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THE APEX

THOMAS B. GOULD



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THE APEX

THOMAS B. GOULD



Boston

Richard G. Badger

The Gorham Press

1903

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INTRODUCTION

THE author of the little volume which is here presented to the public has been a life-long seeker after Truth. His religious life has been a checkered one; his is the growing mind which must always be the apparently inconsistent one. It is apt to be a case of arrested development on the spiritual side when a man rests content in the beliefs which have been handed down to him from his forefathers, nor cares to search for himself whether or not these things be so.

The following words to which Mr. Gould recently gave utterance give the keynote to his character and explain his desire to give to others what he has found for himself. "I have," he says, "in my day believed almost everything that others have believed, and now I am going to *know* instead of believe."

Thomas B. Gould is in the early sixties, a quiet, thoughtful man possessing the eye and brow of one who has long looked beneath the surface of things; of one who has searched for truth as for hidden treasure. Although he now for the first time comes before the public as a writer, yet the thoughts expressed within this book have been seething in his mind for years—its material began to be stored up even in early life. As a boy working in a cotton mill he became interested in machinery, and a taste for invention led him to follow the careers of such men as Mr. Edison with absorbing interest.

Three years in the Civil War, during which he

twice endured the horrors of imprisonment, in the old Libby Prison, and at Belle Isle, tended to develop the sterner stuff in his composition, and to give him the true idea of war expressed in the words—"war is hell."

Denied the advantages of education in his youth, Mr. Gould has overcome many of his limitations by extensive and well chosen reading. From the blacksmith's forge, at which he has worked during the latter half of his life, he has gone home to wrestle with abstruse subjects, and to follow the reasonings of a Fiske, a Huxley, a Swedenborg or a Drummond. From the anvil to the author's desk seems a far cry, but our author is a striking example of the freedom of the mind, which can at will soar above material things, and dwell and roam in a kingdom of its own. "It is the privilege," he tells us, "of every person on this globe to see and hear and know all that he needs to know—in other words, all he strives for." This has been his life work—a striving for knowledge. To this end he has been an earnest student of the teachings of Christ, and on these teachings bases the conclusions he has drawn. Mr. Gould has imbibed much of the Spirit of the Christ, drawn inspiration from the Gospels, and learned what it is to dwell in the pure region called by Christ the Kingdom of Heaven, or the Kingdom of God.

The writer has found this little book full of suggestion; it suggests far more than could possibly be given utterance to in the limited space it occupies, and inspires with its noble simplicity and quiet acceptance of the verity of such sayings of Christ as: "He that

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believeth in me the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father." (John xiv. 12.)

M. R. J.

Boston, February, 1903.

PREFACE

IT seems quite evident to me, and I do not think that the idea will be disputed by those who are the best judges, that there is in this country a large class of very intemperate readers. By this I do not mean those who study the most, or those who are seeking after real, substantial knowledge, for the mind is so well adapted for expansion that it may be impossible to overfeed it; but we may read and study too much at the expense of the physical system. There is one law that prevails in all the kingdoms, physical, mental and spiritual. The law of the physical says that if we overeat we shall have dyspepsia, or some other form of disease: the law of the intellectual warns us that we shall become deranged or insane by excessive study. The spiritual law tells us that we shall become confused, bewildered, mystified, by inordinate speculative reading. From all the evidence we can obtain it seems safe to say that there never was a time when people were seeking after knowledge with less hope of obtaining it than they are today; and yet, every writer of a book has some idea which he thinks unique, and every church has its peculiar creed. If you mention this to a churchman, however, he will tell you that they all agree on the fundamentals.

Scientific people tell us that the more they know, or the more they seek to know, the more mysterious Nature becomes, especially to those who are seeking after the Infinite. They tell us that when they clear up

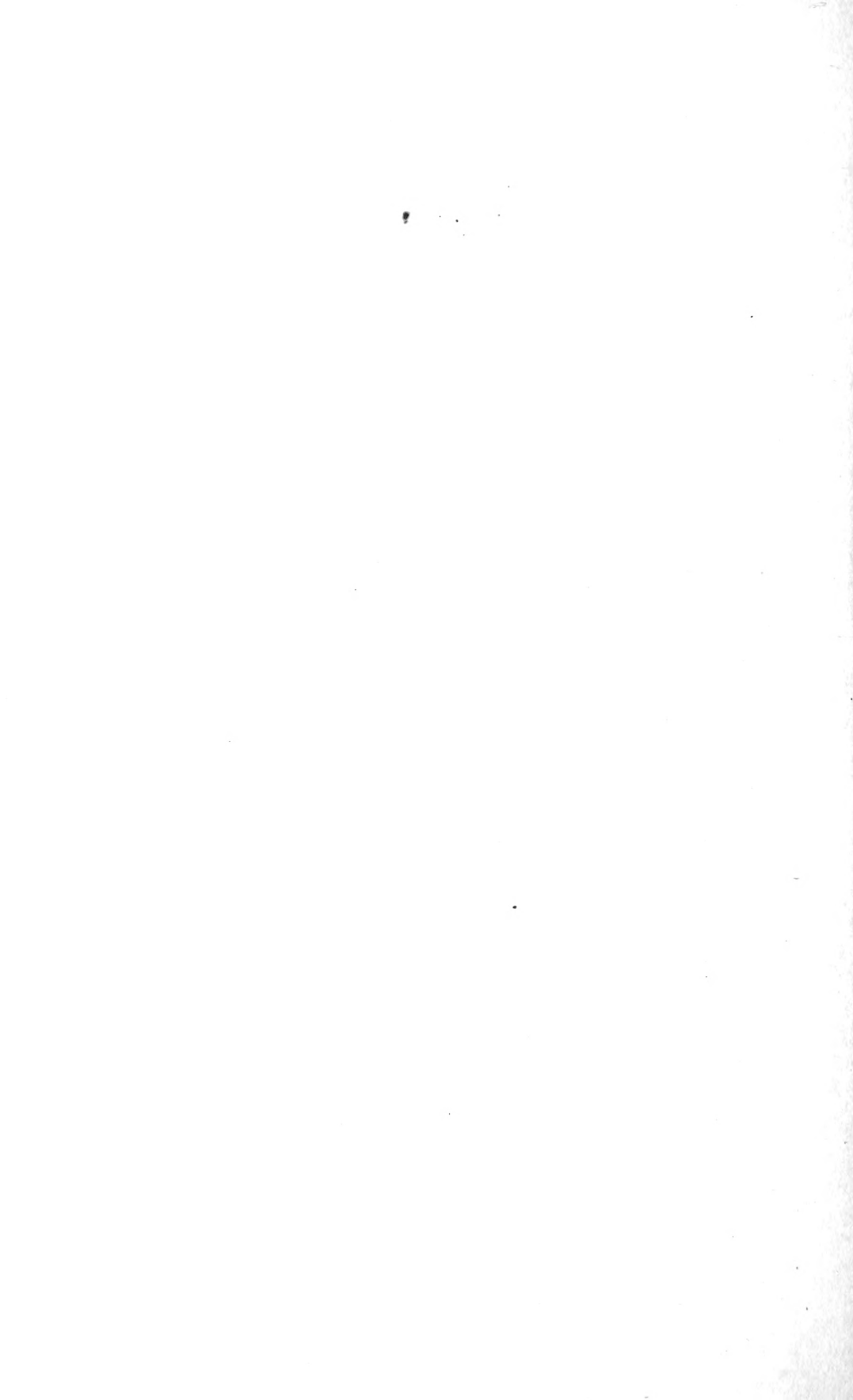
one mystery it only opens the way to another; or, in other words, that investigation leads to agnosticism. But this is only one period of the evolution of thought, and it may be that this mass of thought is only the meal in which the leaven of truth is to perform its part. "And, further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end: and much study is a weariness to the flesh." (Eccles. xii. 12.)

"Ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (2 Tim. iii. 7.)

It has seemed to me that we need something more explicit in our ideas today, something more definite, something that has a foundation to rest upon. We have many stately religious mansions in the world today, but how many of them have real foundations? We have many learned religious books, but how many have foundations? We have thousands of eloquent sermons preached every Sunday, but how many have foundations? The Pharisee will tell us that they all have them. I think that if we could have the testimony of the world today upon the teachings of the religious world (I mean by this the testimony of those who do not belong to any church, but who attend occasionally or constantly), they would tell us that they do not comprehend the plan of salvation. I venture to say that no one can produce a sermon that has been written, published or preached within twenty-five years that contains the whole plan of salvation as Christ taught it.

There must be a very solid foundation for all this mass of current religious literature, and it seems al-

most impossible that this state of affairs can long exist. I know nothing about the statistics of the amount that is published, but it is certainly enormous. I venture to hope that my humble addition to this already overflowing supply may at least furnish a little substantial food for thought. I can but hint at the truth, though I cannot expect to make much impression upon the world, being an old man, and having spent nearly all my life as a mechanic. I have neither the strength nor the ability to write a large book, neither do I think it necessary, nor do I expect ever to undertake to write another; but I have for years had the desire to sow some seed of this kind. I have believed that just such a little book was needed, and this has been my only motive in writing it. I do not claim that its teachings are my own; but I believe them to be what the Great Teacher taught many years ago, and my one desire is to draw attention to the Truth to which He gave utterance.



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THE APEX

I

WHAT IS GOD?

FROM the earliest record of the human race, we discover that men have believed that there is a God.

Not only have they believed in a Unitarian but in a Trinitarian and also in a Universal God; Universal as existing in everything, manifest in every substance in the universe; as some of the poets have sung it;—

“All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is, and God the soul.”

There is, in this land of Christian civilization, another large class of believers in the existence of a God, who believe that the one they worship is the true God. If asked to give a reason for their belief, they will invariably tell you they can see their God in the Bible; he does not, however, dwell exclusively in books, and for further confirmation of their belief they will point you to the works of nature. To illustrate, they will tell you that the artificial works which we see around us are the works of men, and that the works of nature are the works of God.

It would be useless to enumerate the hundreds of

Gods that have been, and are even now being worshipped in both heathen and civilized countries. In fact, the name God is a very indefinite term, and yet it is used indiscriminately. I have never heard any one say that he knows exactly what God is. Some people say there is no God; while others, having become bewildered with the numerous ideas of God and the destiny of the human race, have settled down into a firm belief in the unknown Being that has always been worshipped in all ages. Nor shall I undertake to disturb the belief in any of these Gods until I can point to a better one than any of those that I have mentioned. Our religious teachers declare that God exists, but that He is a mysterious being. I have been repeatedly told that it is impossible to prove the existence of a God. If, then, God is a mysterious being, and the Christ is a mystery, or was a mysterious incarnation of God in man, why do these teachers still claim to be the oracles of God?

They say that the birth and life of the Christ were mysteries, and that his resurrection was a mystery. They also say that the Holy Ghost is a mystery; but they do not attempt to explain how three persons can be one and each one can be God and all of God. The new birth, they say, is a mysterious transformation.

They have never proved conclusively what will be the destiny of the human race: neither have they proved the immortality of the human soul.

They have never explained the meaning of faith, and in fact, have never been able to give good reasons for their belief in the creeds to which they subscribe.

If any man shall say, "We cannot know that there

is a God," we know in what class to place him: for there is an old saying which declares that "the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God."

Scientific evidence points toward the theory which I shall advance: and this theory is that there is a God and a Christ, a Holy Ghost, a new birth, and a future state of existence. What true faith is, I hope also to be able to show.

In its quest after truth, science stands upon a firm foundation and accepts nothing but facts. That is what religion must furnish the coming generation: and true religion will not suffer by the demand.

We are told that, although there are Lords many and Gods many, there is but one true and living God, and this saying will aid us in our search after the true God. If anything I shall say may appear to mean that there is more than one true and living God—this is not my intention. What I wish to affirm is that people can and do worship false gods; and, furthermore, for fear of a misunderstanding, I will add that man has the power by his own wonderful volition to change even the one true and living God into a vindictive and hateful being. For all those who trust in this world or in anything in this world, or in themselves alone,—without regard to the true principles that should govern them, and without regard to the demands of society upon them,—are trusting in an unknown and an untrue God. None but loving people can have a loving God.

We have already placed those who do not believe in some kind of God in a class by themselves as fools.

We shall now appeal to those who believe in Christ or in his teachings.

Some purely scientific people say that there is no evidence of God manifest in all nature. They say, look around through all the natural universe and you discover no God; take the telescope and gaze upward and outward into the immensity of the natural heavens and you will discover nothing but suns and planets like those of our own solar system; or, they continue, search with the microscope among the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms, and you shall discover no God.

Mr. Herbert Spencer says: . . . "Those who think that science is dissipating religious beliefs and sentiments seem unaware that whatever of mystery is taken from the old interpretation is added to the new; or rather, we may say that transference from the one to the other is accompanied by increase; since, for an explanation that has a seeming feasibility, science substitutes an explanation which, carrying us back only a certain distance, there leaves us in the presence of the avowedly inexplicable." He further tells us that, as the result of thought on these great mysteries, "which become the more mysterious the more they are thought about,"—"one truth must grow ever clearer—the truth that there is an inscrutable existence everywhere manifested, to which we can neither find nor conceive either beginning or end. . . . We are ever in presence of an infinite and eternal energy from which all things proceed." He then goes on to point to the gradual transformation of nature, its complexity, intense activity, "marvelous play of forces." "Each

generation of physicists discovers in so-called 'brute matter' powers which, but a few years before, the most instructed physicist would have thought incredible: when the spectroscope proves to him that molecules on the earth pulsate in harmony with molecules in the stars—when there is forced on him the inference that every point in space thrills with an infinity of vibrations . . . ” he is continually prompted “to imagine some solution of the great enigma which he knows cannot be solved. . . . He yet feels compelled to think there must be an explanation.”

This is a part of the scientific evidence that teaches us that God cannot be found in nature: science can only point to something grand, powerful, immense and unknowable. It is said by those who have made an estimate of the matter than in an ordinary cyclone there is developed about four hundred million horse power to carry on the work of destruction and purification. It must be beyond our thought or imagination to compute the energy necessary to propel all the machinery of this vast universe. As we increase in wisdom our conceptions of God will increase; but science has commenced at the wrong end of the universe to seek after God. For if we should take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the universe we should not find Him any nearer than He is now and here. We have not seen the whole ocean that surrounds this continent; but if we have the privilege of walking on its shore, bathing in its surf, and sailing upon its bosom, what care we for its immensity, except as we are affected by the feelings of awe and grandeur with which it inspires us?

If we should take passage on an ocean greyhound and go to foreign lands, we should find the same ocean, or the same in appearance that we find here. This difference would probably be apparent, however,—before we went around the world it may have appeared small to us; now we are impressed with its immensity.

