that we do not appreciate the truth and power of the Christian dispensation, which is already established, and needs no further credentials in order to confirm our faith in it.
A GREAT PROBLEM
A GREAT PROBLEM

A great, if not the greatest, problem of the church, to-day, lies in the Sunday question. It is not simply whether "America will keep Sunday on the calendar, and relapse into paganism or observe a weekly Sabbath and become Christian." In the last analysis, the responsibility for the observance of the Sabbath rests upon the individual man. "No usurpations of corporations or communities can excuse the individual, if he breaks the Sabbath." These are strong words. But are they too strong, when our American civilization is so imperiled by the continuously increasing neglect of the Sabbath?

"The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath." To understand the meaning of this, we must consider how men were treating the Sabbath in Christ's day. They had entirely reversed the true order, and were teaching that man was made for the Sabbath. According to their notion, the Sabbath
was sacred, apart from any consideration of the relation which man sustains to it. Whether it was good for man or not, he was to keep it. The institution was everything, and man was of no account. Jesus brings forward a new interpretation. The Sabbath is not to be kept for its own sake, but for man's sake. As an institution, it must conform to man's requirements. The manner of keeping it will depend upon human need. The Sabbath is man's servant, not his master. Such an interpretation of the Sabbath amounted to a declaration of independence. Henceforth men were free, not in the sense of being absolved from keeping the Sabbath at all, but free in the sense of having liberty to use the Sabbath to their own highest advantage.

This teaching does not encourage loose views concerning the practice of keeping the Sabbath, nor lessen its binding force. The whole question is taken up into a larger and more vital conception, which issues in a principle grounded in the nature of things. The Sabbath was made for man, therefore man cannot be what he ought to be, without it. Its range is universal, and its necessity coextensive as
the human race. No home, no community, no state, no nation can attain to its best estate, unless there is incorporated into its life the Sabbath idea. The Sabbath is no longer merely a positive, but a moral precept; that is, its reasons are laid in nature. Here is the precept, "Thou shalt not steal." It is a moral precept, for the reason that it is binding whether the command is given, "Thou shalt not steal," or not. Respect for the property rights of others is not created by law; the law simply formulates a principle of right, which existed before governmental authority.

Here is the command, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." Putting Christ's meaning into the command, we find that it is grounded in the very nature of man's constitution, which requires intervals of physical repose, and time for spiritual culture. Science itself has verified the need of physical rest, one day in seven. And, as to spiritual culture, how can that be secured unless time is given for its development? The conclusion of scientific research respecting the natural endowments of man, is, that he has a religious nature as much as a physical, or an intellectual nature. What
is man to do with his physical nature? Cultivate it. What, with his intellectual nature? Cultivate it. What must he do with his religious nature? Cultivate it. But how can he cultivate it, unless attention is given to it, unless time is set apart for the purpose? It is right here that the Sabbath comes in to satisfy the demand of man's religious nature. It is grounded in the very constitution of man, and, hence, entails an obligation.

We have as much right to declare that men ought to keep the Sabbath, as that they ought to tell the truth, or ought to be honest, or ought to be Christians. When our Lord says, The Sabbath was made for man, he means that the best product of manhood cannot be secured without its proper observance. The highest in man cannot be developed and worked out to perfection without it. Under this conception the observance is resolved into an obligation. And it is this matter of obligation that needs emphasis in these times.

What is it to keep the Sabbath? I believe there are many who keep it in some such way as did two little boys, who were using their Scripture blocks, making all kinds of objects, and
erecting little houses. After a time, the elder said to the younger, "You must not build houses on the Sabbath day." "But you are building a house," was the reply. "Well," said the older one, "I am going to put a steeple on mine; and it is right to build a meeting-house on the Sabbath." Then they played "keeping store;" and the elder said to the younger, "It is not right to keep store on the Sabbath day." "But you are keeping store," said the younger. "Oh, but I am keeping an apothecary-store," was the response.

The Sabbath day may be so treated as to be, virtually, like other days, and this under the guise of keeping it. The merchant shuts up his store Saturday night, and says, I shall not open again until Monday morning; I do not believe in keeping store on Sunday. But, it may be, he takes home with him, Saturday night, his day-book and ledger and does some footing up of accounts on Sunday, besides occupying his mind with various plans for the opening on Monday morning. According to the letter, he is not keeping store on Sunday, but according to the spirit, he is a store-keeper, seven days in the week.
In regard to any important requirement or obligation, there is always some special duty connected with it, which may be reckoned as a sort of key to the situation. What is that special duty upon which hinges the whole question of Sabbath observance? It is attendance upon the sanctuary of God. I mean that man's relation to the sanctuary is an index of his proper or improper observance of the Sabbath. Of course, I would not be understood as affirming that such attendance absolutely insures a proper observance of the Sabbath. What I have in mind is, that sanctuary worship is such an important feature of Sabbath observance, that habitual neglect of the sanctuary is well-nigh a certain indication that the Sabbath is not kept as it ought to be kept. Pick out any man, in any city or any town, who is never found in the house of God, who is utterly indifferent to worship in the sanctuary, and you will recognize a person who is not making the best use of the Sabbath. And, by best use I mean such a use of the Sabbath as leads to moral improvement, to enlargement of the soul, to sympathy with the highest interests of man. In such case, the tendency is to moral deterioration, to a
lowering of the standards of life, and to engross-
ment with material things.

I was very much interested in reading, some
time ago, what Rev. Robert Collyer had to say
on this subject. He was, for twenty years, pas-
tor of a Unitarian church, in Chicago, and was
very liberal in all his notions concerning
Christianity. But when he preached his last
sermon in Chicago, on the eve of his departure
to New York, to assume charge of the Church
of the Messiah, he took this passage for his
text: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let
us go into the house of the Lord." After the
service, a wise friend remarked to him, "I wish
you had preached that sermon twenty years ago,
instead of the one I remember you did preach,
in which you told us that, perhaps, we might
sometimes worship God better in the woods or
meadows or in our own homes than in the
sanctuary. I remember saying to myself, at
the time, we do not need such exhortation. We
are ready enough to stay at home, or wander
about out-of-doors. Our minister has no idea
how glad we are to hear such doctrine." Dr.
Collyer then makes this confession: "I had no
idea how easy it was for the men and women
of free thought and free ways to drift from the service of the sanctuary. Men come to me and say, 'There is no need for me to go into the house of the Lord. I have outgrown all that, and am, now, my own temple and my own priest.' But I am wont to ask such men, now, 'What do you really do in the woods, and on the waters, and in your own homes on the Sabbath Day, and what does it all come to?' I will tell you what it comes to: The drift of it all, is to slay faith, and to touch with paralysis the nerve of any grand endeavor.' And then he adds, 'Few and far between are those who can withstand the baneful power of sanctuary neglect; while, with multitudes whom no man can number, this 'own temple' and 'own priest' business is merely seeming; and the dumb things, that run and fly, worship God more truly than they do.' Dr. Bellows, of the same liberal faith says, 'I never knew one man, or woman, who steadily neglected the house of prayer, and the worship of God, on the Lord's Day, who habitually neglected it, and had a theory by which it was neglected, who did not come to grief, and bring others to grief.' This is pretty strong testimony in favor of the sanctuary and
its worship, coming, as it does, from two of the most prominent Unitarian ministers in the land.

If you want to demolish the Sabbath utterly, as a day of blessing to the world, begin at the sanctuary, and induce every man, woman and child never to darken its doors, and you will be well along with the work of destruction. Get rid of the sanctuary, and the Sabbath Day would be brought low! Strike out the worship of God in his house, and you have struck down the day; and a spin into the country on a bicycle, or in an automobile, would represent about the highest form of Sabbath observance!

Where is the place in which is awakened the impulse for charitable endeavor and philanthropic enterprise? Where is the place in which men's hearts are stirred to a sense of responsibility, not only in respect to their own highest interests, but of others? I would not locate the place on a "wheel" pedaled through the suburbs of the town, for Sunday pleasure. I would not locate the place in the woods or by babbling brooks, where people profess to be their own temples and their own priests. Nor would I locate the place in homes where sanctuary work has become a matter of utter indif-
ference. I do not believe that any of these places yield the inspirations which take men out of themselves, and make them tender and keenly responsive to a world in need.

What great philanthropic enterprise, or scheme of benevolence, ever originated in hearts which had neither relish for, nor connection with, the house of God? Can you name an instance? I cannot! And yet, there are people who pretend to believe in a Sabbath without the sanctuary. At least, this is their practical belief; for they are never found there. There are church-members who have so little regard for their own influence, as well as for the Sabbath itself, that they suffer themselves to swell the ranks of those who neglect the sanctuary.

In the economy of the kingdom of God, what does a Christian amount to, who regularly absents himself from the house of worship? Tell me of one such person who is doing aggressive work for the Master! If we would lift up the Sabbath and make it a power in the land, we must first lift it up in the sanctuary, and honor it with the worship of Almighty God! Teach the children, from early childhood, to attend
public worship. We have come upon a time when children are nearly done with the habit of church-going on the Sabbath. They attend the Sabbath-school, and then go home and spend their time in their own way. Would you deprive the children of the associations of going to church? If you do, by and by they will imagine that they are too large or too old to attend the Sunday-school, and will sever their connection with it. And then what? They have formed no associations with the church, as a place of worship; and, being out of the Sunday-school, they will take their places, very naturally, among those who do not attend church at all. Children should not attend the Sunday-school less, but should attend worship in the house of God more. If your child is too feeble to attend but one service, let that service be the sanctuary, every time, if you do not want on your hands, by, and by, a person who cares more for Sunday as a day of picnics and excursions than a day for rational enjoyment in connection with services which minister to that which is noblest in man.

I know the frequent excuse for not taking children to the sanctuary is, that they cannot under-
stand the preaching. The fact is, they understand a great deal more than we think they do. A little girl went to church one Sunday, when the minister preached on the text: “Thou hast left thy first love!” Monday morning, her father and mother got into some sort of a dispute—I don’t know whether it amounted to what is now called “an unpleasantness,” or not; but it was so much of a dispute, that, after the father was gone from the house, the little girl said, “Mother, you must not forget what the minister said yesterday about leaving your first love.” Children not only understand the preaching more frequently than we give them credit for, but they know how to apply it. Take the children with you to the sanctuary. There is no substitute for it.

I am not advocating a return of the old Puritan Sabbath, so stiff and formal that all were glad when it was over. No, not that. Some time ago, a scientific excursion was investigating at the mouth of the Patapsco River, and there was found, buried twelve feet below the surface, a fossil cypress-swamp deposit, it having been exposed by the action of the waves in wearing away the bay bluffs. Numerous cy-
press stumps were seen in upright position, with their roots in place, exhibiting the peculiar characteristics of these trees. Some of the stumps were of gigantic size, the largest measuring about ten feet at the top. They were in a perfect state of preservation. Not all, but a good deal of the old Sabbath keeping was like that. It was fossilized. Possibly, there is still here and there one who is trying to have a Sabbath like that. If so, he is doing more harm than good.

Reading the New Testament, and looking into the character of the Sabbaths of Jesus, we find that they are filled with the most abundant life, in the way of kind deeds and loving service. We do not want to fossilize the Christian Sabbath, but preserve it full of glad and joyful Christian service. We want to keep the Sabbath in such a way that it will overflow into the other days of the week and make them glad and joyful too.

We are told that the Missouri River leaks badly. The government engineers once measured the flow of the Missouri in Montana, and again, some hundred miles down stream. To their surprise, they found that the Missouri, in-
Instead of growing larger down stream, was very perceptibly smaller at the lower point. Dakota farmers, sinking artesian wells to the south and east of those points of the Missouri, have found immense volumes of water, where the geologists said there could not be any. So it is believed that the farmers have tapped the water leaking from that big hole in the Missouri River in Montana; and, from these wells, they irrigate large tracks of land. I think a profitable Sabbath is one whose gracious influences leak out into all the days of the week, making our Mondays and Tuesdays and all the other days of hard competition in business life more fertile in brotherly kindness and genuine, Christian sympathy. Possibly, where some people think the Sabbath is getting smaller, the leakage is of this kind.
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THE UNSEEN WORLD

The ascension of Christ is closely connected with, and the proper and natural sequel of, the resurrection. From a human point of view, there would have been something lacking if Christ had not parted from his disciples in some such way as he did.

Many difficulties of Scripture are solved by the "principle of accommodation." Christ's coming into the world was for our sakes; and so he accommodates himself to our needs and limitations. His method of coming, his method of living, his method of dying, his method of rising, his method of leaving the world, was for our sakes. So far as he, himself, was concerned, his visible ascension was not necessary. He could have entered the unseen world some other way, just as well. That he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of sight, was simply using the principle of accommodation which he had employed during all his earthly career.
The situation was this: Christ had completed his work as a visible Redeemer; henceforth his activity was to be manifested in a manner which the physical senses could not recognize; he was to be seen no more. Now it was of the utmost importance that the Apostles and the infant Church should be fully persuaded that Jesus had finally vanished into the Unseen, and would no more visit his people, except through the influence and power of his Holy Spirit. If he had simply disappeared, as he had, temporarily, done before, on several occasions, during the forty days after the resurrection, it would have been hard for them to believe that he might not come again, as he had to the disciples on the way to Emmaus and on the shores of Gennesaret. There would have been imminent peril lest they should be interfered with, in the accomplishment of their proper work, by such natural longings and expectations.

A visible ascension into the clouds unquestionably savors of the notion of a materialistic heaven beyond the blue, which is entirely out of keeping with our present conception of the spirit-world. And yet it is difficult, if not impossible, to imagine how the disciples could
have been convinced of his final and irrevocable disappearance from the scenes of his earthly labors in any other way. Such an act of accommodation to the limited ideas of the time, would, at least, be entirely in keeping with his gentle and sympathetic dealings with the mental limitations of his followers; and it disposes of most of the objections raised against the story of the ascension.

If Jesus had not parted from his disciples in this formal manner, they would often have been confronted with the question, Where is he? You say, Jesus of Nazareth has risen from the dead, but what became of him? Produce your risen Master and we will believe in him. This would be the triumphant taunt to which Christians would ever be exposed.

But he takes a formal leave of them, and sets at rest, forever, the expectation that he is to continue with them in visible form; and soon they catch the meaning of that deep saying which he had spoken to them before: "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you."

You will notice that, ever afterwards, the apostles' conception of Christianity involved
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the ascension. The ascension pervades and underlies all their teaching. The ascension for them was no ideal act, no imaginary or fantastic elevation, but a real, actual passing of the risen Saviour out of the region and order of the seen and natural, into the region and order of the unseen and supernatural.

Paul says, "If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God." To the question, "Where is he?" they have a ready answer. As Peter affirmed, Jesus is the being whom the heavens must receive until the times of the restoration of all things. In the ascension, then, we have not what Professor Huxley calls the "isolated wonder," (which is his definition of a miracle) but a fact so bound up with the fact of the resurrection that the latter would be fragmentary without it. It is a supernatural sequel of a supernatural resurrection. It completes the program of the life and work of Jesus Christ, in a world that he came to save. He entered upon the sphere of the seen and temporal by a miraculous door; and it was fitting, considering the whole course of his earthly career, that his departure from this world should be through
a miraculous door. Both his coming and going were a part of a scheme which forms one united, harmonious whole.

What is the value of the ascension of Christ as a belief for the Christian Church and for mankind? We recognize, at once, that it had a special value for the first disciples. They needed to be weaned from the idea that Jesus was hovering over this earth for the purpose of appearing to them, from time to time, in visible form.

They needed to understand, once for all, that the time had passed when Jesus would appeal to them through the physical senses. But there is a larger significance of the ascension which has its value for us, and for all the ages to come. The ascension emphasizes a stupendous fact, the fact of the existence of an unseen world. One might ask, Whither did our Lord go when he took his departure from this earthly scene? It would be a very childish notion to say that he went up and up, far above the most distant star. We all know, to-day, that there is neither up nor down in this visible universe. If we were transported to the moon, we would see the earth shining over our heads, just as we see, at night, the moon shining over our heads.
We sometimes speak of heaven as "up," somewhere beyond the stars, as though if we went up far enough, we should come to it. But this is merely a conventional form of speech. It has the same significance as to say the sun rises. The sun, in reality, never rises. And heaven is neither up somewhere, nor down somewhere. In the ascension of Christ we are told that he was taken up; but this is only an accommodation of language. It is not an accurate form of expression, no more than to say that the sun rises. What was the ascension in reality? It was Christ passing from the seen world to the unseen world. And, as soon as the transit was made from the seen to the unseen, he was nearer his disciples than ever before. He went away from the seen to be in the unseen, where he could directly make impact upon the hearts of men and thus inspire them from within. The ascension of Christ teaches the existence of an unseen world. Men are so dominated by their physical senses that they find it hard to put much value upon anything that is unseen. Talk to them about an unseen world, and they say, Where is it? A thing cannot be of much consequence, that is entirely out of sight.
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Science is helping us wonderfully, in appreciating things that are unseen. It has settled to a demonstration that the mightiest things of which we have any knowledge are unseen. The force we call gravitation, that is engaged in swinging planets and stars and solar systems through space, at a pace which the imagination even cannot follow, bearing them all up as if but a feather's weight, is an unseen force. No man ever saw it, or touched it, or smelled it. It is utterly inscrutable, and beyond the reach of the senses, except in its effect. Science is teaching us that all space is pervaded with a subtle ether, through which the light of the sun is wafted to us on its waves; and yet, it is so fine and tenuous that we have no recognizable means of discovering what it is; it is unseen. No eye or ear or nostril can detect a scintilla of evidence for its existence.

A few years ago a remarkable book was written entitled "The Unseen Universe." It was the production of two great scientists, Professor Balfour Stewart, and Professor Peter Gurthrie Tait. These men were recognized the world over as authority in certain departments of Physics. Stewart was one of the founders of the spec-
trum analysis; and Tait became famous for his investigations in electricity, heat and light.

The argument of this great work is, that the tendency of scientific investigation is towards the necessity of a belief in an Unseen Universe. That is, science requires, in order to maintain consistency and completeness, the belief that the present visible universe had its origin from a different order of things. What is the last secret of matter according to science? It is the molecule, which seems to be less than the least of all things, for it is no larger than the one-five-hundred-millionth of an inch. The visible universe is made of atoms and begins with atoms, so far as science can discover. But this is not all. When scientific men begin to study these infinitesimals, of which the world is made, they discover that they exist in equal quantities, or in exact and constant ratios; they are exactly fitted, in size, to the conditions where they are found. Here is a paper of pins; they are regular in their shape and exactly alike. What is your conclusion in regard to that paper of pins? You say they were made; this uniformity of size is no mere happening. What is the conclusion concerning the atoms, which are perfectly regu-
lar in size? They were manufactured. Sir John Herschel said, the molecules have every appearance of being manufactured.

Professor Maxwell, following Herschel's reasoning, concludes that the formation of the molecule is, therefore, an event not belonging to the order of nature in which we live. Now observe just what that means. The present visible world is composed of atoms. They were manufactured; but the present visible world has no machinery for manufacturing atoms; therefore, they were manufactured somewhere else; the machinery belongs to the unseen world. Science, as represented by its great minds, holds, then, that the seen world is the product of the unseen world. It follows, therefore, that what we discover with the telescope and microscope, is not the measure of all the works of God. Professors Stewart and Tait are led to say: "The visible universe cannot comprehend the whole works of God. Perhaps, indeed, it forms only an infinitesimal portion of that stupendous whole, which is entitled to be called the UNIVERSE."

We think the universe embraces what we can see, and that is about all there is of it. These
distinguished scientists say that it is quite likely that what is seen is only an infinitesimal portion of the real universe, the larger share of which goes to constitute the unseen universe.

Here is another suggestion of an unseen world to which science calls our attention. It arises from the apparent waste in the present economy of things. Science has established the law of the Conservation of Energy. That law means, that in this universe nothing is lost, nothing is wasted. Energy can be transferred from one thing to another, but it cannot be destroyed. The time was when men believed that light, heat, magnetism and electricity were so many different substances. But we know now that they are one and the same thing. Each can become the other. Light can become electricity, and electricity can become light. If you get rid of one you have the other, taking up into itself what the other contained. Hence there is no waste; the energy is conserved in another form. And yet, scientists have difficulty in maintaining the principle of the conservation of force, unless they admit the existence of an unseen world. Take the sun, for example. He is daily squandering his resources of light and heat
in space; and, at his present prodigal rate, will, eventually, become a bankrupt. Professor Young, of Princeton, tells us that the sun cannot hold out and do business at the old stand, much more than fifty millions of years. Slowly but surely it is becoming a cinder. Well, what becomes of all but a tithe of this waste of his substance? Our earth absorbs just a trifle of the sun’s light and heat; and the same is true of the other planets and bodies; but what becomes of the great bulk of the sun’s energy? It is constantly streaming out into space; but where does it go? Science forbids us to suppose that a bit of it is lost; not a solitary, wandering sunbeam can be lost out of existence, in empty space. What becomes of it, then? Principal Dawson, noted for his scientific researches, tells us, “That the great machine for the dissipation of energy, in which we exist and which we call the universe, must have a correlative and complement in the unseen, a conclusion now forced upon physicists, by the necessities of the doctrine of the conservation of force.”

