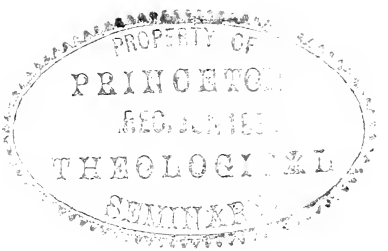

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THE WORDS OF CHRIST

AS PRINCIPLES OF

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL GROWTH

BY

JOHN BASCOM

AUTHOR OF PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION, ETC.

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INTRODUCTION.

MEN are peculiarly liable in all profound questions to find their attention so diverted by the accidents and passing moods of any development as to lose sight in part of its underlying principles. This liability is especially great in religion. The truths of the revelation made us in Christ are united with innumerable historical facts, and so give occasion to endless criticism. These facts as facts are beyond positive proof; these criticisms have no ultimate test of correctness. It easily happens, therefore, that the obscure discussions and the unwarrantable suppositions possible in these directions may confuse the primary and much plainer truths involved with them, and so bring the entire subject in our minds into confusion and uncertainty.

It is not the facts of the New Testament in their precise form, it is not the exegetical harmony of its truths in their occasions and in their details, that are the power working salvation among men. These may be settled in one way or in another way, or not settled at all; they may conform to this opinion or to that opinion, or be amenable to no opinion,—the real redemptive forces of the world are not thereby altered. The redemption of society does not depend on the exact ways in which spiritual truth has been brought to us, but on the truth itself; it is not, therefore, materially affected by the range of uncertainty that pertains to the method simply. Redemption must

be wrought out, and is being wrought out, by living, present principles, finding their way into the thoughts, hearts, actions of men. Redemption is an organic process, going on at this very time, and is to be judged in its own nature without passing beyond the hour. The question is, What are those emotional truths which are subserving the ends of construction and of life in the social world? Are these truths those of the Gospels, or are they not?

The exact facts of the Gospels may escape us; we may easily cast on them endless doubts, and raise with them endless difficulties. They are shrouded by the gathering mists of many centuries. Not so is it with the truths of the Gospels. These have lost nothing and have gained much by intervening years. They are like light that is light at every point which it reaches, and may be pronounced on without reference to its sources; they are like the light of the sun, which gains reflection and diffusion by the medium through which it is passing, and the things on which it is falling.

This relation of the teachings of Christ to the events of his life gives the occasion of our present work. Without any light estimate of historic proof, we wish simply to waive it, and to inquire in what relations the words of Christ, as they have actually reached us, stand to the problem of life. We wish to see whether the assertion, I am the way, the truth, and the life, can be sustained and verified by the constitution of the human mind and of society, and by the historical development which is in progress under our very eyes. This after all is the ultimate question. No matter what we may establish about facts which have now passed into the oblivion of nineteen centuries, we must still ask, What are the controlling in-

centives of the present hour? No matter what we fail to prove concerning these facts, we may still hold fast a spiritual faith, wholly defensible by virtue of the living and potent principles present with us from that place and that period which define the life of Christ.

It may be rationally hoped that this consideration of the words of Christ, as an expression of the unchangeable forces and laws of the spiritual world, may help minds entangled in criticism, and losing belief by looking away from the light instead of in the very direction of the light. We may also be able, feeling how assured our real treasures are, and how much in hand we have them, to discuss with more quietness, fairness, and consideration, the obscure circumstances under which this bequest of truth has fallen to us. Having the spiritual personality of Christ distinctly before our eyes, it of itself will help us to explain very many things in his life, and will also help us to crowd outward to the horizon those things we cannot explain. This is our entire purpose: to turn attention directly to the words of Christ, as holding the theory and the only sufficient theory of spiritual growth, the forces and the only sufficient forces wherewith to secure that growth. Whatever else may be doubtful, it is not doubtful that the spirit of the Gospels is the regenerative power of the world. The kingdom of heaven is being brought forward in this very way, and in this way only can it be completed. In the measure in which this is seen to be true, will all doubts and difficulties take a secondary and remote position; will the path of life and the promises of life lie plainly before us.

CONTENTS.

THE WORDS OF CHRIST AS PRINCIPLES OF PERSONAL AND SOCIAL GROWTH.

CHAPTER I.

Personality in the Words of Christ.

Development is the idea which has received more emphasis than any other in the past century. It gathers up and combines in one comprehensive movement those special facts and theories—the correlation of forces, the geologic stages, the origin of species, the growth of moral law—that have so profoundly quickened the human mind. Though this idea of development has been held but crudely, and been applied but coarsely to the facts of the world, and so wrought some mischief, it is none the less the frame-work along which a great expansion of spiritual life is taking place. The moment any limitations begin to settle down on our idea of God, the moment any one element in his character—of necessity too narrowly conceived in all its elements—begins to assume fixedness, the spiritual life of the soul is straitened, and may easily be strangled. The one conception of God which the mind always passes through, and leaves behind it only too slowly, is that of an outside agent or will taking its way with gigantic strides among physical things, and

bringing them into subjection and order by a force put upon them. Evolution necessarily corrects this conception, and compels us to seek anew for God as an absolutely pervasive presence, walking in the silence of power and clothed upon with all the visible facts of the world.

This idea of development in the physical world should be supplemented in the spiritual world by that of growth, which finds its first expression in life, and its full expression in conscious life. Development is the slow concurrence of all constructive parts in the formation of one whole. The whole is the simple product of the parts. The parts furnish in their own nature both the material of the work and the lines of its dependence. The whole discloses nothing which is not in its constituents. Growth is more than this. A power of some sort, working toward a definite product, uses material for a constructive purpose not embraced in its own physical properties. Thus each living species is anomalous in the world. The world elsewhere and otherwise shows no such power. We may explain all the world besides, and we have not explained the rose, the butterfly, the man.

What the spiritual world has to do with primarily is conscious growth, the unfolding of a life known to itself and pushing more or less distinctly toward the conditions of progress. In treating and discussing this life, we need to bear with us the ideas which belong to growth rather than those which pertain to development.

If we undertake wisely and somewhat extendedly to secure growth in society, we shall be increasingly impressed with the fact, that the difficulties in our way are chiefly those which pertain to the strictly personal elements. Though there are exceptional facts, the position of a per-

son in society is usually defined by the spiritual terms which he brings to it. Close observation generally discloses personal grounds for personal difficulties. Though one may be depressed by his circumstances, the removal of this outside pressure is rarely a radical solution of the problem. Some other difficulty is immediately disclosed which still blocks the path of progress. Still less does an outside lift meet the ends of growth. Unless it stands in close relation to an inside power pushing in the desired direction, the breaking down or overleaping of barriers may readily act like the bursting of the skin of the grape, letting in agents of destructive fermentation. In all living things there are buds, constructive points and constructive powers, and outside influences that are not addressed to these are more likely to be injurious than beneficial.

The one truth that experience and history impress upon us is that the problem of growth is primarily an interior one, and that social progress, therefore, is always gathered up and expressed in personal progress. Nothing will reach that which does not reach this, and nothing which reaches this will fail to extend to that also. The spiritual world is what its spiritual occupants make it to be, and the Kingdom of Heaven can only come as it comes in the hearts of individuals. And so it becomes a problem of immense labor to carry the individual forward through all the slow stages of growth in concert with other individuals to the point in which strength and wisdom and peace abide in each singly and in all collectively.

The long stages of growth which lie behind us and lie before us become painfully evident, and we are tempted, changing the idea of growth for that of development, to

feel that nothing can either be accelerated or retarded by us; that, phrasing it philosophically, we have only to keep pace with events; or, phrasing it religiously, to wait on God. This feeling is at bottom unfaithfulness to the central idea of conscious growth as a power which proposes its own ends and pushes for them.

If we look a little more closely at the secret of our own lives, we shall see how the case stands. Men at first, full of enthusiasm, have a tendency to rush into each other's arms in friendship. They think that at least one or more points of reciprocal interplay and absolute harmony can be found. They try it, and in proportion as their natures are deep and sonorous with one result. The instruments are not attuned; the movements are not in time. Deficiency here and excess there bring a sense of disappointment. They slowly separate, like two molecules whose beat is not the same, that each may get room enough for its own unrhythmical movement. Conditions of close spiritual relationship hardly exist as yet between any two men. The soul is rather startled in its progress by its own growing solitude. When oppressed with such an experience, the wise man does not feel that he has grounds of complaint; that the key-note of life is with him, and that others make the discord. He is rather impressed with the fact of how extended, difficult, and complicated a combination is a true spiritual symphony. How many things in one's self must be increased, diminished, modified, eliminated, before he can successfully take part in it; while the same is true of those about him who are best fitted to unite their experience with his experience. How little right has any one to find fault with these discords; or, if he assumes the right, how thereby is he carried still farther off from the desired harmony.

One, who, breaking out of the bower of his own enthusiastic thoughts, makes this discovery on the barren glebe of life, either sinks back into despondency, and so loses himself without gaining another, or, more wisely, he takes up as a mere tyro the laws of growth with his fellow-men, fits himself coarsely to general relations, feels his way slowly to closer adjustments, expects much from himself, demands little from others, catches quickly at all harmonies, and without ever losing the light of his own life, opens a casement-door, east or west, to all the light that may enter from abroad. He understands that the general must keep pace with the particular, and that no two men can heartily embrace each other, till they are ready also to embrace all true men.

Some may feel that the things now said pertain to poetry rather than to religion; are an affair of sentiment quite as much as of faith. Such a conclusion is greatly to be regretted, for religion is the harmony of life with life, and so the fulness of all life. The problem we have every one to do with is, what are the successive steps of this inner and this outer concord which is to be reached only by an immense amount of personal change?

Plainly the Kingdom of Heaven, as one of spiritual peace and composure, has much to do and most directly to do with this reconciliation of life with life, this sympathetic enlargement of life toward life on the highest plane of action and feeling. Poetry and religion are not separable from each other, when they touch the highest subjects in the highest way. While the one great thing in religion hitherto is the love it has begotten, the one curious thing is the hatred it has occasioned.

Some think that social progress—and there is no social progress that is not spiritual progress—suffers most from

outside obstructions, and that these removed, growth will be rapid. A few sporadic facts may be so explained, but this is far from being an appreciative statement. When the personal conditions necessary for advancement exist, but exist under the repressing force of unfavorable circumstances, growth will be very manifest when these restraints are removed. Progress, following instantly on relief, will be vividly associated with that relief, and exclusively referred to it. It will always be easy, therefore, to maintain a striking argument tending to establish the dependence of social growth on the circumstances that define social conditions. Social science demands exceedingly broad and exceedingly thorough inquiry, and must long suffer from the ease with which opinions of a superficial order can be defended. The mind can dart about on the surface of social facts, like a water-fly, just dimpling with its motion the current beneath it.

Spiritual progress may be greatly burdened and greatly lightened by social conditions, but the controlling fact is none the less the spiritual forces with which we have to do. It is in reference to these alone that any institutions are either aids or hindrances. Places, times, and circumstances derive their significance from the persons who occupy them. This fact is disclosed almost as clearly in the idea of evolution as in that of growth. If we look to physical forces for germs of life, it is not to physical forces in their ordinary action, but in some peculiar action which a small portion of them take on at remote intervals and on rare occasions. Moreover, each living thing, as representing a species, is the result of a very protracted and very peculiar development, and by so much and by so long, has been separating itself from the simple staple of physical forces, and accumula-

ting powers of supreme moment in the construction of all that is to follow. An assertion of an equality, therefore, between the external and internal conditions of life is in the highest degree unphilosophical, since it is the overthrow of this equality of values that the world has been about from the very beginning of time until now. When we add to this general consideration, the consideration that in human life we are dealing with the most complex and peculiar of all powers, one separated in development by the largest space from the action of simple forces, when we remember that development itself has little or no light to cast on the first differentiations which constitute a germ, and very little to cast upon that steady increase of power by which the germ in its progressive specialization becomes the plant, the animal, the man of to-day, we shall scarcely be led, even for an instant or in a single case, to turn our backs on this entire history of the world, by levelling down in spiritual unfolding internal with external causes, and so opening the problem of life anew, as if nothing had already been done. To say that a solution is historical, is to say that a vast amount of difference has already appeared and been established and confirmed in the agencies now involved, and that our units are no longer equal units of force, but most unequal units with variable and prodigious accumulations of power.

If we confront this view, which is rooted in reason, with the facts of the social world broadly considered, we shall see that the two correspond; that no climate, no soil, no geographical features, are uniformly associated with human progress, or separated from it; and that no external conditions, except as they themselves are the expression of spiritual power or are making way before it, bring any solution to human life.

It follows from this fact, that the personal powers are the supreme powers to be considered, watched over, and unfolded in human history, and that any effort which directs itself primarily to the amelioration or modification of outward conditions simply, can only be very partially successful at any one time, and, in continuous effort, must utterly fail. The problem of human well-being will yield only to personal powers, and the fruit of ultimate labor in all grades of life must be in behoof of these powers.

The method of Christ conforms to this principle in a wonderfully complete and thorough way. All the extraneous things to which the eye of man is speedily directed in seeking progress, or in convincing himself, in a more or less illusory way, of its attainment, are wholly set aside. This is not done by any formal statement, or with any explicit denial of the service of secondary things, but by turning the attention exclusively to primary things, and shielding the eye from the confusion of cross-lights. Wealth and rank are the ostensible signs of progress, and are most universally associated with it in the popular mind. They do not appear at all as means of influence or marks of growth in the instructions of Christ. They are, in theory, quietly passed by as accidents in life, while, in practice, they were left one side as blinding and confusing the human mind, at the very best unaccustomed to single vision. The eye was not only to be filled with light, but first filled with light of a spiritual order. This method was united in Christ with no asceticism, which is the opposite error, but was a concomitant of purely personal power addressing itself to like powers. Wealth and honor take part in the teaching of Christ neither as attractions nor as repulsions; they are simply indifferent to it.

When we approach knowledge, we have to do with

something much closer to the inner life, yet capable of a cold separation from it. The Jewish world was oppressed in the time of Christ as very few communities ever have been with the usurped functions of formal knowledge. The precepts of the Rabbis were omnipresent, and burdensome in the last degree. They were destructive of independent thought, personal responsibility, and every condition of individual life. They kindled and fed a consuming fanaticism, which no conditions of progress could assuage or mollify. Christ, though naturally falling into this class, completely separated himself from it in method, and, lest the difference should be overlooked, drew attention to it in the plainest way. He instructs his disciples: Be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your master even Christ, and all ye are brethren. Call no man your father upon earth, for one is your Father which is in heaven. Yet, when he himself is called Rabbi, he does not return in an irritable way to the injunction, and so make of it a formal and minute rule. There is no more vigorous and searching rebuke in language than that contained in his censure of the spirit of proselytism, the winning of disciples to the forms of faith. Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. The whole force of Christ's words was to break down authority as external tyranny, and to build it again as liberty in men's thoughts. They bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

What wonderful caution—wonderful carelessness some would think it—does Christ show in reference to organizing his disciples. At his death, organization, immediate

and prospective, was at its lowest terms. The narrow spirit of his disciples in this respect had been constantly repressed. It could get hold of no distinctions, much as it sought them. When Christ was crucified they were simply eleven men without leadership and without instructions, save that they were to teach all nations. Many facts must have concurred, but this fact was doubtless a reason among others why Judas fell away. There was nothing which his narrow, selfish, prudent, and practical mind could grasp, in wealth, in rank, in organization, or in well-defined work even. What could such a mind do? It could not root in this light soil. Christ also, in the whole course of his ministry, seems to have made no distinction between men and women, or to have implied any inferiority in women.

This proof of the personal element in Christ's instructions should, in illustration, be carried one step farther. There were two things closely associated with his work that might easily have overborne its fine intellectual force: his miraculous power, and the presentations he should make of the character of God. If there is any one thing observable in the miracles of Christ, it is their sobriety and restraint. Who shall give law to miracles, and how rarely in the world's history have alleged miracles been kept within the bounds of any wholesome purpose? It is plain that Christ, in every portion of his ministry, was thoroughly aware of the stimulating and overpowering character of this sense of the Divine Presence which he bore with him, and constantly guarded himself and his disciples against it. As a consequence of this personal sobriety, all excitement was extinguished at once, and attention was exclusively directed to strictly spiritual truths and their spiritual enforcement. The unbelief neither of

the popular nor of the Rabbinical mind was encountered by power. When the disciples were exultant at their earliest participation in this gift, they received the caution: Rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in Heaven. Moreover, these supernatural manifestations were never disassociated either in Christ or his disciples with the rational, in some sense natural, conditions of faith—a state of mind concurrent with the facts. Some share of faith, both in giving and receiving, was the ground of the gift. If faith, the purely personal element, waned in the disciples, the power fell away with it. We find, therefore, the disciples of Christ well-nigh as circumspect in the use of this spiritual power as their Master, and never yielding themselves up to its intoxication.

Purely personal development is easily lost in religion by false views of the character of God, and of the conditions of divine favor. Such opinions were so prevalent in the time of Christ that religious faith wrought very little change in personal character. The zealot simply intensified, in a more or less troublesome and unfortunate way, certain ill-grounded opinions and actions, and was very likely to avenge himself for the unnatural restraints put upon him in one direction by license in other directions. Thus religion might easily make him a less lovable rather than a more lovable man, one less ready rather than more ready to be taken up into the true harmony of a spiritual kingdom. Christ taught that the merciful should obtain mercy; the pure in heart should see God; the peace-maker should be called the child of God. The whole force of the Divine Presence, like light and heat, wrought for growth in personal qualities. There was no method of approach to God, and no unity with him, which was not of this personal, spiritual character.

Christ brought his disciples close within the circle of his own personal qualities, gave them truth permeated with feeling, and passing before their very eyes into action. Personal qualities, therefore, found in the disciples rapid unfolding. The presence of Christ was like the sunshine of spring, in which change follows quickly on change. Any thing subject to these stimulating influences must either grow or decay, and that at once. The attractive force of Christ's presence we discover in the eleven; its repellant power is disclosed in Judas. In a less vigorous atmosphere the buds might not have pushed, and the mildew might not have followed. By this divine schooling of the thoughts and affections toward himself, Christ restored to the disciples a true conception of God, till He became a Pervasive and Benign Presence, whose clearest disclosure was in the Son of God. There was nothing, therefore, in the character of God, as at length apprehended by the disciples, to misdirect or repress their personal life, but the reverse every way.

But this supreme importance of the personal element is distinctly put by Christ in parables, illustrations, and principles. The shepherd leaves the ninety and nine and goes into the wilderness in search of the lost sheep. The Pharisee, as he stands at prayer in the temple, has no advantage over the publican. The humility of the one, as contrasted with the pride of the other, makes an easy way for itself to the heart of God. The widow with her two mites bears off the divine approval. The life is more than meat, says Christ, and the body more than raiment. Not that which entereth into the man defileth him, but that which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

Thus absolutely, in every direction, and in every particular, did Christ ground his instruction and his king-

dom on the personal element in its perfect freedom. Here is a kingdom that can be borne anywhere by any one, and can gather into itself all everywhere. It is as colorless as white light, and yet it brings out the native color of all things. It is organic, but organic after the model of the highest life; each molecule is bound by a secret affinity to its own place and its own office, and to every other molecule in its place and its office.

The part which this fact of a purely personal discipline plays in the kingdom of Christ will be more clearly seen if we contrast it with some of the aberrations of this truth that have attended on the history of the Christian church. An initial term in its theology is sin; most of its doctrines turn on this idea. Fundamental as this fact is in the Christian system, it has easily been distorted, and made to play a false part in life; and that because it has not been expressed in a personal way on a personal basis.

The sense of sin has been intensified vaguely, as if the mind were to receive on this side its great recoil toward God. It has been spoken of as against a perfect law and an infinite God; and things not sinful or sinful in a slight degree, mere forms of action, have been made to bear an immense load. The remedies of sin have become correspondingly artificial; and this strong feeling, obscured and ill-directed, has been used to excite superstitious fears, to push forward devotees in misconceived lines of action, and to make the whole spiritual problem false and painful in its rendering.

Because sin is so certain and so significant a fact, it is the more needful that it be dealt with directly in its individual forms and under its specific remedies. One may be aware of the seeds of disease in his physical constitution; this is not an occasion for general alarm and

random effort, but for careful inquiry and precise action. The problem of sin is not an abstract one, but one eminently concrete, capable only of individual interpretation and correction. In general alarm may be found a force working against needful remedies and aggravating existing evils.

It often happens that those who suffer most from the maladjustments of society, fail to aid in their removal, when the occasion is offered. The evil being misunderstood in its true sources, in the exact distribution of wrongs and so in their real correction, simply maddens the mind,—makes it blind, irritable, and exacting. There is much to be regretted in the relation of labor and capital, yet the laborer, misapprehending the extent and grounds of the difficulty, may easily and often does spoil a promising experiment of coöperation by failing in that spirit of endurance, forbearance, and trust on which its success depends. He covets prosperity, but is not able to supply the personal terms on which it hinges.

The same is true of the sense of sin. Ill-defined, unexpounded in a personal way, it has left the mind eager and fanciful, driven it into absurd efforts, and withdrawn it from the only efforts which could be successful. It has led the ascetic to overlook actual sins and to create factitious ones, and so to pervert the functions of spiritual life by an inner fever of superstition. The nature of sin, above most things, requires constant disclosure and daily correction by personal and social experience. Sin lies in the violation of those individual and social laws by which the harmony of our life is reached. Sin is only seen correctly in the light of a clear idea of the integrity of the individual and of society. Each man must understand how various the changes and how manifold that must take

place in himself, before he can either come into entire self-possession, or can contribute without disturbance his quota to the common weal, or receive from it a full share of its gifts. In other words, one must see clearly the Kingdom of Heaven in its constructive constituents and the paths leading to it, and at the same time be profoundly sensitive of the guilt of maintaining or placing any obstacle in its way. Sin is thus clearly defined by the want of conformity of the actual orbit of our lives to the perfect orbit toward which God is pressing them. The whole problem of religion is first a personal and then a public one, and so Christ treated it. The fulness of each life and the harmony of lives, the harmony of lives and so the fulness of each life; this is the new, the enlarging and changeable, conception which must guide our thoughts.

The direct and primarily personal form which Christ gives to spiritual principles and the spiritual problem, is a most significant feature of his method, as contrasted with those of his own time, or with those habitual among men. He is never for an instant bewildered by forms offering themselves in place of spirit; or by conditions in advance of the powers they address. He rules the world from its only legitimate throne of authority, the soul of man; and herein he discloses the permanence of his power.

CHAPTER II.

Rationality in the Words of Christ.

When we speak of a thing as rational, we understand that it approves itself to our knowing powers in their normal action; it is intelligible to them. Reason, as we are now to use it, is an inclusive term for our intellectual faculties. We have various means of knowing, which give us distinct results with changing degrees of certainty. These faculties, taken singly and conjointly, acting in their own fields and under their own laws, define the scope of our knowledge. Reason also includes feeling, so far as feeling aids the action of an intellectual power. The microscope embraces not merely the lenses that transmit the light, but the mirror also which reflects light on the object under consideration. Our powers of comprehension are in many ways dependent on our feelings, and to this degree embrace them.

That which conforms to our aggregate powers of knowing is rational; that which does not conform to them is irrational. There has often been connected with religious faith, though less now than hitherto, a prejudice against reason. Religious dogmas have refused to submit themselves unreservedly to reason. If we use reason broadly, as we have now defined it, this repugnance cannot be justified. It arises partly from mal-judgment, and partly from mal-purpose. Error is wont to be made up of these two ingredients in variable proportions. There would hardly seem to be any statements more self-evidently true

than these. Every thing that is to be known is to be submitted to the knowing powers. Every thing that is to be done in a conscious and wise way, is to be done knowingly. Knowledge and wisdom have one method of increase.

There are some simple qualifications rather than limitations which these first truths call for. There are many things beyond our knowing faculties. These are of two kinds: those intrinsically—that is, by very nature—beyond our knowledge, and those accidentally beyond it. We may arrive at the second class of facts through the testimony of others. To estimate and to accept the testimony of others is a part of our own rational action, and this indirect use of reason is as rational as its direct use. It is not without reason, but by reason, that we put ourselves, in suitable circumstances, under the guidance of others, ourselves setting limits to it. What we accept on the testimony of others must be in general harmony with what we know directly; and in case of a real conflict, we are sure of an error on the one side or the other. Our direct knowledge gives a law to our indirect knowledge, for the very nature of knowledge and the standards of knowledge are contained in our own powers of knowing.

The first class of unknowable things—those which lie beyond the circle of our faculties—is transcendental to us. We can have neither directly nor indirectly any knowledge of these facts. This is precisely what is meant by saying that they lie without the scope of our powers. Reason is shown in simply recognizing this fact, and in making no effort to transcend the limit.

With this understanding of reason and of its offices, it is impossible to see how any objection can be made to the assertion that religious truths and all truths are amenable to reason—are indeed the products of reason.

Certainly no rational objection can be made to the statement, for that would be to take an appeal to reason against reason. Rationalism must be the height of reason and of religion also. Certainly no one will be found willing that any doctrine held by him should be called irrational. If any thing we hold is irrational, and can be shown to be so, certain is it that sooner or later some one will undertake this task, and, succeeding in it, will disperse the belief, as sun-light absorbs a mist.

Only one thing can be said in resistance, and that is that the alleged religious truth is irrational only in the sense of transcending reason. But this means, if we speak understandingly, that it transcends all knowledge, since reason stands for our entire outfit of knowing powers; and so it becomes irrational to affirm what we do not know and cannot know. If the statement offered is one which lies within the scope of the faculties, but outside of their present action, and is thus appropriately referable to testimony, it still cannot be inconsistent with a wise interpretation of our experience. To grant this would be to make our knowledge contradictory, and in the contradiction to yield to inferior authority—to wit, that of testimony. One must rely on his own discrimination, in the first instance, as the ground of his belief in any one. Mere statement carries with it no proof. If a man cannot trust himself in the first steps of knowledge, he cannot in its second steps. If, therefore, his own knowledge is contradicted, not apparently but actually, by the assertions of another, these cannot be accepted as a portion of his knowledge. Nor is the relation altered, if we refer the inconsistent assertion to Revelation. Our first empirical knowledge is God's disclosure to us of truth, and no later affirmation can be in contradiction therewith, without tumbling down the whole structure of knowledge.

This assertion of the ultimate authority of reason is strangely enough thought to be irreverential. Trust is felt not to be complete unless it has a measure of blindness in it. Faith is regarded as a resting on the unknown, not a resting on the known. Man is placed in reference to God in an attitude of antagonism and contrast; all that disparages human nature is thought to exalt the Divine Being. This is a very feeble philosophy of sin, and is no philosophy whatever of righteousness. Righteousness, right vision, right feeling, right action, are not thrust upon us in our weakness or our wickedness by divine power, but wrought in us, acting in conjunction with divine wisdom and grace. The highest point of spiritual light, that at which the work of God is most magnified and his revelation made most clear, is the mind of man, when the wisdom of God and the will of God are reproduced within it. When man is most debased, the plan of God, the grace of God, are most obscured. When man is most exalted, the work of God is most completely revealed. It is in the clear mind and pure heart that God is most divinely active and most uncovered in his action. There is no contrast but the closest union of the human and the divine in the apprehension of truth. God is not best represented by a priestess of Apollo, shaken by an overpowering frenzy, but by a prophet whose sober mind takes in a clear, calm, abiding vision. True reverence, identifying the divine thing with the best thing everywhere, bows lowest in worship in the noonday light of truth.

