

THE SECRET OF
SUCCESSFUL LIFE

WILLIAM W. McLANE

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THE SECRET OF SUCCESSFUL LIFE

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THEOLOGICAL SE



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PREFACE

THE science of life is the supreme science. The art of living is the finest of fine arts. One who knows what is essentially good, and gains it, and who knows also what is of permanent value, and acquires it, possesses that science, and practices the art of living.

Men wish success in life. Men seek such things as gratify desire, save from suffering, and give a sense of security and the joy of possessing power.

One who studies himself must know that his real life, his pleasure and his power alike, consists in feeling, affection, thought, desire, choice, and power of action. What adds to these, increases life; what lessens these, destroys life.

Whatever will make a man normal in feeling, sweet in spirit, pure in affection, clean in imagination, vigorous in thought, wise in choice, calm in contentions, serene in storms, brave in danger, patient under provocation, resolute in disappointment, constant in purpose, and hopeful of the future, is of extreme value in the promotion of life.

“Know thyself” is an old Greek proverb. One may well begin to learn the way of life by a study of himself. Man should heed his deepest hunger. He should give hospitality to his highest desire. He should accept and cultivate his most intimate and enduring relations.

Man is a soul. He has a body. He exists in relationship. He lives in a state whose laws are bio-

logical and must be interpreted by the action of vital laws.

Fifty years ago, an eminent teacher of theology was accustomed to give as the method of study this formula: "Is there a God? Has God spoken? What has God said?" A more modern and a more scientific method of procedure would follow this method of inquiry: "Is there a man? Has man spoken—and spoken out of his heart? Has an answer come to man from the heart of God?"

Therefore, in the following pages, the reader is directed to the study of man himself, to those evident laws under which man lives, to the cry of the human heart, and to the answer which has come and still comes to that cry.

Human life viewed in various aspects is a pang, a prayer, a promise, and a prophecy.

W. W. M.

*Leominster, Mass.,
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THE SECRET OF SUCCESSFUL LIFE

The Secret of Successful Life

CHAPTER I

HUNGER

A STONE never hungers. A stone never grows. Hunger belongs to life. The quality of hunger is an index of the grade of life.

In the city of Naples, on the shore of the beautiful bay, is an excellent aquarium. One day, in this aquarium, standing by a glass tank, I saw in the water what looked like fine sea-weed with stem, branch and frond. As I looked with admiration on this beautiful form, I saw one slender branch and then another, touched by no breath of air or wavelet of water, shoot out slowly like an arm, close like a hand, and then draw back again having grasped something which was invisible to me. I knew by that one action that the object on which I looked was not a plant but an animal. That one act revealed a certain dim consciousness and automatic power, lifted the seeming plant out of the kingdom of vegetable life into the kingdom of animal life and showed to me its kinship with birds and beasts and even with myself. I had found a remote and lowly cousin.

On the shore of the sea at low tide, one may see what look like acorns or brown buds clinging to the rock. When the tide comes in bringing delicate jelly fish and atoms of animal substance, these brown

buds open, like the petals of a flower, and throw out tentacles which grasp minute portions of animal substance and enclose them, giving evidence thereby that they feed on organic matter, as animals feed, and not on inorganic matter, as plants feed. The food which these anemones crave and eat, indicates the grade of their life.

Naturalists say that the first expression and indication of animal life is irritability or sensitiveness to impressions, as a hand is sensitive to a substance which may be touched, or as an eye is sensitive to sunlight. One may also say that the first distinct consciousness of animal life is hunger and that the first volitional act of animal life is search for food. That old woman who lying on her death-bed was asked by her pastor what she had enjoyed most in life, and who promptly replied, "My vittles," expressed the basal desire and the primal satisfaction of every animal. Had this woman risen higher during her long years of life, she might have stated something other than "vittles" as giving most satisfaction; but, in any event, it would have been the gratification of some hunger. Hunger is the first and the most imperative appetite of every body. Hunger is the first and most permanent passion of every mind. The gratification of hunger by appropriate food is the condition of bodily growth and of mental development. It is likewise the condition of individual satisfaction.

If the plant-like animal which I saw in the aquarium had failed to find food, it would have drooped and died. It might have been surrounded by min-

eral substances on which plants feed, but its inherent incapacity to convert mineral substance into living tissue, and its inability to find its own kind of food, would have doomed it to speedy death.

Every living creature must find the kind and the quality of food upon which its own nature may feed and be satisfied if it attains perfection and even if it continues to live.

Protozoa which multiply by gemination or division, hunger simply for food; with food supplied each protozoan reaches the limit of its possibilities. But in all higher forms of animal life, the sexual nature desires association and correspondence with the opposite sex. It should be noted, also, that there is a hunger whose source is not in the body but in the soul, which craves not physical food but spiritual communion, which expresses itself in the longing of love and which is satisfied only by being loved.

In the animal kingdom below man, hunger seems limited, mainly, to those desires which bear relation to the preservation of the individual and to the perpetuation of the species. I say, mainly, because there is some love of beauty and of music to be found below the grade of mankind.

Man, however, for whom many definitions have been given, may be described as a hunger—growing, vast, well-nigh insatiable. Hunger is the spring of the manifold activities of man. Labor is performed and endured in the hope that some hunger may be satisfied by labor's product. Some may think that men labor to give outlet and expression to an inherent energy, but until men have acquired a habit of

work, little work is done save in hope that there will be a reward in some personal satisfaction. Few persons enjoy solitaire. The zest of play increases in games where there is a possibility of victory, with its accompaniment of praise. Men toil for bread, for shelter, for the comfort of pleasant surroundings, for the gratification of esthetic tastes and for the means of securing and preserving love. The lust of possession, of place, and of power, has incited men to adventure and to war.

What a history of labor, warfare, government, art, literature, and religion may be read by the traveler in the ruins, the monuments, the buildings, and the present products of men around the Mediterranean sea. Men have invented instruments of labor; they have fashioned weapons of warfare; they have marched in phalanxes; they have fought battles for possession of lands; they have contended for praise of men; they have woven garments of beauty; they have built palaces of splendor; they have carved statues to delight the eye; they have sung songs to charm the ear; they have written essays and have printed books that the mind might be fed both with fiction and with truth; they have built altars and temples; they have ordained priests; they have offered sacrifices and conducted religious rituals that the troubled conscience might have peace and the struggling soul might have rest. All these manifold forms of production on the part of an inventive, active, and aggressive civilization have been for the purpose of feeding the hunger of the body and of slaking the thirst of the soul. They

have been wrought in order that the life of which hunger is the cry might be complete.

Sometimes labor has been misdirected; sometimes labor has been expended for that which is not bread; sometimes men have spent their gains for that which has not satisfied; but the desires have been most natural and the effort has been most significant. He would be a singular and an unscientific man who should affirm that any hunger has no true significance and that what satisfies hunger may be a lie. Hunger is fundamentally a cry for what is good; and that which really satisfies it is bread.

Deep in the heart of humanity is a hunger, permanent and persistent, which no material bread, no physical love, and no human ministry can satisfy. This is a hunger for God. It is a longing for the presence, the help, and the approval of the living and loving God. There may be individual men who have not felt this hunger or who, more likely, having felt, have not understood what it meant and what it asked. All men, however, feel dependence, weakness, and need. Some men, like a hungry child grasping greedily and finding that which is not bread, are vainly trying to satisfy themselves on material things and to renew their strength from physical sources, only to find at last that they are not satisfied, and sometimes to find that what they have eaten is not bread but poison.

The witness of generations is better and more trustworthy than the opinion of individual men. That which belongs to men, as men, apart from learning, culture, and philosophical reasonings, is

most true. The native instincts of the heart and soul are genuine and seek after reality. Men, as men, feel their need of God. Out of desert places where nomadic tribes wander, is the cry, "O that I knew where I might find Him." Out of the forest where the hunter seeks his game, out of the sheep fold where the shepherd watches his flock, out of the tent where the soldier prepares himself for battle, comes the cry, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." In the ancient, oriental Veda one may read: "Thirst came upon the worshipper, though he stood in the midst of the waters." Even out of the waters, the thirsty lifted up his cry: "O hear this my calling, Varuna, be gracious now; longing for help, I have called upon Thee." How suggestive of deep spiritual truth is this language of oriental people! Though men live in the midst of waters, yet there is thirst. They are like sailors sailing or shipwrecked in a great ocean with water all about them, still thirsting because that water cannot slake thirst nor sustain life, still crying out for the fresh water which the clouds of heaven may give that they may drink and live.

This cry of mankind does not cease. Whether it is expressed in a sigh or in a song, by sacrifice or by prayer, it is uttered in every land, it is heard in every language, it is repeated in every age.

Dr. Eastman narrating the ways of his people, the American Indians, says: At dawn an Indian will take his stand alone on the prairie or on a hilltop and silently, adoringly, trustfully lifting his face towards the sunrise, will seek the blessing of the invisible

Spirit of life.

On Huntington Avenue, Boston, in front of the Museum of Fine Arts, is a bronze statue of an Indian sitting on a barebacked horse, motionless, silent, with uplifted face craving communion with God. This statue in such a place is suggestive of the fact that to the modern man whose product is the highest art, as to the primitive man whose frail products soon pass away, light, inspiration, skill, and power have their true source not in man himself, but in the creative spirit whom we call God.

As we trace the history of nations recorded on coins, in monuments, and in literature, we find everywhere the symbols and the record of religion. Images of deities abound; granite temples are exhumed from the sands of Egypt; rude stone altars were built on the rocky hills of Palestine; the beautiful ruin of the Parthenon crowns the acropolis of Athens; the Pantheon stands in the heart of Rome; stories of the worship of the Druids adorn the classic page of Tacitus; the traditional mythology of the Northmen awakens profound interest; prayers, hymns, and discussions of the deep things of the soul are found in the literature of the farthest East. Plutarch has said: "If we traverse the world, it is possible to find cities without walls, without letters, without kings, without wealth, without coin, without schools, and without theatres; but a city without a temple, or that practiseth not worship, prayers, and the like, no one ever saw."

Writers on the customs of primitive men tell us that though such men are likely to be reticent on

the subject of religion and their manner of devotion, yet they have found no tribe without some sign or emblem of worship. The signs may be crude, vague, and even vain; but they are there. Modern travelers would seek in vain for a land where there is no church spire, no temple, no priesthood, and no worship. All missionary propaganda would be an utter failure were there nothing in the mind and the heart of the men approached to respond to what the missionaries teach.

All the most important events among civilized nations are sanctified by religious ceremonies. Marriage, birth followed by circumcision or christening, the burial of the dead, the ritual of secret societies, the inauguration of governors and presidents, the coronation of kings and emperors, the opening of parliaments and international conventions, are hallowed by religious rites. Any custom which persistently abides among men has some reality as its basis and the continuance of any custom is evidence of its value to men.

In the Metropolitan Museum of Fine Arts in New York City is a room devoted to the collection of musical instruments. These instruments are of all sorts and from many lands. There are rude horns, hollow reeds, wind instruments of great variety, stringed instruments with two or more strings, harpsichords, old pianos and drums. A man who has heard the best of pianos played by Paderewski, the finest of violins played by Kreisler, and who has listened to the singing of Caruso, may find no music in the blast of a ram's horn, in the shrill notes

of a rude flute, or in the reverbations of a drum; nevertheless, these rude instruments are symbols of a musical nature and a visible evidence of the reality of music and of its value to men. In like manner, the altars, temples, and ceremonies of religion, however crude they may be, are mute witnesses to the religious nature of mankind.

A man of unbroken health, of great physical energy, of constant application to material business, and of constant success therein, possibly may feel that religion has no place in his life and that his nature has no need of God. I say "possibly," for I do not know that there is such a man. I never have met him. But, if there is such a man, his unawakened religious nature would be no more a proof of the unreality of religion than the lack of ear and of musical sensibility on the part of one man would disprove music as a feeling and as an art; or than color blindness in one person would prove the absence of color in the universe. A friend of one of the greatest singers, a prima donna of the last century, said: "I never have perceived in A—the least interest in the higher problems of mankind—in science, politics, religion, not even in *belles lettres*." But the absence of interest in these things on the part of one woman highly gifted in one art, did not remove them from human life, or lessen their vital interest to multitudes of men.

Coins are an evidence of commerce; musical instruments are symbols of the musical nature of men; marriage is a witness of man's need of communion with his kind in the mingling of love and life; re-

ligious ceremonies are outward and visible signs of an inward craving on the part of man for fellowship with God. Eucken in his work on *The Problem of Humanity* has said: "Life assumes the character of a yearning that soars above everything the world has to offer." A modern philosopher has said: "Not to feel evils is the greatest of all evils."

The worst lack which any man could have, would be to have no hunger. Everywhere, hunger is the primal condition, the *sine qua non* both of knowledge and of growth. The new-born babe instinctively seeks the mother's breast and through that breast finds the mother to be the fountain of life, the shelter of love, the heart of comfort, the soul of sympathy, and the source of strength through needy years. Beginning with physical hunger and material supply, a babe growing to manhood learns to know the mother's heart and soul through the rich supplies of her love. A man coming to the period of adolescence finds it not good to be alone. He hungers for the love of a mate. He finds in mutual love which issues in marriage, one of the chief consummations of human relationship.

Now, hunger for God, a hunger which craves forgiveness when there is consciousness of sin, favor when there is need of friendship, strength when there is weakness, comfort when there is sorrow, and hope of life when the shadow of death falls, is the one great, growing hunger in the heart of man which no bread springing from earth can satisfy and which no ministry proceeding from human hearts can meet.

John Fiske in his work, *Through Nature to God*, has said: "Of all the implications of the doctrine of evolution with regard to man, I believe the very deepest and strongest to be that which asserts the everlasting reality of religion." Professor Carpenter in his work on *Mental Philosophy* has said: "The only sound basis for religion consists in man's own religious consciousness; since it is impossible that any revelation should make a man religious whose inner nature does not respond to its teachings, as that any instruction should make a man a musician, who has not a musical ear." Saint Augustine uttered a great truth when in addressing God he said: "Thou madest us for Thyself and the heart is restless till it rests in Thee." It is true that even in the pursuit of religion, men may spend their money for that which is not bread and their labor for that which does not satisfy; but the pursuit evinces the hunger, and the labor shows the willingness of men to make effort to find the bread of life. In the thought of men altars are a way of approach unto God, sacrifices are means of securing divine favor, priests are agents for intercession, prayers have power to bring divine help. Where unworthy means of approach to God are used, or where worthy means are used in a mistaken mode, nevertheless, they attest man's conscious need of God. Failure in the means or in the method of approaching God, may suggest the necessity of a revelation and a gift of grace from God to man in order that there may be true knowledge, pure worship, and eternal life.

No man will know himself aright or gain real success in life unless he gives heed to his hunger. A superficial hunger, which is some craving of the flesh, never should be permitted to suppress the deeper hunger, which is a craving of the spirit. The hunger for bread which comes from earth never should be permitted to become so imperative as to make one forget the hunger for bread which comes from heaven. It is natural for a babe to hunger first for the milk which flows from a mother's breast; but it would be pitiful and painful, if in all the years of life a child never should hunger for the love which flows from a mother's heart. That child would be abnormal, incomplete, and unworthy who never should know, or trust, or be grateful for a mother's love. It is natural for a man to seek that bread which will satisfy any physical or mental hunger; but that man is abnormal, incomplete, and unworthy who never feels, or trusts, or praises, the love of God.

It takes air as well as water, sunshine as well as soil, heaven as well as earth, to produce a flower with fine form, vivid color, and sweet fragrance. In like manner, it takes not only earth and men but the light of truth, the warmth of love, and communion of the Spirit of God to make and perfect a man.

You will do irrevocable injustice to yourself and you will insure failure instead of success in life, if you do not heed the craving of your heart, give place to conscience, and obey those impulses which prompt you to seek communion with the living God. Many

fail not by the choice, at first, of things which are wicked and worthless, but by putting things good in themselves and in their place before things which are better and which are essential to a complete character. By the choice of something good in itself but not the highest good, men lose the best. Many persons, for the sake of something which they wish very much at the time, smother the cry of the heart, silence the voice of conscience, grieve the Spirit of God, and fail of eternal life. This is just what Jesus saw and against which he warned men. Jesus bade men heed the deeper things of their own nature and put the higher things of life first. He charged men not to make material good a matter of first importance. He warned them against the danger of keeping the thought fixed on things to eat and to wear. He called them to seek first the kingdom of heaven. He urged them to love and to do good. He commanded them to trust God. He assured them that the things needed for the lower life would be given them. He said that the higher life is of such value to the world and of such worth in the sight of God that, as the lilies are clothed in beauty and the birds are bountifully fed, all needed supplies are given to God's spiritual children.

Men err by reversing the order of Jesus. Men place the demand for bread for the body first and bid the soul wait till a later time. The result is that, as an appetite may be lost—an appetite for bread, an appetite for music, an appetite for love—so the hunger and the desire for God may die. This is lamentable.

A moment's thought will convince you that man is a dependent creature. He is unable to live without air, unable to expand in thought without the touch of other minds, unable to become complete without love.

The life of a man absolutely depends on some power greater than himself and greater than his fellow men. And where should the creature of a day rest rather than upon the Eternal? Where should the weak seek and find strength rather than in the Strong? Where should the imperfect look for completion rather than to the Source of perfection? Where should he whose life so easily fails turn for immortality rather than to Him whose life is self-existent and everlasting?

And where else should God who is a spirit in essence and love in quality, deign to dwell rather than in the human heart? If God is in the universe creating, keeping, clothing, and beautifying things inanimate, things without intelligence, without conscience, without love which can never know Him and never love Him, how much more should He dwell lovingly and graciously with human souls which feel their need of Him and which give Him love and praise? "Neither stars, nor sea, nor smiling nature hold God so intimately as the bosom of the soul." In the soul itself, a sense of dependence, of emptiness, of yearning for approval, of longing for favor and love may grow into a great hunger which voices itself in the language of the psalmist: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God." The testi-

mony of those who have thus cried, in all ages, is to the effect that God hears the cry of the hungry, answers the need of the distressed, impresses the kiss of forgiveness upon the contrite, and renews the strength of the soul which waits on Him.

The witness of all past generations agrees in the instruction given to the men of each succeeding generation. "Put thou thy trust in the Lord, and be doing good; leave off from wrath, and let go displeasure, else shalt thou be moved to do evil. Commit thy way unto the Lord and put thy trust in Him. He shall make thy righteousness as clear as the light, and thy just dealing as the noonday."

Jesus teaches that hunger is the condition of satisfaction; that humility is the condition of exaltation; that poverty is the condition of possessing wealth. Let, then, a sense of sin impel you to seek forgiveness; let a sense of weakness lead you to the source of strength; let sorrow find a fountain of comfort; let fear of death lead you to Him who gives eternal life. Any condition or circumstance in life which awakens a longing for the knowledge of God and for communion with Him is a blessing. The history of mankind, personal experience, and the deep sense of need in the heart itself, all assert man's dependence upon God unto whom man's desire should flow. Therefore, in making an inventory of your assets, do not fail to include your hunger. That of all things may prove the condition of a perfect life. Jesus has said: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."

CHAPTER II

BREAD

A FEW years since, in the city of New York, on One Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Street, in a hall used for an exhibit of the effects of tuberculosis and the means of its prevention, was a sign with this inscription: "You can live three weeks without bread; you can live three days without water; you can live three minutes without air." This sign was, approximately, correct in its time measurements; it was entirely correct in its truth. A man may live a little longer without bread than without air; but bread, as well as air, is essential to the continuance of life.

Ben Akbar halted his camel in the desert whither he had wandered apart from his caravan. He lifted his eyes and, faint from hunger and thirst, looked longingly over the billowy sands glowing like gold in the level rays of the slowly sinking sun. The strength of his camel was spent and Ben Akbar knew that his own thirst would leave him prostrate and dying before another day would close. He surveyed the horizon, sweeping almost the entire circumference of the visible circle without seeing any sign of life. He was ready to surrender himself to certain death when, in the southeast, he saw dimly against the sky, dark tufts which his keen eye knew to be the crest of palm trees. Ben Akbar with a glad heart urged his weary beast forward encour-

aging him with a voice of hope. As the sun sank and twilight deepened, he arrived at an oasis with its fountain of water, its palms, and its fruit. Ben Akbar dismounted from his kneeling camel, threw himself prostrate in prayer, and then lifting his eyes heavenward in gratitude exclaimed, "Allah, I thank Thee." He had found the water and the bread which would sustain life.

On the plains of Egypt, I have seen lines of veiled women wending their way to streams fed from the Nile to find water for their daily need. The traveler in Palestine may see women leaving a village and ascending a hill where there is a spring, or descending into a valley where there is a well, to draw water for household use.

One of the most pathetic sights in a great city is a bread line of men out of work, standing at the hour of midnight by a great bakery to receive the loaf of bread offered each man in line. Many things these men may do without. Bread they must have, or die. Shelter may be of the slightest, clothing may be of the poorest, and in some climates these could be dispensed with altogether; but bread men must have. Bread and water are necessities. They are the indispensable substances on the table of the poor. They are the essence of every feast on the table of the rich. The most sumptuous banquet may be varied, beautifully decorated, highly colored, and finely flavored; but, in its base, it is just bread and water.

There are other men athirst besides travelers who like Ben Akbar thirst in a desert. There are other

lines of needy women besides those who seek water in Egypt or Palestine. There are other lines of men quite as impressive and as significant as the bread line at midnight in a great city.

The long lines of pilgrims to Benares, to Mecca, and to Jerusalem; the lines of men and women threading the streets to the cathedrals of Rome, Milan, and Paris; the lines of worshippers filing into churches in cities, towns, and villages on Sunday, are suggestive and significant. All these people are seeking something. They are seeking something for the soul. It may be said that worshippers frequently have been ignorant; that they have been superstitious; that their conceptions of the Deity have been gross; that the means they have used to obtain a blessing have been fanciful and fictitious, and all this may be granted; but a conscious want was there. They have sought after God. They have sought ignorantly, if you please, but they have sought after God, if haply they might find Him. The ignorance and the darkness have been in them and not in God. But surely it is want and the search and the cry which God sees and knows and answers. Doubtless many an ignorant worshipper whose soul has felt its deep need, has been supplied with the grace which has ministered to his life. Many a man who knew not God intelligently will know, ultimately, that in reality he had found Him. God saw the need and heard the cry and answered. A mother does not wait for clear intelligence, correct language, and a courteous request before she will answer the cry of her child. Though the child be

but an infant crying in the night, "and with no language but a cry," yet the mother's ear will hear, her heart will answer, and her hand will help. If God should make clear knowledge, correct language, and good form the conditions of answering the need of such as seek Him, then, His love would be less than a mother's.

Tehan, the Indian, speaking of his foster mother whose breast had been his refuge, whose teepee had been his home, and who had thrown her own garment around his shivering body, when in the cold winter their teepee had been burned and they had been driven into the wild by cruel white men, said of his hopes for her who worshipped the Great Mystery, impelled thereto because she felt her dependence and longed for help, "I cannot believe that the hunger of the heart is made for famine, but rather that a divine hand will stoop to satisfy."

If the vision of the seer of Patmos is true, if tribes of every language worship around the throne of God, then, thus far in the world's history, God must have been hearing the cry, answering the prayer, and supplying the need of all who in sincerity have called upon Him. What are land, language, form of expression, and intellectual conception even in comparison with the inner spirit of craving and of devotion, of faith and of hope. A psalmist has said with exquisite truth: "The Lord is nigh unto all them who call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth." Surely this is in keeping with infinite love. Religion would not remain in the world did it not bring relief to the troubled conscience

and renewal of strength to the fainting heart.

Worshippers in Christian churches who continually seek to commune with God would be both ignorant and foolish if year after year and generation after generation they continued a practice which affords no benefit.

Men pursue nothing else which yields no pleasure and no profit. Granted that education from childhood, habit, and social concourse may have some influence in maintaining churches these alone would not suffice for their continuance. People do not go to church for entertainment, they can find that better elsewhere. They do not go for intellectual gain; the intellect, now has many means of gaining enjoyment and information. They do not go for social pleasure, they can enjoy their friends more elsewhere. The question often is asked, "Why do men not go to church?" The question had better be asked, "Why do men go to church?" There is no other institution in country, village, and city which holds its place so continually and so firmly as the Christian church. It is because the soul is strengthened and the heart is fed that people attend the services of the church. People who hunger gather around a table and eat and know that their strength is renewed. People who are disheartened by adversity, hear the promise of some able person to come to their relief, and discouragement passes away and hope fills the heart. People who love music frequent a concert and listen to music and their souls are satisfied. In a like manner, people find that the worship of God and the promises of his

word revive faith, love, and hope in the heart, and that waiting on the Lord, they renew their strength and are satisfied. This experience is as real as any other experience in life. Any man who thinks for a moment knows well that faith, love, and hope are the great inner motives of the soul. What lessens them, makes a man weak; what strengthens them, makes a man strong. The response which comes to the man who waits upon God is a response which renews a man's strength.

The Christian Bible also answers to the need of man. It is a book much of which needs an interpretation; but it is a book whose revelation of divine love is so plain, whose promises are so definite, and whose precepts are so practical that it affords comfort, hope, and guidance to every man who believes. The bible is not the same book to every man. The bible of one man may be bound in Russian leather, with flexible back, gilt edges, and fair pages as clean as when it came from the bindery. To that man, the bible is ancient history and Jesus is a tradition. The bible of another man may have a broken back, thumbed pages, many pencil marks and the blisters of tears. To that man the words of the bible have been spirit and life. Through that book, some soul has found the fountain of living water, some heart has found the bread of life. The bible, like a well-spread table, affords to every age its appropriate food. From its pages, according to the time of life and the need of the heart, youth, manhood, and age find instruction and inspiration and comfort.

Jesus has said that he who drinks at an earthly fountain will thirst again, but that he who partakes of the living water will find it to be in himself a continual source of refreshment and of power. They who have tried it have found Jesus' words true.

We already have noticed that the lack of any hunger or desire for certain things, such as music or marriage, on the part of some persons does not disprove the existence of that hunger in other persons nor invalidate the reality of the source of its gratification. What is common to men everywhere, what is found among all races, what exists in all conditions must be a reality, even though there may be some individuals who know nothing of it. It is more just to call such individuals abnormal than to call the great mass of mankind abnormal. The hunger of the soul for spiritual light, love, and guidance, and the cry of the soul for God are evinced by all sacred monuments, by all liturgies, by all private devotions, and by the sacred scenes and sayings of all literature.

Let it be noted that in the course of nature, there is no hunger, beneath the hunger of the soul for God, which does not find its appropriate bread. There is food to fill every physical hunger, beauty of form and color to delight and satisfy the eye, music to charm the ear, truth to sustain the mind, friendship to gratify craving for companionship, domestic love to rest the heart. Some creatures may be born without common desires or without the organs to gratify those desires, or they may fail to find what their nature craves, but these are excep-

tional creatures, defective or unfortunate. The normal rule of nature is that every hunger finds its food. Shall, then, the deepest hunger of man have no corresponding bread? Shall the highest desire of the human soul remain unsatisfied? That would be a mockery of man so unspeakable and so disastrous that for its existence man never could forgive nature or nature's Creator. God himself must answer the hunger of the soul.

It is true that some persons want a God who provides chiefly for the body. Some are yet in the religious state of the primitive Israelites to whom promises of food, raiment, and material prosperity were of primal value. Some are babes in the life of the spirit. Some are only children in the higher life. But in the things of the spirit, as well as in the things of the mind, the highest character must be the best example of the true nature and the normal possibilities of man.

Jesus promises three things to men. They shall know the Father; they shall be free; they shall have power. They shall know God as the source of the most perfect purity and the most permanent peace. They shall be free from bondage to the lusts of the flesh, the customs of worldly society, and the domination of things. They shall have power to overcome evil, to exercise self-control, to do the will of God, and to gain greatness of character. The annals of Christian history contain a catalogue of a legion of men who have been set free from sensuality, like Augustine; from timidity, like Peter; from self-righteousness, like Paul; from love of

pleasure, like Francis of Assisi. The number who have been exalted in affection, purpose, and power, like Livingston, "Chinese" Gordon, William Booth, and many more would make an army. Let me hasten to say that for every man who becomes distinguished and known as a Christian hero, there are scores and thousands who in spirit find the same experiences and attain equal greatness of character, but whose position is such that their names are not published. Their names, however, are written in *The Book of Life*. It requires heaven as well as earth, sky as well as soil, sunshine as well as mineral substance, to produce and to perfect, physically, any life in this world. It is most natural, therefore, that it should require heaven as well as earth to perfect a man, and that which makes a man complete, is indeed bread.

Jesus gives a threefold description of bread for the soul. In contrast with bread which springs from earth, he calls it Bread from Heaven. In contrast with every fair but false bread by which men try to satisfy the soul, he calls it True Bread. In contrast with every bread which leaves men to hunger again and again, he calls it Living Bread and Bread of Life.

The soul of man must live by life. Man needs the light of a living personality to guide; he needs the warmth of personal love to quicken and expand his affections; he needs the comfort of personal companionship to cheer and sustain; he needs the personal inspiration of a divine presence and power to make him perfect. All that men need is revealed,

manifested, and mediated to men in Jesus, the Christ. He is the perfection of spiritual truth, the fulness of love, the source of inspiration. He is indeed the bread of life.

Jesus gives to men who believe in Him a vivid conception of God's love and care, sweet submission to God's will, cheerful obedience to God's laws, rest in God's love, communion with God's strength, abiding hope in the fulness and constancy of God's goodness, and rich experience of God's grace. The spiritual inspiration and fulness of life which Jesus gives, keeps the moral intelligence clear, the conscience keen, the will strong, love ardent, courage constant, and hope bright. The man who is thus fed, is made sufficient for the conditions and the changes and the duties of life. In such a man faith, hope, and love ever abide.

Jesus says: "If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever." Professor Drummond has said: "One of the most startling achievements of recent science is a definition of Eternal Life." Science postulates eternal life as depending upon perfect correspondence with an eternal environment. Science, however, knows no way of obtaining such correspondence. Science cannot give eternal life. Science knows only those things which in themselves are subject to change. Science may indeed suggest the need of some eternal life with which man may come into correspondence, but it has no means of discovering or of revealing such a life. It is only spirit which can know spirit, and spiritual things must be spiritually discerned. Hence the necessity

of man's consulting his own soul to know its needs and trusting his soul's instincts to find some source of supply for his needs. Jesus has given the completest answer to the hunger of man's heart. Jesus reveals an eternal Spirit and shows the way of eternal life. Jesus says: "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent." The knowledge of God is used by Jesus in the Hebrew sense of the term. This is knowledge based on personal experience derived through communion. It is knowledge of the soul rather than of the intellect, of the affections rather than of the reason. But it is knowledge none the less true. This knowledge to him who possesses it, is eternal life.

All life in this world is conditioned both as to its growth and as to its continuance. No form of life will grow without food—without an influx of that which sustains it. This is true of the body, of the mind, and of the affections. The body must eat to live; the mind must find truth to be strong; the heart must dwell in love. Who could remain loving if there were no person in all the universe to love him? The continuance of any life depends on its ability to keep in correspondence with that which maintains it. A man in the course of time loses his power to feed upon the things of earth. Science and Scripture both affirm that visible and tangible things are subject to change and will pass away. The present form of the universe will pass. If a man could continue in correspondence with it, nevertheless, he would at last cease to be. Jesus has

said that a soul may be in such correspondence with God who "hath immortality" that it may live forever. Saint John, the interpreter of Jesus, has said: "The world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." That is to say, both the outward form of visible things and the inward desire for them are transient and must pass; but God abides and the desire for Him uniting the soul to Him in holy communion in love gives to man the condition of eternal life.

There is a quality of life belonging to the believer in Christ which in its disposition, desires, and expression is superior to any form of life below it. This life is called spiritual. It resembles a life of morality, but greatly differs from it. A man may be moral from selfishness; he can be spiritual only by love. Eternal life differs from a merely moral life, as love which is altruistic differs from love which is selfish, as generosity differs from exchange, as devotion differs from duty, and as the life of Jesus differed from certain men of his time who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.

The men who gathered about Jesus and became his disciples may serve to illustrate the change which comes to men in the reception of spiritual life. The disciples when they first came to Jesus were good men in the usual acceptance of goodness. But it required a great change to bring them into such companionship with Jesus as made them men of like spirit to Him. At the first they believed in Jesus as a deliverer from certain social and political conditions rather than as a giver of spiritual life. They

looked for his kingdom to come; but it was to be a kingdom of political power and dominance existing for Israel and not for the world. They wished for themselves places in that kingdom, but places for their own honor. Selfishness rather than love was dominant. They would keep children from the presence of Jesus; they would silence the cry of a troubled woman; they would send hungry multitudes away; they would call down fire of vengeance upon an offending village.

They prayed for the coming of the kingdom, but a kingdom for themselves. These men, under the tuition of Jesus, were greatly changed. They received the words of Jesus and found them to be spirit and life. They fed upon Jesus and found Him to be living bread. They learned to love as Jesus loved, condescendingly, generously, serviceably. They received freely, they gave freely. They obtained power, they used power beneficently. Their patriotism expanded into philanthropy; lines of racial demarcation disappeared; obligation to men was measured by opportunity and power; they lived, like the Master, to do good. They received the spirit of Jesus and were uplifted, transformed, and made children of the Highest. They lived in communion with God; they ministered to men in love; they rejoiced in the life eternal.