He means that there must be in existence another medium, or mode, of existence, different from that which we know anything about, sus-
taining some relation to this material system, into which what seems to be wasted energy in this world is conserved and perpetuated. The sunbeam, therefore, that streams out into empty space and is not absorbed in this visible universe, is absorbed and utilized in the realm of the unseen. Everything that is apparently wasted in this world is transferred and put to some further use in the world unseen, and will be born again in some future evolution. This is what the great experts in science are to-day suggesting.

A man dies, and the energy that he had in life seems to disappear. Is it wasted? Is it lost? Nothing is wasted or lost in this universe. What has become of it? Surely it is not here; it has gone somewhere; where has it gone? It is transferred to another medium in the realm unseen. If the very sunbeams which are not utilized in our visible universe are treasured up and put to further use in the unseen universe, can we imagine that the life of a man is utterly wasted at death, and sinks into nonentity? If the principle of the "conservation of energy" is strong enough to save a sunbeam from annihilation, is not the principle sufficient to save a man from the same fate?
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There are people who glibly say, "Death ends all!" They imagine that they are simply flying in the face and eyes of Scripture, according to its teaching. But the man who says that, today, is flying in the face and eyes of science. Science is teaching that death ends nothing; that what seems to be waste and loss is simply the evidence that there has been a transference from the seen to the unseen; that the life gone from sight has escaped to another medium, where all its energy is conserved and put to higher uses. But where is this medium or unseen universe from which, according to Professors Stewart and Tait, come both the life and the matter of the visible universe?

The seen and the unseen worlds are in close touch with each other: the unseen world is in such relation to this present, visible world, as to permit action and reaction between the two. Professor Tait says that the ultimate structure of matter should be considered "as a cage." It is open, as wickerwork; the molecule is not a close corporation. What is Professor Tait endeavoring to teach, when he tells us that the ultimate structure of matter, or the molecule, if you please, should be considered as a cage, or a
piece of wickerwork? He is showing that this material universe, so far as science can judge, is in the midst of a larger spiritual universe, which not only surrounds it but permeates it; and that this world, and all other visible worlds, may be conceived of as a veil floating in the air, taking the motions of the currents of the spiritual world, revealing in the very wavings of its folds the breath of the breeze upon it; yet not a film of this material veil is broken; its texture is nowhere torn by the invisible element all the while playing in and out among its many threads.

Thus, by science, we are conducted to such thoughts as these; the material world had its birth, or origin, in the spiritual world; the material world is sustained and maintained in continued life and existence by the spiritual world; when any form of energy, in the material world, has completed its service, instead of being lost or annihilated, it returns to the unseen or spiritual world where it originated, and is put to further and higher uses; and, finally, the seen world in which we live at the present time, is constantly wrought upon and interpenetrated by the forces of the unseen or spiritual world, so
that we are never to think of it as having its nearest boundary far away, separated from us by vast distances, up in the heavens somewhere, but so close at hand that we are carried in its arms and nourished by it.

Well, you say, "What has this to do with the ascension of Christ?" It helps us to understand where he went, when he disappeared from earth. It was a transference from the seen to the unseen world. He, immediately, took on the larger possibilities which can be realized in the spiritual world. He passed behind the veil, where the infinitude of his nature could be displayed. He is no longer a local Christ, confined to Jerusalem, but he becomes a universal Christ, so that he could say to his disciples, who mourned his departure, thinking, when gone, he could be no more with them, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world!"

Where is heaven? Heaven, with its abiding life, is in the Unseen, out of which the worlds appeared, and into which all their glory shall depart. Heaven is the end of all the Creator’s ways. It is, in its final and enduring perfection, the conclusion of the whole creation. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." So the Bible
reveals a celestial glory, which is more than the terrestrial, of a different order, and into whose higher realms of being, unrealized as yet, we and all things temporal are hastening.

"And so," as a recent writer has expressed it, "our latest physical speculations, call them flights of the scientific imagination, if you please, sent out to search over the depths for the everlasting hills, bring back upon their wings the perfume of far-off lands, and some fresh signs of the rest that shall remain after the flood of years shall have passed away!"
A RELIGION WITHOUT A SPECIALTY
A RELIGION WITHOUT A SPECIALTY

It is beginning to be realized, by the best religious thought of the world, that the special thing about the religion of Jesus Christ is, that it has no specialty. The tremendous significance of this fact may not be seen at a glance, but it will appear upon a little reflection. The idea is involved in the words of Paul, "There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female: for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus."

The ancient world was full of specialties and distinctions. It drew the line here, and it drew the line there. There was a specialty of race, Jew and Greek; there was a specialty of social condition, bond and free; there was a specialty of sex, male and female. But as Paul thinks of the mighty magnetism that is drawing all towards the one center, Christ, he declares, in substance, the specialty of the religion of Christ,
which I preach, is, that it has no specialty. Ye are all one man in Him!

Let us illustrate by contrasting some of the religions of the world with Christianity. We discover that each of these religions has a specialty. There is some one feature that stands out, gathering into itself and absorbing the whole interest of the devotee. The specialty of the old religion of Egypt was caring for its dead. They built tombs and pyramids to preserve their dead; and their mummies have been perpetuated to this day. Theirs was a religion of sadness. The central thought of the religion of ancient Persia, associated with the name of Zoroaster, was that there were two deities of equal power, Ormuzd the good, and Ahriman the evil, who were engaged in perpetual conflict. The idea of conflict was its specialty. Life was a battle to be fought to the finish, and the result uncertain, from the beginning to the end. What marked the religion of Brahmanism and made it peculiar? Its system of caste, and the denial of the personality of the soul. As a consequence, there could be no personal responsibility.

Self-culture was the prominent feature of Buddhism. The end was the annihilation
of the soul, or absorption into the universal mind.

The Greeks had their religion. Its specialty was nature, nature in all its beautiful forms. Its gods were humanized; and, in character, they compared unfavorably with that of human beings.

Confucianism was practical atheism, and its specialty was filial piety.

So we find that all these old religions of the world, some of which are already extinct, had their specialized characteristics, in one direction or another. What was the result? Each produced a certain kind of men. The religion of Greece tended to produce artists. The old religion of Persia tended to make warriors. Brahmanism produced men of spiritual pride, or of the caste spirit. Buddhism made ascetics. And thus a peculiar type of men correspond with a peculiar type of religion.

Now observe wherein Christianity differs from all these. It aims at the production of men, just men, and nothing more; but men true and complete, sons of God. Its specialty is not warriors, not artists, not philosophers, not statesmen, not scholars. It aims to produce a
man; and when this is accomplished, its task is done. For, when you get a man everything else is sure to follow. If the man becomes a statesman, he will be a good statesman; if he becomes a warrior, he will be a good warrior; if he becomes a merchant, he will be a good merchant.

What is it that eliminates from the Christian religion that peculiarity which we call specialty? It is a fact that all true manhood heads up in Christ. In him we become partakers of the divine nature. And what is the fundamental characteristic of the divine nature? It is love, for God is love. When Christ's spirit is wrought in us, then we have the divine nature of love; and in love there are no specialties. That is, it has no bounds, no limitations; it works out into life in all directions; it thrills and pulses along every avenue of human activity; and makes the man, whether he belongs to one class or another class. In a word, Christianity consists not so much in this or that special teaching, as in the fact that it tends to embody in itself a spirit which breathes through every outward deed and action.

Well, it has taken nineteen centuries for the
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Church to rise to this conception of the religion which it is pledged to maintain and propagate. Even now, the understanding is not complete in regard to the subject. The Church, to-day, is not thoroughly committed to the idea that its task is to make men in Christ. It is often found working in the direction of some specialty.

What we call sectarianism is but a way of expressing the fact that a church is engaged in some specialty. One church says to another "you are a sect," and we separate from you because we emphasize a certain doctrine to which you do not give sufficient attention. Or it may be some form or ceremony produces the dividing line. Some one says, "We are the church and there is none other." "On what ground do you maintain this monopoly?" we ask. "Our church is in line with the apostolic succession. Our church runs straight back, without a break, to the Apostle Peter. It is our specialty, to be the church!" is the reply. Yes, we answer, and the more you insist upon and enforce and magnify that specialty, the farther you will be from the purpose and intent of the religion that Christ taught. For the specialty of his religion is found in the fact that it has no specialty. It
would make a man, and apostolic succession is not worth a moment's consideration, only so far forth as it contributes to that end. The demand, to-day, is not for a church with a special sort of priesthood, which says, "we are of the Apostles," but for a church that can bring the power of Christ into the lives of men. We demand a church which can turn out men who are the sons of God. And when we find such a church, with such a priesthood, we ask no questions about prestige and credentials; it has the divine certificate in what it accomplishes.

In this first decade of the twentieth century, we recognize that denominationalism has not that strong hold upon the churches that it once had. And that means that the churches are getting rid of their specialties. And when we say that, we do not mean that their special forms of organization are dissolving and disappearing. There are different churches with different names, and will be, and, possibly, there ought to be. There are a great many ways of doing the same thing. We may travel on foot, or horseback, on a bicycle or by automobile. In each case, we are traveling, and we will get
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there, if we only keep on traveling. There are many forms under which the work of the church may be done. Some of these will be simple, others more complex; but, after all, each is doing the same work and seeking the same end. And hence, when we say that the churches are getting rid of their specialties, we mean that they are ceasing, to some extent, to lay mighty stress on certain doctrines or phases of doctrine, as though they were the sole guardians of such truth. It seems strange, and entirely contrary to the spirit of the age, for a church to say, "It is my forte to fortify, defend and promulgate the doctrine of the premillennial advent of Christ." If the doctrine is true, it is utterly subordinate to other teachings of the Bible, and, therefore, should have only secondary consideration. For a church to make this a specialty, simply belittles it and diverts it from the mission for which it was intended. Instead of engaging to show that the world is growing worse and worse, and that nothing can be done, of any account, till Christ comes and sets up a personal reign in the earth, the thing wanted of the church is, that it should lead men into his kingdom and service. Why? Simply, because they
belong there, and cannot be men, in the highest sense, if they are found anywhere else.

What a tendency there has been, and even now is, to draw a sharp distinction between the secular and the religious! This is simply an indication that people have the idea that Christianity operates in this world in the form of a specialty, limited in its area of influence and power. Religion has its place, we are told, but it must keep in its place. Men say, keep your religion on a high plane, but do not let it down into the world, and thereby soil it. Let it live in the atmosphere of worship and praise. Sing and pray on Sunday; but, when Monday arrives, just drop your worship and your song, and hustle like the fastest, that you may outstrip and outdo your competitor!

Religion must not be made too common and familiar! O no, that will not do! It must not be applied to politics and business; it must not be taken into the markets, into the halls of legislation, into institutions of learning, into ways of town-improvement, into the ordinary, every-day affairs of life. It has its own peculiar schedule of duties, offices, ceremonies, doctrines, creeds; let it keep to these, and not attempt to
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mingle in the dust and smoke of secular affairs! Religion is a specialty, and the church must maintain it as a specialty!

How little there is in this conception of religion which makes it an affair of manhood, of deepening moral purpose, of enlarging sympathy, of widening spiritual vision! There are signs that this conception of Christianity is passing, and I believe that the twentieth century will see the last of it.

The same tendency appears in morals as well as religion. In respect to morals, we may say that the specialty of Christianity is found in the fact that it has no specialty. All virtues are seen in the light of all the rest. It does not single out one virtue, and exhaust itself in urging and enforcing it. It produces a man in Christ, and, as a man in Christ, all the virtues are embodied in him, in a living form; and, henceforth, he is not virtuous in one direction, but in every direction.

But how often it occurs that men become specialists in morals! Every man wants to say some good thing to himself. We ask him as to his forte, and he says, "I keep my word. When I tell you that I will do something, I will do it;
I never go back on my word; I am known as an honest man on the street.” Well, so far, so good; but there are other virtues besides keeping one’s word; there is the duty of loving enemies, of being generous and kind, of being pure in thought and life. “O,” he says, “I lay no claim to these things; I am simply a man, who keeps his word, in business affairs!” He is a specialist in the realm of morals; and, being a specialist, he is not imbued with the spirit of Christianity, which has no specialty in this matter. It would not only lead us to keep our word, but every other requirement that grows out of our relation to God and man.

There is a tendency also, in some directions, to tack on to the religion of the Bible certain specialties which are made preeminent in exposition and teaching. The doctrine of evolution is being worked for all it is worth and a great deal more. Evolution is supposed to explain everything, from star-dust to Deity! Now I believe in evolution; I believe in it just as I do in the law of gravitation. But I do not think that gravitation is applicable to everything. I do not think that you can take the measure and weight of a man’s thoughts by
means of gravitation. I believe that evolution is the process which obtains in the natural world. Progressive development has been and is the method by which God carries forward his work of creation. But I do not think there is a theory of general evolution which can be used to explain everything, to which every question in science and religion must be brought, in order to have it correctly answered. And yet this is being done in some quarters. Evolution is made a specialty, and everything is supposed to revolve about it. Some men are careful not to say, "Thus saith the Lord!" but rather "Thus saith evolution!" They would have evolution tell us when and how the Bible was written. For them, everything in the Bible must bear the evolution stamp.

Sometime ago, I preached a sermon in which I had occasion to say that the monotheistic idea, so far as we can gather from history, started with Abraham. A person said to me afterwards, "There was one mistake in the sermon; it was your reference to Abraham, as having in possession the monotheistic idea; that could not be." "Why," I asked, "could he not have it?" The answer was, that "the theory of
evolution would not permit it. That idea was evolved several hundred years after the time of Abraham."

Evolution has reached a fine point, when, by means of it, the exact time that a new idea pops into a man's head can be told. A question of this kind is not an affair of evolution, in any strict sense; it is an affair of fact and evidence; and if they threaten to spoil our theory of evolution, so much the worse for the evolution. It needs revising. The truth is, that, when we come into the realm of free, conscious spirit, as we find it in man, there is no general theory of evolution that will explain his actions. Development in nature is one thing, and development in man is another. They are not governed by the same process. We may call it evolution in each case; but they are different, for they are on a different plane. Man has in charge his own evolution to considerable extent. How fast will a man develop in moral and spiritual character? Well, ask him about it; he has the business largely in hand. He can hinder or accelerate his own development. It depends upon how he behaves. The children of Israel wandered forty years in the wilderness. They would
not have had to wander half that time, if they had behaved themselves. There is no a priori theory of evolution, by which you can tell how human history is written, or how the Bible came into existence. God is a free Spirit, and man is a free spirit; and neither are handicapped by any evolutionary impediment. God is not compelled to make evolution his mouthpiece; he can inspire a prophet and cause him to utter his message.

Evolution is neither an entity nor a deity, but a process, and there is no such absolute certainty about it, as a process, to determine, beforehand, just how it is to operate in the realm of spiritual life and experience. We are not obliged to defer to evolution, and read out of Scripture all evidence of the supernatural that appears on its pages. The evolutionary process is not inevitable; if it were, we could sit down and watch it and see it work. And yet, with some people, evolution has become a specialty, and they fall back on it as their dependence for saving the world. But they misinterpret history and trust to a broken reed.

The Church’s need is preachers, who shall convert men, and not merely trust to the devel-
opment of the natural instinct of their hearers. The preacher who said that he did not expect to accomplish much for individuals, as such, but labored for the evolution and general uplift of society, will undoubtedly see of the travail of his soul, and will not be satisfied—with the result!

We are beginning to discover that the gospel-car of salvation is not being drawn over the rough and rugged highway of this world, by that slow, lumbering, club-footed dray-horse of evolution! There is a grand and inspiring "now" in the Gospel. "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation;" and we are not obliged to wait for the arrival of the dray-horse. In preaching Christ, let us have no evolutionary "fad," that has to be consulted before we can expect men will be turned from the error of their ways. Christianity has no specialty in this direction.

I met a man from Chicago the other day. In the course of our conversation, I asked him with what church he was connected. He said he belonged to Dr. Dowie's church. "And," said my friend, "Dr. Dowie is a wonderful man; he has started a great movement. He has bought several thousand acres of land, and we are build-
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...ing a city, and we shall have a delightful com-

munity.” I asked what would be the special

feature of the new city. He told me, in sub-

stance, that the particular attraction of that city

would be, that it would have no doctors in it! Di-

vine healing would be employed to cure all

sickness and disease. The Dowie church, or

Dowie religion, is an attempt to dwarf and min-
imize Christianity into a specialty, to make the
cure of disease the main issue. The whole

movement gathers about this one idea. Re-
movem it, and there would be nothing left.

Christian Science belongs to the same class of

special notions concerning Christianity. All the

vitality and coherence of this movement hinge

on the assumption that there is no such thing as
disease, except in the mind’s eye. Nothing need

be said about the absurdity of such teaching.

If it could be shown, or if it were admitted by

Christian Scientists themselves, that sickness is

a real thing, and not an imaginary thing, there

would be nothing left of the whole scheme; it

would evaporate into thin air. Its specialty

consists in a man who has rheumatism in every

joint repeating to himself, “I am not sick, I am

not sick.” If some excruciating twist of pain
should seize him, and he should cry out, in his agony, "I am sick, I am sick," that would fix him as a Christian Scientist—or, rather, it would unfix him.

If a man should go into one of the Scientist gatherings with a bad cold, and the members should have the sanity and common sense to admit, with one accord, that a man with a bad cold was actually in their midst, there would be nothing left for them to do but disband; for their calling would be at an end. There would be no use for Christian Science after that. So far as it is anything, it is a specialty, and being a specialty, its very name is a misnomer and a delusion.

Now, it is this larger and grander conception of Christianity, covering the whole area of life and thought and action, not laying special stress on one part rather than another, that we are to take with us into the coming years. I believe that we have entered upon an era of men-making rather than the cultivation of "fads" and specialties; and that the church of the future will be known, not by certain formulas of doctrine, or denominational ear-marks, however important in themselves, but by its success
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in transforming men into the likeness of Christ.

The world needs religious men, not religious specialists.
A MOUNTAIN BACKGROUND
A MOUNTAIN BACKGROUND

Mountains occupy a prominent place in the Scriptures. There are, probably, a thousand references to them. The greatest sermon ever preached, is called "The Sermon on the MOUNT." The most glorious vision of the heavenly world that ever dazzled the eyes of men, took place on a spot which is designated to this day, "The Mount of Transfiguration." We associate the Ten Commandments with the mountain on which they were given to Moses. And when the time of his departure had arrived, Moses, who had received the Law on Mount Sinai, went up into a mountain to die. Some of the sublimest and holiest hours of our Lord were spent in the mountains. It was on Mount Calvary where he died as the world's sacrifice: and on Mount Olivet where he ascended and passed into the heavens.

The man who has not seen a mountain has not received mountain helps, not merely of cool
breezes and a general refreshment of the physical life, but also of the intellectual and spiritual. Mountains seem to have been built for the human race, as, at once, its schools and cathedrals.

I never shall forget the first impressions made upon me by the mountains of Switzerland. We reached Lucerne about ten o'clock at night. During the afternoon, we had been riding in view of the Black Forest of Germany. As evening came on, we crossed the border into Switzerland, and rode some three hours, while all without was wrapped in darkness. When we arrived at Lucerne, there was nothing to be seen but the brilliantly illuminated city, which had been observing the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its confederation. In the morning, the sun was shining brightly, and looking out of the window, I saw what was supposedly a white cloud in the distance with peculiar characteristics. It had the deep, rich color of the alabaster, and maintained its figure and outline, as if carved out of snow-white marble by the hand of Omnipotence. It was some time before I discovered that it was the snow-capped summit of the Jungfrau, more than twice the height of Mount Washington.
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After breakfast, my friend and I climbed a little eminence in the rear of the hotel and sat down to look upon the mountains round about Lucerne. On our left and not far away was the Rigi, the easily reached favorite mountain of the tourist. Before, and a little to the right of us, was Pilatus rearing its head nearly seven thousand feet above the sea. Behind the Pilatus, possibly fifty miles away, was the mighty Jungfrau with its everlasting snows smiling grimly in the sunlight. Farther to our right and stretching away into the dim distance, was that chain of mountains, the Bernese Alps. It is difficult to see how more of awe and grandeur could be compressed into a single scene of earth.