But the very nature of truth leads us to the same conclusion. Truth, in all its forms, is a kind of vision, a breaking in of light within the mind itself. How plain is this in our senses! What a marvelous world without us

is addressed to something still more marvelous within us! It is keen, inexplicable, and transforming sight and insight and construction that disclose to us the world in its brilliant light and gorgeous colors. Equally is it the complicated powers of intellectual vision that turn verbal statements into the permanent truths of science, or into the immutable laws of our social life. Nothing can do this but vision. Many things may make ready for vision, but nothing can take its place. Vision is reason, and reason is vision; and without vision we grope our way under the government of some blind impulse. To come out into a large place is simply to be where we can see, feel, comprehend; is simply to have gotten an outlook from one or another of the high places of reason, and to have been taken into the fellowship of reason.

None will deny that science, in spite of all its limitations, is having a very beneficial effect on theology. It is helping to lay out afresh the highways and private paths of that beneficent action which is binding anew the world together in its manifold physical and social dependencies. And what is this but giving a fresh and better definition of righteousness? While science cannot reach to the very spirit with which the good action is to be done, it helps us immensely in defining the action itself, and so in truly holding within it the divine inspiration. While the right method demands the right spirit, the right spirit demands not less earnestly the right method. And the harmony of the two is the harmony of reason. Reason is a skilful cultivation of the plants of righteousness. Wisdom is never seen to be wiser than when it ministers successfully, as in a garden, to various kinds of life which, in their secret forces, are quite beyond it. Progress lies in a perpetual enlargement of the action of reason.

There is one point of confusion in the relation of reason to religious truth, arising from the reflex action of feeling on apprehension. The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Practical religionists express this truth by saying: "If the Divine Spirit touches the hearts of men, scepticism will speedily give way to belief." Feeling, it is inferred, goes before belief, and the errors of belief must be corrected by a renovation of the heart. The relation here implied is a real one, but it only expresses an eddy in the stream, and not the main current; an eddy that is itself the result of the current, and but slightly modifies it.

What is the real difficulty in the spiritual action of the mind that is sceptical because scepticism is a partial defence against light which it is unwilling to receive? Plainly this very thing, that under one or another passionate impulse it has refused to put conviction in the foreground, and make conduct directly and completely dependent on it. Such a mind, whether it is subjected to the prejudices of belief or unbelief, has tampered with the eternal constitutional order of its own processes, and now requires that some simple truths should be thrown in upon it in a forceful way, like a shock of electricity, to restore its circulation. To do this is like putting a burning lens in the sun-light, and so giving the heat concentration enough to fire the fuel before it. This fact does not alter the laws by which light and heat perform their constructive offices in living tissue. When such a mind is awakened, it must resume that normal action by which truth is inquired into, and truth only partially felt is cheerfully obeyed. Observe, it is the fool who has said in his heart, There is no God; one whose intellectual and spiritual organization is suffering from paralysis. When we are inquiring after the hygiene of the soul, we are not to identify the remedies

of disease with the means of health. Doubtless the feelings often give direction to the thoughts, and assume a certain government over them. This fact, in the many mischiefs which arise from it, does not alter the normal relation of the thoughts and feelings to each other, but emphasizes it rather. The feelings are always terms in the understanding of any broad, moral question, because these questions are always dealing with the feelings, and more or less terminate in the feelings. But those feelings which are really able to elucidate the moral problem are rational feelings, feelings that have come under the previous government of the reason. The mirror in the microscope that helps vision, is one that is itself turned toward the light, and so can reflect light.

Our reason should be emotional, and our emotions should be rational, and the only way to secure this result is to place each and to maintain each in its constitutional dependence. Sun-light must have heat before it can build up the plant, but we cannot get heat without also increasing the light; the light, the heat, the actinic energy, come together and spring from one fountain. Our emotions may lose reason, and our reason may lose emotional force. In either case the result is fatal; in either case we have salt that has lost its savor, fit only to be cast out and trodden under foot; in either case we have but one remedy, to return to normal qualities and relations.

The perversion of belief by feeling is a fact that touches the believer himself not less nearly than the sceptic. We know how absurd and pernicious religious faith may become in an unintellectual and emotional people like the negro race; we know how blind and obstinate it may become in unprogressive minds. This separation is liable in different degrees to overtake religion in any place and in any person,

and so to result in that dangerous combination of intense feelings and convictions insufficiently sustained and guided by reason. Every measure of this division between thought and feeling is spiritual disorganization, and equally in the believer as in the unbeliever; nor is the tendency to it peculiar to either of them. The constitution of the human mind is the divine constitution of the spiritual world, and that constitution is, that the eye is to be single, and the whole body is to be full of light.

This simple and primitive relation of the reason to all spiritual action has been re-stated, in order that we may see more clearly its complete recognition by Christ. The intellectual atmosphere which Christ encountered was one peculiarly full of the mist of unreason and conventional opinion. A thousand things, with no foundation in the constitution of man or society, had fettered the force of religious convictions. The deep channels of truth had been choked up with the prolific growth of a stagnant pool. It was an aphorism that the Scriptures were like water, the traditions like wine, and the comments of the Rabbis like spiced wine. This submissive, dogmatic, and irrational temper Christ encountered at once with pure reason. One of the more justifiable of its requisitions was the rigid observance of the Sabbath. Christ, repeating again and again his works of healing on the Sabbath, met the rebukes he called out with the first truths of common-sense: What man shall there be among you that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath-day, will he not lay hold of it, and lift it out? How much, then, is a man better than a sheep? Doth not each one of you loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And might not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these

eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath-day? He put a true estimate on the law of clean and unclean things in the simplest and most direct way. Are ye also yet without understanding? Do ye not yet understand that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things which defile a man; but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man. The clear, uncompromising, rational way in which these statements are made is not less remarkable than the statements themselves. They flash broad day-light into the dark corners of men's minds. They brush away like cobwebs the entire net-work of thinking and reasoning prevalent among the Pharisees.

He encountered the Sadducees with a wide sweep of thought, in meeting their denial of a future life. Have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead but of the living. The greatness of the assertion—so runs the argument—is preposterously reduced, if Abraham and Isaac and Jacob are no more. He corrects at once those who were desirous to refer the disasters of men in a direct way to their sins. Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you nay; but except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish. Here is pure rationalism. The extreme follies of tradition he passes unnoticed, but he delivers direct and telling blows against its more defensible positions.

But attack in all ages is likely to be rational. The more important inquiry is, What is the new method of construction and defence? When John the Baptist sent his disciples to inquire of Christ—Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?—he made no affirmation, he offered no argument; he kept them with him for a time that they might see his works and hear his words, and then charged them with the message: Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me.

He did not require his own disciples to recognize at once his divine attributes. Not till he had been with them for a long time did he ask them, But whom say ye that I am? Even then the question seems to have been put chiefly to confirm their faith by a direct confession. Enclosed by the most narrow possible race-sentiment, national, and religious sentiment, he affirmed that the heirs of his kingdom should come from the East and the West, the North and the South.

His prevalent and peculiar method of instruction was parables. Evidently this form had some difficulties. The truths so declared made but an obscure impression on his disciples, accustomed as they were to a diverse style of teaching. On one occasion his disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb or parable. What was the reason of this method? The grand power of the parable is that it does not dogmatically deliver the truth, but must be interpreted in its inner significance by the mind to which it is addressed. He that hath ears to hear let him hear, says

Christ. He spoke to them in parables because they were so slow to use their powers, to see with their eyes and hear with their ears. The parable is not the very truth; it only suggests it, and cannot be taken as a formal statement in place of it. It must be discussed, and that, too, spiritually. It is the shadow of a substance, the image of the truth, and the outline must be seen and the relation traced by each mind. The parable cannot be used without understanding it; it cannot degenerate into barren dogma, nor into conventional phraseology. Christ was willing somewhat to lock up the truth, that men might be compelled to unlock it. Yet this concealment was, in fact, the most thorough possible disclosure. This instruction is of the same order with that which we find in the world; the truths of science are not statements, but things and events. No more rational appeal could possibly be made to the comprehending powers of his disciples than this of parables. They chafed under it simply because it demanded consideration on their part. It was no formal exhortation with which he gathered up the parable, He that hath ears to hear let him hear.

Christ, in contrast with the Scribes, is said to have taught with authority. Evidently we are to understand by this the personal authority which immediately and inevitably attaches to clear and coherent thought,—the authority innate in reason. The authority of the past, in all its forms of law, tradition, and comment, was with the Scribes. The mind of Christ gave spiritual truths a new impulse simply by the directness of his appeal to the minds and hearts of his hearers. They were startled by this manner of procedure as something revolutionary in the religious world. It set aside personal authority without so much as stopping to question it; it assumed the

authority of reason without even drawing attention to the fact.

But Christ went still farther. He gave the underlying principles of reason clear statement. He likened his words unto perennial waters flowing out of the mind itself. He likened himself and his disciples also unto light. No image is so fit as this image. Light has but one character, one method, one supreme office. To play the part of light is to carry with us revelation and beget new action under it. Unreason is to reason the same oppugnant state that darkness is to light. To narrow reason at any point is to mar in its office the regnant force.

Wisdom is justified of her children, is a formal statement of the same truth. The wise thing commends itself to the wise, and to them only; the rational thing to the children of reason, and to them only. Reason is a condition of receiving truth, as well as of giving it. The pearls of truth are not to be cast before swine. Those are but swine who trample these pearls under foot, and that, too, as a preparation for brute violence. If, therefore, thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. John the Baptist is spoken of as a bright and shining light in which men were willing to rejoice.

Where the claims of reason are put in a guarded and general form, men may be slow to deny them; yet there is comparatively little of that religious faith which refers itself to the words of Christ, that gives truth, as addressed to the reason, unqualified adherence. Take, as a single example, the doctrine of inspiration. Though it has become a very vague doctrine by being held in so many ways, and by being loosened again and again at some new point of pressure, the religious mind is

not willing to yield it wholly. The anchor has been dragging these many days, yet the timid sailor does not dare to weigh it, and commit himself to the winds—even though they be the winds of heaven. Yet inspiration, so far as it means any thing beyond the rational and spiritual hold of truth on the human mind, is putting authority in the place of reason, and blind obedience in place of insight. Euclid does not need to be inspired, because it has the final seal of manifest truth. It is only doubtful things that can be helped by inspiration, and timid minds that can be transiently sustained by it. Profound spiritual truths, like the love of God and the love of man, do not appeal less directly to our reason than those of mathematics; nor do they owe their authority less to their inherent rightfulness. Spiritual truth is luminous in itself, and does not wait on exterior light. Correggio correctly conceived the facts when he surrounded the Babe of Bethlehem with an intense halo, casting light on all faces. The inexpugnable truths of revelation are what they are, and do what they do, by virtue of an inner force and divine nature, that make themselves increasingly visible to every open and clear eye. Calm vision is what men need, and vision must be unconstrained. A command, a necessity, simply alarm and confound vision. The confused pupil can not see, because the teacher insists that he shall see, and see at once. All the cardinal declarations of Scripture are merely the frame-work of the spiritual universe of God, and if we would truly understand them, we must see them where they are, in the pathway of the Divine Reason as it moves among us creatively. The mind should not feel that it may stop short of vision, or that it needs any thing beyond vision.

But it may be thought, if fundamental moral truths must carry their own light with them, the same is not true of historic facts. Historic facts do indeed rest chiefly on testimony, and so we have always in them an element of authority. But that element can not in the Scriptures be inspiration. Inspiration is in this way put to an impossible use. We meet with two historical difficulties in the canon as regards authority: its own authenticity and the truthfulness of its writers. Of these two difficulties, the first is first in order, is incomparably the greater, and is beyond complete removal. Here we are and must remain on uncertain grounds of reason. Inspiration, if we allow it to be verbal, does not touch this difficulty, does not take hold till this difficulty is overcome. We have, then, by the doctrine of inspiration built an arch, planting, as we allege, one foot of it on the granite of the divine affirmation, and the other on the shifting sand of historic criticism. The result is incongruous and irrational. Our arch is seamed only the more quickly and the more dangerously by virtue of its unequal footing. Inspiration can not do the work we wish it for, and it can greatly embarrass the mind in doing its own work. As regards moral principles it is a mere taper in the sun-light of truth, perplexing and vexing the vision ; as regards historic truth, it is no more effective than would be the addition of a glossary in settling the authority of a work, whose chief difficulties were found in connection with its authenticity. We burden ourselves with a superlative embarrassment, the assertion of exact and sufficient truth in every statement of the Scriptures, and yet are not able to establish the Scriptures themselves. Every thing in the Word of God which presents a difficulty to reason, is made, by this doctrine of inspiration, to tell directly

against their authenticity, which is the fundamental point of historic proof. It is far easier to accept the authority of an uninspired than of an inspired book. We also overlook in this doctrine the results of the fundamental fact in reason, that of growth. Complete truth can not exist for a finite mind, aside from the most simple and primary statements; and large truths can not be lodged in language, aside from the variable understanding of those who use it. Truths which transcend the writer and the reader are as yet unrevealed and unrendered; they are not truths. Reason is the measure and the only measure of truth; when authority enters, it and truth take their departure together.

The historic facts of the Bible have a more than ordinary historic basis, while in them and over them shines the purest spiritual light. They stand like a great character, majestic and real, through its historic force and spiritual integrity.

What, then, is the occasion of this doctrine of inspiration as something above and beyond reason? Precisely that which has been the occasion of an infallible pope and an infallible church; the reluctance with which men let go of authority, and fall back on reason. It was another idol set up over against these idols; another blind movement of unreason. Inspiration is the float on which the theological engineer builds his superstructure, before he gets it in position and is ready to sink it to its true foundations. It has become in the spiritual world that traditional element of menace and fear, which prevents our searching the Scriptures through and through, till we possess them and are possessed by them. Inspiration proceeds on the idea that men are dull, and timid, and wilful, and must be brought into ranks and marched in ranks,

marshalled by some single man, or council, or church. God alone trusts his creatures with their powers. A stern doctrine of inspiration has often been, to the sceptical mind, the obdurate shell in whose cracking the kernel of truth has been pulverized into dust. From no lips did ever a more severe censure fall on the disposition to proselyte men than from the lips of Christ, and the very essence of proselyting is the substitution of coercive and blind incentives for rational ones. If the mind is to be left with the truths of the Bible, it must be left with them. It is not a question of give and take, but of comprehension simply. Precisely in the measure in which unintelligible elements enter our faith, are we without footing in the spiritual world, and are made dependent, we know not on what under-current of remote forces. We may no more set aside one portion of our divine outfit in faculties than another; no more suspend reason by a doctrine than contradict our senses by a dogma, like that of transubstantiation. Our life is one, and must be maintained and ripened in its harmony and freedom. It is this fulness and concord of our faculties that Christ comes to give us. What we do against reason, we do against the completeness of God's work. Not till we have long been with Christ will he ask us, But whom say ye that I am? And even then one may speak for a dozen, and that one not half understand what he himself says. The ultimate problem is to see and to love and to live; the germ is vision, a guidance into all truth.

It is to be regretted that a statement of the order just made should be regarded as an attack, even an eager and acrid attack, on revelation. Its intention is quite the reverse. Inspiration, so far as it signifies any communication of truth that either in substance or form transcends

human apprehension, cannot issue in revelation. Revelation is the reverse of this, to wit, the perception of the truth according to its own nature as the truth. This is a simple process, embarrassed only by any thing extraneous to it. If we distinguish on the one hand the external conditions of the sacred writer, and on the other his own insight, the Spirit of Truth present with him, both must concur in apprehension. So far as he misses this, he misses the truth, both for himself and others. There is in this view not the slightest objection to the presence of the Divine Spirit, but to the idea that its presence issues in something less than insight. Insight, we must insist, is the highest product of the Spirit, and that insight is insight under the laws of insight, and to be used by other minds simply as insight. In the calcium light the combustion of the two gases owes its brilliancy to the glowing lime; the mind of the inspired writer is the seat of that concurrent action whose product is revelation. Any abnormal action confuses revelation itself, and confuses our use of revelation. What we affirm is, that revelation and reason do not miss each other, but that they concur at one point,—apprehension, knowledge, truth. Revelation is not to displace reason but to aid it, and it can only aid it by coming freely under its law. If it sets up another law, it brings embarrassment and conflict. The inspiration of the Almighty giveth—what?—*understanding*.

It may be a matter of surprise that those who most freely use reason often strive most determinedly to restrain its use in others; that they put down reason with reason. This action, if closely analyzed, seems to arise not so much from a distrust of reason, as from a mistaken trust in it. These persons imagine that the processes of

reason are more obvious and certain than they really are; and that appropriate emotions and actions flow from them almost by necessity. They thus think it right to require of others their own convictions. A Calvin identifies integrity in conduct and lucidity in thought, and makes his own action a standard of both. What is wanted under these circumstances is not less reason, but more reason; not less confidence in reason, but a wiser confidence in it. The logical process, which is only the central line of movement in thought, is often taken for the whole broad stream of knowledge. All the outlying parts of the broken and extended river determine its current, and so do all the emotional experiences of the man define for him his lines of conviction. Yet, as in the obscure flow of the river there prevails but one force—that of gravitation, so in the more complicated movements of mind there is but one law—that of reason. We cannot admit this law fully, save as we fully admit its condition, which is freedom. Experience is God's teacher for men, and it belongs to us to offer only a modest assistance in the schooling of the world.

Says that honored man, Professor Austin Phelps, in a discussion of future retribution: "The doctrine has an intense severity which is abhorrent to some of the profoundest instincts of our nature. The glare of it scorches the natural eye. We instinctively turn from it with consternation." There is no natural eye which is not meant to be an organ of vision, and which, rightly used, is not an organ of vision. There is no antithesis more fatal than one between our powers and God's revelation to those powers. The power and the revelation must forever meet in one result—truth. A conflict of the sort here implied is simply chaos in the spiritual universe, and the convulsions

of thought must proceed freely till order and peace reign. We may wait on the future for knowledge, we may struggle for it now; one thing we may not do: affirm disorder to be order, and the frozen waves of our own ruffled thoughts to be the rock of truth. That which repels our profoundest feelings is not yet understood by us; that which is confusion is not the divine problem solved; that which is inchoate is not creation. If there is any one thing notable in the words of Christ, it is a simple, direct, ever-returning appeal to reason. The truths of reason may at times be too profound for us, but we may be sure that they are there, and that when they are disclosed they will lie serenely in the light, like all that have gone before them.

CHAPTER III.

Spirituality in the Words of Christ.

The word idea is employed in its most general sense to express any intellectual state. One of the most observable and remarkable facts in the life of man is the degree in which he is governed by certain ideas, which constantly return to him. These ideas involve a circuit of feelings which support them, and are strengthened by a daily experience ordered under them. The ideas which rule different classes of minds have very different forms and very different degrees of extension. They may belong to a certain grade of civilization; they may pertain to a nation, or to a community within the nation; they may be the product of some one type of religious faith; or connected with some one class or some one profession; or they may be in a measure peculiar to an individual. The ideas which govern a miser are of this last order.

Ruling ideas are, however, greatly aided by the concurrence of many minds in them, and the precise phase of the spiritual forces dominant in any individual is a composite result of the interior tendencies and the exterior influences that have been joined together in the formation of these ever-returning ideas. A dominant conception of the things desirable, no matter of how little worth the things themselves may be, and of the method of their attainment, is a spiritual fact, and marks a spiritual government in every man. Even the savage is not

left wholly to his appetites. He begins to form opinions and to feel the constraint of opinions, and every step in civilization involves an increased transfer of ruling forces from the appetites which possess the body to the ideas which possess the mind. These ideas admit of but slow modification, and though occasionally set aside, are sure to return again in continuous action. They express the balance of convictions and feelings that has gotten hold of the mind; they acquire the force of habit, and increasingly exclude all opposed and foreign considerations. The ignorant and savage mind is not relieved from the government of ideas by the narrowness of its ideas; they are only the more irresistible by virtue of this fact. A stupid superstition is more difficult to displace than a more rational conviction.

There is something marvelous in the energy with which one type of thought comes to prevail in a church. Every one is challenged at the outer gate, and no one finds admission who has not the watchwords of the place. Once admitted, every mind is acted on in the same way; conventional influences concur with primitive tendencies in stamping deeper and deeper the prevalent ideas. A more or less distinct sense of opposition between churches serves to check the transfer of alien impressions, that might otherwise modify the ruling conceptions. Species are in this way formed in the intellectual and spiritual world, and their types are as carefully guarded against change as in the vegetable or in the animal kingdom.

Men are thus everywhere governed by ideas, with their affiliated feelings, which have in one way or another won possession of the mind, and whose present power is very little affected by any want of rational grounds in their past growth. These ideas are an existing dynasty, whose

authority is not overthrown by a simple denial of its legitimacy. The rank and file of an army may have every reason to revolt; physical strength is wholly on their side: yet there may be such a bondage of traditional ideas among them that a few officers are able to rule them in a most tyrannical way. When they do revolt successfully, it is under some new phase of a prevailing idea. An article recently appeared in the *Nineteenth Century*, written by one in the military service of Austria. It endeavored to show that England, made negligent by her insular position, has overlooked the rapid progress of the past few years in military science on the Continent, and, as a consequence, is utterly unable by force of arms to protect herself and her possessions from invasion. The simple, undiluted military idea of force, as the only defence of society, was applied throughout the article with the most depressing effect. It seemed impressed on the mind of the author that each European nation stands on a precipitous incline, and can maintain its position only by untiring and watchful exertion. Force settles all things, and must soon settle them to the disadvantage of the weak. The relation of Canada to the United States was adduced among many other examples of weakness in the British Empire. The assertion was that it would be easy for the United States at any time to occupy that province. The implication of the military idea was, that we were likely, at any time, to enter on so promising an undertaking with corresponding gain to ourselves and loss to England; that the notion of conquest was sure at some time to take possession of us, and that the possibility of defeat ought to be immediately present to the English mind.

The ideas of commercial advantage, of justice, of social well-being and good-will, which are becoming every day

more and more effective forces in the relations of these two countries, and already quite outweigh the military sentiment, seemed, in the conception of the writer, to sink out of sight in the presence of the impulse of military honor, and the delight of its gratification, The problem was discussed as if the people of the United States were a kind of predatory tiger, lying in wait for the favorable moment to make a spring; as if no gratification in the long run could be greater with them than that of inflicting injury under the general notion of national honor. The article was a startling disclosure of the presence of a thoroughly cultivated and widely influential class in society, governed by ideas as rude and barbaric as those of Genghis Khan.

That the military idea still remains deeply rooted in Europe is only too true, and its retrogressive and destructive character is vividly shown when the great English nation, under a stern array of facts, is exhorted to turn aside from its many undertakings at the ends of the world, and adequately arm itself against the Christian nations of Europe. If nations stand on such an incline as this, not only is it precipitous, it is made more so by each new effort at adjustment. Preparation for war is no protection against war, for the preparation is universal; and after each effort all resume the old relations with added strain and danger. The possibility of escaping such ideas as these, and putting in their place more enlightened and beneficent ones, is the possibility of progess. But men are ruled by ideas; the military impulse is but an idea; and they may therefore be ruled by increasingly noble and just ideas. If the convictions and feelings incident to good-will can be made forceful in their thoughts, all external expressions will conform to them and confirm them with wonderful rapidity.

Here, then, in ideas is the truly constructive centre of human society. He only builds for the future, who establishes, intensifies, and purifies the appropriate ideas.

Every one who is gifted with a philanthropic temper understands this, and is struggling for the government, in his own mind and in the minds of others, of those ideas which are able to reconstruct and bear forward human life. Men are possessed and controlled by ideas, and so the fitness, breadth, and beneficence of these ideas become the one comprehensive and significant fact.

Fine art is a question of ideas and forms; a question, therefore, of the spirit and the letter. Genius in art flashes out on the side of the idea. All constructive spiritual forces in the spiritual world show themselves as spirit, the spirit that maketh alive. Yet we know how inseparable are the two elements, spirit and form. While the letter may kill the spirit, it is none the less the letter that the spirit makes alive. While the dead letter is all that is left when the spirit sinks out of sight, it is the living letter that is present when the spirit rises into light. The spirit has no effective force save under the form that the letter gives it.

Any spiritual movement is at once disclosed, therefore, in its character by its treatment of forms and ideas. A true movement approaches forms only through ideas, and carries forward ideas at once into appropriate forms. Herein the method of Christ is preëminent. He is spiritual; he deals directly with ideas. Yet he pushes every idea into action, and treats every action under its own idea. Such a position, consistently taken, is the only universal one, and the only one universally effective.

This spiritual method starts with the individual and not with society. The primary factor is the individual.

Only as the individual first makes society, does society react on and make the individual. Christ commences with the earliest germs of our composite life in the spirit of man. The relation of the forms of religion—even the wisest and the most direct—in the discipline of man, is clearly put in the declaration: The Sabbath is made for man and not man for the Sabbath. Christ came eating and drinking, and so taught his disciples that the religious life lies even more in the wise use of liberty than in its wise renunciation. This is a truth which the early Church lost sight of, and which the Church, even down to our own time, has especially misapprehended. Men have striven to save the spiritual, as a dethroned king is saved, by flight, rather than to win for it its true sovereignty over physical things, intellectual powers, and social conditions.

Our Saviour declares that the pure in heart shall see God. We lose the full force of the words by interpreting them as if some Visible Presence were referred to, purity of heart being a condition of admission to it. Is not the idea rather that a pure heart is a primary medium of vision, by means of which the soul is made cognizant of the Pervasive Spiritual Presence about us? The doctrine of a spiritual life, complete within itself by virtue of its own clear and controlling conceptions, is nowhere more distinctly put than in the words of Christ to Nicodemus: Ye must be born again. The habitual ideas of a comparatively upright mind were brushed away by the assertion, as quite inadequate to lead up to a new life, for the life in Christ was emphatically to be a new life. The mind must be born into a realm of new ideas; must be born again. What these ideas are, is brought before us in the Lord's Prayer: Our Father who art in Heaven. Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in

earth as in heaven. They are the fatherhood of God, and the coming of a social state in which this fatherhood shall find full expression. Certainly none will deny that these ideas, comprehensively understood and passionately received, would be able to beget and nourish a life of such scope and felicity, that we have as yet only caught remote glimpses of it. This life would be a pure spiritual life, as it would be habitually maintained by the highest spiritual conceptions. In proportion as this idea of a Pervasive Presence of Love in the world, and of its power to reconstruct all things for itself, holds the thoughts and calls out the affections of men, are the conditions present for a spiritual kingdom.

Social progress, therefore, is as spiritual in its ultimate terms as is individual growth. There is no union of men, save through the affections; and there is no harmony of the affections, save as they are gathered by one comprehensive idea under one law. If there is no supreme idea, no common and supreme relation present to men's minds, there can be no synthesis in thought or action. With or without theism, the spiritual kingdom must be built by a supreme faith and conviction of some sort. It must first find a centre in men's minds, that it may later find it in their lives. The simple desirability of union is not the basis of union, this must be found in the living convictions which can sustain it. If love is not the rational basis and frame-work of the universe under its truest conception, no effort to make it so on the part of men can prosper. We cannot love men, save as we are bound to them under rational ideas, whose natural product is love. The particular cannot rule the general. The general must call out and sustain the particular. We may wish each philanthropist all possible success in bind-

ing men together, but the fundamental condition of success remains a coherent idea whose direct issue is the law of love, the law which Christ put in the foreground as the command: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. It is out of spiritual ideas that spiritual life proceeds; out of the life of God that our life flows; in his life that our lives move and have their being. Without the sustaining idea of a Supreme Rational Presence in the world, pure and pervasive love finds no sufficient support. "Certain it is that the new epoch will not conquer unless it be under the banner of a great idea, which sweeps away egoism, and sets human progress in human fellowship, as a new aim, in place of restless toil, which looks only to personal gain." [1]

Two limitations crowd on the spiritual development of man. Perfect love is not applicable, save between perfect beings. The ignorance, debasement, and vice of men put corresponding restraints on trust and affection between them. Rational love can not lose sight of excellence, and is ultimately for excellence. We are to love our neighbor as we love ourselves; and we cannot love our own lives, save as they are seen to move toward a comprehensive and permanent ideal. The law of love, then, can find incipient action only as a spiritual idea of each life, and of a kingdom uniting all lives, is present to call it forth. If any one seeks a "synthesis of humanity," he must not merely recognize the two laws of Christ, he must possess, deeply implanted in his thoughts, those conceptions which sustain these laws, and give them movement in the mind. Love for our lives such as they now are, love for our fellow-men such as we find them, viewed under the ever-returning

[1] "History of Materialism," Lange, vol. 3, p. 361.

condition of deep division and petty strife, can only follow from some profound truth that is passing into the light and carrying all hearts with it. The spiritual wisdom and power of Christ are found in the antecedent ideas he holds in his own mind, and plants in the minds of others as the germs of life. We are not called on to draw our inspiration from a remote ideal, which gains no expression in existing facts, but from an over-mastering, spiritual Presence, pushing the ideal toward us, and pushing us toward the ideal. When the ugly facts just about us block the way, we have not an ideal and a real wrestling with each other, but the inner life of the real is seen to be moving toward the ideal, and to be at one with it.