Christianity is not a higher morality, though it gives higher standards of morality. Christianity is a loftier faith and a purer love. Christianity is a disposition, a desire, a purpose, a setting of the will, an efflorescence of goodness, a rich fruitage of

righteousness. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Christianity is a quality of soul which is beautiful in the sight of God.

There are conditions and experiences common to saint and sinner alike as long as they are in the world, but there are differences in the saint and the sinner in relation to the things which are common to both. Temptation comes to the saint as to the sinner; but the saint gains a victory; to him temptation is opportunity; he faces a stairway which leads upward. Trouble comes to the saint as to the sinner; but the saint has comfort; to him trouble finds a center of inward peace. Sorrow comes to the saint as to the sinner; but the saint has comfort; his sorrow is followed by joy. Victory, peace, comfort, and joy are Christian experiences.

Strength of soul which comes by faith and which expresses itself in love; strength which makes the will firm and which keeps hope constant; strength which comforts the heart and gives joy to the spirit is as real an experience in human life as is strength which comes to a hungry and thirsty man when he drinks and is refreshed, and eats and is renewed.

All that any man needs in order to know the reality of heavenly bread and the certainty of eternal life is to partake of that bread and to lead that life. The conscious life of any man is his real life. What a man experiences, he knows. What a man has in himself, he possesses. We may say, now, with the same assurance as men who wrote in the first Christian century: "We know whom we have believed. We

know that we have passed from death unto life. We know that we are children of God. We know God and knowing Him we know that we have eternal life."

CHAPTER III

GROWTH

THE frost-ferns on my dining room windows formed as by fairy fingers on a cold night, rival in beauty the flowers on my table; but they lack color and fragrance, and are soon gone.

The frost-ferns on a window pane of a winter morning are formed of small particles of water deposited upon the glass and frozen together. The ferns in a forest are formed of particles of mineral substance which have been changed by a vital force into living tissue and woven together from within. The former increase by accretion; the latter, by growth. The former is inorganic, the latter is organic. The substance of the former is held in place by adhesion and will dissolve at the touch of the sun. The substance of the latter is pervaded by a mysterious force called *life* and must die before it can be dissolved. The former may be formed in a night and dissolved in a day. The latter is the result of a long process of growth, and will endure so long as the vital force endures. The element of time and of transformation both belong to a living entity. No living thing is perfect in its inception. Perfection is the result of a process of growth.

Teachers of religious truth have been singularly blind to this scientific fact. They have taught that man was created originally perfect. They have also taught that a renewed man might suddenly become

perfect. *The Westminster Confession of Faith* states the theological opinion which was long current in respect of man in these words: "After God made all other creatures, he created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, endued with knowledge, righteousness and true holiness, after his own image." And of the renewed man, the Shorter Catechism says: "The souls of believers are, at their death, made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory."

A man of scientific turn of mind accustomed not to lay down preconceived propositions but to look candidly for facts which present themselves to the mind might ask, "How can a creature be created complete in knowledge which is an acquirement, or perfect in holiness which is an achievement?" He might also ask, "How can a soul become perfect in holiness by virtue of the fact of death, which is the separation of the soul from the body, even though that soul passes into glory?"

Until recently, teachers of religion, like teachers of philosophy and of literature, were not scientific. Their method was not inductive. They laid down propositions based often on literal statements of the scriptures and then sought to maintain them against all disputants. They did not compare carefully either the statements of the scriptures or their own statements with the facts of nature and of life and so they misunderstood God and misinterpreted man.

This habit of mind may be illustrated by the following incident. In looking through a theological

library at one time, I found an old book containing this statement: "When God created trees, they were perfect and crowned with ripe fruit; for God would not make any incomplete thing."

This statement of a private individual may serve to illustrate the difference between the ancient mechanical theory and the modern vital theory of creation. God is continually making trees before the eyes of men, but God never makes a tree in the manner described by this author. The trunk and branch and blossom and fruit of a tree are all the result of growth. What God does is this. He infuses a force which we call life into an atom of matter, and the growth of a tree is the result. But to our author, this was not a matter of any moment. Like theologians of a past period, commonly, the author started with a certain conception of God and with an assumed principle of his action and with these mental concepts he constructed a system of creation, a process of history, and a doctrine of final things. A perfect man as the head of the human race was a part of this system. A moral disaster on the part of this man involving the character and moral standing of all men was one chief fact of human history. This fact made necessary the gracious relation of God to men which is revealed in the gospel and made possible the salvation which men thereby attain.

But man, as we know him, starts life in infancy, a creature undeveloped and incomplete in body, mind, and character. However the first man may have come to be, to the scientific mind, he must

have begun life in mental infancy and in moral childhood. Knowledge is the result of learning. Moral character is the result of choice and achievement. Sinlessness on the part of a first man, even though he be the head of a race, would not mean holiness. Sinlessness is negative. Holiness is positive. Holiness is the result of temptation resisted, good chosen, and righteousness attained. A first man, as much as any of his descendants, if he is to possess the heavenly life, must have the illumination of heavenly light, the quickening warmth of heavenly love, and the inspiring power of the heavenly Spirit. Jesus has said: "Except a man—[not a bad man only, but a man]—be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Whatever might take place in a hypothetical world, in the world as we know it, perfection of any kind comes through growth. Man is no exception to this rule. Man differs from creatures below him only in the potencies of his nature and the possibilities of his character.

The growth of man is conditioned upon hunger, made possible by bread, and accomplished by accepting bread and by assimilating it. Bread is absolutely essential to growth. Trees grow by absorbing chemical substances, by transforming them, by assimilating them, and by adding cell to cell until trunk, branch, and leaf are complete. An animal body grows in a similar way. Bread is absorbed, transmuted into blood, assimilated, added to the cellular substances of the body and converted into tissue of muscle and nerve until the body attains its full

physical perfection.

Mental growth is similar. A body in a vacuum would die. A mind isolated and kept apart from all things with which a mind may hold commerce and communion, would never grow. We scarcely can conceive of its continuance. But as the mind stimulated by its inherent hunger, puts forth effort and through the eye sees and through the hand feels material things, and remembers their form and quality, it gains in power of seeing, feeling, and knowing things. As a mind responds to other minds which appeal to it, as a mother's glance and smile and voice appeal to a baby, the mind grows. The vision becomes more clear, discernment more keen, grasp more firm, judgment more accurate, memory more retentive, reason more subtle, and the power of the will more absolute and constant. All methods of education from the nursery to the kindergarten, from the public school to the university prove this truth.

A mind with little hunger and with little spontaneous action never will become a great mind. Why? Because it is too feeble to feed, therefore it cannot grow. A great mind follows growth.

As it is with the mind, so it is also with the moral nature. Deeper and more important than the intellectual preception and comprehension of things is the feeling which is entertained in respect of relation to persons. A sense of the presence, a consciousness of the individuality, and a regard for the rights of other persons are both a cause and a consequence of social converse with other persons. Even language

testifies to this fact. A boor is a rustic whose lonely life has left him rude so that the roughness of his nature grates on sensitive souls. A civil man is a *cives*, a citizen, whose daily intercourse with other persons has smoothed away the roughness of his nature and made him an agreeable companion. The polite man and the urbane man, as the words indicate, have acquired refinement of manner and graciousness of speech from dwelling in a city. The courteous man has acquired his pleasing bearing and address from frequenting a court graced by kingly presence.

The spiritual nature of man, which is his inner disposition especially in relation to the spirit of the universe which we call God, grows by communion with those qualities of God, however they may be revealed, which evoke love of spiritual goodness and greatness. Appreciation of truthfulness, reverence of holiness, love of goodness grow by feeding upon those qualities until the soul is enamored of them by long gazing upon their sweet loveliness. Worship which is waiting upon God and thinking upon His majesty, power, goodness, and grace until the soul is aglow with adoration, faith, and love, is one chief means of spiritual growth. Only men who thus waited in contemplative worship, could have produced the finest psalms and the loftiest ascriptions of praise found in the psalms and the prophecies of the Old Testament. The contemplation of the glory of God as exhibited in the heavens, of his goodness as shown in the constant beneficence of nature, of his grace as revealed in Jesus, tends to

evoke such qualities of reverence and gratitude and faith as make the soul strong in its adherence to righteousness.

A physical nature feeds upon material food, a musical nature feeds upon music, an esthetic nature feeds upon beauty, and a religious or spiritual nature feeds upon spiritual excellence. We love, because we first are loved. This the writers of the Bible understood when they used such expressions as the following: "O taste and see that the Lord is good."

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat. Hearken diligently unto me and eat ye that which is good." So Jesus, also, speaks of bread and water of life.

A soul, like a mind, will grow by that upon which it feeds. A mind which concerns itself with the science of mathematics will think in terms of mathematics. A mind which thinks upon commercial values and measures every thing by such values, will become commercial in its tone and thought. A mind which thinks upon things political will become a political mind. A mind which thinks of moral values will grow morally judicious. In like manner, a soul which feels the impress of moral excellence and beauty will grow more sensitive to moral qualities. A soul which dwells in love and feels love's embrace will grow loving. A soul which contemplates mercy will grow merciful. A soul which, dwells, voluntarily, in an atmosphere of envy, hate, and revenge will grow unmerciful, unloving, and cruel.

Jesus recognized this fact in his method of teaching. He revealed to his disciples the character of the Father who is merciful to the ill-deserving, kind to the unthankful, and gracious to them who believe and obey Him. Jesus bade them be like the Father. Their character would be formed by contemplation of the divine character. They would grow into the likeness of God by the worship of God.

That which Jesus prescribed to his disciples as the method of growth has been abundantly shown in history to be the way by which men have grown. Jehovah gave Moses a vision of Himself upon a mount when He passed by and proclaimed Himself "the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth." Moses having seen the vision and heard the voice, returned to the base of the mount with a shining face and with a loving heart which bore in patience the rebellious children of Israel. Jehovah gave to Isaiah in the temple, a vision of his holiness. Isaiah beholding the vision was first conscious of his own unclean lips, next, sensible of pardon and peace, and then, willing to go forth and call Israel to repentance and righteousness. The vision of Jesus which Saul beheld on his way to Damascus first filled Saul with fear and then with faith. Having seen a vision of Jesus whom he persecuted, Saul was willing to be led by Jesus in a long life of sacrifice and service.

Saint Augustine whose remarkable experience of deliverance from sin and from doubt, and whose confirmation in faith and righteousness made him a most remarkable witness to the transforming pow-

er of divine grace, has given a beautiful testimony of the power of God both to save and to satisfy the soul. Augustine has said: "Too late loved I Thee, O thou beauty of ancient days. Thou wert with me, but I was not with Thee. Things held me far from Thee. Thou didst call and shout and burst my deafness. Thou didst flash, shine, and scatter my blindness. Thou didst breathe odors, and I drew in breath, and pant for Thee. I tasted and I hunger and thirst for Thee. When I shall with my whole self cleave to Thee, I shall nowhere have sorrow or labor; and my life shall wholly live as wholly full of Thee." Again Augustine says: "Not with doubting but with assured consciousness, do I love Thee, Lord. But what do I love, when I, love Thee? Not the beauty of bodies, nor the fair harmony of time, nor the brightness of light so gladsome to our eyes, nor sweet melodies of varied songs, nor the fragrant smell of flowers and ointments and spices, not manna and honey, not limbs acceptable to the embracements of flesh. None of these do I love when I love my God; and yet I love a kind of light, a kind of melody, a kind of fragrance, a kind of meat, a kind of embracement, when I love my God,—the light, the melody, the fragrance, the meat, the embracement of the inner man: where there shineth unto my soul, what spaces cannot contain, and there soundeth, what time beareth not away, and there smelleth, what breathing disperseth not, and there tasteth, what eating diminisheth not, and there clingeth, what satiety divorceth not. This is it which I love when I love my God."

Augustine's intellectual opinions in the matter of theological thought, were sometimes remote from modern thought, but his spiritual experiences of divine love and grace were true for all time. As Augustine's body had found delight and satisfaction in the light, beauty, melody, fragrance and food of nature, so did his soul find delight and satisfaction in the light and love and grace of God.

There is provided, in this universe, food for the soul as well as food for the body. But there is a difference between food in its relation to physical being, and food in its relation to spiritual being. The difference is this: A physical nature transforms the food which it receives into substance like itself; a spiritual nature is transformed by the food which it receives. Sheep and cattle and horses feeding in the same pasture and drinking of the same brook change the grass and water into the substance of sheep and cattle and horses. The quality of food eaten by a physical body determines only in a small degree the quality of that body. Coarse food cannot make a fine body coarse, nor fine food make a coarse body fine, save in a very limited degree. But the spiritual food upon which a soul feeds will make that soul something worse or better than it was by nature. A boy whose hero is a bully will become like a bully; a boy whose hero is truly brave, will become brave. A girl whose goddess is Venus will become vain; a girl whose goddess is the Virgin Mary will become a humble handmaid of the Lord to do his will.

A man or a nation will grow like that which is

worshipped. The Greeks loved physical beauty and adored divinities of physical perfection. The Greeks in art, in bodily form, and in manners, aimed to produce physical perfection; but the Greeks, in morals, fell below some ruder nations. The Romans worshipped power. Jove and Mars were mighty in the thought of Rome. The Romans framed laws, organized armies, and established and maintained an empire by force. Some modern nations worship wealth and excel in methods of gaining wealth rather than in the practice of morality. That which men regard as the highest good will inspire both their thought and their action, and so determine character.

It is well said, in every sense, that a man's religion is the chief fact in regard to him, Thomas Carlyle has said: "The thing a man does practically lay to heart, and know for certain, concerning his vital relations to this mysterious universe, and his duty and destiny there, that is in all cases the primary thing for him, and creatively determines all the rest. That is his religion." What a man worships—thinks of as best, adores, loves and would possess—is the most important thing in the formation of character.

One has caricatured the saying, "An honest man's the noblest work of God," by the sentence, "An honest God's the noblest work of man." But man never has made an honest god. Every god of whom man is the creator has borne so great likeness to man himself that he has proved immoral. No deity of all the pantheon of the pagan world has been able to

endure in the presence of the God and Father of Jesus. Only the God who has revealed himself in the person of Jesus endures as the supreme object of men's worship. The worship of that God alone, can make men perfect.

It has been suggested that as man improves himself, his conception of God improves, and therefore the God of Christian people is the product and result of man's growing morality. But, historically, this is not true. Man did not become holy first and then think of God as holy. But on the other hand, there came to man, in some way, the revelation and the command of God, saying, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." The history of the Old Testament makes plain the fact that a holy God as the object of worship was the source of improvement in the spirit and in the morals of the Hebrew race. When the Hebrew people worshipped some other god than Jehovah, they always declined in morals.

The history of Christianity proves even more clearly than Hebrew history that the order of development is from God to man and never from man to God. The disciples of Jesus did not become holy, loving, large-minded, merciful, and gracious towards all men; and then conclude that God is like that. No! It was a new conception of God which changed the conception of the disciples in respect of themselves, their relation to other men and their duty to the Gentile world. Their theology determined their sociology. That has been the order of growth ever since.

It was the fact that God is no respecter of per-

sons, revealed to Peter. that made him willing to preach the gospel to the Roman captain, Cornelius, and to baptize him. It was the fact that God had made of one blood all nations, that impelled Paul to regard all nations as worthy to receive the gospel of divine grace. It was conviction of the fact that, in the divine judgment, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female," that made Paul welcome to equal privileges the slave, Onesimus, and his master, Philemon; receive to equal privilege Aquila and his wife Priscilla; and give the right hand of Christian fellowship to his Jewish countrymen and to the Roman soldiers of Caesar's household. It was the fact that God loved men with a love which would make sacrifice to save, as exemplified in the life and death of Jesus, that made the apostles willing to become martyrs and to lay down life itself if, thereby, men might be saved. Had the disciples believed that Jesus was only a man, like themselves, and that he had died an involuntary death as a victim of Jewish fanaticism, they never would have been constrained to accept death so willingly. In that case, neither the death of Jesus nor their own death would have had any appreciable effect upon the character and destiny of men. Martyrdoms—of which there had been many—until the time of Jesus, had not made men holy nor loving.

It is true that as centuries have passed and an increasing number of men have become Christians, the moral standards of society generally have risen and the standards of Jesus have been measurably

adopted. But it is not true that because society has been growing better, the conception of God has risen. The reverse of this is true. A better understanding of the teachings of Jesus and of the character of God as revealed in Him, has preceded the higher moral teachings and the more Christ-like character of men. Were this not the case and were the increasing goodness of men the cause of the worship of a holier God, then the New Testament ought to have been replaced by this time by a better text book; then, higher and holier teachings of the character of God than those of Jesus ought to have been given; then, Jesus Himself ought to have been supplanted by a more divine Messiah. But this has not happened. Two things are very significant as well as very true. Men still refer to Jesus as the supreme teacher of spiritual and moral truth and confess that the God whom Jesus reveals is worthy of the holiest worship, the most ardent love, and the most devoted service. Men who drift away from Jesus and his teachings, commonly deteriorate in spirituality and in morals.

Another great fact is worthy of notice. The number of men who worship a holy God and who follow a loving life is increasing in the world, yet, in the thought of men, God is no more holy, faith is no more firm, love is no more fervid, devotion to duty is no more complete, and character is no finer with modern men than with some men of the first Christian century. Men have not passed beyond the teaching of Jesus who said: "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Jesus is the first and the final teacher of men in the sphere of the spirit. They who follow him with believing mind, trustful spirit, and obedient will, are disciples in the school of Christian living. Their own experience tests and proves the great fact that the words of Jesus are spirit, and that he himself is bread of life.

The conditions of growth ought to be carefully noticed and complied with. Jesus lays emphasis on disposition as the primary condition of learning and of growth. His blessings are for "the poor in spirit," "the meek," "the merciful," "the pure in heart," and for such as "hunger for righteousness."

The purpose and the practice of life are of essential value in the estimation of Jesus. "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." "He that doeth truth, cometh to the light." One who would grow must be willing to put away evil and to cultivate good.

Jesus calls attention to sincerity of heart and obedience of will as necessary to growth. Jesus says: "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching whether it be of God." "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister and mother."

The effort of Jesus is to touch the inner springs of emotion and action. He is more concerned with feeling than with intelligence. He knows that life is fed and trained by life. Jesus spoke to men in parable and in picture and tried to lift their minds from the knowledge of what is best in men to what

is good in God. Jesus never pointed men to the "fixed laws" of nature to instruct them in regard to what they might expect of God. Jesus ever pointed men to the promptings of love and bade them find the ways of God who is a spirit in the way of the spirit of man.

If Jesus would encourage men to pray, he told them of an unjust judge who avenged a widow who came continually to him for justice, avenging her because of her insistence; of a neighbor who would rise at midnight and give bread to his friend because of his need and importunity; of a human father who would not give a stone to a child who asked bread; and of the fact that the Father in heaven knows men's need before they ask him. He emphasized God's willingness to answer prayer by asserting that "much more" than men, God will hear and see and know and answer prayers by giving good gifts.

Jesus instructed men in a knowledge of the merciful and gracious ways of God, that men may both depend on his mercy and become themselves merciful. Jesus pointed men to a woman sweeping her house to find a lost wedding coin, to a shepherd leaving his fold to find one stray sheep, to a father falling on the neck of a returning prodigal son with full forgiveness and bountiful welcome, and bade men see in these pictures an illustration of the loving spirit of God.

Jesus tried to persuade men to put away needless anxieties and hurtful fears by assuring them that men who live in faith and walk in love are more

to God than the flowers of the field which he clothes in beauty, and more than the birds of the air which he feeds with widespread bounty.

Jesus tried to teach men how to grow unto perfection by reminding them of the character of God who loves, blesses, and does good simply because such is his nature, even as it is the nature of the sun to shine beneficently. Jesus bids men love and bless and do good in like manner that they may be the children of the Father who "makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

Jesus teaches that the law of life for the disciple is the same as the law of life for the Master. "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you." Jesus also teaches that the disciple should be satisfied to be like the Master in the experiences of life. "It is enough that the disciple be as his master and the servant as his Lord." One who would follow Jesus and be like Him must conform to the conditions of growth.

Three things constitute the conditions of growing, namely, atmosphere, food, and exercise. The social atmosphere in which you dwell is of first importance. You may perceive easily the effect of an atmosphere upon your soul. If you are in business and experience sharp competition and shrewd dealing, then, that influence may easily lead you to cherish the same shrewd and selfish spirit. If you have suffered wrong and your mind dwells upon the wrong until its bitterness is constant, then, very easily a spirit of resentment and of revenge may be

awakened in you. If you live amid suspicion and jealousy, a blight may readily fall upon generous affections. On the other hand, association with the just, the generous, the charitable, the kindly, and the serviceable tends to awaken generous and kindly feelings within your own breast.

Jesus' purpose is to lift you by his own great love into a high and pure atmosphere where you may consciously dwell in the light and warmth of God's gracious goodness. If you keep yourself in the consciousness of God's great love for you, then, the lovelessness which you may sometimes meet among men will not so chill your own affections as to blight and destroy them. The injustice of men will not turn you from the path of rectitude. The evil of men will not prevent you from doing good. The love of God will keep you warm in affection, sweet in disposition, calm in life's commotions, courageous to bear, and strong to do the things demanded by your relations and by your opportunities. If you feed upon the truth of God as revealed by Jesus, your soul will not fail nor faint, and as your days demand, so shall your strength be.

That which Jesus would have you learn is the quality of spirit in which to live. He would cultivate the soul rather than inform the intellect. All intellectual information furnished by Him is for the cultivation of the soul. You must exercise, voluntarily, the choice of things pure and true and good. You must put away feelings which would make you unlike Christ. "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and

anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice." You must cultivate the graces of the spirit and "be kind, tender-hearted, forgiving, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Thus you will grow by exercise. You will control your spirit, you will cast out evil, you will resist temptation, you will increase in love, you will be an embodiment in living form of the precepts of Jesus. Growing in such ways, you will become like Christ and will be numbered among the citizens of his great and glorious kingdom. The symbols of the Book of Revelation such as the white robe, the palm, the crown will fittingly express the purity, the victorious strength, the royal dignity, and the worth of your character.

CHAPTER IV

MAN'S PLACE IN NATURE

IS man, naturally, a finality or a potentiality? Was man complete in intelligence and character, when he first appeared upon the earth, or was he a creature made to be completed? The doctrine taught by theologians for centuries has been that man, at first, was a finality. Adam was created perfect; in intelligence and moral endowment, he was the resplendent image of the Creator. So recent and so eminent a theologian as the late Charles Hodge of Princeton has said: "Man was originally created in a state of maturity and perfection." "It is commonly said by theologians that the body was created immortal and impassible." "With regard to its immortality, it is certain that if man had not sinned, he would not have died." A moral catastrophe following an act of disobedience has made mankind degenerate. Sin, pain, suffering, and death are all consequences of the fall of man. Salvation is largely the restoration of man to his primal and normal condition.

Nothing could illustrate more clearly than such statements, the utterly unscientific habit of mind which prevailed in the church as well as in the world when the creeds which we have inherited were formed. Theologians failed to look upon life as it lay before them, but read the letter of the scriptures without perceiving the spirit. A man, though he should be made at once with a perfect body and a

full-sized brain, could not be complete in knowledge which is an acquirement, nor in holiness which is an achievement. The body of a man, by its very constitution, is capable of pain and, in a world like this, must suffer even though there be no sin. Death, also, was in the world before man appeared upon it, and death is a destiny awaiting every material body born in the world. Physical death is a part of the orderly process of nature.

Sin and suffering and the death entailed thereby, must be studied apart from the physical laws which dominate the life of all animal creation including man, except where sin is in violation of a physical law.

Theologians have been philosophers and not scientists. They have followed a deductive and not an inductive process of reasoning. They have read the story of creation in Genesis and they have interpreted it by Saint Paul's use of Adam as a type of Christ. They have pressed Saint Paul's illustration to extreme limits. They have made Adam as much a destroyer of his race as Christ is a Saviour.

The book of Genesis, however, is a book of beginnings. It is not a scientific book. It states facts. It does not describe processes. It is an imaginary painting, not a photograph. It is poetical, pictorial, and parabolic according to the genius of the Oriental people who wrote the Bible.* Its purpose is relig-

*See an excellent article on *The Oriental Manner of Speech*, by Abraham Mintrie Rihbany, in *The Atlantic Monthly*, April, 1916.

ious, not scientific. "God created the heavens and the earth." The fact not the method of creation is affirmed. "God spoke"—put forth power—and light, atmosphere, land, plants, animals and, finally, man appeared. The purpose of all this is to show God's relation to the things that are. Man is more than a result of chemical processes. Man is a living soul, an image of the Creator. The image is an etching faint rather than full, potential in its promise rather than perfect. If Adam is compared with Jesus, who is said to be the image of the invisible God, the embryonic character of Adam's likeness will be apparent. Adam was created to be developed. It was possible for him to choose his course, to know good or evil by experience, to develop or to degenerate, to live or to die.

Such is the picture of Genesis. Its simplicity and purity, its freedom from exaggeration, and its religious suggestiveness make it superior to other similar traditions of the Semitic race. That parental choice and conduct affect the character of descendants and transmit qualities and tendencies is obvious. The fall of man and original sin are matters of vital truth, but they have been pressed altogether too far. They have been so presented as to give God a quality of judgment, a method of conduct and a severity of punishment which if practiced by any man or nation would call forth condemnation. Saint Paul's use of Adam must not be so pressed as to pervert the simple facts of Genesis, or to deny the facts of history. Genesis seeks, in the pictorial language of primitive people, to tell how man began to be. Saint Paul is

concerned, chiefly, to show how man may be complete in Christ.

It is more important for us to know what man is now, than to imagine what he may have been in the beginning. It is more valuable for us to take Jesus' estimate of man than to take an opinion based upon some interpretation of the narrative in Genesis.

Jesus most obviously regards man as a candidate for a kingdom. He came preaching the nearness of a kingdom which he called the kingdom of heaven. He bade men strive to enter that kingdom. He said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Potentially, a grain of corn is a possible plant; but except a grain of corn be begotten by the vitalizing power of sunlight, it cannot be a stalk of corn. Potentially, an egg is a possible bird; but except an egg be quickened by the brooding warmth of a mother, it cannot be a bird. Potentially, a child in the matrix is a possible man; but unless the child be born into the larger world of air and light and action, it cannot be a man. Potentially, according to the teaching of Jesus, a man is a possible son of God; but unless a man is quickened by the Spirit and brought into communion with God, he cannot be a son. Jesus regards man as naturally a germ to be quickened, an embryo to be developed, a child to be born, a creature of earth to become a citizen of heaven. This is quite in accord with the course of nature and with the ascending orders of life.

In the ascending grades of living beings, there is always something added in each new kingdom. A

crystal has a form shaped by nature's forces and it has beauty in some respects quite equal to the beauty of a flower; but there is something in a flower which is not in a crystal. A crystal is in the mineral kingdom, a flower is in the vegetable kingdom. A flower has a form and a beauty something like the form and beauty of a sea-anemone; but a sea-anemone, as it opens itself on the face of a rock, has something which a flower does not possess. A flower is in the vegetable kingdom, a sea-anemone is in the animal kingdom. An animal has appetites and affections such as are found in man; but there is something in man which marks him as belonging in a higher range of life than an animal. There is something in man which impels him to seek after God, if haply he may find him. This may not be sufficient of itself to lift man out of the animal kingdom, but it differentiates man from all other animals. It makes possible man's emergence from the animal kingdom into the kingdom of heaven.

It should be noticed, also, that in every advance from one kingdom to another, some power from above uplifts and transforms the lower. The lower never emerges by its own force into a higher kingdom. Whence this power comes, we know not. That it does come and that it works a great change we do know. Jesus says: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The fact that some-

thing has been produced in man is as manifest as the fact that the wind has passed and produced a change on the face of nature.

It is written in the gospel that there is a light shining in the world, a life coming to the race of men, a breath of a spirit from heaven, an influence divine, and that they who receive this light and breath, receive power to become sons of God. They "are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Saint Paul says: "They who are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they who are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit." He also adds: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Saint Paul also says in connection with his doctrine of the resurrection: "Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual (pneumatical) but that which is natural (psychical), and afterward that which is spiritual." "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." It is scarcely needful to add that Saint Paul is speaking of those who have known the heavenly birth of the Spirit. Speaking to such persons, Saint John also says: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth

not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

Such, briefly, is the general tenor of the teaching of the New Testament. Man is not a finality and never has been. Man is a potentiality and has been such from his creation. Man begins life as part of the animal kingdom, but with a receptive capacity and a latent power which make possible action upon him by the Spirit of God whereby he may be lifted into a higher kingdom called the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God. How this takes place man no more knows than he knows how life begins anywhere. The process of changing man is as secret, subtle, and strong as the process by which life once begun is quickened by the warmth of sunlight or by warmth of maternal love or by mental action and influence, and transformed into something of higher quality and nobler form and fairer beauty. That such a change does take place, may be known by the results; just as the results of life may be known anywhere. The quality of the new life is the important thing by which its grade may be known. Wherever spiritual love and purity, sweetness and strength, devotion and righteousness are found, there the life exists. Some persons evidently grow in this life from childhood. They are known of God and, in the Hebrew sense of communion, they know God from infancy. Others evidently begin this life at a definite period and with marked experiences.

The change of the natural man to the spiritual

man is most perceptible and most impressive when the change takes place in those who have been dominated by that selfishness and self-seeking which belong to the natural man. Such changes are frequent and well defined. One day Peter is a fisherman, a disciple of Jesus but a disciple with an intense conviction that only Jews will obtain Jesus' salvation and participate in his kingdom. The next day, Peter is an apostle of love, giving the right hand of fellowship to a Gentile soldier of the Roman army and declaring the great fact that "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation, he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him." One day, Saul of Tarsus is a self-righteous man, breathing out threatenings against all who believe in Jesus and proceeding to Damascus to arrest any believers who may be there. The next day, Saul has become Paul, an apostle; and in Damascus is preaching Jesus as the Saviour of man. The change in the man was not only a change of opinion but a change in the spirit of his life. One day, Augustine is teaching rhetoric and revelling in sexual lusts. The next day, Augustine is living in regal control of the flesh and teaching spiritual truth. One day, Francis of Assisi is enjoying his father's wealth and spending it on the pleasures of youthful society. The next day, Francis is giving up all wealth and all pleasure of the world that he may serve Christ and enjoy the pleasures of spiritual society. One day, John Bunyan is a profane tinker. The next day John Bunyan is a dreamer of immortal dreams

and a writer of a book which next to the bible was long to be the most useful book in all Britain. One day, Jerry McCauley is a companion and a partner of thieves. The next day, Jerry McCauley is a preacher of righteousness, saving men such as he had been. One day, Delia, "The Bluebird of Mulberry Bend," is a harlot on the streets of New York. The next day, Delia, won by a kiss of Christian love, is walking the same streets in saintly purity, seeking to save the fallen.

The changes from a life in the flesh to a life in the spirit, are so numerous and so marked, and there are, now, so many who in pure love and holy ministry walk in the ways of Christ, that the fact of a higher life for men is most manifest. He who doubts it, would doubt the light of a star. He who denies it, would deny the finest flower blooming in any garden on earth. He who does not desire it for himself, shows his lack of desire for what is finest and best in men.

Salvation has been preached and is still often preached as deliverance from a calamity—from the results of a fall. Salvation, more properly, is deliverance from a condition. Where there has been the calamity of a fall, of course, there must be deliverance from that; but deeper than that, is deliverance from a natural condition. Man must be saved from an earthly and animal state of life. He must be saved from a life which is limited to the sphere of the bodily and animal senses. In this sense, man always needed salvation. Adam, as much as any of his descendants, needed salvation. Jesus says:

“Marvel not that I said, ‘Ye must be born again.’” The “must”—the necessity—in Jesus’ estimation, is primarily not because of sin whether of Adam or of any individual, but because “That which is born of the flesh, is flesh.” Jesus regards salvation as generation and birth into a higher state wherein the spirit is supreme.

It is true that Jesus came to save people “from their sins.” But it is equally true that Jesus saves from sin by lifting men into a higher life wherein their desires and their choices are for things true and holy. Salvation, in the opinion of many, is deliverance from punishment and forgiveness of sins; but, in Jesus’ opinion, salvation is the reception of a new power from above whereby men become children of God and delight to do his will.

It is true that Jesus began his preaching by calling men to repent. But it should be noticed that the reason which Jesus gave for repentance was that “the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” It was not impending punishment but open opportunity of the heavenly life which Jesus urged as the motive of repentance. Jesus says: “God so loved the world that he gave his Son that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish.” Jesus says that the man who believes on Him “hath eternal life.” Men escape from perishing by accepting eternal life. It is true that there is forgiveness where there is guilt and deliverance where there is danger of destruction, but forgiveness and deliverance accompany the reception of that “grace of God which brings salvation and teaches how to live.”

The sin which Jesus specially notices and condemns is the sin of refusing to be saved. Men are not condemned by Jesus because they are down, but because they refuse to rise. "This is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light." "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." The condemnation is not for what a man has done in sinning, but for what he fails to do by not believing.

This conception of salvation should give men a new conception of sin. It is very noticeable that Jesus did not judge harshly, men who were under the domination of natural appetites. It is, likewise, noticeable that Jesus did not demand morality as a condition of entering his kingdom. This was not because Jesus approved of physical vice, but because He saw that freedom could come only by a spiritual liberation. Jesus did not require morality in prospective disciples for the reason that the morality demanded in his kingdom could be produced only by the force of a higher life. Sin is commonly regarded as some feeling, word, or act which is evil. But sin is a mistake, a wrong choice, a misdirection in living, a failure. The great sin which destroys men is the refusal to accept the higher life. Adam chose the fruit of the tree of knowledge of evil, rather than the fruit of the tree of life. Adam

degenerated. Adam's descendants choose the things of the flesh and the knowledge of evil rather than the things of the spirit and the knowledge of good. They too degenerate. Degeneration among men is as common as development.