Thus, while we cannot comprehend God in his infinity, any more than we can view the ocean as a whole, yet we may comprehend him by his manifestations of Himself in His greatest work—Man. It is evident that the universe exists under the control of a perfect law, and that this law is a law of love is equally evident. It is true also that we exist, and must eventually come into harmony with this law. We are not at present controlling the universe, but are being controlled by this great law. We may and shall be broken by being controlled, but if we resist we shall be ground to powder.

It is probable that we shall be the ultimate end of evolution, and then shall we know even as also we are known. Some people say that they discover no indication of intelligence in all the natural universe, neither do they discover any of the attributes that are ascribed to God. This is because they have ignored mankind in their quest after God: for we see all the attributes that are ascribed to Him manifest in men. Josiah Royce, in his book upon the subject of natural religion, "The World and the Individual," says:—

"But what we at present say to the finite being is: You are at once an expression of the divine will, and by virtue of that very fact the expression here and

now, in your life, of *your* own will, precisely in so far as you find yourself acting with a definite intent, and gaining through your act a definite empirical expression . . . your individuality in your act *is* your freedom. This, your freedom, is your unique possession. Nowhere else in the universe is there what here expresses itself in your conscious being . . . For all is divine, all expresses meaning, all meaning is uniquely expressed. Nothing is vainly repeated. You, too, then, as individual, are unique. Just in so far as you consciously will and choose, you then and there in so far know what this unique meaning of yours is. Therefore are you in action free and individual . . . Arise then, freeman, stand forth in thy world! It is God's world! It is also thine!"

I, too, believe that this is our world as well as God's world. It has been said in old time that the kingdom of heaven will allow itself to be assaulted and taken by force—a faint heart will never gain heaven. We have been taught to beg pardon for our existence; we may beg pardon if we are anything less than true men and women. Even God himself could not exist if he were other than a God of love—how then can we expect to exist unless we are Godlike? *How* we may become Godlike will be considered in another chapter.

The human organism alone, among all the works of nature, is adapted, and being evolved and perfected by its favorable environment, for the manifestation of what is Good, or God,—which terms are synonymous, for no one can comprehend what he has not the faculty to comprehend.

Nearly all the ideas of God are taken from the pre-

mise that He is the Creator of all things; but *if* it is absolutely necessary to say that all things that exist must have had a creator, then we must say that God himself must have had a creator; and this process must go on indefinitely, which would completely destroy the Creator. This belief existed, and still exists in some minds in regard to this planet of ours. There are still those who think it is stationary, resting on a foundation of rocks: and if asked upon what these rocks rested would reply, 'upon rocks all the way down.' Now before we can come to a reasonable conclusion as to what God is, we must recognize Him as the Father of all life; and the whole universe, as Mr. Spencer tells us, is alive. Then we can see something of God in this direction: for if the natural universe is not immortal we have no evidence that anything will be immortal, for we are a part of this universe by nature. Good and evil are at present in a state of chaos, but eventually, finally, they will be separated. All evil will be utilized for the benefit of the good. We can see this in the processes of nature. The poisonous substances in the atmosphere and the impurity of the soil are all utilized by the vegetable life on which animals can subsist; and the spiritual life must have the animal life in which it can live and develop. Each kind of life will retain its own identity; that which is flesh will be flesh, and that which is spirit will be spirit. The Jews undertook to stone Christ because he called God his father: "because He, being a man, made himself God"; but He said He claimed only to be the Son of God, and this, in a lower and limited

sense, was a privilege which he granted to every honest man.

When he said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," he meant that man was the medium through which God intended to manifest Himself to men. Christ took not upon him the nature of angels, he took upon him the nature of men, as the writer to the Hebrews tells us. Christ taught that God is love; he also taught that He is the intelligent Power that moves this vast universe, and that He is Life, and is the life of all things; that the hairs of our head are all numbered; that not a sparrow falls to the ground without His notice. These things, which were hard to believe in his day on earth, are very easy to believe now; for any one of us may know of everything of importance that is transpiring in any part of the world, and even sometimes among the stars. It is not only possible, but extremely probable, that the whole universe is filled with a network of wireless telegraph lines, as well as telephones, and that there is a loving, intelligent power that is in intimate connection with the universe. As an illustration, take the body and mind of a man: we can see his body, but his mind or soul is invisible to us; we can, however, see the manifestation of his mind, just as we can see in the universe manifestations of some power and intelligence that we call God.

In one of the parables of Christ God is compared to a creditor who was a King; and he commanded that one of his debtors, who owed him a large sum of money, should be sold, and also his wife and children and all of his property, and that payment should be made.

And the debtor fell down and begged his creditor to have patience and he would pay him all, and the King had compassion on him and released him, forgiving him the debt. Now this same debtor went and found a fellow-servant who owed him a small sum of money, and he caught him by the throat and said, Pay me what you owe me! and the fellow-servant fell down at his feet and said, Have patience and I will pay you all I owe you; and he would not, but cast him into prison until he should pay the debt. But this poor man's fellow-servants told this to the King. Then the King called this debtor of His whom he had so kindly forgiven and said, Should not you have had pity on your fellow-servant, even as I had pity on you? And the King was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors until he should pay the whole debt. And that was right. Christ goes on to say: So likewise shall my Heavenly Father do also unto you, if you from your heart's centre do not forgive your brother's trespasses.

This is the kind of God that Christ taught; this teaching of his opens the kingdom of heaven to men, that our teachers have kept closed so long. The kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God are the same. Christ shows in this parable our relation to God; it shows what God is and where He is. It shows that He will be to us personally what we are to others and to ourselves: and this personality is vital, for it is in our own mind and heart. When we have a forgiving heart or mind or brain, we forgive our own sins. When we have an unforgiving heart we condemn ourselves by the same rule and by the same power. Our volition, then, is our vital relationship with God. With

our volition we bring to our aid all the infinite powers of the universe, or we may be crushed by our neglect even to use our volition. How shall we escape if we neglect? This is a very important question. Our relation, then, seems to be the most important question of all, for even the poor wayfarer may decide this for himself.

Those who wish to know something of the immensity of God may learn of Him in the natural sciences, Geology, Botany, Astronomy and the other sciences, all of which magnify Him.

Those who profess to believe in Christ must believe also His teachings, and these teachings and parables of His may be taken as evidence to prove where God is. In that wonderful last prayer of Our Lord, speaking of His disciples and believers, He said: Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also that shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me. And the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one even as we are one; I in them and Thou in me. Or, we may read it, Thou in me and I in them, that they may be perfect in one; that the love wherewith Thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them.

This is the only God that we know anything about. This is the God that we can know.

There is an old prophecy which says that the day will come when no man shall say, Know the Lord, for every one shall know Him. But some would have us believe that there is an unknown God: strange idea!

Where is He? Christ said his habitation is in man. He also said, he that hath seen me hath seen the Father. He had a personality, a heart, if you like that term better, large enough to hold God in all His wonderful immensity. He exhorted every one to seek first the kingdom of God and of heaven. What can they do with the kingdom if they have it not in their minds? A man can have nothing which does not exist in his mind.

The kingdom of heaven is the woof or filling that we are to weave into our every-day life, or an active life of *loving motives*. These are to be sought *first*: the sum accumulated will be the future *heaven*.

II

WHAT IS GOD? (Continued.)

IN a chapter entitled "Religion's First Postulate," Mr. John Fiske says: "As a matter of history, the existence of a Quasi-Human God has always been an assumption or postulate. It is something which men have all along taken for granted. It probably never occurred to anybody to try to prove the existence of such a God until it was doubted, and doubts on that subject are very modern."

In the ninth chapter of the same book, he tells from a scientific point of view how the evolution of the senses expands the world, and shows us how "natural selection is equivalent to survival of the fittest. The shapes of animals, as well as their capacities, have been evolved through almost infinitely slow increments of adjustment upon adjustment. In this way, for instance, has been evolved the vertebrate skeleton, through a process of which Spencer's wonderful analysis is as thrilling as a poem. Or consider the development of the special organs of sense. Among the most startling disclosures of embryology are those which relate to this subject. The most perfect organs of touch are the vibrissae or whiskers of the cat. . . . These cat whiskers are merely specialized forms of such hairs as those which cover the bodies of most mammals, and which remain in evanescent shape upon the human skin imbedded in minute sacs. Now in

their origin the eye and ear are identical with vibrissae. In the early stages of vertebrate life, while the differentiation of dermal tissue went mostly to the production of feathers or scales, sundry special differentiations went to the production of eyes and ears. . . . The implication of these wonderful facts is that sight and hearing were slowly differentiated from the sense of touch. And what was the result of all this for the creature in whom organs of vision were thus developed? There was an immense extension of the range, complexity, and definiteness of the adjustment of inner relations to outer relations; in other words, there was an immense increase of life. There came into existence, moreover, for those with eyes to see it, a mighty, visible world, that for sightless creatures had been virtually non-existent."

Now what does this lesson in natural science teach? I think it tells us of our accountability, according to the teachings of Christ when he said, "He that hath ears to hear let him hear,"—there are none so deaf as those that will not hear. There are a great many things to see and hear in this universe of ours, but many of them are optional with us. When—as I have been trying to make clear—our mental insight shall become enlightened, and we cultivate all the God-given powers of our minds as well as our bodies, after the pattern that Christ has given us, it is possible that we may have organisms superior to that in which Christ dwelt; for he said that greater works than he did should his believers do. He had a personality that was capable of holding the kingdom of God and of heaven within it. He had a mental vision

that could see God and heaven and legions of angels all about him. It is the privilege of every person on this globe to see and hear and know all that he needs to know; in other words, all he strives for; and this is the vital question, namely, man's privilege and accountability. I acknowledge the necessity of the knowledge of the true God, but what is the true God? I claim that it is our relation to the Truth. Now the question "What is Truth?" is the one that was asked of Christ. In the conversation with Nicodemus he says: "But he that doeth truth cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God." That is to say, everything and every idea that we can prove to be true is God's truth, and when we know all the laws of nature perfectly, we shall know God. But we may at any time know our heart's relation to Him—our knowledge of God must be like our relation to Him, for, as I try to prove in my chapter on the new birth, we may have perfect mind or heart relation with Him at once, when we are perfectly sincere in our quest after truth, and receive His words into our hearts. So, also, we shall know Him by the same rule when we are earnestly seeking after truth, although we may not as yet arrive at perfect knowledge. The very fact that we have discovered some truth is evidence that we have seen God, though it may be only like trees walking.

The apostle Paul said, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy: for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are,"—or should be. Now is

there anything that we believe or know about God that did not originate in man, or did not come through the mediumship of man? For even Christ was a man: we have Scripture for the statement:—"As by man came death into the world, so by man came the resurrection from death."

If it be argued that the ancient people who wrote the Scriptures were inspired, I would answer that men are also inspired in this day, for they have the Spirit of Truth, of whom Christ promised that he should come into the world, and who is even now being manifest in a general enlightenment of all men. The time has already come when no man needs to ask another if he knows the Lord, for all may know Him: He is near them, ready to enter heart and mind.

Let none say, the millennium will come later! Let it not be said, there are four months and then cometh harvest time, for the people are all ready to be harvested now, and it is just as easy for the worst as for the best: every one must surrender all,—all self-righteousness, all intent to sin. It is simply an initial act of volition as a starting-point, and after that—growth!

That which is born of flesh is flesh, or animal; this is the teaching of science. That which is born of love for the Good is Godlike, and consequently immortal.

If the teachings of Christ are not purely ethical, they are nothing; for a mysterious interpretation, taken from mysterious teachings, leaves a mystery, and a mystery is a non-entity. I believe that God was manifested in Christ; that these teachings of His were inherent in Him, and that He was the first spirit-

ual man who was evolved or born of the great Source of all things.

In the natural world we find many of the lower forms of life which are links in the chain of the process of evolution from the lowest types of animal life up to the highest type of human beings. Also among so-called human beings we find variations in intellectual and ethical development. So among our religious theories we have today all the first forms of religious ideas. Some of them are two thousand years old, and cannot be improved upon, while many of the new and refined beliefs are really very ancient, such as those which are distinguished by the practice of faith and prayer alone for the accomplishment of their purposes. These ideas are inferior to those which were believed in and practiced six thousands years ago.

The case of King Herod aptly illustrates some of the religious beliefs of the past. "And upon a set day, Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto the people. And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a God, and not of a man." It is a wrong and foolish idea, either in the religious or the political world, to suppose that a man who holds some office, no matter how high, is anything more than a servant of the people. With regard to Herod, we are told that "the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory." In striking contrast to this is the case of Peter, the apostle of that same time. After he had healed the lame man, and all the people were "filled with wonder and amazement," Peter said, "Why marvel ye at this? . . . as though by our own power or holiness we had

made this man to walk?" He further told the wondering people that it was through faith in Christ that the lame man had been cured. Peter believed that Christ could endow him with, or evolve within him a power, that would heal those who came to Him for healing. There are many in our own day who could have this power if they would exercise it.

The faith that is accomplishing the most in this day is the inventive faith. There are men who are searching the heavens and the earth for clues that will carry them on to the completion of some useful machine or device. They call to their support all the powers that be, both human and divine, to aid them in the accomplishment of their purpose. Every element in nature is experimented with. This is an object lesson to those who think their prayers will be answered if they sit down and wait.

In one of Mr. Drummond's addresses, he quotes Mr. Huxley as saying, "I protest that if some great power would agree to make me always *think* what is true, and *do* what is right, on condition of being turned into a sort of clock and wound up every morning, I should instantly close with the offer." Mr. Drummond then says: "The infinite desirability, the infinite difficulty of being good—the theme is as old as humanity. The man does not live from whose being the same confession has not risen, or who would not give his all tomorrow, if he could close with the offer of becoming a better man. . . . I propose to make that offer now. In all seriousness, without being turned into a clock, the end can be attained. Let me begin by naming, and in part discarding, some processes in vogue al-

ready for producing better lives. The first imperfect method is to rely on Resolution. In will-power, in mere spasms of earnestness, there is no salvation. Struggle, effort and agony have their place in Christianity, but this is not where they come in. In mid-Atlantic, the other day, the *Etruria*, in which I was sailing, suddenly stopped. Something had gone wrong with the engines. There were five hundred able-bodied men on board the ship. Do you think that if we had all gathered together and pushed against the mast we could have pushed it on? When one attempts to sanctify himself by effort, he is trying to make his boat go by pushing against the mast." He goes on to give the formula: "You will find it in a letter—the second to the Corinthians: We all reflecting as in a mirror the character of Christ, are transformed into the same image from character to character—from a poor character to a better one, from a better one to one a little better still, from that to one still more complete, until by slow degrees the perfect image is attained."

Here the solution of the problem of sanctification is compressed into a sentence: Reflect the character of Christ and you will become like Christ. Mr. Drummond adds that growth is not voluntary; it takes place; it happens; it is wrought upon matter. "Ye must be born again," says Christ. "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed," says the apostle.