The impressions made on that occasion suggested lessons worthy of consideration. Two greatly contrasted scenes met our eyes. There was the mountain scene—grand, awful, calm, dignified, silent. The hand of man could not disturb or break the serenity of those monuments of omnipotence—those everlasting hills rearing themselves into the heavens. With the feeling that God managed the mountains, it was restful and worshipful to look upon them.
The other scene was made up of that which was going on at our feet. There was the lake with its crystal waters, placid and beautiful. Steamers were flying over it. Little boats were skimming its shores. People were crowding its banks and wharves. On the streets, all was life and activity in the buying and selling of the traffickers. A casual observer could see no special connection between the two scenes. Each appeared independent of the other. Yet what would the city be without the encircling mountains, which give to it all its attractiveness and picturesqueness? The very soil of the valleys has been contributed by the mountains; and the charming lake, embosomed among the hills, finds its supplies among the snows that bury their tops. The mountains, enriching the valleys, have made all the joy and gladness of the city. On the other hand, were there no life and activity where now the city throbs with busy scenes, there would be wanting something to make the picture complete. The barrenness and desolation of the mountains would be deepened and intensified. It is the two scenes, in their relation to each other, that make Lucerne one of the most delightful spots on the face of the
earth. It is what Phillips Brooks calls the "background and foreground" of the picture, which, together, constitute the magnificent result.

There is in every life that which corresponds to the background and foreground of a scene in nature. There are the mountains round about, so to speak, which give stability and earnestness to life, and then there are things close at hand which engage our immediate attention. There are principles, convictions, beliefs, as firm and fixed as the hills, which gird us about like the great mountains, and, then, there are the shifting scenes of every-day life, the work of the hour and its multiplied cares. The two must be joined together to make the complete life. To have activity without convictions and beliefs, is like having Lucerne without its background of Rigi and Pilatus! How tame and thin it would be without them! I can easily imagine that there are men in Lucerne who care as little for the mountains as they do for mole-hills. Day after day passes and they hardly look up at the hills, from whence cometh their help. They almost forget that the water, which they hold to their lips, cold
and sparkling, comes bounding and leaping down the mountain side to satisfy their thirst, so wholly absorbed are they with the immediate concerns of life.

There is always danger of living in the foreground at the expense of the background. The foreground is all astir with activity. Here are trade and commerce; here are ships and factories; here is the business over which men go mad in their rivalries, and on account of which they give scarcely a passing glance to the mountains of righteousness which are round about them. How thin and false life becomes when it is not fed by the streams that flow down from the heights above! The great question, after all, is one concerning the background of life. What is it? What is that which is behind all our outward activities? In the background we place all the great truths and consecrations and impulses which are to keep us at our work. The background answers to the question, What for? We work and work and work. We engage in this and that enterprise. We build and enlarge and multiply our forces. What for?

Activity resting on a great principle, inspired by a great truth, is one thing; and activity born
of human ambitions, stimulated by temporal rewards, is quite another. It is one thing to enter the race for the prizes of life with God's mountains behind, from which we are fed by the streams of his power, and another thing to enter the race with nothing behind but the low plain of self-seeking and personal advancement.

Background determines the man. We may say what we please about the city among the hills; we may extol its thrift and enterprise; we may rejoice in its noise and bustle; but the mountains round about make it beautiful for situation, and bestow upon it all its attractiveness. We may praise the action of a man in the foreground, but sooner or later we shall come to measure him by his character in the background. There is always something behind the action of a man, that we are looking for. He is brave, but what is the source of that bravery? He is kind, but whence that kindness? He strikes the indignant blow, but what made him strike? He is energetic, but what sends him out battling with all difficulties? We are watching for the background. How instantly character springs into some shape behind every deed! While a man is selling a parcel of goods,
we are making up our mind. We can't meet a man on the street in a one-minute conversation, without forming some sort of an idea of the man he is. It is this study of the man, that makes him so interesting. The simple fact that he is a creature of deeds is not that which fascinates us. His deeds are born of principles, purposes, impulses; they have their source in the background of character; and, for this reason, he claims our attention and interest. The steamer that plows the ocean is a creature of deeds; but it has no character. We could not make a hero of an ocean greyhound if we tried. Its triumphs could not become the subject of a novel, for they are all enacted in the foreground and have no background.

All heroism is fed by the mountains round about; it is built out of the everlasting hills of truth and righteousness.

Action stands in a true relation to character, when it exactly expresses it. The truth is, a man may conceal his motives. He may act well and be bad. In this case, he is governed by expediency. There is no harmony between his foreground and background. When we look at a picture, you do not want to see the
background standing out independent of the foreground. The hills must not seem to recoil from the embrace of the plain, neither must the plain seem to resist the embrace of the hills. They must stand together, each the complement of the other. The man of truth, of sincerity, has this correspondence between action and character. The untrue man says, "I am going to do good for appearance's sake; I have no special love for it, but I am going to do it." It is possible that this may be the means of quickening and awakening the principles of goodness; and, by reaction, pretense may be made to give way to honest purpose; but it is hardly safe to depend on reaction, for a well-ordered life. It is like planting a city in the foreground and leaving the mountains to grow around it for a background. Let us have the mountains in the background to start with, and beautiful for situation will be the city in the foreground. Let us have noble activities resting on a high and glorious purpose.

There are two tendencies among men; one, is to emphasize the foreground of life at the expense of the background; the other, is to emphasize the background at the expense of the
foreground. The idealists tell us that the great thing is being, not doing. "It is not what men do, but what they are, that decides their destiny. Be brave and true and generous, and do not bother yourself about action." There is sentiment here. The picture is all background. There are the mountains round about; but there is no place for the lake and stream and city in the valley. Then there are the hard practical men, who have eyes for nothing but action. "Do your duty and do not worry about the condition of the soul. Your deed, not you, is what the world desires. Get down into the business of the world and stir things, and when you die, others will take up the work, where you left off, and they will not ask what sort of a man you were. To do and not to be, that is the motto for you!" This is all foreground with nothing behind it but flatness and tameness.

What the Bible calls worldliness, is, I suppose, just foreground without background. The peculiarity of worldliness is, that it draws all its resources from the seen. Its foreground is the visible things of earth. It wants riches, because they can be seen and handled. It wants place and honor, for these are palpable and easily
recognized. It lives on the surface of things. Its joys are earthly, and its hopes are temporal. Its whole horizon is bounded by oceans and continents. The worldly man is the shallow man, the superficial man, the man without a background. His life is threaded to no great purpose; his motives are grounded in no great truth.

What could be more essential to the young than a right understanding of what constitutes the foreground and background of life? In youth, immediate thoughts and occupations are intensely vivid; life has untold attractions. The danger is that this foreground of active life will, in some way, obscure the background of earnest purpose. The beauty, the glory of young life, of the best and healthiest young life, is that, while it is intensely busy with the present, it is, also, aware of and inspired by those larger truths, the everlasting and timeless verities out of which all true life must be fed. A young man says, "I know nothing about God, I know nothing about immortality and heaven; and, furthermore, I do not care about them. They are nothing to me. I am concerned with having a good time, of making the most of this life."
I attend to things here and now.” You may have, ought to have “a good time” within certain limitations. But when you come to make so much of “a good time” as to obscure the background of earnest living, you have reached the point of weakness and folly. Such a life will never rise to grandeur, it will never become heroic, it will never work itself out in forms of benevolence, philanthropy and unselfishness.

Who is it that makes the background? It is the Christ, who brings God to us and us to God, whose mountains of righteousness, of love, of joy, send down their streams to water all the thirsty places of the soul.
THE UPPER AND THE UNDER
THE UPPER AND THE UNDER

The most casual observation leads to the discovery that everything in this world that has an upper, has an under, also. The wonders of the earth are not found lying round loosely, on the top of it. The energies that combine to cause the pull and push of things are not seen, like a windmill spinning over our heads, whose revolutions are visible and easily calculated. The world’s explanation is not found on the covers of the great volume that has been published. Its ultimate purpose is not hieroglyphed on the mountain tops, or flung out in raised letters on the sky. The formative, causative, ruling forces, are under, pursuing their mission, not in the open day, with all the world as spectators, but in invisible chambers, where the presence of man is not allowed.

Were you to ask a genuine Yankee for a definition of a tree, he would probably tell you that it is a thing about fifty feet high, stuck in the
ground, indigenous almost anywhere, shaped very much like a full-spread parasol of the Japanese type, affording an excellent shade in hot weather for lazy people, and, frequently, used for heating purposes in stoves and furnaces. This is the explanation of one who examines the shell of things. But to the man intent on knowing what is under the outward appearances of things, this account of the tree would seem quite unsatisfactory. In a more thorough investigation of the subject, he would tear away the bark, and hew into its woody trunk, suddenly opening to view thousands of water sluices, beautifully cut, rivers running up and rivers running down; and, what would be the most wonderful of all, he would discover that these perpendicular rivers are worked by an engine, the place of whose power he cannot even guess. This mysterious force he crystallizes into the term, life. "I have it," he says; "the upper of the tree is appearance, the under is life."

What is a flower? The man who defines things from the top says, "It is a kind of posy, to be found in gardens, hothouses, and along babbling brooks—very pretty to look at, sweet-smelling, used largely by young men who wish
to elicit special interest from the fairer sex, as a buttonhole bouquet." But it is possible to have a profounder knowledge of the flower. He who has learned the habits, structure and uses of flowers, who has discovered their relation to each other, their mutual affinities, and their endless diversities, so that he can arrange, classify and designate by distinctive characters and names, the different kinds which are scattered in infinite profusion over the earth, in short, he who has found the underlying principle of the flower, has made a more satisfactory acquaintance with it than he who sees no other use for it than to be made into nosegays.

The earth, what is it? The man who manages the telegraph and the "Limited Express," good for a mile a minute, says, "It is a round thing, continually on 'the go,' fond of taking trips round the sun, always on time, covered with land and water, inhabited by beings, who, as a general thing, enjoy their palates more than their brains, and are engaged in agriculture, manufacturing, commerce, fighting and fretting." This is what the man on a "flyer," sees, as he looks out of the car window upon the world.

But there is an under earth that infinitely sur-
passes the one that a casual observer beholds. It is the earth of the chemist, the geologist, the mineralogist, the biologist, the archeologist, the philosopher, the historian and the theologian. Each of these in his own way is exploring realms whose beauty and magnificence greatly surpass that outward, tangible world in which the unreflective mind ranges.

It is the part of thoughtfulness to discover the under force of the world and ascertain its attributes and nature. It may be said, I think, without fear of contradiction, that the question which agitates the intellectual world, more than any other, is the one in respect to the order of the two forces which we denominate the upper and the under. Matter or mind, which? All phenomena have their ground in one or the other. But the question of the hour is, which takes the precedence? In other words, which is the under force, mind or matter? There is one class of investigators who tell us, the under force is matter, and the upper force mind; that all life, whether it be that of man, or beast, vegetable or fowl, is the outcome of matter; that matter is not only our mother but our grandmother, as well as the beginning and end of hu-
man destiny. There is another and larger class who maintain that the under force is mind.

Do you think it is immaterial how this question is settled? Are we to be unconcerned as to the final issue of this discussion? Let our convictions become fixed in the belief that matter is the under force, and at once the world is stripped of its beauty, the stars of their glory, and man of his virtue and greatness? To conclude that this vast and magnificent framework of things is the resultant of a happy and fortuitous concourse of the original elements; to say that thought is only a subtle chemistry, is to strike a blow at the very foundation of man's hopes, aspirations and noblest aims. This tendency in speculation is to be met by emphasizing the superiority and permanency and spirituality of the under forces of the world and life. Force becomes more attenuated, subtle and impalpable as we proceed downwards. Analysis, carried ever so far, always stops short of the producing cause. It is able to give us the conditions of existence, but never reveals the Hand that fashions life from the conditions. Conditions are not causes. The stimuli of the seed, are water, air, heat, soil; these are the conditions of
its growth, but not the cause. There is a certain something back of all, which manipulates these conditions and uses them to the end of growth. This hidden power we call life. But no microscope has revealed it and probably never will reveal it. The conditions of a house are the trees of the forest; but they are not the cause of the existence of the house. The under force or cause, in this case, is the mind of man.

The great error of materialism is to assume that conditions are causes. Heat is the condition of digestion; but heat itself does not digest. There is a finer force in the background somewhere, which manages that matter. As we descend along the line of the under forces, we find them manifesting, more and more, the prerogatives of directing and shaping energies. Instead of showing signs of passivity and helplessness, they seem to be clothed with soul-like qualities.

Mr. Huxley, looking down the tube of a powerful microscope, upon a tiny speck of matter, the egg of a little water animal, the common salamander, describes what he sees. "Strange possibilities," he tells us, "lie dormant in that minute spheroid. Let a moderate supply of heat reach it, and the plastic matter undergoes
changes so rapid, and yet so steady and purposelike in their succession, that one can compare them only to those operated by a skilled operator upon a formless lump of clay. One is almost involuntarily possessed of the notion that some more subtle aid to vision would show the hidden artist with his plan before him, striving with skilful manipulation to perfect his work." So near has this observer come to a creator, that he can only describe what he sees in terms of creation. It seems as if he had come within a hair's breadth of the operations of the universal Mind, in developing life from a structureless sac.

Science itself encourages a belief in mind as the under force. But we are told that mind is a very unsubstantial thing. We can neither touch, taste, nor handle it. It eludes our grasp. But how much more palpable than mind is that entity which we call matter? What is matter in itself? Who will define its essence? All our knowledge of it is through certain sensations which have passed in through the windows of the soul, to be interpreted by the mind itself. It is not the thing, in itself, that the mind takes cognizance of, but the impression from without,
made upon the mind, which is but an image of the external object; and this image is not mechanically produced, as a human figure on a photographer's plate, but by the operation of the mind itself, in a process that is organic and spiritual in its character. The connection between subject and object, between mind and the external world, as represented in consciousness, is a living connection. The mind is not a tabula rasa on which external objects inscribe themselves in a purely mechanical manner. It is rather a thought process by which we know the external world. Hence we distinguish the not self from self, by inference. That there is a world of sensible objects is a conclusion reached by the understanding. The most certain entity with which we have to deal, after all, is mind. It is far from being unsubstantial; it is the most abiding, permanent and indestructible force of which we have any knowledge.

Personal identity is an assured article of our faith. If there is one belief from which you cannot possibly escape, it is, that you are the same person now that you were when you first woke to a state of consciousness. You are thoroughly convinced that the person whom you called "I"
ten, fifteen, twenty years ago, is the same one, whom you, to-day, designate by that title. Nevertheless, you are positive that you have not the same body, at the present time, that you had when a child. You may have lost that a half dozen times, but your mind has stood by you. The body has not a material continuity, through a whole lifetime. All its constituent parts are in a constant state of flux and change. "The body," one has said, "is more like a river running by, than like a body, remaining constant in the constancy of its material."

The mind is the only substantial part of us. It holds on its way, from the beginning to the end of life, in one unbroken history. Like the Eternal himself, our personality never leaves or forsakes us. Such being the wonderful nature of the human mind, it is easy for us to pass to a belief in an infinite Mind. As we go down, then, towards that ultimate force, upon which everything above leans, we find it exhibiting more and more the characteristics of mind. Organization meets us at every step; and organization implies the existence of a power that rules, disposes, penetrates and vivifies; and that power must be mind.
We are all familiar with the fact that there have been certain philosophers who claimed that there is nothing else in the universe but mind. "We cannot," they said, "attribute external existence to that which causes our sensations." The common sense of men never adopted this theory. You never can make the man who saws wood for a living believe that a stone post is only a stubborn thought, or that the bite of a dog is only an over-familiarity with a sharp, incisive, four-footed conception of the brain. When a man tumbles down-stairs, he is very well satisfied that the bumps he receives cannot be resolved into the sort about which the phrenologists have so much to say. You cannot make a man believe that the scolding of his wife is simply the hubbub of certain ideas which are henpecked. There is no danger that this sort of idealism will prevail, to any extent, in this practical age.

We are not such lunatics as to deny the reality of matter. Unreservedly, we yield our assent to the evidence of the senses. No one shall be able to shake our faith in substantial existence of the farms we till, the houses we live in, or the hills we climb. While we acknowledge all this, we
reach the conclusion, through constantly recurring observation, that the under force is a planning, organizing, controlling energy. And, according to all analogies with which we are familiar, that force which plans, organizes and controls, is, and must be, from the nature of things, mind. Every effect must have an adequate cause; a design must have a designer; and thought must have a thinker. But this world in which we live bears the impress of thought; therefore there must be a mind, of which this thought is the expression. "Without thought in the ground of things," says Trendelenburg, "the organic cannot exist." This fact forms the groundwork of education, in its broadest sense. The importance, significance, inspiration and glory of education rest on the assumption that mind is the under force. Let it be proved, beyond controversy, that matter is the under force, and a death-blow is given to all higher forms of education. It would be shorn of its worth and dignity. It would be brought to the verge of insipidity.

Suppose all being and life start in matter, without personal and intelligent direction. Assume for a moment that that highly
seasoned, yet senseless substance, called protoplasm, lies at the basis of created things. Then the first line in the opening page of the book of life would read, in the beginning, a soft, nitrogenous gelatine, which for the sake of investing the subject with mystery, we give the name protoplasm. With this the under force, what is education, viewed in its relation to the sources of knowledge? It is an attempt to discover the ways and methods by which protoplasm, or jelly, transforms itself into the light of day, the verdure of the fields, and the genius of men. With the under force gelatine, the educated man would be one, who, in tracing back his history to its primal source, would find himself growing softer and softer, till he reached his original home, where he would shake like New England "hasty pudding." As we move down towards that border-land, where darkness gives place to light, in creation, we do not get the impression that either stupidity or insensibility or gristle is at the cause-end of things, while men and angels are at the effect-end. We do not see any reason why creation is to be likened to some of our Western roads, which are said to be, in their later development, a boulevard,
while in their earlier history they were a squirrel-track running up a tree. Whether this is a true account of our Western roads, I will not undertake to say; but I will venture to affirm, that no Western man has had the audacity to use the grasshopper logic of making the inference that the squirrel-track was the cause of the boulevard. As I apprehend the subject, education, in its broadest generalization, is to trace the evidence of the Mind of the universe in forms of creation. But if there is no mind in the universe, whose workings are to be traced, then the broader purpose of education must be surrendered. The inspiring thought, that, in acquiring a knowledge of the order and consistency of nature, we are coming in contact with the infinite Mind, must be summarily abandoned. Henceforth we must range through the fields of the visible world, with the dispiriting and sickening consciousness that, whatever of beauty and order are revealed to us is the result of some happy accidents in the beginning of things.

Knowledge, having no relation to an intelligent First Cause, can have no other value than the practical uses to which it can be put. If there is no mind in the universe, then simply
utilitarian motives must be the mainspring of our activities for enlightenment and culture. We study for the personal advantage that accrues to us. Under this condition, it would be regarded as a piece of extravagance and folly for a person to spend time in studying anything that could not be actually utilized in ministering to the body. When it is fully settled that the under force is matter, it would be well to put upon all our school-books, the initial letters B. B. the short for bread and butter, that the ultimate end of an education may be kept constantly in mind by the pupil. Let the under force be matter, I say, and our noble system of education, whose branching and diversified interests cover every field of knowledge, will finally terminate in a shriveled, flaccid, half-starved idea, bearing, perhaps, the incongruous title "scientific."

What is chemistry? It is God's thought about the properties of elementary substances, and their mutual combinations. What, then, is it to study chemistry? It is to trace that thought as it is outlined in the primary elements of nature. What is geology? It is God's thought about the formation and structure of the earth; his thought about its rocks, strata, soil, minerals, organic
remains, and the changes which it has undergone. What is it to study geology? It is to trace that thought as it has thus unfolded in building a world. What is physiology? It is God's thought about living bodies, their functions and powers. What is its study? It is a search for that thought. This world is the thought of God made objective to himself; hence, when we study and analyze the world, we are tracing the almighty thought of Him who made the world.

Whatever we assume as the first cause, determines the scope and purpose of education, and the nature of morality. Teach that the first cause is material, and true philosophy is pulled up by the roots; theology is disemboweled of all substance; morality is turned into a burlesque; the breath of all natural piety is frozen; and the only message to man is the message of despair.

How important for us, as educators, to lift up the grand, omnipotent truth that God, a free, all-wise, infinitely powerful and holy being, is the first cause, or under force, upon which rests the superstructure of the world and all its teeming life!
A NEGLECTED CHRISTIAN DUTY
A NEGLECTED CHRISTIAN DUTY

There is a time when laughter is right, when it is a duty, and when it would be wrong not to laugh. It has been said that laughter is dying out among men. If so, it is a pity. It is quite possible that we are not accustomed to look upon laughter in this way. We think that it is an agreeable exercise but are not apt to class it among the duties, like honesty, or kindness. "A merry heart doeth good like medicine." This goes beyond the mere act of laughter, to its effect. The word translated medicine is very interesting in the Hebrew; it means to take off the bandages. We thrust away the dressings when the wound is healed. Hence the word does not really mean medicine, but a final cure. The merry heart helps to forward a cure: and this, whether the trouble be physical, mental or spiritual.