I take it that had the first man chosen to ascend, he would not have fallen. Now, however low men have fallen, the grace of God can lift them up. "All sins shall be forgiven" unto the sons of men, says Jesus. He who believeth shall be saved. This is the gospel.

However high a man may be by virtue of his birth and by culture in the refinements of polite society, that will not save him. Birth, education, culture, politeness—all good things indeed for the world—will not lift any man into the kingdom of heaven.

What God desires in a man are qualities of the spirit which belong to a heavenly kingdom. What God requires in man is faith in Him, however revealed to man, and especially faith in Him as revealed in His Son where that revelation is known. What God looks for as evidences of the true life of man are reverence, faith, gratitude, love, obedience, devotion to truth and to the law of love especially as that love shows itself in the life of Jesus. These qualities of character are said to be fruits of the spirit. They grow not from earth alone, but from earth as kissed and quickened by the touch from heaven. As flowers and fruits are the product of the earth and the physical heaven, so these graces are the product of human nature quickened and made

perfect by the touch and power of the Spirit of God. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." If these are not found in a man, then, however much of decency and morality there may be in human relations, condemnation must be pronounced.

Is not this the law of judgment of all life in this world? If the tree of a husbandman does not bear fruit, he will dig about it, fertilize it, and give it every chance of sunshine and shower. Then, if it bears no fruit what will he say? "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground." A fig tree with leaves and no fruit is a failure as a fig tree.

Is not a student dropped from his class in college simply because he refuses to learn? He may point to his good clothes, to his politeness, to his decent habits, to his freedom from vice, nevertheless, in the world of scholarship for whose service a college exists, if he will not learn, he is condemned. Is not a soldier dismissed from the ranks if he will not drill with his company? No decencies of private life can make him a soldier when his individuality is so pronounced that he cannot be subject to the will of his commander and made one of a company. Does not a clerk lose his place in the world of business if he proves incompetent? In all the higher ranges of life in the world, failure to accept a privilege, to improve an opportunity, to fulfill an obligation, and thereby to rise into a higher state of life in learning, or in art, or in official position, or in the esteem of men, debars one forever from that

higher place or that higher life. This men recognize in all civilized society.

Only in things of the spirit and in things of the kingdom of God, do men flatter themselves that they can secure welfare and obtain the rewards of the kingdom of heaven, while neglecting the conditions upon which such things rest. Men, who in their generation are eminently wise and prudent in respect to things of the world, are singularly blind in respect to the laws of the life of the spirit and indifferent to the judgments of the kingdom of God. And because, while they are blind, they say, "we see"; therefore their sin remaineth.

The sin of Jerusalem, in the days of Jesus, was that the people would not see and learn the things which made for their peace. The sin of the Jews was that they would not come to Jesus that they might have life. The sin of men of the world is that they will not come unto the light; but prefer the darkness. This is as though a grain of corn in the earth should refuse to receive sunlight, as though an egg should resist the warmth which would quicken it into a bird, as though a child in the matrix should refuse to be born. It is the refusal of a soul to respond to the light, and love, and opportunity given by God, and so to reject the power which would so act upon it as to quicken it in spirituality and perfect it in righteousness.

The question may be asked, If God is omnipotent, why does he not regenerate every man? This question, in thought, confuses material and moral things, and fails to distinguish between physical and spirit-

ual power. An act of physical power can lift a grain of corn and transplant it, but it cannot give a grain of corn life. The vitalizing power of sunlight differs from a power which simply can change the position of a grain of corn in space; sunlight produces change within the corn itself. A man with physical power can lift a child and transport him from place to place in space; but such power cannot persuade a child to love or to perform an act of righteousness. A power which produces righteousness must act within the soul of the child and impel him to choose righteousness for himself. A power acting like a physical force to compel a man's moral action would destroy a man's liberty. That liberty God has given to man and He does not propose to destroy it.

The Spirit of God acting upon the soul of man can move man, as one mind can move another mind, to see and to feel righteousness; but the soul of man must choose righteousness for itself. Herein lies the agreement of Calvinism, which ascribes salvation to the grace of God, and Arminianism, which ascribes salvation to human choice. There can be no stalk of corn if sunlight from heaven does not come to a grain of corn to quicken it; there can be no stalk of corn unless the grain of corn responds to the sunlight. There can be no salvation, in the sense of being born into the kingdom of heaven, if the spirit of God does not come to the soul of man to quicken it with life from above; there can be no salvation, unless the soul of man responds to the inspiration of the spirit. This is the deep convic-

tion of the Christian church. The hymns and the liturgies of the church ascribe salvation to God and give thanks for grace divine. The judgment of the scriptures and the judgment of the church alike condemn men who are not saved, because they have refused to accept salvation.

Man's place in nature gives him the singular capacity to receive life from God and to hold communion with Him. God's grace gives to men the opportunity to receive such grace and to enjoy such communion. Man's choice accepts or rejects such communion. This agrees with the conditions of life in the orders of creation below man. This accords with the teaching of scripture respecting man. The divine attitude and the human action are thus expressed in the Bible: "I have called, and ye refused." "I am come that they might have life." And "ye will not come to me that ye might have life." But he that believeth, loveth, obeyeth hath eternal life.

This is man's place in nature. Man stands at the head of creation as now constituted in this world. He is superior to everything else. He has dominion over the creatures beneath him. But man stands at the entrance of the kingdom of heaven. He is potentially a child of God. He is a possible heir of God. Scientists admit that further development for man must be along spiritual lines. As an animal, he is complete. As a spirit he is to be completed. Jesus teaches that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. He bids men strive to enter that kingdom. As men enter a kingdom other than the kingdom of their

birth, by naturalization, by accepting the government, laws and institutions of that kingdom, so men enter the kingdom of heaven by faith and obedience. The kingdom of heaven is within them and they are in the kingdom of heaven.

The spiritual difference between men arises from the fact that some enter the kingdom just above them and some choose to remain in the kingdom of the world. Saint Paul defines the two classes by saying that the lower class walk after the flesh and the higher class walk after the Spirit. They may be distinguished by this fact: "They that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit—the things of the Spirit." The sad fact remains that "the mind of the flesh is death"; and the blessed fact remains that "the mind of the Spirit is life." In Saint Paul's conception, men who continue under the control of the flesh and care only for the world are under a law which leads to death; and they who yield to the Spirit are under the control of a law which leads to a continuance of life. That is to say, the one class belong to the present changing and transient order; the other class have risen into an abiding order of spiritual existence. The life of the former class is fed from the earth which must fail; the life of the other class is fed from God who endures. The former class belong to a temporary state; the latter class belong to an eternal state.

The dividing line between these two classes may be invisible to man. The difference between the class below and the class above the dividing line

becomes more positive and distinct as the distance from the line increases. This is in accord with the development of life everywhere. Likenesses in living things which are similar exist in the earlier stages of growth and unlikenesses appear in the later stages. Wheat and rye, at first, as they stand in a field, look alike to an inexperienced eye; their differences are plainly visible at the harvest time. An oak and a maple, as they emerge from the ground, seem quite alike; they are quite unlike when full grown. The embryo of a dog and the embryo of a child, biologists say, look alike at certain periods before birth; their differences are great after birth. A child of small intellectual power and a child of great intellectual power may seem much the same for the first few months or years of life; but the differences between them are very marked as time advances. The saint and the sinner may seem much the same to those who see only the outward expression and whose standards of measurements are those of the parlor and the market-place; but the inward difference is there and the outward expression will become more and more marked with the passage of time. In intelligence, morality, politeness, and actions pertaining to the present world, the citizens of the world and the citizens of the kingdom of heaven may seem alike to the untrained eye. But in spiritual insight, moral feeling, quality of thought, purity of affection, loftiness of aim, and purpose of living they may be widely different.

Morality is freedom from vice and crime and from offensive attitude and injurious action on the

part of men toward one another. Spirituality is the attitude and action of a soul towards God and towards the inner heart of things. A man who lives under the conditions of moral life which prevail to-day may have higher standards of conduct than the standards of a man who lived in the days of David. But it is possible that a man of the days of David, in point of spiritual sensibility and in aim and purpose of life, may have been a better man than a man of seemingly higher moral character to-day. A man reared in a cultured home may have finer manners than a man reared among rude people; but the man of ruder speech and action may, possibly, have a finer spirit than the more cultured man. A man must be judged by his inner life and not by his manners. Culture is largely the product of social opportunities; character is the product of choice and affection.

We know that in every class of society and with every degree of culture, there are men who are actuated mainly by the thought of self and there are men who are actuated by the thought of God. There are men whose aim in life is to please themselves, and there are men whose aim is to please God. There are men whose prayer, if they pray at all, is that God may do for them what they will; and there are men whose prayer is that they may do the will of God. There are men whose efforts are directed wholly to the securing of such things as wealth, position, and power, and there are men whose efforts are expended in loving and useful service. There are men who sacrifice the inner life

of the soul—such as love, truth, and justice,—for outward gain; and there are men who suffer the loss of outward things that they may keep the spirit true and pure. There are men who sell their souls to buy the world, and there are men who lose the world to save their souls. The former serve self, live in the flesh, and live for the world; the latter serve God, live in the spirit and for the kingdom of heaven.

The fundamental distinction between men lies in their thought of themselves as made for themselves, or as made for society. The essential character of men is determined by their sense of obligation to live unto themselves or to others. The rank of men is determined by the fact that they live to do their own will, or to do the will of God. Carlyle has said most truly: "A man's religion, not what he professes as a creed, but what he does absolutely think of himself in his relation to God and the world and to men is the most important thing about him."

The soul of all evil—though evil takes so many forms in choice and action—is selfishness. The soul of all good—though good takes so many forms in choice and action—is love. Love bows to a superior. Love walks in equity with an equal. Love stoops to an inferior. Love worships God. Love deals justly with man. Love shows mercy and confers grace where there is need.

The natural man simply holding his place in nature and holding that place for himself, makes himself, in his thought and love, the center of the

universe. The spiritual man makes God the center of his thought and love, and so the center of his universe.

The natural man puts forth his tentacles of desire, thought and volition to gather for himself, and so infolds himself in loneliness, in darkness, and in death. The spiritual man puts forth his tentacles of aspiration, love, and will in worship and in devotion to love and to duty, and so unfolds himself, dwelling in light and love immortal. So the spiritual man fulfills the eternal purpose of God.

CHAPTER V

COOPERATION

OUTSIDE the windows where I write, lie gardens, orchards, green fields, and hills covered with forest trees. The seeds in those gardens, orchards, and distant hillsides would never have germinated and grown if there had been no sunshine, no showers, and no air. The physical heaven and the material earth coöperated to make those plants and trees. Substances of the soil, breath of the air, warmth of sunshine, and colors of light, are all inwrought in the forms and beauty and fragrance of the vegetable kingdom.

In those gardens and orchards, man also has coöperated with nature in bringing plants and trees to perfection. The world is so made that man may be a co-worker with his Creator. Beneath man, no animal coöperates with nature to change or to improve her products. Fish swim in waters, but they do not change the course of rivers. Birds gather seeds and, in an involuntary way sow them; but they do not improve the original plants. Beasts roam the forests, but they do not change the forest into a harvest field. Man, however, by his knowledge, care, and skill, changes a purely natural product into something superior and finer. The Jacqueminot rose, the full-blown Chrysanthemum, and the generous, golden sunflower, are the result of man's care and toil. The name of the Concord

grape reminds one of the place where it originated, and the Baldwin apple preserves the name of the man who produced it. The fame of Burbank has spread across a continent from the wonders he has accomplished in producing new and improved forms of flowers and fruits. It has pleased the Creator to take man into partnership with himself in this great department of creation, that without man the highest perfection should not be attained.

According to the story of the book of Genesis, man was placed in a garden "eastward in Eden to dress it and to keep it." And by this keeping and dressing, the garden bloomed in fairer beauty, and the man grew in intelligence and skill.

Not alone in the vegetable kingdom, but also in the animal kingdom, man coöperates with nature. Such animals as have been domesticated by man, are larger and finer than any of their kind found in a wild state. Durham cattle have attained their size; Jersey cattle, their beauty; and merino sheep the fineness of their wool; under the care of man. Percheron horses have gained their fitness for drawing loads; English horses, their gentleness and spirit; and Kentucky trotters, their speed, from generations of careful training at the hands of man.

But above this, and more to the credit of his genius and power, man has been made a partner with the Creator in the making of himself and his fellow men. By his efforts in the cultivation of plants and animals, man has improved them and has also improved himself. He has gained in self-control, power of mental concentration, kindness,

gentleness, and the qualities of a gracious life. Men have risen in the scale of being by the love, instruction, and inspiring influence of the higher men of the race acting in wide reaches upon lower men.

Schools, colleges, and churches all rest upon the fundamental principle that the lower must be served by the higher. It is by coöperation in education, in worship, and in ideals, that the race of mankind rises. Our civilization is the result of the continuous impartation and preservation of the best any man has acquired in thought, knowledge, culture, and character. For the preservation and perpetuation of the best of any generation, books are printed, libraries founded, schools conducted, and the elaborate machinery of education and civil government are established among men. The man who would receive most during his lifetime must be content to be served by those higher than himself. The man who would do most during his lifetime must consent to serve.

There are two forms of service in the world; service from compulsion wherein the weaker serves the stronger from fear and necessity, and service from love, wherein by an inward impulse the stronger serves the weaker. The former service degrades; the latter service elevates. Nothing is morally worse for both master and servant than slavery. Nothing is more beneficial than that relation of faith and love by which the lower receives the ministrations of the higher. Writers on social history sometimes justify slavery as a historic fact by claiming that slavery has been the means of training men in the

habit of continuous labor and has, thereby, induced greater skill, efficiency, and character. There may be a measure of truth in this claim. The black slaves in the United States, in language, intelligence, and moral character reached a higher plane than their ancestors attained in Africa. Slavery in a measure civilized them. But the black people in the United States who, in the last fifty years, have been served by a host of white teachers quickening their intelligence and training them in manual skill, have risen to a much higher grade of life than their ancestors who were slaves. The native tribes of South Africa who have been taught and trained by the loving ministry of missionaries have advanced in intelligence and efficiency far beyond what they would have achieved through any system of slavery and compulsory labor. It should also be noticed that no race ever has risen in slavery to the height to which men have risen in freedom. There must be the free choice of reception of service by faith, and the free choice of service in love, for the best development of mankind.

The highest life ever lived on this earth was a life of voluntary service. Jesus said of himself: "I came forth from the Father and am come into the world." "I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." "I am among you as he that serveth." Jesus revealed the great fact that the law of love, the law of service, is a law of the kingdom of heaven. Prior to the time of Jesus, men conceived of God as a Ruler; they hardly imagined that God stooped to serve.

The law of love is a law which God Himself obeys. Does not the act of creation place the Creator in some relation of obligation to the creation?

Does not the gift of life impose some obligation in respect of the care of life? Does not parentage carry in itself a sense of obligation to offspring? Parents placed on an otherwise uninhabited island where there is no government to impose laws and where there are no policemen to enforce laws, would feel in themselves a sense of responsibility, demanding service to the children born to them. In all parental life, the nature of the parent binds the parent to seek the welfare of the child.

If God created man capable of communion with himself and needing that communion for his completion; then, surely, God is under obligation on His part to give such communion to man. God's own nature and law of life and purpose bind Him to fulfill that obligation. If man cannot be a complete being without God, then God is compelled to give Himself to man. This indebtedness is recognized in the Bible.

Throughout the sacred scriptures, God insists, continually, on the fact that He is striving to fulfill the indebtedness of His own love to men. Over and over again, God is represented as declaring that He has loved, sought, called, reached out His hands, and tried in every way to save and bless men. And, if there is failure, it is attributed, constantly, to the fact that men refuse to see, hear, heed, receive, and know the grace of God. The revelation, in the gospel, is the supreme manifestation of this impulse

and compelling love on the part of God. "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."

God becomes the supreme servant of man. God condescends to love, visit, renew, inspire, and lift up the man of humble heart, trustful spirit, and obedient will. This accords with the law of life under the care of man. If plants and animals, in nature, reach their highest development under the loving care of man; is it strange that man is to reach his highest development under the care of God? If life from the kingdom just above the mineral kingdom, or life from the kingdom just above the vegetable kingdom, touches that which lies in the kingdom just beneath and lifts it into the kingdom above; is it not natural that life from the spiritual kingdom of heaven should touch the life of man and lift it into the kingdom of God? This, according to the gospel and the New Testament teaching, is precisely what is being done.

Man's greatest achievement here, as elsewhere, lies in coöperation with God. Man's greatest achievement in mechanical affairs is accomplished by placing his machinery so that the forces of wind, water, electricity, and gravity play upon that machinery until it moves in accord with nature's forces. Man's greatest achievements in the sphere of morals and spirituality are accomplished by placing his affections, intelligence, and will in obedient accord with God's love, thought, and will in the world. Great deeds are wrought not so much by great effort as

by complete surrender to the will of God. The love of God constrains the man who yields to it. As a rolling river carries on its way all smaller streams which flow into it, so God's great love and power, in things of the spirit, carry along the love and thought of every man who surrenders to them. This is what Saint Paul meant when he said: "The love of Christ constraineth me." Saint Paul had been served and saved by God. This fact brought him under the control of the law of God in his relation to unsaved men. Saint Paul said of himself: "I am a debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise." This indebtedness did not arise from any service which had been rendered to Saint Paul by the Greeks or Barbarians. The obligation rested upon Saint Paul not from any service rendered him, but by the ability conferred on him to render service. He had become a child of God through faith in Jesus. He had experienced the divine love in the pardon of his sins and in the gift of a new life. He who had received so much from God owed something to men who had received less. It was an obligation imposed by love. It was the indebtedness of power possessed. It was the ability to confer a benefit which impelled him to seek to confer that benefit. This is the law of life in all men who truly live with God.

The two greatest qualities of soul and heart are faith and love. Faith is that attitude of the soul towards God which makes the soul of man receptive to the power which God stands ready to confer. Love is that quality of the heart which impels a

man to worship God and to serve men. Without faith it is impossible to please God or to be saved. Without love, it is impossible to fulfil the divine law of life. Faith places the soul of man under the tuition and guidance of God. We may say as plant and animal arrive at the highest perfection through faith in man and obedience to him, so man rises to highest perfection through faith in God and obedience to Him. According to the New Testament it is to the man who believeth, loveth, obeyeth, that the promises of God are given. All things are his, for he is Christ's and Christ is God's.

Nature itself, properly interpreted, teaches men the law of love. The struggle for existence is not so much a struggle for personal and individual existence, as a struggle for the existence of others. A child begins life in instinctive faith in maternal love, and a child's knowledge of that love is intuitive. A child learns early to love its immediate family and to live in active coöperation with its family. A child soon learns that its welfare, its pleasure, and its success, lie in the keeping of the family or the tribe. The mistake which men have made in their history is in limiting good will to the tribe or the nation, and in regarding all who live without that limit as enemies. But the perception of diversity of natural talents and skill which results in division of labor, the practice of trade which issues in commerce, and the necessity of dealing with wider groups than the family or tribe, reveal to men a larger relationship. The establishment of government and the enactment of laws

which at first mainly forbid injuries, but which soon enjoin duties also, train men in the perception and knowledge of the fact that individual good is best secured in cooperation with other men. The increasing areas within which wars are impossible and within which entire freedom of travel and trade exist, the increase of international and world-wide trade, and the establishment of international law by which nations are to be governed, all indicate increasing knowledge that in common faith, mutual good-will, and widespread coöperation, the highest welfare of men is to be attained. To him who can see into the heart of things, this shows that the law of love is the divine order of life as revealed in the very constitution of society. Distrust, hatred, and injury, such as mark a period of wars, lead naturally to degradation, destruction, and death. The benefits which are supposed to have followed wars arise either through the perception and knowledge of a higher form of civilization and life, such as an invading people may get from travel as in the case of the invading Goths or the crusaders who returned home with new ideas of manufacture and learning, or else, the gains which follow wars, arise from the increased activities which war has demanded or made necessary. The real gain, comes from increased knowledge, inventive skill, and practical application of quickened intellect and trained coöperative power to the practical affairs of life. Gain to men never comes directly to mankind through individualism and destruction, but only indirectly. Gain comes directly through socialism and construction.

The law of love, which is the way of mutual good-will and mutual service, is the law of life for mankind. This fact is coming to be understood as never before. This is partly because men see the advantage of coöperation in all lines of effort. The age of individualism is passing. The age of democracy in politics, of combination in business, of coöperation in social service has come. Large empires and republics, international law, world-wide commerce, increasing control and oversight of private business, sanitary legislation, public education, increasing social coöperation, and many other things all reveal the practical operation of the principle of love in the world. The individual man counts for little alone; he counts for much with others. The chief value of a man to himself and to the world, consists in his being a member of society. Even in the highest form of human life this is true. Individual salvation is essential for entrance into the kingdom of heaven. But even individual salvation is perfected by one's becoming part of a renewed society. The best things now, as in the ancient economy of grace, are withheld from men for a time because an individual without others cannot be made perfect.

As one may think God's great thoughts after him in scientific knowledge, in mechanical motions, and in artistic forms, so one may think God's great thoughts after him in the ways of spiritual motives, social relations, and serviceable activities in life. The eternal life and the divine law of love are declared to be revealed in Jesus; they are cer-

tainly illustrated in his words and works. The true life of man is secured by fellowship with Jesus. There can be no truly successful life to any man apart from that faith which brings divine power into him, and apart from that love which leads him to worship and to serve.

Jesus lived among men as one who served, and he bade his disciples live in the same manner. Their relation to Him must be vital, like that of branches to a vine; docile, like that of pupils to a teacher; submissive, like that of servants to a master; obedient, like that of subjects to a king. As the Father loved Jesus so He loved His disciples; as He loved them, so they were to love; as He had lived, so they were to live; as He had served, so they were to serve. They had received freely, they were to give freely. They had obtained power, they were to use power. They were to heal the sick; to cast out demons; to preach the gospel; and to bring the kingdom of heaven to pass.

Whatever one may think of the original gift of power to the disciples by which they wrought changes in the world miraculously; it is evident that in the long course of Christian history, demons have been cast out, disease has been conquered, minds have been made sane, and love has been generated in the hearts of men by slow processes working according to the laws of the spirit rather than by miracles. Those who have followed Jesus in love, have added their contribution to the sum of human welfare; even when they could not point to specific cases wherein changes were wrought by power proceeding

from them. The loving heart and kind spirit, like unseen flowers which breathe their fragrance on the passing air, sweeten and perfect the society of human kind. All such persons fulfill the divine condition of a growing and perfect life. They obey, though unconsciously, the apostolic command, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." They become "workers together with Him." They live in the divine light, walk in the divine love, and fulfill the divine will in feeling, thought, purpose, and expressed power of their life.

No life can be successful unless it conforms to the divine requirement of communion. Any life to be successful must commune both with God and with men by receiving and by imparting. Any person who attempts to be simply receptive and absorbent, to partake of the good gifts of God and to make no effort to serve God and man, will fail in the end. The self-centered, selfish, absorbent life will become diseased in affection, perverted from the truth in thought, debased in purpose, enslaved in will; and so, both by its own action and by the laws of the kingdom of spirits, will be separated from the current of the divine life and will be thrown at last like flotsam, on the shores of time, and will have no place or part in the eternal kingdom.

On the other hand, any life which accepts the will and the way of God as that will and way are revealed in the constitution of nature and in the enlightened conscience, and which expands and ex-

presses itself in love will grow sweet in spirit, pure in affection, true in tenor of thought, generous in sympathy, rich in graciousness, and large in influence and in service. Such a life will move in the current of the divine life in history, and will have a place and a part in the eternal kingdom.

The particular sphere of life in which one finds himself, may not be of his own choosing; but the spirit in which one wills to live is his own. Every man must control his own feelings, cherish his own imagination, think his own thoughts, sing his own song, paint his own picture, build his own house, and complete his own work. The place of his birth and the material given him with which to work are not of man's choice; but what he will do with the material at hand is his own choice. A man's purpose is his own; if there is a flaw in the material given him which mars the work, he is not responsible for that. A man is measured by what he attempts to do. When that attempt is according to the divine will, then he is a workman together with God. If conditions arise which check and limit the expression of the power which is within him, then, like the King of Israel who desired to build a house to the honor of God, but could not; he will be praised for what was within his heart.

Love, however, is irrepressible and where love exists there will be found some mode of expression. A life inspired by love will come to blossom and to fruition. In the sphere of the spirit, love can know no final failure. The divine blessing, accord-

ing to Jesus, is pronounced not upon him who has accomplished some visible thing, but upon him whose spirit is right. The humble, the pure, the loving, the merciful, the gracious are blessed. One's union with the divine kingdom is not dependent upon his visible achievement, but upon his love. "Every one who loveth is born of God and knoweth God."

The flower growing in the field cannot tell how much of the force which builds it up is rising from the soil, and how much is flowing from the sunshine; the ship on the sea cannot tell how much of the force which impels it comes from the waves of the ocean, and how much is from the winds of heaven; the child in school cannot tell how much of his increasing intellectual power is due to his own effort, and how much is due to the inspiring influence of his teacher; the soldier marching to battle cannot tell how much of his courage is his own, and how much comes from the companionship of the marching army; and the man who is coöperating with God cannot tell how much of his power is his own, and how much is directly and indirectly from God; he can know only that he is growing in love and in power of ministry, in peace and in joy of service, in worship and in delight in doing the will of God.

A scheme of world history, such as is made known to us in the constitution of the world, in the gospel of grace, and in the promises of great things yet to be, makes possible to men participation in the prog-

ress and in the results of such history, and affords to men opportunity to become great through faith and love.

CHAPTER VI

THE INCARNATION

THE marvel of spring when fields which have been brown are clothed in living green, when flowers like arbutus and violets and dandelions appear, when trees so recently bare and seemingly dead are clothed with delicate green leaves, when blossoms white as driven snow and pink as a baby's hand crown the orchards in profusion is an annual miracle. To the man of seeing eye and discerning mind, this wealth of vegetable life and beauty is a revelation of the wisdom, intelligence, and power of the Creator. It shows something of which the mineral kingdom has not spoken. It reveals much of God; but it leaves much unrevealed which the heart would gladly know. Men beholding all this, still seek after God if haply, by the spirit, they may find Him and finding Him, by the spirit, may be satisfied. There is needed a more complete revelation of God than nature affords.

We cannot say that all power is life, but we can say that all life is power. In our world, at least, power expresses itself in material movements, by changing the position of material things or their relation one to another. Power, thus, expresses itself by what may be called an incarnation of force. When by an act of my will, I lift a book from a desk, the movement of that material thing is the

visible expression of the power of my will. Emotion, thought, and will clothe themselves in material form.

Music is a spiritual emotion, but music clothes itself in air, shapes the air in billowy waves which throb and thrill with feeling, enters the open ear, and touches the listening soul until that soul throbs and thrills with the same feeling. Music is a universal language.

Thought is a mental emotion, but thought clothes itself in vocal or in written speech and, thereby, becomes perceptible to ear or eye, and so intelligible to a receptive mind.

Love is a feeling, an affection of the heart, but love embodies itself in smile or in sigh, in tone or in tear, in touch or caress and, thereby, makes itself known and felt.

All life in this world, from the life of the lowliest flower to the life of the highest man, is known through an incarnation, and by means of physical expression. But life itself is something other than the material in which it is embodied and through which it is expressed.

Chemically, the material may all be there and yet there may be no life. Chemically, the material in which life has dwelt may all remain and yet the life may be gone. That which is lacking in the former case and lost in the latter case, is the soul of what lived. What that soul is, no man knows. In the study of biology, by sight and touch and by knife and microscope, I found that life itself always eluded my touch and sight. Life is a mysterious

force which seizes, moves, and changes the material in which it is embodied. Life, also, has its own peculiar quality independent of the material in which it dwells. Two trees may stand in the same field, may feed on the same soil, may drink the same showers, may bask in the same sunshine, and yet may differ radically in form, flower, fragrance, and fruit. Everything else being the same, that mysterious somewhat which we call life must make the difference. We classify vegetation according to form, fiber, blossom, and fruit. We classify animals according to disposition, intelligence, and habits of life. In such classification, man easily stands at the head of creation. Men differ immensely from one another. The difference in intelligence, morality, and spirituality between the lowest specimens of primitive and barbarous men and the highest types of civilized and cultured men is very great; yet there is no difficulty in classifying all men in the family of mankind.

One person alone has appeared among men with such a heart of holy love and such a spirit of supreme service that men have found difficulty in classifying him. Jesus alone has transcended ordinary classification. Who Jesus is, is a question whose solution men sought and still seek. Men of the time of Jesus did not find Him to be a product of His race, or age or environment. They said that he was an old prophet returned again; or a modern prophet, like John the Baptist, risen from the dead; or a superiorly gifted prophet; or a demonized man; or a son of God in

some special sense; or "The Son of the living God." For nineteen centuries, men have found Jesus to be singular, unique, supreme in the sphere of the spirit, and their most common conclusion has been that he is the Son of God.

This title, historically and according to the record, was not given to Jesus by men because of an angelic announcement at his advent, nor because of singularity of birth, nor because of claims put forth by Jesus himself; but because of the impression made by his life on the minds of them who knew him best. Jesus did not begin his public life by announcing singularity of birth and divinity of nature. Jesus simply lived his life and let it speak for itself. A rose does not declare its beauty, it simply blooms; it does not announce its sweetness, it simply breathes it on the air. So Jesus simply lived His life, spoke His words, did His works and, then, men called Him the Son of God. When, near the close of his life, in answer to His own question "Who do you say I am?" those who had accompanied Him most intimately exclaimed in a burst of admiring faith, "Thou art the Son of God"; Jesus pronounced that conception as a blessed one. He said that conception of Him did not arise from human superstition, but from divine revelation of the Father. He said that definition proceeded from inward illumination, spiritual vision, and true knowledge. He said that on that truth He would build His church. And a little later He said to men of such faith, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father."

The impression which a man leaves on the minds

of men and on the world, reveals what he himself has been. Mention Phidias, and you think of sculpture; mention Raphael, and you think of painting; mention Newton, and you think of science; mention Beethoven, and you think of music; mention Jesus, and you think of God. The impression which a die makes, shows what the die is. The impression which a man makes, shows what the man is. The impression which Jesus made on the minds of men, and which he continues to make, is not a new thought of men but a new thought of God.

This is worth considering. Think of it. It was not a new thought of the value and meaning of man which led the apostles to adopt the life of evangelists and missionaries. It was new thought of God. God loved the world—not the Jews only—and so they should love the world. “God hath showed me,” said Peter to the Roman captain, Cornelius, “that I should call no man common or unclean.” Therefore, Peter was willing to give the hand of fellowship to the Gentiles, and welcome them into the church. The conceptions of the apostles were so changed that they said: “In point of classification, opportunity, privilege, there can be ‘neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female.’” “God’s love,” they said, “has been shown in the life and sufferings of Jesus, and his love constrains us. We are willing to live and to suffer for the salvation of men.” It was God’s love, God’s judgment of men, God’s action, and God’s effort which impressed them and made them willing to put away former thoughts and

to live as the love of God had lived in the person of Jesus. God loved the world, and they, too, should love the world. God's love as it had appeared in Jesus, had given itself for them, and they should love as He had loved.

That which the apostles first preached as revealed and published in the life of Jesus was not new ethics or a new sociology, but a new theology. They preached the Father who had revealed Himself through a Son. "In former times," they said, "God spoke to our fathers in prophets, but now He hath spoken to us in a Son." They worshipped God not as King, but as Father. They obeyed God not as servants, but as sons. As a result of this faith and this worship, they taught that the distinctions which had existed between men were fortuitous and should be abolished. They taught that men should be brothers. Their sociology followed their theology.

In all this description, there is no intention of denying or making little of any statements of the New Testament respecting the conception and birth of Jesus, but only the intention of emphasizing the greatness of His personality. Jesus' character showed love; His works, power; His words, spirit and life. The effect of Jesus' life upon men was to make them new creations in love, purpose, and power of holy living. The effect of Jesus' life was such that men felt that He could not be accounted for by the common lines of heredity, education, and environment. Jesus' life was so full, so rich, so life-giving that men felt that it must spring from

some higher source than the lives of other men.

How that life came to be, like the coming of all life, is a mystery. Life was not, life is. Whence it comes, who knows? How it comes, who can tell? The ordinary processes of sowing seed and of physical generation, the growth of plants and of bodies is something known,—but life itself, in its origin and nature is unknown. Life is the name we apply to that secret, silent, ^epotent power which vivifies, shapes, and completes any living thing.

All life is of God. He is the living essence in the universe. He is the giver of life. His touch vivifies. His breath quickens. His spirit imparts intelligent and moral life. He speaks, and things grow.

But with every stage of increasing life, something is added which was not before. There is something in vegetation which was not in the mineral; that something is life. There is something in an animal which was not in a plant; that is more life. There is something in man in capacity and possibility which was not in the animal; that is still more life. There is something in Jesus which was not in man; that, too, is more life. Man, in respiration and the circulation of blood, is akin to vegetation; and, in nervous structure and feeling man is akin to the whole animal kingdom; but there is something in man which is not in the vegetable nor in the animal below man. Jesus in physical and psychical nature is like man and akin to him: but Jesus in moral and spiritual nature transcends man.