Some of the above ideas seem to me a little confused. Mr. Drummond says that the ship could not have been moved by pushing against the mast: but it might have been moved with large oars, or by the repair of the en-

gine, which would have been an act of volition on the part of the internal personality. He gives no formula, as I have done in another part of this book—a formula taken from Christ's own lips for the propagation of life or the new birth. He tells us we must keep on reflecting character indefinitely: Why! people would all die and perish like the beast if they should attempt to do that. How can a person reflect character before being born—born from above?

Everything is ethical; God is love; He is as much our Father as He is the Father of Christ, when we are filled with love—and we may at heart be filled with love. This whole universe is filled with love as much as it is filled with air or electricity: we can see it in the solar system and in all the provisions of nature for our happiness.

It is only necessary for us to be filled with love in order that we may see it all. Even death itself is not an evil to the old and feeble. As we increase in knowledge and love, all these things will be evident. It is this love—this infinite love that gives the long eternal life in exchange for this short life of nature. Evil is the chaos of good.

In this new life God's part and man's part are clearly defined. God furnishes the sunshine and the rain—He furnishes the seed and sows it; this is all that He will do. This He does for the evil and the good alike. The good man is he who has the honest or good heart—the good ground. He ploughs it and digs out the thorns and bushes and makes it ready for the seed. He receives the seed into his good, honest heart soil, and to the best of his ability keeps down the weeds and

bushes that the good seed may grow and bear bountifully.

In nature, whether a man has anything to harvest or not in the autumn depends entirely upon himself. Theology tells us that there is something mysterious about religion. I would reply that there is nothing that concerns us that is mysterious,—all is as plain as daylight can make it. God is continually doing His part, and man's part is certainly plain and easy. The good intention is the good ground that we must furnish. Perseverance in good intentions, with the best work we are able to do, is the cultivation of the soil, and we shall reap the harvest of character. Christ and the apostle Paul both taught that the spiritual life was dependent upon the natural body for its environment as the soil in which it must germinate and grow. Neither of them taught that a man's spiritual life is inherent.

“Of the multitudes who confess Christianity,” says Mr. Drummond, “how many have clear in their minds the cardinal distinction established by its founder between “born of the flesh” and “born of the Spirit?” By how many teachers of Christianity even is not this fundamental postulate ignored? A thousand modern pulpits every seventh day are preaching the doctrine of Spontaneous Generation. . . . Let us place vividly in our imagination the picture of the two great kingdoms of Nature, the inorganic and the organic, as these now stand in the light of the Law of Biogenesis. What essentially is involved in saying that there is no spontaneous generation of life? It is meant that the passage from the mineral world to the plant or animal

world is hermetically sealed on the mineral side. This inorganic world is staked off from the living world by barriers which have never yet been crossed from within. No change of substance, no modification of environment, nor any form of energy can endow an atom of the mineral world with the attributes of Life. And if there is one thing in nature more worth pondering for its strangeness it is the spectacle of this vast helpless world of the dead cut off from the living by the Law of Biogenesis and denied forever the possibility of resource within itself. . . . It is as if God had placed everything in heaven and in earth in the hands of Nature, but reserved a point at the genesis of Life for His direct appearing.”

Right here I think that we have discovered something of immense value. If we say, as the Law of Biogenesis has always said, that life can only come from preëxisting life, we are simply saying that preëxisting life must have had preëxisting life continually. God told Moses that His name was I AM: but the immortal term, or the proper formula is,—All life is or must be produced by present life,—life is always produced by generation. According to scientific teaching, the natural man is an animal, belonging to the organic kingdom of nature, and will exist as long as the natural term of animal life, and who will finally return to the earth whence he came. I do not see that there can be any alternative.

If man desires to be born into the kingdom of God he must comply with the ethical teachings of Christ: these I have given, or shall give, in this book. Christ’s teachings are the most reasonable that have ever been

given to man, and they also correspond with the teachings of science. For as science teaches the Law of Biogenesis, so did He; He taught it in that saying of His, so often repeated in varied forms: "Except ye become as little children ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven";—if you wish to live in that higher kingdom you must become like infants and be born into it.

Let us see what the apostle Paul has written on this question: he says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus,"—in other words, to those who obey His teachings, whose intentions are right, who "walk not after the flesh,"—that is, not after the letter of the law, but after the Spirit, the intent of the law of love.

Again he says: "For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I know not. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me; for I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise; the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach: That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy *heart* that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the *heart* man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. So then, faith cometh by hearing," and hearing by the teachings of Christ. He further says: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present

your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service; and be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

I believe that all the New Testament Scripture teaches Biogenesis: and the central and vital truth of all the teachings of the New Testament is, first:—Sincere love for the Good as we strive to know it, even though limited by our short-sighted ideas of the immensity and the knowledge of God; second:—The practice of morality to the best of our ability and knowledge, minus any self-righteousness of our own. This must, of course, include love and service to our neighbor. All self-righteousness must be banished before God can find room in our hearts. Many people have struggled along through the world without solving this question; they have lived moral lives, have loved God and the good, as they supposed, they have loved their neighbor, and have cast out every idol except this one of self-righteousness; and that has put them on the level of the beast.

We have no goodness, neither have we any ability except that which we have received from above. Even our desires and our wills have been given to us, so has everything except our ability to choose; but some even reject or neglect that, and there is no difference between neglecting a privilege and rejecting it.

III

THE HOLY GHOST

IN the first chapter I have said that I would try to show that there is a Holy Ghost, but I have not tried, and shall not try to show that it is some mysterious personage without tangibility. We have seen that God is a tangible Being, making Himself manifest in men. The tangible existence of the Holy Ghost, and the fact that it can be seen and heard in society at the present day, can also be shown. It seems quite evident that the evolution of society from an uncivilized state to its present condition of Christian civilization is the result of the operation of the so-called Holy Ghost, which is, in fact, the principle of knowledge. It should be called the principle of knowledge that will throw light upon every question of the day, separating error from truth.

Christ said, If I go not away the Comforter will not come to you; but if I depart I will send Him unto you from the Father, even the spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father.

This is the same spirit that will enable men to do greater works than Christ did in the line of surgery, medicine, chemistry, physical and mental sciences, theology and political economy, and it is this same Spirit of Truth that is developing the minds of our inventors; for the inventor is seeking after truth. He tries one combination after another until he finds the

right one—the perfect one: this is the spirit that experiments to know the truth, and the world is gradually reaching it.

It will also teach us the theological truth, eliminating all the errors of the religious creeds, and show us the perfect road to eternal life. It will also in many ways exert its influence in a general evolution of man, in a greater ratio than ever known in past generations.

I believe that the Holy Ghost will be manifest by a most stupendous evolution of society, and is really all that its advocates have claimed for it, and even more than any one has ever imagined it to be: but I do not believe that this manifestation is something or anything that is not tangible to our reason:—that is to say, we can understand what it means, just as we can understand what intelligence means. As the Holy Ghost is now interpreted it cannot be understood.

IV

THE NEW BIRTH

MR. HENRY DRUMMOND, in his book, "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," says:—

"The passage from the Natural world to the Spiritual world is hermetically sealed on the natural side. The door from the inorganic to the organic is shut, no mineral can open it; so the door from the natural to the spiritual is shut and no man can open it. This world of natural men is staked off from the spiritual world by barriers which have never yet been crossed from within. No organic change, no modification of environment, no mental energy, no moral effort, no evolution of character, no progress of civilization can endow any human soul with the attribute of Spiritual life. The Spiritual World is guarded from the world next beneath it by a Law of Biogenesis. Except a man be born again—except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he *cannot* enter the kingdom of God."

Again he quotes Scripture: "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. Life—that is to say—depends upon contact with Life. It cannot spring up of itself. It cannot develop out of anything that is not life. There is no spontaneous generation in religion any more than in nature; no life without antecedent life. . . . In this

mythical theory of the Origin of Life the whole of the New Testament writers are agreed.”

He goes on to say that a moment's reflection ought to make it clear why in the Spiritual World there had to be added this mystery, the further mystery of its proclamation through the medium of revelation, and goes on to say: “This is the point at which the scientific man is apt to part company with the theologian.” Again, in speaking of the natural man as the organism, and God as the environment in the process of the new birth, he says:—“Where do organism and environment meet? How does that which is becoming perfect avail itself of its perfecting environment?” His answer is, “Just as in nature, the condition is simple receptivity. . . . It is so simple that we will not act upon it. . . . But there is no other condition.”

Now, in my opinion, Mr. Drummond has ignored man's part, namely, the good soil, or good and honest heart: he has, however, come nearer to the truth concerning the teachings of Christ than any other writer with whom I am acquainted. To the average mind, however, and apparently to his own, there still remains a mystery. Now Christ taught no mysteries, all is plain. Sometimes we have to dig to find the treasure, but it is well worth the cost. To my mind there is nothing mysterious in the Parable of the Sower. Christ said,—Behold a sower went forth to sow, and some seed fell on good ground and sprang up and bare fruit an hundred-fold. We can imagine how his voice rang out as He said these things. That cry has been heard around the world, is still echoing, and will continue to echo until it shall be heard above all the clam-

or of this suffering earth. "He that hath ears to hear let him hear." This cry has the same ring as that other one of his when He said: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink and never thirst again." The parable, He said, is this: The seed is the word of my teachings,—namely, the love for all things that are good, and love and service for thy neighbor. . . . The seed that fell into good and honest hearts,—hearts that had been prepared to receive it.

There is no mystery about this new birth any more than there is about the birth of a plant or an animal. Christ told Nicodemus there was nothing wonderful about it; He said, Wonder not at what I say to you, for I say this because you are not honest and sincere. You tell me that you believe I am a man sent from God, and that no man could do the works that I do unless God were with him. At the same time you are cowardly and dishonest, for you come to Me by night. You believe in Me and in my teachings, and you wish to be benefitted by Me, and at the same time to keep your former standing as a teacher. You wish to be an honest man; be just what you pretend to be, practice what you profess to believe, before I can do anything for you. In the condition in which you now are I can do nothing for you.

Christ cannot save any one unless he be *sincere*, and that every one may be.

To illustrate farther the propagation of the spiritual life, let us take the case of a man who had large possessions and who asked Christ,—calling him "Good Master,"—What shall I do to inherit eternal life? Christ told him to keep the law, and the man replied

that he was keeping it. Then Christ told him to sell what he had and give it to the poor, and he should have treasure in heaven. Then he was to take up the cross, which was probably that of working for his living, just as millions are doing. This was not a large price to pay for eternal life. By this we see that Christ taught the distribution of wealth. He does not, however, call upon all men to give away their wealth, since all those who are engaged in any honest business, such as manufacture or agriculture, are never called upon to give up their possessions, for capital is as necessary as labor. It is only when we worship our possessions that we are called upon to give them up. It is the sincere and honest intention, motive, heart, or mind, that is demanded of us.

Further to illustrate this subject—for I wish to emphasize the fact that we must honestly use our common sense in considering the propagation of the spiritual life—let us take the case of the apostolic Paul. In the first place he was a church member after the strictest sect, a zealous Jew and an educated man; he was also a zealous persecutor of the Christians, and verily thought he was doing God service when he was killing them. Now he was just the kind of man that God loves, for he was honest and sincere. That is the kind of man that all good people love, the kind that is near to the kingdom of heaven, and the kind of man that will reach it first. Why? Because when he is convinced that he is right he goes ahead, and when he sees, after thorough investigation of the subject, that he is wrong, he stops, seeks after the truth, and when satisfied, goes ahead again. It may be asked, What

has this to do with the new birth? Much, in every way. When Paul saw the light he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. A "heavenly vision" is nothing more than what comes to us all when we have a conviction of wrong-doing and the necessity of changing our course.

Do you ask, Where do God and Christ come in? My answer is, they have always been ready at a moment's notice to do their part. We, as organisms or human beings, have only a small part in the work of salvation; our environment, or God, as you please to call it, does the rest. Our own conscious opinion should be the best rule to go by in the question of duty; for when we are honest and sincere, and actively engaged in the duties of life, we are on the road to the kingdom of God.

Christ said, Come unto me and I will give you rest. The parables best illustrate the new birth. In the parable of the man who built his house upon a rock, we find a foundation that is very easy to understand, for Christ himself gives the explanation. . . . "Who-soever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man who built his house upon a rock." Now this foundation is the sincere intention and active determination, to the best of our ability, to know and practice what He taught. What did He teach? He taught *sincerity*: this is the starting-point; this is the new birth; sincerity is the atmosphere of heaven. When a man inhales this fragrant air he may be sure he has entered into the kingdom of heaven. This is the foundation of God. On this foundation we can rest. The material of which

the house is to be completed is not of as much importance as the foundation upon which it shall rest. Of course we must have some kind of material or we can have no house; but whether it is good or bad, wood or stone, we should use the best of workmanship in its erection, for the perfect intention should be manifest in every part of the house, until it is all complete. Some may object to this definition on the ground that Christ himself is the only rock on which we must rest. It is thought by some that no new construction can be placed upon the teachings of Christ. In my opinion, the teachings of Christ, his example and his life, are our salvation. Even if it were possible that many of his sayings had been given to the world before his birth, their value would be none the less; and our faith is strengthened by his example through life, by his resurrection, and by his presence in the hearts and lives of his believers in our own day.

In the parable of the Prodigal Son we see what Christ means by coming to him. It seems that when the prodigal realized the condition that he had brought upon himself, then and then only he came to himself. When a man is intoxicated he must first come to himself before he can come to do anything else. So with the prodigal—after he had come to himself he made up his mind that he was making a great mistake in living away from his Father. He then said to himself, “I will arise and go to my Father, and will say, Father, I have sinned against *myself* and against all Good, and against Thee, my good Father, and I am no more worthy to be called thy son. Now make me a servant of thine, for this is all I deserve or desire.”

To come to Christ, then, is first to come to one's self and realize one's condition; second, to become like Him, in honest intention at least, and serve Him; and to serve Him is to serve humanity, just as He did. This service may be performed in any honorable chosen profession in life which we believe we are called on to enter.

V

WHAT IS FAITH?