A physician always tries to keep his patient in good spirits; and when he discerns that his
patient is weighed down by some mental burden, he wisely seeks to lighten that, as well as to administer remedies to the body.

Addison says, Cheerfulness is the best promoter of health. Repinings and secret murmurs of heart give imperceptible strokes to those delicate nerve fibers of which the vital parts are composed, and wear out the machinery, insensibly, not to mention those violent ferments which they stir up in the blood, and those irregular, disturbed emotions which they raise in the animal spirits. He says that he can scarce remember, in his own observation, to have met with many old men, who “wear well,” as we say, that had not a certain amount of humor and cheerfulness of heart. The truth is, health and cheerfulness mutually beget each other.

There is a distinction between mirth and cheerfulness. Mirth is short and transient; cheerfulness, fixed and permanent. The man of mere mirth has his ups and downs. At one time he is in the clouds; at another, in the dumps; now elated in his feelings, now depressed. Mirth is like a flash of lightning, that breaks through the clouds and glitters for a mo-
ment. Cheerfulness keeps up a constant, clear light in the mind.

In the world at large, cheerfulness is an immense gift. What a sad thing it would be if it were altogether crowded out. One of the expressions of cheerfulness is laughter. Think of a world of human beings with no laughter, men and women wearing, everywhere and always, grave, serious, solemn faces, with no relaxing of the sternness on any occasion. Think of the laughter of childhood departing from the world, and the laughter of youth,—how dull and dreary life would be! A man that never smiles is morbid. He has lost the joy-cords out of his life. He has trained himself to think only of unpleasant things, to look only and always at the dark side. He has accustomed himself so long to sadness, that the muscles of his face become set with hard, fixed lines and cannot relax themselves. His thoughts of life are gloomy, and the gloom has entered his soul and darkened his eyes. What a delightful habit to take a cheerful view of things!

A farmer's boy once asked this question: "What is an optimist?" "Well, John," replied the father, "ye know I can't give ye a dictionary
meanin' of that word any more 'n I can of a great many others. But I 've got a kind of idee what it means. Probably you do n't remember your uncle Henry: but I guess if there was ever an optimist, he was one. Things were always comin' out right with Henry, and especially any-thing that he had to do: it wa'nt a-goin' to be hard,—t'was jest kind of solid pleasant. Take hoein' corn, now. If anything kind of took the tucker out of me, 't was hoein' corn in the hot sun. But in the field, 'long about the time I begun to lag back a little, Henry, he 'd look up an' say:—'Good, Jim. When we get these two rows hoed, an' eighteen more, the piece 'll be half done.' An' he 'd say it in such a kind of cheerful way, that I could n't 'a' ben any more tickled if the piece had been all done,— an' the rest would go light enough. But the worst thing we had to do (hoein' corn was a picnic to it) was pickin' stones. No end to that, on our old farm, if we wanted to raise anything. When we wa'nt hurried and pressed at some-thing else, there was always pickin' stones to do: and there wa'nt a plowin' but what brought a fresh crop of stones to the top, an' seems as if the pickin' had all to be done over again. Well
A NEGLECTED CHRISTIAN DUTY

sir, you 'd 'a' thought, to hear Henry, that there wa' n't any fun in the world like pickin' stone. He looked at it in a different way from anybody I ever see. Once, when the corn was all hoed, and the grass wa' n't fit to cut yet, an' I 'd got all laid out to go a-fishin', and father he up and set us to pickin' stones up on the west piece, an' I was about ready to cry, Henry, he says:— 'Come on, Jim. I know where there's lots of nuggets. An' what do you s'pose now? That boy had a kind of a game that that field was 'what he called 'a plasser mining field'; and he got me into it, and I could 'a' sworn I was in Californy all day— I had such a nice time. 'Only,' says Henry, after we 'd got through the day's work, 'the way you get rich with these nuggets is to get rid of them, instead of to get them.' That somehow did n't strike my fancy, but we 'd had play instead of work, anyway, an' a great lot of stones had been rooted out of the field. An', as I said before, I can't give ye any dictionary definition of optimism; but if your Uncle Henry wa' n't an optimist, I do n't know what one is.'

This is the lesson: the bright, cheerful man makes a cheerful world around him. The mo-
rose, fretful, disjointed, critical, dyspeptic,
gloomy man creates a world about him which is the reflection of his own mood. Some people have the power of making summer wherever they go. They infuse light and joy and happiness and beauty into everybody they meet. If you meet one of them on the street, he will throw a stream of sunlight into your soul, that will light up the whole day. One has power of making the best of everything, of not only looking at the bright, but the brightest, side of things. He finds peace and comfort everywhere. The servants are all attentive. He is never snubbed. Everybody is considerate. Another is always insulted, cut, snubbed, slighted, neglected. We get pretty nearly what we give to the world; and we are treated about as we treat others. If others are uncharitable, neglectful and unkind in their treatment of us, it is, usually, but the reflection of our own bad tempers and lack of charity. Beecher once said: “Away with these fellows who go howling through life, and all the while pass for birds of paradise.” He that cannot laugh and be cheerful should look to himself. He should fast and pray until his face breaks forth into light. Some have an idea that they comfort people when
they groan over them. Don’t drive a hearse through a man’s soul. When you bind up a broken bone of the soul, and need splints, do not make them of cast iron.

“Many years ago,” says Oliver Wendell Holmes, “in walking among the graves at Mount Auburn, I came upon a plain, upright marble slab which bore an epitaph of only four words, but, to my mind, they meant more than any of the labored inscriptions on the surrounding monuments,—‘She was so pleasant.’ This was all, and it was enough. That one note revealed the music of a life of which I knew and asked nothing more.”

Dr. Griffin, when he was president of Andover Theological Seminary, was much troubled by the gloomy, sad and glum appearance of the theological students. One day he called them together, and said he wanted them to practise laughing exercises every day, and, at once, gave them an example, by an outbreak of roaring laughter, insisting upon their joining. He did not have to wait long for a response: the glum-mest of them soon out-laughed the doctor himself. This had a wonderful effect upon the students.
There is a statement in Paul's writings in regard to giving, that is very instructive. He says, the Lord loveth a cheerful giver. It is not simply that he loveth a giver; but a cheerful giver. He likes to have a man come up smiling, when he puts in his contribution. I read, some time ago, about a mission congregation in Jamaica, composed of colored people. One Sunday a collection was to be taken for missionary purposes. One of the brethren was appointed to preside. But before they proceeded to business they made the following resolutions: "(1) Resolved, That we will all give. (2) Resolved, That we will give as the Lord has prospered us. (3) Resolved, That we will give cheerfully." Then the contribution began, each person, according to custom, walking up to deposit his gift under the eye of the presiding officer. One of the most well-to-do members hung back until it was painfully noticeable. When at length he deposited his gift, the brother at the table remarked, "Dat is 'cording to de fust resolushun, but not 'cordin to de second." The member retired, angrily, to his seat, taking back his money; but conscience or pride kept working, till he came back and doubled his contribution, with a
crabbed, "Take dat, den." The brother at the table again spoke: "Dat may be 'cording to de fest and second resolushun, but it is n't 'cording to de third." The giver, after a little, accepted the rebuke, and came a third time with a still larger gift and a good-natured face. Then the faithful president expressed his gratification thus: "Dat's 'cording to all de resolushuns.

It is magnificent to be a cheerful giver. When a man gives as if he were glad to give, it has a wonderfully bracing effect upon others. We ought to have such an interest in the various objects to which we contribute, that we would feel it a disappointment not to have the opportunity to give. In our benevolences we are to respond according to the spirit and intent of "all the resolutions."

In emphasizing the value of cheerfulness, by means of various illustrations, I wish to say that it is not a superficial thing; it is not something that we put on for the occasion, and doff when the company goes home. Cheerfulness is rooted and grounded in the soul, and is the expression of the joy of living. It is that quality that keeps the soul turned toward the light. Here is a little potted rose-bush in the window of a sick-
room. What do you discover? You find that the rose on that bush insists on looking towards the light. Suppose you turn it round towards the darkness; it will not remain long in that situation; it will twist itself back, until its face is again toward the light. It will not look into the darkness. Cheerfulness is like the rose; it will not allow itself to look toward any gloom, but will instantly turn from it. It will not live in shadows and discouragements. The foundation of cheerfulness is right relations. When a man is in right relation with himself, in right relation with his fellow men, and in right relation with God, he has the prerequisites for a constant habit of cheerfulness. Let these relations be disturbed and broken, and there will be discord and schism in the soul, which will preclude the possibility of genuine cheerfulness. Let there be those whom you do not love, and with whom you will have nothing to do, and there will be poison at the roots of your life, which will check and disturb your happiness.

Remember, now, that all true Christianity is cheerful. Christ taught no long-faced, gloomy theology; he taught the gospel of gladness and good cheer. His doctrines were touched with
the sunlight, and drew lessons from the flowers
of the field, the birds of the air, the beasts of the
fields, and happy, romping children are in them.
True piety is as cheerful as the day. The time
was, when men believed that Christ never smiled.
That day is past. We believe now that he had
the most joyful soul that ever tabernacled in the
flesh. About the last thing he said to his dis-
ciples was, that he would leave his joy with them,
and he affirmed it was a kind of joy that could
not be taken away from them. No idea is more
fatuous than that a change of circumstances will
make a man cheerful. It is not outward sur-
roundings but inward peace that gives the
merry heart, that doeth good like medicine.

But here are the sorrows that come to us,
which are so keen and heavy. What now?
Grief should not crush cheerfulness out of our
life. Along the shore you will sometimes come
upon fresh-water springs which bubble up on
the edge of the salt sea. The tides roll over
them and bury them out of sight for the time,
but when the brackish floods ebb again, the
springs are found sweet as ever. So, after the
deepest sorrow, the heart’s fountains of joy
should be found, pouring out their streams of
gladness.
Some people seem to think that it would be disloyalty to their friends who are gone from them, ever to be happy again. But this is not true. Of course there is a sense in which we never get over sorrow. Our life is never the same after a sore bereavement. We carry the marks forever. But they should not be marks of sorrow. There is a beatitude of the Master's which pronounces those who mourn blessed or happy, because they have God's comfort. God's comfort is heaven's joy entering into the human soul. It is not an anesthetic, which makes men insensible to pain or loss; it is a benediction, which transmutes pain into joy, and loss into gain. Sorrow healed by Christ's wise, skilful treatment, leaves no ugly scars, no bleeding wounds. Nothing beautiful is lost in the grief which Christ comforts. The sweetest songs sung on earth are those learned in the darkened room of trial.

We need to put cheerfulness down among Christian duties. Nor is it one of the minor duties. There may be no direct commandment to the effect, Thou shalt laugh, or thou shalt be cheerful; but it is implied in the teaching of
the Master, and involved in such words of Paul, as "Rejoice in the Lord away: and again I say, Rejoice." Let us not give the impression that we have a peevish, doleful religion. Let us not go moping and grumbling around, as though the Christian graces ever assumed that form. There is sunshine in religion; but there is no sunshine for those who persist in keeping their shutters barred. Cheerfulness is not gained by asking for it, but only by acting for it: we must walk with Christ if we would walk in the sunshine.

There is a tiny poem, expressive of this subject, that I quote, for the benefit of little folks and big folks.

"If I knew the box where the smiles are kept,

No matter how large the key,

Or strong the bolt, I would try so hard—

'T would open, I know, for me.

Then over the land and sea, broadcast,

I'd scatter the smiles to play;

That children's faces might hold them fast,

For many and many a day.

If I knew a box that was large enough

To hold all the frowns I meet,
I would like to gather them, every one,
From nursery, school and street.

Then, folding and holding, I'd pack them in,
And, turning the monster key,
I'd hire a giant to drop the box,
To the depths of the deep, deep sea."
THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION

FROM THE VIEW-POINT OF THE SUPER-NATURAL
THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION

FROM THE VIEW-POINT OF THE SUPERNATURAL

From many points of view, the resurrection may be regarded as a power. Just here, let us consider the power of the resurrection of Christ as reenforcing and emphasizing our idea of the supernatural, concerning which we should have distinct, certain and positive thoughts.

It makes a great difference with a man whether he conceives himself living in a world with or without the supernatural belonging to it. As a matter of fact there are thousands who live as if the supernatural were something unreal and utterly unsubstantial. There are also those who go so far as to say, that anything supernatural is an impossibility. We are to remember that the question of the supernatural is not, merely, one concerning miracles; whether this or that particular miracle ever occurred; whether Christ healed the sick, raised the dead or stilled
the tempest. The supernatural has a wider range, and includes such questions as these: Is there a supernatural being—God? Is there a supernatural government of the world? Is there a supernatural relation of God and man, so that God and man may have communion with one another? Is there a supernatural revelation? Has that revelation culminated in a supernatural person—Christ? Is there a supernatural work in the souls of men? Is there a supernatural hereafter? These questions imply that the supernatural, if it is anything at all, is not alone that which is miraculous, in the strict sense, but that which we are constantly dealing with, which is here, there and everywhere. You are a supernatural being. You may think the statement somewhat extraordinary. But where shall we draw the line between the supernatural and the natural? We must draw it between personal and impersonal beings. What is an impersonal being? It is a thing acted upon and directed according to certain fixed and uniform laws. It must be thus and so, and not otherwise. What is a personal being? It is a being endowed with a rational free will; and this, in its essence, is that which is supernatural. Not
that it can originate power, but it can direct and exert it. Here are all the forces in nature; if left to themselves, they move in a path fixed for them; they turn neither to the right hand nor the left. But you come along and lay hold of some of these forces, and divert them from their natural tendencies; you use them, and make them produce effects, which nature, left to its fixed course, would not have produced. What have you done? You have done that which is above nature; you have made a sawmill, or a factory, or a spinning-jenny. These things neither grow nor develop by means of an impersonal energy, but rather depend upon a free, rational will. You have asserted your sovereignty over nature, in a certain measure. You have been acting in the sphere of the supernatural. In a limited sense, you are a supernatural being. Civilization itself is simply the effect of the supernatural in man. And you will observe that you have not disturbed the uniformity of nature. By doing a supernatural work you have not interfered with, or arrested, or broken a single law in the natural world. You have simply introduced a force originating in your will, which is superior to that force in
natch, and, therefore, it had to yield to your wishes.

There are people who tell us that God never does anything that is supernatural. How is that? we inquire. Oh, the laws of nature are uniform; they never change; there can be neither breaks nor suspensions; they keep right on, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Suppose we actually know this to be the fact, (which we do not), it would not prevent or hinder God from performing supernatural operations. If he were so handicapped that he could do nothing over and above what nature does with its impersonal forces, then man, himself, is superior to the Being who made him, and would outclass him, in his achievements. If God cannot communicate with man and reveal himself to him in some special way, then man can do what God cannot do; for he can communicate with others, and reveal himself to them, and make his wants known; and, furthermore, man has a capacity for receiving divine communications; and he looks longingly towards the heavens for recognition in his needs, and listens to hear a voice from the clouds, which shall address his soul. But God is so entangled and
shackled with the natural order of things that he must remain dumb and speechless. He cannot even recognize the capacity he has given man for receiving communications; and thus negatives and stultifies himself at the very center of his handiwork. It is a strange conclusion to reach, that God has less freedom in the use of power than man has. It is very singular, that what is possible with man is impossible with God. Evidently Christ made a mistake when he said, “All things are possible with God.”

Certain methods are employed in the treatment of the supernatural. One method of treatment is, to deny that there is any such thing as the supernatural. There are men who tell us that what we call God is only nature. He is sometimes spoken of as the Great Nature, spelled with capitals. On this theory, the supernatural has disappeared and nature is all and is from everlasting. This is materialism, which recognizes nothing but nature going on in its invariable sequences of causal dependence, from all eternity. According to materialism, there is nothing in the universe but matter and force, in different modes of existence. As one materialist has it, “the world is made of atoms and
ether, and there is no room for ghosts." Another modestly says, "The world, to-day, is without mysteries!" By this he would have us understand that there is nothing in existence, from the crystalization of a diamond to the character of a saint, which cannot be investigated and explained by means of a crucible, a blow-pipe, a microscope, and a few other tools. Still another affirms that he has searched the heavens through and through with his telescope, and can find no God. An old farmer once answered this argument, by saying, "I have searched my sack of meal, through and through, and can find no miller." Virchow, one of the greatest scientists that the world has known, says: "Of all kinds of dogmatism, the materialistic is the most dangerous, because it denies its own dogmatism and appears in the garb of science; because it professes to rest on fact, when it is but speculation; and because it attempts to annex territories to natural science, before they have been fairly conquered." Materialism denies the existence of the supernatural, but it flies in the face and eyes of the facts of man's personality, which cannot be reached and explained by the tools of a chemical laboratory.
It annexes the territory of personality before it has conquered it.

Another method of treatment of the supernatural is, to deny that God has made a revelation of himself in Jesus Christ and the Scriptures. The attitude in this case is very different from that of materialism. Men who hold this view do not wish to deny the existence of God, or the fact of a future life, or the essentials of Christian morality. In not a few cases, they strongly uphold these truths—maintain them to be the true natural religion, in opposition to revealed. Jesus was a good man, probably the best man that ever lived upon the earth. But Jesus was not the Son of God, in any peculiar sense. He was the Son of God as other men are, only somewhat truer to the type. He was never sent into the world by the Father, as declared in the Gospels. The Gospels are simply a literature that was accumulated among an earnest people, but are in no sense a revelation of God's purpose to the world. The author of Robert Elsmere is an example of this class of thinkers. She does not admit even the possibility of a miracle. God can make no special revelation of himself. To be sure, God is a
supernatural being, but he makes no display of it. God is a person, but he acts as if he were impersonal. He utters no voice for mankind; he has no message for his creatures other than that which is gathered from nature. He never inspired a prophet, or endowed an apostle with his Spirit. There is no supernatural Christianity. Whatever religion we have, we derive from nature. Nature is the source and spring of all our thoughts of God and of duty. Whatever language God has for man is indirect, through nature. There is no direct communication between God and man.

Now the remarkable thing about all this is, that many persons of this type of thinking have discovered a religion which is very beautiful. It is essentially Christian in all its main features. All the humanities which Christianity knows anything about are designated and emphatically recommended. Men are to be good and pure, to love the right and hate the wrong, and live the unselfish life. And when God is spoken of, he is clothed with warm and gracious attributes. We are made to understand that he is a very lovely being. Now the question arises, How did they come by this beautiful religion? How did
they obtain this wonderful information concerning human duty and the character of God? The answer forthcoming would be that they derived their ideas from nature. They would say, "There is nothing supernatural about all this; there is no revelation and cannot be; we have been studying the forces and movements in nature, and watching the action and reaction of things; and from these we have derived our rich and voluminous conclusions concerning life and destiny." Let me give you a truer account of the origin of this data of religion. They picked these doctrines out of the New Testament, either consciously or unconsciously. What they call "Natural Religion" has been re-enforced by breathing an atmosphere surcharged with spiritual thoughts and ideas, which had a supernatural origin; and these they have appropriated, without giving credit. It is a case of plagiarism on a large scale. And if their lot had been cast in a land, or a world, where they were left absolutely to their own wits to find out, through nature alone, moral and religious truth, they would have exhibited the same blindness and superstition which are everywhere found in places where the light of the Gospel has not
spread. What kind of a being is God, if he has no other voice for humanity than that which is echoed in the material world which he has created? How shall we regard him if he has so shut himself out, by natural law, from direct contact with the spirits that seek him, that he can neither speak to them, answer their prayers, help them in trouble, nor even reach them by inward communications? What shall we think of him, if he remains self-enclosed, impassive, uncommunicative towards his creatures, made in his own image? I will tell you the kind of God we have with these premises: he is a silent God! And a silent God is not one whose attributes are warm and gracious. He cannot be a God of love; he cannot be a father in any sense which lends attractiveness to the name. How can love be silent? How can a father remain in icy stillness and impassiveness when his children are crying for help? A silent God! The eternal hills are silent until the winds moan about their crests, and then they seem to return answer to the wail. But a silent God may be acted upon by the sighs and tears of ten thousand hungering, yearning hearts, and he is silent still. If God is deaf and dumb to hu-
man need, what better are we than orphans, unprotected, uncared for, unloved, by the hand that made us? The truth about God is this: he so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that he might give us eternal life. The God that really is, breaks the silence and enters into fellowship with his children. Let us not have such hard and fast notions about the supernatural, that we virtually banish God from his own world, and from his own offspring. Paul tells us that there are things natural and things spiritual; things earthly and things heavenly. That empty tomb from which came forth the risen Lord, speaks volumes in confirmation of the fact that the natural world does not embrace all that is. It declares that we are in touch with supernatural verities; that the heavenly enswathes us and wraps us round. Do you realize what an uplift it is for us to entertain a sense of the supernatural, to have the thought that God knows us, cares for us, loves us, and that the heavenly world is as real as the natural? I have often been surprised to find how utterly blank and empty, to some individuals, everything seems beyond the sphere of the senses. They live as though what we call the natural world is
the bound and limit of all things. The practical working of their thought is that everything is here and nothing beyond. They may have an abstract theory that embraces more; but in their every-day view of things there is no vision of the supernatural. There are those who lay their loved ones away, and then think of them as dead, beyond recall, as non-existent, and not as living in the power of the resurrection life. What a tremendous loss to the joy of living is incurred by letting the supernatural become an empty word!