“The invisible things of God,” says Saint Paul,

“are clearly seen being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity.” Power is seen in the roll of a locomotive, and power is seen in the revolution of a world. Wisdom is seen in the construction of a watch, and wisdom is seen in the construction of a plant. But who can tell from a locomotive what is the moral character of its maker? Who can tell from a watch what is the ruling principle of the man who made it? Who can tell from the material universe, so expressive of intelligence and power, what is the moral character of its Creator? How shall love, mercy, pity, compassion, and grace, if they be in God, be made to appear to men? The sun does not change its face whether its beams brighten or burn the face of man. The sea does not change its swell or its sound whether it carries the ship of man on its waves or swallows that ship in its depths. A general benevolence may appear in the course of nature, but specific love is never shown. How shall a God of love who, loving, obeys love’s great law of sacrifice be made known?

The New Testament says: “God so loved the world that He gave His Son for men.” It also says: “Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us.” Jesus has revealed what nature has not spoken and cannot speak. After Jesus’ revelation was given, then, an account of His coming into the world could be given. This we have in the New Testament.

Perhaps it had been as well if the Greek mind never had attempted to define the person of Christ.

Light, life and love are indefinable. They may be described, but they transcend definition. Christ loved the world and became the light of the world and the life of the world; but, like light and life, He cannot be defined. But men naturally desire definition. Much that has been written about the person of Christ has been an attempt to make a mystery comprehensible to the human mind. Men have described Christ as "the God-Man" consisting of two natures, in one person, subsisting side by side, like oil and water, each with its own qualities and its own actions, but ever distinct. The simple statement of the New Testament, namely, that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," is better. This is a statement of fact. What Christ is, is of value. How he came to be, might be left unknown or to be known later.

However, if men seek an explanation of the source and method of the life and character of Jesus; it seems to me, there is no more simple, natural, and scientific setting forth of the case than that given by Saint Luke in the introduction of his gospel.

There is a disposition on the part of many to deny or to doubt the story of the birth of Jesus as related by Saint Luke. This arises largely, I think, from certain teaching of modern times which tends to create a feeling that, since the first creation, nothing new or extraordinary has happened in the world. But Jesus is something both new and extraordinary. Much is made of the fact that, with the exception of Matthew and Luke, none of the other New Testament authors tell the story of the

birth of Jesus. But we must remember that the Fourth Gospel according to John says: That "the Word which in the beginning was with God and was God became flesh and dwelt among us." The First Epistle of John says: "The life was manifested, and we have seen it and bear witness and declare unto you the eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us." The author of The Epistle to the Hebrews says: "God having spoken unto the fathers in the prophets hath spoken unto us in His Son whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds." Saint Paul, in his Epistle to the Colossians, says: "In Him were all things created in the heavens and upon the earth—all things have been created through Him, and unto Him: and He is before all things and in Him all things consist." The denial of the truth of the narrative by Saint Luke does not simplify matters, or leave any explanation of a method by which such an "eternal life" and transcendent person became incarnate and lived among men.

Saint Luke's statement seems to me, personally, the most simple and the most satisfactory account of the person of Jesus, the Christ, which ever has been given. A few facts concerning life as we know it are worth noticing in this connection. Life is a mysterious something which shapes and rules every living creature. In the case of animals and men—whatever may be the life of each physical cell—even if we regard an animal body as a community of cells—the unifying force which makes one plant or one animal, and gives continuity to the life, is the

soul. The body continually changes, but the soul constantly remains. The *psyche* in beast and in man is the formative power which shapes the body, determines the actions, and makes the character. Each creature is like its prenatal disposition, that is, its *psyche* or soul. A bull dog whose nature is to seize and to hold on, has a body and jaws suited for that purpose. A hound is moulded before its birth for the race. A deer and an elephant, a draft horse and a race horse, are shaped by an inner nature and each animal is fitted for the life it must lead. Among men, character is like the physique, because the character forms the physique. Every gifted and great man is endowed before his birth and is ordained to be poet or painter, sculptor or scholar, prince or prophet, before his birth. Whether men claim the power to read character from the head, from the features and expression of the face, or from the lines on the hand, the claim is based upon the physical correspondence with the inner life.

Through the body, life is revealed and we see it, read it, and know it. A German philosopher, Schopenhauer, in his treatise on *The World As Will and Idea*, writing on heredity and with no thought of Jesus in mind, makes these suggestive statements: "If now we cast upon this problem, the light of our fundamental knowledge that the will is the true being, the kernal, the radical element, in man; and the intellect, on the other hand, is what is secondary, adventitious, the accident of that substance; before questioning experience we will assume as at least probable that the father as *sexus potior* and the pro-

creative principle, imparts the basis, the radical element of the new life, thus the *will* and the mother, as *sexus sequior* and merely conceiving principle, imparts the secondary element, the *intellect*; that thus the man inherits his moral nature, his character, his inclinations, his heart from the father, and, on the other hand, the grade, quality, and tendency of his intelligence from the mother. Now this assumption actually finds its confirmation in experience; only this cannot be decided by a physical experiment upon the table, but results partly from the careful and acute observation of many years, and partly from history."

This theory may not be capable of proof, but it is suggestive in relation to the common theory of the Christian church in respect of the person of Jesus. In Him, derived from His mother, feeling, thought, emotion and passion in all ways are most truly human and common to men; and the spiritual quality and moral tone of His life are truly divine and coincide with what is in God the Father.

Now in this connection, let us read the story given us by Saint Luke. He says that he traced carefully all things from the first so as to give the earliest traditional belief concerning the birth and life of Jesus. Saint Luke tells us that the angel in declaring to Mary how the promised Son should come, said: "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten of thee shall be called the Son of God." This may be translated, "That which is to be born, shall be

called holy, the Son of God.”

God is a spirit, and the soul of Mary, touched and filled by the Spirit divine, was the immediate source of that soul, that living essence, which filled and formed the living germ from which the body of her child grew, and that child thus begotten and born was the embodiment and the expression of the eternal life and of the divine love. So the divine life imparted itself and centered itself in humanity. So the child, one in life and one in personality, human in condition and divine in disposition, entered the world and was called the Son of man and the Son of God. In appetite, passion, intellect, and all elements of human nature He was the brother of men. In spiritual quality and moral tone, He was the Son of God. So God was in Christ who became thereby the image of the invisible God. So the divine life in its spirituality dwelt in Him, and was revealed through Him.

I venture the above suggestions as being in accord with what we know to be true with respect to the relation of the soul and the body in the animal kingdom, as being in accord with respect to much that we know to be true of man in natural generation, as being in accord with the promise made to Mary by the angel, and as being true with respect to the revelation of God made in Jesus Christ.

I do not make these suggestions *ex cathedra* as a philosophy which another must accept. I make these suggestions tentatively as a possible theory which may relieve the minds of some persons who accept the New Testament record, but are troubled because

of ideas suggested by the material side of physical birth. I do not claim to explain a mystery, but only to put forth a suggestion which seems a reasonable interpretation of the manner of the incarnation.

In Jesus there was a life which in its spiritual quality, expression, and power, men felt and still feel to be superior to all other life in this world. Had the life of Jesus in its source and in its quality been just the same as the life of every man; had the beauty and the power of the life of Jesus been due simply to the fact that He willingly received more fully of the divine spirit than other men; had Jesus merely illustrated what is possible for other men; then, ere this time, He should have been equalled by other men. But Jesus remains apart, distinct and supreme. Men see in Him, and not in His disciples of any age, the image of the invisible God. Men do not look to any of His disciples, but to Him for the gift of life. Men give praise, not to any of His disciples, nor to the entire body of believers, but to Him for salvation. Were Jesus simply the first among many, this could not be the case. Others would share His position in the thoughts of men and share also His power and His glory. Men never think of placing Paul, nor any other person in the place of Christ.

This unique and transcendent position could not be held age after age, were there not something in Jesus to justify it. Men who cannot tell in any single instance whence life comes, nor how it comes, nor what it is, but who in every instance know it and designate it by what it does, need not be sur-

prised at the inexplicable mystery of the life of Jesus. They need not be surprised that the church, with well-nigh universal uniformity, has held fast to the doctrine of divine incarnation. The church which believes that God has spoken in many prophets by inspiration believes that He has spoken more vitally in a Son. The church believes that he who sees the Son, sees the Father who sent Him. This knowledge of God, however, is not primarily an intellectual knowledge which one may measure and mark limits and comprehend as one may know a material thing. It is, rather, the knowledge of faith and love which sees and feels and enjoys as a growing child sees and feels and enjoys a mother. It is a knowledge of the heart.

It is the moral nature of God, His sentiment, feeling, and will towards men, which Jesus makes known. Save the one statement that God is a spirit, Jesus says nothing about the metaphysical nature of God. Jesus tells what God does in making the sun to rise and the rain to fall upon good and evil men alike; what God feels in that He loves the world; what God suffers in that He loves with sympathy; what God knows in that He knows the need of every saint; what God hears in that He listens to the cry of the needy; what God wills in that it is His will to save and to keep every trustful soul which seeks Him. Jesus' revelation is not designed to satisfy the curiosity of the mind, but to meet the need of the humble, penitent, and trustful heart.

What a man may know by intellectual perception,

analysis, and reasoning, is always inferior to the man himself. What a man may know by trust and love, and by communion and obedience is superior to himself. The world by wisdom—that is by intellectual acumen and apprehension—knew not God and knows Him not. The world by wisdom will never know God's Son, but he who by faith knows the Father, will know the Son, and he who by love knows the Son will know the Father.

It is not by arbitrary choice and unreasonable action on the part of God, but by nature of a trustful spirit and a teachable mind that things hidden from the wise and prudent are revealed unto babes. A child is not the equal of a philosopher in intellectual acumen and knowledge, but, in the sphere of the spirit, things which are hidden from the philosopher may be revealed to the child because he is using the proper organ. One can never perceive light by the ear, or learn music by the eye, or know the things of the spirit by the intellect. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things." It is true that one may learn the symbols of music by the eye, and that he may state by the intellect things which are known by the heart; but music itself must be learned by the ear and the things of the heart must be known by the heart itself. The man who loves, knows God; because God is love.

Jesus praised Peter, when Peter called Him "The Son of God." Jesus promised to build His church

upon this fact and on this confession. But there is no record of Jesus' requiring a definition of His person as a condition of receiving healing from sickness, or salvation from sin. What Jesus did require was faith, that is, belief in His ability to help and in His power to save. According to faith, the blessing came. Unbelief was the only limit. The limitation was in man, not in Jesus. In some places, Jesus did not many mighty works, because of their unbelief. To one who sought a blessing from Him, Jesus said, "All things are possible to him that believeth."

The leper who knelt at the feet of Jesus needed only faith to say, "Lord, if Thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," to feel the power of the cleansing life. The woman who touched the hem of Jesus' garment needed only faith to say, "If I but touch, I shall be healed," to be made whole. The sinful woman who wept over the feet of Jesus as He reclined at table, needed only faith to believe that He would pardon to hear Him say, "Thy sins are forgiven; go in peace."

Zaccheus, the publican of local ill-repute, needed only the faith which would grant hospitality to Jesus to hear Him say, "This day is salvation come to this house." The penitent thief on the cross needed only faith to lay the bruised and broken remnant of a misspent life on the breast of Jesus to hear Him say, "To-day thou shalt be with Me in paradise."

According to the record given in *The Acts of the Apostles*, the apostolic church required, as a condi-

tion of church membership, three things, namely: repentance from sin; belief that Jesus, whom men crucified, whom God raised from the dead, is the Son of God; and belief that through Him forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit are given to them who believe. Baptism was the symbol of the washing away of sins and the Lord's Supper was the visible pledge of spiritual communion. No verbal statement of the manner of the incarnation and of Jesus' advent; no definition of the metaphysical nature of Jesus' person; no theory of the method of his atonement; no description of the processes of the new life was demanded as a condition of discipleship and of membership in the church. This was both wise and well.

Few men, in any department of life, care for scientific knowledge or for philosophic statement of the nature and relation of the things with which they deal. Practical knowledge is what most men desire and what they use. Scientists and philosophers, however useful, are few in number. Most men believe in the things which they use without scientific knowledge of them and the practical ends of life are well served. This is quite as true in spiritual, as in material, things.

It is natural for men, especially for some men, to formulate their thought of what they have learned and experienced, and creeds are a natural expression of Christian belief. A creed stated in simple language and used for liturgical purposes may be valuable. But a creed used as a fence to exclude from the communion of the church is a mistake.

Truth preached for purposes of instruction and inspiration is valuable, but the creed of a man must be a growth of his own experience, whether he states that creed in his own language or in the language of another.

It has been a mistake for men to formulate an intellectual and philosophical creed,—like the Athanasian creed, for example, with its fine distinctions of the persons of the Trinity and of the person of Jesus Christ,—and to make the acceptance of its propositions a condition of receiving salvation. This, as in the case of the above creed, has been done, “Whosoever will be saved; before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith. Which Faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled: without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.”

The Greeks, with their love of philosophical speculation and of scientific analysis, gave to the church that habit of mind which produced the Ecumenical creeds. The Romans with their love of law and power gave to the church that complex organization which issued in the papacy. The Reformation broke the authority of the latter for the Protestant churches; but the Reformation retained the philosophic method of the former and imposed elaborate creeds upon Protestant churches.

After centuries of contention, division, and experience, the Protestant churches are slowly coming back to “the simplicity which is in Christ.” In religion, the heart is more than the head. Valuable as clear conceptions and even definitions are, it is not intellectual knowledge of truth stated in philosoph-

ical terms, but faith in a Person which secures salvation, and love for persons, which fulfills the law of Christian living. Jesus has given faith, which is trust, and love, which is devotion, the supreme place in the Christian system and in the soul of man. Jesus has declared that faith is the condition of salvation, and that love is the expression and fulfillment of salvation. Faith, therefore, entitles a man to membership in the Christian church, and love is the evidence of his worthiness for such membership. This the church is coming more and more to see and to accept. This fact does not arise from a denial of the faith even in an intellectual form; but from that love which admits gradation in knowledge and which permits differences of opinion in the sphere of the intellect, where men seeing in part and knowing in part, always have differed and always will differ, and which asserts that the basis of Christian union is a common faith in a common Lord and a common love as the motive of righteous living.

This is what the church must come to in practical unity, if there is to be efficiency in a community where there should be only one church. This is the condition to which the church must come, if there is to be united power in withstanding the evil which is in the world. This liberty must be allowed, if men are to be permitted to think. It must be allowed if the best thinkers are permitted to lead. It must be admitted, if men trust the truth. It must be admitted, if we believe with Jesus that "every one that is of the truth cometh to the light, and that every

one that loveth, knoweth God.”

Certain results have followed the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, and, historically, have followed the course of the gospel of grace.

First, polytheism has passed and is passing away. Whatever may be said of polytheism as an attempt on the part of men to give expression to their conception of the divine being or of divine beings, it results, always, in crudeness of worship, in carnality of life, and in destruction of belief in human brotherhood. Where each race or tribe has its own god or gods, there can be no true unity among men. The preaching of the gospel has been followed, always, by the passing away of polytheism. Its temples have fallen; its altars have crumbled; its idols have disappeared. Throughout Christendom, men have come to believe in one God.

Second, through the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, men have come to believe in God as a Father. The imperial idea of God gives place to the paternal idea of God. This does not mean that the conception of divine power has passed away, but that power is infused with love and administered in grace. There is more power, in some ways, in the family than in the state; in a father than in a king, but the administration is different, and its design in love is more apparent. Throughout Christendom, men's idea of God is that of a Father.

Third, following the revelation of God in Jesus Christ has come the conception of human brotherhood. Slowly, alas, too slowly, is brotherhood be-

lieved and practiced; but it is coming. It has been coming ever since Jesus taught men to pray saying, "Our Father," and taught them to love as He loved. Nothing was more marked in the church in the first instance than the passing of Jewish narrowness and the admission of Gentiles to brotherhood in the church. Men who had been unwilling to eat with Gentiles saw that God would have them call no man unclean because of his race or nationality. If God is one and loves the whole race of mankind, then, men must love their fellowmen everywhere. Slowly, this fact has been received as a doctrine, and more slowly has it been admitted in practice; but its reception as a truth is gaining rapidly now and is becoming an obsession in many minds. It must practically rule the world. It is a truth which came with Jesus and it must rule where he is King. It must be held that He who does not love men, cannot love God.

Fourth, following the revelation of the law of love as the law of life in Jesus Christ, has come the belief in the law of service for all men. Service always has been in the world but, too frequently, it has been the service of the many to the few and of the weak to the strong. It has been a servile service from which strong men have sought exemption. But since Jesus lived as one who served and showed that service is the law of life to which even God himself is subject, service has been seen as a liberty of love which glorifies. Strong men may well yield obedience to this law. This law of life is now recognized in all Christendom. Service,

like efficiency, is now one of the most common words, and expresses a common conception of life.

Service has long been demanded of certain classes of men. The preacher, the physician, the teacher, who will not give life to the utmost, has long been condemned as unworthy of his profession. This demand of service is spreading. Indebtedness is based upon ability. Obligation rests on opportunity. The king who rules for himself and not for his people is deemed unworthy of his crown. The man of wealth who keeps his wealth for himself and who does not share it with his fellowmen and leave it for their benefit, is unhonored. The man who knows Christ must be Christlike in his living. Had not Jesus, as the Son of God, revealed this law as the very law of the divine life, men would not have learned to love as He loved. These four great facts and forces, namely: belief in one God, faith in God as a Father, the thought of men as brothers, and obedience to the law of love in service, all have resulted from belief in the incarnation and the revelation of God, the Father, in Jesus Christ the Son.

CHAPTER VII

THE NEW BIRTH

A YELLOW butterfly glowing in the sunshine, flying swiftly through the air, lighting daintily upon flower after flower, and sipping honey from delicate cups, is quite unlike a caterpillar of which it is the secondary and completed form. One wonders if the voracious caterpillar creeping slowly on the ground, eating greedily, and casting away skin after skin to make way for a new one, ever imagines the change of which it is capable. By a metamorphosis during which the natural life undergoes changes which lift it and which fit it for a higher state of existence, the caterpillar undergoes a renewing process which makes it more beautiful in form, more dainty in taste, and more refined in the manner of its life. It is the same life in essence, but a higher life in its purposes and in the use of its powers. The caterpillar when it becomes a butterfly is refined, beautified, and physically glorified.

The butterfly is a physical picture of a psychological change which may take place in man. "The caterpillar, towards the end of summer, waxeth volatile, and turneth to a butterfly," says Bacon. Man, likewise, as his life progresses, should cease to be essentially carnal and should become spiritual. A man should become new by the regeneration of his soul, transformed by the renewing of his mind, and

beautified by the pervading power of holy love. With the butterfly, that is not first which is volatile, fitting it for flight in the air, but that which is gross, fitting it to creep upon the ground. With man, also, as Saint Paul has so well said: "That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural or *psychical*, then, that which is spiritual or *pneumatical*." That which takes place in the butterfly is a metamorphosis, a change of form, wrought by action of natural life in relation to the earth. That which takes place in man is a regeneration, a change of spirit wrought in him by the power of a spiritual environment. The butterfly, by the action of a natural power, is lifted to a little higher place in the kingdom of earth. A man, by action of a supernatural power touching him within, is lifted into a higher state called "the kingdom of God." The metamorphosed butterfly still draws its life from the things of earth. The regenerated man draws his life from the kingdom of heaven. An inspiration fills him with moral motive and spiritual excellence. Jesus says: "Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The word *gennao* used here in the New Testament, means both to beget, like a father, and to bring forth, like a mother. It may refer to the beginning of life, as in conception, and, also, to a change of life, as at birth. Both meanings are included in Jesus' words. He affirms that life must be imparted by the Spirit and that life must be lived within the environment of "the kingdom of God." Both uses of this word *gennao* occur elsewhere in the New

Testament. Men who experience the change wrought in regeneration are said to be "begotten of God," to be "born of God," and to be "sons of God." This is the destiny for which man has been created, but he may fail of its fulfilment. A caterpillar is made to become a butterfly, but a caterpillar may fail to reach this consummation of its existence. A man is born into the world to become a son of God, but a man may fail to reach this consummation of his creation by failing to find and to fulfil the conditions of a completed life. If it were left to a caterpillar to choose whether it would become a butterfly, it might refuse to accept the change. It might prefer to remain a caterpillar. Man is a creature with power of choice and with liberty of choice. A man cannot lift himself into the kingdom of heaven; but a man may resist the power which would lift him into that kingdom; he may prefer to remain wholly within the communion of things of the earth.

Several years ago, Professor Drummond called attention to the fact that a change from one kingdom to another kingdom in the ascending scale of being is accomplished, always, by the entrance into the lower kingdom of a new and transforming force from above. The mineral never can transform itself into a vegetable, nor can the mineral kingdom, of itself, produce a vegetable. A seed in the soil is the beginning of the transformation of mineral substance into vegetable substance, and the source of a vegetable product. Whence life first came, no man knows save by faith. But we do know that one

form of life and being cannot lift itself into a higher kingdom. Accepting this scientific fact, Professor Drummond has said: "The world of natural men is staked off from the spiritual world by barriers which never yet have 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 single soul with the attribute of spiritual life. The spiritual world is guarded from the world next in order 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 into the kingdom of God. Except a mineral be born from above—from the kingdom just above it—it cannot enter into the kingdom just above it. And except a man be born from above, by the same law, he cannot enter the kingdom just above him."

Let it be noted, however, that there is this important difference between a mineral and a man. The mineral has no will. Any change on the part of a mineral is without volition on its part, without resistance, and without choice. A man has will. A man cannot regenerate himself. He cannot lift himself into the kingdom of heaven; but he can neglect and he can resist the action of the force which would lift him into that kingdom. A man cannot live without air in the kingdom of the earth; but a man may resist air, refuse to breathe, and so die. A man may resist and refuse the vivifying breath of the kingdom of heaven, and so fail of heavenly life. This is the constant teaching of the scriptures. This

is the reason that men are said to be renewed and saved by the grace of God, and the reason they are said to be held responsible and guilty for their failure of salvation. This, according to the New Testament, is the cause of the divine condemnation of unsaved men. God is represented, in the scriptures, as coming to men, being present with men, seeking to renew and save and perfect men. Men are represented as resisting God and refusing salvation. Wisdom calls and men mock. Light shines and men love darkness. The Son of God comes and would save and men will not accept salvation. The Spirit woos, and men resist and reject the saving power. Therefore, they are in darkness, without light, and doomed to die. This has been the history of mankind from the beginning, on the downward side of carnality, worldliness, and wickedness. Adam chose to go downward not upward, to live in the flesh not in the spirit, and so lost Eden. Some men have been doing the same thing ever since. Men live under varying degrees of light and of opportunity; but the ultimate condemnation of men always rests upon the fact that they have refused to be saved. They have refused to go up. Therefore, the condemnation comes because they have not the life of the spirit which is love. They have not given bread to the hungry, nor water to the thirsty, nor ministry to those in need. They have lived in the flesh; they belong to the world; they have no part in the kingdom; their names are not written in the book of life. This condemnation on account of something negative, on account of what men have not and are

not, is in keeping with the judgment of life everywhere.

When this truth is more clearly seen than it has been seen, evangelists will not direct their anathemas so primarily against the drunkard, the adulterer, the thief, and the persons who frequent places of amusement as though these were sinners *par excellence*; preachers will not single certain sins as the condemning ones to the comfort of a moral, self-righteous and self-satisfied congregation; but evangelists and preachers alike will declare that the sin which shuts the door of heaven and brings abiding condemnation is the sin of refusing to accept the higher life.

This is not intended to say that immorality, vice, and crime are not sins and do not bring consequences of heavy penalty; but it is intended to say that the absence of immorality, vice, and crime does not constitute salvation. Freedom from vice and crime will leave any man free from their special penalties; but this mere negative goodness will not constitute eternal life. What does a man do more than an animal when he simply keeps himself temperate, loves his mate, cares for his children, is decent in habit, and well-groomed in body and mind? That is simply to be adjusted to the world, that is simply to live well in the present order, that is to get the best for one's self under earthly conditions, and it will receive its reward; but that is not faith in God, it is not fellowship with Christ, it is not living in communion with the spiritual kingdom of heaven, it is not loving as Jesus loved, it is not living as He

lived, it is not a service animated by loving self-surrender to the will of God and to the sacrificial way of Christ. It has no part in the kingdom of heavenly and holy love.

On the other hand, there is a life in this world the opposite of this, namely, the life of those who have chosen the upward side and have increased in love and in devoted living. From the beginning, some have chosen this life. Let them be called saints, or sons of God, or children of the Highest, or what you will; they have been lifted out of the life of selfishness, self-seeking, self-indulgence and neglect of things of the spirit, and they have been lifted into the kingdom of love, worship, consecration, devotion, generous sympathy, and altruistic service. Wherever they are found, they are marked as being in spirit of a high order, children of the upper kingdom.

The life of the new-born is a Christ-like life. As an old writer has said:

“Though Christ be born a thousand times in Beth-
lehem

Yet if he be not born within thine own soul

His birth is all in vain to thee.”

The Christ-like life is reverent, worshipful, trustful, loving, self-sacrificing, and serviceable. It transcends life in the flesh and in the world not, chiefly, in the moralities of decent living, but in the motives, purposes, choices, and activities of life. A merchant who goes to a foreign country, though he

deals honestly, which is good, simply that he may gain riches for himself, is not animated by the same kind of motive as a missionary who goes to the same country, and lives self-denyingly, that he may give the gospel to the natives. The one goes to a foreign country to get for himself; the other goes that he may give. This may serve as a picture to illustrate the difference between the once-born man and the twice-born man. Selfishness in some form is the spirit of the once-born man, and self-enjoyment in some way is the motive in his living. Love in some form is the spirit of the twice-born man and service in some way is the motive in his living.

This higher life, like every lower life, is silent and secret in its inception and it reveals itself by its various forms of expression. It has a breath, an atmosphere, a tone, a touch by which its higher and heavenly qualities are made known. It is a life of the spirit, and it is spiritually discerned.

Jesus says this life comes from the Spirit of God and belongs, in its development, in the kingdom of heaven. It proceeds from a vital touch of the divine Spirit, and it grows by communion with such things as are in the kingdom of heaven. This is no more mysterious than life elsewhere. An eagle in the shell has a beak which may be strong, eyes which may see, and wings which may sweep the air; but in the shell the beak is weak, the eyes are without sight, and the wings are without power. When the eagle bursts the shell and enters the larger world of light and air; then, the beak grows strong, the eyes become keen in sight, the wings beat the air with

power of flight, and the eagle is perfect of its kind. So the soul of man touched, first, with vivifying power and, then, born into the kingdom of heaven becomes a complete soul and perfect after the divine idea. The New Testament teaches that the presence and power of the divine spirit, like the presence and power of light and air in the physical kingdom, are always in the world moving upon men to give them this life from above.

In Freiburg, Germany, there is a celebrated organ. One day, Mendelssohn visited Freiburg to see this organ of which he had heard. He found an old man, the verger, within the church. Mendelssohn asked permission to play upon the organ. This was denied him. But the great man talked so intelligently and so lovingly of the organ that at length the verger consented to let him play upon it. Presently, the fingers of the musician began to move caressingly over the keys and the church became filled with such music as the verger never had heard. He stood entranced, touched and charmed by the sweet tones. He never had known the capabilities of that organ. "Who are you?" he exclaimed, as the music ceased, "I am Mendelssohn," was the reply. "And to think," said the verger, "that I was unwilling to permit you to play upon that organ." Man is like this organ. He is a creature of great potential powers; but he needs to be touched in his feelings and emotions, his affections and his choices, by a spirit which will bring out all the possible good which is in him. We may not know all the meaning of Jesus' words respecting

the new birth, but we can know the truth of his saying, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." While we must leave the inception of the spiritual life in the silence and secrecy which belongs to the beginning of all life, yet we know enough of the power of spiritual touch and the method of spiritual culture to be well assured of the processes of spiritual growth. We know that that which touches a man only through his fleshly nature, never elevates him, and that it frequently degrades him. We know, also, that that which touches the springs of a man's soul may make him a new creature; it may elevate, refine, and save him. Instances of this are numerous, and a few may serve the purpose of illustration.

In one of George Eliot's books, *Silas Marner*, an English weaver who has been crossed in love and disappointed in business, shuts himself away from his fellow men and lives alone plying his trade. He saves his money until he comes to live for the gold he may earn, over which he gloats in a perverted love by night. Loving gold, he is debased by it until he becomes a miser of narrow type. Suddenly and unexpectedly, a little girl is left with him. In caring for her whose beauty of spirit he discerns, his captivity to gold is broken. He loves her with the ardor of a strong heart. He becomes a man dominated by love. That which is born of the spirit is spirit, in him.

In the Corcoran Art Gallery in Washington, is the original statue of *The Greek Slave*, by an American sculptor, Powers. A story to this effect is told

of this statue. When that statue, a figure of a woman exquisitely formed and with a face of surpassing purity and sweetness, but chained as a slave, was first exhibited in a window in Rome, a common servant girl stopped to look upon it. Standing before that statue, she was struck by the purity and beauty of one of her own class, a slave. She went home, washed her face, combed her hair, and adjusted her dress to such neatness as was possible. Day after day, she returned to look upon this figure of a slave made beautiful by the purity of an inward life, until she herself was transformed by its influence. It was not the marble, not the lines of physical beauty, but the conception of womanly purity, modesty, and sweetness which the artist had caused to express themselves through the marble which touched the soul of the servant maid, set her free, and made her beautiful. It was spirit which spoke to spirit. That which is born of the spirit, is spirit.

Recently, I heard a man condemn the popular conception of the Virgin Mary as the embodiment of beauty which has been held by the church in an idealized manner. He proceeded to describe Mary in terms of the physical form of a common peasant woman of Galilee. His description may have been photographically true, but it pained me. What has there been in Mary which has held the mind of the church to the high ideal of her? This: her purity; her modesty when the angel spoke to her; her submission to the divine will, "Be it unto me according to thy word;" her trust in facing a situation which might blacken her reputation; her patience

in waiting through long years for the revelation of her son; her wisdom, keeping all the great promises in her heart; her supreme sufferings, "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother,"—these are the great qualities which the heart has felt and which may have prompted the imagination to exaggerate her physical beauty. But what does it matter? Is not the heart the chief element of value? I doubt not but many a humble girl and many a suffering woman kneeling before an image of the Virgin have found there inspiration to purity, modesty, trustfulness, patience, and heroism in suffering which have greatly blessed them. Is the trellis on which a morning glory climbs, a matter of chief value? Are not the flowers, bright in the sunlight, what a man wants? Does God care greatly for the ladder on which some soul climbs to get a glimpse of beauty, if that soul is thereby beautified? That which is born of the spirit is spirit.

At one time, passing through a ward of a hospital, where it was my duty to minister to patients, I came to a bed on which lay a stalwart Irishman greatly afflicted and unable even to lie in a comfortable position. I expressed my sympathy for him in his unusual sufferings. Turning towards me, he said, "The Saviour suffered more for us, sor, and we should be willing to suffer." This man's theory of the nature and purpose of Christ's sufferings may have differed from the opinions of some others, but his vision of the suffering Christ made him patient in suffering and peaceful in pain. That which is born of the

spirit, is spirit.

The heart is deeper than the intellect, and prompts to higher living and holier character. Truth received by the mind, must sink into the depths of a man's nature where the sources of action are, if it is to move and transform him. It is not abstract truth, but truth embodied in living character, which God uses to save men. God speaks in prophets. God reveals himself in a Son. Life is saved and trained by life. If a man cannot see beauty when it is set before him; then, he cannot be taught what is beautiful. If a man cannot hear music; then, he cannot be taught music. If a man cannot see goodness when it is set before him; then, he cannot be taught goodness.

Jesus used this method of teaching. He washed the disciples feet and then bade them follow His example in the spirit of humility and service. Jesus loved men to the point of giving His life for them and then bade His disciples love as He loved. Jesus presented the Father to men in the regnant greatness of His love and mercifulness, and then bade them be merciful as the Father is merciful, and gracious as the Father is gracious, and perfect as the Father is perfect.

This was the practical method used by the apostles. When Saint Paul would enlarge the Christians of Corinth in generous sympathy to the point of giving liberally for the relief of poor saints in Jerusalem, he said, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His

poverty might become rich." When Peter would comfort servants who suffered unjustly at the hands of cruel masters, he said: "If when ye do well and suffer for it, ye shall take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow His steps." When Saint John would call the disciples to heroism, he said: "He laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." By touching the souls of men by the mercy of God, by the love of Christ, and by the heroism of his sacrifice, the apostles who called men into His kingdom and glory, sought to awaken similar graces in them. That which is born of the spirit is spirit.

That there is such a thing as a spiritual regeneration by which men are renewed and made new men is a fact of experience and a fact of observation. There are those who testify to the change which has been wrought in them, and there are those who bear witness to the great change which they have seen in others. In the record in the New Testament, there is account of men who became new with clearer knowledge of truth, with wider vision, with more generous sympathies, and with more altruistic purposes, and whose lives were spent in the loving service of mankind.