SELF-RELIANCE, determination, concentration—these are the chief elements of ordinary faith. We must believe in ourselves; without this we shall accomplish very little. We never know what we can do till we try, but, on the other hand, we cannot always do what we think we can. A man may believe he can swim and yet be drowned in spite of his faith. Men have prayed and exercised faith that rocks might be moved from their door-yards nearly all their lives, without having them removed. They have failed to couple intelligent action with their faith. And yet, the results of faith within the memory of those now living are innumerable. Take as an instance such a man as General Grant, who believed that he could conquer the Southern army in the war of the rebellion. While he knew that he had the resources at his command, he also knew that he must concentrate all his energies in the right direction, and this he could not have done without faith, and faith in himself. Faith sees the end in the beginning, sees the accomplished fact, just as the sculptor sees the image in the stone before he has placed his chisel upon it. Our inventors are, most of them, people of great perseverance and capable of intense concentration of mind. These qualities are necessary in any undertaking in life. I should say that faith and works are

generally inseparable, but the initial faith is doubtless bare. In most cases we find there is an act connected with it, although it may be almost imperceptible. I think that sensitive people are affected by their surroundings much as Christ was when the woman touched the hem of his garment. This was an act of faith, and although but a trifling act on her part, the desired object was attained. We are told by Christ himself that one of the best illustrations of faith he had ever seen was that of the centurion who came to him and besought him to heal his servant who lay at home sick of the palsy. Jesus said, "I will come and heal him"; but the centurion replied, "I am not worthy that you should come under my roof; but speak the word only and my servant shall be healed." He then gives his reasons for his faith, telling Christ that he himself was a man of, or with authority, having soldiers under him: "and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth: and to another, Come, and he cometh: and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it." Now this was equivalent to saying, I believe you are the Son of God, and that you have all the powers of the universe at your disposal, and that you can send some agent or power to accomplish this cure just as I can exercise, in my inferior capacity, my authority over a few men.

When men have the faith that it is their privilege to have, they will accomplish more than they have ever done before. When a number of people of strong concentrative ability combine, they can accomplish wonders.

While Jesus was dining in the house of a rich Pharisee, a woman who was a sinner approached and

annointed his feet with ointment, the tears of penitence which she wiped away with the hair of her head, and the kisses of love, dropping upon them. Of her Christ says: "Her sins which are many are forgiven; for she loved much." To her he says, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." . . . "I came not to call the righteous, but *sinner*s to repentance," are his words. All he demands of us is a pure heart—good intentions. He does not expect us to become perfect in character all at once. This is why so many refuse his offer, because if they cannot become perfect at once they will not comply at all; they simply bury their talent in the ground. This is partly due to public opinion; people do not wish to be considered hypocrites, and knowing that the world expects perfection of character, they bury themselves until it is too late to remedy their error. This is why we need a different version of the gospel; we want to offer people a heart religion,—one that will bring people heart to heart with God.

After this the joining of any religious organization which they believe to be the best is a secondary matter. I have already said that true faith is always connected with an act, trifling it may be, but still an act of faith. It may be an action performed or a practice restrained. Some, indeed, have been obliged to surrender even their lives; like the apostle Paul, they have not counted their lives dear unto them, satisfied that in losing the present, fleeting life, they were gaining an eternal, abiding one.

VI

GOD

IT may be said that I have not proved the existence of God, but we really need only to prove the existence of man in order to prove that there is a God. If we were not ourselves in existence there would be to us no God, neither could his existence be proved, nor would proof be necessary. We have, however, a man to commence with for our first premise—the Man Christ Jesus. Christ was a man, and in all probability not different from other men, except in perfection, although even He said that His Father was greater than He, and that there was none good but one, that is His Father and our Father—His God and our God.

Now it is reasonable to say that every man has a God of some kind. Some men make a god of money; some there are who worship high eating and drinking—offering up their bodies a living sacrifice to the god of intemperance. Others sacrifice themselves soul and body to the god of fashion; these are only a few of the hundreds of gods that are worshipped by men, some even making gods of themselves. These latter are people of large self-esteem, who can see no superior to themselves. These are statements which need no proof to substantiate them, being self-evident facts. We can prove the existence of not only one God, but that of many gods.

There is but one true and living God (to reiterate what I have already said), and He is the perfect God: far above man's comprehension, but not above man's ideal of perfection, using the word perfection in the fullest comprehension of its meaning. It may be asked, how do I know that there is a God who comes up to man's ideal of infinite perfection? I answer, because man's God is always the counterpart of his highest desires and aspirations. You may say that this is visionary; but is it visionary, or a plain statement of fact, to say that a man worships a wooden idol? The idea and the ideal elevate the man; but the man must first be elevated before he can have a high ideal, paradoxical as this may sound. We shall call attention later to this idea as brought out in the life of Helen Keller, to whose view a new world was brought when she first learned to connect words with the objects with which she was already familiar. The elevation of our ideas and our ideals sometimes opens up to our vision a new heaven and a new earth, and a God of a perfect law. Those who keep that perfect law with the full intent of the mind will live in that new world to which their eyes have been opened, knowing that whatever of good or ill may come in this present time, eventually it will be for their greatest good and happiness.

The reason we do not enjoy more happiness in this world is because of our imperfection; from the nature of things we cannot expect to be perfect except at heart. Take the case of a great inventor, like Mr. Edison, for instance. Were he possessed of perfect knowledge and ability, no invention would be beyond

his powers—not even the much-sought-after flying machine. So in the change of the heart; we are only partly good—there is but a small fraction of perfection in our entire system.

These things we know: that we have a conscious existence; that there is another manifestation in this universe which we know surrounds us; that this manifestation is of an infinite Power and Intelligence which we must call God or Law. This intelligent power is as evident in the universe as the intelligent mind is evident in the physical body of a human being. We know that there is an intelligent mind connected with the physical body, although we cannot see it with the natural eye so-called, but with the eye of reason. So, in the manifestations or phenomena of nature, if we use our reason, we can see evidences of a superior power, which to a reasonable mind must appear to be a perfect, intelligent law, or a perfect Spirit of love and power, as well as intelligence—not as Creator, but as being immanent in all nature, or the soul of nature. The apparent evil in the world is like the evil attributed to money: money is a blessing when rightly used; it is only evil when we worship it or use it for selfish or evil purposes. Christ said, 'My kingdom is not of this world': in this saying He had a meaning other than that which has been taught us by our religious teachers; for He taught us to pray to the Father, 'Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.'

We can neither know nor say that there is a human soul in existence, or a conscious human being—one who is conscious of his own existence, or of that of any

other human being except as we judge by our own experience, and by the manifestations of nature as we see these in the physical system. We say, there is a man. Why do we say this? Because we see the natural phenomenon of a man. We can as consistently say, in the light of our knowledge of the vast universe as we know it in this century, that there must be a living soul connected with it. As Herbert Spencer has said: "The whole universe seems to be alive." This kingdom of God that is to come, and even now is visible on earth, is the scientific light which we see slowly, but in an ever increasing ratio shining all over the world.

This kingdom is not a military kingdom, but a kingdom whose warriors will fight against false principles, ideas and practices; against ignorance and superstition. Christ meant that His kingdom was not like the former kingdoms of this world: He did not mean that it would not come to this world. His mission is not to destroy men's lives, as has been done in the conquest of one kingdom over another; but to save men's lives as well as souls. His mission is not the destruction of the world or the people of the world, but the destruction of the evil in the world, and the building up of a world of wisdom, virtue and happiness, wherein God may dwell and be seen and known. This building up of a new kingdom in the world does not imply the destruction of the old, but simply the remodeling of a new one out of the old. Thus we see that all things evil may be neutralized and utilized for the coming of the new kingdom.

This new kingdom can never come to our conscious-

ness except as we become wise and virtuous. We cannot expect that all people will observe it, any more than we can expect that the dumb animals will observe it—it is only those who strive for it that may enter in.

To illustrate more fully my meaning when I say that we can know God in His entirety, immensity, or fullness, in accordance with the teachings of Christ, and also in accordance with logic, let us take that saying of St. John, "God is Love." We may say that He is all the love as well as power that there is in existence. Now Christ said: We will both come—that is, He and His Father—"We will come and make our abode with you, and sup with you and you with us." There are many other sayings similar to this; such as: "The Father is in me, and I in him." "He that seeth me, seeth him that sent me." "But the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."

How can God in all His immensity dwell in an individual? King Solomon of ancient time asked a similar question and answered it partially, but we can, perhaps, give a reasonable answer. Let us say that God is an infinite reservoir of love. Now let us represent this reservoir of love by an immense reservoir of pure water: now if we had connection by which we could be supplied with all the cool, pure water from this reservoir that we needed, would it not be equivalent to having the reservoir itself in our houses, constantly at hand for the supply of our needs? Should we not have it *all*, to all intents and purposes?

When we become pure in heart we shall never thirst again; all that is necessary is to keep connection with

this reservoir, and this is very simple and easy to do, —the weakest mortal can do it.

Philip wanted to see the whole of God: (John xiv 8)—this would be impossible with our short vision—more impossible than it would be for us to see the most remote stars of the universe. Why did Christ say to Philip, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father?” Did Philip really see God when he looked at Christ? Yes: because Philip was thirsting to see and know God, and Christ was his ideal of perfection. This was, no doubt, his second thought, after Christ had let the light into his mind. He had previously believed in an unknown something, just as people are doing today.

We must have an internal consciousness of anything and everything, be it money, honor, life or even God Himself, before it can be real. The Ideal must first be photographed on the mind before it can be developed and become real.

It appears then that the most essential thing in life is a noble ideal. This is what we should fall down and worship and serve with all our hearts. In this way, and by perseverance, our ideal will grow and continue to increase until in the eternal ages it will fill immensity with beauty and grandeur.

To each one it is given to fight and win his own battles. God will bear us and our burden, but he will not remove it until his own good time. Christ also had his burden until the last hour when he cried out: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

Dark days sometimes overtake us, but the sun shines beyond the clouds.

I recognize no one as my superior in authority when I am told that I can know nothing of the so-called future, or of heaven, or of God. Neither do I recognize a belief in these without evidence. When people tell me that this world and this life end all; that when our bodies die this will be the termination of our existence; that we cannot have an existence separate from the body, I must tell them that the present is, and always has been, the future of the past; that within me, or in some way connected with my natural body, I know there is a vitality more tenacious than flesh and blood that says, I will not die. It does not say, I do not desire to die, or I do not want to die, but it says, *I will not die*. How do I know this? Because this is my God: this volition of which I know that I am in possession: not lightly to be retained, but with the grip of a drowning man. . . . We have the treachery of our natural environment to contend with, and we must cling to our Life-buoy with all the powers of our being. The God who is within us tells every one of us that sincerity and honest intentions cannot be resisted, and if continued existence depends upon virtue, then our continued, practical, determined efforts must be successful in maintaining life, and also everlasting life. As it is in this present world, so it will be in all worlds; we must take advantage of our environment, knowing that we can make to a great extent our own happiness or misery; realizing that individually we

increase our own happiness by laboring for the happiness of society, endeavoring also to teach others that they have the power within themselves which no one can give nor take away of creating their own world, their own God, and their own happiness.

VII

THE IMAGE OF GOD

LET us for the present throw aside all preconceived ideas and all the authority of the Bible, and take the naked truth as it is revealed in the human mind; for here we shall, perhaps, find something as substantial as anything that we have ever found from any other source. For instance: when we judge people, saying that none are honest, that "every man has his price," we immediately pass judgment upon ourselves. "Judge not that ye be not judged," are the words of the Master, and we are included in our own judgment. When we speak of every man, we must mean also ourselves; and that this is the God in man is evident, for God cannot reverse this judgment. Again, in forgiving the debts of others to us, we forgive our own in that act. If you say that we have no power to forgive under such circumstances, I would say that God cannot but imitate man, and it is our act of forgiveness to others that brings forgiveness to us. Again we see the God in man.

How may we obtain eternal life? By trying to increase life and happiness in ourselves and in others and in the world generally. The tendency of destruction is to end all life. When we can see within ourselves a pure heart, we shall see the true God within our own person. A man may have a true idea of his

farm, his buildings, his orchard, his cattle, as well as of his wife and children, if he have all these things in possession, although they may be many miles from him. Their image may be photographed so plainly upon his mind that he sees them perfectly. Sometimes in dreams we see and talk with our friends,—those who are alive as well as those who have gone over on the other side. In like manner can we have the true God in our minds: He may be to us the most substantial reality we have. To illustrate this point more fully, we will instance the miser who has a chest of gold hidden on his premises where he thinks no one will ever find it, and he says to himself: I will take comfort the rest of my days, for I have enough to last my lifetime without working for any one. Now this chest of gold is his god. In all probability he will continue to accumulate more and to deprive himself of all the comforts of life, living and dying in the worship of this chest of gold, which must be left to his heirs, if he have any. *His* god he cannot take with him, and it is with the greatest reluctance that he parts with it, going into the Unknown without a God and without hope. Now where was his god, all the years of his life? I affirm that it was in his mind,—it was the selfish satisfaction of the mind which made him leave the gold intact, never using it either for his own good or that of anyone else. He simply satisfied his own selfish heart; he simply said, "This gold is my god, it is all I want." It made him narrow, shrivelled him up, made him as nearly nothing as it is possible for any one to become.

Turn now to the other side; what effect does it have

upon a man to worship the true God, after the fashion that Christ gave us? It will transform him, make him in the image of God. The man who worships and serves this pattern that Christ gave us will be developed into a being equal in every way to the Christ; in other words, he will be changed into the same image.

We can, then, prove that there is a true God by proving that there is, or has been, a true man; and even where the man is not, or has not been of absolutely perfect character, yet if he have a true heart, there you may behold the true God. Again I say that the existence of a true, good-hearted man is perfect evidence of the existence of the true and living God, for one could not exist without the other. One must be the Father and the other the son, and "all ye are brethren." This is what Christ meant when he told his disciples that "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

We are all familiar with the law of gravity, but none of us have ever seen gravity, nor could even a scientific man tell us what it is,—yet its workings prove its existence. In like manner we believe that men have living souls inhabiting their bodies, although we have never seen a soul. We know that it exists by the manifestations of life in the man's acts. When we see the lifeless human body we say, the soul has left the body and it is dead. That is to say, the body is not the person, it is only the tenement in which the real man lived for a short time. Very often the soul is glad to leave the corruptible tenement of clay. What then is man? He is the manifestation of God, he is a

part of God, he came out from God and will return to God.

Is there in all the natural universe (outside of the human race) any evidence of intelligence that can be compared with the intelligence of the human race? There are, it is true, many manifestations of intelligence in creatures which perform wonders of handiwork,—if we may call it so. This, however, does not imply creation; for God Himself is fearfully and wonderfully made, but without having been created. The conclusion, then, at which we have arrived is this: that God is the Source of all things, the Ruler of all things; and that wherever we see a manifestation of life we see a manifestation of God,—not always in full perfection, but in fullest perfection in the Man Christ Jesus. Men are in some sense a part of God, according to their virtue. To love God, then, we must love virtue, love all good causes, do service either with hand or brain or purse,—in any and every way, and love our neighbor as ourselves. Thus shall we fulfil all the law and the gospel.