The second limitation is that men never conceive the law of love clearly, save in the degree in which they obey it. The object of Christian truth is to organize men under this law, and yet it is plain that it has accomplished this result only very partially, even with those who have accepted it. Character is Christian character only as it is more lovable than all other character. Yet Christian men have not judged their own characters or the characters of others in this way. The true standard by which to criticise any phase of faith is the human synthesis wrought by it, the attractive force of its ultimate units, the organic spiritual powers that draw its members together, the wisdom and grace of the ideas that rule them, the kind of kingdom and the strength of the kingdom in which they are coalescing.

Men seem to think that salvation is an invisible fact of some order to be taken on faith. It is rather a supremely visible fact, open to the most common and to the most scrutinizing observation. It is the fact of a new organic force in the individual shown in increased integrity—as

inner unity,—and increased love—as outer power. It is a fact which we must all feel, therefore, as we approach it; it was the fact that made the early Church so conspicuous. The magnet is a magnet because it has the attractive power of one. The spirituality of the method of Christ is seen in his presentation of appropriate ideas, and in his reliance on the continuous extension of these ideas within themselves. Nor are they ideas which rest in the mind of man simply; they gather up rather the whole force of the spiritual universe, and bring it to work with the mind of man. Man aids in a work of which he is by no means the author. He is not called on to make a kingdom, but to learn to play his part in a kingdom that is in the processes of construction.

The significance of the great increase of emphasis laid by Christ on the passive virtues, meekness, patience, forgiveness, as contrasted with the active virtues, courage, self-assertion, justice, is apparent in this connection. We no sooner forecast the future broadly, we no sooner come under the government of an omnipresent constructive idea, than we find occasion for patience, that we may not be unduly fretted by delay; for forgiveness, that we may cut short none of the forces which work for success; for meekness, that we ourselves may enter with a chastened and obedient spirit into this kingdom of harmony and love. The passive virtues are called out by the presence of overshadowing ideas, and they help, as a gentle providence, to nourish all the spiritual powers of every human soul. Though our Lord was in no degree destitute of the bold, active virtues, his unusual lustre of character was found in the passive virtues, his power to rebuke adverse influences by waiting on their natural correctives. The active virtues are to the passive ones what rashness is to

wisdom, what boldness is to love; they hold but a small portion of that moulding power by which great events are slowly nourished into life. A main point in the Kingdom of Heaven is how to escape the weakness of its inception, how to reduce the first strain of its imperfections, how to teach the strong to bear the burdens of the weak. The active virtues make haste to overcome evil, but they expect to do it with evil; the passive virtues are content to abide by the slow remedial measures of the good itself. A supreme spiritual idea, brooding over all impulses, begins at once to call out the passive virtues, and to hold in check the active ones,—to become a creative spirit.

The Churches which have sprung up out of the life of Christ have especially fallen off from his spirituality. This has been due to the disproportioned force of forms and of visible things over the minds of men. The spiritual life must renew itself many times and in many ways before it can win its own. A Church has fitness only as it gives the best immediate discipline. It stands in no closer relation to the Kingdom of Heaven than any one university to the world of letters. The universal, historical Church, if we attempt to mean thereby any thing more than the unity of the Kingdom of Heaven foreshadowed in the pure thoughts of pure men, is a misleading fancy, the scope of whose import is sought in external facts, not in internal life. No matter in what Church-fellowship our Lord may be found, his language will still be: I have sheep which are not of this fold.

If we look upon the Kingdom of Heaven as that complete spiritual life which is to prevail on the earth, we cannot say that its centre is to be found in any existing organization, that its progress will necessarily reduce these organizations to any one type, or that they will act

otherwise than as movable centres ready to be thrown into higher relations with each other, as the rhythmic movement takes more complete possession of them. It is not the purpose of spiritual unity to abolish individual diversities, but to hold them in more immediate ministration to each other. Our only safe assertion is, that as the inner force of spiritual life increases, it will take the place of the unity of external methods and rites, and these, both as divisive and unitive agencies, will be reduced to their lowest terms. The coherence of all spiritual life in successive ages and in diverse persons and places, is an idea that cannot receive too much emphasis, because it is that inner organizing idea which watches over its own fulfilment. But this is a fact which, far from demanding any immediate expression, or perchance any expression, in external organization, is rather present to our thoughts for the very purpose of reducing the conflict between existing Churches and existing tendencies, and giving an inner ground of union only the more apparent by virtue of the diversities of persons, times, and places. It is not oneness but unity, not sameness but harmony, not constraint but liberty, not quiescence but movement, that are sought for. The equilibrium of the Kingdom of Heaven is a dynamical, movable one; its centre masters all subordinate centres by their activity and its own activity. We can only rise to a Church universal by rising quite above any one Church, and yet by not losing any Church in its own sphere.

The spirituality of the idea which Christ bore with him, and strove to implant in its pure form and with its appropriate governing forces in the minds of his disciples, is especially manifest in his presentation of his relation to God on the one hand, and to his followers on the other.

When Philip said to him, in those last hours of communion in which the eleven were seeking, and yet how blindly, for the guiding ideas of truth: Lord, show us the Father and it suffices us, Jesus said unto him: Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father, and how sayest thou then show us the Father? Here was an outcry of the senses. Philip would fain see the truth. He longed for an open door by which he could enter bodily into the kingdom.

The words of Christ wholly set aside the notion that the Kingdom of Heaven is to turn, or can be made to turn, on any new visible effects; that any further revelation was at present possible. An Invisible Presence was already present in visible things, and must be found there, or not found at all. The supreme idea, that of a Heavenly Father, had expressed itself in Christ; had been worded forth again and again by Christ. That idea, in its own spiritual order, must take possession of the minds of his disciples, and rule them. Otherwise Christ had spent three years with them to no purpose. This clinging of the minds of men to a sensible manifestation, is like that which binds timid birds to the nest, or inexperienced swimmers to the shore. This spiritual lesson had a rehearsal in Peter. He was bold enough to venture on the water, but not bold enough to walk on it. Christ was an open door to his disciples, by which they entered the world of spiritual ideas; saw them as he saw them, and felt them as he felt them.

The same relation is taught in another form, when he assures his disciples that it is expedient for them that he should go hence, but that he will pray the Father, and he shall give them another Comforter, that he may abide

with them forever, even the Spirit of Truth. Every supernatural manifestation, every special revelation, is to be regarded as an effort to help forward weak and immature minds onto a truly spiritual footing. The physical presence of Christ came to occupy too exclusively the senses of his disciples, and so got in the way of his words. It displaced that inner vision of truth, which was the real revelation of God. It became needful, therefore, that their training should be altered, that they should be led to a deeper, stronger, more self-reliant grasp of the truth by the very Spirit of Truth.

The bold figure in which Christ asserts that his disciples are to eat his flesh and drink his blood, is but a striking way of insisting on the fact that they must become full partakers of his ideas, and so of his life. The grossness of the image was fitted to save the mind from any literal use of it, and the force of the image from any misapprehension of it. Yet the truth was not quite won, nor the error quite escaped, and so men traveled by the obscure road of transubstantiation and consubstantiation up to the light.

These shreds of thought, which seemed for a long time to the disciples but cobwebs floating in the air, visible only for short distances, and from particular positions, were the living filaments of the new spiritual growth, which was to root itself in all minds, transform all hearts, and lead men at length to understand that the Kingdom of Heaven is within them, the plants of righteousness having no other soil than the human soul. The proof of the Messiahship of Christ is essentially for us what it was for his disciples. They were called in one way to translate the visible into the invisible, and we are called to do the same thing in a somewhat different way. Those who

can make the translation will believe in the divine message, no matter to what generation they belong; and those who can not make the transfer, share neither the vision nor the belief. Historic proof is nothing, and the vision of the senses is nothing, save as they are accompanied by the insight of the spirit into the spiritual message. The meaning of the cypher saves the cypher from being meaningless. In the degree in which we see the transcendent force of the message, will our difficulties about the messenger fall away. The highest truth in all departments is self-verified. Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?

The ease with which the mind dwarfs a truth as yet too large for it, is seen in the cunning mechanism of law which theology has built up between man and God—a mechanism so difficult of management, that neither man nor God nor both conjointly can handle it without terrible loss. A chief office of Christ is to attain a position in which he can bear this loss, and make this needful sacrifice. We search the words of Christ in vain for the expression of such a purpose. He is the revelation of God, he is a reconciliation of ideas; he who hath seen him hath seen the Father.

The parable of the prodigal is the most explicit, the most beautiful, the most purely spiritual exposition of the relation of man to God. It was only necessary that the prodigal should come to himself, and so return to the Father. The mistake was one of convictions and feelings. The elder brother may well stand for the theological temper. He felt that more difficulties and delays should have been put in the way of the prodigal, that it was not fair to the righteous to make so easy the return of the unrighteous. Here was a righteousness that had gotten an

advantage against the sinner, which it did not quite like to yield.

Men are spiritual in this sense, they are ruled by ideas, and the more so as they advance in intellectual life. Christ would make them spiritual in this sense, that he would put them under the government of the truest, broadest, purest idea,—the idea on which alone the spiritual universe can rest, that of a Supreme Pervasive Reason. Reason can no more be malignant than it can be negligent, no more be concessive than it can be exacting, but must struggle for the synthesis of all thoughts and all hearts under its own constructive law of love—love which is the inner force of reason. It is plain that if such an idea can reign in men's minds, it will bring strength, harmony, peace; and that in the degree in which this idea is wanting, these also must be wanting. This is the secret of Christ and the secret of the Kingdom of Heaven. We shall not easily apprehend how great a thing this is: that Christ should at once and fully master the problem of human life, should offer no false motives, should enter on no partial methods, should look forward to a spiritual unity of the race, and should bring into the foreground the ideas which can alone be productive of it, and which must underlie it when it is accomplished. To see Christ in this relation and in this attitude is to recognize him as the Master of Life, is to know him as Philip should have known him.

CHAPTER IV.

The Law of Truth.

The law of truth is the fundamental fact in rational life. Truth, as a law, implies the power to inquire into things, to understand them, and to conform our action to our apprehension of them. To do this is the nature and province of reason. Physical events are interlocked with mental life, and the two move on together by virtue of the law of truth, the power of the mind to understand things and so to adapt itself to them, and them to itself. All parallelism between the two movements, that of physical events and of spiritual activities, is secured and maintained by the law of truth. Facts come under the government of reason only by comprehension, and reason submits itself to facts without injury only by comprehension. The point of contact between the two is always this of knowledge, and the fitting line of action is always in conformity with the truth. The law of truth is as broad as the reason, and nothing that is present to our conscious, spiritual life is present under any other condition.

We do not at once see how much is involved in this law of truth. Truth, as a law, does not imply mere facts of any and all sorts, but facts that stand in definite and permanent relations to each other and to us. A disclosure to reason is not one to the eye merely, but to the mind also. The mind has no part in the revelation till a principle of order is discovered. What science really

shows, and what it is justly so proud of showing, is that this second and greater disclosure to the mind of order is as universal as the disclosure to the senses, and that there is, therefore, nothing present to us anywhere in the Universe as sensitive beings which is not also present to us as rational beings. This surprising assertion our increasing knowledge is making good every year. Local and feeble as seems to be our personal presence, we lay down directions of action which the near and the remote, the secret and the subtile forces of the world fully sustain, and we shape conclusions which far-off events in the Universe come forward to support. That is, mind, as a comprehending and voluntary power, is in extended harmony with the world as a fixed and unfolding series of events; and the inference is ready to follow, that this harmony of being and reason is universal and complete.

This certainly is a startling fact, and in some sense puts man in possession of the world. This absolute and extended harmony between things which do not seem to include or involve each other, is the one great fact of the Universe. Mind does reflect the Universe, and the Universe does reflect mind, and the two are united under the law of truth. Either the two have been shaped together by mind under one rule of reason, or the two have grown up together as correlative facts of the general order; either this harmony is rooted in reason, or reason is rooted in this harmony. To take the latter view is to decide in favor of the blind, the instinctive, the irrational, as the final constructive term in the Universe, as against the conscious, the intelligent, the rational. If we do this consistently, the reason with which we close our development will be of no higher order than that with which we open it; the apparent concurrence of thoughts and things will still rest

in the nature of things and not of thoughts; man will be but one thing among things.

When men reflect how absolutely universal the intelligible is, with what a net-work of relations it embraces the world, they are not willing to refer these results to blind physical causes, till they have endowed these causes with some of the attributes of intelligence. Hence it becomes a favorite method with those who regard the idea of development as the ultimate explanation of all things, to confound the terms in this equation of truth, giving to nature the attributes of mind and to mind those of nature. They solve this wonderful relation by perverting its facts. They start the process by a vigorous setting aside of mind in its normal powers, they continue it by a subjection of mind to matter, they end it by an obscure transfer of the pilfered powers of mind to matter. At every step they contradict our rational experience, and close the movement by locating intelligence in things where its presence is least apprehensible, and denying it in a corresponding measure to mind where its presence is most apprehensible. The controversy seems to resolve itself into the questions: Whether what we know as reason, intelligence, has its ultimate seat in matter or in mind? Whether its later manifestations in mind, to which alone our consciousness extends, are secondary and incidental, or, in the order of reason, are primary and supreme? or, again, Whether the relation of time is the superior relation, or that of reason? If the problem is to be understood, the human mind cannot for very long be so untrue to itself as to satisfy itself with an explanation that stultifies the explanatory power, and abolishes the explanatory process as one of reason. Certainly construction, as an instinctive movement of intelligence, is less intelligible than the idea of conscious

construction, from which alone we derive our notion of intelligence.

The law of truth, whether it arises from the productive force of mind or the productive force of matter, is the peculiar law of reason. The two are commensurate. So far as they are intelligible relations reason may go, and reason can go no farther. As, however, there are such relations in the entire Universe, reason has the range of the Universe.

Nor is the relation of truth to our emotions less complete. The feelings have their first and lowest centre in the body. They start in sensations which are obscure and local—obscure in that they reveal nothing beyond themselves, and local in pertaining immediately to some portion of the body. The growth of special senses in animal life does not alter the physical character of the feelings, though it greatly enlarges their sweep in reference to their sources. These obscure sensations of the earlier forms of life carry the conditions of action beyond the states of the body. In organic life stimuli arise from some change within the body. The special senses gather stimuli from a broad circle beyond the body, the ear ranging over miles and the eye over many miles. The first mastery of space—or ordering of action in reference to external objects—comes from the special senses. But these alone give no government in time. The animal, by its special senses, cannot break beyond the charmed moment it may chance to occupy. The organic action and the instinctive action of the animal have reference to time, but only by virtue of the presence of that obscure constructive principle we term life, and not by any recognition in consciousness of elements that involve time. When sensations are united to memory in consciousness, then arise actions with

direct reference to time. A consciousness whose terms are made up of sensations held fast in memory begins to supply incentives from the past for the government of the present. From this centre of sensation, an animal experience, involving time relations, may slowly creep onward, may be coherent within itself, and may give quick and safe conditions to action. As the senses are a virtual expansion in space of the terms of life, so the coherence of these sensations in memory gives a kindred extension in time.

Many are ready to believe that this statement is not merely a first statement, looking toward human life, but one that covers in outline its entire experience; and this, notwithstanding the great variety of feelings which belong to the fully developed man, the vast range of his intellectual and emotional activity, both in space and in time, and the fluctuating and indeterminate character of his spiritual incentives, looked upon as sources of coherent action. The experience of the brute perfects itself as far as it goes. It gives immediate and relatively safe impulses. The experience of man lies scattered over an immense field, and shows, in reference to it, neither prompt nor safe action; it has but a feeble organizing power. No fair philosophy of life will fail to recognize the sudden and great expansion in man of the data of action both in space and in time, and the accompanying uncertainty and waywardness of movement that characterize him. What is the explanation?

We believe that the explanation is found in the fact that man, by individual and collective experience, is taking up a new and higher centre of life. The primary fact in this new life is disclosed in the law of truth. The senses give us facts; they do not give us truths. It may indeed be said that these facts involve truths, but they involve

them only for the reason; they are not contemplated, in a simply sensational experience, as containing truths. All that such an experience requires is that they should be felt as facts on their sensational side. As facts, they do their work directly and rapidly. Nor does a simply conscious and continuous experience, lying about this centre of sensation, alter the relation. The records of sensations in experience are simply another train of facts, the product of a previous train; and this second train, by virtue of memory, acts on the sensibilities precisely as the first train acted on them.

Truth, on the other hand, has to do with facts, not as facts, but as the language to the mind of invisible relations and principles. The truth-craving temper is no more satisfied with sensations than the linguist is satisfied with the characters of a language he cannot read. The great need of a sensational experience is that it shall respond quickly and accurately to the facts so near it in space and time as to concern its well-being. This response is secured by organic life, by instinctive life, by sensations, memory, and the accumulated connections of experience; and all the more exactly because of the narrow range of the activity. Truth is no product of an experience of this order, nor is it needed in perfecting it. On the other hand, it is sure to embarrass it, as double vision may embarrass the eye. A printer sets his type more rapidly and correctly if he gives no attention to the meaning of that which he composes. Animal life owes its felicity of action to the narrowness of the terms it contemplates, and the directness of the incentives it feels.

The power to discern the truth as truth, on the other hand, gives the mind at once new conditions, new impulses; starts it from a new centre; and carries it immensely be-

yond the range and the wants of sensational life. Simply seeing the stars does not much expand the world; but understanding them in their nature, position, and relations, this gives the mind such a shock of heat and light as turns a solid into a gas. This notion of truth immediately confers a new centre of action, a new arrangement of experience around that centre, and calls for an immense accumulation of the results of this experience. Not only does truth, by its extent and coherence, lead the mind to transcend immeasurably the limits of sensation, but what it so gathers it reunites to sensation only in a limited degree. The truth satisfies the mind as itself a primary reward of pursuit, and the conformity of the thoughts to it, their commensuration with it, become a delight. A new set of feelings, sustaining this new movement, spring up from it, and thus the mind becomes rooted in an intellectual soil and grows there. To be sure, it has not lost its former physical connections, but it has thrown them into new relations around a higher centre. It feels no compulsion, sooner or later, to bring back its gains to animal life, but weighs its animal life by its ministration to this new wealth.

On the other hand, the power to understand the truth, the power of reason to take to itself the range of the Universe along the invisible lines of thought, includes the power of reason to direct its own inquiries, and to govern its action in a new way—to wit, by the truth. Thus an intellectual product intellectually apprehended comes to be the law of an intellectual life, more and more coherent within itself, and knitting itself together with the accumulated insight and varied emotional experience of the human race. Human life is no longer merely conscious, combining facts as it finds them in a narrow experience;

it is spontaneously active toward the truth, and the truth guides it in a career of spiritual construction. This is what we mean by spiritual life—a life that is constructed about the centre of truth, under the law which truth brings to rational action, and sustained by the affections which the truth calls out between man and man, man and God. This involves the constant exercise of will, and will finds its office in bending action to the pursuit of truth and obedience to the truth. This conformity is virtue, and the failure to conform is vice.

Instead, therefore, of the return of the rational mind to its starting-point in sensation, it strives more and more to transfer all its possessions to its new position. New and enlarged offices are assigned the senses, and the facts of the senses accrue not merely to the benefit of the animal life, but still more to that of the spiritual life.

But the intellect can never be far or long in advance of the feelings, and the development of the new life lies chiefly in enlarging and deepening the affections, in making them the conditions of new insight, and in putting them in association with the lower feelings without the loss of their own character. The law of truth, though first a law of thought, is equally a law of feeling, and it becomes both to our thoughts and feelings an harmonious law only by a steady unfolding along the lines of voluntary action.

From this view of the philosophy of our spiritual life, there follows at once the recognition in it of an inexhaustible potentiality. Truth is coherent and complete within the Universe about us. Its principles also approach our powers and subject themselves both to our ability to comprehend them and our power to obey them. We can, therefore, assign no limit to the degree of service

that may ultimately be rendered us by the world about us. The inner potentiality of this law is still greater. Obedience moulds the mind that obeys. When obedience is measurably complete, both in the individual and in society; when it passes freely its accumulated gains from generation to generation, there will be no restraints in those inner transformations wrought by the law of truth. The grand principles and powers of the spiritual world can pour themselves freely out in human society, as the musical conception of a Mendelssohn rolls on in a sacred oratorio. In this direction every thing is pliant, every thing possible. Intelligent obedience is all that is wanting.

But great potentialities involve great liabilities, and spiritual life is in its development marked by failure and delay. We can not put an immense distance between the starting-point and the goal for one purpose and in one relation, and not find it there in other relations also. The greatness of the thing to be attained involves a corresponding variety in the means employed and length of time in their use. Nor can this spiritual consummation remain one of growth under spiritual powers without being open to the chances of vacillating and recessive movements. While liberty is not chance, it greatly increases the range of accidents. While a rational liberty is being achieved and brought under its own laws, it is only partially obedient to lower laws. The first fruit of freedom is a relaxation of law; the full resumption of law is its last result. Those who deny liberty in man should none the less see that he is the least well governed of all animals, and that his actions are constantly escaping into lawlessness, so far as any higher ends are concerned. This obvious weakness at the point at which the perfection of

the workmanship should be greatest, finds correction and compensation to the eye of reason only by the introduction of a new voluntary law, which, once established in clear intellectual light, will yield greater flexibility than any physical law, equal certainty, and nobler construction. Perfection of adjustment, combined with certainty, belongs to reason; this only satisfies reason. But reason has its own laws of development, its own conditions of introduction and action; and an interregnum in the steps of evolution between laws so diverse as those of organic life and those of spiritual life is necessarily one of grave perplexities and manifest evils. Men dash at conclusions much at random. They glorify reason, they admire its fruits, yet they complain bitterly of the delays it involves, and censure thoughtlessly its necessary conditions. The slow growth of insight, the slight gains of experience, the dilatory transfer of just convictions into social sentiments, the tardy improvement of the birth-right passing by inheritance, the clearer visions and the better promises that from time to time go before the race, these things are overlooked in their full significance, and men fret at delay as if a spiritual kingdom were so easy a construction that it should go forward at once to the sound of music. Let the insight of reason be broad and profound, and its conclusions consistent with themselves, and the difficulties now so readily discoverable in the circumstances of our lives will be greatly reduced, if they do not wholly disappear. As long as we wish ends without means, as long as we feel that good can be conferred upon us with little reference to our own actions and characters, or that these characters themselves are capable of rapid and outward change, so long the spiritual universe can not stand in our thoughts over against the physical universe, its counterpart, and more

than its counterpart, in the slow, continuous, and beautiful extension of order. Nothing, indeed, reminds us more distinctly of the necessity of the bitter discipline of life than an eager, querulous spirit of appropriation, ready to destroy, in reference to all high spiritual uses, the very resources it lays hold of. The most exacting members of the household, those most hasty to be blest, are those least able to be blest. The dulness that obscures the difficulties of progress, greatly adds to them.

Reason, calm, clear, and patient, should accept once for all spiritual growth as a supreme good, and so accepting it, should take with it all its necessary conditions. The eye ought not to flinch under the light, nor the reason to turn back on itself in its own methods. This idea of growth being clearly held, there is very little of the evil of life which brings to the mind any new difficulty under it. The physical evolution of the world in its tremendous sweep, in its slow accumulation of rational terms, is before us, in part, for this very reason, that looking far back into darkness we may also look far forward into light, and bring our narrow and sluggish thoughts up to the great theme of an earth and heavens which, in reference to those which now are, shall be new. The fact that all other explanations of the world finally fail us, notwithstanding the trail of light which they may seem for a time to leave behind them, shows that they are but the sleeping visions of children, disturbed by the weariness and distemper of too passionate intellectual activity, and pertain not to the quiet convictions of the eternal years and man's waking hours.

These immense possibilities of growth locked up in the spiritual world, obscured though they are by so many and so stubborn evils, give the conditions of faith. Faith

springs from the confidence of reason in reason, from a sense of the fitness and certainty of its own universality. Reason admits no limits. Being present it should cover all facts; they should all be reasonable. This affirmation reason readily makes to itself. When the mind adds to the first assertion, many things are rational, the further assertion, many more things are rational than at first thought seemed to be, it is ready to leap, by a vigorous spiritual induction, to the conclusion: "All that is is rational, and every thing that is rational is." This is faith. This is the confidence of reason in its own supremacy. This is the belief that a Supreme Reason rules all things. Faith, therefore, far from containing an irrational element, is rather the inner force of reason, pushing beyond the narrow light of experience, and conquering for order and life the unseen as well as the seen. It is doing in the spiritual world exactly what science does in the physical world, when from a score of cases it implies a law, and from a score of laws affirms the universality of law. It is the noble inspiration of an idea which carries the mind infinitely beyond its present position and the vision of the senses into the realm of universal truth. When we reflect that reason is personal in us, is itself known only in and by conscious exercise, we see at once what part faith, a trust in Reason, plays in religion.

Out of these three conditions, immeasurable possibilities of growth, immeasurable dangers of growth, an Omnipresent Reason everywhere yielding truth and working for truth, we have the most intense and complete terms of spiritual life. This presentation involves a philosophy! Certainly; so does every presentation, and we are left to raise the question whether this interpretation covers most completely and expresses most fully the

significant facts in the world's spiritual history. That it does this in the salient features of that growth which in individuals we term character and in nations civilization, seems perfectly plain. None of us can set ourselves in motion or our neighbors in motion morally without producing for the mind one or all of these incentives—possibilities, dangers, aids, All the resolution of the soul is born in the moral atmosphere of these motives. The record of men who have been morally influential in the world is the record of the directions, degrees, and circumstances under which these motives have operated; and the greatest have been those who have felt all three in most even balance. Neither individual experience nor national history can contradict this assertion. The fatalism of the Mussulman has in it no conditions of moral growth; the Nirvana of the Buddhist only helps in bringing to a halt the oldest civilizations of the world; conquest simply expends forces it cannot renew. If any man or nation or race begins to take on a spiritual movement, it is because in one form or another they have to do with the spiritual ideas which issue from the lovers of truth. When the Christian Church, which is inseparably interwoven with modern society and modern civilization, has made any step forward, it has been done with a definite reënforcement of these ideas; and when it has lapsed into weakness, it has been because these ideas, the constituents of responsibility and hope, have lost application. This is only stating what we must all admit, that some measure or form of liberty is the accompaniment of growth, that repressive forces are crowded back far enough to give room for thought and action, room in which spiritual energies can find play.

It matters not for our present purpose that these moral

conditions and this moral temper have been limited and betrayed in a thousand ways by those who have felt them; it none the less remains true, that they are the universal conditions of spiritual progress. They are the incentives which lie back of the law of truth, and make it rationally significant; great things that may be gained, great things that may be lost, and a concurrence of rational life everywhere with its rational surroundings and in its own rational ends.