The annals of the church contain the names of many who were changed from an open life of fleshly vice into a life of spiritual virtue. The historian, Gibbon, who will not be charged with prejudice for Christianity, frankly says, "The friends of Chris-

tianity may acknowledge without a blush, that many of the most eminent saints had been before their baptism the most abandoned sinners. As they emerged from sin and superstition to the glorious hope of immortality, they resolved to devote themselves to a life not only of virtue, but of penitence. The desire for perfection became the ruling passion of their soul."

In modern times, there are changes quite as marked. Mr. Begbie, in *Twice-Born Men*, relates the experience of men in Ceylon and in India. These men have been accused by their fellow men of being possessed by devils. Their spirit and manners give every mark of demonical possession. Under influences of missionaries of the Salvation Army, some of them become rational, quiet, and docile. Under the spell of Christ they become very useful, giving every evidence of a change of heart and soul. They become entirely new men. The change is as marked as in any case recorded in the New Testament. They too give credit to Christ for the change.

Great changes in character occur, also, in Christian lands. Many who have been abandoned sinners become eminent and useful saints. But it is not in such changes that we need feel compelled to look for evidences of the new birth. It is the quality of the life and not its contrast to a former mode of living which attests its spiritual character. Faith and love and devotion mark the new life, though one may have grown in it from childhood, and never may have known another spirit. It is the quality of life rather than any contrast to previous exper-

iences which marks it as belonging to the heavenly kingdom. Many have been led from infancy in the footsteps of Christ. They exhibit the reality of a Christ-like life among men. Faith is the ruling principle in their life, and love is their motive power. In such persons, the flesh is subject to the spirit, the world is subjected to the kingdom of heaven, purity is more than pleasure, truth is more precious than gain, integrity is more than position, to do the will of God is more than to please men, and to win the praise of God is sweeter than to hear the plaudits of the world. The twice-born man does not desire to possess personally, to own legally, and to use selfishly, simply for himself; but he desires to possess, to own, and to use for the glory of God and for the good of men. The twice-born man does certain things because they are godlike, such as the Father does; he does other things because love prompts the doing of them; he does still other things because the cry of need appeals to him. The authority which he obeys is in his spirit; the law is within his heart; the deed is without gain to himself. As the sun shines because it is its nature to shine; as flowers bloom and breathe their fragrance on the air because they must; as fruit ripens and hangs ready for the hand which will pluck it; so the goodness of the new man is spontaneous, free, and beneficent. Like Jesus, the souls of such men lie open heavenward for inspiration, and open earthward to hear the cry of need. They are sons of God; they are servants of men; they are living souls whose love and ministry make an enduring

society possible. It should be remembered, always, that the man who is born of the Spirit begins as a babe in the kingdom of heaven. He is still in the flesh; appetite and passion may be strong within him. But a new force is working within him to subject every appetite and passion and power to the law of God.

A modern woman who passed through the not uncommon experience of seeking to find physical health and mental comfort and ease for herself alone, and who, intellectually, passed through the mists and twilights of New Thought and occult searchings after philosophic truth; relates her experience by saying, "When I say that I became a Christian, I mean to use the words of the evangelists, that 'I found Christ'; or to use the words that seem to describe what actually happened, I was 'born again.' This process of introduction took about three months. It was cumulative in method and results. It was by neither a reasoning nor an emotional process that this knowledge (if one may use so cold a word of so warm a thing) came, but a sort of gradual stimulation of the soul; a fanning, as it were, of the spark of Godhead within me till the life of the soul took command of the whole life; till the divine spark burst into a 'consuming fire,' till that point was reached where aspiration becomes realization. 'I lost myself and lost the desire of having my own way, in the love of the way of Christ.'" This woman might have said, as a man of an ancient time said, "Christ liveth in me." That is to say, the spirit which animated and controlled Christ, ani-

mates and controls the person who is born of the spirit.

“The difference between the spiritual man and the natural man is not a difference of development, but of generation.” In the beginning, the difference between a man of the world and a man of the kingdom may be invisible to the eye of man. Indeed, if by nature and by culture, the man of the world is the finer man, he may seem to be the better man. Along some lines, also, the man of the world may be the better man. But, as in all life, the difference will become more marked as time passes. The man who is not conformed to the world, but who is being transformed, will become visibly the better man. At first, the difference is wholly within and hence hidden from the eye. It is a keener sense of God, a spirit of trust in Him, a grateful heart, an obedient will, a desire to submit to the will of God and to obey that will, and an increasing power of love. At last, when completed, it will be conformity to the image of God and likeness to Christ. The divine purpose in creation will be complete in Christian character. “Heaven lies about us in our infancy,” a poet sang. But more truly, by far, heaven lies about us in our age, if life has been spent in learning the will and the way of God.

The sad thing which suggests failure of a successful life on the part of some persons, is the fact that they do not, by any voluntary action, place themselves in contact with those places and persons and means and forces which may awaken and cultivate the spiritual life. Some, indeed, seem sedu-

lously to avoid all such places and persons. Churches, sermons, sacred songs, liturgies, societies for rendering Christian service, are all efficient means of cultivating spiritual life. To some persons, these offer no attraction; to some they are valuable for their incidents, such as sociability, and not for their soul. Some find them a means of grace and of growth.

How shall one who wilfully avoids all places where music is heard or taught or practiced, grow in musical nature and culture? How shall one who takes pains to avoid all places of art and beauty, grow in esthetic nature and in the love of beauty? How shall one who avoids all places and persons suggesting God and revealing God, grow in the likeness of God? That is impossible. To pursue such a course is to turn deliberately away from light and from spiritual life. A spiritual capacity unused, like an unused physical power, will atrophy and be lost.

But such persons as place themselves voluntarily under the influences of such means and of such persons as awaken a sense of truth and righteousness and love, will grow continually. And a successful life must ever come from following the way of Him who is the truth and the life.

Look then on any vision which through art may speak to you of purity and moral beauty. Listen and hear any voice which through music speaks to you of love and of worship and praise. Learn to see and know on the page of literature, the saintly characters which glow and are radiant with the warmth of sweet sympathy, and which are regal in

the greatness of a serviceable life. Behold the matchless person of Christ as He stands out upon the page of the scriptures until you are inflamed with a desire to be like Him. Interpret the circumstances of life in the light of the divine purpose of training of character. Yield ever to the inspirations of the Spirit which touch the soul in many ways to inspire goodness. Then, your years will not be spent in vain, but you will find and you will know the way of a truly successful life.

Love is a unifying force. Love unites man to God and to men. Love saves. The loving man lives. The life of love endures not by virtue of any arbitrary decree, but because of its own inherent nature. The life of love is eternal in its essence, and the kingdom to which it belongs is an eternal kingdom.

CHAPTER VIII

LOVE AS AN ATMOSPHERE

MOST days drop behind us into the common pathway of the past and are forgotten. They have no distinguishing feature and, in memory, they blend in indistinctness with many such days. Some days are remembered because each is an anniversary of an event of importance. A few days are remembered for what they were in themselves. One such day stands out vividly in my own memory. A blue sky bright and unclouded, a pure air exhilarating like wine, mountain heights to be climbed with joy, a wide view of an enlarged and beautiful world, and simple physical and mental delight in the mere fact of living made that day remain clear and distinct in memory. It lives because it was a day of full joyous, triumphant life.

The thing most essential and most valuable to the life of any creature is atmosphere. The atmosphere which we breathe is not air composed of oxygen and nitrogen alone, but air suffused with sunshine, moistened with vapor, and pervaded with electricity. To plants and animals, the atmosphere is, physically, the kingdom of heaven. It brings ministry from higher sources and from wider reaches than the earth. The atmosphere may injure or it may improve a living thing; it may nourish or destroy life. Plants are blasted in a cold atmosphere and withered in a hot one. Plants grow where tem-

perature, moisture, and light are combined in proper proportions. Animals are affected by the quality of the air they breathe, and mood and temper are frequently the resultant effects of air upon a sensitive organization. Men are wont to speak of air as heavy, depressing, debilitating, and so injurious to life, or as pure, exhilarating, and invigorating, and so favorable to life.

The social atmosphere of a home is the most important factor in the life of a child. In an atmosphere of suspicion, distrust, anger, injustice, and cruelty, it is impossible for a child to grow in faith, sweetness, gentleness, and kindness. A child reproduces the temper, speech, and actions of the grown persons about him. Common observation of the speech and conduct of children, confirms this statement. Even in play, children will use the tone and language of their elders. There is, of course, a certain native and individual quality of character independent of environment; but this is modified in increased goodness or in intensified badness by the atmosphere in which a child lives. A little girl is a moral blossom in the likeness of her mother, and a small boy tries to reproduce the speech and conduct of his father.

The moral and spiritual quality of a community as shown in the speech, conduct, business manners, amusements, and worship influence the mind and habits of a growing child.

In so far as personal choice may decide the atmosphere which one will breathe, in so far, there is individual responsibility. One may allow the

milder or the more severe spirit of a home to dwell in mind; one may choose the companions who awaken the baser, or the companions who awaken the more refined feelings; one may cultivate the desires and the actions of the worse or of the better spirits about him.

Personal choice performs an important part in the formation of character. But in so far as choice has no place, as with the very young who are confined to a limited and circumstantial atmosphere, environment is the chief factor in determining quality and direction of life. The experience and observation of societies who take charge of neglected and abandoned children, and who place them in homes, confirms this statement.

The religious atmosphere in which a soul lives is of prime importance. Man is a religious being. He has in himself a sense of divinity. He believes in the supernatural. He is moved by faith in or by fear of spiritual beings. He will be, or he will become, like the god he worships. Men whose heaven is peopled with gods such as Pope's couplet describes:

“Gods partial, passionate, unjust,
Whose attributes are rage, revenge, and lust,”

will indulge themselves in like passions. Fear has played a great part in the religions of the world. Fear which is reverent, which is filled with respect, and which dreads to offend, is beneficial. Fear which is simply apprehension of danger and injury,

is hurtful. Men too frequently have conceived of gods after their own image and have regarded them as essentially selfish, self-seeking, and self-indulgent. They have worshipped them as beings whose anger may be placated by sacrificial offerings and whose favor may be purchased by costly gifts. Men, through their vain imagination, have lived in an atmosphere spiritually unhealthful and morally baneful.

But Jesus has revealed God to men. The revelation in Jesus did not create the divine character or change that character, but made it manifest. Jesus has made men acquainted with the spiritual atmosphere in which they live. Jesus' character is holy and loving. Jesus' disposition towards men is unselfish and benevolent. Jesus' ministry to men is beneficent, giving health and holiness. He that hath seen Jesus, hath seen the Father. The revelation of Jesus is threefold: God is a spirit; God is light; God is love. God is a spirit in essence; God is light in action; God is love in relation to men. Men by faith dwell in God; God by love dwells in men. Men by faith, open mind and soul to God; God by love enters and enlarges the souls of men. "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."

That which is wisest and best in men is used by Jesus to interpret to men what is wise and good in God. The farmer who sows good seed in his field, the shepherd who seeks a lost sheep, the father who forgives a repentant prodigal son, the father who hears and answers the prayer of his child, the

householder who amply rewards a faithful steward, are all used to exhibit and illustrate qualities which belong to the divine nature and which spring from the one source—love.

God's love is not unintelligent, unregulated, and misdirected sentiment. God's love is clear in vision, wise in choice, intelligent in action, moving outward in ministry and in control which will secure good.

The spiritual atmosphere in which the world of men lies is love. This love has in it all the elements of mercy, long-suffering, forgiveness, and grace which meet the various needs of men. The principles and practices of the divine government are to be interpreted by love. They are essentially benevolent; they are for good purposes; they are for the welfare of the creature. The glory of the Creator is not secured by any injustice to the creature. The good of the creature is not obtained by any dishonor to the Creator. The principles of the divine administration run along the lines of righteousness.

Evil, obviously, is incidental to creatures beginning life in infancy to be educated in spirituality and pain is part of the discipline of human life. But evil is not pleasurable to God, and pain is not the permanent inheritance of man. That punishment of sin which warns and restrains the sinner for his own welfare is benevolent; and that punishment of sin which, like surgery, removes the incorrigible sinner from a society which would be injured by his presence is likewise good. Divine love is not soft-hearted kindness destitute of moral principle, but wise, intel-

ligent, firm, and well-directed benevolence which maintains the authority of right and of law, and which sends suffering for the good which will ensue.

Permission given to a child to choose his own way without control would not be wisdom but folly. Granting a child limitless liberty, would not be the act of intelligence, but of ignorance. Granting a child every request would not be kindness but cruelty. Withholding pain when pain would correct or chasten or call out heroic qualities, would not be a favor but a futility. Diverting sorrow when sorrow would sanctify, would not be a blessing but a bane.

It is not possible to set every separate state of a man or every kind of pain or every time of sorrow in such a light that one may see all its relations and interpret its meaning and show the good which must follow, but it is quite possible to see the general course of goodness in the world's guidance and governance. There is, obviously, a benevolent purpose in pain; suffering evokes strength of soul; sorrow may soften, chasten, and serve to complete a character. This world without pain and without sorrow would be to a very great degree, without the patience and the heroism, and without the sympathy and the gentleness which now, are found in it. There is also in the heart of mankind an abiding hope of better things yet to be.

The physical atmosphere has its clouds and showers, its currents and its storms, its electric displays and destructions; but these all perform a beneficent part in the promotion of health and welfare. In-

dividual instances of injury and loss occur; but these are incidental and, relatively, minor; they are neither the common nor the permanent things. They are but temporal. The gain far outbalances the loss.

In the spiritual sphere, there are times of darkness and trial, of suffering and sorrow, of pain and loss; but to him who believes in the love of God, and abides in that love, they conserve spiritual welfare. This an apostle saw when he burst out in a glad exclamation: "We glory in tribulations also knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience, experience, and experience, hope." He teaches the same truth when he writes, "Our affliction which is for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding weight of glory." There are some things in human experience, now, which are seen only as painful and full of sorrow; but, says Saint Paul, "These are temporal," and there are other things which follow that are full of pleasure and of glory and these "are eternal."

To him who knows God as revealed in character in the person of Jesus, and who knows the purpose and principles of the divine government as declared in the gospel, there must be this interpretation of human life. He who dwells in the love of God will have a strength, a comfort, and a glorious hope in the midst of all life's experiences which can belong to none other. "Keep yourselves in the love of God."

God loved when he made the world, and the constitution of the world must be accepted as an expres-

sion of his love. We should not expect the physical conditions of the world to be changed because of the revelation of divine grace and our acceptance of it, nor the laws of nature to be annulled because of our prayers. In so far as we personally have neglected the laws of the universe and have lived in violation of those laws, we should expect change; but the change must be in us and not in the laws of nature or in nature's course. Labor, for instance, must be accepted as a primary law of life. He who lives in the love of God will perform his labor not in the spirit of servitude, but in the spirit of sonship and will make it a ministry.

The normal relations of human life which are formed by men's appetites and affections have been ordained in love. These relations are not to be avoided but accepted. They give much satisfaction and joy; they bring also much care and sorrow. But it is, mainly, through the common relations and common duties of life that the finest elements of character are developed. Men by obedience in spirit to the constitution of society, are enlarged in affection and in sympathy, and are fitted to be part of an enduring social order. He who believes in the love of God, and who sees that love expressed in the constitution of the world and in the structure of society, cannot think that labor is a penalty for sin or that celibacy is superior to marriage, or that meditation is better than action. The mode of life which must be led by the many must be good rather than a manner of life which may be led by a few.

A superficial survey of the history of mankind

will show that by toil man is trained in self-restraint, self-control, power of concentration, and power of application, and that by toil, man gains both knowledge and skill. What most men have learned has come through the necessity of a struggle for existence, and the moral qualities of mankind have been evoked and made strong through adaptation to one another in the relations and mutual duties of life.

Man is said to be nature's favorite. Yet, as one has said: "How does nature deal with her favorite? She turns him out naked, cold, and shivering upon the earth; with needs that admit of no compromise; with a delicate frame that cannot lie upon the bare ground an hour, but must have immediate protection; with a hunger that cannot procrastinate the needed supply, but must be fed to-day and every day; and why is all this? I suppose, if man could have made of earth a bed; and if an apple or a chestnut a day could have sufficed him for food; he would have got his barrel of apples or his bushel of chestnuts, and lain down upon the earth and done nothing until the stock was gone. But nature will not permit this."

Nature, which for animals provides food which needs no cooking and which weaves garments for them by the action of their own bodies, clothing them in feathers or in fur, as climate and conditions demand, and which makes them capable of living without a house, or provides a house for them, compels man to raise his own food, to weave his own garments, and to build his own house. But

with what result? This, namely, that while animals remain the same through the generations, men sowing, spinning, weaving, trading, building house and home, become farmers, artizans, architects, artists, sculptors, painters, musicians, scientists, philosophers, poets, and, by inspiration, prophets. So it comes to pass that not only through the gentleness but through what seems the severity of God, men become great. Now he who sees this result in the course of nature and in the history of mankind, will accept his place in the world, will use his power, will perform his work and will do this with that cheerfulness and strength and hopefulness which come from the belief that his life is under the rule of love.

The fact of moral evil also must be set in the light of love if we are to understand it aright. Why should a man be tempted to do wrong? Temptation is not a trap to catch a man and destroy him, but temptation is a trial and a test. It is an opportunity to fall, but it is also an opportunity to rise. He who when tempted refuses evil, rises as a bird rises by beating the air with resisting wings. He who is tempted, but without sin, proves thereby the power of his manhood. But do not many fall, rather than rise under temptation? Yes. But within the soul of man, as nowhere else in the animal world, there is a nature which feels remorse, which regrets and repents and makes possible the sundering of the soul from evil, and the renewal of relation with the forces which make for righteousness.

Suffering also, in the ordinary sense of that word, that is, in the mere enduring of pains which are incidental to the human frame and to a man's relations to the world and to other persons, is a means of heroism. That suffering which is endured on account of one's own sins or on account of the sins of others has in it the most powerful forces to expand the soul in love. Of the greatest character which has appeared on earth it is written, "He learned obedience by the things which He suffered; and having been made perfect, He became unto all them that obey Him the author of eternal salvation."

This eternal salvation comes to him who believes and knows the love that God hath for us. Nature lies about man waiting to minister to him with inspiring breeze and warming sun and renewing forces. He who will receive the ministration of nature, finds that his fainting body is revived, his waning strength renewed, and power is given him to finish his journey or to complete his task. God, also, in like manner, is a living, present, all-embracing spirit waiting to revive, renew, and make strong the soul of man. This is no mere Oriental dream, no mystic imagination, no illusive hope. This is a fact which is abundantly attested by the most reliable men. It is a matter of experience. Shepherds, soldiers, political leaders, statesmen, and men also in the very ordinary walks of common life have affirmed that they have waited upon God and have been helped, have called upon God and been answered, have trusted God

and their strength has been renewed and made sufficient. The sacred scriptures, the biographies of eminent men, and the hymns of the entire church expressive of common experiences, all bear witness to this truth. Humble persons have asserted in the ears of those who have tried to comfort them that the grace of God has come to them in their need like water of life and like comfort of a mother's love. God indeed revives the heart of the contrite, dwells with them who are of humble heart, and renews the strength of such as wait on Him.

The man who will search his own interior nature must know that faith, love, and hope, in some form, are the mightiest forces to keep his soul sane and pure and strong. He who will try must know that the love of God beyond anything else feeds these forces. He who dwells in the love of God, knows that he is guided in his counsels, strengthened in his purposes, comforted in his sorrows, sustained in his trials, and heartened at all times by the love of God. This persuasion and belief is conducive to moral power, mental sanity, and physical health. Salvation physical, mental, moral, and spiritual, comes from dwelling in the love of God. That love is the only atmosphere in which the soul can live and live eternally.

Success in life is considered by many to depend on place and position, on the abundance of things with which a man surrounds himself, on escape from trouble and pain, and on the element of ease in living. But there have been men humbled in position

who have been greatly exalted in themselves. There have been men who have suffered the loss of all things who have made others rich. There have been men bereft who blessed God in their bereavement and who greatly comforted others. There have been men who have passed long years in pain for truth's sake or for love's sake who have inspired souls with heroism. The fact that God loved them was to such men exaltation, enrichment, companionship, strength, and joy. The really successful life is the life in which one learns the lessons which make him pure, loving, constant, strong, patient, superior to external conditions, and invincible in soul.

To the servant, like Hagar, and to the public man and prophet like Elijah, in the desert places of life, there may be met the angel of ministry and there may be received the water and the bread of life. If any man thirst, let him come. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Life—life renewed daily—life strong to serve—life brave to suffer—life full of sympathy—life abundant in ministry—life which will never fail—may be unto all who will believe and dwell in the love of God.

There has been transacted on this earth a marvelous ministry of grace, healing, and salvation. There has been on this earth a wonderful history full of the experiences of those who have found God all-sufficient in the depth, tenderness, and strength of his love. This ministry has been given in part for our enlightenment, and this history has been written for our learning that we through like faith might

know and enjoy the love of God. It is as Browning wrote of Lazarus and the Arab physician who saw and conversed with him:

“Whence has the man the balm that brightens all?
* * * * *

Indeed the especial marking of the man
Is prone submission to the heavenly will—
Seeing it, what it is, and why it is.”

So the Arab physician writes to his friend:

“The very God! think, Abib; dost thou think?
So, the All-Great were the All-Loving too—
So, through the thunder comes a human voice
Saying, ‘O heart I made, a heart beats here,
Face, my hands fashioned, see it in myself!
Thou hast no power nor mayest conceive of mine,
But love I gave thee, with myself to love
And thou must love me who have died for thee!
The madman saith He said so: it is strange.”

CHAPTER IX

FAITH

IN THE north of Scotland spanning a small stream, is a stone foot bridge on the keystone of whose arch is an inscription, "God and Me." The stream itself is small in summer, but when swollen by spring freshets, it becomes a raging torrent. Many years ago, when the stream was crossed by a footlog, a young girl lost her footing and fell into the swollen waters. She felt herself being swept down the current and she prayed to God to help her reach the shore. In answer to her prayer, so she believed, help came and she buffeted the opposing waters until she was safely landed. In return for her deliverance, she promised that when she should be able, she would build a bridge across that stream. After many years of labor, she was able to redeem her promise and she built the bridge and placed upon it the above inscription.

Had a vine held fast by its roots been floating in the water when that girl fell and had her hand grasped it, she would have been saved by faith in a physical means of deliverance. Her faith, a materialist would say, was well placed and justified. But was not her faith equally well placed and justified by its trust in a spiritual source of salvation? True, no audible voice from the sky responded to her cry and no hand from heaven was extended to help her escape from the waters. But in answer to her faith,

her soul was strengthened with confidence, and she was nerved for her struggle and saved from a watery grave. The soul is as real as the body, and strength of soul is as much a support as strength of body. This girl saved through prayer might have written her experience in words of the psalmist: "He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters." So she felt, and the bridge is the material monument to her belief.

In the matter of faith, this Scotch girl was not exceptional. In the purpose of her faith, her experience was her own, but in the nature of her faith and in its object, it was a common faith. In a recent book upon the work of some American women who have rendered most signal and valuable civic and social service, the author says, in the preface: "In almost every instance, they who have done so much for the public welfare have stated that they believe themselves to have been selected by a divine agency for their particular work and accountable to the Divinity for success or failure. The sense of a power beyond themselves, impelling them onward, was general. So was a great faith in the efficacy of prayer." The author who claims that she herself is "not a sentimental person" says, "The simplicity and sincerity with which this belief has been shown have made it impossible to doubt."

This testimony seems much like that of Saint Paul who says of his own works and remarkable life, "By the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all:

yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." That faith brings power to withstand evil in a wicked world, to work righteousness in the midst of sin, and to meet and often to overcome physical difficulty and danger, is a common experience of those who lead the most saintly and the most serviceable lives.

Faith not only frequently gives deliverance from danger and strength for service, but also patience of endurance and hope of future good. In fact, faith, gives hope when without it one might sink in despair. Among the men imprisoned by Napoleon I, was a man named Charney. This man wrote his brief creed on the wall of his cell in the words, "All things come by chance." It was a comfortless creed. It gave no light to his mind and no cheer to his soul. One day as Charney was walking up and down the pavement, he saw a tiny blade lifting a green tip from between the flagging. He was interested in it, as the only living thing around. He cared for it, watered it, and watched it grow. In return for his love and care, the plant became his teacher. It blossomed, finally, in a beautiful flower, rose-colored with white fringe. The man began to think that such a life and such beauty could not come by chance and could not flourish without loving care. It occurred to his mind that higher life in this world cannot be the result of chance and cannot come to its best without love and care. He rubbed out the creed he had written upon the wall and wrote instead, "He who made all things is God." Light came to cheer his mind and a sense of

love to comfort his heart as he thought that if God could care for so tiny a flower in a prison and make it beautiful, God could care for him. Incidentally, Charney's love for the flower coming to the knowledge of a little girl whose father was also a prisoner, was reported by her and, at length, reached the ears of the empress and resulted in Charney's liberation. But in the prison he had learned enough to believe the words of Jesus, "Consider the lilies how they grow." He had learned enough to believe that if God cares for the flowers of the field much more will He care for a living man who trusts Him.

Faith is given the first place in the New Testament as being the most essential thing in man. Love may be the greatest thing in human character, but faith is the most essential. Every normal child begins conscious life in faith. The child does not know love, but the child intuitively trusts love. It is out of this trust that love grows in the heart of a child. So is faith in God first in the heart of a true man and out of his faith, love grows. "Faith works by love." Notice the place given to faith in the New Testament. Faith is said to be the condition of acceptance with God. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him." Faith is declared to be the condition of salvation, "He that believeth shall be saved." Faith is distinctly said to be the active principle of a saintly and heroic life. They who do great things in the service of God, do them by faith. "Through faith they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, and obtained promises." Faith is said to be the means of victory and of reward. "This

is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Jesus says of such victors: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father and before His angels." The lack of faith is the cause of failure. Jesus turned away from His own immediate country and "He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." When the disciples asked Jesus the secret of their lack of power He said: "Because of your unbelief." The blessings of healing, pardon, and power of new life came as a result of faith. Faith, let it be understood, is not primarily or chiefly a mental concept or an intellectual assent to statements of truth, valuable as this may be; but faith is an attitude of mind, a state of soul, a personal relation to a personal presence and power. *The Augsburg Confession* states this conception of faith in fitting words by saying, "This word faith is taken in Scriptures, not for such a knowledge as is in the wicked, but for a trust, which doth comfort and lift up disquieted minds." Faith is trust in a Person, a living Presence, a ruling Power, an inspiring Spirit. "God," says Jesus, "is a spirit and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth." They who thus worship God revere Him, receive Him, and obey Him. These statements are not designed to discredit or to undervalue intellectual knowledge of truth, which may be most valuable; but to call attention to the fact that intellectual acceptance of statements of truth may be made

where there is no obedience to the truth, and that there may be the spirit of obedience where there is little knowledge. These statements are also intended to call attention to the fact that faith according to the New Testament is a personal relation to a personal God. Faith is the response of the soul in its sensibilities and in its desires to the circumambient Spirit of Life.

Scientists now believe in a substance, like a limitless ocean or vapor, like a universal atmosphere of an ethereal nature, something invisible, imponderable, intangible sensibly, in which all worlds lie, through which attraction passes, through which light flashes, and in which all forces which pass from world to world find their medium. In this nameless and unseen somewhat, all things exist. Scientists believe this not because of proof which may be demonstrated like a problem in mathematics; but because such a viewless and imponderable substance gives a satisfactory physical basis for certain phenomena in nature. So it has come to pass that scientists accept belief in a physical environment similar to the spiritual environment in which many men have believed, as affording a sufficient basis for the spiritual phenomena which exist in the world. God is a spirit by whose power all souls come to be, in whose love all souls lie, and by whose life all souls which attain complete life, find it. God, who is invisible and intangible to the physical senses of men but most real to the spiritual sense, is the one living reality and the one source of life to men.

Jesus reveals to men not the metaphysical nature

of God but His moral qualities and His moral attitude toward men. Jesus declares that God is loving, merciful, gracious, sympathetic, and serviceable, ever ready to save and to serve men, ready to make them strong to overcome sin and death, and ready to make them perfect in character such as is worthy to endure.

Every man dwells in God in so far as his existence is concerned, but the believing and loving man dwells in God intimately in that he is open to the influx of divine power which acts within the man, inspiring love and holiness. The dying plant, and the growing plant both are in the air, but their relation to the air differs. To the one, the air is mainly external and will become wholly so when it is entirely dead; to the other, the air is both external and internal in that it is nourishing the plant that grows. All men are in the air, but the air is also in living men as the support of life. All men are in God as the all-embracing spirit, but God is in the soul of the man who has faith.

Faith is a state of soul, an attitude of mind, a relation to the omnipresent spirit whom we call God. Faith is the open eye which light may enter; the uncovered ear to which the voice of the Spirit may speak; the waiting heart which love may fill; the trustful soul which the tides of spiritual force may swell; the obedient will which inspiring grace may make strong. Faith, whether in reception or in action, is the response of the soul to God.

Faith is the condition of receiving spiritual power. It was power which Jesus promised to his dis-

ciples when the Spirit should come upon them. It was power which marked the change in those disciples when the Spirit came. They had power to know and to interpret the revelation and the will of God. They had power to see clearly, to think truly, to love intensely, to speak boldly, to endure bravely and to continue steadfastly in Christlike service. This has been the quality and the result of faith in all ages. Increased power, intensified from some moral source, is the explanation of extraordinary men of biblical history. The Spirit came upon strong men like Samson, and they became stronger; upon skilful men like Bezalel, and they became more skilful; upon men fitted for political leadership like Moses, and they became more capable; upon men of poetical and musical gifts like David, and they became more poetical and more musical; upon men of spiritual vision like Isaiah, and they saw spiritual truth more clearly and expressed it more beautifully; upon willing and teachable men like the apostles, and they increased in boldness and in efficiency; upon men of heroic nature like Paul, and they became invincible. The Spirit does not create new faculties in men of faith, but it makes more effective the faculties which they possess. The prophet has a clearer vision; the poet, a loftier flight; the singer, a sweeter tone; the man of action, a more resolute will; and the obedient servant of the Lord, increased effectiveness. Evils are revealed, righteousness is declared, judgment is decisive, kingdoms of opposition to truth and righteousness are conquered, and kingdoms of truth and love

are established by such men.

Men of common parts, by faith, partake also of these same graces as higher men. They see and appreciate things which higher men have said and have done and in their place and to their degree reproduce the same. After all, it is not the particular work which men do nor its greatness, as men measure greatness; but the spirit in which men do their work which makes them great. To men of true faith, labor becomes a service of dignity, love becomes the sweet spirit of home, and the common round and trivial task of daily life are elevated and glorified by faith.

They who learn to walk in love, to let the light of Christian character shine forth, and to do all things to the glory of God, are moving in the upward pathway and belong to the spiritual nobility of the universe, quite as well as men who by virtue of greater talent or more conspicuous position are marked and praised men.

The secrets of the heavenly kingdom are revealed to the believing eye and the successes of the kingdom come to the submissive soul. Things which are hidden from the wise are revealed to the trustful, and power which is lacking to the strong who strive in their own strength is imparted to the weak who obey the divine will. Let it be known, however, that, "It is not intellect from which God hides Himself, but selfishness and pride which may belong to taught and untought, and darken the soul of sophist or of clown."

"The differences," says James Martineau, "by

which God is revealed are in us, not in him; in our faculty of recognition, by no means, in his constancy of action. His light is alive in the very hearts of those who neglect or deny him; and in those who must own him is latent a thousand times for once that it flashes on their conscious eye. It is he who comes to us and finds us; his presence rises of itself, and the revelation is spontaneous. Our sole concern is to accept it, to revere it, to follow it, to live by it."

Certain results must inevitably follow that faith which is a loving relation to a personal God. Faith will deliver from that anxious care about the conditions of life which causes fretting and which consumes the strength of the soul by needless friction. Take not anxious thought, says Jesus. The reason for this freedom lies in the fact that the heavenly Father knows the things that are really needed. It goes without saying that, like a true father; He will provide them. Things imagined, much more than things real, fret the souls of men. It is very significant that Jesus specified to-morrow rather than to-day, when he forbids anxiety. Faith brings freedom from fretting.

Faith, also, frees the soul from that foreboding which brings fear. Fears arises either from a feeling that strength will not be equal for the things which must be borne or performed, or from the idea that the things which may happen are uncontrolled, or from the thought that the effect of the things which may happen may be hurtful and inflict abiding injury and loss. Faith, however, faces the fu-

ture with the feeling that life is of divine appointment, part of a divine plan, and that strength will be equal to the demands; that the things which occur are not uncontrolled, but are set within limitations; that any thing which may befall a believer cannot render abiding harm; and that "all things work together for good to them who love God." Jesus bids men not fear even them who may kill the body. Faith drives away that fear which hath torment. Faith is not blind to the fact that pain and losses and sorrow may come, but these things are seen in true perspective; they are set in right relation to other things; they are not the great and enduring things; therefore they may be met with courage and confidence.

Faith drives away doubt, despondency, and despair. Many persons walk beneath a murky sky, live in a depressing atmosphere, and suffer from despair in the soul; because they lack sufficient faith. To the mind of faith there is always a beneficent power ruling for good, a supreme strength of righteousness invincible and bound to conquer, a certainty of good in the long run. Faith receives the light which streams through the cloud, breathes the upper stratum of air, and looks to the far future where the brilliant bow of promise rests on cloud and on land. Faith keeps the angel of hope in the heart of the believing man.