In the course of one of his sermons, Rev. George Hepworth of New York tells of an interview with an architect, who said to him that he felt just as truly bound to be honest in building a house as a minister is to be sincere in his prayers. “If,” said he, “I can show when the time of reckoning comes that I have *put my soul into my work*, I have no doubt about the welfare of that soul.” This statement ought to be posted upon every rock by the wayside, in every public place, and should be framed and hung up in our living rooms,—for surely there can be nothing more concise

upon the subject of religion. Do we realize that we cannot serve God in any other way than in our every day's labor? Wherever we see an opening for honest labor,—or, in other words, for honest money making—we must engage in it as in God's service. If we are successful we shall be held accountable for the use we make of our success. If unsuccessful, we shall be rewarded for what we tried to do.

“One of the ideas which give life its dignity and its interest is the fact that no experience stands by itself, but becomes a preparation for that which is to follow. In every successful career there is clearly revealed the close relation between the culmination of some striking achievement, and the fidelity, patience and courage which went before it. No man comes suddenly into any kind of supremacy. Every kind of superiority is the result of a thousand apparently unimportant and insignificant acts. Preparation for a great crisis is rarely made consciously. It is generally made by the person who is doing the work of the day with the utmost fidelity, without any idea that this fidelity is to find its reward in the possibility of a notable achievement at the end. The experience of life is so adjusted to the development of character that everything which comes in the shape of opportunity or duty presents a test which there is no possibility of evading.”

“To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life,” said Peter. “It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life,” said Christ.

“For God so loved the world that He gave his only

begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." "He that believeth is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the Son of God."

VIII

THE NEW LIFE

CHRIST said, Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead. He said again: I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if a man eat this bread he shall live forever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, or my life, which I will give for the life and well-being of the world. And again, It is the spirit of my words that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak upon you, they are spirit and they are *life*. Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me except it were given him of my Father.

This implies that God does give man the power, but not the choice. The choice, or volition, is in our own hands. He said these things because he knew there were some who did not believe his words. Those who eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ are those who have Him formed within them. They have lived in Him and partaken of Him, His personality, until they have Christ's whole body formed within themselves. They have shed or exfoliated the old personality and taken on a new personality.

It seems quite plain to me that Christ intended to show that God, and the kingdom of heaven, and eternal

life, as well as its environments,—such as the bread of life and the well of water,—were internal. For Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, “If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him and he would have given thee living water. The woman said unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; from whence then hast thou that living water? Jesus said to her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, it shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life.”

Where else can we locate this well of living water except in our mind? This well may be in every living person by his own volition. The existence of this living well within us may be as true and as real as any other experience of life. For instance, the normal condition of our mind is more real to our existence, the effect of reasonable evidence is more substantial and more material, than any abnormal condition. Again, we are all satisfied that under certain abnormal conditions and derangements people do really live a visionary life which to them seems to be real. Now the question is, Can we be sure that the living water is what it is said to be? The thought which I wish to convey at present is that this living water may be in the mind, which, for the time being, is the safest place for it to be in. We must take into consideration the fact that this water of life is a quality as well as quantity, for it has the quality of everlastingness. Because we have it in our minds it will live forever, or as long as our souls exist; for if we should cease to

exist everything would cease to exist for us. We, being a part of God, must exist as long as He exists.

Mr. John Fiske, in his book, "Through Nature to God," says: "What we call the soul, the mind, the *conscious* self, is something strange and wonderful. In our ordinary efforts to conceive it, invisible as it is," (I should like to substitute: as it *seems*,) "we are apt to try so strenuously to divorce it from the notion of *substance* that it seems unreal, ethereal, ghost-like. Yet of all realities the soul is the most solid, sound, and undeniable. Thoughts and feelings are the fundamental facts from which there is no escaping. Our whole universe, from the sands on the seashore to the flaming suns that throng the Milky Way, is built up of sights and sounds, of tastes and odors, of pleasures and pains, of sensations of motion and resistance, either felt directly or inferred. This is no ghostly universe, but all intensely real as it exists in that intensest of realities, the human soul! Consciousness, the soul's fundamental fact, is the most fundamental of all facts."

How, then, can we have God in the consciousness? I would answer, by cultivating in or within our consciousness the ideal Christ life in sincerity,—not Christ the man, but His teachings. Christ may be formed in a weak personality, but He can manifest Himself more powerfully in the large, robust humanity, and more perfectly in the soil of the sinful consciousness, for the heart that is fertile enough to produce enormous weeds of sinfulness is rich enough to produce an enormous harvest of Christian character

when thoroughly cultivated: for where sin abounds grace can much more abound.

It is said by some, and by our teachers among the number, that we must first receive the seed; but I would say that we must prepare the heart first, by digging out the roots of sin before we can receive the seed, —or both must be done at the same time,—and then the thorns and weeds must be kept down to the end of the harvest.

In another chapter of the book above quoted, Mr. Fiske beautifully describes the restfulness to the soul of a "daisied field in June." He speaks of the matin songs of the birds, the luxuriant splendor of noon-tide, the "more pensive time when long shadows are thrown eastward—" when the "solemn mantle of darkness" falls upon the earth. After dwelling upon the sense of unalloyed happiness which the contemplation of nature's beauties brings to the mind, he turns to the other side—to the tragedies of nature—the preying of the hawk upon the bird, of the bird on the worm, the "black injustice—a savage disregard for others" which are part of the general scheme of nature, and adds:—"We find that this hideous hatred and strife, this wholesale famine and death, furnish the indispensable conditions for the evolution of higher and higher types of life. Nay more, but for the pitiless destruction of all individuals that fall short of a certain degree of fitness to the circumstances of life into which they are born, the type would inevitably degenerate, the life would become lower and meaner in kind."

This view of God's or nature's, process of evolution seems the same idea that Christ taught when he said,

“To him that hath shall be given”; but eventually it will not be those who have the most in quantity but those who have the best in quality who will have the “abundance” promised to those who *have*. For Christ evolved the idea that the fittest were the most virtuous, —at least at heart,—which would increase the possibility of the survival of a larger number of the human race than would be the case among the lower forms of life.

Mr. Fiske says again, “When Mr. Huxley asks us to believe that ‘the cosmic process has no sort of relation to moral ends,’ I feel like replying to the question, Does not the cosmic process exist purely for the sake of moral ends? Subtract from the universe its ethical meaning, and nothing remains but an unreal phantom, the figment of false metaphysics. “Likewise, subtract from the teachings of Christ their ethical meaning, and we have pagan idolatry. “What is the ultimate goal of the ethical process?” Mr. Fiske goes on to ask. “According to the utilitarian philosophy, that goal is the completion of human happiness. But this interpretation soon refutes itself. A world of completed happiness would be a world of quiescence; the dynamics of evolution would have no place in it. But suppose we say that the ultimate goal of the ethical process is the perfecting of human character? This form of statement contains far more than the other. Consummation of happiness is a natural outcome of the perfecting of character, but that perfecting can be achieved only through struggle, through discipline, through resistance. It is for him *that overcometh* that the crown of life is reserved.”

Now, this testimony from a scientific man of the latest school is nothing more than the truth Christ taught many years ago. But He taught us more; He taught us the philosophy of the birth, growth, and possible degeneration of the human soul. Again he says: "All life upon the globe, whether physical or psychical, represents the continuous adjustment of inner to outer relations. The degree of life is low or high according to the correspondence between internal and external relations; is simple or complex, perfect or imperfect. Every stage of enlargement has had reference to actual existence outside. . . . There was a critical moment in the history of our planet, when love was beginning to play a part hitherto unknown, when notions of right and wrong were germinating in the nascent Human Soul, when civilization was to be superadded to organic evolution. At that critical moment we see the nascent Human Soul vaguely reaching forth toward something akin to itself, not in the realm of fleeting phenomena, but in the Eternal presence beyond. An internal adjustment of ideas was achieved in correspondence with an Unseen World. . . . Now if the relation thus established in the morning twilight of man's existence between the Human Soul and a world invisible and immaterial is a relation of which only the subjective term is real, and the objective term is non-existent, then, I say, it is something utterly without precedent in the whole history of creation. Every stage of enlargement has had reference to actual existences outside. The eye was developed in response to the outward existence of radiant light, the ear in response to the outward ex-

istence of acoustic vibrations, the mother's love came in response to the infant's needs; everywhere the internal adjustment has been brought about so as to harmonize with some actually existing fact."

If, as Mr. Fiske says, for the development of any faculty in nature, the internal adjustment is necessary for the completion of the actual fact, then, I say, this corresponds exactly with the teachings of Christ when He said, "The pure in heart (or mind) shall see God." We know that the eye must be perfect before it can see perfectly, that only if the ear is perfect, can we hear perfectly—and so if, in his own words, our intellectual eyes are single or perfect, our whole bodies or souls will be full of light. This, then, is the central fact. Nothing outside of ourselves can be real to us until we ourselves are changed, and this change can be made only by our evolution from darkness to light by our own volition.

The masses, at present, are like the blind man who said he could see men as trees walking. He could see moving objects, but could not distinguish the shape; for when the men stood still he could not tell whether they were trees or men. We can comprehend something of this law of internal and external relations every day of our lives when we consider that nearly all the thoughts of our lives are caused by some external relation which we are called to consider or pass judgment upon or decide. We make our plans never so perfect,—some trifling external information will cause a complete change in our actions.

"In the process of spiritual evolution, evil must needs be present," says Mr. Fiske; "but the nature of

evolution also requires that it should be evanescent. In the higher stages, that which is worse than the best need no longer be positively bad." I should say that this can *never* be said of the intention or heart, as it is called, but it may be said of the *character at any stage* of evolution. Let us follow this author's thought further;—"The mystery of evil remains a mystery still, but it is no longer a harsh dissonance such as greeted the poet's ear when the doors of hell were thrown open; for we see this mystery belongs among the profound harmonies in God's creation. Many are the pains of life, and the struggle with wickedness is hard; its course is marked with sorrow and tears. But assuredly its deep impress upon the human soul is the indispensable background against which shall be set hereafter the eternal joys of heaven!"

In these words we have the mystery of evil solved; it is the indispensable background of the picture of the kingdom of heaven. In fact, the animal man is a large part of the environment of the soul. The human heart is the soil in which the spiritual soul lives and grows; fertile from the very fact that it is full of impurities. But these evils may all be, and will be, utilized in the evolution of the soul. In the catalogue of crime we can see that it is not what we do but what we intend to do, in many cases, that constitutes the crime. Sometimes that faculty of the mind that would normally be a virtuous faculty is perverted or uncontrolled until it becomes vicious. Take, for instance, the faculty of combativeness in its normal development; it is virtuous, for with this faculty we defend ourselves, our opinions, our homes, our neighbors and our country,

and in the use of this faculty we are sometimes forced to kill. This process is going on in the world almost unobserved in society at present. In the competition of labor the weakest are thrust aside, and they and their families suffer the privations that kill. Now to be industrious is a virtue, but to take the work that another man needs more than we do is a crime.

All evil, then, is the perversion of good, either wilfully executed or uncontrolled. There are also sins of ignorance which will exist until we are enlightened; it is impossible, under present circumstances, but that offences must come, but woe unto the men by whom they come! One of the most patent of these offences is the tenacity with which the Rum kingdom holds the reins of government. No man can be justified in its sale by saying, "It will always be sold, and if I do not sell it, some one else will."

All evil will eventually be utilized by the good, just as the lily in its growth utilizes the damp, black soil,—black with the decayed leaves of centuries from which it draws food and drink, inhaling also the poisonous gases from the atmosphere—and there is nothing more pure and beautiful in nature than the lily. The saying, "That which is worse than the best need no longer be positively bad," is true in practical life in the present conditions of civilization, for it may well be said, There is none good but one: One, that is God. We may condemn evil as evil, but we must not condemn those honest-hearted people who are struggling to overcome their besetting sins, no matter how sinful they may be, as long as there are indications of a purpose to reform; some of them are the best hearted peo-

ple in the world, for they love much, and sometimes make the best citizens either in this world or the next. The apostle Paul says: "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I know not. So then, with the *mind* I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin!"

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who with the mind obey the law or teachings of Christ, not to the letter morally, but with the perfect heart or intention, or, as He Himself says, *mind*.

One cannot fail to discover the analogy between the evolution of the natural mind from childhood to age, and the evolution of the spiritual life as far as we can observe it, although we presume that the development of the latter life is infinitely slower than that of the former. I have been more than ever forcibly impressed with this analogy since reading a sketch of the life of Miss Helen Keller, written by herself, which seems as wonderful as any historical miracle. In writing about the dawn of her intellect, she says:

"I did not know what the future held of marvel or surprise for me. Anger and bitterness had preyed upon me continually for weeks, and a deep languor had succeeded this passionate struggle. Have you ever been at sea in a dense fog when it seemed as if a tangible white darkness shut you in, and the great ship, tense and anxious, groped her way towards the shore with plummet and sounding line, and had no way of knowing how near the harbor was?" At this time, when she was about seven years old, the wordless

and sightless cry of her soul was, "Light! Give me Light! And the light of love shone on me in that hour. I felt approaching footsteps. I stretched out my hand, as I supposed to my mother. Some one took it, and I was caught up and held close in the arms of her who had come to reveal all things, and more than all else, to love me." She had learned from this teacher, Miss Sullivan, to spell many words, but had confounded the word m-u-g and the word w-a-t-e-r. But one day she and her teacher walked down to the well house: "Some one was drawing water and my teacher placed my hand under the spout. As the cool stream gushed over one hand she spelt into the other the word 'water' first slowly, then more rapidly. I stood still, my whole attention fixed upon the motions of her fingers. Suddenly I felt a misty consciousness of something forgotten—a thrill of returning thought; and somehow the mystery of language was revealed to me. I knew then that w-a-t-e-r meant the wonderful, cool something that was flowing over my hand. That living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy; set it free! There were barriers still, it is true, but barriers that could in time be swept away. I left the well house eager to learn. Everything had a name, and each name gave birth to a new thought. As we returned to the house every object which I touched seemed to quiver with life. That was because I saw everything with the strange, new sight which had come to me. . . . As my knowledge of things grew, I felt more and more the delight of the world I was in." This "world" was the new kingdom into which she

had just been born. She continues: "Thus I learned from life itself. At the beginning I was only a mass of possibilities. It was my teacher, who unfolded and developed them. When she came everything about me breathed of love and joy and was full of meaning. She has never let pass an opportunity to point out the beauty that is in everything."

Note the words, "As my knowledge of things grew I felt more and more the delight of the world I was in." This of the natural, external world: but what shall we say of those who have never had their spiritual vision or hearing developed? This spiritual world is as tangible to me as the world of nature into which this child so suddenly entered, and it also may be entered by the same process by which she entered into her world. This world is indeed beautiful, but we shall come to the end of it sooner or later, and although some of us enjoy it for many years, there are countless numbers whose lives are lives of suffering from one cause or another. But in this spiritual world into which we may all enter, we learn of a better time coming, and that we may have an eternal life in exchange for the animal life. For the words of Christ even now usher us into eternal life when He tells us that God is our Father.