Is this law of truth the law that expresses and governs the life of Christ, and gives it spiritual power? We should answer this question most decisively in the affirmative, whether we consider what this life contains, or what it excludes. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. This is the comprehensive statement of the evangelist, and one that the narrative of the life of Christ everywhere sustains. The one inclusive figure which expresses the effect of his words and actions on those about him, is that of light—light that in the physical world is the counterpart and image of truth in the spiritual world. So thoroughly is the fellowship of truth the very substance of his character, that it is his life that is the light of the world; and it is the reception of this light that enables his disciples to become the sons of God. Nor is truth altered in its freedom by its transfer to his disciples, as is too often the case in the instructions of a master. The disciples were to be in turn the light of the world, a city set on a hill that could not be hid.

This relation of Christ to his disciples receives the most succinct statement in the words: I am the way and the truth and the life. The truth is central; the way leads to it; the life springs from it. Obedience gives the conditions of a more profound understanding of the

very substance and spirit of Christ's instructions, and this new mastery of the truth in broader relations fills the soul at once with a fresh inspiration of life. The life is awakened by the light, and the miracle of the physical world is repeated in the spiritual world: the fountains of light overflow with vital impulses. There is no obedience in the Kingdom of Christ which does not rest upon truth, and which is not in turn productive of truth; no life which does not draw its nourishment from the truth, and any and all truths are esculent in this higher consumption.

For one fully to take this attitude of simple dependence on truth in his own experience is rare indeed in human history. Not less rare is it to pass on the same principles to one's disciples unrestricted. The strong mind so easily fears the perversion of a weak one, is so anxious to guard itself against misapprehension, and so wishes not merely to initiate action, but to control it, to go with it as an ever-renewed impulse, that it cannot easily commit its own precious truths to the uses of disciples in the same unreserved spirit in which it has held them. The law of the master and the law of the disciple separate themselves; what is conviction in the one becomes restriction in the other; what is entire freedom here becomes partial bondage there.

It is an inquiry, therefore, of utmost interest, the way and the degree in which Christ put his convictions on his disciples. The freedom and trustfulness of his method in this respect, if rightfully contemplated, is one of the most surprising things in his character—one of the divine things in it. No principle is shaped into a dogma, no action into a rite, no personal relation into position, no guidance into authority, and so transferred in a permanent and portable form. The disciples take up the words of Christ and the

works of Christ without any of those conditions of organization which begin at once to straiten and limit the life they enclose. The result is that none of those special terms on which Christian churches have been constructed can be traced in their narrow assertions of authority to any thing in the words of Christ. Those words are productive rather of many forms and many methods, and are good for them all, in the degree in which they themselves enter into the spirit of freedom, wisdom, and love. The proof-texts of the theologian can rarely be taken from the lips of Christ, and still more rarely without some loss or some limitation put upon the spirit of the words.

This method and this spirit of Christ are so declared as to make us feel that the few utterances capable of a narrower rendering are not to be construed narrowly. He that believeth on the son of God is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten son of God. The belief referred to is no formal acceptance of Christ as a Saviour. Christ was slow to ask even of his own disciples an opinion on this point. He immediately follows the above words with the interpretation: and this is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light. No legal form or future condemnation is referred to. Christ guards himself against this construction by the words: is condemned already. The condemnation lies in that very blindness of the eyes to light, of the mind to truth, of the heart to love, disclosed by the two facts, the presence of Christ and his rejection.

When baptism is associated with belief as a means of salvation, the union is so transient and so unsustained by the instructions of Christ, that even if we have his very

words, we may well believe that baptism here stands not for the ordinance, but for that which the ordinance expresses: cleansing of the thoughts, affections, and actions. A belief that issues in the fruits of belief, a purified spirit, shall carry with it salvation. The words of Christ should, by virtue of their prevalent power, construe themselves as profound, not superficial; as spiritual, and not formal. He who apprehends Christ must do it as he worships God, in spirit and in truth.

Christ left his disciples at his death, as every ordinarily wise man would feel, in a very unprepared and disorganized state, as regards the dangers and the duties before them. The only protection and guidance that he promises them is that they shall be directed by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth. What does this mean but that their own eyes should be opened, and their own minds more profoundly and distinctly moved by the presence of surrounding facts and remembered instructions, till they themselves should see and feel what was fit to be done! Thus their individual spiritual life germinated, burst its restraints, and began to grow. What else could be of as much worth as this! What else could take the place of this!

It is not necessary that we should settle what, if any, supernatural element is involved in this showing of the things of Christ to his disciples by the Spirit of Truth; it is enough, if the whole process resolves itself into apprehension, comprehension, conviction, and so expends itself freely in the realm of truth. It is enough, if it is the office of the Spirit of Truth to guide the disciples of Christ into all truth. What spiritual boldness of treatment have we here, to cast out those timid, ignorant, callow disciples—certainly timid, ignorant, and callow, if

we contrast their powers with the apparent powers called for by the work they had to do—on the tempestuous times that followed the crucifixion! Yet it was a method in exact keeping with the moral discipline of the world to-day, that flings truth as seed broadcast, letting it fall where it may, and suffer what fortunes it may, the one possibility always present, that it shall somewhere spring up and grow according to its own nature and in its own power.

Christ puts but one limitation on this use of truth. We are not to cast pearls before swine. This is a limit which lies not so much within the natural bounds of truth as without them. It is the swinish, not simply the antagonistic, temper that is rejected, and the swinish temper does not apprehend truth as truth. The herd are enraged that pearls are not provender, and so turn in their fury on the giver. It is against the law of prudence to offer truth that cannot bear instruction and may carry irritation. So Christ at his trial remained for the most part silent amid the blind passions that swayed the multitude about him. This injunction is simply saying that truth is to be used as truth, and not to be thrown away heedlessly as if it were not truth. It involves a loving and reverential reservation of truth for its own high ends and offices. This is the Christ-like method, but as prudence, quickened by fear, only too easily persuades men to withhold the truth that at all endangers them, the principle is let pass with a bare mention. Against this timidity, which unduly extends the principle, the whole life of Christ is a protestation. That life had the one supreme and supremely noticeable fact in it, that he bore the truth everywhere to all classes, undisturbed by the conflict awakened by it.

At no point has it been more difficult for the Church to apprehend the life of Christ than in its simple, unreserved obedience to the truth. Men distrust each other. They distrust the wisdom, they distrust the convictions and the good-will, of those about them. They wish, therefore, to set up safeguards against the ignorance and prejudices and waywardness of those who may come after them; they desire to make sure of what they themselves have gained. The father cannot easily believe that the son may be safely trusted with the same freedom that he himself has enjoyed. Men are thus led to thrust their conclusions on those about them; to overlap the lives of others with their own lives. The quickening liberty of Luther becomes the crippling bondage of his disciples. This conviction and this action are not all awry. Men are often much what we think them to be. Our error lies in our notion of the remedy. This remedy must ultimately be more truth, and more freedom, therefore, in its use. Freedom cures freedom. Restraint, that is first a rule and then a barrier, must ere long be broken down. We wish to correct a moral evil by a physical, or semi-physical, force. The good we thus do is partial and transient; the evil we fall into is great and permanent. The one thing needful, that good part which shall not be taken from us, is to sit at the feet of Christ; and till this is attained, the work is not truly begun, the law of truth has not found application. What more perfect or more painful contrast than that between Christ and the fathers of the Inquisition? Yet the Inquisition was the logical outcome of accepting truth, yet not accepting it under the law of truth—free, rational conviction. If truth could be transferred otherwise than spiritually, the methods of the inquisitor are possibly

correct, and are to be looked on with interest, like the surgery of the surgeon. With no breaking in on civil law, with a conservative regard for social institutions, Christ recognized completely the office of truth and the freedom of truth—the truth shall make you free. Men for twenty centuries have been slowly, painfully, almost blindly tracing these footsteps of Christ and advancing a little distance in them. Is it not true, exactly true, grandly true, Christ is the way?

Men are perpetually turning truth into authority. Christ turned authority into truth. He taught them as one having authority, yet only this authority of the visible reasonableness of the thing said. His words hit on and held fast by the eternal laws of mind: the laws of spiritual life. Men may rebel against this method and spirit of Christ, they may wander very far from them, but they must return to them again before they can advance. We need trouble ourselves but little about the exact phase of critical and historical proof of Revelation. The spirit of that Revelation has gotten clear expression, and twenty centuries have shown it to be the divine law of our own constitution and of the constitution of society; the one inherent law of the Spiritual Universe. This law was embodied in the life of Christ, and so he became the one Divine Messenger.

What, then, is the great fact before us in the world but this: a protracted effort of the incipient spiritual nature of man to shake itself loose from physical and social obstructions, to master its own conditions, to assert itself in the purity and priority of its own law of truth, and to do this, as it can only be done, in the force and freedom of thought. Men start in violence; they expect to impel and to restrain with the ever-ready blow. The word of

reason and of persuasion is unuttered or merely uttered. Later, when they begin to speak words of counsel and of caution, they still think that a true self-assertion requires that the blow of enforcement shall follow fast on the protest: "a word and a blow." Government is grounded in these brute instincts. It is long before truth can be left, and still longer before it is left, to work its own rational way among the thoughts of men, and assert the authority which belongs to it. But Christ is from the beginning the word, the word of reason, the word of revelation, the word of persuasion. He theoretically asserts the law of truth; ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free: he practically applies and uses it. He set it in motion among men, so that ever-returning assertions of it, from his time onward, have brought it down to us. On the other hand, delay, obscurity, obstruction, arise from the various ways in which this law is narrowed and retarded. As a spiritual law it must assert itself spiritually, and so the moral strife lasts, as in itself the best thing that remains to us, till the moral life prevails. If we so read the world, we read Christ at every sentence into it; if we do not so read it, it sinks back into darkness, till its lessons die out for us, one by one, in the on-coming night of death. The light breaks out for a moment, we know not why; dazzles us, and is lost again, before we can begin to see by means of it. But if we grant truth, the law of truth, the Revelation of truth, the victory of truth, this light never palls on our astonished vision, but leads us from knowledge to knowledge, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of God. The only transforming power in the world is faith, receptivity, exercised toward the power that transforms,—the Divine Truth, the fulness of the Revelation of righteousness and peace, Christ our Lord.

CHAPTER V.

The Law of Love.

WHILE the physical universe has reached a point of construction comparatively complete, and presents laws that cover its facts with fulness and with a fitness that is at least sufficient to carry it steadily onward, the spiritual universe is relatively chaotic; its laws are but partially defined, and are constantly disobeyed. We may, indeed, say of the laws of spiritual life that they are inherently perfect, but that perfection is not discerned by those subject to them, nor pursued when discerned. We must still look upon these higher laws as ideal states struggling with the unpliant and disobedient materials from which they are to be constructed. So true is this that many catch sight of no certain lines of order, no steady energies of growth, no sufficient spiritual goal to which all things are tending. They are tempted to regard the spiritual universe as an accident—and not a fortunate one—of the physical universe. Others, a little more hopeful, look upon it as the present inchoate term in general development. They suppose that when the physical forces of the world shall, by the conditions which they impose, have reached more fully personal and social forces, and given them closer terms of action, a development in human life, somewhat akin to the movement which has taken place elsewhere, and in completion of it, is to be expected. The vista is neither a very clear one, nor extended one, nor bright one, but it is still a vista. A spiritual universe that is simply the last

term in a physical universe necessarily suffers from comparison with that ideal state which has so long hovered before the minds of men, and which springs from the belief that the spiritual is in some way destined to enclose and possess the physical, as the higher uses the lower, and not to be a decadent bud upon it.

To those who entertain this more comprehensive and historical hope, the two laws of love: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, offer the outline of order and the germinant idea in the new kingdom toward which all things are moving, if not hastening. This much would seem to be plainly true, that if the facts of the spiritual world in themselves, and in their relation to those of the physical world, are such as to give the grounds of these two commands, and their establishment as laws in the progress of events, there is the possibility of a perfect spiritual kingdom, as much more perfect than the physical one as it is in its terms higher than it. Love is the supreme pleasure-giving impulse in human life. We use the term love as the last stepping-stone of ascent by which to express our feelings toward the things that confer enjoyment upon us, from lower objects to the highest persons who minister to our well-being. The highest directions of love, the fullest expansion of love, the harmony of love,—these are the conditions of a spiritual life, complete within itself. The two laws involve this highest direction, fullest expansion, and perfect harmony; and, therefore, their possibility as controlling terms in the world is the possibility of a Kingdom of Heaven. The first command expresses the elevation and expansion of our affections; the second, their expansion and harmony. These two laws being

operative, and physical conditions being conformable to the demands made by them, we should have a perfect spiritual kingdom, without weakness and without conflict. Nor is it too much to say that in the degree in which either of these laws fails of realization, in that degree must spiritual evolution come short of its mark. We are able to see clearly that these are the conditions and the essential ones of spiritual construction.

The first law implies a supreme centre, the second law the harmony of all in their relations to it and to each other. Neither in kind nor degree is any thing to be added to this kingdom of God. It is a great kingdom, the very greatest; it is a free kingdom, the very freest; a harmonious kingdom, even absolutely so.

The unrest of our time, and of previous times, is plainly due to the weakness of spiritually organic forces. Our impulses are misdirected and unsatisfactory in their attainments; they are accompanied at every step with fatal collisions and great losses. Unrest is the result of ill-directed and insufficient affections, and of the want of harmony in the social world where such affections find play. The physical jar that is still present in the world is a real factor and a great factor of evil, but is for the most part incident to and consequent upon the perpetual and pervasive jar of the spiritual world. This is the inherent relation of the two; the first intensifies the second, and the second cannot be overcome without at the same time overcoming the first with slow elimination. The manifold appetites and passions of men, and the manifold discipline to which they are subjected, are parts of one system. Unrest in human society is simply the fever of the patient, partly medicative partly punitive, partly productive of evil and partly remedial of it. The moment

these two laws are present in the mind, it has caught sight of the goal, to whose attainment all effort and all hope may be rationally directed. An idea, complete to the eye of reason, is offered to our thoughts, and invites our pursuit.

The command of supreme love toward God can not fittingly be laid upon men, except in connection with such a disclosure of his character and of his relations to us as is fitted to call out and sustain this love. The injunction, when made, gains its full scope only as the revelation which accompanies it becomes complete. Supreme and permanently restful affections can only spring up in the clear light of reason. The greatness of this first command is seen in the greatness of that which it implies. It is a feeble and ineffectual thing to command love, unless its conditions are at the same time supplied. The force which is to evoke this great love of man toward God is not the word of authority, but that absolute rationality, that supreme excellence, that patience of power, that overflowing love of God, which remove all distrust, all fear, all misapprehension, and render the mind able to draw near to God, and to abide, without one disturbing thought, in his wisdom and grace. We do not owe our greatest debt to Christ for rescuing these two commands from the rubbish about them and assigning them their true position, but for making that fresh revelation of God, and of his relations to us, which justifies and sustains the precepts. The fatherhood of God, in its fullest scope, is the idea which answers to the perfect moral law, and gives that law the possibility of fulfilment. The spiritual force of the law arises from the increasing light of the revelation. The law, though formally stated, was not truly announced, till it fell from the lips of Christ. A

star had shone out for an instant here and there, and been lost again, but now the heavens began to clear and their true glory to be seen. In the Jewish code the injunction, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, was a companion precept with the command, and hate thy enemy; while the supreme love of God, as the national protector, stood contrasted in the thoughts of the Israelite with adoration wandering out toward other gods. It was national integrity rather than spiritual integrity that was uppermost in the injunction.

If Christ had made no additional disclosure of the temper of God, if he had not revealed a love potent to draw forth our love, these commands would have failed both of instruction and of renovating power. Indeed they have perpetually failed, because of the mean con ditions which men have brought to them. The lawyer, full of the law as he thought himself, rose up in the face of the command, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thy self, with the question, Who is my neighbor? evidently hoping by some subtile distinction to win back the field of daily life to its ordinary impulses. The parable of the good Samaritan, with which Christ made answer, is of greater moral worth than the command, because it gives the command an extension and interpretation not to be evaded. The first command, so far as it has the vigor of a moral law, is the offspring of that vision of our Heavenly Father which discloses him as the centre and source of spiritual life, and draws the heart without reserve unto him. Such a vision rose only for a moment in any human mind prior to Christ, and has been present only in a partial, interrupted way since his time. The law, therefore, has struggled for authority, and shown but a small part of the organic force which is in it. Yet, as the

revelation of God gains breadth and depth, it carries the law with it, and constructs men's thoughts under it. But this movement is very, very far from completion. The law can neither be perfectly understood nor fully obeyed till the Supreme Moral Life out of which it springs is clearly present to men's minds. The eye may see much of the light before it can brook the full blaze of noonday, and drink in directly the sun's rays. The possibility of obedience to the first command, and of the full inflow of moral life which accompanies obedience, is the possibility of seeing God as he is, in the purity, scope, and intensity of his rational love.

The possibility of that obedience to the second command which shall make the flow of our affections toward our fellow-men pure and restful, is double. It involves first a recognition of the fact that they are by constitution the members of one household under one law, harmonious in its action; and secondly, our hearty acceptance of this fact, with corresponding desire to secure its complete realization. The second command follows from the first command. Not till we find God as a father can we love him, and not till, standing with our fellow-men, we find him as Our Father who art in Heaven, can we feel the full flow of the reflex love we owe to them. If there is not theoretical unity in the spiritual kingdom; if men do not by constitution belong to one kingdom, then it is vain to strive to construct a kingdom out of discordant materials by mere authority. No matter how often and in how many places obedience may spring up, it must die out again, if the soil and the climate of the spiritual world are not congenial to it. We first catch sight of this unity of men in their common relation to God. Christ bears it constantly with him in his instruction. He addresses

himself to sinners, to the weary and heavy-laden; that is, to those who seem to stand farthest out in the spiritual kingdom, and least to belong to it. He seeks after the lost sheep that he may restore it to the one fold under the one shepherd. This fact once felt, that the love of God is as broad as the rational kingdom, the forces of construction operating freely in every portion of that kingdom, we have at once the conditions of hopeful and loving labor with men and for men. As a matter of fact, it has been by the discernment of this relation almost exclusively that men have reached the second plane of love. They have come down to it from the first plane. They have traveled with the light; they have felt the benign purpose of God, and have shared it.

Frederic Harrison, in a plaintive and pathetic way, expostulates with men, and strives to push them on toward a "human synthesis," and to marshal them as an army in confronting the ills about them. It is a very unusual effort and a despairing effort to save the beauty and promise of the second command by one who has lost hold of the first command: "Strange that we do not all, day and night, incessantly seek for an answer to this of all questions the most vital. Is there any thing by which man can order his life as a whole? Is there any thing by which our nature can gain its unity; our race acknowledge its brotherhood?" "What is there left, I say; what other idea can become the basis of mundane faith but the idea of *humanity* which includes all?" "No one of these critics has ventured to dispute the great central principle of a human synthesis for thought and life, the principle that in convergence toward our common humanity we may at last find a complete repose for our efforts—peace within us, peace among men."[1] What a bursting up and pour-

[1] *Nineteenth Century*, March, 1881.

ing forth of man's moral nature have we here when there is so little to unseal its fountains! How far is a human synthesis possible aside from faith in God!

If the law of love is an inchoate principle in the human constitution,—as we believe it to be—it may be found there and urged on the attention of men; but if it is not there, human synthesis is a philanthropic illusion which can help no one. But if a supreme spiritual synthesis is provided for in the constitution of man and society, what better or more profound proof can be given for the being of God? What can hide or dim this proof to the mind that sees the fact, that the germs of peace are all planted in the spiritual world? Nothing can hide it, nothing dim it, save some blind incoherent conviction that the same Divine Power that implants the moral principle could push it forward more rapidly in development, or dispense perchance with development altogether, and make peace and good-will on earth, not proclaim them. That is to say, men first recognize the excellency of spiritual powers and spiritual life, and then become impatient of their necessary conditions. They invoke physical forces that may in some inexplicable way flood our spiritual powers, lift them up, and bear them at once to the goal. Men crave spiritual elevation, but they would fain reach it by unspiritual means. The mind will not hold fast to reason as reason, virtue as virtue. Moving forward in their own way, by their own means, to their own ends, they would wish God to make what can not be made.

Yet Frederic Harrison is so far hopeful beyond his faith, that, while denying the intelligibility and credibility of any supreme law or grace in the world, he desires none the less to gather up the shreds of moral order in society, to interest men in them, and to weave them together into

that most magnificent of all conceivable products, a human synthesis. If this is possible, the easier thing should also be possible, the recognition of one rational purpose as pervasive of the lives of men, everywhere defining their aims, in every way helping them on to their fulfilment. History is an obscure riddle if this is not the order of progress in human thought; a divine impulse working with human virtue; human virtue striving to fulfil the purposes of a divine impulse. In spite of the many, the manifest, the bitter failures in religion, it has been by religious hope, zeal, insight, that men have gone forward. The apparent exceptions to this rule are really no exceptions. Frederic Harrison is himself the product of the very faith that he has lost. The wine of the gospel has indeed come to us in unclean and earthen vessels, but we can not be altogether mistaken in its true character. Whether a human synthesis can be hoped for in oversight of the first command, is the inquiry; Whether, with a fraction of the motives hitherto present, we can do the work of the world, when these motives in their entirety have borne events forward but slowly?

The second portion of the law of love remains incipient for another reason. It is of the nature of the constructions of reason that they are ideal, and must be pursued as ideals; their implications and involutions are indefinitely great, and are never exhausted. The law of love is operative in society between man and man. Its perfect action, therefore, implies a perfect state of society, a society whose units respond one and all to this law. So thoroughly is the individual life a part of the general life, that there can be no perfection in the one without corresponding perfection in the other. The law of love can not move under perpetual contradictions and retarda-

tions without a loss of ease and fitness, and a reduction in its power to bless the hearts that are struggling to receive it. Love does not allow us to overlook the facts of life,—a love that does this is blind passion—and debasement, meanness, malignity, not only remain in themselves what they are, but they take on a peculiarly hateful aspect, and bring ugly limitations when confronted with virtue. Love so placed must feel abhorrence and repugnance. The affections, therefore, which are taking root in minds partially cognizant of the higher law of their lives, must, when brought in conflict with the impure and selfish impulses about them, issue in repulsions as well as attractions, divisions as well as unions.

Farther than this, there is always in the spirit that has not yet attained its moral manhood, with whom virtue remains a struggle, many partially suppressed passions, which are awakened in an evil way by the evil they encounter. Evil has a diabolical power in discovering and eovking evil. To endure the contradictions of sinners is a divine attribute only. This reaction of evil under evil in the partially virtuous mind unites with the just repugnance of pure love, and mars the moral state. The inner balance of virtue is lost, and the painful strife in one's own thoughts is renewed, called out afresh, by the turbulence of the moral world. The vessel is tossed by the sea on which it rides. This is ever the most unfortunate result of evil: that it so penetrates the mind which is setting up defences against it. If no absolute defection follows this return of passion to our inner lives, it none the less obscures our vision and distresses us in our work.

But the law of love is also, in an important sense, suspended by the presence of vice. The vicious person can not be treated as the virtuous one. The gentle minis-

trations and pervasive good-will which belong to love are no longer applicable. They must be modified in some very real, but oftentimes very difficult and obscure, way. A feeling of censure and indignation must be present. Virtue must show itself belligerent. It may, indeed, be said that the reserved energy which belongs to justice in its work of restraint and correction is in harmony with love, but it is a harmony peculiarly difficult to realize and express. The expressions of justice and of indignation are not those of love: they are directed toward disobedience, not obedience; sin, not righteousness; and it calls for the highest equipoise of spiritual life to reach without ever passing their limits. Pure love is drawn out only in the direction of virtue. In human society, therefore, we constantly find ourselves in positions in which love is not the fitting moral expression. The appropriate moral state is thereby made peculiarly difficult, and the needed opportunities of the more peaceful affections are lost. Thus the life of virtue in the soul is cut down to the conditions of the life without it. We must respond to that which demands response, be it sin or righteousness; but the law of love in its complete form lies between the righteous only.

A further fact looks in the same direction. Not only are there these positive repellents to pure love, there is corresponding weakness in its positive impellents. Love can not be called out if there be nothing toward which it can be directed. We can not love, we ought not to love, the impure and the selfish as we love the pure and unselfish, and any measure of these qualities is in abatement of the higher affection. Love in indiscriminate exercise loses its own character, and imparts no superiority of character to its objects. Our love toward God is supreme simply

because his virtue is perfeet, and we can love our fellow-men only as they share, or begin to share, his excellence. The purity of the spirit is the only perfect bond of peace. We can not, we must not, lose this purity. Any disproportion between the love and the object of the love loosens every rational relation. We are not called on to love our neighbor otherwise than we love ourselves, and we ought not to love ourselves otherwise than as we are pure. Any measure of impurity abates the force of love.

Moreover, sin always implies and carries with it visual obscurity and obliquity. It shortens and perverts the sight. It is unable to discern moral facts fully, or trace moral results correctly. It is ready on the one side with the extenuation of faults, on the other with their exaggeration. As long as sin is in the social system, the facts of that system will not be understood. The results neither of obedience nor disobedience will be pure results. Every thing will be mixed, perplexed, obscure. No one who is immersed in this defective social sentiment can be free from its perverting moral power. He will be too indulgent and too severe. He can no more escape these conditions of his time than the ship can escape the currents that run under its keel. The limitations of our intellectual powers and of our moral powers go together, and must be escaped together. As the individual can not perfect his physical, intellectual, or social constitution aside from society, no more can he his moral constitution, the most inclusive of them all. Growth here comes by a continuous and extended interplay with the spiritual world, till, in some sense, every man is a function to every other man, and the perfection of the parts is won by the perfection of the whole. Our fellow-men must do much of our thinking, and must organize the moral forces

which are to play upon our lives, and by which in turn our lives play upon their lives. The higher life of each man flows into the community, and flows back to him from the community. The health of this circulation is the composite health of the human household.

We see the action of this fact in reference to God. The infinite love of God is hidden from us. Why? Because the moral conditions of the world are such as not to allow its full manifestation. The light is in the heavens, but the sky is gray and sombre with clouds. Transgression will neither admit of unrestrained disclosures of love, nor correctly apprehend the limited ones which its own presence occasions. The same is true among men. We do not fully discern or freely acknowledge the virtues of our fellows. There is the same obscuration here as in the higher field. The vapors which hide the sun hide men from each other. This is especially seen in the irritation which accompanies argument. Few are able to allow a better opinion to set aside an inferior one without discomfort. The contact of mind with mind, even at the point of truth, calls out the heat of collision. Supremely fortunate as is this action of mind on mind, it has frequently been one of disastrous passion. Men can not do even the good thing well.

It follows, then, from these reasons: first, that sin is repellent; second, that virtuous men still suffer its reactions; third, that it calls for a peculiar and peculiarly difficult moral recognition; fourth, that it weakens the incentives to love; and, fifth, that it begets a hazy moral atmosphere;—from these reasons it follows that the law of love is a rational ideal, progressively applicable under its own application. It indicates the constructive lines in the spiritual world, and gains force as these gain extension.

This law is not put upon the spirit as something to be instantly realized ; it is born of reason and must be sustained by the fullest reason. If we think of it as a precept simply, we shall soon belittle it, reducing it to our present measure. Such a method involves an oversight of the ideal fulness of the law, and of the endless spiritual unfolding which must take place under it.