Faith, also, fastens itself in feeling, affection, desire, and expectation upon the things which are best. It is the intuitive nature of faith to see the best in nature, in persons, and in God. Faith sees the

things which are true, just, lovely, honorable, and beneficent and believe that these are always good in themselves and will insure good. The soul full of faith never fails, though it be set in the midst of evil. "This is the victory which overcomes the world, even our faith."

Faith, finally, makes him who possesses it like Jesus Himself. Jesus was serene in the storm at sea which filled His disciples with fear. Jesus was calm in the midst of the angry crowd who thrust Him out of Nazareth. Jesus was sweet in spirit when men were soured in spirit in their contentions about places and honors. Jesus was kind when His disciples would have been cruel in their treatment of the citizens of an inhospitable village. Jesus was sane and judged the issue aright when His enemies plotted to take His life and when the shadow of the cross fell across His pathway. Jesus bade His disciples, also, bear an untroubled heart because of faith in God. "Believe in God, believe in Me" was His prescription for the cure of heart trouble.

Many persons fail of comfort in life, exaggerate evil, dread to-morrow and walk in weakness, because they do not keep the soul stayed upon God. What such persons need is to give hospitality to the truth of God and they will find, as many have found, that God is indeed a refuge, a fortress, a shield. They will find that God is strength, salvation, and a song. They who trust Him may be kept in perfect peace. They who wait upon Him, renew their strength. They walk and are not weary, they run and are not faint.

But one will say, "Look at the trouble or the sorrow which has come to me!" Yes, but is it more than the trouble or the sorrow which has come to many of the saints of God? Has not Job, bereft of all things, been taken as the abiding pattern of patience? Or if Job be regarded as a creation of the imagination, have we not known persons, like Job, bereft of property, family, and health, who have still blessed God and waited in patience for His deliverance? Have not some of the greatest letters, like Paul's epistles, and some of the greatest of books, like Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, come from the pens of men imprisoned? Have not some of the greatest of poems and of sermons been written by men who were blind, like Milton and George Matheson? Have not some of the most helpful of hymns been composed by men bruised by suffering and sweetened by sorrow? Have not some of the most useful lives which the world has seen, been lives filled with personal suffering? No temptation or trial can overtake persons who live to-day but such as has been common to men. Faith has surmounted them all. The prayer of the believing soul to which passing years bring losses or wrongs or pains or sorrows should be, "Lord keep me sane, sweet, and strong."

No words have been used more commonly for comfort, than the words of the Twenty-third Psalm. "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." Mr. John R. Mott has analyzed the assurances of this psalm as follows: I shall not want rest; "He makes me to lie down in green pastures." I shall not want

forgiveness; "He restoreth my soul." I shall not want guidance; "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness." I shall not want companionship; "for Thou art with me." I shall not want comfort; "Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me." I shall not want food; "Thou preparest a table before me." I shall not want joy; "Thou anointest my head with oil." I shall not want any thing in this life; "surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." I shall not want any thing in eternity; "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

To those who try and test this psalm in their own life, experience will give such assurance of its truth that they may say in the language of another psalm: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy desire with good things, so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's."

Faith is the soul of true greatness. It has been well said: "There are two types of human greatness—the pagan and the Christian—the moral and the religious—the secular and the divine. The former has its root and essence in trying hard; the latter, in trusting gently; the one depends on voluntary energy, the other on the relinquishment of personal will to cast every burden upon God. The one chooses its own ends and elaborates the means; the other, possessed by a God-given end, becomes its

organ and its implement, and simply lets it use from day to day, the entire powers of the soul. There is no instrument so tremendous in this world as a human soul thus committed to what is diviner than itself."

The pure in heart see God. They who love, know God. They who obey, live with God. With God there is ever the guidance of light, the sweetness and the joy of love, the endurance and the victory of power.

One of three things must be believed. Either this world is left to chance, or it is in the control of fate, or it is guided by wisdom and unfailing power. If the world is given over to chance, then one must be driven by his own passions or by popular passions which may be like the waves of the sea and the sweep of the wind without purpose and without control. If the world is controlled by fate, one must surrender himself to forces of whose origin, nature, and purpose he can know nothing. If the world is governed by a God of wisdom, love, and power; then one may trust the present, and quietly hope for the future.

Cromwell once said, "One never mounts so high as when one knows not whither one is going." The man who in faith, answers the call of the spirit, follows the gleam of holy light, and obeys the inspiration of love, will find that he learns the truth, walks in the light, fulfills the will of God, and so is saved and safe.

Faith has been called a sixth sense. Faith is the sense which sets a man in right relation to God and

to the universe. "What reason is to things demonstrable, such faith is to the invisible realities of the spirit world," says an Oriental writer. Reason is richly rewarded in knowledge gained by exercising itself on things demonstrable. Faith is richly rewarded in experience gained by trusting spiritual verities. Reason is rewarded by knowledge comprehended by the intellect. Faith is rewarded by personal knowledge experienced in the soul. "Hereby know we love."

"What is faith, but to believe what you do not see?" said Saint Augustine. This accords with the scripture which says that "faith is a conviction of things not seen." But faith is, also, more than this. Faith is to believe what the soul sees to be beautiful, what the conscience affirms to be good, what the heart in its purest impulses is impelled to love. Faith is a power in the soul which enables one to give up the inferior beauty, the lower good, the baser reward, for what one sees to be higher. To believe in a better country and to seek it, like Abraham; to give up the wealth and the power of the world for the soul's enrichment and the soul's service, like Moses; to flee from the pleasure of sense, when pleasure would be sin, like Joseph; to respond to a call from God in the night time, like Samuel; to see what great things one may suffer for Christ and to choose them, like Paul; to face impending martyrdom and to accept it, like Peter; this is faith. Faith claims the promises of God and finds them exceedingly great and precious.

Men of faith are not lifted out of the common

experiences of life, but through these experiences, they come to what, to men without Christ, are uncommon experiences. Sin is a common experience; but forgiveness is a Christian experience. Temptation is a common experience; but triumph over it, is a Christian experience. Suffering is a common experience, but patient waiting in hope is a Christian experience. Sorrow is a common experience, but comfort is a Christian experience. Death is a common experience, but persuasion of victory and immortal life is a Christian experience.

Faith does not change outward natural conditions, but faith tends to give health of body, sanity of mind, and strength of soul. Faith cleanses the affections, sweetens the disposition, sustains the will, and increases the entire life of man. If physical well-being, mental clarity and strength, spiritual efficiency and the achievement of good, be considered success in life; then, the man of faith is the man of success.

Faith, then, in brief, is the relation of the soul in all its powers of feeling, thought, and will, to God. Faith believes that God is the absolute Cause and Creator of all things and so lives in Him. Faith believes that the natural conditions of the world are of God's purpose and appointment, and so accepts them without question and without resistance, without fretting and without fear. Faith believes in God's wisdom and so accepts cheerfully the normal and destined way, and finds that way good. Faith believes in God's unflinching love, and so trusts Him for all things needed. Faith believes in God's care

and purpose for the individual and so submits to His providence and obeys His law. Faith believes in God's mercy, and so forsakes sins and forgets them as belonging to a past from which there is freedom. Faith believes in God's grace, and so receives from Him power to rise from a dead past to new and higher life. Faith believes in God's power as something to be imparted to man, and so faces duty, difficulty, danger, and things which, like death, seem to defeat the soul in the hope of sufficient spiritual energy to insure success and victory. Faith believes in God's eternity and so hopes in Him to have eternal life. Faith sings ever in Saint Paul's immortal paean: "I am persuaded that neither death nor life, things present nor things to come, height nor depth, nor any creature is able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

CHAPTER X

OBEDIENCE

OBEDIENCE is the way of peace and of power. Obedience escapes the hindrance of friction and receives the inspiration of force. In inanimate nature, every planet in the sky, every wave upon the breast of the sea, every river rolling on its course, and every particle of matter which enters into the structure of any material thing, must obey the forces by which it is touched and moved, if its destiny is fulfilled. Here is no freedom but only submission. This is the law of perfect form and of freedom from pain and from deformity, in every animated physical body.

Obedience is the absolute condition of success in human affairs. Whether one is in a hospital for the healing of the sick, or in a school for the education of the mind, or in a factory for the accomplishment of some work, or in an army for military service; one must obey those in authority. The prescriptions of the doctor must be followed; the lessons assigned by the teacher must be learned; the directions of the foreman must be carried out; the commands of the captain must be obeyed. Without obedience, the business of the world would be disordered and destroyed; with obedience, the business of the world is performed regularly and good results are secured. Among fallible men, one in authority may err in his commands; but, even with this possibility, none may

venture to disobey—except in most extraordinary instances and with clear vision—for, on the whole, obedience is essential to the accomplishment of life's tasks.

In any sphere where there is unerring wisdom and absolute authority, obedience must be universal. Where a law of God is revealed, there the life of man must move. As men obey God and so become workers together with Him, they achieve their greatest works and attain their highest good. One who would attempt to walk without regard to the law of gravity, or to swim without thought of the laws of water, or to secure harvests without knowledge and care of seasons, seeds, soil, and sunshine, would absolutely fail. Men gain success only as they think God's great thoughts after Him, work with Him in agriculture and in manufacturing, move with Him in transportation of merchandise, and submit to Him in all the ways of physical business. One may deceive and defraud his fellowman in a business transaction and seem to gain; but no one can deceive or defraud God. To attempt to defraud God is to defeat one's self. Disobedience to God is the destruction of one's endeavor. This men recognize in the physical universe; this men should recognize in the spiritual universe.

Jesus, the highest revelation of spiritual reality and the greatest teacher of moral truth, lays supreme emphasis upon obedience. These are some of Jesus' significant sayings: "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man." "If a man love me, he will keep my

words." "Not every one that saith unto me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." "Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother."

Jesus did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it. Jesus reveals the spirit of that law which is perfect trust in God and perfect love of men. Jesus enlarges love beyond geographical and racial lines, frees it from limitations which men had placed around it, and makes it the universal principle of holy living. Without love, a man cannot worship God, or keep the commandments, or fulfil his duty, or attain his destiny.

There is no department of life, save this of the spirit, of which men think results may be attained and rewards received without fulfilment of the conditions on which they rest. But in the sphere of spirit, some think the fruits of love may be obtained without love and the rewards of righteousness may be received without righteousness. This false and injurious opinion arises from one of two sources. It arises, sometimes, from the presumptuous thought that the goodness of God will compel Him to give good to men irrespective of character and deserts. It arises, sometimes, in part, at least, from the teaching long current that the righteousness of Christ is a substitute for the righteousness of men, and that the righteousness of Christ is imputed rather than imparted unto men. Men have been taught that they are justified by faith as one is justified whose commercial debt has been paid by

another, rather than that they are justified as a branch grafted into a good tree is justified because of the life that is in it, promising blossom and fruit. The former conception led men to rest satisfied in an imputed righteousness; the latter conception leads men to seek to become perfect by the development of the life that is in them.

Jesus received His name because He would save His people from their sins, not in their sins. He "hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." "He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him." The purpose of Jesus' work was to the end "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Through Jesus we are brought near to God, reconciled to Him and made willing to do His will rather than our own will. There can be no success in the Christian life save as one conforms to this law of obedience.

The call of God is a call for the heart of man. The demand for faith is a demand for that condition of mind which will make a man follow God in thinking and in willing. The salvation promised in the gospel is salvation from self-will unto delight in doing the will of God. The saved man is a follower of Jesus who said, "Lo, I am come to do thy will, O God." Jesus' prayer was, "Not my will, but thine be done." When Jesus bids men come unto Him for rest, He clearly indicates that rest will be found only when they have learned of Him to

possess a meek and quiet spirit. When Saint Paul bids men live so as to be transformed by a renewing of the mind, it is to the end that they may learn by practice what is the good and acceptable will of God. When Saint Paul bids men have in them the mind which was in Christ, it is to the end that, like Christ, they may not cherish pride, but may condescend to serve with a lowly mind and a loving heart.

Salvation, as a possession, is the cultivation in man of the moral qualities of God. The saved man is the godly—Godlike—man. Practically, a man is not saved because he is loved, but because he loves. A man is not saved because he is forgiven, but because he is forgiving. A man is not saved by receiving mercy, but by being merciful. A man is not saved by knowing sympathy, but by being sympathetic. A man is not saved by knowing generosity, but by being generous. The bestowment of mercy, forgiveness, and grace upon any man is to the end that he may have these same qualities in his own character. Jesus bids men be merciful as the Father is merciful; to do good as the Father does good; and be perfect as the Father is perfect. This is the goal of salvation. It is to be gained by the practice of the graces of the Spirit.

One who would succeed in the Christian life must rise above the law of nature into the law of grace. The impulses of the natural man may be regarded as the law of nature. A man naturally thinks of himself and thinks but little of others. Jesus says a man must love his neighbor as himself. He must

learn to consider his neighbor as himself and to regard his neighbor as he regards himself. He must not treat his neighbor in a way which would be injurious to himself, were the places changed. A man naturally seeks things for himself and measures them by their value to himself. Jesus would have a man seek the things which are profitable to others, and value them by what they are worth to the world. A man naturally invites to his home and to his feasts, those who can repay the favor. Jesus bids a man invite those who cannot repay. A man naturally lends to them of whom he hopes to receive. Jesus bids a man lend to them from whom he can receive nothing. A man naturally does good to them who do good to him. Jesus bids him do good to them who do evil to him. That is to say, a man should do good spontaneously and without regard to the actions of others. In all this, one is to rise above the natural impulses of his own heart into the sublimer state in which his impulses become holy and godlike because they are genuinely unselfish and loving.

Again, one must rise above the civil law which regulates the conduct of a citizen. Many persons tend to regulate much of their conduct according to the civil law and to regard themselves as being good so long as they are not violating the laws of men. Jesus clearly teaches that His disciples must rise into a higher state of judgment and motive. The natural law of the heart of man impels him when injured to inflict, in return, a more severe injury. Naturally, a man will try to strike a harder

blow than he has received; to say a sharper word than he has heard; to repay in kind beyond what he has suffered. Human law tends to restrain this natural tendency and to limit punishment to retaliation. "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" was the restraining injunction of the Mosaic law. But Jesus says, "I say unto you that ye resist not evil." Meet the angry word by a soft answer. Meet the blow struck by non resistance. Meet even an unjust demand by more than is asked. If the law or the custom of the country will compel you to go one mile with a traveler to show him the way, go with him two miles. Do more than the law demands. Now all this implies that the man who obeys the higher law will not regulate his conduct by the commands of the civil law which are usually negative, nor by the actions of other men who may be evil, but by the impulses of that great and gracious Spirit which impels him to do good actively as the plan of his life. Can this be carried out? Try it. When one member of your family, having passed an uncomfortable night, comes to your breakfast table in an unhappy frame of mind and speaks a sharp word, reply in like tone and you may easily have a family quarrel. Return a soft answer and quarreling is impossible, and most likely the mind of the irritated member of your family will be soothed. Let one child who has been struck by another child, return the blow, and there will be a fight. Let the child who has been struck, refuse to return the blow, and most probably shame will suffuse the heart of the child who was angry. Let a neighbor

do you a wrong, and repay him in kind, and you will have double wrong in your neighborhood. If opportunity offers, do kindness to the evil neighbor, and a flame of fire will burn his conscience. The principle of Jesus' teaching is that evil never can be overcome by evil, but must be overcome by good. Society never will rise high by the natural impulses of the human heart and, by the negative statutes of human law. There must be a deeper, purer, and more perfect source of improvement.

The natural man is governed by the impulses of his own nature, and lives in selfishness, doing good or evil according as he thinks it will pay him. The citizen lives with regard to law and refrains from doing the things which will injure others. His goodness is the absence of badness and, so far forth, is gain. The social man lives with regard to his own class; he sends his invitations to feasts, lends his money, and confers his favors, where like kindnesses may be returned to him. So far forth, the social man is in advance, for he does good within limitations; but he does this good because it will benefit himself. The spiritual man lives in love, learns to obey the new commandment and to love as Jesus loved.

How did Jesus love? Did Jesus love men because they were really lovable? No. Jesus loved because men needed love and because they might become lovable. One may love a beautiful child simply because he loves himself, and the beauty of the child pleases him. One may love a child because the child needs love, and because love may

brighten and bless the child. That is the way Jesus loved. He said, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me." What then? "I must bind up the broken hearted, open the eyes of the blind, preach deliverance to captives, and do good to men." What Jesus had of spiritual endurance was for the use of love.

Jesus called unto Him His disciples and gave unto them power. What then? "Go," He said, "heal the sick, cast out devils, preach the gospel." Power was for beneficent use. This is the law of the kingdom. Whether a man's power is physical strength, or mental vigor, or the faculty of making money, or administrative ability, or personal influence, it must be consecrated and used so as to benefit and not to injure men.

Slowly indeed has the world been coming to believe the words of Jesus, to realize the regal greatness of His spirit, and to know that the way of love and of loving service is the way of peace and of power. Certain individuals have caught the inner meaning of Jesus' words, have believed them, have lived according to them, and have become benefactors in society. But these have been looked upon as exceptional persons rather than as true examples of Christian living. Many dissatisfied and unhappy persons whose names stand upon a church roll and who in many ways are good people, would find life filled with new interest and zeal, with fresh happiness and joy, if just where they are and in the things they must do, they were to cultivate the spirit of Jesus and love as He loved. An introspective, self-centered, self-circumscribed life is the secret of

the unhappiness of many people. Jesus in His daily life did not follow a set program. He simply went about doing good as the opportunity came. Much that He did, in comparison with His person and His power, was lowly ministry; but His spirit made everything great. It is neither where you are, nor what you do, but the spirit in which you live and speak and act, that counts.

Very gradually, the light of this truth is dawning upon the minds of men. They are beginning to see that all life is to be fulfilled in the spirit of Jesus. The religious man is no longer the man of a certain order of office, but the man of a certain spirit. The laborer who toils, the merchant who distributes, the capitalist who controls money, the statesman who directs the course of political history, and the man in any walk of life may live and must live in the spirit of ministry, if his life is to fulfill the will of God and so be complete and perfect.

There has been much false teaching, and, as a result thereof, much misconception of the meaning of labor and of business. This has tended to debase the motives of men and to destroy pure morality. A few examples may be noted. For centuries, the Christian church taught that labor is part of the curse which followed the fall of man. Unfallen man was a gentleman, a lord, who should live without labor. Fallen man is a serf, doomed to toil as a penalty for sin. Labor, therefore, could be only servile in spirit and a form of life to be escaped. Teachers of economics taught "the iron law of

wages," namely, that the natural wage to be paid a workman was the lowest amount which the laborer will accept and on which laborers can be reproduced. Teachers of political economy taught that the merchant who bought in the lowest market, sold in the highest, and so obtained the greatest immediate profit for himself, fulfilled the whole law of merchandising. Apparently, it did not occur to such teachers that this spirit and method discouraged production, lessened the number of purchases which a customer could make, lessened the wealth of the world, and so limited the wealth of the merchant himself.

Economists also taught bankers to exact the highest possible interest so as to enrich themselves. Such teachers failed to see that they discouraged investments, lessened the scope of investments, and, in the end, decreased the income even of the bankers themselves. Political economists, both by the spirit and the letter of their teachings, taught rulers to regard their own interest first. The ruling class considered themselves as divinely elected to live as parasites upon society, rendering no equivalent service for what they received.

All this the spirit of the divine kingdom inspired by Christianity has been changing and will yet continue to change. As, historically, the struggle for religious freedom led to the establishment of political freedom; so the doctrines of indebtedness for divine grace, of the law of love, and of the obligation of service, declared in the church, have been leavening the world. The change wrought is of

value chiefly in the formation of character, but it is also of immense value in contributing to the material welfare of the world.

The laborer who learns to live in the spirit of the carpenter of Nazareth, the laborer who regards labor not as a curse but as a blessing, who measures the value of his work not in terms of wages but in terms of its worth to the world, becomes a free man whose toil does not enslave but ennoble. The merchant who learns to conduct his business in the spirit of Him who came not to be ministered unto but to minister, the merchant who regards the rights of the producer from whom he buys and the welfare of the customer to whom he sells, who allows a profit to the producer and is content with a small profit from the consumer, will find that he encourages production and increases the number of things which his customer will buy, thereby increasing directly the wealth of the world and indirectly increasing his own wealth. The banker who learns to live in the spirit of Him who believes that He has freely received and so should freely give, the banker who is content with moderate interest which allows the borrower to make a profit on his business, will find that he increases the number of his customers and the number of those who have money to place in his bank for care and use, and so increases his own business and profits. The statesman who learns to live in the spirit of Him who says that he who serves most is greatest, finds that by serving the people over whom he rules, he increases their loyalty and the security of his own power.

Men are beginning to see that both the welfare and the wealth of the world are increased by obedience to the law of Christ. Churches, colleges, and universities are teaching a much more enlightened science of life to the young than was formerly taught. The change which has taken place within the past forty years is most marked. Subjects which scarcely would have been mentioned in a college course forty years since, are now fully considered. The churches no longer teach that labor is a penalty but that it belongs to the natural order of the world. Colleges teach, in the treatment of economics, that the dignity, the rights, and opportunities of the individual man must be regarded. Universities teach that political economy is not simply "the science of wealth," but the science of right living.

Experience, also, has shown the fallacy of much past doctrine and the value of Christian principles of living. "The iron law of wages" is past. Experience has proved that to give the laborer such conditions of labor and of living as increase comfort and inspire hope, is to increase intelligence, capability, and efficiency. Governmental control of banking with its effort to make money obtainable at low rates of interest; the growing disposition of merchants to be content with small profits and to depend on large sales; public effort to obtain a minimum wage and the legal regulation of hours and conditions of labor, are all indications of the effort to destroy injustice and oppression, and to make possible freedom both of labor and of capital within just lines for the benefit of mankind in general. Suc-

cess along these lines can be secured in full only when, in addition to law, the spirit of service takes possession of the hearts of mankind, and men strive to do the best they can for one another in the work and the business of life. Law, in the main, can restrain only from certain violations of what is right; love can compel obedience to what is right.

Jesus said, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." He who believes that the law of the divine life is revealed in the spirit and the ministry of Jesus, and who endeavors to obey that law in his own life, will find himself able to fulfil that law. He who sees the heavenly vision, and who hears the divine voice, will be able to obey the divine law of life.

There is a traditional story of Abraham which will serve to illustrate this fact. "When Abraham sat at his tent door, according to his custom, waiting to entertain strangers, he espied an old man stooping and leaning on his staff, weary with age and travel, coming towards him, who was an hundred years of age. He received him kindly, washed his feet, provided supper, and caused him to sit down; but observing that the old man ate and prayed not, nor begged for a blessing upon his meat, Abraham asked him why he did not worship the God of heaven. The old man told him that he worshipped the fire only and acknowledged no other god; at which answer, Abraham grew so zealously angry, that he thrust the old man out of his tent, and exposed him to all the evils of the night and an unguarded condition. When the old man was gone,

God called to him and asked him where the stranger was; he replied, 'I thrust him away, because he did not worship Thee.' God answered, 'I have suffered him these hundred years, though he dishonoured me; and couldest thou not endure him for one night, when he gave thee no trouble?' Upon this, saith the story, Abraham fetched him back again and gave him hospitable entertainment and wise instruction. Go thou and do likewise, and thy charity will be 'rewarded by' the God of Abraham." It was the knowledge of what God did that enabled Abraham to love in most practical ways the man whom he had regarded as loveless. Faith in God as revealed in the gospel and the desire of fellowship with Him, lead ever in the ways of right living. This ever has been the method of the holiest character and the highest service.

The New Testament insists on obedience as the indispensable condition of spiritual well-being. He that believeth not, he that loveth not, he that obeyeth not, is condemned. "He that believeth not is condemned." "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema." "They that obey not the gospel, shall be punished with everlasting destruction." But on the other hand, it is written, "Believe and thou shalt be saved." "If a man love Me, he will keep My words," says Jesus. "He became unto all them that obey Him, the author of eternal salvation." These are among the plainest promises of the New Testament.

Obedience must be in the spirit in that it is subjected to the mind and the ways of Christ. All

revelation is for knowledge. All doctrine is to make possible fulfillment of duty. All ritual of worship is for discipline in righteousness. Therefore, success can come only through obedience.

Failure in Christian living comes more frequently through lack of obedience than in any other way. If any one is failing either in the strength or in the joy of Christian living, he may well inquire whether he is obeying the love and the law of Christ. One who frets about the future is failing in faith in God. One who cherishes an irritable and unloving spirit is failing to dwell in the love of God. One who does not endeavor to render some service is failing to move with the moving power of God. One who makes the acquisition of wealth the chief aim in life, is failing to act with God in the supreme purpose of living. One who is permitting the love of pleasure to absorb thought and time to the neglect of better things, is quenching the spirit and losing the flame of devotion.

But he who trusts God for the future and obeys Him in the present; who keeps himself in daily consciousness of the love of God for him; who makes his daily living a daily service in whatever he does; who uses increasing power of strength, knowledge, or wealth as a means of doing good; who, in all things, seeks to glorify God and to benefit men, will find the peace of God possessing his mind, the love of God warming his heart, and the power of God making him strong. His face will have a look of peace. He will have a certain winsomeness of nature. He will have unfailing power

in himself. He will never want for joy.

No one can stand upon the sunny heights, where heaven lies and where the overhanging sky is ever clear, without absolute faith in God. No one can be serene in the midst of the storms of life unless his confidence is in Him who is above all storms and without whose causative or permissive will, storms cannot be. No one can be strong in the midst of the duties, difficulties, disappointments, and apparent defeats of life unless he is moving with the divine spirit in ways of truth and love. If success comes to any one in the way of Christian living, it must come along the line of implicit obedience to the will of God. To the man who obeys, all things belong; for he is Christ's and Christ is God's. To him, heaven will flash with beauty, earth will bear rich bounty, men will become friends, and life will enrich him as a child of God.

CHAPTER XI

NEGLECT

AN Oriental writer of proverbs and an observer of the causes and the consequences of gain and loss in life has said:

“I went by the field of the sluggard,
And by the vineyard of the man void of understanding,
And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns,
The face thereof was covered with nettles,
And the stone wall thereof was broken down.
I saw and received instruction.”

This was a wise man, for he walked with open eyes; an observant man, for he saw the condition of the field of the slothful and of the vineyard of the man void of understanding; a man of discernment, for he perceived that the cause of the sad condition, was neglect. This fact of neglect as the cause of grave consequence, many fail to see. This is especially true of the life and the welfare of the spirit.

There is a quiet assumption on the part of many persons, that a man must make a positive choice of evil and pursue it with zeal and steadfastness if he is to be adjudged worthy of condemnation, and suffer irretrievable loss. Is it not strange that with all the patent facts of nature and of life, it has not occurred to them that a man must make a positive

choice of good and pursue it with zeal and steadfastness, if he is to be deemed worthy of commendation and of abiding reward?

If a man enters this world at the summit of human character and attainment, then, of course, he can descend from that summit only by a choice which leads downward. But if a man enters the world at the beginning of human character, a creature to be developed, then, he can rise only by choice and action. Embryonic life everywhere is a capacity of reception, a potential power, a possibility, a promise. Everywhere, with plants and animals alike, life is conditioned, and all that is necessary to insure failure, is neglect. A neglected garden runs to weeds; its few plants left from former cultivation deteriorate or die outright. A neglected field yields no harvest. A neglected animal, though the product of former care and culture, speedily reverts to a lower type. Moles which have burrowed in the earth, have lost their eyesight. Fish which live in caverns, like the Mammoth Cave, become blind. Minds unexercised become idiotic or insane. Neglect everywhere tends to degeneration. Degeneration is as common as development. The end of degeneration is death.

One of the solemn and significant questions of the scriptures is this: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" The scriptures leave the question unanswered, because the answer is obvious. The word salvation, so far as it relates to the means of securing that state, is the revelation of divine love and the promise of redemption and of

the gift of the spirit of life. The word salvation, in so far as it relates to the acceptance of the means and the achievement of character and life, means a condition which man may attain. All that is required to fail of salvation, is neglect. This is in full accord with the law of life everywhere. Neglect on the part of farmer or gardner or fruit grower, means the loss of possible gain and, ultimately, the loss of all he had set himself to cultivate. Death is quite as common as life, and more natural. "Life is the sum total of the forces which resist death." The preservation and the perfection of life everywhere are conditioned. Asphyxia is suspended animation resulting from interrupted respiration. If an animate creature neglects to breathe, whatever may be the cause, poison of the blood and cessation of heart beat ensue, and the result is death. If a living creature neglects to eat food; weakness, fainting, and death soon follows. All that is required to insure death is neglect of the means of sustaining life. Solitary confinement produces insanity. The lonely life of many country people prior to the modern means of conversation by telephone and of travel by trolley, resulted in a large number of cases of insanity, especially among women.

It is in accord with all this, that faith, love, and hope should fail, and the qualities of spiritual life decay; if the conditions of their growth are not improved. The neglect of the means of their development insures their loss.

"Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." This is an abiding law of nature. And, if

a man sows nothing, he will reap nothing. Should a man who sows nothing, reap a golden harvest of wheat? Should a student who is indolent, reap the rewards of scholarship? Would there be incentive to arduous and high endeavor, if neglect of labor and of study issued in the same rewards as effort and diligence? In every sphere of life in which things material and mental are concerned, men recognize the rule and the justice of the law of reward. They find the law a beneficent condition of the development of that which is good, and an incentive to effort which insures gain. Only in the sphere of the spirit, do men claim that grace should bring holiness and heaven to men, irrespective of their own choice and effort. Here alone, do men think there should be a lawless world in which eternal life should be given to all men. How can this be? Law must rule here as elsewhere in God's universe. The Son of God did not come into the world to destroy law, but to fulfill it. He does not save men by making them free from law, but by enabling them to fulfill law. This is the covenant which I will make, saith the Lord: "I will put my laws on their heart, and upon their mind also will I write them." Obedience is not to the letter but to the spirit of the law. The law here as elsewhere is beneficent. It makes for good character and for a perfect society. It is a high law because man is to have a high destiny. Great character could not be produced in a lawless world where rewards are conferred without regard to desert. Men are saved from sin, but not through

lawlessness. Forgiveness is restoration to the divine favor, and is a most gracious act on the part of God. But salvation which is the completion of character in the likeness of God, is an achievement. Salvation is accomplished by the acceptance of the conditions of the spiritual life and by obedience to the laws of the divine kingdom.

Men usually do not become bad by first choosing some evil thing and pursuing it with zeal. Men become bad by refusing to choose some good thing and by neglecting to grow in the love of righteousness. The man who pursues something good with ardor, is not usually led into base sins. The old adage that "Satan finds some work for idle hands to do" rests on a very common law. Nature, it is said, abhors a vacuum. Something will fill it. Jesus relates a parable of a man out of whom an evil spirit was cast, but into whom nothing good entered. As a result, seven spirits more evil than the first entered into that man and dwelt in him. An uninhabited house becomes the abode of spiders and bats and unclean insects. An imagination which cherishes pictures of uncleanness and lawlessness, leads to a lawless and unclean life. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." "Out of the heart," says Jesus, "proceed evil thoughts, murders, blasphemies." The heart which is not actively engaged in taking in things true, pure, and good soon will be filled with things false, impure, and evil. The tragedy of life proceeds from an empty and then from an evil heart.

Fineness of nature is marked by sensitiveness to

impressions. There is a great difference in persons in respect of sensitiveness in the senses of touch, taste, smell, seeing, and hearing. The different colors in the spectrum are made by the different number of vibrations of light per second. Persons who are color-blind cannot distinguish these differences, and so cannot distinguish colors. In the sense of hearing, there is not only a natural difference in persons, but there is a great difference between the untrained and the trained ear. With respect to pitch in musical notes, Preyer found that unpracticed persons distinguish a difference of from eight to sixteen vibrations as producing a distinct difference in the sensation of pitch. It has been said that, "The trained musician can detect by ear a difference in quality between two tones of four hundred and four hundred and one-third vibrations per second."

This fineness of sensation in physical nature is suggestive of the fineness of impressibility which may be cultivated in the moral nature. Persons who have not trained themselves to see, miss many forms and many colors of beauty which delight the mind of the man whose eyes have been trained to see. Earth and sky glow with beauty to him whose eyes have been opened; all nature sings to him whose ears, according to the fine Hebrew idiom, have been uncovered.

The prophets and Jesus are absolutely correct when they speak of men whose eyes have grown dim that they cannot see, whose ears have grown dull that they cannot hear, and whose hearts have

grown gross that they cannot know. So the supremely sad fact remains that men who are dying in their spiritual nature, may be unconscious of that fact. They only know that what some persons say they see and feel, seems unreal to them; and that things which others speak of knowing, are to them unknown. But they feel no loss, for sensibility is either latent or dead. The whole upper sphere of life may become an unknown world to men who live in the lust of the flesh, in the lust of the world, and in the pride of life. They only know that they care nothing for those things which others love and praise; that those things seem to them unreal. Some Christian people who live in the enjoyment of faith in God and in communion with the Spirit, and who delight in things divine, suppose that all other persons equally may enjoy the things which they enjoy and that, if they do not enjoy them, they should know what they miss. But, in reality, things are not missed when men become so blind that they cannot see them and so gross that they cannot know them. A man with no appreciation of music and with no love for music, does not know what he has missed, nor mourn his loss; but it is loss.