IX

THE DESTINY OF MAN

HE must be a bold man who will undertake to solve the problem of the destiny of man: but something in that direction is certainly needed to satisfy the thirst of the human soul.

An old proverb tells us that we ought not to try to cross the bridge until we come to it, but it is for our benefit sometimes at least to know what the bridge is.

To be existent,—to know at this moment, that you have a conscious identity,—is the most positive evidence of immortality. There are evidences within our own observation of long ages of previous existence in some of the lower forms of life, and as we look around us in nature we find that there is evidence even on this planet of almost infinite age. The rocks speak to those who have ears to hear and eyes to see; they tell us of the countless years since they were in a melted mass, and if we had the right development of brain we could see much more than we can now of this evidence of innumerable ages in the past, when we were dormant in the lap of nature. What is it that has made us what we are? It has become a commonplace that it is God that has done all this, for “without Me ye can do nothing!” Nothing is more true than this! “There is,” says Mr. Drummond, “in the spiritual organism a principle of life; but that is not self-existent. It requires a second factor, a something in

which to live and move and have its being, an environment. And what is the spiritual environment? It is God." . . . "When a piece of coal is thrown on the fire we say that it will radiate into the room a certain amount of heat. This heat, in the popular conception, is supposed to reside in the coal and to be set free during the process of combustion. In reality, however, the heat energy is only in part contained in the coal. It is contained just as truly in the coal's environment—that is to say, in the oxygen of the air. The atoms of carbon which compose the coal have a powerful affinity for the oxygen of the air. Whenever they are made to approach within a certain distance of one another, by the initial application of heat, they rush together with inconceivable velocity. The heat which appears at this moment comes neither from the carbon alone nor from the oxygen alone. These two substances are really inconsumable, and continue to exist after they meet in a combined form, as carbonic acid gas. . . . Without Environment the soul is as the carbon without the oxygen, as the fish without the water, as the animal without extrinsic conditions of vitality. It is certain that in most cases the larger debt is due to an invisible environment."

It is at this point that I object to the religious teachings of the day, both old and new,—except just what Christ taught, and, unfortunately, he is not taught by the teachers of the day,—for we need no longer believe in an *invisible* environment!

To prove what man is and what God is, and what the destiny of both by scientific evidence, should be easy, for Mr. Drummond, who was himself a scientist

as well as a Christian, has given us the answer in the above-quoted passage. Of those who believe in God I would ask the following questions. The coal or carbon which represents the human soul—is it not visible? Is not oxygen visible or tangible? Are not both inconsumable? Which is the most valuable, coal or oxygen, or are both equally valuable? Coal alone never could produce heat, neither alone could oxygen, or environment. Again, the fish could not exist without the water; the water might exist without the fish, but is not the fish a factor? Which is highest in the scale of existence? Man cannot live without air, food, and many other things which form his environment. Which is the greatest factor, man, or the natural environment? How about the soul of man—is it not an important factor? In other words, is not coal the environment of oxygen as much as oxygen is the environment of the coal? As we look around upon nature and her forces we are sometimes inclined, like the savage tribes of men, to stand in awe of the elements around us, and to feel sometimes that we can see the manifestations of God in the lightning and in the tornado, and even in the diseases which people used to think were sent into the world by some unseen demons or gods, but men are learning how to harness these demons or gods, and are making them useful instead of harmful.

In saying that man is the highest and most important factor in environment, I do not in the least degrade infinity, but simply place man at the head. Christ made the same statement when He said, "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father," and yet, He

said, "you continue to ask me to show you the Father." People will continue to believe that God is invisible, scientists will still explore the universe to find Him, but in order to know the destiny of man we must seek farther. Let me illustrate not what man is, but what it is possible for him to become. It is said that there is, in a large bookstore in New York City, a small colored lad who works there and who has located in his mind every book in that store. This lad has a duplicate bookstore in his mind. Just so we can have the kingdom of God within us. There are not, then, any factors more essential or more lasting than we may become. If there are, let those who can do so produce them—man is the environment of all the other factors. Christ and God and the kingdom of heaven formed within you, not you in God, not you in Christ—it does not say that,—but rather, Christ formed within you the hope of eternal life. The natural tendency of virtue, knowledge, is better circumstances. Eternal life is a quality of life; a perfect quality of life is immortal. Christ prohibited our speculations on the duration of our existence when He said: "Take no anxious thought for the morrow": He did not say we must not be anxious for the present time; no one can live in future time until it comes, and our present is the result of the past. Emerson has said: "One of the illusions is that the present hour is not the critical, decisive hour. Write it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year. No man has learned anything rightly until he knows that every day is doomsday. He only can enrich me who can recommend me the space between sun and sun. 'Tis the measure of

a man, his appreciation of a day." Another writer says: "No person is strong enough to stand the strain of today's duties, and all the load of tomorrow's anxieties piled upon the top of them." The idea is well expressed in the simple lines:—

"Let me be strong in word and deed
Just for today;
Lord, for tomorrow and its need
I must not pray!"

It has not been my intention, in anything I have written, to imply that I do not recognize an Almighty Father of all men and ruler of all things. I believe He is the perfect Almighty Law of life and love, but at the same time I believe that man must conform to God, for He will never conform to man. Science teaches us that the human race as we now see it has been developed from the savage state. It teaches us also that we are still animals, and the natural character finds its limits within the organic sphere. In dealing with a person of fine moral character, we are dealing with the highest achievement of the organic kingdom, but as Mr. Drummond says: "In dealing with the spiritual man we are dealing with the lowest form of life in the spiritual world: to contrast the two, and wonder that one is apparently so little better than the other, is unscientific and unjust. The spiritual man is a mere unformed embryo, hidden as yet in his earthly chrysalis case, while the natural man has the breeding and evolution of ages represented in his character."

Mr. Fiske says:—"The savage's primeval ghost world is always mixed up with his childlike notions of

what he ought to do; in their beginnings theology and ethics were inseparable; in all the vast historic developments of religion they have remained inseparable. The grotesque conceptions of primitive man have given place to conceptions framed after wider and deeper experience, but the union of ethics with theology remains undisturbed even in that most refined religious philosophy which ventures no opinion concerning the happiness or misery of a future life, except that the seed sown here will naturally determine the fruit to be gathered hereafter. All the analysis that modern knowledge can bring to bear upon the theory of a future life points to the opinion that the breach of physical continuity is not accompanied by any breach of ethical continuity. Such an opinion relating to matters beyond experience cannot of course be called scientific, but whether it be justifiable or not, my point is that neither in the crude fancies of primitive men nor in the most refined modern philosophy can theology divorce itself from *ethics*. Take away ethical significance from our conceptions of the Unseen world and the quasi-human God, and no element of significance remains. All that was vital in theism is gone."

Mr. Fiske has given great weight to ethics in religion, but he has skipped over the important truth that there can be no unseen world except to those who cannot see it. If no one has ever seen this world it is indeed unseen; and again, if no one knows there is an unseen world, it is an unknown world.

Now I believe that Mr. Fiske is on the right track in the computation of this problem; but instead of using his term "the Unseen World" I should say the

Ethical World, and for the "quasi-human God" should substitute the Ethical God. We know that there is a world of ethical meaning in the teachings of Christ, and that mankind can live and be happy, for even in this world we are governed by this ethical law, and this same law that was given to us by Christ will extend into all worlds and into all time. St. John expressed it clearly when he wrote his first verse: "In the beginning was the (Ethical) Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

One of the statements attributed to Christ has always had great significance to me—a statement which He made to the man who came to Him by night, namely: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." And in addition to this one statement with which I am so forcibly impressed, all His teachings are imbued with the same idea, neither is there lacking evidence from other sources. Science teaches us that man is nothing but an animal, and perishes, both mind and body, like other animals. Since natural science has proved one part of this statement—"That which is born of the flesh is flesh"—it certainly ought to be the duty of believers to prove the other part to be true. I have shown that there can be no preëxistent life, that is to say, in the sense of one life creating another life. It is also true that all existence is present existence, that it is past, present, and future blended in one eternal Now. Neither man nor God can live more than one moment at a time, in the common idea or acceptance of time, for time is merely an imaginary point or line on the chart of eternity.

When Moses enquired of God about what he should say to the children of Israel about his personality and name, it is said that God told him to call him by the name I AM. Again, when Christ was discussing the question of the hereafter and the resurrection of the dead with the Jews, he quoted some Old Testament scripture to them, namely: "I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. Therefore he is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live unto him." Now, when he said I AM, he meant *now*. He did not say, I was, he did not say, I shall be, but when he said I AM, it implied present and future. The fact then that a thing exists is evidence of its future existence after its kind. The mineral, vegetable, animal, spiritual, each in its own kingdom after its kind, each one will live and progress in its own kingdom. It appears then, that to exist as a mineral or an animal is not the eternal life we are after. Life of the true sort is something more than duration or quantity; it does mean this, but this alone would be worthless if we were miserable. The spiritual life is a peculiar quality of life; it is a life that will satisfy all the demands of our being even beyond our imagination. When we have this new life in this world it is not so great a change as some have supposed; it is an *addition*. We can enjoy all that is good in the natural kingdom, and added to this is the enjoyment of the mind in the spiritual kingdom.

This life is the present condition of the mind. This can be best understood by comparison; on the one side we will place the imbecile, or low grade human animal, and on the other side place the most noble specimen of

the animal man; which one would the ordinary man choose to be? Now there is not much difference between the two in the natural or physical life: but there is an infinite difference between the most noble natural man and the spiritual man, even in this world or in this life, by the testimony of thousands of people who have passed from death unto life.

Mr. Henry Drummond, writing upon the subject of Spiritual Life and Degeneration, says: "There are certain burrowing animals—the mole, for instance—which have taken to spending their lives beneath the surface of the ground, and Nature has taken her revenge upon them in a thoroughly natural way—she has closed up their eyes. If they mean to live in darkness, she argues, eyes are obviously a superfluous function. By neglecting them, these animals make it clear they do not want them. And as one of nature's first principles is that nothing shall exist in vain, the eyes are presently taken away, or reduced to a rudimentary state. This is the meaning of the favorite paradox of Christ, "take therefore the talent from him." No sleight-of-hand can rob religion of a *present*, the immortal nature of a now. When one examines the crustacea which have inhabited for centuries the lakes of the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky, one is at first astonished to find these animals apparently endowed with perfect eyes. The pallor of the head is broken by two black pigment specks, conspicuous indeed as the only bits of color on the whole blanched body; and these to the casual observer certainly represent well-defined organs of vision. But what need of eyes in these Stygian waters? There reigns everlast-

ing night. Is the law for once at fault? A swift incision with the scalpel, a glance with the lens, and their secret is betrayed. The eyes are a mockery. Externally they are organs of vision—the front of the eye is perfect: behind, there is nothing but a mass of ruins. The optic nerve is a shrunken, atrophied and insensate thread. These animals have organs of vision, and yet they have no vision. Exactly what Christ said of men: they have eyes but no vision.”

As I have already, in my chapter on the New Birth, given in as concentrated a form as possible the formula of the new birth or the new generation, I will, by quoting from the Apostle Paul, try to give a concentrated idea of the growth of the spiritual body. “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.” From all the information we can derive from all known sources, we learn that if we are seeking after eternal life we must, with all the energy we possess, love and serve all that is Good, and love our neighbor as ourselves. This formula includes all that is essential in religion. No man can prove that there is any other God than the God of Love and Goodness, and those who wish to keep you in ignorance of this fact are enemies to you. There is no mystery about this religion: it includes a knowledge of God, for God is good, and God is love. Love will fulfill all the law and the gospel. Every one may understand this with the exercise of a little reason. It will not hinder any one from joining any society or church which he may see fit to join, neither will it force any one into any society or church that is not congenial to him. The

idea that Christ tried to enforce with the strongest emphasis was expressed in His answer to the disciples when they asked Him if there were few that could be saved. His answer was: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many I say unto you will seek to enter in and shall not be able." This is a law of nature. Only those who concentrate all their powers upon the accomplishment of any purpose or object in this world will succeed. The laws of the spiritual world, as Christ taught them, correspond with natural law in every case.

IX

LIFE AND DEATH

WE often hear the question asked, Is there any conceivable way by which death can be abolished, practically, for you and for me? I would say, yes: for life never had a beginning, and consequently will never have an end. Life, like everything else, is simply *present* existence. What we call death is only a change of circumstances. Death does not always occur under circumstances over which we have no control, for we frequently have the privilege of deciding between life and death, so-called. Life, like death, is not something of the past, neither is it of the future. Life is always life, death is the absence of life. After we have had a decayed tooth extracted with which we have suffered much pain, we do not say that we have lost any part of our life by the removal of the suffering member. If we should have both arms and both legs removed, we might possibly live if we possessed a strong constitution—we might, indeed, in some cases preserve life by having them removed. We know that the whole universe is full of life, not future but present life. Neither God nor man can live in other than present life, and no one can define death, unless we should define it as a vacuum.

Death is the final removal of the painful or the decaying part of the human soul. Just as we remove

the decaying tooth or the decaying limb from the living body, so the final disintegration of the human body relieves the soul of its earthly environments. This body that has decayed is not the soul; it never was the soul; but the soul was the life of the body and controlled it as long as it was a fitting place or tenement to inhabit. The soul or mind controlled the body within the limits of natural law—all things are controlled by law, both God and man. We shall yet look upon the body which we once inhabited as we now do upon some dismembered portion of it, with feelings of relief.

If we have no immortal life abiding in us, then the natural life must end our existence, as Christ has said corruption cannot inherit incorruption.

Finally, I wish to reiterate that all our possibilities are within us: that is to say that life, and heaven and God, are within us, or they are nowhere. We each know of a certainty that life is within us; it is just as true that heaven and God must occupy a place, and that place must be in the mind, or nowhere. Christ taught this and nothing but this, and this is the only reasonable conclusion at which we can arrive from his testimony. It is an undeniable fact that an evil-minded, unhappy and discontented person could not be happy in the most beautiful paradise imaginable. The greatest truth ever uttered was that saying of Christ, "According to your faith be it unto you": in other words, according to our own volition we shall receive that which we desire. The power to move the arm that moves the world is latent within the human mind: it only needs the action of our own volition to put it in action. Christ said his kingdom was the

kingdom of truth: all great minds are seeking after the kingdom of truth,—that kingdom of knowledge whereby we shall be able to solve all the problems of life, both domestic and national; and they are numerous. This kingdom is being established not only in the individual but in society: it is like the leaven in the meal, and will accomplish that for which it was designed: namely, to spread abroad the knowledge of the truth and to separate the false from the true.