At first thought it may seem surprising that the law of love in its two branches, present to the minds of men for nineteen Christian centuries, should have met with so little comprehension and obedience. Indeed, the perfection of the law seems to have been hopelessly obscured by the imperfection of the practice under it. It is almost useless to ask what religious organization understands this law, and strives after obedience, so manifest is it that a narrow and antagonistic spirit has prevailed among all considerable bodies of men. As civil constructions, industrial economics, and social customs are still grounded in Christian nations in self-interest, so do they also express the average action of Christian men. This narrowing down of a fundamental ideal truth in the minds of men, that it may lie side by side with the meagre results that chance to be present in practice, is, from one point of view, the height of moral misfortune. If we would put to ourselves the moral facts of the world correctly, in their grounds of encouragement and discouragement, we must understand their relation to this primary law under which alone harmony and perfection are attainable.

Men constantly wish to secure, and hope to secure, by rhapsody what can be secured only by reason, in its slow, plodding processes. It is at this point that men theoretically and practically oftenest fall out with the divine

government. They look to it for aid when they should look to themselves, charge upon it the fruits of their own actions, and wish to substitute the grace of God for the grace of men. This means simply that the fundamental methods of reason have not yet taken possession of their thoughts, that they have not yet climbed out of a world of incoherent indulgencies into one of coherent delights; out of one of gifts into one of powers; that they have not yet learned to live under reason, by reason, for reason. The test question in the divine government is: What would be the results if this were done? Would the proposed method in application justify itself to reason?

Spiritual growth is this extension and coherence of our rational powers, and the law of love is a formula of movement; as much so as a mathematical formula is the summation of the numerous and complicated steps which it gathers up. The formula has no value save in relation to the processes it summarizes, and the law has no worth save in connection with the spiritual life it formulates. It is not the law we want, but the life to which the law pertains.

Love, perfected spiritual love, as a product of growth is rooted far back, historically, in self-love. If love is to be no foolish and flickering sentiment, but a thoroughly comprehensive and intensely rational feeling, its first term must be a keen perception and high valuation of all the great pleasures that attach to human life, and these pleasures can be best learned, where they are most truly experienced, in ourselves. No one would wish an ascetic to prescribe his diet, nor a hermit his clothing, nor a dullard his reading. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself would not cure the verdict they would render. The surreptitious saint not understanding himself cannot understand

another, not guiding himself wisely, he cannot wisely guide another. The breadth, intensity, delicacy, balance of our own experience are the charts which prepare us to direct the experience of others, and so to make the law of love as efficacious in their lives as has been self-love in our own lives. A man without self-love cannot have love, he has no measure for it. The experience of the world in the various claims of men's appetites, passions, tastes, affections is not more various or more difficult of reconciliation than is needful in order rightly and fully to interpret human nature to itself, to give it a complete inventory of the conditions and resources of human happiness, and to furnish forth the reason of man with the terms of its own activity. One who has no intensity of life at the centre of life,—self—can have no intensity at its circumference. If love is a law to such a man, there is little or nothing for the law to rule. It is not the law alone, but that which the law orders that makes strength and beauty. The first term in the growth of a rational kingdom of love is self-love, bursting out in the fulness of its impulses into a thousand forms of selfishness, all waiting for the love that is to restrain them, guide them, and transform them. This love must enter at the various points of transition, and by the various measures of reconstruction, which teach and help the masses, and shape them as furnishing the only and true body of social life. The development of society is by a series of steps, in themselves secondary and transitional. Ground must be gained in one direction and built upon, before it can be gained in another direction. Each application of the law of love between man and man, class and class, the people and the state, implies a present preparation for a new relation, and no sooner is the new method fully established than it prepares the way

for a higher one. Every step toward an equality of rights and opportunities successfully taken gives the conditions for the further extension of the same principles. This is true, however, only as the movement is general, pervading society and carrying it onward as a whole. The law of love is strictly a social one, and it must be allowed to shape to its own ends all the material subject to it. Retardation and retreat at one point, carry with them retardation and retreat at all points. It is impossible for the individual, because of this very law of love, to separate his own development from that of the community. Class-cultivation and class-power only widen the breach between classes, set fast limits to love, and put off the redemption of society. Such a division, if held to, becomes an occasion of disruption. The law of love finds its immediate field in society, is constructive of society both in its civil and social relations, and expands in its action as society expands. The presence of such a law proclaims at once the long line of progress open to the race. He who checks social development at any point, in the relation of classes, in the organization of the state, in the duties of the state, puts himself in conflict with this law—a law that cannot lie between heart and heart in one relation without lying between them in all relations. We can not have a state founded in mere justice, and a society under it shaped by love.

To discern, therefore, the points at which and the degrees in which the higher law is immediately applicable, to introduce it at these points, and press it in these directions, become the form of duty under which the individual and the community, in joint development, apply the law. This method of progress takes up the problem factor by factor, calls for only a partial apprehension of

the ultimate result, incorporates good-will piecemeal into the civil construction and social spirit, supplements and supplants with it the lower ideas of justice and protection, and increasingly wins those conditions under which the law is fully applicable and the beauty of its results fully appreciable. At any one stage of this movement, it is too much to expect, save in connection with a few rarely gifted in spiritual powers, that the law of love shall stand for any thing more than a kindly administration of personal possessions, and of the customs which for the time being define society. The opinions of the masses of men wait to be modified by those very forces which are to reshape society. The law, therefore, grows into the thoughts of men as it grows into society, slowly, by insensible degrees, and as one indivisible process. Even the most advanced ideas of the clearest minds and best hearts must remain incomplete, as not able fully to comprehend the complex changes involved in the conditions of the growing problem; and also as found only partially applicable in the community, still tardy in offering the safe conditions of progress.

It is of the utmost moment that we see how completely a social law this law of love is, and the limitations of apprehension and application which accompany it in every stage of development, as it slowly penetrates the masses of men, remoulds individual character, and reshapes social ties. As no class can separate its fortunes from the fortunes of the community, neither can any man long maintain in a felicitous form any spiritual feelings which are not shared by those about him. Truth calls for dispersion and reflection for the ends of vision, as much as does light. The law to have the full range of the thoughts and feelings must have full range of the facts

through the whole extent of the spiritual realm. When the facts disclaim it, the thoughts will begin to lose it. As a law of organization, also, it demands and implies a reciprocal relation of every part under it.

That delays, mistakes, deficiencies, will accompany the development of this law among men is a matter of course; the correction of them is what God and good men are about. No accusation has less reason back of it than that which charges upon the advocates of a beneficent idea the inconsistencies and perversions that arise under it. It is given to no man to see the breadth of a great moral principle, much less to see the times, places, limits, of its fortunate introduction. Every progressive movement is slow, tentative, partial, and they are to be praised who join in it on these terms of obscurity and confusion. Great mistakes are of comparatively little account in ultimate results. They bring delay and occasion reactions, but they suggest their own corrections, and have their own instruction. At all events they are unavoidable, and the faith of the faithful spirit is strengthened in overcoming them. The keenest and quickest censure should fall on those who make mistakes and failures the grounds of unbelief and inaction. They constitute the dead material which will not let the living power have its way. Some sharp pains may attend on the action of vital forces, but when the forces themselves become languid, the danger is tenfold greater.

All forms of presentation of the law of love in Christian churches have been partial or partially apprehended, yet the law has found development in connection with them, or, perchance, at times in spite of them. The law is not altered, nor the rational ideal which it involves lost, by this struggle which attends on its fulfilment. The con-

fusion of thought and feeling which accompanies the introduction, theoretically and practically, of moral ideas, is far greater than that which comes with new theories and new methods in science; as the interests involved are more complicated and sensitive, and the moral truth is subject not simply to the action of clear and superior minds, but of all minds, and that too in their most perverted and selfish movements.

The spiritual problem of the world is to be understood on its own spiritual basis; and on that basis, What do we find? That Christ clearly announced the law of construction, the law of love, and gave it its central position as a law on whose prevalence all harmony and all well-being depend. If obedience under this law is not attainable, moral life has no goal; if it is attainable, it has an absolutely perfect ideal. Christ also restores to the minds of men, or reveals to them, those conceptions of God and of their relations to him and to each other, which constitute, on the one side, the spiritual facts to which alone such a law is applicable, and which furnish, on the other, the only incentives of action sufficient for the fulfilment of the law. The law is not offered as ideal merely, but as the rational exposition of existing facts.

Christ does not stop with this theory of life, nor busy himself primarily in directing attention to it. He takes up the details of duty, which lie so near his own hand, yet so far off from the ideal, and thus initiates life under the law. He understands how incomprehensible the law itself is to the crude thoughts of men without better facts under it, and these facts he gives, and so helps the giving forever forward. There thus springs up a spiritual movement which, with all its delays and failures, has yet at every stage brought this law more clearly into the

foreground. What other way now remains to us, but this same way? What other name is given under heaven in which this work of salvation can be completed? Evidently, whether we acknowledge Christ or not, we must follow in his steps, if we seek our own perfection and the perfection of men. The needed ideas have been furnished, the needed methods initiated, and all that remains to be done is to go forward.

Take the command: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and the parable of the prodigal son, as expounding the terms of our relations to God; take the command: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, and the parable of the good Samaritan as its working formula; add to these the life of Christ as the one immaculate fact in the world's history under these laws, and we can hardly fail to see how the spiritual problem of the world now stands, how far it has been wrought out, and how it remains to be finished.

CHAPTER VI.

The Law of Consecration.

The older discussions in morals, as well as the more recent ones, turn on the relation of pleasure to duty. The most vigorous and painstaking thought has not yet been able to unite the opinions of earnest and reflective men on the question, whether the law of conduct is to be drawn from our sensibilities, or is to be referred in its ultimate authority to a rational fitness of its own, rationally discerned; whether this authority is extrinsic to reason or intrinsic to it. Man, by virtue of his physical organism, has a wide range of sensibilities. These sensibilities are greatly multiplied by his intellectual and social constitution. It has been claimed by many, from Epicurus onward, that herein we have the foundations of our moral constitution. That if these pleasures are widely and wisely compared, both over broad surfaces and through long periods; if individual and social relations are both considered, and also the tendencies which accompany inheritance, we shall discover therein a sufficient law of human action. That there is a law derivable from our sensitive organization, and that it is one of great moment, none can doubt. The lines of pleasure and those of duty, even if we regard duty as containing a transcendent element of authority, are inseparably interwoven with each other, and are in constant reaction. It is this fact, and the further fact that the two laws apply to the same field in human life, that have made the discus-

sion so difficult and so obscure. A very important portion of the facts has been held by each of the two contestants, and has in each case been held without a sufficient recognition of the correlative facts brought forward in the opposed presentation. The grounds defended have not been false but partial.

The strict evolutionary idea is of course committed to the development of the moral constitution of man from his sensitive nature. It is plain that the law of that portion of the action of the animal which is most allied to conduct is one of pleasure, and it is thence inferred that the moral behavior of man is simply an individual and social expansion of the same law by greatly enlarged powers. This view has never been more confidently asserted than at present, and never more wisely supported; yet there remains a large number to whom it is utterly distasteful, and that, too, usually, of men of high moral development.

Nor is this fundamental point in morals made dependent on religious beliefs. The discussion does, indeed, easily and naturally draw to either pole of opinion many affiliated conclusions, but these inherent connections have not been so clearly seen, or generally felt, as to be the occasion of much theological bitterness. Theists have not uniformly declared themselves in favor of an inherent moral law, nor have atheists pronounced always in behalf of the law of pleasure. So carefully and cautiously has the law of pleasure, personal and altruistic, been applied to action, that the practical results reached under it have not been very different from, nor less desirable than, those which follow from the intuitive law; indeed, are superior to them, unless the latter law is applied with equal discretion and a correspondingly broad survey of the facts.

Yet, in spite of this external approach, the inner spirit in the two theories is very different. Nor would they draw near each other as closely as they now do did not each involve forces logically traceable to the other. The pressure of motives which the utilitarian creates, he creates in a nature profoundly sensitive to moral impulses. He uses a susceptibility quite in advance of his own explanations.

Christ, in the law of consecration, has impliedly taken position on this fundamental ethical point. He commits himself to the primary and independent force of the moral law. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life shall keep it unto life eternal. Christ returns to this principle, as a primary one, often and in a variety of ways. Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. In each case there is an opposition of a life of pleasure to one of duty, and an unconditional subordination of the former to the latter; and yet there is the promise also, that the former shall attend on the latter. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. The implication is that duty and pleasure, as we conceive them, are perpetually falling apart, and the injunction is that we are in all instances to pursue duty. The mind is helped in many ways to catch sight of moral law, and this becomes at once to it an ultimate law by its own insight.

The philosophic view has often been that of the Stoic: that pleasures, as they offer themselves to men, are temptations, and must be encountered in an unconcessive spirit. This also has often been the Christian view, derived from the words and life of Christ, and has easily,

though without encouragement from the Master, fallen off into asceticism. Pleasures are temptations to men because their sensibilities are not constitutionally harmonized, and a large portion of them, and that the most important part, remains undeveloped. The strongest sensibilities, those which are the seats of the most immediate pleasures, must often be repressed in order to secure a proper balance, even in the passing hours, and much more to secure a true equipoise in coming years. Still more are personal pleasures, as opposed to the pleasures of others, obtrusive. The results on our own happiness of a careful consideration of the wants of our fellow-men are so remote, so obscure, so inappreciable by a selfish man, that there does not exist, on the theory of pleasure, any sufficient counterpoise of motives, when we contemplate our own enjoyments in direct contrast with the enjoyments of others. The spiritual view embodied in the words of Christ finds the danger of life in this very fact, that pleasures are so urgent, blind, and partial in their demands,—that they spring from a constitution so disordered and inchoate; and it confronts this danger with the strong claims of duty.

The utilitarian is not insensible to these confused relations of our impulses, and though he phrases the facts more mildly, he still strives to provide for them. He constructs a noble ideal of what man and society may become, and brings forward their remote pleasures as rational counterweights to hasty and sensual indulgence. The effort is most laudable, and deserves more success than can attend on it when left to its own resources. If we place ourselves on the basis of pleasure simply, then each set of sensibilities as they exist in each of us, no matter what their present excesses or deficiencies, must define pleasure

for us, and become our present standard of measurement in all contrasts between enjoyments, whether those of the appetites or of the affections; whether those of the present or of the future; whether those of ourselves or those of society. But it is impossible for a debased nature to form a clear and noble ideal; still less is it possible for such a nature to enforce on itself the evanescent and faint motives which accompany such an ideal. Yet such a nature demands these motives at their maximum power, while it furnishes them at their minimum power. Its means of resistance are in inverse ratio to its dangers. The ideal is most obscure when most needed, and moral forces vanish in the very presence of the work to be done by them.

The utilitarian is aware of this also, and invokes the aid of the community against the stupid and refractory individual. Morality, it reasons, is required for the common well-being, and a public sentiment will enforce it on those otherwise slow to concede it. Here, again, many things are overlooked, or too favorably regarded. It is true, society requires morality, but there is no other insight save that of these same blind individuals who make up society to discover this fact, and to enforce it. Failing in individual morality, we fail in social morality also. Society can not be better than its constituents. Society as a combination of selfish persons may selfishly enforce its own interests, but such an enforcement will not be converted, in its very putting forth, into benevolence. It is quite without reason to suppose that men collectively will achieve a moral character which does not belong to them separately, and that selfishness by simple extension will take the place of good-will.

If we look closely at this method of social evolution, we shall see that it destroys the autocracy of every spirit,

and so makes virtue itself ignoble. Instead of begetting virtue, it would tend to extinguish any sporadic virtue there might chance to be. The individual is driven on by the many, themselves no more virtuous than he, and so his action loses true, personal quality. A man is virtuous by his own convictions and his own incentives; constraint removes the very conditions of virtue. Society is, indeed, the occasion of individual growth, but is not itself the seat of that growth. Moral life has only one centre, the heart of man. The view then remains sound, that pleasures still unharmonized, whether acting on immature powers in the individual or in society, are temptations so blinding the intellect that they can not be overcome within themselves; the higher balance must be attained by a higher law. It is the more noteworthy that this fundamental principle should have been so clearly and frequently returned to by Christ, as he also recognizes the fact that pleasure shall follow after, and add itself to, virtue. He does not allow the pursuit of those very enjoyments, which are to be consequent on righteousness.

Nor is the utilitarian able to define the rational value of different susceptibilities. He has the one word pleasure, and all other words, happiness, enjoyment, blessedness, must be translatable into it, like prices expressed in dollars. Pleasures may differ in amounts, but not in kind. A difference in kind breaks down all computations. We can not carry into the same market two inconvertible currencies. Moreover, different kinds of pleasure, recognized as such and incomparable with each other, imply a rational ideal, and a rational insight into its terms, and this is intuition. A mere evolution of pleasures, acting in the same field in the same way, can not concede

this diversity. A life so diversely made up can only justify itself by means of a spiritual ideal in which different pleasures play different parts, and are united in some higher idea. This view is intellectual, permeated with notions of nobility not to be rendered in terms of pleasure. Herein is a fatal weakness in utilitarianism. It insists on pleasure, as if it were a simple fact of one order, and not many facts of different orders. It is misled by the unity of the word. If pleasures are one, they must be all expressible in terms of physical enjoyments, as these are the initial pleasures. Good must mean physical good, or that which can be translated in terms of physical good. Such a theory is pushed forward in oversight of our spiritual constitution, and assumes at once a physical simplicity of emotional life which plainly does not exist. The intuitionalist claims that to the reason of man, pleasures, in their full variety, have an instruction and a rendering of their own, and that we must bring to these facts of our constitution, insight, as we would to the words of a poet. The utilitarian claims that these sensible facts, as facts, have in themselves a governing power which needs only to be applied; and this application time is sure to bring. In the one view, sensible facts are operative through the interpretation of the reason; in the other, they are operative by virtue of their force as facts of our sensitive constitution.

Utilitarianism is also at war with a familiar fact of experience, which its most acute defenders have not failed to recognize, but can not explain; to wit, that pleasure constantly escapes direct pursuit, and follows on when duty is freely accepted. Though this principle is not quite as true of physical enjoyments as of higher ones, still the law discloses itself even here. Not only does the pam-

pered appetite rapidly lose the power of appreciation; labor, exposure, and abstinence so sharpen the appetites that they bring a keen relish to the coarsest food. Enjoyment is conditioned on robust health, and robust health demands activity. Labor, therefore, which is undertaken in neglect of physical pleasures, often meets with a reward paid in these very pleasures.

With every step upward, the law becomes increasingly clear. Self-culture, if it is sought in a self-conscious spirit, brings with it many petty and personal irritations,—evils which it itself creates for its own annoyance—and, as culture, easily misses that large and catholic feeling on which the power to grasp knowledge so much depends. The direct pursuit of honor is still more difficult. Men seem to conspire against rendering honor which is claimed, even though the claim is based in justice. A neglect of honor, even a certain scorn of it, is not an unfavorable condition of securing it. This is not due to any perversity in men, but to a strong feeling that the most honorable action is the most self-forgetful one, that noble purposes move outward with least thought of one's own interests. Disinterestedness is a supreme social virtue, and meets, as society increases in intelligence, a supreme social reward, —a reward in turn which is not measured by the good achieved so much as by the sacrifice incurred. The quickness and depth of discernment which men often bring to this quality are not a little surprising, when we remember the under-current and upper-current of selfishness everywhere present. There are to be seen, amid the passions and prejudices of men, many examples of praise foolishly and unjustly bestowed; but in spite of them all, the law, that honor is not to be sought, manages to disclose itself in a signal way. No characteristic is more acceptable to

men than generous self-forgetfulness. The immediate annoyances, on the other hand, which an eager desire for honor brings to its possessor, are very great, and go far to compensate any gains in its pursuit.

When we come to the spiritual affections, we find that self-forgetfulness, as pirit lifted above its own pleasures, is of their very essence. Patriotism, benevolence, love, mean this outward vision of the mind and heart, and the reaction of these virtues on the happiness of the person who exercises them turns on the singleness and sincerity of this spiritual sight.

The facts, then, of the rational world do not, even in their present mixed form, accept the law of pleasure, no matter with what sagacity it may be laid down. If the pursuit of pleasure is insisted on as a law,—even though it be made as broadly comprehensive of the pleasures of others as it is possible it should be and retain its own incentives—it can not be followed as a law without involving failure. Its spirit is too contracted for the terms with which it has to deal. Under the narrow experiences and brief periods of animal life it may be applicable, but under the varied experiences and long periods of human life it is not applicable. Facts return upon us too remotely, by too circuitous routes, and with too much reference to the inner intent of conduct, to make this a safe law. The injunction under which we must take up life is a profound fear of its inherent forces, and a slight fear of its accidents; a profound fear of God, and a slight fear of men. A tempest of wind may fill the air with dust, and create many dangers; it leaves the highways unaltered.

Morals as enforced by Christ, and by most great teachers of morals, involve a notion of law, and a power to discern that law. What, indeed, would morals be without a law.

The utilitarian is not content with such a result, and seeks for a law of morals in the joint action of men, having found no place for it in their individual action. He makes it a product of the collective life rather than of personal life. This is every way an ignoble transfer, and a feeble effort to find in many what can not be found in any one of the many. Yet the law, if found, must in some way be transferred again to the individual, and become the guide of his action. It can not be transferred otherwise than by fear and pleasure, or by insight. To transfer it in the first method destroys at every stage the disinterestedness and rationality of the law, and makes it one of sensibilities to which society in part is the medium. There can be no nobility of action which does not turn on individual endowments of insight and obedience. To remove the moral law as moral from the thoughts of men is wholly to debase it.

Intuitionalism recognizes a law of morals that, like other laws, calls for study, and is caught sight of only slowly and by sustained effort. It is seen not in the heavens but on the earth. It is a law of conduct, and must recognize and cover all the facts of conduct. It lies in the facts it marshals, but it lies there for the reason of man, and not for his sensitive organism simply. It admits of no abstract, absolute statements prior to experience, and aside from its concrete forms, but it gathers light in and with these forms. It is not to be regarded as a mystic sentence written on a wall, waiting the translation of a prophet, but it is to be sought into as it is and where it is, in rational actions whose relations are rationally apprehended, and whose results are daily disclosed in every variety of pain and pleasure. These pains and pleasures must be known in their moral values ; in the ways

in which they vanish at one point and reappear at another; in the manner in which an immediate pain returns later as a pleasure and a pleasure as a pain; above all, in the subtile spiritual transformations which they undergo, with a constant reversal of primary character. What intuitionalism claims is that conduct, being understood, offers a law of order to the reason. When this statement assumes the form of the greatest good of the greatest number, it is still reason that pronounces on its adequacy and gives it its authority.

A stoical attitude of defiance toward pleasure is partial and inadmissible in morals. It is not the attitude of Christ. He came eating and drinking. He entered freely into the pleasures of all. In some particulars the position of Epicurus is superior to that of Zeno. It does not hide or strive to thrust into the background the facts that are to be dealt with under the moral law,—the infinitely varied facts of human happiness. The estimate of life was made too exclusively in terms of pleasure, but these terms do most extendedly express its quality. It is these facts of human well-being, but partially understood and daily to be studied, with the clearer facts of the human constitution, that, spread before the mind of man, give rise in it—not elsewhere—to settled convictions as to the lines of action which are fit to be pursued,—which ought to be pursued; lines not absolute, yet which plainly involve fixed principles. These snatches of vision are vision, and put the moral nature on the same terms of growth as the intellectual nature. No inquiry is excluded, diligent correction is demanded, pains and pleasures are expository terms,—are the colors which play in the light in the disclosure of things; but in all this medley of things laws are seen,—seen, as all law is seen, by the reason—principles

emerge, and the ultimate conditions of good order and good order itself come into the spiritual vision. Among these principles are justice, veracity, good-will. "It is impossible to live pleasantly," says Epicurus, "without living wisely and well and justly, and it is impossible to live wisely and well and justly without living pleasantly." To make this passage truly significant, we must contrast wisdom and goodness and justice with pleasure, and be ready to affirm that the law of these virtues is the condition of well-being. Pleasure becomes an index of character, a declaration which in a long series of years discloses the nature of the moral forces at work. It is not the root of wisdom and virtue, it is their fruit; something which is the product of that harmony of life that these have brought about; something which discloses the ultimate mastery of virtue over life. If we overlook the interpretation which pain and pleasure bring to human life, we shall make bitter mistakes; if we guide ourselves by them without first expounding them in the laws they help to declare, we shall make still more bitter mistakes. As physical pains and pleasures are terms of diagnosis in therapeutics, so all pains and pleasures are a revelation of the forces at work among men.

But this relation implies primary constitutional laws which underlie these results, and which may be discerned and obeyed. The power to see a law as a law is the supreme function of reason, and belongs to reason alone. The utilitarian may summarize his system as the pursuit of the greatest good of the greatest number,—and a very excellent summation it is—but we were with him as moral beings, discerning good and evil—not simply pleasure and pain—long before he reached this succinct statement; as moral beings, also, we decide what is the

greatest good of the greatest number; and when this is satisfactorily settled, it is still the insight of our moral nature that announces this pursuit as a law of righteousness. Indeed, the failure of simple utilitarianism is nowhere more conspicuous than when it approaches the end of its labor. Let it reach and stand facing this its final statement, or any other statement it may prefer; what is to convert it into a law? As merely comprehended it is not a law. Nothing can make it a rational law, save the insight of reason. Turned into a law in any other way, its enforcement is tyranny,—the spirit loses its own autocracy. We wait patiently for the utilitarian to make his ultimate appeal. To what can it be made, save to the mind itself, in its comprehending power? If he ventures to go elsewhere for authority, we must denounce him as the accomplice of tyrants. How profoundly Mill felt this, when he expressed his willingness to go to hell rather than obey a command he did not himself approve, even though put forth by God himself? There is no escape here, unless the utilitarian dares to say that this law of the greatest good of the greatest number is a physical one, and so a fact that cares for itself. The case is not much different from that presented by the statement, two and two make four; make four to what, to the senses or to the reason?

All great virtue in its greatness implies a law inwrought in conduct of which it has caught sight, which it is pursuing, obeying. Such a mind has faith in the law, faith in growth under the law, faith in an ideal state toward which this growth is directed. It never confounds the passing terms of expression in pains and pleasures with the ultimate principles which they expound. Such a mind derives its nobility from the nobility of the truth,

as the eye gets its lustre from the light. It understands what is meant by principle, and plants itself upon it, believing it to run far beyond its vision, and to constitute the real connection of the past with the present, of the present with the future.

This leads us to the second conviction of intuitive morals, which accompanies this of law and grows out of it,—that of immortality. The moral law is one of great scope, and demands corresponding time for its fulfilment. It is a law that is fitted to balk and baffle the mind in its first application, to bring it endless perplexity and apparently useless disaster, unless a sufficiently long time is granted it to take in the full circuit of growth. The moral law, in common with other laws that pertain to life, has a period, looks to a progressive unfolding, no part of which is complete without the whole. We may make this our present life a laborious beginning of the line of action demanded by virtue, but we can reach no proportion, no symmetry, in our action; we can enter on the conflict, but we can not bring it to an end; we can put before ourselves noble purposes, but we can not attain unto them; we can reach advanced positions of growth, but the full fruits of growth will still lie beyond us. The moral law, limited to the present, offers the practical anomaly and theoretical absurdity of a law of life which includes a longer period than that granted the being whose it is. As this incongruity takes place in the highest region of conscious life, none could be greater, none more unfortunate and disappointing. The moral law does sustain itself, and must sustain itself, by a large range of motives, corresponding to the breadth of its own government. To cut it short is to cripple it. Vice may win brief victories over virtue, as folly may over wisdom. A large instru-

mentality demands a field commensurate with its operations. The longer the period, and the more extended the interests involved, the more certainly do wisdom and virtue declare themselves, and win their own. They are the laws of grand aggregates, the ultimate and most comprehensive laws of rational life. Not more does the moral law call for time, that it may fully justify itself, than does time call for the moral law, that its years may be pregnant with events of increasing moment, and its lengthening spaces be filled with the great spectacle and growing achievements of rational life—the life that reason yearns for.