When death came to our Lord, it was not the end of life, but only an event in life. It did not close his being; it was only an experience which that being underwent. Instead of being what men had feared it was, what men had hardly dared to hope that it was not,—the putting out of life—it was seen to be only the changing of the circumstances of life, without any real power over the real principle of life; any more than the cloud has power over the sun, that it obscures; or the ocean has power over the bubble of air that it buries fathoms deep, whose buoyant nature it cannot destroy, nor hinder from struggling towards, and sometime reaching
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to the surface of the watery mass that covers it.

As death was but an event in his life, so it is but an event in our lives. It is an experience, not an end of life. Life goes on through it, and comes out unharmed.

But some one says, this event, that we call death, constitutes a tremendous crisis in our life. It seems to break the continuity of things. No trace of life is left behind. The spirit has departed. But what is spirit, what is soul, when no longer clothed with the garment of flesh? Is it more than a dream, a shadow, a phantom? Is there anything of personality belonging to it? Does a man know himself, after the crisis, that we call death, is passed? Has he the same person as before? What says our hope, begotten by the resurrection of Jesus Christ? There is a resurrection of the dead; and the central idea of the resurrection is identity. If there is a natural body, says the great apostle, there is also a spiritual body. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." A body! not a phantom, not an unsubstantial thing, not a rare and subtile ghost, but a body! The spirit is clothed upon with a body! And that means
not only continuity of life, but identity of life. The chasm is bridged, and the person passes to the other side, with all his intellectual, moral and spiritual belongings; and these are provided with a medium for expression which is even better suited for its end than the earthly body, which is left to return to ashes.

Thus, the man is the same man after as before the experience of death. He is the same man that once talked with you, and planned with you, and sat at your table and gave to you the wealth of his affection; and this earthly environment, in which he once lived so tenderly and happily, is not forgotten by him. What a hope is this! What a mighty power to calm our fears and make us men! I know men may claim to have this hope, and then live on like dogs. I know men may claim to have it, and yet be slaves and cowards. The truth is, the hope is not theirs. When a man really has it, it makes him free. It breaks his tyrannies. It prepares him to undertake works that he cannot finish before the sun goes down. He forms plans of self-culture, or the development of truth, far too vast for the earthly life of any Methuselah to finish; and yet he smiles calmly and works
on, when men tell him that he will die before his work is done. Die! Shall not the sculptor sleep a hundred times before the statue he begins to-day is finished, and wake a hundred times, more ready for work, bringing to his work the strength and the visions that have come to him in his slumber? Die! What is death to this man but a shadow of a coming, greater life, in which shall be fulfilled the visions and ideals which he had in this life! And why should he act now like a poor, timid, limited, temporary thing, not daring to begin to chisel his marble, for fear he will not be able to finish the statue in this life?

There is no vague mysticism about the "prac-
tice of immortality." It does not suggest an exist-
ence of dreams and shadows. John Wesley was asked one morning, how he would live if he knew that he was living the last day of his life? Wesley answered that he would not change his plans in the least. "I would fulfill my numerous appointments. I would preach in the chapel in the forenoon, meet my Bible class at two o'clock, attend a funeral at four, and preach to my people in the evening. And then, after the last duty was performed, I would com-
mit my soul to God, go to bed, fall asleep, and wake up in glory.” This is the practice of immortality—the practice of duty, day by day.
WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY

(AND OTHER THEMES)
WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY

(AND OTHER THEMES)

One of the latest discoveries of modern science will help us to illustrate and enforce the necessity of being in tune with God, in order to hear his voice and understand his words. In wireless telegraphy, as perfected by Marconi, one of the most important features is the tuning of each receiver to its own transmitter, so that it will respond to it alone. The tuning of the receiver to the transmitter is determined by the pitch of frequency with which certain electric waves pass through the ether. If, for instance, the transmitter radiates 500,000 vibrations a second, the receiver must be tuned to take messages at 500,000 vibrations. According to the same principle, a tuning fork will respond only to another tuning-fork having exactly the same number of vibrations per second. A piano must be in tune in order to get music from it. In this case the vibrations of each key may not be
the same, but they must be multiples of the same, so that vibrations of the different keys will coincide. If this arrangement of tuning were not necessary, so that a message could be sent by wireless telegraphy, whether the transmitter and receiver were in tune or not, there would be no such thing as secrecy in transmitting a message; the message would be as liable to be caught by one receiver as another. But it is the law of wireless telegraphy that the receiver and transmitter must be in tune, and consequently the message goes to that receiver and none other. Why is it then that one man does not, and another man does hear the voice of God, in nature, through conscience and the Bible? It is the difference in the receiving apparatus. The one is attuned to the transmitter; the other is not. In a thousand ways, God is transmitting his thoughts to the world; and he who is attuned to his Maker will understand these messages, and enjoy the sacred intimacies of divine friendship.

A wonderful feature of the Marconi transmitter is, that nothing can intercept or obstruct the ethereal waves set in motion by it. They will pass through mountains as easily as
through an electric wire. They break down all barriers in their onward movement; nothing can hinder or divert them.

A man attuned to God can hear God's voice anywhere. There is no barrier that can interrupt or intercept the message. In the press of the multitude, amid the noise of traffic, at the bench, in the market-place, as well as in the sanctuary, God speaks to him and he hears, not with the ear of sense, but with the inner ear of the soul, which is responsive to the divine utterance, because it is tuned to its vibrations. Marconi found it a very difficult and delicate process in tuning the transmitter to the receiver, so that there would be exact correspondence. It takes something of an expert to tune even a violin so that it will have the concert pitch. The strings are stretched to the breaking point in order to make them tuneful. To have the pitch and tone of Christ in our lives, is fraught with some difficulties. It may be, there is not a person on earth who is exactly in tune with God, so that the harmony is complete. We may regard ourselves as in process of tuning. The discords are gradually being taken out of life. The strings of our ill-sorted nature
are being streached sometimes to the breaking point in order to get the proper pitch. God is preparing us for perfect music hereafter.

ANTE-MORTEM RELIGION

Religion is something more than a nod of recognition to be given to Jesus Christ on our way to the realm unseen—more than an admission ticket to be handed in at the door of heaven.

There are people enough who believe in what might be called a post-mortem religion. They have great admiration for a religion of the shroud, a religion of the coffin, a religion of the hearse, and a religion of the cemetery, but, apparently, no appreciation of a religion for the bank, for the factory, for the warehouse, for the jeweler's shop and the broker's office. A great number of men scarcely ever attend any religious service, except a funeral service. I ask one of these men to attend church and he replies, "I do not go to church; but I go to funerals."

What sort of an idea of the Christian religion does a man have who keeps himself away from the sanctuary and confines his attention to mortuary occasions? The man who side-tracks
the Christian religion, is doomed to be a subordinate in the great affairs of the world. Do you know that there has never been a chief justice of the United States, who has not been a Christian man? Along the whole line, from Jay to Fuller, there has not been an exception. Every one of these great men, without a single departure, has been a member of some church, and he intended to be.

Religion is, largely, an ante-mortem affair. What you are and what you are doing in this world, determines what you will be in the world to come. May I tell you some things to do? Pray in secret, at least once a day. How it lifts a man out of the dust and smoke of life, to raise his thoughts, even for a moment, to the Father of his spirit! Read at least one chapter in the Bible every day. We do not go to this arsenal frequently enough, for the weapons with which to engage in the warfare of life. You will find something there for every emergency. Attend religious services regularly, not spasmodically. Remember that an empty pew has a depressing effect on all concerned. Give systematically, joyfully and generously. Subscribe, at least, for one religious paper and read it. Desire earn-
estly to be the means of saving some one who is out of Christ. Forsake every habit that stands between the soul and its larger growth in Christ. Test every amusement by the standard —does it help or hinder growth in Christ?

DOING RELIGIOUS THINGS AUTOMATICALLY

A distinguished psychologist has written that the great thing in all education is, to make the nervous system our ally instead of our enemy. What he calls the nervous system, the Scriptures would call heart. What does he mean by making our nervous system our ally? He would have us understand that the nervous system can be so educated that the path of least resistance will be in the direction of doing things that are good and useful.

The heart can be educated into desiring and loving the things of the kingdom of God. When the psychologist says, "we must make automatic and habitual, as early as possible, as many useful actions as possible," he refers to education in schools. But the principle is not limited to this branch of education; it applies, with equal pertinency and force, to religious education.
I wonder how many of our religious actions have taken on the automatic and habitual characteristic, so that pain comes from their non-performance, so that the cross has become our ally, so that not bearing it is the hardship. The great point is, that the doing of these things should begin in childhood. The presence of children in the church should begin as early as possible, that their church-going may become automatic and habitual. They should be so educated that the pain comes, not in going to church, but in not going.

We should educate ourselves in acts of benevolence until they become automatic and habitual. Our nervous system should be in such fine condition that it has become our ally instead of our enemy when an offering is to be made to the great missionary societies. That is, the pain of the thing ought to be entirely eliminated and succeeded by the pleasure of giving.

THE SECRET OF A STABLE MINISTRY

There is nothing that saves the decline of appreciation like better preaching. Here is the secret of a stable ministry, which, I believe, is no secret to you. Grow, my brother. There
is nothing that we are more interested in than a thing that grows, whether it be a plant in the garden, or a tree in the forest, or a minister in a parish. When a tree stops growing, we say, Why cumbereth it the ground? Cut it down. When a minister stops growing, we say, Why cumbereth he the parish? Release him. Some people want a new minister every year or two. They would not, if they could, secure a growing man. A growing minister is not the same man, from year to year, except in his personality. The people are having something new every year, with a growing pastor. Their thirst for a new deal in the ministry is quenched in the fact that things, new and old, are dealt out to them from the pulpit. If you want to give your people the benefit of a new minister, grow, my brother, grow! and again I say, grow! Grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Grow in the knowledge of the Scriptures and their interpretation. Grow in the love of your work in the ministry. Grow in your love for the people to whom you minister. Grow into the spirit of your Master, and find all your blessedness in his service!
PUBLIC OPINION THE REAL HEAD OF ANY CITY

A good government in our cities ultimately means a good government at Washington. A bad government in our cities ultimately means a bad government at Washington. As is the city, so will be the nation.

What is the municipal problem? It relates to an honest, non-partisan administration of affairs; to the execution of the laws, as we find them on our statute-books; to the suppression of vice and crime, and to the bringing about a condition in which the path of right doing shall be made easy, and the path of wrong doing shall be made hard. In what direction shall we look for the solution of this problem? Who are ultimately responsible for the good or bad condition of a city?

When you diagnose a disease, you not only want to tell what is the matter, but what is the cause. In the work of civic reform, we sometimes imagine that we have done all that can be done, when we have located the disease. It is a greater thing to know the cause that makes possible a bad condition. We say there ought to be a different state of things; it is imperative
that we begin civic house-cleaning. But where
shall we begin, with the broom and scrubbing
brush? Where shall we make the first applica-
tion of soap and water? Some would say, give
it to the men in authority. Let them receive a
good raking and combing down. It is possible,
by this method, that a few hairs might be
straightened out from the tangled and matted
locks. But, after all, the main trouble is not
with the city government that happens to be
in power.

You stand by a roily creek and dip roily
water with a leaky bucket. Under these condi-
tions, your effort is somewhat protracted before
you obtain pure, clear water fit for drinking
purposes. You would better go up to the
spring, at the head of the roily brook and drive
out the herd of swine that are stirring up all
the fuss. If our municipal creek is running
roily water, we must go to the fountain at the
head of the muddy stream, and stop the foolish-
ness that is going on there. In other words,
we must purify citizenship by driving out the
cowardice and selfishness and indifference,
which, like swine, are mussing up all our pure
conceptions of civic life.
As citizens, we try to make it too easy for ourselves. We think, if we have good laws, a good city charter, and a good working system of government, it is safe to return to the peaceful pursuits of life, and leave the administration to take care of itself. But merely good laws and good city charters will not do. They do not, necessarily, produce a good city government. I understand that St. Louis has an almost perfect city charter; but the perfection of the charter has not insured the perfection of its municipal government. A bad city government has existed, again and again, in connection with an almost perfect city charter.

A good city government is wholly dependent, at any given time, upon the integrity, vigor and executive ability of the administration. If you are to have a clean city government, the men who administer it must be clean. But, how are you to get clean men to administer it? Certainly by the majority of citizens voting for clean men. Hence everything turns on the kind of citizenship which prevails.

Let me tell you something. The real head of any city is public opinion. And by public opinion I do not mean an inert, laggard, dormant
public opinion, but an aggressive, irritating, pungent public opinion, that uses needle-guns all along the line, when things begin to go wrong. The only real competitor that Almighty God has for the dominion of the world, is public opinion. Back of all the empires, and under all thrones, and around all city governments, and in all public laws, is the force of public opinion, which, in the end, asserts its supremacy. The unwritten law of England is public opinion; and it is more predominant and regnant than Edward VII himself. In the long run, public opinion determines what can, and what cannot be done. But it is an active, alert, vigilant and resourceful public opinion. It is the public opinion that reaches the ear of men in authority, and calls them down when their ways become crooked.

We live in an age when we think mechanism can do about everything that needs to be done; that it can even produce a good city government. We adopt the Australian ballot, we obtain voting machines, we secure a Primary Election law, and now, we say, we have perfected things; we have nothing more to do but touch the button and this beautiful machinery
will turn out the delightful product of good government. We leave our duties of citizenship to mechanism, which our ingenuity has invented. We go back home, and attend strictly to business. In the meantime, every thief, every saloon-keeper, every gambler, and everybody with a hatchet to grind, and everybody that wants a contract, and everybody that wants to rob the public, begins to swarm around the city government, clamoring for recognition. They get in their work; and corruption follows. We find, alas, that mechanism is no substitute for morals. The solution of the problem of municipal government must be found in men—men of character, men of intelligence. It will be what our citizenship is, as voiced by public opinion. The city may be full of good men, and yet all sorts of vice and corruption may prevail in the city, for the reason that the opinions of good men are not voiced.

What avail is public opinion, when it is shut up in our thoughts, and packed away in our sentiments, when it burrows in our ideals, and gets in no fine work, as the hydra head of evil shows itself? Given the backing of an earnest, aggressive public opinion, and there is nothing,
in the way of reform, which cannot be accomplished in the course of time. There is not a righteous law upon our statute-books, which cannot be enforced, under these conditions. How long would there remain in existence a "stall saloon," if there were a good public opinion standing around, giving the backing and moral support of the community?

The trouble is, we try to do most of our reform work at the wrong end of the line. After vice and corruption are fairly entrenched, and the results are clearly in evidence, then we open our batteries and begin a cannonade against existing evils. We fight the devil after he has thoroughly fenced and walled himself in with plenty of outworks and fortifications. What are we to do? Keep the devil in the "open" where he must contend without breastworks. Keep him "on the jump," so that he will not be certain of any local habitation. This can be done only where there is an aroused public sentiment which does not simply scent mischief in its results, but in its causes. Our chief business is not to scold the powers that be, and rain invectives upon them; it is to castigate the civic conscience of the community, and make it
distressed and ashamed at its indifference and selfishness respecting the duties of citizenship.

THE BIBLE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Mr. Justice Story said: "There has never been a period in which the common law did not recognize Christianity as lying at its foundation." How peculiar, if the law of the land is grounded in Christianity, and Christianity is taken from the Bible—that the Bible is a "sectarian book!" If the book is sectarian, then that which comes from it is sectarian; and so, the amazing conclusion is reached that the law of the land is sectarian. We have, then, the strange spectacle of grave judges administering a sectarian law and declaring that the book is sectarian from which they derive the principles on which are based their decisions.

The Bible is everywhere. The Bible is in the schools, whether it is read there or not. What English literature can be read, that is not colored, in its very fiber, by Biblical truth? Shall we rewrite our histories, our treatises on metaphysics and political economy, our very dictionaries? We shall have to, if we wish to keep the Bible out of our schools. It is in them
all. Christian principles and morals underlie our manners and customs, our thoughts and feelings, the inmost tenor of our life. But the Bible is a "sectarian book!" Then we are steeped in sectarianism, from the crown of our head to the soles of our feet. The only way to get rid of this sort of sectarianism, is to sweep the continent clean of its inhabitants and re-people it from some race that has never seen the Bible nor heard the voice of a missionary.

In the midst of a Christian civilization, let us not maintain that there is no Bible beyond that which has leaves and covers and that is the product of the printing-press.

The Bible is wrought into the very texture of American life. No science is godless; no realm of education is godless. The history of the United States is not godless. God is the God of Winthrop and Washington and Lincoln, as well as of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the God of geometry as well as of the calendar of the saints! I say again, the Bible is in the public schools, whether it is read there or not; and it cannot be kept out, for the reason that it is not a sectarian book. What kind of morality is taught our youth in
the public school? A Christian morality. They are taught a sacred regard for truth; they are taught love of country, of humanity and individual benevolence; they are taught sobriety, industry and frugality; they are taught chastity, moderation and temperance and all those virtues that are supposed to be ornaments to human society. When teachers are inculcating these virtues, they are, so far forth, teaching the Bible. They are emphasizing moral principles, which owe all their grand significance and sanction to the Bible. Let a moral precept be taught in our common schools, which is contrary to the teaching of the Bible, and the community would be shocked. The fact that the Bible is not read in some of our public schools, may be painful to many of us; but the Bible is too large a book to be stopped by any such exclusion. You cannot bar its influence; you cannot hinder its power. Put up your little embankments and say, "Thus far and no farther;" and it will sweep down upon them, overflow them and spread out into a wide sea, a boundless ocean.
TROUBLE

AN INCIDENT IN LIFE TO OVERCOME
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AN INCIDENT IN LIFE TO OVERCOME

Far back in the history of the human race, the sad philosophy that "man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward," had become established. Adown the centuries, this statement has been preached from every pulpit, declared in every family, published in every form of Christian literature, because, when it is affirmed that man is born unto trouble, we have not only a fact stated, but a doctrine announced. It is much as if it were said, trouble belongs to the warp and woof of things. But, is it true? Is there no happy man to stand up and say, No, this is a mistake; I have had no trouble; my days have been days of laughter and mirthfulness and festival; a summer life has been mine, without one touch or breath of chill and cruel winter; everything has been smooth and unruffled, since I drew my first breath? Such a man has not yet been born.

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The truth is, man is not completely strong anywhere. He never built a house that time did not unroof, that time did not take down. He never built a ship that God's great sea could not swallow up like a pebble. He never made a chronometer that keeps pace with the sun—exactly, astronomically, punctually; his poor chronometer is always falling out of beat, is always in need of survey and repair. Whatever man does—what he builds, what he writes, what he invents—has upon it the seal of trouble; there is always a defect somewhere.

We might be glad to find a man who had discovered a Bible that says man is not born unto trouble; who would tell us that he had found a nation all young, all happy, all moving and living in the spirit of music. Until that nation is discovered, we abide in the rock of our own experience, we stand in the sanctuary of what we ourselves have known and felt and handled.

What man calls his progress is but a series of self-amendments. Why not face these facts, and search into their origin? If it be science to take some little stone back, in its geological history, until its origin is discovered, it cannot be other than a greater science to take back
some human emotion, some sad, awful human experience, and trace it to the starting-point.

It has been taught that all trouble comes from sin, as a punishment for disobedience. This can hardly be true; from the connection between the two cannot always be traced. On one occasion, as Jesus passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth. His disciples asked him, saying, "Rabbi, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither did this man sin, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." There is no doubt that sin is the greatest troubler in the world; and if it were blotted out, such a change would take place that we should scarcely recognize we were living on the same planet. Yet there is trouble for the good as well as for the bad. "The wages of sin is death;" but the wages of righteousness is not always exemption from loss, pain and disappointment.