But is not God in it at all? Yes, He is in it all; but He will not conform to us—we must conform to Him. The spiritual world is the same as the natural world: we do not expect that nature will furnish us all we desire without our volition and our labor. Religion should teach us our duties to ourselves and to our neighbor. God does not need any of our service,—it is He that serves us, not we that serve Him.

As an instance of one whose God is the embodiment of kindness (and I say this with all reverence), I should like to refer to a well-known minister in Boston, whose face, life and sermons all show forth the beauty of the character of the God he worships. I have already said that we cannot all have the same God: those who are like this minister cannot believe in a vindictive God. But we must remember that all goodness is a savour of life unto life or of death unto death as we are affected by it; for if we accept life, we may have life; but if we reject life, no one can force it upon us. Is thine eye evil because I am good? is a question not easily answered without self-condemnation. Because we are justified before our God it

is not always safe to justify others before our God,—we must judge them by the God that they serve.

If we possess the immortal ingredient of love,—that pure, impartial love that seeketh not to be benefitted by intercourse with others, but to be of benefit to them,—we can claim sonship with God as well as immortality. Why not? We can see no reason why we should not be immortal as well as our God is immortal. But that which has not the quality of love cannot exist as life; it may exist as dead substance, as do the minerals, but not as a consciousness. It is the conscious life of love and activity that constitutes true existence. There is no reason why we, by the divine power which is inherent within us, should not resurrect ourselves into immortal existence, here and now; for Christ claimed that we, like Him, might by our own volition become the sons and daughters of God. “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Heavenly Father is perfect,” are his words.

Heretofore the great stumbling-block to men has been the idea that we cannot be holy; but it is evident from all the teachings of Christ, as well as from the teachings of common sense and reason, that we may be perfect in intention, and perfect intentions lead to a perfect life. Then if a perfect life is God’s life, by the same reasoning, if God is self-existent and immortal, we are also. No one will presume to say that the Infinite Soul of all things is less than immortal, for the very present existence of mind and matter precludes the possibility of a beginning or an end. To sum up:—This is God’s world—it may also be ours.

This eternal life is God's life—it may also be ours, and when we possess it we know what God is.

Natural scientists say that man is an animal, and that the mind dies with the body; but they cannot prove this. In fact, neither the one nor the other dies, for the body never was anything but dead matter, and the mind is mind and will so remain. You cannot change one substance into another. Water was always water and will so remain through all the ages to come; you may evaporate it and it may be taken up many miles into the air, but it will return again after many days, or be dissipated into another planet. Only a small part of man's capacity originates in the brain; a very large portion is received from external sources, thus showing that the brain is not the source of the mind, or that the brain does not act upon the mind, but that the mind derives its information from external sources in most cases and communicates them to the brain, the brain in turn acting upon the muscular system. The brain is simply an instrument or machine, which the mind uses for the accomplishment of its earthly purposes in life.

If we should isolate a number of small children from society until they were grown up men and women, they would be inferior to the lowest savage tribes; because they had not had the advantages of the cultivation of the externals, which children brought up in the society of the good may have. Our religious ideas have come to us through the evolution of religious thought that has come down to us through the ages of the past, and those which came to us through the mediumship of Christ are perfect. He denied no one

the privilege of becoming a son of God just as he was. He thought it not robbery to call himself the Son of God, neither did he deny us the privilege of becoming the same,—he urges us to do so. This is not religious cant; this is upright manhood and womanhood, something easy to do—something of great importance. It might be summed up as follows: Be yourself, just as you have always been when at your best; be sincere; be honest men and women. The truth which I would like to emphasize more strongly than any other, and which I consider of the greatest importance, is this:—take care of the *present* and the future will take care of itself.

But what is the spiritual life? This is a question that may well be asked and answered in this day of infidelity and carelessness, when people are saying, “We see no beauty in religion—it is a faith of sorrow and grief.” They say there is no light that penetrates into the future in our day; all is dark; we know nothing of the other or spiritual world that we hear so much about, neither can we understand anything about the spiritual life; we cannot discern between those who profess to experience this life and those who say they know nothing about it. Now there is good reason for this way of thinking, because our teachers have not understood the spiritual life themselves. What did Christ say about it? In all His explanations of the spiritual life He illustrated it by comparing it with the natural. He taught that the spiritual life was the prolongation of the natural life. This is why he took little children to illustrate its naturalness; He said, Of such is the kingdom of heaven.

This was because they were purely natural, sincere and honest, fit to be transplanted into the spiritual kingdom where they might, if they should die, be evolved into perfection in a perfect environment in a place prepared for them. He looked upon the young man who had great possessions with love and pity, for He saw in him one who was not far from, but living on the very verge of the kingdom of heaven: one who was almost *perfect*.

Cannot we see the spiritual life here? Christ opened the door and showed him the kingdom of heaven, and the road to eternal life. The spiritual life is the continuation of the perfect natural life,—a life of pure intentions, of seeking to know the truth, an energetic effort to live a perfectly natural life. To commit no natural sin; to transgress no physical law; to have our hearts open to the conviction of our best judgment as to our duties toward ourselves and others; to obey this conviction, even if it be to become poor that others may be rich; even to follow the example of Him who died that others might live,—dying for them, if necessary,—this is to live the spiritual life. But some will say that this is hard. Oh no, this is comparatively easy, and if your heart is in it, you will not be called upon to do anything that you will not *love* to do. There are many good people, almost perfect in heart, near to the kingdom of heaven, who lack only some little act of volition to bring them into the kingdom. And here let me say that sometimes the church itself puts a stumbling-block in the way, by expecting people to conform to some stereotyped usage, such as what is known in some religious

bodies as the "anxious-seat." Perhaps in many cases there are other duties to be done, or things to be refrained from; perhaps there is some act of vital importance which, if it were pointed out to these good people, they would willingly do. Those who undertake to teach men the way may be held accountable for leading people astray.

To make this point plainer, let us look at the other side and take the case of a young person who had been well developed physically and mentally, one who had been well educated, possessing in abundance the wealth of this world. We have seen such an one who was not far from the kingdom of heaven and who, with probably very little effort, might have entered in, but who, under the degenerating and poisonous action of some deadly sin had become imbecile or criminal; had indeed become so degraded that he had no soul, no humanity, had sunk lower than the beast,—without hope, without love, without fear, without a God unless he worshipped something more like a demon than a God. I leave this point for your own following out. It is the difference between life and death.

I may be criticised just here on the ground that all will die from the effects of disease of some kind; both the good and the bad will degenerate in body and sometimes in mind. This is true, but if you investigate the matter you will discover a vast difference between those who wilfully commit sin and those whose intentions are perfect. There are those who, like the apostle Paul, are suffering bodily infirmities, but who are nevertheless living a perfectly happy life in an unhealthy, broken-down body. Oh, yes! this

spiritual life is sometimes connected with a weak body, but not with a sinful mind. The disease may be the result of a sinful past, or it may be an inheritance; but within the old life is the spiritual one planted, and this is growing up and making all things new. But we can, at times, see an example of well-developed human beings who have lived their lives in almost perfect harmony with nature,—who have been quite free from the accidents common to life, and have lived pure-hearted lives,—we can see, I say, that their almost, if not quite perfect, souls have been separated from their bodies as perfectly and as easily as the ripened grain is separated by the gentle breeze from the sheaf.

We have already spoken of a class of people who tell us that there is no God; that man has no soul; that the soul or mind perishes with the brain; that this new life about which I have said so much is simply the development of the brain. That this is not true may be seen from the fact that this new life may come to one in a moment's time, from an external source, simply by the conveyance of an idea. Let me convey the idea to a person who disbelieves in a God or a soul, that Christ did not teach us that there is a personal God or a living soul until there was a new life formed within. That new life formed within is God's life, and this idea which Christ conveyed to man gives man the power to become a child of God, thus making men who are visible and tangible beings, and whom we know as personal, conscious existences, children of God. Knowing this, we must accept the teachings of Christ which make man infinite. Men

have the power of becoming the sons of God, and therefore visible manifestations of God. Natural evidence proves this, as well as the teachings of Christ, and if this truth will not elevate men, nothing can. But this true idea must and will elevate and resurrect those who will accept it into eternal life. This is what Christ meant when He said, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father."

This idea was inherent and evolved in the personality of Christ; He has sowed it, and it will bring forth fruit. While it comes to us from an external source, it becomes an internal life and power.

XI

CLOSING WORDS

LET me say in closing that there is no necessity for exchanging for something different the particular calling in which you are engaged—if it is an honorable one—in order to live this life of love and service to God and your neighbor. You can do this best just where you are. Recreation is also an important part of our lives, for the person who takes recreation and rest can accomplish more in the long run than those who do not. We should simply use the same judgment in the spiritual life that we do in the natural life.

Neither are there any particular channels for God's money; it is all God's money. The money that you pay in public taxes which is used to provide for the poor is as much God's money as that applied for any other purpose. It is also your duty to provide for yourself; one's first duty is toward himself. No wise father with a large family of small children to provide for would think of neglecting to provide for himself every necessity that would be conducive to his health or well-being. We should be careful not to get wrong notions of love and self-sacrifice for others,—we are never called upon to sacrifice anything that would be for our best interest. It is true that in certain contingencies people have laid down their lives for others, even for their enemies, but they have loved

to do so, counting not their lives dear unto them in their desire for others' good.

The things of which Christ meant us to deny ourselves are those which are injurious to us. He did say, "deny thyself and take up the cross, and follow me," but He meant that we should deny ourselves of crime, such as murder, theft, envy, unnecessary labor on the Sabbath, gluttony, drunkenness, or any of the physical or mental crimes in the whole catalogue of law.

Mr. John Stuart Mill says:—"Utilitarianism requires a person to be as strictly impartial as between his own happiness and that of others as a disinterested and benevolent spectator. If the end which the utilitarian doctrine proposes to itself, were not in theory and practice, acknowledged to be an end, nothing could ever convince any person that it is so. No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness. This, however, being a fact, we have not only all the proof which the case admits of, but all which it is possible to require, that happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness therefore, a good to the aggregate of persons. Happiness has made out its title as *one* of the ends of conduct, and consequently one of the criteria of morality. But it has not, by this alone, proved itself to be the sole criterion. To do that, it would seem by the same rule necessary to show, not only that people desire happiness, but that they never desire anything else. Now it is palpable that they do desire things which, in common language, are de-

cidedly distinguished from happiness. They desire, for example, virtue, and the absence of vice, no less really than pleasure, and the absence of pain."

This seems to me to be the only true idea of virtue; for virtue and happiness are synonymous. To tell a person that he ought to be happy, would mean that he ought to be virtuous. It is only when we misunderstand what virtue is, that we place ourselves before the public in a wrong light, for there is a large class of people who believe that virtue and happiness are opposed to each other. The true idea of virtue is a temperate, intelligent, and natural exercise or action of all the faculties, physical, mental and spiritual—if these are not all one. All the propensities may be cultivated within the limits of virtue; it is the excessive or perverted use of any of them that causes unhappiness. The person or the machine that is minus a regulator will soon go to destruction. This is a law of the physical and spiritual as well as of the mechanical world. Alcohol, in minute quantities, exists in nearly all our food, but food as nature provides it does not have it in excess. When we extract it and use it as a beverage, however, it becomes a sin,—if there is such a thing as an external sin, for Christ said, Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man,—meaning that sin originates in the heart. Alcohol—except in very small or medicinal quantities—is undoubtedly a poison, and no person can take a poison into his system when he knows that he is committing self-murder without committing sin.

The following extracts from a sermon preached by

Rev. Charles Gordon Ames, Minister of the Church of the Disciples, Boston, shows which way the wind is blowing:—

“Professor Ely reports that at a labor meeting the name of Jesus called out a burst of applause, while an allusion to the churches was received with hisses. . . . It is a sign of the times that a large part of us who nominally belong to the company of Jesus, have yet so neglected and slighted the humanities that we have lost the power and the right to lead a great social reform; that we cannot come near enough to our brethren to win their confidence and to exchange signals of good will, but must go on alone toward our own select and exclusive heaven. Does it mean—can it mean—that we have never felt the all-constraining, all-including love? Or how is it that we have lost the sweet secret that opens the door of human hearts? Perhaps we, too, are victims of the situation: we, too, are swept away in the confused currents, the eddies and swirls of social confusion. How shall ministry and church become mighty to serve and save the age, unless ministry and church can rise above the age, and show the upward leading way by moving in advance? But this means a profound change in our animus, attitudes and methods. . . . For this is our mission—to turn men from darkness to light, from senseless idols to the living God. . . . The Eternal is ever Lord and Master of the temporal; and it is the Eternal for which we are to stand, sure that the Eternal will stand by us, if we are humble, simple and true.”

What could be more true than these statements? This is the diagnosis of the disease of the church, and

its remedy; but like most of the remedies advocated by the church, to be taken by *some other church*, or if taken at all by those who advocate them, taken in negative doses. In talking with a church deacon a few days ago, I made the statement that Christianity was all right, but the church was all wrong; that the church, ministry and people should commence and continue, until perfect both in heart and character, to pray the publican's prayer,—‘God be merciful to me, a sinner!’

“‘Oh,’ he said, ‘we do.’ My reply was, ‘If you do, it is only the few that know it. The great need of the church today is that positive assertion by the church that, first, we are all by nature sinners; neither the best moral person, nor the best church member perfect. Second, that all people, old and young, good and wicked, church members and non-church members, need salvation from sin, and always will need to be saved from sin, either of omission or of commission, as long as they live in this world. And this assertion must not be a negative but a positive one; it should, also, not be put under a bushel, but be posted up in public places.

Some may ask, must we always be seeking and never coming to a knowledge of the truth? No! For every living soul on this broad earth may come to a knowledge of the truth in a moment's time; every one may become perfect in heart when he becomes sincere and honest in heart, and this is all we can become in this world. To surrender our hearts, and, to the best of our ability our lives also, for God or Good—to live or die (not live *and* die) as may be required—this is

all that is asked of us. Our characters will not be far wrong if our hearts are right. But as the world will expect perfection the church should not profess any more than it possesses; this is why I would say that the church must point the world to the pattern Jesus Christ, not to itself. The most it can say to any one is, Come with us, and we will all do the best we can by mutual helpfulness to save each other from sin. Thus, they will not only be in sympathy with the labor party or element, but with all elements, both in this world and in that which is to come. In evidence of this assertion I would point to the apostle Paul, who called himself the chief of sinners; and even Christ said on one occasion, "Why callest thou me good? None is good but one, that is God." He probably here had reference to quantity instead of quality.

The question seems to be, what shall be done for this large class of good-hearted people who would like, perhaps, to go into the churches? I think she should open her doors to them on condition of good faith, regardless of perfection of character,—gather them in, the good and the bad. It may be she will have to cast some away, and it may be that it would be good policy to cast out some who are already in; but perhaps there would be a large net increase of much better quality. Christ was ostracized from the upper class of society because he associated with what was called the lower class. He was called a gluttonous man, a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. These days are the same as those days; we may indulge in the popular sins with impunity, but we must beware of the unpopular ones.