When God speaks of withdrawing from men and of withholding His Spirit, He is simply expressing what takes place, practically, when men refuse to receive the grace which is offered them, and so lose the power to receive it. There comes a time when a grain of corn cannot be quickened by sunlight, a time when an egg cannot become a bird, a time when an embryo cannot become an animal. There is also

a time when a body which has asphyxia cannot receive air, cannot be charged again with life, cannot partake of food. That body has passed beyond the limit of reception. Henceforth, it must be left to the action of forces which dissipate and destroy it.

This seems to be the condition of some souls. They cannot be touched by sermon, by song, by gospel story, by the presence of a holy life, or by the touch of tender and yearning love. They are dead so far as spiritual things are concerned. We do not like to think that this is so, but we know that there are those on whom Christian truth and love and life make no impression. The sacred scriptures pronounce such persons dead in sin. This is the supreme danger to which men are exposed. There is need of all the warnings which may be given to lead men to see the danger of refusing to accept divine grace and to choose the means and the way of life. Would that all men could be made to see that danger lies primarily and chiefly in neglecting the things which are true and good and which make for life!

It is neglect which Jesus emphasizes. In the teaching of Jesus, the man who neglected to put on the wedding garment was judged unworthy of the wedding feast; the man who neglected to put his talent with the bankers was deprived of that talent; the foolish virgins who neglected to take oil with their lamps were excluded from the bridegroom's house when the bridegroom came; Jerusalem which neglected the day of her visitation, became a city for which there was left only lamenta-

tion and tears; the men of Jesus' time were condemned because they neglected to come to Him that they might have life. According to Jesus, condemnation comes upon men because light has come, and they love darkness. The loss which is irreparable and final, is not because of original sin nor actual transgression, but because men will not hear and see and believe and so receive salvation. Men are not finally lost because they have been sinners, but because they have refused to be saved. This refusal, in most cases, takes the course of neglect. The majority of mankind are not now and, perhaps, never have been very bad in the sense of wickedness; but many are indifferent to the things of the spirit. They live in the flesh; they love the world; they neglect the opportunities which God gives them; they refuse the call to the higher life; they belong to a temporal and transient order. The neglect of salvation is the crying sin of the world.

Who can tell how much is lost out of the heart and life of the man who neglects salvation? To him, the heavens shine with sun by day and with stars by night; but they shine only to warm his fields and to guide his steps; they do not declare to him the glory of God who made them. To him, flowers bloom in brilliant beauty, and harvests wave in golden splendor; but no harvest ever speaks to his soul of the goodness of God who feeds men; and no bush burning in glowing colors ever declares to his soul a message from the invisible Spirit of life. Never with uncovered head does he bow before the heavens above, nor with unsandaled feet turn aside

and wait before flower and field for a message from the divine. To him, prayer is an unknown tongue, or if he prays, it is in the spirit of the Pharisee of whom Jesus said, "He prayed with himself." If petitions are ever on his lips, they are for something which God may give to him and never that he may learn and do the will of God. Prayer, to him, is a breath of selfishness wafted heavenward, and never the opening of his soul to the inspiring breath of God.

To the man who neglects the higher life and who lives in the lower spheres of being, love is likewise self-centered and limited. The natural man loves himself, and he loves all other things embraced in his affections for himself. He loves for what the object of his love may bring to him. His parents are almoners of bounty. His wife is a source of delight. His children are means of personal pleasure, or means of perpetuating his plans, when his own power fails. His fellowmen are instruments of service. The love of a selfish man never outruns the limits of his own personality. His love is never lost in the life of another as a stream is lost in joining a river, or a river is lost in the sea. The center and the circumference of love are in the man himself. The love of Christ never constrains such a man. He is never lost and carried onward by that great, warm current of love which issues from the heart of God. The stream of his affections never bears him heavenward.

The natural, psychical man neglects the means of salvation. Neglect of the means of rising, means

falling. Neglect of the way of expansion, means contraction. Neglect of the means of growth, means atrophy and decay. Neglect of the way of life, means death. He who has eyes to see, may read this law written on every hand. This law is written in the garden, in the field, in the forest, in the shop, in the school, and in the church. Neglect in the garden, means weeds; in the field, no harvest; in the forest, decay; in the shop, loss of skill; in the school, ignorance; in the church, spiritual decline and moral deterioration. He who sees this, easily may know that a man must awake, learn the truth of God, receive His grace, and do His will, if he would win life.

The fact that salvation is of grace, no more deprives man of freedom and opportunity than the fact of selection in nature deprives plant and animal of the means of growth. Selection means the survival of such plants and animals as fulfil the conditions of growth. In all education, save the education of the soul, the necessity of diligence is recognized. If children were left to follow their own natural inclination, many never would go to school, or acquire knowledge and skill. Until a child is sufficiently developed to choose a course of training for himself and stick to it, parents compel discipline. Some compulsion in learning the things of the spirit would not harm a child. A grown man must choose for himself those means of information, inspiration, and growth which experience has proved to be helpful.

Prayer, public worship, and sacred music; such familiarity with the New Testament as will saturate

the mind with its truth and spirit; the habit of thinking of God and of relating Him in thought with the course of one's life; the companionship of devout persons; voluntary choice day by day of such feelings and acts as are like the feelings and acts of Jesus; cultivation of a spirit of aspiration after better things; participation in movements which have for their purpose the moral and spiritual improvement of mankind,—all tend to cultivate a spiritual and religious character. The daily habit of reverence toward God, of thoughtfulness toward men, of a disposition to fulfill the labor of each day in the spirit of Jesus "who went about doing good," and consecration of the will to the service of God,—all tend to educate the character and to make it complete in holiness. The man who uses these means will not fail to receive power, to gain in faith and love, and to grow in grace until he becomes a perfect man in Christ.

The wilful neglect of any of these means of good, will result in the loss of power of good. The neglect of all of them will result in the loss of the desire of goodness. Neglect of prayer is followed by forgetfulness of God; neglect of public worship increases the spirit of self-indulgence; neglect of familiarity with the New Testament leaves the mind in the common habits of thought which pertain to a worldly life; neglect of cherishing voluntarily a Christian disposition is followed by a lax and morally weakened tone of mind; neglect of participating in efforts to make the world better, leaves a soul growing indifferent to the highest welfare of mankind

and increasingly self-seeking and worldly. The heart in which love does not glow, will become a heart chilled into lovelessness.

Demas deserted Saint Paul because he loved this present world. Any man who falls away from the worship of God and from conscious work for Him, if he will candidly trace his course, will probably note the fact that his departure began in some neglect. Some duty neglected, left him more inclined to place self first in his own affections; some means of grace neglected left him more self-indulgent; some failure to coöperate in carrying on the kingdom of God, made more easy over him the domination of the world; the neglect of the **things of the spirit**, let him sink gradually into subjection to the things of the flesh. Neglect of good submerges a man in the kingdom of evil. And the man who never has risen, if he could discover the cause of his decline to lower and lower moral states, would discover the source of his fall in a prior refusal to rise.

The greater part of the things for which men to-day neglect the cultivation of the soul, are not bad in themselves. Some of them are good. But for sake of what is relatively good, men may lose what is better; and for things good, men may lose things which are best. For example, physical exercise and the joy of motion in space are in themselves good, if not carried to the point of dissipation; but they minister mainly to the body, and but incidentally to the mind; they have no ministry for the soul. The pleasure of entertainment whether

by pictures, plays, or social fellowship may be innocent in themselves; but they serve merely to divert from serious thought and toil; they lead for a time to forgetfulness of the things which make life a burden; they give a certain relaxation and relief, and so far forth are good; but they add no solid gain to a man's powers. Mere rest, whether of body or of mind, may renew, but cannot increase strength. Inspiration increases strength.

The strength of a man is primarily in his soul. Faith, love, aspiration, and hope are real power. Let a man compare his strength when hopeless with his strength when some great hope fills his soul. Let a man compare his strength when he is in doubt, or in fear, with his strength when some great faith possesses him. Let a man compare his strength when he feels unloved, or when he is without love, with his strength when he is conscious of being devotedly loved, or when he ardently loves some one for whom he would even die; and he will know the power of love to make strong. The hope of future good, though that good can be obtained only by self-denial and hard toil, makes a man strong in courage, fortitude, and patience. These are facts which any man may verify in his own experience.

Now the faith, hope, and love which Christianity gives to a believing man have power beyond any thing else to hearten, comfort, sustain, and cheer the souls of men. These give true success in life. "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? He giv-

eth power to the faint; and to them who have no might He increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

Men may endure much hardship because they cannot escape it; but only a believing man can write, "We glory in tribulations." A Christian man can write thus, because he can also write, "We faint not; though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

This is a matter of personal experience. One may test the truth of it here and now. The character and works of them who truly believe, testify to its reality. Any man may prove it for himself.

The sad thing in life to-day, and life's greatest tragedy, lies in the fact that for sake of things which in relation to the bodies of men are good, many neglect the higher things which minister to the spirit and which are best. They drink only at earthly fountains. They eat only bread which springs from the ground. They wait only on the ministry of men for amusement and for rest. They enjoy only the things which are from beneath. What will it profit

them if they gain the whole world and, by neglect, lose their own life? When physical energy wanes, when mental vigor declines, when the things which feed the body fail, when men can no longer entertain or amuse or instruct; what remains to sustain life? It stands written and men should read and heed, "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

CHAPTER XII

ETERNAL LIFE

IF a man die, shall he live?" is an ancient question. If a man die should he live? is a modern question. Scientific biology has disclosed the fact that all life in this world is conditioned. The law of the survival of the fittest has declared the fact that only a living being which fulfils the conditions of growth and perfection is deemed, by nature, worthy of continuance. These facts suggest two questions. The first is this, Is man an exception to this law of biology? The second is this, Is eternal life, irrespective of the character and condition of that which lives, a boon to be desired?

In an attempt to answer such questions, a man who feels the limitations of his vision and of his knowledge, must speak with becoming modesty. Nevertheless, the man who has the spirit of a seer and who looks upon the world with open eyes, must report what he sees; and the man who has the mind of a disciple and who listens with open ears to the words of Jesus, must report what he hears.

The seer who with open eye, clear vision, and keen insight looks upon the world of animate things, must see that every living thing, physical, mental, spiritual, which does not fulfill the conditions of growth, development, and perfection, degenerates, decays, and dies; that which fulfils the conditions of

growth, development, and perfection, of its kind, continues to live to the full limit of its possible duration. We may say, in the world of nature, the living thing which believes—that is, receives—feeds—that is, appropriates—and works—that is, exerts its powers normally—lives; and that which does not receive, feed, and work—dies. This is the law of nature. Nature is the expression of the mind and will of God.

The disciple, who listens to the words of Jesus, must hear him say, "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly." "I am bread of life." "He that believeth hath eternal life." "He that heareth My word, and believeth Him that sent Me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life."

Obviously, also, as specifically stated in the New Testament, "He that believeth not hath been judged already." He is under condemnation. He remains in a state and under a law whose issue is death. "Sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

According to Jesus, eternal life is first of all a kind and quality of life which may exist here and now. It is a present possession. It is a life which, by faith, feeds upon God; which, by love, fulfills the will of God; which glows, in beauty, with a certain divine glory. It is a life, therefore, which has the quality of continuance, and which deserves immortality.

To the disciple, the words of Jesus are a final authority. Jesus surprised and startled men by His use of paradox. What He said seemed to con-

tradict what they saw. What He promised, seemed to them opposed to their experience.

For example, their Proverbs which garnered the practical knowledge of the ages, taught that if a man honors the Lord, his barns shall be filled with plenty and his presses shall overflow with new wine. But Jesus lifted up his eyes, looked upon men and said, "Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God." Jesus said, "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Men had been taught to have special regard to the means of securing prosperity, and so saving their life. Jesus said, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it." Jesus said that not outward possessions but inward state, decided a man's security and determined his destiny.

Jesus saw only two great passions and principles of character and conduct. These are selfishness and love. According to the teachings of Jesus, all sins are rooted in the former; all righteousness springs from the latter. According to Jesus, selfishness seeks to gather abundance for self. It fails to see that life is more than meat and more than raiment. Selfishness separates a man from God. If selfishness acknowledges God at all, it desires Him only as a servant who may minister things for the increase of wealth and grant pleasures for personal enjoyment. Selfishness separates a man from other men. Selfishness causes a man to make use of other men only for his own pleasure and profit. Selfishness means separation, for it withdraws a man from God. Selfishness

means starvation, for a man cannot live upon things. Selfishness means strangulation, for a soul may be smothered by the abundance of the things which have been gathered. Therefore, Jesus asks the pertinent question: "What shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his life?"

According to Jesus, love is self-forgetful, self-denying, and serviceable. Love, therefore, is the one passion and the one principle by which Jesus is sure that men belong to His kingdom. Jesus justified His forgiveness and reception of a sinful woman "because she loved much." Faith, Jesus said, saved her; but love was the evidence of that faith. Jesus said, "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and My Father will love him." Jesus says that in the final judgment of men, He will welcome into His kingdom all who have shown a heart of love by their gifts of bread, clothing, visitation, and ministry. According to Jesus, sinners are forgiven, saints are trusted, and men are eternally rewarded on the basis of love.

No life, therefore, seems to Jesus to be a success, whatever may be the place and the wealth and the pleasure which it has gained, if in gaining those things, love has been strangled or smothered or lost. What will the things gained profit, if the life is lost? It stands written in nature, in human life, and in the sacred scriptures, "He that loveth not abideth in death." It stands also written, "He that abideth in love, abideth in God, and God abideth in him." That is to say, the loveless man lives in the sphere of things which are transient and which

pass away. The loving man lives in the sphere of things eternal, which endure.

“The wages”—the natural reward—“of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Nothing could be more simple, direct, and intelligible than the teaching of Jesus and His disciples with respect to the consequences of unbelief and faith, selfishness and love, sin and righteousness. The end, in the one case, is death; the end in the other case, is life. No words and no facts are more sharply contrasted and more easily understood than death and life.

The Christian church, as an organization, long since departed from the teaching of Jesus. The church long since adopted a human philosophy of the nature of man, and claimed for man immortality by virtue of his being man. Happiness and misery, pleasure and pain, triumph in glory, and torture in fire, have been taught by the church as the reward of righteousness, on the one hand, and, on the other, as the penalty of sin. Some portions of the church latterly have turned the fire to a figure, but to a figure not of cleansing or of destruction—the two things which fire will do—but to a figure of torture. Some portions of the church now are simply silent on the subject.

An opinion which has been held by a large body of men and current for many years, should be treated with respect and deemed worthy of candid consideration. An opinion long prevalent should not be rejected without sufficient reason.

An opinion, however, let it be remembered, often has been formed by unobservant and unscientific men, and, once formed, has been held because it is an accepted opinion. An opinion, also, sometimes has been accepted because of the authority of some great man who has endorsed it. But the several opinions of a great man are not all equally worthy of credence. For example, for a thousand years or more, the name of Augustine gave authority to anything which he taught, although—great thinker though he was—some of his teachings set in the light of modern scientific knowledge are altogether false. An opinion often is held because it has been instilled into the mind in childhood and is retained without investigation and without evidence. This has been true of doctrines of the church, the questioning of which has been regarded in some quarters as denial of truth itself. I have known ministers to affirm that they would continue to teach what is most obviously false, because they had been taught it and had themselves taught it. This illustrates the habit of an unscientific and unthinking mind. Such a mind is parrot-like, repeating what it has been told. I have great respect for the Christian ministry; but, in candor, I must say that it contains some minds like this.

An opinion which has come to be accepted by the majority of men in any country, is held without question by most persons; for most persons, do not think. For example, the Ptolemaic theory of the solar system was long current and concurred with the superficial observation of men who did not

think, but that theory was entirely false. Men long held the opinion that the earth and the heavens were created in six days of twenty-four hours each, because the writer of the book of Genesis, in giving a pictorial account of creation, described it as made in six days. It is known, now, that this account of creation is not a scientific treatise and that the earth was produced by a long process.

In an old bible in the Congressional Library in Washington, I saw a picture of the creation of Eve which was drawn according to the ideas of the artist. The Creator was shaping Eve, mechanically, as a sculptor might mold in clay, and drawing the body gradually from the side of Adam. For a long time, the creation of man was considered a mechanical formation of the human body, which being formed was, then, infused with life. Men who believed this, neither saw nor thought scientifically, or they would have seen and would have known that God is continually making bodies, and that no body of any living thing, from the daintiest flower to the largest tree, from the tiniest insect to the most perfect man, is ever made save by a force of life which in seed or germ weaves and fashions every part from within.

The habit of mind which prevailed in the world until late years was not scientific. Men, generally, did not look patiently upon actual processes and did not form opinions slowly from the data of facts. Most men accepted things as they seemed to be on first view. Men were superficial in matters of physical science, and superstitious in matters of re-

ligion. Men read the letter of the scriptures, and often failed to perceive the spirit. Hence, the theory that the sun revolves around the earth was accepted because it looked that way. The theory that physical death is the penalty of sin was held, because the scriptures say that Adam was told that if he ate forbidden fruit, he would die. With such a habit of mind, opinions were accepted and held, which with the habit of tracing consequences to their cause and in the clear light of scientific knowledge, cannot be believed. Modern men, while retaining faith in the spirit of much ancient doctrine, must reject its letter. The modern man unavoidably asks, "What is God actually doing in the world?" He also asks, "What do the scriptures which speak for God say and mean?"

The natural immortality of man has been taught in the church since the third and fourth centuries of the Christian era. At that time, men who had been educated in Greek philosophy and trained in Roman law, became the leaders of Christian thought. Many facts of life were quietly ignored. The scriptures were interpreted by men who approached them by a preconceived philosophy of the nature of man. The terms, life and death, than which no two words could be of plainer meaning and no two states more vividly contrasted, were interpreted as merely figurative modes of expression and, in respect of the soul, spiritual states. Their teaching came at length to be the common opinion of the church. The truth of that opinion may well be questioned at the present time. It is certainly

well to observe what science sees and to listen to what the scriptures say.

Scientific men who study man as an animal of the order mammalia, do not find in his natural constitution evidence of immortality. The feeling that one cannot die, of which some speak, if examined closely, will be seen to be simply the feeling which a living creature when full of life has, namely, a sense of living. The living thing when full of its natural power, cannot conceive of itself as dead. But when physical and mental strength both are fast ebbing away, one can conceive of himself as dying. Any argument for the natural immortality of man—as man—from the unity of his life and the indissolubility of his soul, could be used with equal propriety to prove the natural immortality of any animal with power of affection, memory, and volition.

Certain philosophers, also, who have studied man in his mental and moral nature, confess that by virtue of his failure to conform to the conditions by which souls live or to set himself in right relation to society, man may die. Immanuel Kant says, "The soul may cease to be by inanition," by fading out as the flame of a lamp fades from want of oil. A later philosopher, Hermann Lotze, says, "Indestructibility would include, not merely immortality after death, but also unending pre-existence before the present life; and with the latter, we neither know how to make a beginning, nor do we find in our experience any evidence for such a previous life." Lotze also says, "Touching immortality, in general we simply hold the principle to be

valid that everything which has once originated will endure forever, as soon as it possesses an unalterable value for the coherent system of the world; but it will, as a matter of course, in turn cease to be, if this is not the case." The immortality of any creature cannot be considered simply by seeing that creature in itself, but in seeing it in its relation to a system and a universe of which it is a part.

Scientific men and philosophers who see clearly the limitations of development and of continuance on the physical side, and who see also the unmeasured possibilities on the moral side, conclude that any further gain to be made in the animal creation, must be along moral lines. They admit the need of immortality to complete what seems to be, now, great incompleteness both on the part of the individual and on the part of human society. Certain scientists, like Sir Oliver Lodge and others, hope to be able through psychical research to find proof of the immortality of the soul. With them, however, as with all men, belief in immortality must be a matter of faith and hope.

If we turn to the sacred scriptures which record the revelation of the character of God and of his will respecting man and which record, also, the life and resurrection of one called the Son of Man, who conquered death and who brought life and immortality to light; certain facts appear to him who will see.

The first fact which appears in the scriptures is, that touching immortality, most of the books of the Old Testament are silent. In the account of the

creation of man given in Genesis, it is said, God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life (Hebrew lives) and man became a living soul. According to this ancient account of creation, man's life, like all life, was conditioned. Two trees grew in man's garden. The fruit of one tree was the symbol of life. The fruit of the other tree was the symbol of death. Man was given the choice of the way of life or of the way of death. He had access to both trees and power to eat the fruit of them; but he was forbidden to eat the fruit of one tree through which would come knowledge of good and evil. Obedience or disobedience was left to his own free choice. Man could follow the way of faith or the way of unbelief, the way of obedience or the way of disobedience; he could go up or fall down; he could live or he could die. Life and death were possibilities.

The death threatened was more than physical death. Physical death was in the world before the advent of man. Physical death is part of the order of nature and not the penalty of sin. In a world where animals propagate rapidly, as on the earth, death is a necessary part of the order, or life could not be sustained. The physical constitution of man in all his organs and in the injuries and diseases to which he is exposed, is precisely the same as the constitution of the higher animals. If they naturally die, so must man—as man—die. What is threatened as the penalty of unbelief and disobedience is a second death. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The Hebrew words

are more suggestive of the truth. Literally, these are, "Dying thou shalt die." Disobedience would be followed by a process of decline which would issue in death. The death threatened is greater than physical death. "Thou shalt die." The matter is left with this simple but significant statement. The story of the temptation and fall of man is the most suggestive of possible immortality of anything found in the earlier part of the Old Testament.

The promises of the laws of Moses and of the Levitical code relate to the present world. Obedience to the law would issue in health, prosperity, and long life. Disobedience to the law would issue in disease, adversity, and premature death. The law knew nothing of future rewards and punishments. The horizon of the earthly life was the boundary of knowledge.

In the historical portion of the Old Testament, the man who died, slept with his fathers; if fortunate, he was buried in the sepulcher of his fathers. Dust slept with kindred dust, and no light was cast beyond the grave.

In the poetical and prophetic books of the Old Testament, a few brief passages express a hope of immortality. In the book of Job, in the nineteenth chapter, Job expresses his hope by saying, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and will stand upon the earth, and after my skin is destroyed, then without my flesh shall I see God." In the sixteenth psalm, the tenth verse, the psalmist voices his hope in the saying, "Thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol; neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corrup-

tion. Thou wilt show me the path of life; in Thy presence is fulness of joy; in Thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore." In the book of Daniel, the twelfth chapter, it is written: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

There is also a suggestive passage in the last book of the Old Testament. In the fourth chapter of Malachi, there is a striking indication of the final difference to be made between the righteous and the wicked. A day will come in which there will be discernment "between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not." To the former, that day will be like the light of the sun, healing, and life-giving. To the latter it will be "as a furnace of fire" which will consume them as stubble, and, like worthless trees, burning them up "root and branch." This is practically all the light cast by the Old Testament upon the future of man.

The second fact to be noticed is that the teachings of the New Testament on the subject of immortality are clear, quite consistent, concise and conclusive. By the time of Jesus the Jews held a clearer conception and a firmer faith in a future life than had been held in an earlier period. Jesus, as was His wont, cast His teachings in language and in literary form which would be intelligible to the men of His times. Their conceptions and their figures of speech gave form and color to the teachings of Jesus, but the essence of the teaching was His own. The teaching

of Jesus as we shall see, is explicit.

There are four great facts touching immortality stated in the New Testament. The first fact is this: "God only hath immortality." (I. Timothy 6:16). The entire passage shows that the affirmation is made of God the Father who alone hath immortality. He is the eternal and self-existent One, the Possessor and the Giver of life.

The second fact is this: "As the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have life in Himself." (John 5:26). It should be noticed here that even in the case of the Son, life is the gift of the Father.

The third fact is this: God having given life to the Son, has made that Son to be the giver of life to men. This Jesus clearly affirms. "For as the Father raiseth the dead and giveth them life, even so the Son also giveth life to whom He will." (John 5:21). Jesus says of Himself: "I am the life." "I came that they may have life." "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on me though he die, yet shall he live." In the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of the gospel by John is found that greatest of all gospel declarations: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life." It should be noted that the contrast here is between perishing and eternal life.

The fourth fact is this: eternal life is not the natural possession of man, but the gracious gift of God. In the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Ro-

mans, it is said: "The wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord." Here the contrast is between *opsonia*, wages, a merited or natural consequence and reward, and *charisma*, a gift of grace, free and unmerited.

Could anything be more plain than these four statements? "God only hath immortality." "God hath given to the Son to have life in himself." "God so loved the world that He gave His Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." "The wages"—the natural result—"of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life."

It should be noticed that the teachings of Jesus and the apostles are along this line always. Jesus claims for Himself that He is "life," and "living bread," and the giver of "living water," and "the resurrection and the life," in whom, if a man believes, he shall live forever. In vain would we search through the words of Jesus to find any passage where He teaches that He came to deliver men from misery and confer upon them happiness. Sin and death are the things from which Jesus saves men. Love and life are the things for which He saves them.

The apostles teach the same truth. In the conclusion of the gospel according to John, it stands written: "These" (the things selected and placed in this book) "are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in His name." And in his

first epistle John says, "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life."

Saint Peter, likewise, in his first letter, gives thanks to "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to His abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Evidently this hope of immortality was given to Peter in Christ. It was given him through the resurrection of Jesus. He did not hold this glorious hope as a man, but as a Christian man.

Saint Paul, speaking of the divine economy embracing all dispensations says, "God, who will render to every man according to his deeds," will give "to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life." (Romans 2:6-7). This eternal life, according to Paul, is not the natural possession of men but is given as a result of their seeking it. Eternal life is a possibility; it may become an actuality by faith. Again, Saint Paul says, in speaking of the resurrection: "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and the mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on

immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying, 'Death is swallowed up in victory.'"

Why multiply passages? The words of Jesus and John and Peter and Paul are concise and conclusive. Only a preconceived opinion of the nature of man which blinded the mind to the natural meaning of the words of scripture and which forced a figurative meaning upon the plainest of words could have kept the church in ignorance of the truth. As light is colored by the glass through which it streams taking the colors of the windows of a cathedral which it floods, so divine truth is affected by the preconceived opinions of minds into which it enters. But as minds become open and clear, truth is seen in its clear white light. Only unwillingness to see the truth can hold the minds of men to ancient falsehood.

Jesus was accustomed to teach the people in parables. A parable is a picture or story wherein, by things known, men are given some knowledge of things hitherto unknown. A parable by its nature is designed especially for the instruction of unspiritual men. Jesus says, "Here is something which you know. Now the kingdom of heaven is like this" A parable usually is intended to teach just one thing and should not be pressed beyond its natural meaning. It has been said that a parable and what it is intended to illustrate, are like two globes which touch only at one point.

In the several parables recorded in the thirteenth chapter of the gospel of Matthew, there are two which reach to the final judgment of men. These

are the parable of *The Wheat and Tares* and the parable of *The Net and Fishes*. In the harvest, wheat and tares are separated. Wheat is for the garner; tares are for the burning. Jesus says, "As, therefore, the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

So likewise, when the net was brought to shore, the good fish were gathered into vessels, the bad were cast away. Jesus says, "So shall it be in the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the righteous, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire." Obviously, fire is not for torment but for destruction, and destruction is based on worthlessness.

Four other parables of judgment are recorded in the gospels. In the parable of *The Ten Virgins*, the five foolish virgins who took no oil and who were late, were excluded from the marriage celebration. In the parable of *The Talents*, the man who wrapped his talent in a napkin and made no gain was deprived of his talent. In the parable of *The Ten Pounds*, likewise, the man who wrapped his pound in a napkin and gained nothing was deprived of his pound. In the parable of *The Marriage* which a king made for his son, the man without a wedding garment was cast out. There is one

parable in action, namely, that of *The Withered Fig Tree*. The fig tree whose leaves gave promise of fruit but which bore no fruit, was withered.

In the account of the judgment of the nations given in the twenty-fifth chapter of the gospel by Matthew, Jesus says that from among the nations, He will welcome all who have lived lovingly and that He will condemn all who have lived selfishly and have rendered no service. The former He will welcome into His kingdom. The latter He will send away. "These shall go away into eternal punishment" (literally into the eternal cutting off as branches pruned from a vine); "but the righteous into eternal life." This is the common thought in the New Testament: the one class shall be cut from life; the other class shall possess life.

But one may say, do not the scriptures speak of the continuance of the souls of bad men after this life? Yes. But that continuance is prior to the consummation of this world's history; that is not the last state. A body continues after death, but it continues in a state of dissolution which decomposes it into its original elements until it is no longer a body. A depraved soul may continue after death but under laws which will destroy it. Jesus says to His disciples: "Fear not them who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell, in *gehenna*."

The parable of *Dives and Lazarus* may be referred to as teaching future punishment in the form of pain. But that parable was spoken in language

which would appeal to Pharisees of Jesus' time. It certainly teaches future punishment of selfishness and sin; but it does not reach out into times beyond the final judgment. It cannot be referred to as a proof of endless torment or of eternal life in sin.

One may say, Do not the scriptures teach that the wicked will have their place in *gehenna*, in the fire belonging to that place? Yes. But it will be well to know what *gehenna* meant in the days of Jesus. *Gehenna* is the Greek form of the words *Gah Hinnom*. This, in Hebrew, was the valley of Hinnom. This was the narrow valley which skirted Jerusalem on the south. In that valley, in times of idolatry, idolatrous Israelites burned their children in the fire to Moloch. The valley, in later years, became the common lay-stall of the city where the dead bodies of criminals, the carcasses of animals, and every kind of filth was cast to waste away by natural decay, or, according to late authorities, to be consumed by fire. Decay, however, is simply slow combustion.

Bodies were thrown into *Gah Hinnom*, not for purposes of punishment but for destruction. The Jews in the time of Jesus employed this place as a symbol of the place into which the wicked finally would be cast. Obviously, they could not regard this place as symbolizing pain, but as setting forth the idea of dissolution and dissipation into nothingness. Jesus took up this name in common use and employed it to designate the fate of the unbelieving and wicked. Surely the most natural meaning of

such a name and such imagery is not torture but destruction. Jesus compares the wicked to tares, to fruitless branches, to things of utter worthlessness. The effect of fire depends on the substance on which it fastens. Fire purifies gold. Fire consumes tares. Jesus says the wicked are tares.

In addition to the teachings found in the gospels and in the epistles which have been given in fullness, there is found in the book of Revelation a brief description of the judgment. The "dead great and small stand before the throne." The books are opened. Another book is opened which is the book of life. "The dead are judged out of the things which are written in the books." They are judged according to their works. "And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire. And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire."

Dean Alford says in commenting on this passage: "Hades is death's follower and the receiver of his prey. The punishment of sin is inflicted on both, because both are the offspring and bound up with sin. This is the second death, the lake of fire. As there is a second and higher life, so there is also a second and deeper death. And as after that life there is no more death, so after that death there is no more life."

Notice now in this final statement of the New

Testament that not only they whose names are not written in the book of life and who therefore are worthless and wicked, but death itself and also Hades are all cast into the lake of fire, and so suffer destruction. Life alone, life holy and worthy, survives and reigns.

Pain as punishment holds very little place in the New Testament. Torture as a divine delight has no place whatever. That teaching was introduced into the Christian church from pagan sources. This I shall show later. The god of the doctrine of eternal torture was Moloch and his kind, and not the God and Father of Jesus the Christ.

I already have stated that a change came into the teaching of the church when men, controlled in their thinking by Greek philosophy and by Roman law with its imperial ideas, became the leading teachers of the church. I am not writing a history of Christian doctrine and must, therefore, refer the reader to treatises on that subject or to the writings of the church Fathers. However, for the benefit of such persons as may not be able to refer to original documents, I shall give a few quotations which will serve to show the earlier and the later teachings in the Christian church. The reader will mark that the earlier writers follow the simplicity of the New Testament and the later writers elaborate their philosophy of the nature of man and their theories of the physical and eternal character of punishment.

In *The Epistle of Barnabas* whose date is about the year 100 A. D., we read as follows: "Thou shalt be simple in heart and rich in spirit. Thou

shalt not join thyself to those who walk in the way of death. The way of darkness is crooked; for it is the way of eternal death." Again, we read: "He who keepeth these," (the judgments of the Lord), "shall be glorified in the kingdom of God; but he who chooseth other things shall be destroyed with his works."

Theophilus of Antioch, who belonged to the first half of the second century, writing of the nature of man says: "But some one will say to us, Was man by nature mortal? Certainly not. Was he, then, immortal? Neither do we affirm this. He was by nature neither mortal nor immortal, but capable of both. If he should incline to the things of immortality, keeping the commandment of God, he should receive as reward from Him, immortality. But if, on the other hand, he should turn to the things of death, disobeying God, he should himself be the cause of death to himself." Such is the tenor of the teaching of the men who immediately succeeded the apostles.

In the third and fourth centuries, though some writers follow the earlier simplicity, a change appears. Tertullian, who wrote about the beginning of the third century, speaking of final rewards says: "After the resurrection, the servants of God are forever with God, and clothed upon with the proper substance of eternity; but the profane and all who are not true worshipers of God, in like manner shall be consigned to the punishment of everlasting fire." Tertullian, then, proceeds to argue that this fire, so far from destroying like ordinary fire, "from its

very nature ministers to their incorruptibility." That is to say, it tends to make them indestructible. According to Tertulian, the wicked, like volcanoes which burn and last, will endure in flames forever.

Augustine, bishop of Hippo in North Africa, lived in the latter part of the fourth and the early part of the fifth century. He was a man of great ability and of wide influence. He knew but little Greek and no Hebrew. He was a Latin writer dominated by the idea of Roman imperialism. He interpreted the divine government after the analogy of imperial Rome. To him the kingdom of heaven was not ruled by biological laws but by laws like a political empire. Augustine laid supreme stress on law and authority and the sovereign and independent character of the ruling powers. His teachings gave direction to the theological thought which prevailed in Europe throughout the Middle Ages.