There is trouble of some sort in every house. Talmage was once passing down a city street, in company with a merchant who knew all the finest houses on it. The merchant said, "There is something the matter in all these
houses. In this one, it is conjugal infelicity; in that one, it is a dissipated son. In this one, it is a dissolute father; in that, an idiot child; and in the other the prospect of bankruptcy." And, probably, we could go through the streets of our own city, or town, and say there is something the matter in every house; there is some trouble there.

In many of our homes, death has cast its shadow; there is the vacant chair; the lips that once spoke words of tenderness and love are sealed. We cannot call them back. The child that played at our feet, and brought sunshine to all our hopes, has passed from our sight, and mingles with those in bright array on the other shore. Such sorrows are inevitable; they belong to the course of nature; they are part and parcel of a human experience that is universal. To escape from trouble we would have to escape from existence; for it is here and there and everywhere. Since this is the fact, how can we doubt that God intended we should live in a world where there are to be found all these varied experiences of pains, hardships, losses and disappointments? Moreover, ought we not to consider that this is the very best sort of a
world for us, and that any other arrangement would be to our harm and disadvantage?

An earnest and brilliant thinker has lately said: "If I had my life to live over again, and if I were given the choice to accept it, from infancy to old age, without a disappointment, the shadow of a loss, a hurt or a pain, I would not dare to take life on such terms; I would rather say, 'Give me such life as the universe offers, with its strange vicissitudes, with its summer and winter, its shadows and sunshine, its bitter-sweet of sorrow mingled in its cup. If the raising of my hand would save those whom I love most from all pain throughout eternity, I would not dare to raise my hand. What comes to all, what is universal, I believe is not evil, but good.'"

What constitutes the real and full life? Our Longfellow says, "Not enjoyment and not sorrow, is our destined end and way." What is it, then? It is life wrought out through achievement. And there is no achievement without the confronting and overcoming of obstacles. A life would be utterly colorless and dull, that moved so smoothly and frictionless that it attained success without a struggle. It is life con-
tending under pressure and difficulties, and fin-
ally emerging and proving itself superior to all obstructions in the way, that is entitled to honor, and a place in the gallery of heroes. And this is the only sort of life that brings satisfac-
tion to the soul of man himself. The highest delight which we can have is that which comes through achievement. What was the particular delight of the great engineers who carried the Canadian Pacific Railroad across the Rocky Mountains? Was it the pay and the applause? I think not. They would have chosen to do their work if they had barely received a living out of it, or even if the praise went to the wrong persons. Their delight was not merely in cut-
ting through loose gravel or pushing their way over easy levels. No! The great engineers' special joy is in overcoming difficulties, in solv-
ing hard problems, in expressing all the power, courage, intelligence, genius, that they possess, in a splendid piece of human service. Show them steep cliffs, deep canons, roaring mountain torrents, quicksands and bogs, to be tunneled and bridged and filled, and their mastery of these is their delight.

So the divine life-power in man takes every
TROUBLE

material of experience—difficulties, losses, opposition, pain, as well as successes, praise, favor and joy—and weaves all into a beautiful harmony. What is the achievement in this case? What is the beautiful harmony secured? It is love, or good will. The divinest power of this world is to give expression to love or good will. It is a great thing to tunnel mountains and bridge canons; but it is a greater and grander thing to encounter trials, oppositions and sorrows; and, finally, to master them, emerging from them with a life purified, sweetened, and expressing itself in love and good will. When we speak of those whose life is soured and embittered, we simply mean those who have had trouble and been mastered by it. Instead of overcoming the trial, the trial overcame them. They did not consider, that losses and disappointments are a part of the program of this life. It was their philosophy that these things "ought not to be." Hence, when the trouble came they hugged it, carried it with them, brooded over it, until all the sweetness of their life was turned into bitterness.

What a disaster to any man, to allow trouble to monopolize his thoughts and feelings! The
man is not his full self when trouble becomes weakness as well as pain to him; he is but half a man, or less than half; his faculties are clouded, his hands have lost their cunning, his whole system feels the influence of the trouble that fills his vision and occupies his attention. Man was made to be bigger than any trouble. But when it comes to pass that the trouble is bigger than the man, it is not on account of some inexorable necessity, but because he has suffered it to be so. How often we fall down before little troubles, little disappointments, and become paralyzed by them! We can’t do anything now; we give right up; and that which interested us once interests us no more. This is weakness, not strength; it is folly, not wisdom.

Some one aptly describes the people who go around full of cynical criticism, and finding a rotten spot in life’s sweetest joys, as “the Knights of the Sorrowful Figure.” We ought to keep out of the company of the Knights of the Sorrowful Figure. The disciples of Jesus have no right to go about in any such masquerade. It is not a fancy or a dream, but the real truth, that there is always a bright side to life, and to every experience in life; and the bright
side is the right side, the side where God is. There is no sorrow so dark but you may delve out from under it, if you will keep your face toward the light, and dig with a courageous heart.

In talking about trouble, we should always talk about its mitigations. Is it possible that there can be a life, anywhere, on which some beam of sunshine does not fall? We are not talking now about the insane, or those who suffer from increasing and continued melancholy, but about the general average of human life; and, so speaking, we can always find, in the hardest lot, some mitigation of the burden, some compensation for the heavy darkness or difficulty. An incident that happened on a railway train is illustrative. A woman clad in deep mourning entered the cars and took a seat just in front of an inquisitive-looking, sharp-faced female. The woman in black had not been seated long, before she felt a slight tap on the shoulder and heard her neighbor ask, in a low, sympathetic tone, "Lost anybody?" A silent nod was the response. A slight pause, and then a second question, "Child?" A low shake of the head, in the negative, was the answer. "Parent?" A
similar reply, a low shake of the head in the negative. "Husband?" This time a slight nod in the affirmative. "Life insured?" A nod in the affirmative. "Experienced religion?" Another nod in the affirmative. Then: "Well, well, cheer up! Life insured and experienced religion; you are all right, and so's he!" This may seem too practical a way of imparting comfort to the sorrowful; and yet the general trend of the argument is correct. We should look out for the mitigations. Instead of arguing from the difficulty, we should argue from the strength which is able to bear the difficulty, in some degree. Instead of looking at the dark side of things we should accustom ourselves to look at the bright side of things, the side where God is.

How important to get into our minds that this is God's world! And since it is God's world, there is no need of fear or anxiety. There is nothing which ever befalls you, or those whom you love, which may not be so handled as to be translated into beauty and good. Human experiences of every sort become so much material for good. All trouble is subject to this translation. This is the law.
The darkest passages in life become radiant as we turn our faces toward the Sun of righteousness.

A ship which arrived in New York from Rio de Janeiro, brought, in the captain's cabin, a pair of canaries from Rangoon. They were both fine singers, the quality, as well as the range of their notes, being extraordinary; but the distinguishing characteristic of these songsters was, that they always sang at night. The Lord would make of us such canaries. He would have us, like Paul and Silas in the dungeon at Philippi, able to sing songs of hope and courage and victory in the darkest night of trial. It is these songs in the night that give the most effective testimony to the power and worth of our religion. What does our religion amount to if, falling under disappointment, we lose our faith and join the ranks of the Knights of the Sorrowful Figure? Disappointment is a thread to be woven into a beautiful pattern, bearing the stamp of love and good will.

Brussels is a city of lace-shops. There the most splendid patterns of lace are spun in darkened rooms; the only admitted light is let in through a very small window, where it falls
directly on the pattern. When shall we understand that human lives can be worked out in the loveliest figures only by the aid of shadows? When will every wise soul sing out of a full heart,

"I thank Thee more, that all my joy
Is touched with pain;
That shadows fall on brightest hours,
That thorns remain;
So that earth's bliss may be my guide,
And not my chain"?

When shall we learn that pain, losses, disappointments are only the incidents of life; that the note of life is not sorrow or fear; that life is blended of many notes and voices; that joys and sorrows, toil and rest, alternate; and that the key-note of life rises out of the whole? And what is this key-note? It is not a wail of grief; it is not a bitter cry; it is musical, sweet, beautiful; a clarion call. It is a paean of victory; it tells a love story, and is joy.

All around us are those who need the uplift of strong, joyous spirits. What is more depressing than the man who goes about sounding a discouraging note, who is continually looking upon the dark side of things, and talking about it?
TROUBLE

We never should forget that our spiritual atmosphere helps to mold the character of others, every day, by discouraging or encouraging and inspiring them. To do the most good, we must present, both in our conversation and life, the bright and courageous side of things. We are not only to act as those who are living in God's world and have nothing to fear, but we are to talk, hopefully and encouragingly, to show that our lives are not set in darkness, but in the light of Christ's life.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox illustrates this thought very clearly in these verses:

"Talk happiness. The world is sad enough
Without your woes. No path is wholly rough;
Look for the places that are smooth and clear,
And speak of these, to rest the weary ear
Of earth, so hurt by one continuous strain
Of human discontent and grief and pain.

Talk faith. The world is better off without
Your uttered ignorance and morbid doubt.
If you have faith in God, or man, or self,
Say so; if not, push back upon the shelf
Of silence, all your thoughts, till faith shall come;
No one will grieve because your lips are dumb.

Talk health. The dreary, never-changing tale
Of mortal maladies, is worn and stale.
THE LIVING CHRIST

You cannot charm, or interest, or please,
By harping on that minor chord, disease.
Say you are well, or all is well with you,
And God shall hear your words and make them true."
REAL GOODNESS
REAL GOODNESS

On a certain occasion Jesus objected to being called good. One reason was the superficial or merely outward meaning attached to it. To say, "Good Master," was a polite salutation. It was like our saying, good afternoon, or good morning. We use the word "good" in this way, without much thought of its meaning. Another reason was the fact that God alone possesses the absolute Good. God is what others become.

Human goodness is a growth, even when there is no imperfection. It develops, like wisdom, from childhood to youth, and then to manhood. The Master possessed this human goodness.

It was said of Jesus that he advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man. In assuming our humanity, Jesus assumed all the laws of development that belonged to our humanity. He grew in stature
and wisdom and goodness. He would not have been a man, and could not have had the experiences of a man, if he had been endowed with the absolute goodness of God. The goodness of Jesus was unique, unprecedented, without a parallel, because it was always what it ought to be in connection with the circumstances in which it was manifested. His goodness always kept pace with the knowledge and light which came to him. As he increased in wisdom, he increased in goodness, and consequently was "without sin." His goodness was not like his Father's, original, self-contained; but human, derivative, sustained by the constant reception of the Spirit bestowed from above. Therefore he refuses to accept the title in the absolute sense in which the Father is good.

The word good is very frequently upon our lips. We speak of certain men as good. Certainly we do not mean that they are good in the sense in which God is good. No man is good in the absolute sense. No man can be good to that extent; for that would involve perfectness of character, without the possibility of increase. We are growing creatures, and shall be, through the cycles of eternity, and
we shall never reach the bounds of the absolute goodness of God. No man is to blame, then, for not being as good as God is. But we can say this: the word good means the same in him and in us, else it means nothing to us. We are not to think of the goodness of God as so far above and beyond the reach of our comprehension that it becomes different from that with which we are familiar. It is not different in kind, but in degree and intensity. So far as we know anything about goodness, it is just like his.

We say more. Wherever is seen any goodness, in yourself or anybody else, under whatever form it may appear, it is but a spark and manifestation of the "Eternal Goodness" of God. Understand that your goodness is not original, but derivative. God is the fountain of it, and you are the medium, or may be the medium, through which a few drops may find an outlet. You must not think of goodness as having an independent culture and development, as flourishing whether there is a God or not.

When I see a beautiful rose in your garden, I do not need to be told that the sun has been
there with his light and warmth. I know that there would have been no rose at all, if the sun had withheld his shining. When I see the beautiful flower of goodness growing and blooming in any life, I need not be told that God has been there, with his shining and warmth.

Let us think what it means to be good—a word so often used in a conventional way, expressing certain external qualities which do not go to the heart of things. Here is a man who is law-abiding and orderly in his conduct, and we call him good. Here is a boy who makes no trouble, no mischief in school, and we call him good. Even little babies, that scarcely know their right hand from their left, are sometimes called good. "It is a good baby we have in our house." some mother says. What is meant? That the mother can put it to bed at six o'clock in the evening, and it will not wake up until seven o'clock in the morning. This fact makes a "good" baby. Feed it well and it is comfortable; and, after that, it attends strictly to the business of being good.

Then there are certain people who are re-
spectable, representing law and order, and we call them good citizens. But even good citizens, who never saw the inside of a police court, and were never called to an account for an infraction of the law, often fail to stir our hearts to any admiration. Somehow their good citizenship is not very attractive. It does not elicit applause. Why? It does not cost much to be "good" in the form in which they exhibit it. It is easier to keep within the laws than to transgress them; as it is easier to walk on a good road than to walk through a thicket. Very likely they were born and brought up in the ways of respectability, and now they can keep to them without half trying.

Curiously enough, it is possible to be all this—good, respectable, orderly, never to have fear of the police or the sheriff, and yet be mean, narrow and selfish. Here is a boy that never gets a bad mark at school, and, perhaps, stands at the head of his class. Nevertheless, he may be neither brave nor generous. What if his father has offered him the prize of a gold watch for being the first scholar? What if we think of him pushing his way to the highest rank, under the spur of such a reward? How we
would discount his scholarship, and the genuineness of his ambition!

It is for the interest of most people to obey the laws, and to be respectable. They find increased business, credit, honors and official position in being respectable. Why, indeed, should any intelligent person venture to do wrong and lose his respectable standing? But, suppose that every one could be persuaded to be good by this shrewd calculation of the profit of goodness, who would ever be satisfied with a world full of such cold-blooded virtue? As a matter of fact, we often prefer the company of certain persons who are not very good, in the conventional sense, to the company of others who are extremely orderly and proper. I have read of one Deacon Coffin, who was exceedingly rigid, exact and formal in his conduct. He himself had the impression that he embodied about every virtue. He boasted that he had not laughed for twenty years, and had snickered but once in that time. But his friends admitted that he was "so awful good" they could not live with him.

I suppose there are mothers and teachers who love their mischievous boys just about as
well as the boys who never need a word of blame. They do not love and admire them for their mischief, but because there is in them a gleam of life and reality. There is an exuberance or overflow of spirits; there are sincerity and generous abandon. The "Deacon Coffins," shut up within the reservations of their egoism, or their superior caste, give us no touch of real, joyous, bountiful life. They exploit law and order for their own benefit, like the good boy, who proposes to earn a holiday with his conduct marks. Between selfish goodness, that is, merely orderly conduct, and a certain lawlessness, with moments of generosity shining out of it, we are inclined to prefer the sight of the latter, although we may not, altogether, enjoy living next door to it.

It is almost startling to read in the Gospels, how Jesus ignored the distinctions that had been drawn between the good and the bad. The Pharisees were the conventionally good people of his day. They kept the law in all strictness, and added to it their traditions, which increased the difficulty of exact conduct. Jesus dines at the Pharisees' houses; but he does not hesitate to dine with publicans and
sinners. This is an awful thing to do, in the
eyes of the Pharisees. But he, evidently, liked
them better and found them more interesting.
He was actually in closer sympathy with them
than with the respectable Pharisees. Why?
They had a certain openness and frankness and
sincerity, which were not possessed by the latter.
They were not good; they knew it, and ac-
knowledged it. The Pharisees plumed them-
selves on their goodness, and had nothing to
show for it but the shell.

We need to find a sounder and more vital
sense in the word "good." There are two things
that we do not like in this world—lawlessness,
and a conformity to law that is merely out-
ward and heartless. That is, it is not enough
to have conduct regular and orderly, unless it
springs from the depths within. There must be
discipline, or obedience, and life. Here is a
horse, for example. What is he good for, if he
throws the rider, runs away, and will not go
in the carriage, or balks at its load? On the
other hand, what is a horse good for, that has
not force and energy enough to run away, if he
had a favorable opportunity? I once knew a
man in Vermont, (a sort of Eben Holden, in
his way) who declared, one day, that his horse was slower than the growth of trees. Said he, "If the road rises an inch in a mile, he stands stock still!" In a horse, you not only want discipline, but life, force and speed.

The problem is to combine training and life. The training must not waste the life; it must develop the life so that the trained creature can do and be more than he could possibly do and be, if left to run wild.

We seek the same combination in the education of children. What are we to do with the exuberance of a child? We are not to waste one ounce of it, but turn it over, by discipline, into beauty, grace and efficiency. Show us only wild goodness—slovenly, inconstant, impatient, blundering—and then show us trained goodness, watchful, biding its time, uncomplaining, faithful to death, generous, and who will not choose the latter?

Now I think we can see what it really is to be good, viz., to express good will, or love; to let good will, flowing from the heart of God, as if from an infinite reservoir, flow through us and use us. We are good to the extent of our love, or good will. What kind of love is good?
Any kind. Love is love, the universe through. In every act of real love, we are good, in that instance. The mother loves her child; what is that but a spark from the infinite orb of "Eternal Goodness." A friend whose love demands nothing, asks nothing, but the privilege of being kind and tender-hearted, is indeed a good friend.

I read of an engineer who went to his death with his hand on the throttle of his engine. What was that but a flashing of goodness in his soul, borne in upon him from afar? The sailor goes over the ship's side and plunges in to the rescue of perishing strangers, on a storm-tossed wreck. What is this but a gleam of the divine goodness? Every one is good, at times, in happy hours, in grand moments, when the tide of love comes flowing in upon the soul, amid the trumpet calls of duty. Why? Because, in these better moments, we carry good will in our hearts; we let our love well up into expression; we speak it, we act it; its light is in our faces; its frank fearlessness is in our hearts. And now, if we only continued such good will, reiterated such acts; if we only kept the flow of the divine cur-
rent open from the infinite reservoir, through our souls, as through a channel, then we should be living the eternal life, and should indeed share in the goodness of God.

The trouble with our goodness is not that we don't know how to be good, but that we will not be good, all the time. We know how it was in the early days of the electric light. It would shine out for a time, and then, without a moment's warning, it would leave the city in darkness. Men behave very much like the old electric light; they are good by fits and starts; but you cannot depend upon them, or know in what dark and stormy night the shining of their goodness will go out. To have good will to-day, and ill will to-morrow, is not the standard of goodness. Real goodness, belonging to character, is continuous in its manifestation. It can be depended upon; it will not fail in drouth or storm.

There is another characteristic of real goodness. It is universal in its nature. I mean, that it shines out upon all, and not merely upon a select few. With many of us there is a dark belt, where our goodness does not act; we have enemies, or think we have; we have rivals; we
have those whom we despise, or to whom we are indifferent. This is the dark belt, where our goodness does not operate. We try to cover the territory, outside of the dark belt, with our good will, it may be; but we purpose to stop when we approach the other territory. We do not intend to have our good will do business in that region. Evidently our good will does not correspond to the divine good will, which makes no distinction of persons. How was it with the Master? The greater the need, the more active and generous was his love. He poured out upon the dark belt a profusion of good will. The very men that slew him were not excluded from his love, and he pleaded for their forgiveness. Would it not be beautiful if our goodness had this all-round generosity?

Let us suppose that you had lived before the government had built lighthouses. We will suppose that your house is situated on a point which overlooks the harbor, where vessels pass and repass. Partly through kindliness, and partly through the fact that you are a shipowner yourself, you determine to keep a light in your window, to guide the sailors in dark
REAL GOODNESS

nights. We will suppose that you are familiar with all the vessels that enter the harbor in sight of your house. You know all the captains and the crews—the good ones and the bad ones—the foreigners, and your own countrymen; you know the ships in which you are interested, and those that belong to your rivals, those that are friendly and those that are unfriendly. Now, how about keeping a light in your window, during every dark night, for friend or foe? Suppose you say, this is my light, and it is kept at my own expense; and, therefore, I can do as I please with it; I can turn it on or shut it off, according to my own pleasure. The vessels that I own, and the captains I like, shall find a light in my window on every dark night. But the others must get on as well as they can, without the light. If they are wrecked, it is none of my business. I have made no engagement to supply them with light. Hence, as soon as the rival vessel appears on the horizon, you turn off your light, with the thought that no favors are to be shown to competitors. As soon as the foreign vessel comes into view, you extinguish the light, and say, I will let those Dutchmen poke their way into the har-
bor as best they can; they can't have the use of my light this night. Do you imagine that the community would be inclined to erect a monument in memory of the disinterestedness and generosity of a man who used his lantern in that way? Would you expect to find chiseled upon his tombstone the epitaph, "Here lies the dust of a good man"?