There are two sides to the gospel of Jesus Christ. It makes no difference what our own preference is—whether it be that we hope to be saved ourselves, and consequently hope that every one else will be saved; for our belief is colored by our desires. A man with the organs of benevolence and love well developed, who loves all the world and would not if he could help it see any one suffer, may fall into the error that all people, good and bad, will eventually be saved. But we cannot find this doctrine in the teachings of Christ; He says: “And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. They ate, they drank, they married wives, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot: they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded: But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all; even thus shall it be in that day when the Son of Man is revealed. In that day, he which shall be upon the house-top and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not turn back. Remember Lot’s wife. Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall find it.”

We may make what sport we please about Noah’s Ark, and fire and brimstone: but still there is a lesson for me and for all others in those words. I think it was General Sherman who said that *war is hell*, and those who know most about war and have seen it in its worst phases month after month, and year after

year, say that they have seen hell,—and they will not forget it! It will not do for ministers to continue preaching that everything is lovely; I certainly hope it will be so, but I cannot think it. We must judge spiritual things by our knowledge of natural things. There is a warfare going on in nature continually; the evil is ever trying to destroy the good, but in the end the evil will be destroyed.

Swedenborg tells us that heaven and hell are in equilibrium, and that therefore God is obliged to punish some classes there just as men do in this world. Judging by this world, it certainly looks as if this might be the case. We see people who are continually trying to make this world miserable, and we feel inclined to ask the question, Why does not God destroy wickedness in this world and in the other one too? It might as easily be done in the one world as in the other.

We shall have to fight against the evil in ourselves, and we may be called upon to help fight the evils around us; but if we overcome ourselves we shall have the crown of everlasting life and happiness: then let us be of good courage, for it will be well with all who strive and fight for the right. We are well able to go up and possess the goodly land; then let us have courage and fight, and we shall surely conquer, for there is no such word as fail. We have millions more for us than all that can be against us, but we must work out what God has put within us, for it all depends upon ourselves; He Himself is with us and we cannot fail. Then let us shout as we go along the way—the strait and narrow way, but also the easy

one, for it is as much better than the broad way as the railway is better than the broad earth road.

“Some people,” says Swedenborg, “believe that to live the life which leads to heaven, which is called spiritual life, is difficult, because they have been told that man must renounce the world, and deprive himself of the lusts which are called lusts of the body and the flesh, and that he must live spiritually. And these things they do not understand, otherwise than that they must reject worldly things, which consist chiefly in riches and honors; that they must walk continually in pious meditation about God, about salvation, and about eternal life; and that they must spend their days in prayers and in reading the word and pious books. This they esteem to be renouncing the world, and living in the spirit and not in the flesh. But that the case is altogether otherwise it has been given me to know by much experience, and from conversation with the angels; and indeed those who renounce the world and live in the spirit in this manner, procure to themselves a sorrowful life, which is not receptive of heavenly joy; for *with* every one his own life remains. But to the intent that he may receive the life of heaven into himself, it is quite necessary that he live in the world and engage in its business and employments, and that he then by moral and civil life receive spiritual life; and that spiritual life cannot otherwise be formed within man; or his spirit prepared for heaven. For to live internal life and not external at the same time is like dwelling in a house which has no foundation, which gradually either sinks, or becomes full of chinks and breaches, or totters till it falls.”

“That it is not so difficult as it is believed to live the life that leads to heaven may be seen from what follows: Who cannot live a civil and moral life, since every one from infancy is initiated into it, and from life in the world is acquainted with it? Every one also does lead such a life, the bad and the good alike; for who does not wish to be called sincere, and who does not wish to be called just? Almost all exercise sincerity and justice in externals, insomuch that they appear as if they were sincere and just in heart, or as if they acted from real sincerity or justice.”

So much for Swedenborg. This teaching of his, whether he obtained his information from the spirit world or not, is the same as was taught by Jesus Christ nearly nineteen hundred years ago, namely, that our lives should be lives of good intentions, and that we should seek after the knowledge of the good and true. For it is our duty to learn our duty, as much as it is our duty to do it after we know it. This implies knowledge, and knowledge brings accountability, and accountability may and will be a stepping stone to honor. This knowledge of the truth is what Christ continually endeavored to instill into the understanding of men. He taught that men should in all sincerity seek to discover the truth about every idea in existence, whether it be in natural, political, theological or spiritual science. For more people lose their natural and spiritual lives from ignorance than from any other cause. When Pilate said to the Christ, “Art thou a King then?” He answered, “Thou sayest that I am a King. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear

witness unto the truth." In other words, bear witness unto facts, or evidence, or reason or knowledge. This is the mission of the so-called Holy Ghost,—a subject of ridicule to the masses, and justly, too, when spoken of as a mysterious something that no one can understand; for what cannot be explained and what no one can understand simply does not exist until it is understood. But perfect intention or loving intention is far above knowledge alone. To illustrate this we will cite the case of the wealthy miser who had a copper and a gold coin of the same size in his purse, and when the contribution box was passed to him in church he put what he supposed was the copper coin into it as the Lord's money; perceiving his mistake and that he had really put in the gold piece, he besought the collector to allow him to take it out, which privilege was decidedly refused; for, said the collector, "As I do not know who put it in, I have no right to take it out." Upon this the old miser said, "Well, I am sure the Lord will reward me for it." "No," the collector answered, "He will only give you credit for the copper you intended to give."

What is common sense and reason is frequently God's sense and reason; therefore we can reasonably believe that God will judge us in much the same way that reason will judge us. It is not really difficult to do right, for of those who have but little a very little will be required.

All our power comes from God, the power to do good and the power to do evil; we have nothing but the power of choice. If we knew the truth we would understand that it is really easier to do right than to

do wrong, because His power which is almighty is behind us when we choose the right and refuse the evil. Christ taught but one method, and that was that if a man desires to be saved from any sin, he must first be willing and determined, if need be (which is not the rule) to sacrifice the natural life in order to obtain the spiritual. He must say to himself, to men and to God, "I will break off that sinful habit if it costs me my life," and then it will become easy and continue to grow easier for him to control that habit. This is the method of extracting all evil from the heart, and it will then be filled with all good habits and desires so that there will be no room for evil ones. It may, in some cases, be a hard and a long fight, but we can conquer. Many good-hearted people have apparently enjoyed the spending of their lives in fighting their besetting sins. Such men as John B. Gough, for instance, who seemed to enjoy fighting the appetite for strong drink which was probably always seeking admission into his heart, but which was relentlessly opposed. It was to some such conflict as this that Jesus referred when he said, "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." In other words, he that is willing to lose the natural life in his effort to be saved from sin, shall find the better, or everlasting spiritual life. Every man will realize this change in himself when he has overcome his besetting sins.

The question will continue to arise, "Is there a Hereafter?" I say, there must be, for everything in existence has been shown to be immortal. But the vital question is, What will be the quality? The quantity is in no sense material as compared with quality.

There never can be any time but present time, and this mysterious snare of the devil about the future we should ignore. We are dealing with quality. Whatever we are we shall be until we change; and if we have not the inclination to change *now*, there is no evidence that we shall ever change. All the evidences in nature tell us that the tendency of the good is toward improvement in circumstances, while we know the reverse is true of the evil.

I have written these things, not so much to attempt to prove by evidence from Christ's teachings that my ideas are sound, as to show that faith in Christ is something more than belief in his personality. For the devil can and does believe in that, and so can any one, forever, without being benefitted by it. There is but one way—the unconditional, complete surrender of our souls, bodies and possessions, as we may know them to be required; not always as others tell us we ought to do, but as we ourselves believe to be our duty after a thorough investigation of any doubtful demand upon us. For some will try to bind heavy burdens upon us, which they themselves will not touch with one of their fingers.

“Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Yes, let us rest just here, putting the load of every day toil into the wonderful mechanism of perfect intentions, and it will carry us and our load. We shall thus find rest to our minds and souls, and sooner or later we shall have rest for our bodies, for the mind will act upon the body, and we shall become new creatures. As surely as God exists, a mind at rest ensures a restful body.

The toiling millions may know that they are performing all that is required of them while doing their daily work, if they have right motives; while the well-to-do classes are under obligation to assist those who are poor, and the very rich should provide the means to alleviate and elevate all who are in need. The poor ought to have the gospel preached to them; what is the gospel they need? I say, a gospel of hope. Let no one bind on you any more burdens than you already have; all you need is a heart of love for the GOOD, and for your neighbor,—this you may have without money and without price. Belong to societies and churches or not, as you believe to be for the best interests of society; but we must all belong to the community in which we live, and we should be willing to contribute all we have, if necessary, for its well-being and support.

“Take that thine is and go thy way,” said Christ: “I will give unto this last even as unto you.” For he has served me this last hour with all the ability of his mind and body, and has done his *best*.

The idea which I wish to convey in all I have written, and the one which, to my mind, Christ has the most difficulty in making people understand is, that the belief and practice of His teachings would raise men up to a realization of their kinship with Himself. They found fault with Him because, as they said, He being a man made himself God: this because He forgave sins, and also because He said, “I and my Father are one.” Now He tried to elevate man by teaching him that he could have the ability to control his own destiny and become a partner with Him—by this con-

tract becoming from necessity a co-worker with God. If the privilege of being elevated until we can become factors in our own salvation is not all we could demand, then we ought to suffer for it.

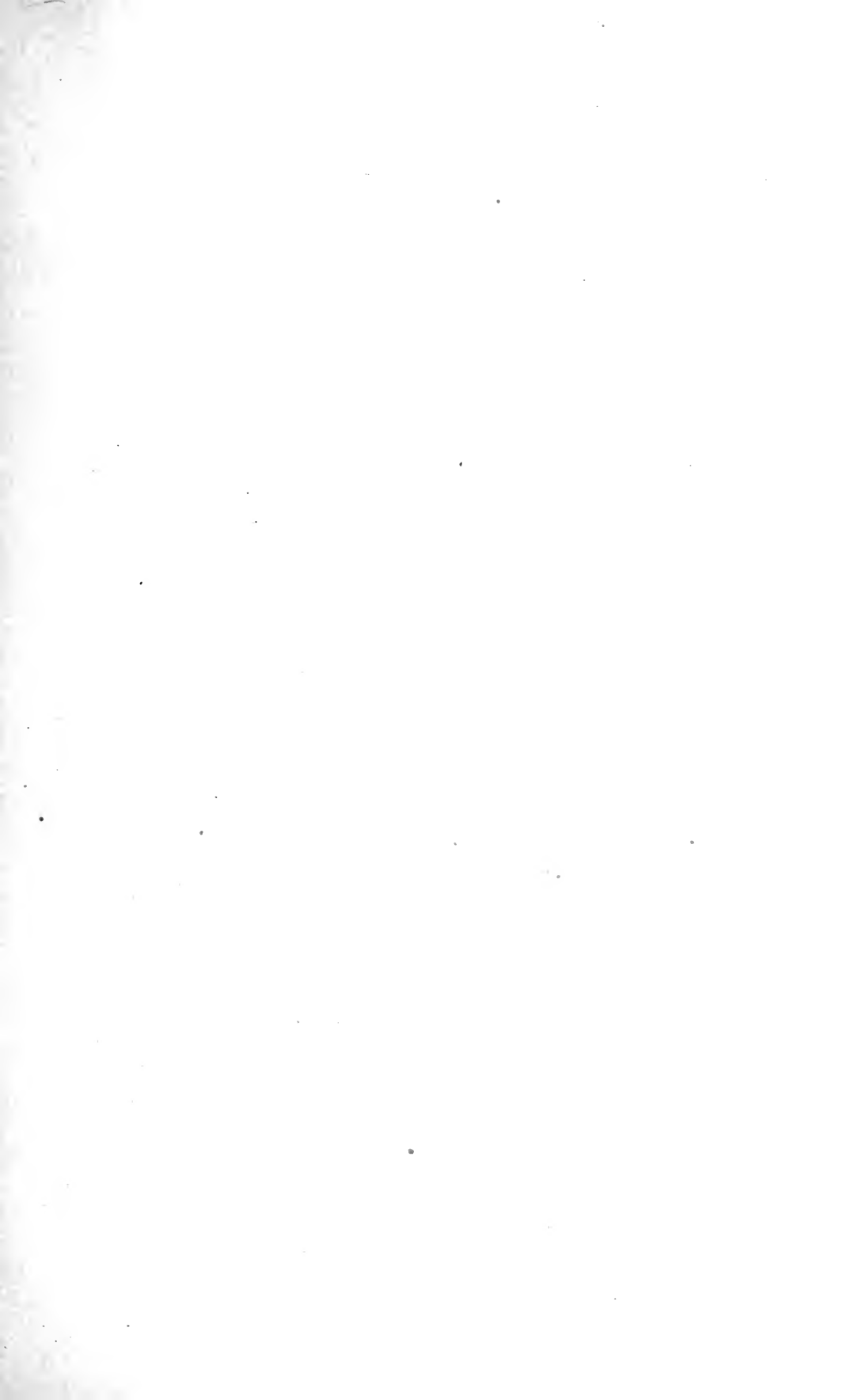
This places a man where he can say, I and my Father are one; he becomes then not a creature but a son of the Infinite, having life in himself. This is not merely belief in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man,—this elevates man to an equality with Christ, but only those men who accept and comply with the conditions. These are plain and not hard to comply with.

It may be said of these statements that this is reasoning in a circle. Whether it is so or not, this is just what Jesus taught, and places the responsibility where it belongs,—namely, with ourselves. We need nothing outside of ourselves for our salvation that is not as free as the sunshine and the rain, and the air we breathe. For we may appropriate God just as we appropriate nature, and he is just as visible to the pure in heart as is the natural environment. This purity of heart can be developed by the law given by Christ.

Taking it for granted, then, that these teachings are true, the mission of the church must hereafter be a mission of education, of investigation of the problem of physiology, or perfect character. A knowledge of all the questions that involve the health of the community, and in fact knowledge in general, would be included in this mission of the church. Our religious teachers have been preaching theology until it is threadbare. Christ said, If I go away I will send the Comforter, who will fill my place in the world

as the spirit of truth and knowledge. People know enough about theology. Theology is simply the Good or the True, and the Holy Ghost is simply the knowledge of what is good and what is true in every question of the day.

Christ's mission was to teach us how to be born into the kingdom of heaven, and the mission of the Holy Ghost is the development of this new life through education.



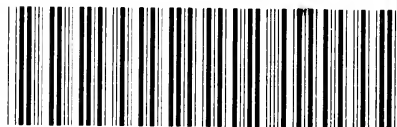
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