So deep is this necessity, that those gifted with a profound moral nature, who have lost the faith of immortality, have, in the effort to escape spiritual suffocation, substituted the life of the race for that of the individual, and have striven to draw from the perfections of humanity motives large enough and lasting enough to drive the moral mechanism of their own natures and of society. The effort is a noble one, and the only one which remains to them. It is a convulsive struggle to hold on to the life that is escaping them. It is a grand testimony to the depth of moral aspiration in the human spirit, and to the labors of self-denial it will gladly undertake in its behalf. The impulse is full of refined benevolence. The misfortune is that it can only retain a ghost-like image of the hope which belongs to it. If men individually are ephemeral, if virtue in each of them is forever incipient, if it proposes duties which are never met, and attainments that are never made, then an endless procession of these abortive beings loses nobility, and has no power to rouse the mind to hope. What we are in the inadequacy of our aims our children must be in their aims. It is a blind

passion of parentage which leads the father to sacrifice himself for the son, with no certainty that the son can be essentially better than himself. The dignity and independent worth of the father must be maintained for his own sake, and for the sake of his son; and when the son absorbs the life of the father, he is likely to waste both lives. The son is rich only as the father is rich also; good can not be forever thrown forward, for each son is in turn a father. What is true in the narrow relation is true also in the broader one. No generation can find its own value in the next generation, or rightly sacrifice itself to it. Each generation in succession must be an heir to its own life, and so an heir of the life that has gone before it, and so a fitting parent to that which follows it. There is no possibility of rolling up moral values by imbeciles, by those who have themselves no part in them, and so pushing the accumulated mass on and on, hoping that some worth may at length attach to it, or some place of lodgment be found for it. An incipient and disappointing experience can not be completed by a thousand repetitions; each, rather, is a fresh aggravation. If virtue as a law is out of sorts with us, it will be out of sorts with our children. The gains that are possible from generation to generation, even if these gains should remain possible on the hard terms of a speedy mortality in full vision, would have no permanent significance. The incongruity would every moment accompany them, of powers withering in the bud. The manifest increase of this evil in the enlargement of the blighted powers could bring no correction of it. It is his abuse of powers that assuages our grief at the death of a man; the loss of perfected powers would become at every stage less bearable.

It is a strong spirit that can retain its purpose, when the

means of its accomplishment are disappearing; it is a vigorous soul that can preach a synthesis of humanity, when humanity is passing at every moment under the hopeless and remediless disintegration of death: when the only unity that can ever be achieved for it is like that of a mobile centre in a cyclone. Whence are the motives of the average man to come, which shall lead him to push forward development, when development itself is so partial and so futile a thing—a little grace of motion in atoms that are taken in and thrown out along the paths of force.

Under such conditions true wisdom seems to be expressed in a sober Epicureanism, that allows itself to neglect no pleasure and to become the slave of no pleasure; that undertakes no great labors because there are no suitable returns for them. Such a spirit, slightly tempered with Stoicism in the endurance of inevitable evils, would seem, under the condition of mortality, to be the spirit most in harmony with the conditions of man. An enthusiasm and nobility that are not called out by facts, nor sustained by facts, near or remote, physical or spiritual, are ill-sorted and vaporing, a supersensuous chivalry of the soul that can create no light, and may easily waste the light there is. The reason that they now help us is that they now stand in profound accord with the constitution of the mind, with immediate and remote facts. When virtue is once convicted of foolish excess, it must lose its hold on sober minds.

The words of Christ, in their self-denial, retained their wisdom and inspiration, because his calm, clear vision ranged over an immense period, and united the efforts of incipient virtue to the results of its mature strength, because he contemplated a new life in its entire circuit. He

not only allowed things to move forward to their completion, he saw them in their completion, and gathered his motives from them in this superlative form. The light of a spiritual life fell upon his face, he was fanned by winds from an invisible world that caught up his words and bore them outward. He brought life and immortality to light, by taking them each moment into the circuit of his thought and by reflecting them in his speech. His words without this inspiration and this faith would become the dying tones of a bell in an exhausted receiver. No violence of motion could remedy the want of a suitable medium.

The secret of human life lies largely in its hold on time. A quick, tight grip of the times that are nearest us means sagacity. A wide reaching out to the full measure of our lives is wisdom. An over-passing of life in our thoughts and plans is the virtue of religion.

Intuitive morals, resting upon a rational law, and claiming the needful time for its fulfilment, imply a present want of harmony in human action, inchoate and unbalanced conditions, which are to be brought forward in growth by the mind's own efforts. At this point of power and responsibility the moralist plants himself. There can be no flinching. To yield here is to allow an inroad of the physical and the necessary into the field of the spiritual and the free. He claims for himself conduct in its entirety, and sets up over it the moral law. Compromise and concession, which modify this position, are impossible ; the necessary extinguishes the free, and the free excludes the necessary. Moral elements do not wait upon the growth of physical ones, nor even of social ones. It is their office to take possession of the one class, and to call forth and guide the other. When the good thing that may be done is present to the mind, the duty enters with it.

Under these conditions—the presence of a supreme law, time for its full development, and powers ready for obedience—intuitive morals demand consecration; immediate, and unflinching obedience. This obedience expresses the real relation of the moral law to the facts ordered by it. The harmony of the facts is only to be obtained by the supremacy of the law; this is what law means. The confusion and malformation of the facts are due to disobedience. We are to see as first that which is constructively and ideally first; and which will bring order and beauty into all secondary relations.

The law of consecration is also demanded as the only sufficient source of strength in moments of conflict. The moral struggles of life take place between the accumulated inducements of lower impulses and the more remote and indeterminate proffers of our spiritual nature. The strength that is to suffice in this conflict must be of a complete and transcendent order; a movement of faith and not of sight. As long as any doubt remains in the mind of the superlative force of the moral law, or any feeling that law is found in harmonizing the interests which crowd the visible horizon, we shall be open to concession which will sweep the ground from beneath our feet, and leave us to battle for spiritual life against forces as violent and as variable as the waves of the ocean, each separate onset threatening ruin. Under such conditions nothing gives the peace of assured victory, but the law of consecration, held serenely in the soul. The grand moral force which often showed itself in Stoicism was nothing more than a somewhat blind assertion of the just domination of the inner life over all its external accessories and against all passing dangers. Herein were the elevation and the value of Stoicism, in a stanch assertion of moral manhood.

The young man that drew to himself the quick sympathies of our Saviour in his effort toward a well-ordered life, was brought abruptly to this test of consecration, as the most direct means of disclosing to him that his formal beauty of action was not sufficiently sustained by the inner force of the spirit. Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me. He was called to do this difficult thing that his strength might be measured by it; that an obscure weakness and misdirection of effort which were lurking in his moral constitution might be disclosed to him, and that he might begin at once to make those higher attainments which were open to him.[1]

That this supremacy of the moral life is not an impossible or even very rare fact among men, history makes plain, and, in doing it, it also discloses the supreme energy which accompanies complete consecration. It is not so much the harmony of moral impulses that tells on the progress of the race, as it is the force of these impulses. There has been no extended renovation, no marked movement onward, without the unflinching action of some minds in some fresh moral direction. The convictions that prompted the effort may have been partial; they may have brought severe limitations to intense truth, adding bigotry to liberty; they may have carried with them manifest mischief, but the indispensable and valuable element has been thorough-going obedience to an independent moral

[1] Strauss and others make sharp criticism on the manner with which Christ dealt with this rich young man, and, taking the injunction, Go sell that thou hast, with other passages, regard Christianity as containing an element at war with industrialism. It is true that Christianity is not a gospel of political economy simply, that it builds upon and over the foundations of labor the superstructure of a higher life, but it does this in no antagonism to industry. Christ's method with the young man was exceptional; his injunction was specific, not general. It involved simply the priority of spiritual to pecuniary interests; of the laws of the kingdom of grace to those of wealth.

conclusion. In a choice between a Luther and an Erasmus, the flow of events will always accept Luther as the controlling force and fact. Harmony waits on energy; symmetry, on life. Not till a point of conviction bordering on fanaticism has been reached, do men begin to be moved by their fellows. This arises not from any inferior moral value in harmony, but from the fact that the harmony men usually attain to is one of feebleness and not one of strength; one in which great things are sacrificed to little ones, and not a harmony in which little things are gathered up in the shadow of great ones. An equilibrium which arises from hesitation is a balancing of powers, not a use of them. It is a first interest among men to secure in some direction the moral force which shall express the vigor of the moral law, while this law will later gather to itself all collateral aids. Complete and symmetrical as are the teachings of Christ, there is no effort to set them in order one against another. They are each incisive in its own direction, and they occasionally bear the impress put upon them by the narrow and inert habit of mind which they assailed. Resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek turn to him the other also. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. These statements, like a strong bow strongly bent, fling the arrow of truth toward the mark with stern purpose, though after-thought is called for to unite them perfectly with subordinate and sustaining truths. Men readily forget that the effort to understand is a large part of the advantage of understanding. The law of consecration, while it may seem for a moment to mar the harmony of life, is yet the fundamental condition of that harmony. The harmony the soul is to attain is not that

of many equal things, but of many subordinate and superior things gathered up in one supreme movement. The fir gains its symmetry by a continuous push upward and so outward; the spirit gains its symmetry by an obedience to its own law which becomes free and delightful, and more and more includes all that is in keeping with it, or in any way enriches it. The power of movement carries with it the grace of movement, and the dominance of the dominant idea easily accepts all that properly partakes in it. When the ship moves, it obeys the helm. Weakness in action arises from busying ourselves with little things and feeble counsels; power in action, from a controlling purpose that gives value to all that is associated with it.

We have, then, afresh to mark the moral compass of the life of Christ. He clearly announces the fundamental law of morals, in every grade of it. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. No man can wisely sacrifice the health and beauty of the body for that which clothes it, nor the force and balance and tone of life for that which feeds it. There is in every moral relation that which is inner and higher, to which the outer and lower must submit itself. This is the principle: Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life shall save it. Here, by a subtile shifting of the word life from the centre to the circumference and back again, we have a telling contrast between the spirit and its surroundings, and a clear assertion in it not only of prior worth, but of an organic power able to carry with it everywhere complete beauty.

Not only does our Saviour penetrate in his instruction to the core of our moral life, he supports his words by all the motives needful to make them effective, and embodied them in a life wholly expressive of their nature. Mak-

ing way for religious liberty, he encountered the blindness and bigotry of his nation, and laid down his life that he might win it again for himself and for the world. He thus marked out the only path that leads or ever can lead upward, becoming to us the way, the truth, and the life. The one central, working law of our moral nature, that of sacrifice, reaches its culminating expression in the cross of Christ; and so that cross in turn becomes the symbol of consecration, the highest activity of our highest thoughts and affections. These moral foundations can only fail us, when our moral constitution itself gives way. If this rendering of the spirit of man in its nature and laws of growth is not a true rendering, the work of Christ is superseded; but if these principles reach to the centre of our being, they carry with them the Messiahship of Christ. The question is not a remote one, but one just at hand. If a supreme hold must be taken on spiritual truth in utter obedience as the condition of moral beauty, then is Christ the lord of life.

CHAPTER VII.

Individual Growth.

THE speech of men is full of words expressive of disinterested actions and noble qualities, and these words find familiar application to their own conduct and attainments. These words necessarily diminish in number and decrease in scope, when the characters of men give little occasion for them and no incentive to their use. We do not behold virtues with our senses, nor yet apprehend them in the abstract; they are a complexus of qualities given us in our personal experience. The virtues of others will be lost to us, if we do not in some degree share them. Purity in man, as in water, is a condition of reflection, at least in the region of right action.

Though this principle, that the glossary of all spiritual words must be found in ourselves, admits of considerable qualification, it is none the less one of profound significance. As men are dependent on the perfection of a mirror for a complete view of their own faces, so are they dependent on the well-ordered images given in their own characters for insight into the characters of those about them. Even vice itself may disclose itself but narrowly to the vicious mind. Mean qualities and narrow moral endowments begin at once to put fearful limitations on a knowledge of the spiritual world. The point at which this principle brings the severest restriction is in our apprehension of God. That our idea of God is a reflection of our own moral nature is a fact involved in an

inevitable relation, and one that carries with it serious consequences. Out of this dependence have sprung the worst results of faith. The immorality of the immoral community has been a contagion extending even to the gods. When a nation's gods are perverted, the evil is radical, to be overcome only by a spiritual revolution. A steady induction of evil is set up between the visible and the invisible, by which all mischief on the one side repeats itself on the other. The bad man in dealing with bad men, spurs on an evil action by the evil conception which precedes it. He creates for himself, in his interpretation of human conduct, conditions which to his mind call for injury, even giving it the appearance of justice.

It was in part at least this sense of the steady and appalling reverberation of evil which the heavens reflected down upon men, that made Epicurus and Lucretius so anxious to push the gods one side in thought, into a region of remoteness and indifference, that simply human movements of mind and heart, rid of these perverting impressions, might proceed again in a more quiet and truly moral way.

The Stoic endeavored to attain the same result by bracing his mind up to moral resistance; by affirming its superiority to, and independence of, the conditions assigned it.

Yet this interpretation of the Unknown by the known arises from the very nature of the case, is the process by which the mind correlates its motives with its own moral states, and lives in a world of harmonious and coherent impressions; the very process also by which it moves forward, putting before itself at each step a new, better, holier, more inspiring idea. It is the condition of growth that a larger thought, a purer affection, a stronger faith,

should enable the mind so to apprehend the moral force of the Universe about it as to stand with it on increasingly free, loving, and living terms.

Christianity, in its actual development, has constantly stumbled at this very point. It has not been willing that the conception of God and his government should remain fluent, ready to receive every increment of knowledge, ready to gather definition and fulness of expression with every increase of the power of reflection in any human soul, the conception itself a partaker in growth and ready to subserve all the purposes of growth. It has not been willing that the revelation of God in Christ should pass from disclosure to disclosure, till we, beholding as in a glass the glory of God, should be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of God. Notions which should have remained flexible, becoming inflexible, have bound close the thoughts of men to the conceptions of past centuries; doctrines narrowly constructed and severely rendered, have misrepresented the moral force of the presence of Christ in the world, and have so far betrayed it. The Christian religion has in its turn become subject to the inadequate opinions of past generations, and once distorted has accumulated growth along these lines of distortion. It has been slow to affirm its perpetual freedom, or, when this freedom has been lost to regain it again, and resume its progressive unfolding. The more wrinkled the mirror, the more firmly have men believed that it expressed the facts reflected by the mirror.

This difficulty and this danger men do not escape either within or beyond the circles of faith. The pessimism of the pessimist is the distillation of his own thoughts with which he embitters the world about him. The gratitude of a grateful spirit looks out with longing, loving eyes on

the things before it. Questions of evil and of good turn on the responses which events awaken in our own sensitive organism; we can hardly judge them independently of these sensibilities. It is no accusation against the laws of physical life that an inebriate falls off from pleasure. It is no disparagement of the spiritual universe that those who are but partial participants in its methods do not enjoy them. Sight is made for eyes, and sound is addressed to ears. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned, and spiritual pleasures are spiritually enjoyed. The deep questions in life are for this reason not to be quickly answered, for they imply an experience commensurate with their own magnitude. Are there spiritual pleasures, and what is their value to those who enjoy them? That those who miss them shall misapprehend them is a matter of course. The plans of the Universe can be comprehended only as they pass into a measure of completeness. This is not because supernatural powers are called for, but because natural powers are misdirected and perverted. Music is the product of sweet bells, not of bells jangled and out of tune.

Two things then plainly follow: faith must preserve in full degree the freedom of progress, and this progress must express itself in the perfection of individual character. This is the double and inseparable process, a better apprehension of the harmonies of the spiritual world, and a better rendering of them in life. Not to see is not to do, and not to do is not to see.

Noble natures have shown their nobility in making self-culture a chief aim, in an insatiable longing in some directions or in many directions for a personality of high qualities. They have sharply distinguished between things which pertained to themselves, and those which simply

belonged to their surroundings. Less noble natures strive, in a surreptitious and impossible way, to appropriate as their own the advantages of their environment. It is the power which the acquisition of wealth implies, and the power incident to its expenditure, when lodged in the hands of true men, that feed the pride of its foolish possessor. The feast is often a wholly ideal one, an illusion of the world in which we live.

Men have not overlooked the problem of self-culture and its essential relation to real good, though they have given it very inadequate treatment. They have caught sight of it from time to time as the one door by which men must enter into life; and when religion has neglected it, or mistaken its method, it has done so to its own great confusion. Manliness and righteousness must coalesce, like the two images of two eyes, or we shall have but a distorted vision of the world. The more obvious forms of power, as physical strength, intellectual acuteness, and extended knowledge, have been sought for; the more urgent moral endowments, as courage and self-assertion, have been cultivated; a full circle of refined sensibilities has been coveted; and, as even better than this, a certain imperturbability of the moral life has been desired, by which it is separated somewhat from the lives of those about us, and made to rise above the events of our own lives; but self-culture has rarely been conceived as a steady expansion in due proportion of all our sensibilities, by which we at once possess the world and separate ourselves from it.

Courage has perhaps been the most universally esteemed quality among men; though they have often overlooked the narrow forms in which it has been offered, and the mean service to which it has been put. Self-assertion, as an expression of courage, has shared this honor. That

men should have been so profoundly impressed by courage, and in so many ways cultivated it, involve an apprehension and movement deeply right, though these indicate a very tardy and immature moral development. Courage is a first condition of morality, as it is of all constructive strength. It is the stamina of life, and must be had at all sacrifices. The moral implications, however, of the value we assign it, are like those of the adjective "honest," when employed to define the most noteworthy feature of a great statesman.

We see in such a novelist as Thackeray, and in such a hero as Harry Esmond Warrington, that courage, physical powers, vigorous appetites, and a fair circle of generous impulses, as the raw material out of which manliness may, by and by, be manufactured, are looked on with a very partial eye. Men seem content to see them each and all wasted for a time in a career of dissipation, while they console themselves with the presence of an unusual potentiality not yet hopelessly lost. They seem to fancy that, in some obscure way, vice is the coarse, succulent fertilizer that lies at the roots of virtue. The world has experienced great difficulty in its self-cultivation in detecting partial forms and superficial shams, and so in overcoming the idea that virtue is one of these shams and the attribute of a milksop, or, at the very least, that there is a partial antagonism between virtues. Fortunate natural endowments have lorded it over acquired powers or virtues, as an indigenous aristocracy despises the interlopers of enlightenment. The hypocrisies and failures, which easily attach to hard-earned virtues, favor this view, while the robust health of natural endowments cast off more readily these parasites. Not till the eye of reason grows clear and firm at this very point can self-cultivation

thrive. We must see that dissipation dissipates admirable qualities, that reckless action wastes generous impulses, that passion blinds the mind, and that the greater the endowment the more is it to be regretted that any portion of it should be lost. It is the self-abandonment of those lowest in indulgence that we should look on as a present fact with most allowance, since to them it is well-nigh the only thing that remains,—since with them it hastens a catastrophe that were better over. But how can we wisely so deprecate the end of vice and yet make light of the beginning? How can we admire the fool that throws coin after coin into the ocean, simply because that in hand is not the last one? That which defiles a pure garment is to be regretted, but the latest filth of a foul one, who thinks of it?

In our division of virtues, oddly enough, and with telling force against ourselves, we try to maintain the womanly moiety unabated. The first touches of vice and low habit have no fascination for us here. So Thackeray retains "one or two pure hearts to love and pray for his hero,"—the ugly chrysalis that is still thought to contain the butterfly demanding this warmth of pure affection to bring it out. And so, indeed, it does; nor is it that which we regret, but this confounding of the moral vision in finding our way. The glamour of half virtues, or it may even be the perversion of virtues, bewilders the eye of reason. We fail to understand, once for all, that every thing which is virtuous is noble, and only that is noble which is virtuous. There are no feminine virtues and no masculine virtues; there is only virtue one for all, and in all its forms beautiful. There are feminine faults and feminine temptations, masculine faults and masculine temptations, but there is one wealth only, no part of which we

can afford to lose. He that is less pure and justly sensitive than a woman is by so much less admirable than she.

So weak and timid are men that they escape hero-worship with utmost difficulty. The brilliant intellectual endowments of a Napoleon, though disassociated from almost every beneficent quality, almost every quality truly admirable, bewilder them; they become like charmed birds before the eye of the serpent. They are willing that high poetic sensibilities, like those of Goethe, should feed eagerly on the affections of the spiritual world, even though these are consumed thereby, like a rose eaten of a worm. They are well-nigh ready to say: Herein is the archetype of the spiritual world; the plant rightly nourishes the higher life of the insect. A sense of collision thus subdues the mind. Excellence is at the expense of excellence. Every question is one of sacrifice; all construction is a process of waste. Heine, in connection with the most extravagant adulation of Goethe, adds: "About his mouth a frigid stamp of egotism might have been noted; but that trait belongs to the immortal gods." The repugnant expression finds its way up to the immortal gods from our own crude fancy, and then comes back to us as if heaven-born.

The best defence which men have offered to this feeling of conflict, a feeling inevitable in a narrow range of vision, a feeling which it will require the broad sweep of eternity wholly to remove,—disclosing how completely the inferior end is included in the superior one, how liberally all things are added unto us, when we have once and for long sought the kingdom of heaven—is, aside from the words of Christ, Stoicism. Stoicism simply asserts the noble thing and stands by it, escapes the losses of concession by despising it. Its strength is the sturdy strength with

which it makes its affirmation, and waives aside a too nice discrimination. But Stoicism is holding fast in darkness; what shall give us light? True, extended, continuous, concessive, firm self-culture is the condition of light, the condition of seeing both what is and what may be. Who shall become to us, in this culture of the spirit, the way, the truth, the life?

There are obviously new and superior principles of self-cultivation contained in the method of Christ,—principles we are not again to lose sight of. It is not necessary that we should assert that these truths were entirely unknown. Human nature and the divine method have been the same from the beginning. Snatches of vision may come at any time. What we are chiefly interested in are those declarations of method on the part of Christ which are so clear, full, and opportune, as to be a revelation, and remain with us as one.

The passive virtues received in the instructions of Christ a new position. Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God. So long as the tyranny of the world seems, even to virtuous minds, its most outstanding feature, courage, self-assertion, and pride offer themselves as the most direct feelings with which to meet it. Without more or less of these qualities, one can hardly secure a footing for the other virtues he may possess. Humility and meekness have a flavor of servility, and seem to lead to servitude. It is only a broad outlook over the spiritual world which discloses the merely primary character of these active virtues of resistance and resentment, which have played so important a part in the history of the world, and places quite above them in serene

strength and composure the passive virtues of humility and meekness. As long as the law of progress is thought to be, and measurably is, one of violence, and men expect to overcome evil with evil, to oppose hate to hate, to meet exaction by exaction, to overmatch pride with pride, and to undermine cunning with cunning, courage will be the one manly virtue. Indeed, so essential is courage, that it will always remain a necessary quality of any character in any good degree admirable. It is courage alone that puts us, pressed upon by our fellow-men, in possession of the conditions of independent and thoughtful action. Timidity is even more the foe of rational than of physical life.

But when we learn that evil, though it may check evil, can not exterminate it, that the productive power of virtue is found only in virtue; under this higher and more spiritual law, we see that our proper defensive weapons, and even offensive ones, are the passive virtues. It is a far greater result in the conflict with sin to escape un injured, than it is to suffer and to inflict injury. Out of the quiet endurance of the unruffled spirit there proceeds the only true spirit of conquest. Christ set his disciples the task of renovating the world spiritually. To do this in any good degree, they must be able to keep at bay the evils of the world, so ready to call out corresponding evils in their own hearts. When the disciples wished to call down fire from heaven to consume a village of Samaritans, Christ told them that they neither had learned his spirit nor knew their own spirit. It is the immediate result of any evil to extend itself under its own terms. Anger kindles anger, pride is offensive to pride, dogmatism bitterly censures dogmatism. This extension of evil arises from the fact that like conditions of evil exist in so active

a form in all hearts. Passive virtue is the power to repress these germs of passion in our own bosoms, to prevent the entrance of passion from abroad, and to use freely and wisely the palliatives by which we assuage its heat in others.

The passive virtues imply a more extended experience than the active ones, and an experience more thoroughly spiritual. Humility, as a Christian grace, is but a fit impression on the sensitive mind of the largeness of the life upon which it has entered. It is the first product of the greatness and purity of the spiritual world, as it begins to disclose itself to us. The brutal man of arms may despise any æsthetic sentiment in a comrade, but his coarse contempt is a result of his coarse nature. Those outside the threshold of the spiritual kingdom may not feel the awe and humility of those who are passing it, for this light falls on us only as we enter, and only then begins to cast its shadows. Humility is not the result of depression, but of impression; and is the antecedent condition of large attainments and extended hopefulness.

Arrogance and pride shut us out of the spiritual treasures of the world. What the world really has of treasure is held in the minds and hearts of our fellow-men, and the doors of these storehouses are not opened to us when we knock at them loudly and threateningly. The blossom does not unfold itself more coyly to the warm touch of light than does the human spirit to the gentleness of the human spirit. Pride and scorn hedge up the only paths by which we can enter the Kingdom of Heaven as one of affection. We must find our way into the grottos that open on the sea, when the sea is at rest. Boisterous waves will only bring shipwreck at the entrance. Especially would meekness seem to be an unsuitable virtue

with which to subject the world, yet the promise is, the meek shall inherit the earth. When the mind is partially free from the first illusions which attach to conquest and ownership, it is plain enough that these are more often than otherwise the means of expelling one from the real spiritual possession of the world; and that one must enter into the life of the world simply by nearness, appreciation, fellowship. The passive virtues spring up later than the active ones, and turn more exclusively on the inner power of the mind. Christ in his instructions rises at once to the level of these virtues, and presents them distinctly as characteristic of his kingdom,—as the peace which pervades it. His method as a moral method claims this mastery of moral forces within the soul itself.

An allied truth is found in the last beatitude. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. The school of virtue is as certainly one of suffering as of enjoyment. Henry Martyn expressed this dependence in the words, "to believe, to suffer, and to love." As sensitive beings we would not choose this relation. Nor does it seem to have any more permanent foundation than that of the immature and superficial quality of human thought and human virtue. Trying to give it a deeper relation than this the ascetic has perverted the ministration of pain and passed through suffering voluntarily inflicted to, one knows not what, states of mental and moral imbecility. If we are to grow by belief through suffering into love, belief and love must attend on every step. The evil borne must be evil wrongfully inflicted, and the end had in view must be the well-being of men. In such an experience, in which the thoughts and feelings are conjointly, vigorously, and soberly moved toward the

Kingdom of God on earth, insight deepens, purposes strengthen, affections flow out and in amain, and we have the conditions of a mobile experience, and so of a truly masterful life. In accordance with this principle of consecration, Christ would have his disciples exultant at the spiritual gains which they had in hand, and not regretful at the physical losses that might accompany them. Nothing that deepens and develops our lives is to be deprecated. The pearl of great price having been found, there is to be no prudential hesitation in its purchase. Indeed, all men order any earnest discipline in this same way. Honor among men of honor is not allowed to bear any offence. Each man must put his life at risk on the instant to remove the danger. Noble things are not to be won by ignoble sacrifices.