Augustine, in his treatise on *The City of God*, one of his two greatest works, wrote as follows: "For to what but to felicity should men consecrate themselves were felicity a goddess? However, as it is not a goddess, but a gift of God, to what God but the Giver of happiness ought we to consecrate ourselves, who piously love eternal life, in which there is true and full felicity? For we mean by eternal life, that life where there is endlessness. For if the soul live in eternal punishments, by which also those unclean spirits shall be tormented, that is rather eternal death than eternal life. For there is no greater or worse death than when death never

dies. But because the soul from its very nature, being created immortal, cannot be without some kind of life, its utmost death is alienation from the life of God in an eternity of punishment. So, then, He only who gives true happiness, gives eternal life, that is an endlessly happy life."

The change from the simple teachings of the New Testament and of the Apostolic Fathers is here apparent. Almost all the terms in common use for fifteen hundred years are found in the writings of Augustine. The natural immortality of man, felicity as the hope of the human heart, happiness and misery as the rewards of faith and of unbelief, a happy heaven and a hell of physical torment, a death which is simply alienation from God and literal fire consuming but not destroying, are all found in the writings of Augustine.

Augustine argues that there are material bodies and animal bodies which can continue to exist in fire. He produces these arguments in order to prove the possibility of eternal physical torment. He rejects as untenable, the doctrine of those who consider fire as a figure of speech and who hold that the punishment of sin is "the anguish of a spirit repenting too late and fruitlessly." He makes mention of "Animals which live in the midst of flames, and worms which live in springs of hot water."

He says: "If, therefore, the salamander lives in fire, as naturalists have recorded, and if certain famous mountains of Sicily have been continually on fire from the remotest antiquity until now, and

yet remain entire, these are sufficiently convincing examples that everthing which burns is not consumed. As the soul too is a proof that not everything which can suffer pain, can also die."

Again, he says: "It is absurd to suppose that either body or soul will escape pain in the future punishment, yet, for my own part, I find it easier to understand both" (that is the fire and the worm of which he has been speaking) "as referring to the body, than to suppose that neither does. I think that Scripture is silent regarding the spiritual pain of the damned, because, though not expressed, it is necessarily understood that in a body thus tormented, the soul also is tortured with a fruitless repentance." He further adds: "I have already sufficiently made out that animals can live in the fire, in burning without being consumed, in pain without dying, by a miracle of the most omnipotent Creator, to whom no one can deny that this is possible, if he be not ignorant by whom has been made all that is wonderful in all nature."

So enamoured is Augustine with material fire as the fitting means of torment that he suggests that even devils—who evidently puzzle him a little—may possibly have bodies. He says, "Perhaps, as learned men have thought, the devils have a kind of body made of that dense and humid air which we feel strikes us when the wind is blowing." But, if this is not the case, still devils can burn. He says: "Therefore, though the devils have no bodies, yet their spirits, that is, the devils themselves, shall be brought into thorough contact with the material

fires to be tormented by them. That hell, which also is called a lake of fire and brimstone, will be material fire, and will torment the bodies of the damned, whether men or devils, the solid bodies of the one, aerial bodies of the other."

The reader can easily judge for himself, from the above quotations, whether the doctrine of hell and of future punishment which was taught by the church during the Middle Ages and which was preached commonly since the Reformation until recent years came from the New Testament. A few facts are, historically, very plain.

I. Torment is not emphasized in the New Testament as the punishment of sin.

II. Torment is emphasized in the teachings of much of the world apart from Christianity.

III. The doctrine of eternal torment was introduced into the teaching of the Christian church by men whose minds had been filled with ideas of pagan philosophy and doctrine.

To the student of religions, it is quite apparent that the doctrine of torment and descriptions in vivid colors of physical punishments are derived from pagan and not from original Christian sources. A few quotations will serve to illustrate this.

Buddhist descriptions of the punishments of those in hell portray them as undergoing various forms of torture. "Some are among fabled mountains; some are upon the shores of a great sea; one place is a place of terrific darkness; another is a place of red-hot iron; another contains pits of burning charcoal; another is a dense forest whose

leaves are sharp swords; another is a place paved with iron spikes." Everything is painted as vividly as in the hell of Dante.

Homer who, doubtless, popularized the thought of his time among the Greeks, as Milton described the thought of his day, describes Tartarus as "A deep gulf beneath the earth, with iron portals and a brazen threshold, as far below Hades as heaven is from earth."

The Northmen of Scandinavia believed that evil men should be banished from Valhalla, the palace of immortality where the souls of heroes dwell, "and that perjurers, murderers, and they who seduce men's wives shall wade through thick venom streams in Nastrond."

Ximenes, in his *Indian Chronicles*, gives the descriptions of hell which he found among the American Indians. "Hell is a house of darkness; a house of unendurable cold; a house of tigers which lacerate the inhabitants; a house of bats which cry terribly and fly wildly about; and finally a house of edges of knives."

The above quotations from widely different sources seem to indicate a disposition on the part of primitive and unchristian men to ascribe the cruelty common to men to the character of God, and to conceive of punishment in terms of torment.

Certain influential writers of the early church, retaining apparently something of this primitive disposition and controlled, in part, in their thinking by pagan thought, misinterpreted some expressions of

the New Testament with respect to punishment, and misunderstood and misused the figure of fire which occurs in the parables and the teachings of Jesus. Some of these writers gave free scope and vivid expression to their imagination in portraying the punishment of sinners in the department of Hades known as Tartarus.

Tertullian, a fierce and barbarous sort of Christian, depicts "Illustrious monarchs, world's wise men, philosophers, and poets trembling before the judgment seat and burning in fires; tragedians, play actors and wrestlers dissolving in flame, glowing in fire, tossing in fiery billows for rejecting Christ and for sin."

Hippolytus describes a place of unquenchable fire where the unrighteous and those who believe not God shall endure endless punishment. "No sleep will give them rest; no night will soothe them; no voice of interceding friends will profit them; but to the lovers of iniquity shall be given eternal punishment."

Lactantius says, "The wicked will again be clothed with flesh, yet it will not be flesh like this our earthly body, but indestructible and abiding forever that it may be able to hold out against tortures and everlasting fire."

In later times, the paintings of artists such as appear in pictures of the latter part of the Middle Ages and the poems of such great poets as Dante, in his *Inferno* and Milton in his *Paradise Lost*, added to the popular belief in the torments of the lost. So the doctrine of eternal torment as the pun-

ishment of sin became incorporated in the theology and the teachings of the church.

Pain does not hold the place in the punishment of sin in the New Testament, which it has held in historic theology. The New Testament clearly teaches that sin merits and will receive punishment. There are "many stripes" and "few stripes" inflicted according to knowledge and desert; men are "rewarded according to their works;" but these punishments belong rather to the discipline and training of life and precede the final consummation. "There is a sin," says Jesus, "possible now which shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come." The time limit, when punishment shall no longer belong to the disciplinary process of life, but shall become purely destructive, is not revealed to us.

God and holiness, truth and love, will be no more attractive and lovable in any other world and state than now. It would be a mistake, and contrary to the tenor of the scriptures, to imagine that the future holds better conditions and possibilities of salvation than the present. But, evidently, it is not the incident of physical death which may happen at any time and at any age, but the personal and permanent choice of every soul which decides destiny. The ultimate end to the unbelieving and the wicked when the chastisements of God have failed to lead to repentance and the grace of God has failed to save, is death. Not pain but perdition is the end of sin.

Torment does not honor and maintain the law,

nor satisfy God, nor even by an exhibition of "justice," cause the saints to "rejoice" and "excite them to joyful praises," as so late a theologian as Jonathan Edwards taught.

It is the worthlessness more than the wickedness of selfish men which is emphasized in the New Testament. The sinful are foolish, like the foolish virgins; they are slothful, like the man who wrapped his talent in a napkin; they are indifferent and obey not the gospel; they have no future worth, like fruitless branches and like tares; they are objects of divine condemnation; they are children of *gehenna*; they are sons of destruction.

The punishments of sinners correspond to their characters and may be summed up under five heads. The punishment of sin is exclusion. The foolish virgins are excluded from the marriage celebration; sinners are excluded from heaven. The punishment of sin is privation. The talent of the slothful man is taken from him; power and opportunity are taken away from the sinner. The punishment of sin is degradation. The man without a wedding garment is cast out from the feast; sinners without the character which divine grace offers, are cast out into darkness. The punishment of sins perdition. The wicked are like chaff, like fruitless branches, like tares, fit only to be burned. The final punishment of sin is said to be *apoleia* or perdition, *olethros* or destruction, a place in a lake of fire, a second death.

Now as science does not discover, nor philosophy prove, nor revelation teach, the natural immortality of man, the very significant words and symbols of

the New Testament must be interpreted in their ordinary and natural meaning, and we must accept as a very simple statement of fact the declaration of the New Testament, namely, that "the wages of sin is death." Death, like life, is a merciful provision of infinite love.

No more unscriptural and unworthy conception of punishment could have been devised than that which presents it as an act of wrath inflicted mainly to satisfy the injured feelings of an offended Deity. That is a conception of unregenerate and unchristian humanity unrelieved of its pagan character. I once heard a preacher of some popular power compare the result of punishment in the mind of God to the effect of punishment on the minds of men whose desire of vengeance has been satisfied by the violent execution of a murderer. The men have given expression to their feeling of anger and lust of vengeance, and so are satisfied. In like manner, said the preacher, God satisfies Himself by the punishment of men. He added to this caricature by affirming that God could not pardon sin until He had satisfied Himself for vengeance by the literal punishment of His Son. That God will be satisfied in Himself with all His acts towards men, we may well believe. But the satisfaction of the God and Father of Jesus will not be the satisfaction of an irate father who has whipped an erring son, and has, thereby, relieved himself of his anger. The satisfaction of God will be that of a father who has suffered for his erring son, and who has done his best to reclaim him. The satisfaction of God will

be that of a father who, if he leaves a wilful son to his fate, does so because, under the beneficent laws of life, it is inevitable and it is best.

Punishments in nature are for two purposes, medicinal and surgical. Punishment first administered is medicinal and designed to save the sinner. Punishment, when the sinner cannot be saved, is surgical and designed to save society. The first punishments of sin, if heeded, are admonitory, salutary, and saving. Later punishments are destructive. This is clearly seen in the effects of physical vices. The first pains are admonitory and, if heeded, corrective. Where correction is refused, they become destructive. The vicious man is taken out of society. His removal is beneficent.

Punishment on the part of wise and loving parents, is intended to save the child. Where the child will not be saved, that punishment which excludes him from home is intended to save that portion of the family which is, as yet, uncorrupted.

It is worthy of note that as society moves farther away from those conceptions of government, law, and punishment which have descended from pagan times, and as it incorporates the teaching and the spirit of Jesus into civil legislation and the administration of law, society loses the desire simply for vengeance, on the sinner and uses punishment, first, if possible, to save the offender, and, then, if that cannot be done, excludes the incorrigible offender from its presence to save society itself. The reformatory for children; the indeterminate sentence for criminals; the gift to a discharged prisoner of an

opportunity to choose and to follow some useful career, all indicate the modern conception of punishment.

Human society, by its present practice, affirms its practical belief in conditional immortality within the limits of this present life. That the privilege of remaining in relation to human society as a free member of it is conditioned upon worthiness, is the practical belief of men nowadays. The man who will not accept the common customs of society and obey its laws is first punished as a means of restraint and of reform; and, when reform is impossible, he is excluded from society. This is, also, the principle of the divine government.

All physical life in this world from the tiniest flower to the most perfect animal is conditioned. All physical development and the avoidance of death, depend on the fulfillment of the conditions of life. All mental and all moral growth are, likewise, conditioned. If the conditions are not fulfilled, there are degeneration and decay of mental and moral power.

Conditional immortality is the doctrine that man is created capable of immortality. Man's possession of immortality depends on his fulfilling the conditions. Men live under various circumstances of light, knowledge, and opportunity. Their attitude of mind and heart towards light, their desire of knowledge, or their lack of desire, their improvement or neglect of opportunity, are the important human elements. According to the New Testament, eternal life is given to them who diligently

seek it; eternal life is given to them who, having the light of nature only, the voice of conscience and the touch of the spirit of Jesus whom they have not known, live in love; eternal life is given to them who having the gospel, believe on the Son of God.

Saint Paul expresses his thought of the condition of condemnation in his words to the Jews of Antioch in Pisidia when he said: "It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you: Seeing ye thrust it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."

Jesus expresses the condition of commendation when He says, "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, but he that doeth the truth cometh to the light." Again Jesus says, "Every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice." In His account of His judgment of the nations, Jesus says that He will welcome all who live in love and so possess His spirit, though they have not known Him in person or by name.

The truth-loving mind, the receptive soul, the loving heart are the conditions in man, anywhere and in any age, of receiving the reward of eternal life.

Conditional immortality differs from annihilation. Annihilation, strictly speaking, is an act of reducing to nothing. The word carries with it the idea of putting forth power to destroy. It conveys the conception of crushing out of existence something which, let alone, would continue. Conditional immortality, on the contrary, conveys the idea of a life dying out of itself for want of the fulfill-

ment of the conditions of continued living. It is like a flame fading and dying, because it fails to feed upon oil. It is, as Kant suggests, a soul dying from inanition.

Three views, at present, are held respecting the final destiny of men. There is the common opinion that man is created immortal and his destiny is to live forever in happiness or in misery. There is the opinion that man is naturally immortal and, in some way, by the grace of God, all men will escape from sin and exist forever in felicity. There is the opinion that man is created capable of becoming immortal, and men will cease to be or live forever, according as they reject or receive the grace of God.

With respect to the first view, ancient and widespread as it is, let me ask: Can any sane man suffering agony from toothache or neuralgia or acute indigestion or filled with unspeakable anguish in his soul, really believe that a man should and can and must exist forever in untold misery and unspeakable pain? The men who have preached this doctrine have had no vivid conception and realization of what it meant. It was a far-away suffering which they did not feel. A God who would create a being like man, place him in a world like this, give him a little span of three score and ten years and, then, for failure to live righteously during those years, would consign him to an eternity of unrelieved torment, could not be worshipped.

If a man like Jonathan Edwards, for instance, had not been under the domination of a system of belief in which man was simply a means of maintaining

that system, and if he had observed his own children, known his own neighbors, and studied his own heart, could never have preached some sermons which one must wish never had been printed.

With respect to the second view, namely, that of universal salvation, personally, I should be only too glad to believe it true. But I cannot blind my eyes to the laws of life to which I have called attention; I cannot refuse to see that Jesus in His parables and plain statements declares that the laws of the divine kingdom are biological laws; I cannot remove the impression of the pictures which Jesus portrays, nor change the meaning of the words He uses in speaking of final things.

One would think that a doctrine so full of hope as universalism would crowd the churches of those who preach it. But they are not crowded nor greatly multiplied. Much as men like myself might wish that it may be well hereafter with all men, the intellectual vision of men is too clear, the moral conscience of men is too keen, and the evidence in the resultant facts of choice and conduct is too plain, for men to entertain the thought that faith and unbelief, love and selfishness, obedience to divine law and disobedience, will sometime issues in the same result. Ian Maclaren has said in a sermon on *Judgment According to Type*, "We have a robust common sense of morality which refuses to believe that it does not matter whether a man has lived like the Apostle Paul or the Emperor Nero." It is said, however, that the issue of well-being comes through repentance at some time.

A single act of sin, like David's adultery and its consequent crimes; or like Peter's denial of Jesus, may startle a soul and show its weakness and lead to that repentance which pens penitential psalms or, in darkness, weeps bitterly, and so may occasion the rebound of a virtually healthy soul from sin. But, while this is true, the plain fact remains shown on every hand that a course of sin wilfully chosen and followed naturally and inevitably dulls the conscience, darkens the moral vision, hardens the heart, and leads a soul in the way of death. The law of sin is not a law which works life but death rather. There are seemingly men now, such as Saint Paul speaks of, "Who are past feeling." And the scriptures plainly speak of a time, whatever may be the deciding cause, when it is too late to repent, a time when the day has gone and the night which will know no dawning, has come.

With respect to the third view, that of conditional immortality, a few things may be said. It is in accordance with the laws of nature regulating all life in this world within the time limits of each kind of life. It is in harmony with the doctrine of the survival of the fittest. The fittest, in this case, is not the strongest in a militant way, but the best. It is that which has fulfilled the conditions of life and so is worthy to endure. It is in accord with the teachings of Jesus. Jesus does not compare the divine kingdom with an imperial kingdom, as Roman theology does, but with the biological kingdom of earth. All through nature, anything having life which fails to fulfill the conditions of living

and to attain its fitting destiny, within the possible limit of time allotted it, decays and dies. Why should the life of highest potentiality, having the possibility of eternal existence, be an exception to this law? One would think that failure here would be most offensive to the Creator. One would think that, beyond anything else, such life should be subject to the law of death.

Why a man, who has been given by his Creator exceptional potential powers, great possibilities, and a chance of choosing the way of eternal life, but who refuses to choose that way and so becomes, at length, a being of no pleasure to himself, of no value to society, of no delight or use to God, should live forever, does not appear.

Speaking for myself, I must say that I cannot feel nor think, whatever I may do and be, that I ever could be reconciled to any so-called divine justice which would consign me to everlasting torment or to hopeless remorse and unavailing regret. But I could feel and think that having been given life and its possibilities; if, in the judgment of the Creator from whom life is derived and by whom it is sustained, I were of no value to the coherent system of the social and moral universe, I should cease to be. There would not appear to me any injustice in such a judgment.

As to eternal torment, it should be noticed, that a man who, being injured in any way by another man, and who having power to do so, should take the man who injured him and imprison him and voluntarily inflict on him daily torture for the sake of

punishing by pain, and who should continue this so long as his enemy could possibly live, would be regarded as an immoral monster. What would be immoral and unjust in man, cannot be moral and just in God.

It may well be asked again, Why should any creature continue to exist when he has failed of the ends of its creation? When it is no pleasure to itself? When it is of no value to others? When it is nothing but an offense to its Creator? By the most common laws of nature that a living thing which does not fulfill the conditions of its continuance, growth, and perfection, declines, decays and dies. Nay more, the very forces which build up a living thing, destroy a declining and dying thing. Sunlight, air, and showers feed a growing plant, but consume a decaying plant. A mind unexercised loses its powers of acquisition and expansion, and sinks to idiocy. A moral nature misused, loses moral discernment and affection. A wicked man who says in his heart, "There is no God," has become insensible to God and has lost connection, inwardly, with the source of life, Why should the touch of God, without, continue to preserve him? How can he continue to live? Why should he continue to live?

"No, no, the energy of life may be
Kept on after the grave, but not begun;
And he who flagged not in the earthly strife,
From strength to strength advancing—only he,
His soul well-knit and all his battles won,
Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life."

Mr. Charles Darwin, in closing his treatise on *The Descent of Man*, says: "For my own part, I would as soon be descended from that heroic little monkey, who braved his dreaded enemy in order to save the life of his keeper; or from that old baboon, who, descending from the mountains, carried away in triumph his young comrade from a crowd of astonished dogs—as from a savage who delights to torture his enemies, offers up bloody sacrifices, practices infanticide without remorse, treats his wives like slaves, knows no decency, and is haunted by the grossest superstitions."

In writing on the ascent of man, one may say: The dog, who, though hungry, will suffer rather than touch his master's dinner which he guards; who will loyally serve his master even when that master is unkind; who will brave danger and fight and die in his master's defence, seems more loving, moral, and noble than the man who will allow his wife and children to suffer the pangs of hunger; who will treat with cruelty those who are kind to him; who will beat his children and permit them to die for want of attention that he may indulge himself through lusts in grossest vices. Why should such a man—because he has been made a man with a man's possibilities—continue to live forever, when he has sunk below the level of the monkey and the dog? Why should the latter die because they are animals, and the former live simply because he bears the form of a man?

In fact, a man without love as the dominating motive in his life is like a sunbeam without heat,

if he is simply moral. He is like a rose without fragrance, if he is simply physically clean. He is like grain which has rotted, if he is grossly depraved.

Again, I repeat the question, Why should a man, who in point of love and morals is worthless, who is of no pleasure to himself, who is of no use to others, who is no delight to God, continue to exist forever? For God to maintain such a life by the mere exercise of His power would be a misuse of power, for it is not a beneficent use. For God to force a sensitive, living creature to continue to live simply that He may suffer pain forever, would be an act of continued cruelty. Death, in such a case, is a merciful event, administered in loving kindness by infinite love.

Eternal life, on the other hand, is the greatest gift of divine grace, the reward of faith, the possession of love. Three terms are used to express the idea of eternal life. These are incorruptibility, immortality, and eternity. According to the New Testament those who believe "have been begotten of incorruptible seed"; they have "a living hope of an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away"; their present condition must be changed so that "this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality"; and "when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality; then shall come to pass the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory'"; then, they, who "by patience have sought for glory and

honor and immortality, shall have eternal life." These words: *incorruption*, *immortality*, and *eternal* in their various forms as nouns and as adjectives are the exact equivalents of the Greek words which they translate. A metal which cannot corrode, a vegetable fiber which cannot decay, a consciousness in thought which cannot cease, must be eternal. An incorruptible, immortal, and deathless man must live forever.

Scientific students of human evolution and history, recognize the fact that further development of mankind must be along moral lines. They also recognize the fact that a future life seems to be necessary to complete what is so imperfect and so broken here. Professor Henry Drummond has said, "One of the most startling achievements of recent science is a definition of eternal life." Herbert Spencer said, "Perfect correspondence would be perfect life. Were there no changes in the environment but such as the organism had adapted changes to meet, and were it never to fail in the efficiency with which it met them, there would be eternal existence and eternal knowledge."

Charles Darwin writing on *The Descent of Man* concludes his book by saying: "Man may be excused for feeling some pride at having risen, though not by his own exertions, to the very summit of the organic scale; and the fact of his having risen, instead of having been aboriginally placed there, may give him hopes for a still higher destiny in the distant future." What that distant future may have embraced in Mr. Darwin's mind, I do not know;

but even if, in his own thought, it had reference to the advance of the race, it is suggestive and serves to give hope of a still greater future.

Science, however, which furnishes a definition of eternal life, does not inform us how to fulfil those conditions. Science which sometimes expresses a hope of a future life is not able to affirm it. Jesus Christ, alone, who abolished death, has brought life and immortality to light. Through Him, eternal life is the gift of God to man. As many as receive Him to them gives He the right to become children of God. The Son of God became the Son of Man and so, by virtue of the assumption of flesh, brother of men by incarnation. The sons of men become sons of God, by faith, and so brothers of Christ by regeneration.

Jesus has said, "Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother and sister." Saint Paul has said, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." Saint John has said, "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him even as He is."

Eternal life is, then, first of all, a kind and quality and grade of life. Its beginning is here; its completion is hereafter. Its character is now manifest; its consummation and its glory are yet to appear. Eternal life is a life of faith in God; it is a life of love for Christ; it is a life of communion with the ever-living Spirit. It is fed from unfailling sources. The eternal life lives because God lives.

It loves because God loves. It is merciful because God is merciful. It blesses because God blesses. It is joyous because of the joy of God. It is unfailing because God is unfailing. "They who wait upon the Lord renew their strength." They know that their strength has been renewed. The love of Christ constrains them who believe. It seizes them and bears them on its own gracious way as a river seizes and bears on its way the smaller streams which join it. The man in whom is eternal life comes to think as Jesus thinks, and to love as Jesus loves, and to do as Jesus does, and so grows into the likeness of Jesus.

Christianity has suffered greatly in efficiency from the diversion of the minds of men from this great purpose of God in Christ. The church has taught the gospel as a plan of salvation rather than as a power of salvation. The church has conceived of salvation as the adjustment of legal relations between God and men, rather than as the impartation and perfecting of a new life. The fact of the new life—it must be said in justice to the church—has not been denied nor wholly lost sight of, but it has been obscured. The result has been that men have thought of the gospel as a sort of scheme and plan of insurance—a condition, a covenant, a promise—by belief in which men may escape future punishment and secure entrance into heaven. But the gospel is the revelation and the publication of God's love to men, and the promise that he who believes may live in that love. It is fortunate that of late years, emphasis is placed upon Christianity as a life.

It feeds indeed upon a creed, but it formulates itself in character and in deeds.

Success in life comes from believing and apprehending the great facts of the gospel where that gospel is known. Or success in life comes from accepting the inspiration of the living Spirit mediated through Christ who acts beyond the bounds of the published gospel. There is no other true and worthy success in life.

A Christian is not exempt from the ordinary conditions which exist in the world; but a Christian who has in him eternal life, has something in himself which transforms all things. A Christian has temptation; but he has a way of escape from temptation. To him temptation is an opportunity to rise rather than to fall. A Christian has trials; but he has gracious help which sustains him in trials, and through trials, he is made strong. None but a Christian can say, "We glory in tribulations." A Christian has sorrow, but he has also consolation. He sorrows not as the rest who have no hope. A Christian has disappointments, but he has an abiding hope of better things which God has provided. A Christian must die; but to him death has lost its sting and its victory. To be absent from the body, is to be present with the Lord; to lose this body, is to receive a better one; to depart from earth, is to dwell in heaven; to leave things temporal, is to enjoy things eternal. Therefore, if you would truly succeed in life, you must believe.

Believe, and the sky will bend in beauty, and glow with glory above you now. Believe, and the

truth and the promises of God will illumine your path and sustain your heart and strengthen your soul now. Believe, and you will be filled with peace and power, sanity and strength, sweetness and love, hope and joy now. You will have the eternal life.

But eternal life will find its fulfillment and its fruition in the future, beyond the grave and beyond the present order. No one can read the words of Jesus to His disciples and not perceive that the future and not the present was the object of hope. No one can read the writings of the New Testament and not perceive that the emphasis of reward is laid not upon the present life but upon the future life. The consummation of the kingdom is not upon earth but in heaven.

The parables of Jesus point to a consummation. Life is to be followed by a harvest time when good and evil will be separated. Life leads on to a day of reckoning when a report of stewardship and service will be made. Life is to be succeeded by sharing the victory and the reward, the blessedness and the glory of Him with whom the saints have suffered. Saint Paul teaches that the distinctions between men made by position, possessions, and conditions are of little moment because they are so transient. Sufferings are short, afflictions for a moment, and possessions as though they were not in comparison with the power and the possessions and joys of eternity. The things which make this present life a time of trial and discipline, of suffering and sorrow will pass away. They will be replaced by a state

in which pure love, perfect power, painless exercise, congenial persons, and wholly suitable and adjusted conditions will make living a delight. According to the revelation of the New Testament, all things which, at present, occasion pain and suffering and sorrow will be eliminated and only such things as occasion pleasure, peace, and joy will be found in the heavenly home. There, the mind will know all necessary truth. There, the heart will be satisfied with love. There, all the powers possessed will find free exercise. There, the soul in all its greatness will be satisfied.

Who will compose the heavenly society? Will it be limited to them who have heard and believed the gospel? Surely not. Jesus has said: "Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." The revelation of God's love in Christ does not create that love. The publication of the method of salvation does not make the method. Sunlight floods many a valley before the sun himself appears over the eastern hills. Sunlight fills many a house from whose windows the sun is never seen. The Son of God, who is the Light of the World, sends His Spirit to many who have not seen His face nor heard His voice. Jesus says that every one who is of the truth will come to His light and will hear His voice. The truth-loving man will see and know and love Jesus when He is revealed. The attitude of such a man is like the attitude of the Gentile Cornelius who was ready to believe the gospel and to confess Christ as soon

as they were made known to him. Not intellectual knowledge of a revelation which God has graciously given, but a heart ready to receive that revelation is what God first requires and approves. Not knowledge but love is the sign of life.

Expressing the condition of eternal life in terms of natural theology and natural law, Saint Paul has said that the heavenly society will be composed of all "who by patient continuance in well-doing have sought for glory and honor and immortality." Expressing the condition of eternal life in terms of action possible among all nations, Jesus has said that the eternal society will be composed of all who have lived lovingly and have given ministrations to them in need and thereby have been followers of Him who came not to be ministered unto but to minister. Expressing the condition of eternal life in terms of faith and knowledge, Jesus has said that eternal life is to know God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent.

This is surely a broad enough basis of eternal life for all men. All who bow before the majesty of moral truth, however revealed; all who believe and obey the truth, however made known; all who dwell in love and cherish a loving heart; all who, like Jesus, have the spirit of service and who according to strength and opportunity render ministry, will have a place in that perfect and permanent society.

I am persuaded also that of those who live where the gospel is published, there are many who, evidently, are only babes in Christ. As flowers are set back and chilled in the spring time and blossoming is

delayed by an unfavorable atmosphere, so the lives of many are limited by unfavorable circumstances. The atmosphere in which they live is so cold, spiritually, their own powers are so feeble, the burdens of their life are so heavy that they are hindered in growth. One may fain believe that many a harassed man, and many a troubled woman having lived under great limitations and with few opportunities but neither denying nor doubting the love and wisdom of God but trusting in a very simple faith, will blossom out in fair beauty of soul, like a transplanted flower, when they are brought into the light and love of Christ in a fairer world.

What the future life may be is not a matter of knowledge but of hope.

An unhatched eagle has lungs fitted to breathe the air, eyes which will pierce space in glorious vision, wings which will beat the air with strength, and all the organs necessary for its life when it shall leave the shell; but the unhatched eagle cannot conceive the form and nature of the world into which it is so soon to enter; it could not conceive that world even though its mind were awake and intelligent. So we, though we possess all the powers capable of entering and enjoying the future life, cannot know now what its form and circumstance may be.

The revelations given to us in the scriptures are adapted to our present condition. They are portrayed in the imagery of things with which we are familiar. They are suggestive and satisfying. These revelations are worth our study.

The future dwelling place, according to Jesus, will be a father's house. A father's house is a home. It is a place where one is loved for his own sake. It is a place where every want is anticipated and every desire gratified. It is a place of rest, shelter, friendship, and joy.

The future dwelling place, according to Jesus, will be prepared for men. "I go," said Jesus to his disciples, "to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." As a bride may trust her husband to prepare a home for her, though it may be beyond the sea; so the believer may trust Jesus to prepare a home for him, though it be far beyond his sight. It will be a home prepared in every particular to meet the nature and the wants of those who shall dwell there.

The future dwelling place is described as a city. The children of faith, it is written, "look for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." "Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He hath prepared for them a city." This is a "great city and a holy, having the glory of God." This is a very suggestive title and figure. A city is the most complete place of abode for men which has been developed upon earth. A city is the place of greatest safety, convenience, ministry, and comfort upon earth. A city is the most completely organized society. A city is a place where every want is anticipated, every hunger fed, every taste gratified, and the social

nature satisfied.

They who dwell in that future world shall be like Christ and shall see Him as He is. Their bodies, it is written, "shall be fashioned like unto His glorious body." These bodies are described as incorruptible, strong, perfect, and immortal.

On the negative side, all the weaknesses, evils, sufferings, and sorrows of this present earthly life, shall have no place and shall not be found. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat." "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain."

On the positive side, they shall be clothed in beauty and endowed with every necessary power. They "shall be clothed with white robes," which suggest purity and beauty. And "the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters."

The activities and occupations of the future life are expressed by three significant terms. They worship. They sing. They reign.

They worship. Worship is the perception and admiration of physical beauty and the perception and adoration of spiritual excellence and glory. All the works of God in the entire universe will be seen in such clearness of vision that the perfection of form and radiancy of beauty will awaken constant delight and will evoke unceasing praise. God Himself in the surpassing excellency of His glory will be so known and so loved as to evoke the joyful ador-

ation of all saints so that they shall ever worship Him as the angels worship who say: "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God forever."

They sing. Music is the language of the heart, the utterance of the emotions, the voice of the soul. Music speaks from the heart and speaks to the heart. Music is always pure. Song is music wedded to words. Song is the feeling and voice of the heart filling and expressing the thought of the mind. Song, therefore, is the highest and the most perfect expression and utterance of the whole personality. Song gives vent and voice and harmonious and perfect form to all the feelings and inmost powers of the saints. Hence, they sing, saying, "Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord, God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? for Thou only art holy."

These songs of the saints in the future life and the heavenly world will be like the voice of many waters. In them, will be such sweetness and such unity that it will be as though the languages of every land and race speak in perfect harmony.

They reign. Reigning suggests the exercise of power put forth in wisdom and in masterful ways. They who reign will find expression and scope for all their powers. Much of the greatest enjoyment in life comes through the use of power. Power in that future life will not be wasted and lost and leave weariness; but power will be put forth in wisdom

and with delight, and will be used in regal and kingly ways for ends beneficent and good. Men will think and act and achieve with intelligence, efficiency, and joy. "For the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign forever and ever."

These figures of worship and song and reigning suggest that the eternal life, in its immortality, will be free from weakness, from weariness, and from pain. They suggest, also, that love and thought and the power of will shall find expression in ways congenial, delightful and full of joy.

All who by faith have received God's greatest gift of eternal life in Jesus Christ and who, through that life, have controlled the flesh, and have overcome the world, and have conquered death will find, at last, that they have achieved success and are satisfied.

They who by faith in Christ learn from Him the spirit of sonship will be heirs with Him of God's glorious creation. All things are theirs; for they are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

They will be a joy to themselves. They will be satisfied with their society. They will rejoice forever in the light and love of God.

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