Real goodness lets its lamp shine for all, and would save from wreck its worst enemy. The one law of our life is, to turn on the light, and to keep it on. The one prayer is, that, whatever we do, we may never show ill will or self will, but only good will. Why? Because this is the divine and universal law of all spiritual life; because Christ does thus for us; and to do as he does is what every man is here for. Some one says, I have good will for my friends, but not for my enemies; as soon as they approach, I shut off the light; I do not keep my lamp shining for those who are not good to me.

Do you know that we cannot be good to those who are good to us unless the divine current of good will is turned on, once for all, and we have made up our minds to keep it on, so far as we can, forever? If our good will is
partial, and select, it will fail in some hour of darkness, where we least expect it; and its light will be extinguished in the house of our friends; and the black belt will embrace the whole area of our life. This is the tendency of circumscribing and narrowing our good will. Shut off the flow of good will in one direction, and keep a dark belt, where your lamp never shines, and you will find, as temptations assail you, that the darkness widens its range, and encroaches upon the region of light; and, finally, a dark shadow will be flung over the whole hemisphere of your life.

Keep open the floodgates of good-will and never dare close them against any one. Let this vital connection be broken, and no one is safe; no action is valid. Without good will, or love, the good becomes as bad; but with good will, the bad at once ceases to be bad, and is good. Here is the philosophy of happiness. How we puzzle over the question, "how to be happy"! We think of this thing, that thing and the other thing, to make us happy. There is just one thing to make us happy. It is good will; a good will, that carries the blessing of love and kindness to all; that penetrates the
dark belt and scatters the dark shadows by turning on the light, which is never suffered to go out.

The health of our souls rises and falls with the flow of good will in us. The joy of living is simply the output of good will. We sing as we go, as long as there is no check or hindrance to our good will to men. Good will is what unites us to God and his Christ and brings into our lives the divine current of love, which irrigates our whole being. Good will is the divine stamp which marks the children of God. The measure of good will in us, is the measure of our real goodness.
THE MANHOOD OF LINCOLN
THE MANHOOD OF LINCOLN

What was the wonderful power by which Abraham Lincoln subdued, conquered and compelled all hearts to love and respect him, and which keeps his memory as fresh and green as if he were living among us to-day? It was the manhood of the man himself—his character—what he was, in the essence of his life. We are drawn towards him, not simply by his deeds, his achievements, but by what he was in heart and soul. Napoleon was masterful in achievement, but who loves him?

Lincoln started at the lowest level. Hardly a man ever lived, whose early conditions had less of promise in them. As the picture unrolls, his abiding-places wear all the marks of poverty and destitution. In the backwoods, on the farm, by the river-bank, in the small village, his conditions are lowly. But in connection with all these lowly conditions, we discover that the young man is making strenuous efforts at self-
education. As time passes, he becomes an active, respected citizen in the new and energetic community where he lives, and is thought of as a fit representative in the legislature. In 1858, the compiler of "A Dictionary of Congress" sent a circular of inquiry to Mr. Lincoln, as a former Congressman, asking information as to his birth, education, occupation, and a list of the public offices he had filled. This was before he was the most talked about man in America, and before any one had dreamed of his becoming President. The following concise statement was returned to the compiler: "A. Lincoln. Born February 12, 1809, in Hardin County, Ky. Education, defective. Profession, a lawyer. Have been a captain of volunteers in the Black Hawk War. Postmaster at a very small office. Four times a member of the Illinois legislature. And was a member of the lower House of Congress."

The question is sometimes asked, "What made Lincoln?" The current saying is "circumstances make the man." Whether this is true or not, depends upon the man. The same circumstances do not, always, make the same kind of a man. It was, preeminently, the forces
in Lincoln that made him. If you are to explain Lincoln, you must explain the inside man.

When the inside man is what he ought to be, circumstances are of secondary consequence; that is, it does not make much difference whether they are favorable or unfavorable, hard or easy. In either case, the circumstances are utilized and made contributors to the development of the man. The hard conditions in which Lincoln found himself, at the beginning of life, became his allies instead of his enemies. It is quite probable that, in the end, they helped rather than hindered him. This simply emphasizes the fact that, to know Lincoln, we must know the inside man.

Now what was that almost indescribable quality, which belonged to this inside man, which ever seemed to be present, and which never failed to express itself in his conduct? It was what might be called, in a general way, the clearness of truth. This does not mean, simply, that he was a man who told the truth; but that truth belonged to his very nature, so that, to know the truth and do it was the very essence of his purpose. What we call pretence, subterfuge, evasion, mere acting, were as foreign to his na-
ture as light to darkness. This quality was so inherent that it found expression in every department of his nature. It appeared in the physical structure, as health, in the moral constitution, as honesty, in the mental structure, as sagacity, and in the region of active life, as practicalness. Even his physical strength and endurance as a worker, cannot be separated from his character.

It is said that most men have some disabling quality. It is not always bad health, but, more frequently, a moral deficiency. Sometimes it is conceit that spoils a man for all kinds of work; sometimes it is love of pleasure; then again it is lethargy, or an ugly temper. These are all disqualifying faults and throw a man out of a great career.

Lincoln had a prodigious faculty of performance and worked easily. Why? Because he was sound to the core, cheerful, persistent, all right for labor, and liked nothing so well. There was nothing in temper or disposition that disqualified him. Uniting strength and muscular activity with the power of enduring, which, as a backwoods boy, he inherited from generations of hard-living ancestors, full of the culture of
labor, he was able to perform tasks, under any and all conditions, which were amazing to his countrymen.

Looking now at the moral and intellectual powers which Mr. Lincoln possessed, you will find them all embraced under the general description of clearness and truth, which makes it impossible to examine them in separation. They go together; they blend. Men have sometimes asked if Mr. Lincoln was an intellectual man—as though intellect were always of the same sort, and could be precipitated from other constituents of the body, weighed by itself, and compared, in pounds and ounces, with that of another man.

The truth is, that, in the best and noblest characters, you can hardly draw the line between their moral and intellectual natures. We are unable to tell, in considering the wise acts and words which issue from such a life as Lincoln’s, whether there is more of righteousness, that comes of a clear conscience, or more of the sagacity, that comes of a clear intellect. But this combination is not found in all men. The moral life and the intellectual life do not always cooperate. They even stand over against each
other, as antagonists. Hence we come to speak of some men as intellectual, but not moral; exhibiting intelligence, but not conscience. And, finally, we entertain the melancholy notion that goodness and greatness, as we call them, are not to be looked for together; and thus we expect to see, and do see, a feeble and narrow conscientiousness on the one hand, and a bad and unprincipled intelligence on the other.

It was a great virtue in Lincoln, and a great blessing to others, that he reunited what God has joined together and man has put asunder. In him was vindicated the greatness of real goodness, and the goodness of real greatness. The twain were one flesh. That is, in respect to what he said and did you cannot tell, to-day, whether they came more from a strong head or a sound heart; whether his goodness or greatness had more to do in wisely deciding some important matter of state. The only true answer would be, that both his goodness and his greatness contributed to the judgment.

There are men who seem about as good as Lincoln; but they do bad things. There are men as intelligent as he; yet they do foolish things. He combined intelligence and goodness, and their best result was wisdom.
THE MANHOOD OF LINCOLN 249

After all these years of scrutiny and criticism, it would be a heavy task for a historian to lay his hands on any bad things that Lincoln did while at the head of this nation; by bad things I mean things involving selfishness or wrong of any sort; and it would be just as hard to point to any foolish things that he did. He sometimes made mistakes, for he was not infallible; but he was first to make the correction.

Truth was the very quintessence of his spirit. "Honest old Abe," was neither a fictitious nor ironical title. When applied to him, it expressed exactly what men who came in close contact with him thought of him. To question his honesty would be like questioning the most patent fact of physical vision. In his great "Cooper Institute" speech, he made use of an expression that revealed the man. "Let us have faith, that right makes might; and, in that faith, let us, to the end, dare to do our duty, as we understand it." And what is right, but truth carried out into practical relations? Nothing could drive him from the path of right, when he saw that it expressed the truth of his position. After he issued the emancipation proclamation, there was no power on earth that could lead him
to retract or modify it. His whole nature was up in arms against the suggestion of retraction. Said he, "There have been men base enough to ask me to return to slavery our black warriors of Port Hudson and Olustee; thus to win the respect of the masters they fought. Should I do so, I should deserve to be damned, in time and eternity. Come what will, I will keep my faith with friend and foe."

Let us observe, now, how Lincoln, by his character, has become the type-man of our country. Lowell has called him the "first American." What is it to be an American, in the true sense? It does not mean simply, to be born in America. An American, in the sense in which Lincoln may be regarded as the first American, is one whose character is developed under the discipline of freedom. By freedom, we do not mean such freedom as is found in various parts of the world under aristocratic and despotic forms of government, but such as is involved and proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence; and, according to Lowell, Lincoln was first to take that immortal document to heart, make it the creed of his life and maintain it and hold it, consistently, in all its logical bearings.
THE MANHOOD OF LINCOLN 251

What determines the place of man, under the discipline of that freedom vouchsafed in the Declaration of Independence? Certainly, no outward restraints can deprive a man of his place; for every man has a right to be all that he can be, wherever he is, in this land of freedom. Suppose we take this to be our idea of freedom, under our form of government; every man has a right to be all that he can be; that is, he has a right to the fruit of all the possibilities of his nature, so far as this fruit is the achievement of well-doing. Well-doing, then, becomes the measure of a man, under the discipline of freedom, as interpreted by the Declaration of Independence. In determining, then, whether a man is an American or not, we do not ask, where he is born, or what is his pedigree; we are not concerned whether he first saw light in a hovel, or a palace, in the wilderness or in the town. We simply ask, is he one who believes that a man has a right to be all that he can be, by well-doing? This is the principle by which we may test our Americanism; and this is precisely the Americanism that Lincoln represented.

There are indications, here and there, that
people are entertaining quite un-American ideas. Let us see. Every man has a right to be all that he can be, socially, by well-doing. Booker T. Washington was once invited to dine with the president; and it raised a perfect storm of protest, in a certain section of the country. Why should it be such a grave offence for Mr. Washington to break bread with the president? Anything the matter with his character? Anything the matter with his education? Anything the matter with his ability? No! In respect to these things, he is the peer of almost any man in the state where he lives. But—and here is the awful disgrace of the thing—his face is colored. And because his face is colored, he must not be allowed to be all he can be, socially, though he is, in a way, the prince of educators in the South. Americans are not those who make nothing of well-doing, and who draw the line at color. What was the crime of Mrs. Cox, the postmistress of Indianola, who fled from her home to escape the indignation of her fellow townsmen? Had she made free with the stamps and money in the post-office? Was she incompetent? Was she discourteous? Was any fault to be found with her as a postmistress? Not at all!
THE MANHOOD OF LINCOLN 253

What sent her away, in a hurry, from her native town? A crime (?) for which there was no mercy. While the blood in her veins is seven-eighths white, there mingled with it, one-eighth colored. And because of this slight tinge of color in her complexion, she is not allowed to be all that she can be, officially, though a faithful servant of the government. Let us write un-American on all such foolish and wicked prejudices! How did Lincoln treat a colored man? Let Fred Douglas, the great negro orator, answer. "Lincoln was the first great man I talked with freely, in the United States, who, in no single instance, reminded me of the difference between himself and me, of the difference in color." There is your genuine American!

-Every man has a right to be all that he can be, commercially, by well-doing. What about the Trusts, which prevent thousands of men from being all they can be commercially, either by swallowing them up, or crushing them out? Write un-American on the back and front, on the inside and outside of every Trust, which takes advantage of its power to cripple and destroy other competitors in the field!

Taking the Declaration of Independence as
our charter of freedom, every man has a right to be all that he can be in the labor world. What about that organization, then, which sometimes undertakes to tell men whether they are to be allowed to work or not, whether they are members of the organization or not, and follows them with vengeance when they keep at work after the signal is given to stop. Cover it all over, plaster it thick, with the label, un-American!

There is nothing that this country needs so much, to-day, as the Lincoln type of Americans. He was a kind of multitudinous man. What richness and fullness in his character! The elements were so mixed in him, that nature might stand up, and say to all the world, This is a man. In the time of the great crisis in our national history, our country was looking for just such a man. We did not know that we had him, at first. It took some time to find him out; but we did, at last. And what a man had we discovered! A man who was honest, and sound from center to circumference, true to the heart's core; a man whose conscience was as steady as the needle to the pole; a man who would stand for the right if the heavens tottered and the
earth reeled; a man who could tell the truth, and look the world and the devil right in the eye; a man who would neither brag nor run; a man who would neither flag nor flinch; a man who had courage without shouting to it; a man in whom the courage of everlasting life ran still, deep and strong; a man who knew his message and told it; a man who knew his place and filled it; a man who knew his own business and attended to it; a man who would neither shirk nor dodge; a man who was neither too lazy to work, nor too proud to be poor; a man who was the first typical American, and, as Grady, of the Atlanta Constitution once said, “the first who comprehended, within himself, all the strength and gentleness, all the majesty and grace of this republic.”

We are not surprised to find that this man regarded Providence as an important factor in the accomplishment of the great tasks that were laid upon him, and that he was accustomed to seek the help of the God of nations.

During the year 1862, the hopes of the North were at their lowest ebb. It was after the second battle of Bull Run had been fought and lost. McClellan was entrenched before Rich-
mond, and the strength and resources of the na-
tion seemed to have been fruitlessly wasted. Henry Ward Beecher at this time was in Broo-
lyn, and was, perhaps, more prominently asso-
ciated with the cause of the North, in those days, than any other minister of the gospel, having fought its battles in pulpit and press. Late one evening, a stranger called at his home and asked to see him. Mr. Beecher was working alone in his study, as was his usual custom. This stranger refused to send up his card, and came muffled in a military coat, which completely hid his face. Mrs. Beecher's suspicions were aroused; and she was unwilling that he should have the interview which he requested, espe-
cially as Mr. Beecher's life had been frequently threatened by sympathizers with the South. The visitor insisted, however, that he be shown up to the study of the great preacher. Accord-
ingly, the stranger was permitted to enter, the doors were shut, and for hours the wife below could hear their voices and their footsteps, as they paced back and forth. Finally, towards midnight, the mysterious stranger went out, still muffled in his cloak, so that it was impossible to gain any idea of his features. The years went
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by, the war was finished, the president had suffered martyrdom at his post; and it was not until shortly before Beecher's death, over twenty years later, that it was known that the mysterious stranger, who had called on that stormy winter night, was Abraham Lincoln. The stress and strain of those days and nights of struggle, with all the responsibilities and sorrows of a nation fighting for its life thrust upon him, had broken down his strength, and, for a time, undermined even his courage. He had traveled alone in disguise, and at night, from Washington to Brooklyn to gain the sympathy and help of one whom he knew as a man of God, engaged in the same great battle in which he was the leader. Alone, for hours that night, the two wrestled together in prayer with the God of battles and the Watcher over the right, until they received the help which he has promised to those who seek his aid.

Lincoln went back to the great duties which awaited him with the divine assurance that the eternal God was his dwelling-place, and underneath were the everlasting arms.

And thus it comes to pass, that the last and supremest word we have to say concerning Abraham Lincoln is, that he was a man of God.
THE MOTHERHOOD OF GOD
THE MOTHERHOOD OF GOD

Our most intelligent conception of God is derived from a study of man's nature. God opened a way to a knowledge of his own nature, when he said that man was made in his likeness. Man is God in miniature—a little picture resembling God.

Revelation is full of its descriptions of God; but we always interpret these descriptions by a reference to his image, man. We determine the meaning of God's love by considering what love is in man—love in its noblest and highest manifestations. If we were told that God is love, but altogether different from any love with which we are familiar, we would remain in total ignorance of God's character. If divine knowledge, divine patience and divine love are things of which we can form no conception, if they are widely separated from anything with which we are familiar, then these epithets, applied to God's character, have no meaning for us. It is nothing
to us that God is said to be compassionate, if
his compassion bears no likeness to human
compassion.

We like to look at the photograph of some
distinguished individual. Our active imagina-
tion begins, at once, to fill it out. In the mind's
eye, the little man in the picture is expanded
to life size. We clothe him with all the charac-
teristics that belonged to him as a living being.
We try to conceive of him as he is in real life.
We so exalt the little image, a thousand times
less than the original, that when, at last, we are
permitted to behold the real man himself, we
say, immediately, "Oh, I have seen that man be-
fore; I have his picture."

It is by some such process that we obtain our
conception of God. All the noblest ideas in the
human soul are so many photographs of God.
We take up one, examine it, and find it good-
ness. Every man has an idea of goodness,
which is a little miniature of one characteristic
of God. Expand it and carry it up to life size.
Let your grandest conception of goodness be
realized and you have obtained some idea of
what it is, in God. You have an idea of purity,
which, also, is a little picture of God. Lift it
up, idealize it and, by it, interpret God.
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In all the high qualities of our nature, man becomes the medium of our knowledge of God. But, mark you, it is man in the broadest sense. It is man, including man and woman, which, I believe, is sometimes forgotten. The way in which Holy Writ speaks of this subject is very significant. In the likeness of God made he man; male and female created he them, and called their name Adam, or man. Both together were called man. Thus, we are taught that the complete idea of man is not found in either one of the sexes alone, but unitedly. And this is a very important consideration in understanding God's character. We discover God's nature by studying man, made in his image. But man includes both man and woman; therefore, in our endeavors to learn God's character, it is our duty to study woman's nature, as well as man's. How much is said about the fatherhood of God! Well, it is perfectly right and proper to speak of the fatherhood of God; but it is as proper to speak of the motherhood of God, who has as many qualities that are typified by the mother's nature as the father's.

There is, then, a motherhood of God, as reflected from woman's nature. Moreover, man-
kind desires the mother element in God. It is a very significant fact, that all cultured idolators idolize woman. The Phoenicians had their Ash-toreth, whom they worshiped; the Greeks, their Venus; the Romans, their Juno. India has its Lakshmi; Romanism, its Mary, "the mother of God;" and even Comte, the father of materialistic infidelity, provides for the adoration of woman. He, virtually, eliminates God from the universe, refuses to believe in anything supernatural, rejects, of course, revelation and Jesus Christ; but he admits that man has a nature that inclines him to worship, and recommends that woman shall be the object of this worship. Every error simulates some truth. What, then, is the truth that underlies the fact of the existence of such creations as Juno, Venus, Ash-toreth? It is, that mankind seeks that type of divinity represented by woman's nature. It not only loves to think of God as possessing masculine qualities, but feminine, also; and the Bible tells us that this universal desire of man is well grounded. God is mother, as well as father. The prophet Isaiah, speaking the words of the Lord, in reference to those who should dwell in Jerusalem, wrote, "As one whom his mother
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comforteth, so will I comfort you." God promises to be a mother to them.

We obtain a very inadequate conception of God through the higher experiences of man alone. There is more in God's nature than can be seen by the exclusive study of man. He is not the image of every quality that belongs to the character of God. It is woman that is the image of some of the loveliest elements in the divine nature. And I think many errors respecting God have crept in by the one-sided study of man alone. The motherhood of God is often overlooked. All the noble elements of character, that are marked traits in woman's nature, are to be carried up and attributed to God. His image is to be sought in her equally with man.

One of the characteristic qualities of the perfect man is strength. We are quick to say this is the image of God; and so we lift it up, idealize it, and interpret God, who is limitless in his power. There belongs to the perfect man not only strength of muscle, but strength of purpose. So we expand this idea and apply it to God. We say, he cannot be stayed in his purpose. If man has an energetic will, much more, God. True manhood is accompanied with discretion,
judgment, wisdom. This image, in man, is amplified and made to interpret God. We call him wise,—so wise, that our wisdom seems foolishness in his sight.

But how about some of the qualities that, by nature, belong to the perfect woman, qualities which must also be used in order to interpret God’s nature? We cannot understand the love of God till we look for its image in the mother. What are some of the peculiarities of a mother’s love, in its relation to her child? First, she bestows her love upon it, while the child is unconscious of her affection. It makes no difference to the good mother whether her child knows and understands her love or not. She loves it always, conscious or unconscious of love’s manifestation. Oftentimes, you hear men say that they do not care much about children until they get to be interesting. You never heard a mother say that. It is very seldom that men bestow much love on an object that is unconscious of it. They want to see immediate returns of their love. “When the child gets big enough to know me and call me by name, I will show it some attention.” This is not woman’s love, at all. She loves the little one that ap-
precipitates none of her affection, as well as the one that fully reciprocates it. It is her nature to do so. This, then, is an image of God; and we are to lift it up, idealize it and apply it to God's nature, and say, it is one of God's characteristics to love, when the object of that love is unconscious of it. Here is a man who never thinks that God loves him. In fact, he believes that God cares nothing for him. As he goes to his daily tasks, and pursues his life, he is totally unconscious that there is any affection in the great heart of God for him. But what of that? God loves the man notwithstanding—loves him with all the solicitude and tenderness of a mother who loves her infant child that knows not its right hand from its left.