This early assertion of the passive virtues and of discipline through suffering are indications by Christ of the fortunes of his kingdom, as to be sought after on the spiritual and not on the physical side of life. This impression he makes even more distinctly, when he assigns service to his disciples as their true insignia of honor. He that is greatest amongst you shall be your servant. Men usually place their stakes of happiness in the fulfilment of the desires, and their promises of personal development in the acquisition of powers, which will in turn minister to the desires. Christ places the motives and the rewards of action in the affections, and of cultivation in the unfolding of those powers by which we enlarge the lives of others, ourselves entering in to this enlargement. When we direct attention simply to self-cultivation, the end seems definite and noble. We do not doubt that any power of body or of mind is to be coveted, and that these powers are to be measured in value by what they enable

us to do, and by the support which they render each other. In the pursuit of self-cultivation, we feel that we can not well be at fault; for disciplined powers will lend themselves to any undertaking. Yet in this effort after culture there is a perpetual postponement of the real problem of life; there is a getting together of material without determining the kind of building we will erect with it. We are wont to think that when we have accumulated power the use of it in securing well-being will be simple and direct; whereas in this lie the whole difficulty and mystery of life. Superior powers employed under inferior impulses only disclose more rapidly and more hopelessly the inadequacy of the ends which are offered to them. There can be no doubt that a large share of the pessimism of the present time is referable to this failure of self-culture, and arises from efforts directed toward aquisitions that have no purpose sufficiently comprehensive to maintain and reward the labor involved. The man whose powers are meeting with inadequate returns must inevitably be tinctured with pessimism.[1] As soon as powers have been acquired and are waiting expenditure, every question as to the ends and gains of life is thrown back upon us. He who pursues wealth may satisfy the mind for a time with an object of apparent and of real value, and find in his work many enjoyments incidental to the play of his faculties. That the question of ultimate well-being is simply deferred may not be apparent to him, till wealth has been secured, and he is compelled to decide how he will use it. He is then very likely to discover

[1] The conspicuous pessimism of Schopenhauer was accompanied by a fatalistic hedonism. When the feelings, after a vain pursuit of pleasure, begin to eddy back on the soul itself, we have all the conditions of pessimism. An adequate external object can alone sustain that full flow of sentiment, which is the buoyant force of a hopeful and pleasurable life.

that the returns in happiness are by no means what he hoped they would be, and that to that degree he has wearied himself for nought. These results are ameliorated and disguised, first, by a continuance of pursuit, blind as it may be, and so satisfying the mind simply with its own activity. The good to be gained is thus not the wealth, but the labor that acquires the wealth. The devotee trudges on refusing inquiry; he takes the objects he has in view at the world's estimate and his own instinctive estimate of them. Failure is thus at length identified with the fatigue of old age, into which it lapses and is lost. The incidents and accidents of life, as it has passed along, have imparted to it whatever worth it has had. As these wither it withers also. Such a life never reaches self-consciousness, never proposes to itself a sufficient purpose, or finds increasing satisfaction in its fulfilment. Life ripens only by decay. A second fact by which results of so inferior and unsatisfactory an order are made decorous and bearable are the elegances and refinements of life, its beautiful shell of appliances. While these have a very real value, they have a much greater apparent one. Ostensibly they are every thing. If mature minds and thoughtful minds do not find them to stand in happiness for what they represent to immature and thoughtless ones in the full excitement of pursuit, they only sadly whisper this fact in moments of depression to each other, and then strive to forget it. If the hue-and-cry of half a county has run down a hare, laugh at it, and try again. Public sentiment has but one opinion which it is willing to offer on this subject; to distrust this would be to paralyze all effort, and pulverize all motives. The man who has run his race and won his crown still believes himself to be blessed, as fully as ennui and overworn faculties will

allow him to be. The sensational verdict of life is thus accepted as at least less distasteful than the spiritual one. These results of action are also in a measure hidden, and more fortunately hidden, by the partial development of the affections which accompany them. These are the vines which still climb over and cover the ruined walls.

A pursuit of knowledge as a chief direction of self-culture has the advantage that it gives rise to varied activity, and proposes an end capable of being pushed forward indefinitely. The mind is not called on with the same decision to realize on its investments, or at any moment to count up its gains. Knowledge is easily accepted as an ultimate good. It may seem at the end as at the beginning of labor, that all which is needed is more time, more strength, more effort. There also may be present the noble faith that this knowledge will, in some unknown way, accrue to the benefit of men.

The real solution of the problem of individual growth, is the discovery of some adequate purpose to which all one's powers may be directed. If there is any such purpose in life, if there is any centre at which all gains can be gathered and held, then life is not a failure. If there is no such purpose, though the fact may be more or less hidden from us till we near the end, by the many illusions prevalent among men, life becomes a melancholy flashing up of hopes that flicker and die, and he is most fortunate who wakes latest, or wakes not at all, to this discovery. He who is to do any thing in any degree adequate for the cultivation of individual powers must meet this question of the primary end of life. Powers are to be cultivated in reference to it, and in its pursuit. The soul can not go on simply to exhaust itself by activity; the reaction of rewards sufficient to sustain and remunerate effort must be provided for.

There is no hesitancy in the method of Christ. We are to seek first a kingdom of righteousness on earth, and find our enjoyments in the affections which are called out by this end in its pursuit and attainment. Christ relies on the affections developed in building up a kingdom of truth, as sufficient incentives in happiness for the effort demanded. We have not here a self-culture which leaves the end of life undefined, and can only partially estimate the relative values of our powers,—a self-culture that when it seems most complete may easily find itself the farthest off from any sufficient goal. We have from the beginning a simple and direct pursuit of the highest end, and one which grows in magnitude as we approach it, and calls out, in each stage of unfolding, emotions increasingly large, pure, and peaceful. Action and repose, hope and possession meet in it, and life is roundabout and balanced.

Men do not and will not trust the affections as sources of happiness. Having accumulated powers of any order, they begin to expend them in reference to personal ends, and so these powers, in their return of pleasure, sink to the level of desires, passions, appetites. A large fellowship with men, one so large as to be winnowed of the selfish impulses that cling to more narrow relations, is not accepted as the secret of life. A little may be done grudgingly, but men do not often venture freely out on the theory of action laid down in our spiritual constitution. Yet the happiness that is attained is plainly found in this direction. A household whose members even measurably conform to this law is the seat of the best enjoyments. Truth and right assiduously sought for between men call forth at every step feelings of the highest order, feelings that crave nothing beyond themselves. If there is any sufficient theory of individual growth, if there is any root

of permanent life in the human spirit, which can justify it to itself now and forever, it is plainly this sympathetic union of men with the unfolding race of men. If the vision seems chimerical, it is only because it is still too far off from our craven thoughts,—because such long spaces of development still lie before us as to weary our childish minds. When we cultivate all our powers, and find their adequate use and reward in a pursuit of the well-being of men, we have attained the primary conditions of individual growth.

This discipline looks to the most extended dependence of man upon man, the most perfect union of man with man. It involves a "synthesis of humanity" under conditions of prolonged and complex development, passing up in each man into a full consciousness of a pervasive life of thought and affection in all toward all. So it has been in great periods of art; the impulses of men have been unusually volatile, sympathetic, and extended.

Life alone begets life, and the spiritual life of each person is drawn out toward the lives of his fellows. No portion of one's spiritual environment is superfluous in reference to growth. Each step of consolidation in families, classes, races, nations, nationalities, evokes those larger thoughts and more extended sympathies which make this advanced organization possible. Failing at any point of these fitting ties between men, society sinks to that next lower combination at which they are found. Each powerful and free nation, all concord between nations, testify to the conditions of growth as those of enlarged and enlarging fellowship.

When religion separates its duties from those we owe to men, it easily becomes fanciful and fanatical, and misses the forces which are working spiritual progress in

the world. But when religion takes as its own this very field of the moral relations which hold between men,—between men and God—it adds the highest incentives to those already present; it has before it an urgent and definite work and the largest inspiration for its accomplishment. When Christ indicated it as the primary petition of his disciples, that the Kingdom of God should come on earth,—a kingdom whose pervasive law is that of love, whose worship gathers men side by side, as they unite in saying: Our Father who art in heaven—he gave them the most distinct principles of development and the most comprehensive and constructive aim possible,—one, in every stage of pursuit, fitted to deepen and enrich the entire manhood. We see, indeed, in it abundant occasion for the passive virtues. The way is neither short nor easy, nor free from any kind of vexatious retardation. The disciples of truth must possess their souls in patience, must expect great things only as the product of great labors, must have their hold upon truth tried and deepened in every variety of way, and suffer the expulsion of partial views, narrow impulses, timid and ungenerous sentiments, by every variety of hard discipline. It is thus, and for this end, that patience becomes so noble a virtue, the power to bear the assay by which the gold of pure thought and gracious affections is set free. The impatience, the complaints, which are the vociferous offspring of the desires, which assume that nothing is needed in the attainment of happiness save gifts of advantage which may better be conferred now than later, are replaced by gentler incentives full of deep insight, coveting nothing before its time, willing to abide in a discipline which, without impoverishing the present, infinitely enriches the future.

In no direction is the wisdom of the method of Christ more manifest than in his clear discernment that culture comes through worthy work worthily done, that the spiritual world is constructed on work, and that good work brings its own renovation. A training of this order takes place under the clearest, most practical, and best-sustained motives, lies most immediately in our every path, carries with it the greatest variety of experiences in our solution of the spiritual problem of our own lives and the life of the world, and sustains our strength at each stage of progress by a perennial overflow of feeling.

A first condition of personal cultivation is a clear understanding that it aims at power more than at possession; that little, therefore, can be given to the aspirant; that he is to covet only the conditions of trial and attainment, and be forever postponing the present and pursuing the future, yet so wisely postponing and so wisely pursuing that the full possession of the one and clear promise of the other are ever with him. There is a balance of character to be sought in two directions: between the claims which spring from ourselves and those which spring from our fellow-men, and between the various claims which arise within us from our own varied powers. These balances are not to be settled for us, but by us under our own insight. The convictions which shape the Kingdom of Heaven are not merely habits, but habits momentarily renovated and directed by our thoughts.

In making up the harmony between the individual and the community, the former, as the weaker party, has often suffered from the latter, as the stronger one. The true solution of this relation does not lie in exaction or in defence on either side; these are the make-shifts which attend on the struggle. It lies in distinctly seeing that

society is for the individual, and that the individual is in turn for society. There is just now current a philosophy of social evolution which breaks down the organic dependence in behalf of the individual, as if he held within himself his own ends, and could in a measure reach them independently of society, asking of society only protection in the pursuit. This is a very insufficient solution of the great problem. The growth of our physical nature is by descent, with the accumulated gains of many generations. Our intellectual strength is equally the product of the past and present. We think with every man who thinks, and inquire with every one who inquires. Wise men are organs in the common life, and they fulfil their functions in that life because they themselves share it. Still more, if possible, are men one in spiritual relations. Our moral life lies in the lines of duty which unite us to our fellowmen. Here are our affections. There is not a man who does not, in the degree in which he touches us, alter for us our spiritual experience. If we ignore him, he still stands by our path to cast on us an evil eye of hate or reproach or repugnance. Indifference is the frost of our spiritual climate; love, its warmth. Excellences in men are the light and beauty in our sky; vices in men, its darkness and clouds. When we let men alone, it is simply because our vision is too narrow to include them; when we draw near them and do not bless them, and are not blessed by them, it is because our life still suffers from disintegration and inner weakness. The true balance between man and society is that by which we freely give all,—subject to the laws of mutual profiting—and so are able as freely to take all. Our giving must not impoverish or debase us, for that will impoverish and debase the gift also; and in the gift we must find the fulness of our

personal life. Nor must the gift impoverish the receiver, for this again is its loss. We can not transcend in distinctness the image of the apostle, under which we are all one body, and members one with another. Each organ is specialized for itself and for the body, by itself and with the body; and no profitable division is here possible. The more complete the service it renders, the more complete that which it receives. So every step of individuation among men must open the way to a higher and more complete organization. The power and integrity we may have won only prepare us for more efficient and safe giving and receiving.

Christ secures the first equipoise in life by uniting us to men in the most hearty and extended service. There can not be a Kingdom of Heaven save as it embraces men on these terms; nor can we enter it save as we have suffered, point by point, the corrections which wickedness and weakness call for, and have won, point by point, the insights, sensibilities, and harmonized powers which constitute the dower of virtue. Spiritual life must lie between many pure hearts, and must be as comprehensive as its entire field, whatever that field may be. It can accept, no more than the body, an interior division. The ocean feels at every point its remote surfaces and distant boundaries, though they remain far below the horizon. Under this form of discipline, Christ distinctly stated to his disciples that his was a gospel for all the earth.

A second balance which we are to attain in self-cultivation, and one in which men are more readily interested, is that of our own powers and impulses. This balance comes second in logical order. Until we understand the field of our powers and the law of their activity within that field, we shall not apprehend their true harmony.

As that law is a moral law, and as morality lies between man and man, we must first determine our spiritual surroundings before we can settle the appropriate method of activity under them, and the relation of powers called for in our work. Not till we discover that there are imperative claims coming in on us from all sides, do we learn that in becoming the servants of the world we may also become its heirs. This is a part of the secret of Christ, and a secret open to us and yet hidden from us in many ways in our daily experience. The mother gains her wealth in her children by the labor she bestows upon them. What we have done in any spiritual enterprise is, as in an industrial undertaking, our plant in connection with it. An ascetic spirit, a fastidious spirit, a selfish spirit, must at once obscure every question of self-cultivation.

This relation of our lives to others imparts immediately clear light in the treatment of our own lives. One who overlooks exterior duties, or shakes them off in behalf of a more undisturbed development of his own powers, enters on a barren method of spiritual exhaustion. He acquires that of which he can make no satisfactory use; his ideal character falls out of relation to the spiritual world, and loses all fruitfulness within itself. Life is fructified by life. Happiness arises from the relation of our sensibilities to our environment, and, in the long run, as the commanding element in that environment, from their relation to man. When we inquire, What is to be done in society, and what can we best do? the problem of life is very much simplified, and the lines of cultivation in its primary features are laid down. The aid we can, from our powers and position, best render our fellow-men will disclose the discipline we need, and this discipline will, in

turn, in its reflex action upon us through the entire circuit of our spiritual constitution, do the most possible for us. Herein is a practical application of the principle, that we can not be wise without being good, nor good without being wise. Wisdom and goodness unfold together, and must together be sought and attained. Not only are they mutually explanatory in reference to each other, they create by their interdependence immediate and successive claims, which maintain our lives in constant and pleasurable interplay. Goodness prompts the action and wisdom discloses the method. Wisdom directs the way and goodness rewards the effort. The adequacy of the motives and the adequacy of the means enable them to sustain each other. Culture is not so much the result of acquisition as of varied action; is not so much statical, a poise of powers, as it is dynamical, a balance of forces in motion in reference to an end. Motion in the spiritual world, as in the physical, makes an equipoise easy and delightful, which can only be achieved with difficulty or not at all at rest. One sweeping along on a bicycle maintains a ready balance between conflicting forces, and quickly combines them for his own ends.

Individual growth lies in a widening of vision, a corresponding deepening of feelings, and a ready direction and mastery of action; lies in more intense unity of life with more scope of life. Old questions are answered and new ones are asked; the mind uses and enjoys what it gains, and so makes ready for more. The pursuit by each one of an adequate object, the building on earth of the Kingdom of Heaven, gives mastery by uniting the inner and the outer life. We escape doubt and dogmatism as distressful conditions; we slip between that pride and that humility which bring overthrow; the knowledge

which ends in imbecility and the ignorance which is imbecility we leave on either hand, and press forward toward the mark of the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus—manful powers well trained in the kingdom of grace.

This method of self-cultivation is at one with the laws of love and of consecration. We win life not by seeking it, but by devoting it. We start with the cross, we accept the sacrifice, we enter into eternal life. This method is at the farthest remove from a refined dilettanteism, and presents the sharpest contrasts with it in results. We may seem to have gained much less, but will, in fact, have won much more; and that in the degree in which we have understood and shared the spirit of Christ. This temper will never issue in that languor and profound discouragement which take away all incentives to effort, and hide its very direction. So far as this spirit is present there is health, and health accepts all labors and trusts all promises.

We have, in the teachings of Christ, a philosophy of life, with its practical and working forces. Christ lays down as his method of self-cultivation, growth, under the discipline of the world, with the inspiration of the highest ideas, by action directed toward the well-being of men as expressed in the Kingdom of Heaven. What other, or safer, or fuller, way of life can we find than this? How can we avoid returning to this way after each digression from it?

CHAPTER VIII.

Social Growth.

Individual life seems to present, and does present, a large field of secluded and personal activity. The sensitive nature at times is appalled by the absolute separation and isolation of its own experience. Close contact with men, habitual intercourse with friends, still leave the flow of the inner life unbroken. The hands that are stretched across this gulf are shadowy, and may at any moment be withdrawn. Or if one feeds on the senses, he is only preparing himself for a deeper and more hopeless experience of loss. One is alarmed at the solitude of his own spirit, at the many things that are to be thought, felt, and borne alone. Selfishness greatly enhances this solitude. The selfish man seems steadily to pluck up and cast out, as weeds from a garden, all sincere interest in others, and all partnership by others in his own life.

Yet, if we look more broadly and closely at human life, we shall see that it is entirely impossible to separate the individual from the community, that the plane of activity for every one is assigned him by the community, that the rise and sinking of society is like the upheaval and depression of a continent—it bears every thing with it. Even Simeon the Stylite, in all his despite of human things, would soon have climbed humbly down from his column, if his admiring fellow-men had all perished. The individual is thus as strikingly dependent as he is independent; and while he always reserves a kingdom for himself whose

borders no man can pass, whose authority no man can usurp, the nature of that kingdom and the region in which it shall lie turn almost wholly on the collective history of man. Any words of instruction, therefore, which are to remain with men, must have application in both directions, inward toward personal life and outward toward common life.

Though society, both in the formal laws which bind men together in the state, and in the more numerous though less formal customs and sentiments which guide and restrain them in the intercourse of the community, has reference to the common well-being, it has none the less sprung up through the incitements of individual interests, and been improved in the pursuit of them by the slow entrance of broader principles. The common welfare, extendedly conceived and distinctly sought, and individual interest, narrowly taken and deceptively followed, are thus the two extreme phases of impulse between which the growth of society takes place. It hardly lacks altogether, even in its lowest forms, the higher incentive; and never, in its best forms, lays aside the inferior motive. The marvel of the world is, that individual interest poorly apprehended and wastefully pursued has borne men toward the goal of a social life, broadly illuminated in its common rights and common possessions by principles both of justice and beneficence.

If society originates in the need of protection, that protection is not so much the result of general counsel as of individual strength, the pursuit by some one man of his own interests in providing for the safety of those more immediately useful to him and dependent on him. The love of power and sympathetic concession to power are so native to men, that they at once take the foreground as

compared with any deliberate consideration by each and by all of their common interests. The fundamental conditions of order are deeper than the thoughts of men. Individual interests are so interwoven with the common interests as to drag them forward with themselves. The spiritual career of society lies in the slow transfer in position of these incentives, making the common welfare include and bear onward individual advantage.

In periods of general conflict so plainly is the individual dependent on the state for safety, that all influences concur to subordinate him to the state, and to put the state itself in the hands of those who can and will wield it with vigor. Safety is the first gift of society to man, and in early society safety means strength, and strength means subordination. It is not surprising that the Greeks and their greatest philosopher, Plato, should subordinate the individual to the state, the single organ to the great organism, one of whose separate functions it was performing. As long as pressure from without is the occasion of union quite as much as attraction and construction within, the code of war will prevail, and the citizen, like the soldier, must take the position and accept the dangers unhesitatingly which the state assigns him. Nor is this unjust or unwise, for the citizen and the soldier are one, and must feel the presence of one absorbing claim.

When this pressure is removed, or materially reduced, when safety is a matter of course, and the divided aims of individual life are pushing in all directions, quite another view takes possession of the thoughtful mind. The philosopher is no longer impressed simply with what the individual owes society, but also with what he suffers from society, the many ways in which his action is anticipated and thwarted by the state, the degree in which he is

dwarfed by this overshadowing power. The danger most urgent, the interference nearest, are no longer those of enemies, but those of rulers; and the question becomes, How shall the simple citizen reserve himself and his own from the all-embracing and importunate claims and provisions of society? Immediately there springs up the opposite theory: that the individual is the primitive seat of rights; that the state is a voluntary organization whose function is the protection of these personal rights, and whose just powers are derived from its citizens. This doctrine as nearly disorganizes society as it possibly can, and from the oppressive unity of the past, we escape into the sporadic freedom of the present,—into extreme individuation.

But this view, as the product of peculiar and transitional conditions, is no more ultimate than the previous one. When men contemplate the goal of human society, and the truly magnificent attainments open to the race collectively, they see at once that we have no less need of the conjoint strength of society, in the free combinations of all its members, than of the strength of each of them individually. No resources are lightly to be thrown away; nor, as we progress, to be deemed incompatible with the safety of individual rights. The individual will often, in the freest putting forth of his own powers, reach circumstances in which he is so dependent on the conjoint action of those about him, that his own efforts will be greatly reduced in value, if there is no general organized method of sustaining them. The vice, the ignorance, the prejudice of a few may undo or retard the social progress of many; and leave society the product of its poorest rather than of its best sentiment. It is the right of the thing righteous that it should have free access to organic conditions.

It would also be strange if the state, the representative of all, must forever remain in the attitude of a power to be distrusted, and limited in service; and that, too, in the very degree of the freedom and virtue of its subjects. It can hardly be the true line of growth in liberty so to order the state that the more it can be trusted the less it shall be trusted, and the more disinterestedly it is able to act, the less it shall be allowed to act.

The true doctrine would seem to be, that both society and the individual are to find co-extensive and concurrent lines of development, along which the aid they render each other will more and more hide the limitations they put upon each other. The state is for the individual,—the generic, the typical individual, the representative of every one within the state—and the individual can perfect his life only through the state. Society has no interests which it can wisely pursue aside from the individual, and the individual has no interests which he can either oppose to society or long follow without it. More and more, as we pass from the extreme of personal incentives forward to that of common interests, shall we find these two terms of our lives blended in all great achievements and all inclusive aims.

In the first place there is no perfection possible to the individual except through and by the perfection of society. We need not refer to the appliances of civilization, and to the immense accumulations of knowledge, as directly conditioned on the common life; we direct attention simply to society as the true field, almost the only field, of spiritual sentiments, moral sentiments, and actions. Light is not more the medium of vision, than is society the governing element of our moral life. The breadth, the purity, and peaceful flow of the affections are not the

results of one mind or one heart, but of all minds and all hearts that are embraced in them. The feelings are indefinitely mobile; they spread, like an atmosphere, over all fields, contract every taint, and bear with them from remote places health or malaria, according as they meet with virtue or with vice in their passage. There is nothing so contagious as vice; not always as vice, but as a devitalizing power, reductive of the moral tonic in the air of the spiritual world. No man can escape, no man does escape, this influence; any more than the world can escape the heat that steals on from the equator, or the cold winds that come from polar ice. To be associated with vice, is to be profoundly injured by it; to separate ourselves from vice is to reduce the injury by one degree only—the degree which falls to "good society"; to contend against it is a further and greater gain; to exterminate it and replace it with virtue is alone fulness of life. Our moral atmosphere is the atmosphere of the world; out of it we are breathing, into it all men are breathing, no matter how unwholesome the breath that comes from them. There can be no perfect man till all men are perfect, as there can be no pure place till all places are pure. Virtue alone gives scope to virtue, as wit exercises wit. We put, in our vices and faults, constant limitations on each other; as we all put so grave limitations on the grace of God that we do not know what it is. The loving fellowship of the flower-cup with the light is both the source and disclosure of its exquisite tints. Life is found in the most extended and delicate reactions between itself and its conditions.

The perfection also of the individual, such as it is, is gained only by clearly conceiving and laboring for the perfection of all. The moment this end is lost sight of,

or loses its hold on the mind, that moment the spiritual nature misses its appropriate impulses, and drops off in activity. This is, as we have all along seen, the discipline of Christ, a direction of the vision outward to social ends, with the enforcement of zeal, patience, humility, hope, in their pursuit. A view of society, therefore, which makes it a safeguard to the individual, a fence of law about him while he seeks his own ends, is a fresh relegation of the mind to itself, and to those personal objects which have always brought with them so much mischief. When, on the other hand, the mind distinctly plans for the well-being of others, both near and remote, it finds at once its own discipline in the reconciliation of all interests, and in their joint pursuit. Organization, not forced but free, becomes the ruling idea, and society is made strong, not by the concentration of strength here and there, but by its diffusion and reciprocal ministrations. The body, in its divided functions but common life, remains the apt image of society in its unity and dependencies, ever extending outward and deepening inward. The individual, in his spiritual activity, is so much a part of the whole that he can attain to no perfection except in the precise duties assigned him by this very development. To transfer the centre of life to the individual is not only to break up the system of things of which he is a member, it entirely perverts that intellectual and moral outlook, which defines the direction of his efforts, turns them into spiritual training, and brings their spiritual reward.

Again, the grand movement of progress, in which individuals are made partakers, is strictly in and of itself a communal one, one that must proceed in the masses. Here is the bulk of physical human life, from which the life of each one is taken, and to which it is returned.

The law of inheritance, as a regenerative power, is involved in this mass of life, and in its dissemination. For the best application of the laws of physical inheritance there can not be too many men, undergoing too great a variety of favoring conditions, and productive of too many types. Health and strength may rise to the surface anywhere, like a mermaid in the sea, from these manifold, subtile, interchangeable, and but partially calculable forces of life. No family, no class, no nation can be isolated, without ultimate loss in the reproductive powers which should invigorate it. The tentative and incipient movements of development should have their full range both in their own varieties and in the variety of their conditions, the superior everywhere displacing the inferior, and in turn giving occasion to that which is better. The element of diversity, multiplicity, endless involution, is an essential one in the problem of life. We all share the gains marked by those immense strides by which the growing points are transferred from nation to nation and continent to continent.

Nor are the conditions less communal by which we win, retain, and enlarge the terms of intellectual and spiritual strength. Science subserves but a partial purpose, and runs but a brief career, till it becomes applied science; and science is applied in the directions and for the uses that society requires. The ministrations of knowledge lie in physical and mental refinement, and the fitness, completeness, and universality of this refinement it is which enrich society, enrich the individual, and give both the occasions and the motives for further effort. True refinement is something which the individual can never acquire by himself, nor enjoy by himself, and which suffers in quality as well as in quantity by every limitation. Snobbishness, as an external defect and as an internal disease, is the result of nar-

rowness; narrowness always entails this evil. Society can not be made pure and wholesome and stimulating by parts, any more than water is cleansed in divided sections. Motion is the one condition of purity.

The communal character of our possessions is still more manifest in our moral life. This life is communal life; the moral law stretches over all this common life, and lies between every one of its members. If there is any revolt of any portion of it, not only is morality so far limited, it is made correspondingly weaker everywhere. The law actually operative in the most of men, and in the best of men in the most of their actions, is that conventional law which pervades society. Manners,—a minor expression of morals—customs, the written and unwritten laws of the state, are the products of society itself in its organic activity, and no man can lift himself very much, or for very long, above them. His better theories and better methods must be made operative in society about him, before even he himself can receive their full benefit in his own thoughts and feelings. Theories about virtue are something very different from the exercise of virtue in its own domain. The moral temper is a social temper, and in its ruling forces draws its inspiration from the entire body of society. Exclusiveness, in all its phases, is weakness; and may easily be wickedness.

While repudiating heartily the theory that morality is distinctively a social sentiment, begotten by social conditions, and without any independent enforcement in the individual,—a theory that makes society as society productive of new ideas—we still recognize the fact that the individual conscience must work its way into the common convictions, before it arrives at the force and sweep of a

law. The community is the ultimate seat of efficient moral power. The individual needs, even for the maintenance of his own action when it concerns the many, the concurrence of the many, and society can build no customs and institutions on convictions that are not shared by a large part of those to whom they apply. The struggle which waits upon every man, and makes his life morally grand, is this very effort to incorporate his convictions with the code of society, and so to give them the force of law; to make them a portion of that social and political vitality which engenders institutions, outlives customs, methods, special relations, moral sentiments, and accumulates the influences which enforce them. The individual mind and conscience are the active organs of appropriation, but the processes of assimilation and incorporation go on in the social body—the seat of social strength both for itself and for its several members. The common convictions of men are the repository of law, whence the individual in the long run must draw his supplies, more especially in the transition from generation to generation. This social sentiment in the moral world presents a fact of the same order as common law in the legal world, holding the first principles of law in a plastic form, shaping and reshaping its methods.