There is not a person, however distant the thought of God may be from his mind, but that has lavished upon him, in his unconsciousness, this wonderful love of God. Woman's love, in this regard, is but a faint image of the divine. How great is that love poured forth by the Infinite One—so great we cannot reach up to it, even in imagination! How few recognize it! The world, like the tiny infant, lies in the arms of Almighty God, unconscious of his love. Men
imagine that God cannot love them unless they coax it out of him. Do the roots, the grasses and the flowers have to send messages to the sun, in order to get him to shine upon them and warm them into life? Do they say to him, come back, come back? No, the sun comes forth from his far voyaging and overhangs the sleeping fields of flowers, until they feel his presence. Before a single plant has penetrated through to the surface of the earth, the sun is there, with his beams ready to bathe it in his warmth. God, so to speak, overhangs the place where we are, and pours upon our unconscious heads, his love. We do not have to importune God to love us, any more than the insensible child in the mother’s arms.

There is another peculiarity of a mother’s love. She bestows it upon the object of her affection, though it be apparently very uninteresting. She will love her child, though, to a spectator, it may seem to be without any attractive characteristics. How many unpromising children there are in this world! Some are utterly unlovable, born ugly and distorted. Some have physical blemishes that spoil their comeliness; they are deformed, weak, imbecile. To the
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stranger, they are repulsive. But what of the mother? How does she regard her ill-favored child? Did you ever see a child so disfigured, either by physical or mental deformities, that its mother did not love it? No. How she throws the arms of affection around her child, who has not the first sign of promise! It may be its mind is darkened and idiocy enthroned in the soul. No matter, there is one to love the idiot. There is one to clasp the most unfortunate creature that was ever called a human being; and this is the mother, who bore it. Her heart always feels for it. Why? It is her nature to do it. Very well, then this is the image of God. Lift up this idea, idealize it and ascribe it to God's nature. He too, loves all ill-shapen creatures.

Some men are frightful, horrid, repulsive. We turn away from them with disgust. But what of God? How does he regard them? He loves them. For the mother's nature is his. Do you ask, how can he do it? Tell me how the mother loves her imbecile child, and I will tell you how God loves these miserable creatures, whom the world despises. Here we have an answer to a prevalent belief that God does
not look out or care for anybody. Do you suppose, men say, that God has any special regard for the degraded beings that live in poverty and wickedness, for a creature, that has sunk to the lowest depths of shame? God, you say, cannot love that being. Ah, you do not understand the motherhood of God! He does love that being. And the mystery is no greater than appears in the mother's loving this same creature. You never looked upon a human being unloved by his mother. God is mother to every son of earth, and why should he not love that being, too?

Another peculiarity of a mother's love is, that she frequently bestows it upon an object that does not return it, that is, she bestows unrequited love. How some children have treated their mothers! They have grown up disobedient, hateful, vicious, despising the counsel of their home. They exhibit no love for those who are their best earthly friends. But how is this obduracy and hardness of heart endured by the mother? Is her natural affection turned into hate? Never. Where is the mother who does not love her dissolute son? I know a father who has turned his son into the street and told
him never to cross the threshold over which he was wont to pass with the utmost freedom. The son has been given up by his father. But how is it with the mother? Oh, how her heart yearns for her wayward boy! She loves him. It is her nature to love her child, though this love is unrequited. Well, then, this is an image of God's love. Lift it up, expand it, and let it be set in God's nature. He loves when it is not returned.

Think what is going on in this world of sin. How much opposition there is to God! Think of the profanity, think how men often despise religion, think how they hate the truth. Nevertheless, God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. "God so loved the world." What world? Why, this world—this disobedient, ungrateful, hateful, headstrong and perverse world. Oh how strange, that he should love those who have trampled all that is sacred in his law under their feet! How can he love such? Tell me how the mother loves her dissolute son, who has despised her teaching, and I will tell you how God loves his wayward children. The one is the image of the other. The one is the little
picture, which, when expanded, represents the mystery of God's love.

Again, the mother reflects in her nature the sympathy of God. As the Æolian gives forth sweet music, when swept by the breath of the winds, so is the mother's heart sensitive to every breath of sorrow that comes up from her children. Did you ever see a good mother who was not ready to have poured into her ears the griefs of her little ones? Whoever heard a true mother say to the child who came to her, burdened with sadness, Go away from me; I don't want to hear a word about your trials; I care nothing for them. It is not the way she treats her children. Oh, how she folds them to her bosom and listens to all their woes! Not a sorrow but that draws out her warmest sympathy. She feels every pang of her children. This is beautiful to behold, and it is an image of God's sympathy. Lift up the idea and spread it out, until it shall include every human being on the face of the earth. As the mother sympathizes with those that are of her own flesh and blood, so God sympathizes with every child that comes from his hand, all over the broad world. He has the mother nature; and not a grief that we
pour into his ears is unheard and unfelt by him. Touched with a feeling of our infirmities, how he loves to gather us in his bosom, and whisper comfort to our souls! Not a tear falls, but he notices it with a responsive throb of his great heart. How vividly Christ taught the sympathy of God! What a heart of pity was his! All went to him, the poor and miserable, earth's rejected ones; for they knew he would hear them, though all others despised their cry. Christ showed the motherhood of God.

The motherhood of God is reflected in the wonderful patience and forgiveness of our earthly mothers. Think how much the mother endures for the sake of her children! She will exhaust the father's patience, twenty times. Think further of the forgiveness that is ingrained in her nature. We can hardly conceive of a mother's refusing to forgive her repentant child. "Mother, forgive me, I will not do so again." Where is the mother heart, that answers, "I will never forgive you, my child. I will treasure up your evil deeds in my memory and never return you to a place in my affections. I care not for your repentance"? No, this is not the mother's nature. It forgives. Let,
then, this characteristic of his mother's nature be carried up and applied to God. He is such a one as your mother is, in respect to patience and forgiveness. Just ask him to forgive your sin and he will do it quicker than ever your mother did. Oh, how a woman's heart bounds with delight, when she hears her recreant child say, "Mother, I am going to be good in the future. I am not going to make you any more trouble. I am sorry for my bad conduct." Breathe these same words into God's ear. Tell him that you are going to try, in the future, to be good and not make him any more trouble. Tell him that you are sorry you have been so unheedful of his requirements, and oh, how our Great Mother will rejoice at such a step, and clasp you in her arms and say, I forgive you all, go and sin no more, and all that I have is thine!

We have considered only a partial view of the mother side of God's nature. All that is highest and noblest and most beautiful in woman's nature, is but the image of what is found in God's character. He is not only our Father in heaven, but also our Mother in heaven. I sometimes think that our view of God is confined too much to the father side—the side that
furnishes us an image of sternness, of strength, of power and of wisdom. These are, preeminently, characteristics of the masculine nature—and the chief qualities that a great many ascribe to God. Why, how many people there are in the world, who think God does not love them much, or is not very much interested in their lives. "God does not sympathize with me in my sorrow, he does not bend to such as I." Why is this feeling so prevalent? I will tell you. It is because they have stripped God of his mother nature. They know nothing of his motherhood. Many a one has said, "I wish God were as good as my mother. How she feels for me, how she loves me, how she tenderly cares for me! I wish God were just like my mother, in this regard." Well, he is. Think a moment. Do you suppose that your mother is better than God? Do you suppose that our heavenly Father has made our mothers better than himself? Do you suppose they have more lovely traits of character than he has? Oh, away with such a thought! Whatever lovely trait of character you behold in your mother, lift it up, idealize it, and ascribe it to God, for she is his image.

That cold, dreary philosophy that represents
God looking down indifferently upon the affairs of the world, arises from our overlooking the motherhood of God. Let him be invested in our minds with the mother element, and it will no longer seem strange that he loves us and sympathizes with us, though we seem to be utterly unworthy of it. For, do not our earthly mothers do the same thing, on a smaller scale? Do not they love unpromising, ungrateful children? Much more then, he, who is perfect in love, loves all.

Then, how can you help loving such a being as God,—hovering over you with a love that is but faintly typified by the purest mother-love? How can you say, “I will live as I have a mind to, I will not regard his will”? How can you discharge the duties of life without one thought of serving him, or being his child, by adoption? How can you remain unmoved by such a love as God is exercising toward you, every day and moment of your life. How can you, young men, who have such tender regard for your mothers, refrain from loving your Father in heaven, who has yearned over you with a greater tenderness than ever she in whose
arms you first reposed. How can you, parents and children, refuse to be the followers of him, whose love could find no adequate expression, until he sent his dear Son to die for us? How can you help deciding, at once, that, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord"?
AN EVER-EXPANDING THEOLOGY
AN EVER-EXPANDING THEOLOGY

In view of a seemingly unsettled state of theology, the question, "Where are we at?" is often asked, with the thought that theology is waning and that soon it will be cast into the fire altogether. There is an intimation that theology is a sort of superfluity and may well be gotten rid of. They tell us that theological opinions are in a chaotic state at the present time; and, therefore, it is impossible to have any definite and fixed belief; hence the question, "Where are we at?" which indicates the alarming uncertainty that broods over the theological world.

It is very important that we have an understanding as to what theology is, what it means. It may be defined as the exercise of thought on religious things; or, we may say it is the intellectual apprehension of divine truth; or, we may give it a definition with still greater precision, and say it represents the formulated
results of such intellectual apprehension, in the form of classified knowledge; and this constitutes a science. What is botany? It is the exercise of thought on plant life, or an intellectual apprehension of this kind of life; or, it is the formulated results of such apprehension which takes the form of classified knowledge; and this constitutes a science. When shall we get rid of botany? When people stop thinking about trees and plants and flowers. When shall we get rid of theology? When we stop thinking upon religious things. But as long as we think upon these matters, we shall have some sort of theology. It is just as inevitable as intelligence.

When a man declares that theology is unnecessary and superfluous, he might as well tell us that intelligence is unnecessary and superfluous. Religion is an instinctive impulse, sentiment, aspiration or tendency in every human soul; it is there, binding each soul to the Soul of the universe, as gravity binds the planet to the sun. Every man has this Godward tendency; and, therefore, he is compelled to think about it; and what he thinks about it becomes his theology. Do you imagine that a man can
live in this world and not think about God, or about the future life, or about the person of Christ, or about the Christian religion that is taught in the churches? He may not think very deeply or habitually, about these things, but he will think; and his thinking will breed an opinion; and that opinion will be his theology. Now observe the significance of the fact that theology follows as an inevitable consequence from the exercise of thought about religious things.

What will be the character of our theology? It will depend upon what we think upon religious things. If our thinking is casual and superficial, we shall have a lean and attenuated form of theology, which will have but little influence upon our practical life. Those who pay but little attention to religious things, are, usually, those who entertain the view that theology is of no earthly value. The trouble is, they have not gone far enough in their thinking to create an opinion that is worth anything for themselves or anybody else. They do not care anything about theology, for the same reason that a man does not care anything about Greek, because he never studied it.
Since theology comes into existence by the exercise of thought on religious things, we see that progress is not only possible but certain, and will be more or less continuous. For thought is affected by knowledge, and knowledge grows from age to age. Paul affirms the inevitableness of progress, when he tells the Colossian Christians that they are to be found "increasing in the knowledge of God." As time passes, they are to know more and more about God; the subject is boundless and they will never reach the limit, but are likely to keep adding to their knowledge of God, which implies an ever enlarging and expanding theology. As we learn about God, not only through the Scriptures but through creation itself, our knowledge of God will increase, whatever may be the field in which discovery is made. All knowledge pertains to God, that is, has something to do in revealing what he is; and, therefore, all knowledge will have its bearing on theology, and tend to modify it, according as every additional fact of knowledge is taken up into it and appropriated.

Some people seem to think that theology should always be the same, unchanging as the
course of the seasons. Undoubtedly, the great and essential features will remain without substantial modification. We never shall outgrow the fact that the world needs saving and that Christ was commissioned to do it. But in a thousand subordinate particulars, changes will be required, simply because an increasing knowledge of God makes it inevitable. In order to have a fixed, utterly stable and unchangeable theology, we should have to keep it in "storage," and prevent people from discovering new ideas. But allow men the freedom of discovery, and new facts of knowledge will constantly be coming to light, and must be taken account of. These considerations enable us to account for some things which are very disturbing to some minds.

What is it that has brought about the unsettled conditions of religious thought, in the midst of which we now find ourselves? It is sometimes said that we are passing through a transition period, and that is why there are so many theological disturbances. But every period is a transition period; we are always passing out of the old into the new. The former period never exactly corresponds with
the present. Why? Because there are new facts of knowledge discovered, which were not known in the former period. It may be true that there never has been a transition period like this; and the reason may be in the multiplicity of new facts and ideas that have been brought to light during the century just closed. There has been an amazing increase of knowledge in that time; and, as all knowledge, scientific and otherwise, contributes in some measure to the understanding of who and what God is, this new knowledge must be given a place in our religious thought, and find such adjustment to all our previous knowledge, as shall maintain the unity of the whole.

Now the trouble with the transition period in which we find ourselves, is, that there has been so much new knowledge discovered that we have become bewildered and confused in trying to find a place for it in our previous system of thought. Consider the fact, that through the researches of physical scientists, this universe is, to us, a thousand times larger, a thousand times older, a thousand times more complex, and a thousand times more pregnant with life than the
men of a century ago dreamed of its being. Now, if we have found that our universe is many thousand times larger than the universe of our fathers, we have made a discovery that will affect our conception of God in some degree; and our theology cannot escape some slight modifications. Why, how small the universe used to be in the minds of men! The earth was the center of it; and all the orbs in the heavens were its satellites. Then came the discovery that the earth is not the center of our planetary system, but the sun; and that the sun, with all his satellites, is but one of myriad like systems scattered through space. How all these ideas modified our conception of God! How our theology expanded in reference to the greatness and grandeur of God!

Or, take the thought that the universe is many thousand times older than our fathers considered it. They held that it was in the neighborhood of 6,000 years old; we know that it is many millions. They thought that they were having a transition period with a vengeance, when they were told they must give up the idea that the earth was made in six literal days, and that ages on ages were consumed in
bringing it to its present degree of perfection. Confused and dazed, they were inquiring, What will become of our theology, and what will become of the Bible, if it took longer than a week to make the earth? But the transition was made from the old to the new idea. What was the result? A better theology, and a Bible interpreted not only in harmony with the latest geological facts, but in harmony with itself, so that, to-day, no one thinks of six literal days, as he reads the story of creation. Such a reading would seem forced and strained. But before the transition was made, there was tremendous excitement in the theological world. Prophecies of the utter overthrow of the Christian religion were proclaimed in view of the changed conception in regard to the creation, just as some people think, nowadays, that Christianity and the churches are "going to the dogs," because there is an unsettled condition of theological belief.

What means this unsettled condition? It does not mean that truth is being gotten rid of. It means that so many new ideas and facts have been discovered that we are bewildered as to what we will do with them. We must use them.
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Our theology must receive them. But just how to make them fit or dovetail into the system as we have it—this is the nub of the problem.

Our present-day theology is obliged to make use of the doctrine of evolution. At one time evolution seemed a frightful thing. Surely, people said, there will be no help for the Christian religion now. Evolution has unsettled all our notions concerning it. But what is there about evolution that should cause any one to have the nightmare? What is evolution? It is simply a question about the formation, not the creation, of the universe; "God created the heaven and the earth." That word will stand forever. But how about the formation? The old idea was, that there were as many separate creations as there were things. God created outright this thing, that thing and the other. But science has shown us that things are more closely related than we had supposed. There is a sort of brotherhood running through creation. God put into lower things a tendency to become higher things. He introduced the principle of development. Therefore, instead of having an act of creation in every single in-
stance, we have a process of formation of one thing from another. God causes the universe to grow, instead of springing into existence ready-made, by a creative stroke. This gives us a grander conception of God. But it was very hard to make room for it in our theology. It was in the minds of some that it would be the ruination of Christianity and the churches, if the doctrine of evolution was accepted.

But the transition was made; and men saw that it was not a question of life or death to our Christian faith, whether God was a long spell or a short spell in bringing the universe to its present condition. It began to seem, however, that the long spell was more in keeping with an infinite and eternal God, in whose spirit, "a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night!"

But this opened the way for another transition of view in regard to the Bible. Scholars began to say, God did not hurry up and make the world in a minute, but employed a slow process of development. Is not this his customary method of action? Is not this the way the Bible came into existence? The world grew to be what it is. Did not the Bible grow to be what it is?
The great question about the Bible to-day is, whether it is a growth-book or a fiat-book. It is not many years ago that the prevailing notion about the Bible was, that it was a fiat-book. That is, it came into the world, virtually, ready-made by the hand of God. To be sure there were writers of the Bible; but they were merely amanuenses, writing down from dictation. We say we are living in a transition period; now, one feature of that transition is, the attempt to regard the Bible as a growth-book, instead of a fiat-book. This question, with certain others involved, is the main cause of the religious unsettlement and disturbance which we find existing at the present time. The question might take this form: Can the Bible, as a growth-book, be regarded as really God's book, as a fiat-book? Well, can the world be regarded as really God's world, when we think of it as unfolding according to the doctrine of evolution, as when we think of all things coming into existence by separate acts of creation? I believe that God is more closely identified with the world, under the conception of evolution, than under any other. And I believe that the Bible is a better book for humanity, with the concep-
tion that it was not made outright, by God himself, but made by man, as his instrument, that is, God working through man, for its production. But just what is meant by thinking of the Bible as a growth-book? It means that God has been revealing truth to men, as fast as they would recognize and use it.

Suppose the whole New Testament had been poured out upon the world at the very beginning of human history. It would have appeared to men as a conundrum rather than a source of enlightenment. Men had to be drilled, at the outset, in the belief that there is one God, not many gods. It took a long time to get that idea into the minds of a people specially chosen for training in divine things.

Then they had to be drilled a long time respecting the character of God. What sort of a being is he? He is powerful, for he created the heavens and the earth. But power does not always imply goodness. Is he just and holy and good? Several thousand years were employed to bring men up to the conception that God is gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy. And then, when the "fulness of the time" had come, that is, when the training had reached the
point where a full revelation could be made respecting the character of God, and be appreciated and used, Jesus Christ came into the world and set at rest, forever, any questioning concerning the goodness and love of God.

No man can read the Old Testament understandingly, who does not view it as a history of the method whereby Israel was trained up, by slow stages, to gain a proper conception of the character of God. What was that method? It was the method of growth. And this growth was not merely an outside development, which found its expression in human experience. The Bible grew, as divine truth was more and more embodied in the lives of men.

Thus it comes to pass that our religion is more than a life-religion, more than a book-religion. Looking at the Bible, from the standpoint of growth, it calls for a new method of study. If the Bible grew, then there are parts of it farther advanced than other parts; that is, they occupy a higher level; that which is first would not be equal in every particular to that which is last. The Old Testament would not and could not contain all the value of the New Testament. There would be the blade, then
the ear, and then the full corn in the ear. This fact has led to a new method of studying the Scriptures.

Without condemning, or doing away with other methods, reverent scholars are studying the Bible to-day just as they study nature. They employ the inductive method. They marshall the facts from near and from far; they classify and arrange them, and then make up their conclusions. It is no question but that they have made many mistakes in their conclusions; they have sometimes left the Bible with the supernatural obscured, or even eradicated; but such results, sooner or later, miscarry and recoil upon the heads of those who adopt them.

This is the point: the scientific way of studying the Bible is a correct one. How can you press the claims of Christianity, when it is held that you must not study the Bible, as God's revelation, as you do nature, which is, also, God's revelation. Freedom of inquiry must not be put under the ban, if we are to make our appeal to the more thoughtful men and women of our time. In the meantime, it is said, we are in a very bad way, in these days of free discussion. It is considered a dangerous and hazard-
ous thing to look upon the Bible in any different fashion from that of a century ago. Now observe, that the whole trouble is one largely concerned with methods, not with essential truths. Modern criticism does not get rid of God; it does not get rid of Christ as the Redeemer of men; it does not get rid of men's spiritual need; it does not get rid of the Bible; it simply gets rid of certain notions which have existed concerning the method by which God reaches men with his truth. He does not employ the fiat-way of doing things in the religious world, so much as the growth-way. On this hinges the main-difficulty of those who think that theological beliefs are at sixes and sevens. But when our minds become adjusted to this method of looking at our religion, we shall find that Christianity stands on a firmer foundation than ever before.

I rejoice to believe that we are at the dawn of an era which shall surely work a new, higher, more helpful religious thought than has been dreamed of hitherto, except in the blessed gospel of the Son of man!