This being the dependence of the individual on society, and of society on the individual, that social organism is perfect in its two leading products of laws and customs, in which all is ordered for the individual, and in which every individual freely submits himself to the general strength. The general strength stands at once for the largest aggregate of life, and for the primary condition of all life. The individual can not in his activity afford to impoverish the state, another branch of that same

activity; nor the state to impoverish the individual, another phase of its own power. We are, therefore, to seek that combination in which each does the utmost in consistency with the full activity of the other. Nor are these two phases of action in any way so belligerent as to render such a union impossible. If we understand by an increase of liberty, an increase of powers, freely put forth and harmonized within themselves, then the just activity of the state is the liberty of the individual, as it enlarges the circle of his powers, actual and potential; and the just activity of the individual is the liberty of the state, since it also is in increase of the joint powers of the state. These blended powers, no more than those of father and son, exist by exclusion, but by inclusion and joint increase.

The typical individual is each individual in his generic qualities and relations. Incentives, conditions, rights, so far as dependent on customs and laws, are equal in each case, arising as they do from a common nature. Whatever limitations any one man suffers, or whatever peculiar powers he may possess, are personal characteristics, which the social construction neither gives nor takes away. Society recognizes them as facts, orders its own action in reference to them as facts, but does not accept them as fixed facts; nor does it provide for them, as such, in its organic law. The law admits these changeable forces, but admits them as changeable, and in no way strives to fix them. Society may neither waste the variable powers of the individual by overlooking them, nor treat them as permanent differences, when they are not so. The characteristic of a high social organization is the utmost extension of the conditions of well-being, whether dependent on customs or laws; the rendering of aid on the

easiest and freest terms to all; an habitual watchfulness over the general incentives to action; mobility in the conditions which define classes; ready terms of concession to individual endowments.

With this general notion of society, which, if not fully definite at all points, contains no contradictory elements, and suffices to give direction to our thoughts, we ask, How do the words of Christ bear on those social problems which are pressing so hard on the minds of men for a safe and sufficient solution? We are not to look here more than elsewhere for a continuous statement or exhaustive discussion of principles. The words of Christ are addressed directly to the insight of men, and never assume the form of a system, established by proof, pursued into particulars, and to be accepted as a whole. They are fitted to awaken the mind at vital points, and enforce its attention, while leaving it to itself in instituting and completing the appropriate lines of reflection and action. But principles that hold in them the essential truths of our social relations are not wanting in the instructions of Christ.

The economic relations of society are very fundamental, both as furnishing the conditions of a refined and purified life, and as giving, in the pursuit and distribution of wealth, a constant and common field of moral discipline. The words of Christ bear very definitely on economic principles. The twentieth chapter of Matthew opens with the parable of the house-holder, who hired servants into his vineyard at various hours during the day, from early morning to evening, and at the close of their work paid them each a penny. This parable touches directly questions of justice and of method in the dealings of men with each other, and in

the dealings of God with men. It enforces, and seems primarily intended to enforce, individual ownership. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Ownership, sufficient and final, is the condition of benevolence, and so the condition of the unfolding of the spiritual affections. Any claim that trespasses on this primary right of the individual fatally impoverishes him, and in the end must impoverish the community. Nor are the economic losses greater than the spiritual losses. It is out of our own resources that our gifts must come. If these are taken from us, we lose all means of good-will. Nor is there any good-will expressed in that which is given under a claim. The laborers in the parable were angered by receiving less than they expected, and were not prepared to be pleased by receiving more than they could rightfully demand. When claims run ahead of justice, they destroy the conditions of amicable relationship. The parable defines the limits of benevolence and justice, and does not allow the two by confusion to destroy each other. Friend, I do thee no wrong. Didst thou not agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way. I will give unto this last even as unto thee. If we undertake to displace benevolence by justice, we shall in the end lose justice also. The fundamental idea in justice, as well as in benevolence, is ownership.

The parable also distinctly repudiates a notion of equality as of the very nature of justice. Confusion of thought at this point was the occasion of the dissatisfaction of the laborers; and it is this confusion which often lies at the basis of communism, and which is made the ground of complaint against the divine government of the world. Inequality may or may not express injustice; the association is not a fixed one. It is very easy for those who

seem to suffer from inequality to regard it as of the nature of injustice. There is a very general sentiment that the inequalities of society disclose either the wickedness of men or the injustice of God, and ought in some way to be corrected by civil law. The inequalities presented in the parable were clear and great; some had labored twelve hours, and some one hour. The unfair division took place also in connection with severe labor, by those who had borne the heat and burden of the day, and who found themselves at night no better off than those who had accepted the light toil of the evening hour. The opposite principle, therefore, of constant inequalities in society, which do not in any way trespass on justice and are productive of well-being, is fully involved in the parable. While equality in claims is a fundamental principle, inequality in gifts is equally fundamental. A world that did not yield the same rights to all persons under like conditions would be one of moral confusion; a world that aimed at universal equality would be fanciful and impracticable, and repress every impulse of enterprise and goodwill. Justice simply involves the protection of rights and claims; rights arise from powers seeking their own field of exercise, and claims from this very exercise of powers; but powers themselves are subject to many degrees of inequality. The equality which is associated with justice is the equality of personalities. Justice is not permitted to weigh persons, but only to weigh rights and claims. The confusion in men's minds arises in part from the inaptness of language. Equality is not of the essence of justice, but only equality before the law; that is, equality or oneness of procedure in the law, and in the principles which guide it. Equality of powers is not a fact, and equality of conditions thus becomes a chimera; so much

so that it implies a state of things not only undesirable, but in its details unintelligible. Justice, impersonality before the law, is the measure of our claims. Indeed, the two, personal inequalities and social equalities, resolve themselves into the one principle and its implications; it is lawful for me to do what I will with my own. The inequality lies in the possessions and conditions which are my own; the equality in the fact that I share the lawfulness which belongs to all men of using my own, and disposing of it at my pleasure. If each man has not an ultimate ownership in his powers and the fruits of those powers, then there is no one valid claim, no equal principle; and if the one principle is not respected, then the diversity of powers is so far lost. The equality in the claims and the diversity in the powers are inseparable. Moreover, that which destroys one man's claim, destroys equally the claim which is brought against it. This parable is closed with a concise statement of the practical results of the truth recognized in it. The last shall be first, and the first last. Position must ultimately depend on the power to receive, rather than on what one has received; on the freedom which we grant to the rights of others, rather than on the eagerness with which we seize our own rights. In abridging the work of others, we by so much abridge our own work. A little held fruitfully, that is receptively, is better than much held barrenly, unreceptively.

The comparative indifference of the amount of the first gift appears in the two forms of the parable of the talents. In the one form, a single talent is given to each of two servants; and in the other, one, two, and five talents are given to three servants respectively. Both forms are summed up in the same pregnant principle: For unto

every one that hath shall be given, but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. It would be difficult to find a more important economic or social truth, or one more readily lost sight of in its application. The germ of growth is within us, in our own exertions. God gives to them that have—that is, to them who have the disposition to make use of what they have. This disposition is the one discriminating possession among men; all motives are addressed to it, all hopes rest on it. It is not an alteration in position and circumstances that is to be sought for, but in the disposition to use them. As long as we look upon the discipline of the world as hard and hopeless, it is certain to be profitless to us.

This principle is thoroughly applied in the parable. He who had gained ten talents, as standing for the greatest activity, receives the talent which had been left idle. Possession passes from the lowest to the highest. Action is thus not only directly fruitful in itself, but indirectly draws to itself advantages and gifts. This tendency is fundamental in human society, and is not softened in the parable. Men must first look to themselves for help, and in so doing receive help from all quarters. This productive, economic law must be left operative in the construction of society.

These gains, however, being made, there comes in a complementary moral principle, which the eager doctrinaire often forgets, but which receives the clearest statement by Christ: It is more blessed to give than to receive. Other principles are applicable for the sake of this principle, which springs out of the fulness of our spiritual affections. We seek our own so earnestly, we hold it so tenaciously, only that we may dispense it thus freely and wisely. We give to those who are able to

receive, because the gift is thus made most efficacious. Our own supreme benefit is found in the gift, and in the good it works. This principle is the crowning truth in the words of Christ, and one that men as yet by no means understand. Indeed, it is a truth that gathers light only as it is broadly applied. We need to give more freely; all need to give and receive more freely, more wisely, in order that the fruits of good-will may be apparent. This crowning truth in the instructions of Christ men are slowly approaching. They understand better the laws of acquisition in wealth than those of use. They stumble as they reach the goal. They can as yet hardly be said to believe that it is more blessed to give than to receive. The practical demonstration of the truth turns on the breadth and power of the spiritual affections as contrasted with the desires, and is thus necessarily defective in transitional stages; as much so as the motives of civilization to a savage, entering reluctantly on its hard labors. The problem of making wealth is solved every day; the problem of using it has only attained a theoretic exposition by Christ. Civilization has again and again shown itself a thrifty tree, till the period of fruiting has been approached, and then the too ungenial climate has blasted all the buds.

Men have believed, and still believe, that wealth spent selfishly, or in a narrow circle, yields more pleasure than spent benevolently; that they can not trust society, can not return to it what they have gained from it and find it again restored in full spiritual measure. They limit social organic force. Organs swollen by their own usufruct, they seem to think better than organs in active ministration to the body. They surmount physical difficulties, they climb intellectual heights, but when they approach

the very object to be gained, and have only to pitch their peaceful tents on the broad and beautiful uplands of our spiritual life, they hesitate, they fail to understand the new conditions, they insist that the advantages and disadvantages which have grown up in strife and selfishness shall remain. Thus they reach no moral elevation, and means become means only in the ministration of passion. Power, wisdom, and grace are before them, and they tarry in power, believing that wisdom and grace are more or less a mistake. It is just here that the whole force of the Gospel is expended.

This failure to take the highest social principle from the lips of Christ is seen in the very partial way in which it is applied, when men first turn to it. They may give, but give with so little wisdom and love, give in such antagonism to lower principles, as quite to lose sight of the cardinal idea that giving is for the development of power. A love that seeks virtuous life will be saved from this error. Giving which is careless giving is not true giving, as it lacks the giving mind and heart, and can not bear either backward or forward, to giver or receiver, the beneficence of a gift. The giving which is more blessed than receiving is that which pours life into channels of life, and draws life freshly therefrom. To deny this aphorism of Christ, is to deny that society is organic throughout, as well in the higher spiritual realm as in the lower physical one; is to believe that ultimate strength is to be sought by exclusion and limitation and not in the largeness of our common and divine life; is to distrust the possibility of our becoming the sons of God.

Severe things, some have thought inadmissible things, were spoken by Christ concerning riches, as if their possession were incompatible with the Kingdom of

Heaven. This language is fully intelligible, if we understand it to refer to the spirit in which riches were then held, and are still so often held, as one that directly bars the kingdom of grace. In the development of our spiritual life, things are attacked, not so much according to intrinsic quality as according to their present relations to progress. The misconception of the spirit in which wealth should be used is one which turns piety into formal morality, and, taking from righteousness its love, leaves it to sink into rightfulness. Just here the column of advance wavers and falls back. The poor may be as selfish as the rich, as hostile therefore to the kingdom of grace; but they can not put this selfishness in so conspicuous a position, they can not oppose it so directly to the next steps of progress. The rebuke must fall where the offence is most manifest. For this reason it was that Christ strove to help the young man from a formally correct mood into one spiritually powerful by bidding him: Sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me. The claim was carried thus far that there might be no longer any opportunity of confusion and self-deception, any colliding of letter and spirit. It is just at this point of faith, a launching one's self unreservedly on higher incentives, as the eaglet takes the air, that the mind hesitates; but this and this only is following Christ. While Christ puts clearly primary social principles, he as decidedly supplements them by spiritual ones. We are not brought to the gates of heaven, without the password of admission.

Nor do the instructions of Christ fail at times to bear in the plainest way on civil government. Yet we are to remember in the interpretation of his discourses, that he

habitually abstains from a systematic statement of the principles applicable to any portion of our experience. It is not philosophy which he has in hand, but life itself; it is not to speculation but to action that he leads us. A system covers equally the principles in force among men, and those which are ready to be brought forward; those which are sustained by self-interest, and those which appeal to our affections. A system must also not only give governing principles, but must carefully follow them out in their limitations. One who ministers to action, who calls out life by fresh spiritual impulses, a life that is to remain free, expansive, constructive, may pass in silence accepted truths and lines of action sufficiently well-enforced, and call attention exclusively to new incentives of a higher order. Nor need he trace these to all their conclusions, but may leave them in their own unfolding in experience to attain their true balance. A balance in action is a balance of the feelings as well as of the thoughts, and is by no means the product of simple speculation. Christ proposes a new life, and so brings forward with undivided attention the truths which are fitted to initiate it. If life is attained, it will in due time and in suitable order make way for all other things; if life is lost, truth will perish with it.

Christ enforces service rendered, not service received, as the proper ground of authority and honor: Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you; but whosoever shall be great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. This principle is so far from the practice of men, that they rule it out of their thoughts as

of a transcendental order. Yet it is plain that this spirit of service can alone contend with all evils, and establish for itself the proper limits of action. Wrongs and rights will right themselves under gracious impulses, seeking fitting expression; ungracious impulses can never sufficiently, in their antagonism, fence each other off from mischief.

The same principle receives a broader application in society. Honor is not to be sought by the disciples of Christ, but is to be left to fall freely to them in the simple sequence of right action: Be ye not called Rabbi; for one is your master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters; for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted. This view of honor, the infirmity of great souls and the folly of little ones, is as philosophically correct as it is spiritually elevated. Honor can never be sought without missing its quality when attained. Honor is like the shadows of the human face when the light falls upon it from above; they help to disclose the nobility of noble features.

Another pungent principle presented by Christ, one quite in the teeth of ordinary practice and even of sedulously enforced sentiments among men, a principle that has its counter principle lying at the very foundations of government, is that which pertains to the manner in which we are to encounter evil: Resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek turn to him the other also. Evil as a pervasive and malign fact among men is not to be overcome by evil. Satan is

not to be looked to to cast out Satan. Evil that is met by force, which is but another phase of the same evil, is suppressed, not vanquished. Evil is overcome by good only, is extinguished in its bitter passion by love only. The spirit of chivalry, which ruffled up so readily at offence, and was so quick in its irritability to inflict injury, was worth something as a school of mere courage; and yet disclosed the moral blindness of the period, and the great poverty of its conception of manhood. It maintained its inflated pride only by mistaking vices for virtues. It could not distinguish between patience which is the cowardice of a servile spirit, and patience which is the crowning strength of a noble one; it could not contrast the choleric heat of self-love with the purified and quiet temper of love, and see where the balance of power lies. Virtue of this order overcomes vice, only as fire extinguishes fire, by a consumption of its material.

It is true that force, backed by moral impulses of an impure order, is called on in government and elsewhere to encounter rampant evil, and secure a momentary lull; but its effective power, if power it has, is found in the element of justice it contains, not in the wrath it expresses. Even in government, what truth do men more need to recognize than that the foundations of authority must be found in justice, and that justice must, in all its limits, lie side by side with love. Passion is the alloy of justice, not justice itself. The cruel penalties with which governments have sustained themselves have been made necessary by the injustice of their construction, and have given expression to an inhumanity which is of the very nature of crime. Men move slowly along the blind paths of force, only because they have not vision enough to detect the coming

light. The wars by which states have built themselves up against each other have wrought immense suffering, and have so darkened the spiritual heavens that men have groped for the highway of morals at midday. What sense of justice could find admission to the minds of men when Napoleon was driving North, South, East, West, through Europe like an enraged beast?

This principle, as stated by Christ, will have to some minds a tinge of fanaticism, first, because they may not have felt to the full the need of the principle, and second, because they have in their own minds imposed on the Great Teacher the duty of defining its limits. If for a moment we reflect on the degree in which this new temper of patience was the temper of Christ, how completely unknown it had hitherto been among men, how certainly and fully it must enter as a condition of regeneration, how sure it was to be misapprehended and unduly narrowed, how little men were yet ready to apprehend its proper limits, we shall understand, I think, that the ends of action, and ultimately those of instruction, called only for a vigorous enunciation of the principle of patience, as the supreme expression of moral power and the great remedial element in the conflict with sin. If we grasp this principle firmly, if we justly feel this just sentiment, all suitable limitations will be learned as they arise, slowly it may be but effectively. The present lesson is not to be lost or embarrassed by anticipating the next.

The counter principle Christ does announce at another time: Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under feet, and turn again and rend you. Moral means that can not be used as moral, are not to be wasted on physical forces. The supremacy of the moral element is to be asserted in a moral realm, and there only.

Christ more frequently deals with social than with civil relations, as offering the broader field of action, one more truly expressive of the moral forces at work, and one ultimately productive, by its own spirit and possibilities, of the more formal constructions of government. When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends or thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed; for they can not recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. Christ here enjoins a generous, wise, and considerate extension of social life; a use of it not as a means of sustaining personal interests, but of promoting and completing the general well-being. The injunction is permeated with the idea that human life is common life, and that its social receptivities may lie between all its members; that it is organic life, and can not attain its predetermined scope, if any divisive lines of self-interest enter in. Who, other than Christ, has so conceived society? And yet do not the mischiefs of society arise from the want of this conception? What life is there less than the largest which is worth as much as the largest? And is not this question quite as applicable to that grand aggregate, human life, as to that inferior aggregate, individual life; to that major unit, society, as to that minor unit, the family?

We may easily misunderstand these words of Christ, misled by the narrowness of the form of the injunction, and overlooking the breadth of its spirit. The instructions of Christ make no effort to dispense with common sense, or with spiritual insight. When he washed the feet of his disciples, he did so as a single yet signal expression

of the most needful temper which he had occasion to inculcate; he thereby gave no color of approval to the caricature of this act of humble service by the most luxurious of his later disciples. This social parable, for so the evangelist speaks of it, lays hold at once of the primary and most tangible idea, that of a generous spirit, and enforces it against the old ungracious one which he saw manifested immediately about him. The error was that little distinctions of honor were embittering men's hearts, and that social intercourse was neither sincere nor unselfish. The form had displaced the substance, the true spiritual force. We are not, therefore, to accept the correction in so literal a way as to repeat the same error on the opposite side, as if formal concession can ever take the place of real interest and generous sympathy. The thing contended for is a casting away of little things and personal things, and a corresponding broadening of the thoughts and affections which are the sufficient basis of a large life. It is a play of the higher nature that is sought for, in place of a mean, deceitful, unwearied rehearsal of the selfish passions. This purpose, society should be made to subserve.

The candor with which our intercourse should be ordered, is enforced in the injunction: Judge not that ye be not judged. The more artificial, correct, and explicit society is, the more does it avenge itself for the restraints put upon it in public by indulging in private a spiteful and malicious criticism. The fellowship that Christ contemplates is a spiritual one; hence it is born in good-will, and grows up with a large participation by all in the gifts of God and grace of God, which we hold in common. When social life is built on the second command, and the second command rests back on the first command, we shall set no limits to the outward range of society any more

than to its inner force. As in the ocean, breadth and depth will correspond. The condiments of this feast will no longer be vanity, pride, emulation, the love of honor.

The illimitable movement of moral life is also clearly put in the injunction of forgiveness. We are not to forgive until seven times, but until seventy times seven. The only obstruction to grace is transgression. As often as this is taken out of the way, life may be renewed, or rather is renewed. This conception of a clear, conscious life of divine love, rational within itself, and with deepest reason taking to itself, by sympathetic appropriation, all terms of life, and yielding all terms to life, is the dominant idea of Christ; the Kingdom of Heaven for which he would have us labor and pray. And there is no other kingdom for man, no other goal of human life, no other sufficient salvation for any human spirit. That this kingdom is attainable is shown by the simple fact that it lies on our visible horizon.

The obstructions, dangers, delays, which attend on this life; the tenderness of the divine parental love which watches over it; the blindness and wilfulness of the human impulses which, taking part in it, thwart it; the slow discipline, much to be deprecated and not to be escaped, which bears it forward; its final and joyful consummation, are all set forth in the simplest, clearest, and most divine fashion in the parable of the prodigal son, a complete gospel of wisdom and grace within itself. That such a parable in its promise should lie in the facts of this our world, should be seen by Christ and fall from his lips, discloses, on the one side, the germs of salvation that are hidden in the very soil of the earth, and, on the other, the divine sunshine and light of that Word of Truth that is to call them forth, and to put them in full possession of these their native fields.

CHAPTER IX.

Growth of Society Historically.

Spiritual growth explains the rational world. If we omit this idea or weaken it, all interpretation becomes obscure; the sufferings of men seem endless and hopeless. If we conceive this growth clearly, and give it that first position in our thoughts which it claims, immediately light begins to fall on the dark way men are travelling, and we come to see that the path, though long, leads out of a wilderness into a promised land. The Kingdom of Heaven is accessible only along the rugged road of spiritual discipline, but being attained in its commanding beauty it makes quite insignificant even this great labor of accomplishment. The direction of this growth, the means which have been used and which remain to be used in its fulfillment, must be somewhat known, if we are to understand the relation of Christ to its completion.

We shall certainly find two things, even in a comparatively hasty inquiry: first, that the chief evils men have suffered have been moral evils, and the remedy has necessarily been moral. Physical evils have been severe, intellectual limitations have been constant and great, but any effort to overcome them has disclosed the fact that back of them and beneath them, as a soil in which their roots were thriving, have been moral evils, which it was necessary to remove as a condition of any permanent improvement in the lot of men. Neither the physical nor the moral has long been handled separately successfully. The line of

development, therefore, in society has from the very beginning included voluntary elements, and has shown the obscure and fitful movements which belong to spiritual powers. There have been frequent and encouraging gatherings of favorable impulses, which have borne particular nations a great way onward in growth; but these energies have subsided and been dispersed again long before any thing like a goal has been reached. It is also plain, in the second place, that the early stages of social growth are more instinctive and necessary, and the later ones more conscious and free; and hence that the development of the race is not only one involving moral forces, but one in which moral forces increasingly assume the leadership. Hence it is that Christ, the incarnation of spiritual strength, becomes, century by century, more manifestly the leader in this movement, provided for from the foundations of the world. If it is plain that this growth among men, now stretching back over many millenniums, can not complete itself except under this very leadership, we shall have the strongest proof, and the only sufficient proof, of his Messiahship.

The formation of nations is the first considerable step in the growth of humanity. Physical necessities, social sentiments, intellectual impulses, all concur in securing it. Safety, the love of power, the fellowship which men, even the lowest, have with each other in the acquisition and exercise of power, give occasion to national growth, to an extended and strong social organism. The collective life takes the lead, and consolidates itself as the condition of all individual well-being. This stage of society has been termed its militant form. It involves firm cohesion, clear limits, sharp conflicts, and the stern subordination of individuals to the community. The

active constructive agent is war, its constant arbitrament is war.

That the intrinsically horrible circumstances of war, with its vast power to augment human sufferings, and its bitter expression of human passions, should be in any way the means of moral growth, is a fact that discloses fully the mixed elements we have to deal with, the slow and painful birth of the higher from the lower, the struggle which life is at once compelled to enter on with its environment as a condition of compacting its own powers. That war has wrought progress, and that war, men being what they are, has been a necessary means of progress, are plain facts. Yet war has suppressed human sympathies, called out brute appetites, and been everywhere and in every phase of it a startling manifestation of the cruelty and selfishness of men,—if not in all the combatants yet most intensely in the larger portion of them. Yet war has carved out the first grand organic forms in society and breathed into them national life. It has been a school of courage, duty, devotion. Count von Moltke is credited with saying: "Without war the world would stagnate and lose in materialism duty and self-sacrifice." While not overlooking the truth there is in this assertion, we ought not to overlook its profound error. War stands to social growth in something the same relation that sickness does to health. It indicates disease and helps to eliminate it; and if successful is eliminated with it. War that subserves the purposes of war, to wit, progress, puts an end to war. No such clumsy and brutal method of change can long accompany advantageous change. It is only the worst of circumstances that can be relieved by war.

The courage that is called out is chiefly physical courage; and in the direction of this cardinal virtue of courage,

war works quite as much by the physical means of natural selection as by those moral means which fortify the mind within itself. The sense of duty also which war enforces is a very narrow one, and one of contradictions and blind limitations. As the heavy wheels of its own artillery rut the earth, so war cuts into the minds of men certain deep lines of duty; outside of these the manifold obligations of men to men are wholly forgotten. The military roads that here and there cross the great steppes and wind through the mountains are no substitute for the innumerable highways of communication along the fruitful plain; no more is the hard muscle of war for all the gentle, pliant, patient activities of peace. A wave of lawlessness and crime followed with us the war of the Rebellion, and did not reach its full force till ten years after the close of that struggle. War may be a way of escape, but it is a passage of fire from a burning building.

The second step of growth which accompanies and follows the first step of combination is that of consolidation within the nation. Successful war without, gives more or less of peace within, the nation, and extended communication and safety make way for the industrial phase of society. Moreover, this phase early becomes an adjunct of war, giving it its resources, and also those possessions for whose preservation and extension war is carried on. The spirit of war is compelled at once to foster that of peace in its industrial productiveness. But the second spirit is diverse from the first, and in development separates itself from it more and more. The objects which enlarged industry brings before the mind are constantly interfered with by war, and when industry accepts the service of war it is very largely at the cost of its own feelings and pursuits. The industrial phase of society springs out of the mili-

tant phase, yet tends first to modify it, and then to displace it. Industry means production, commerce; and these mean peace. It means also a restful enjoyment of the fruits of its own labors, and this desire war ruthlessly disregards; war despises industry even while profiting by its labors, and industry hates war, looking upon its forced contributions as the exactions of an enemy. Hence industry tends first to divide society into two classes, the productive class and the military class; and later, if opposing circumstances are not too imperious, to subordinate the second class to the first.

The industrial period is also in its social tendencies diverse from the militant period. The latter consolidates the nation with comparatively little specialization of individual powers, interests, and duties. The former is the reverse of this in its action. It quickens the development of individual interests and of individual rights. Private enterprise finds its own fields of activity, asserts itself in them, and strives to rescue them from the interference of government. The first necessity of society lies in the direction of organization, and its first theory of rights is in the same direction. Society is a supreme need, and also is it a supreme right. The second necessity and the second disclosure of rights lie in the opposite direction, and the individual comes to be regarded as the primitive seat of authority, while the state holds from him what authority he, in the pursuit of his own interests, has conceded to it. In the militant period there is a central life which makes a very simple organization effective, and gives to personal liberty but a narrow range of activities. It is not embarrassed with any theory of rights, but identifies them at once with force. In the industrial period there is an extended division of functions and powers, which ren-

ders society, in its various members, capable of much; but also one which easily weakens its organic unity. In making this assertion we must direct attention to the results of industrial interests simply, which draw rights, powers, pleasures, toward the individual in his private activity. We must not forget that this stage of development gives occasion to a third stage, and may be, therefore, partially obscured by the action of spiritual impulses higher than its own.

What we now wish to urge is that the industrial phase is no more complete within itself, is no more ultimate, than the militant one; that the two, as opposed tendencies, must unite, as a condition of progress, in a movement higher than either. If the industrial stage is left to itself, it will destroy itself in its own excessive individuation, and society will be forced back again on the militant phase as a means of regaining its strength—the one grand feature of this development. When individual power has been won, that power must return itself freely to society under the moral law as a condition of its ultimate retention. The central life must expand proportionately to that of its members, must tower up and overshadow the life of its parts; or rather must gather up into itself from its members, and must send freshly forth from itself to its members, those common currents of health and strength for the sake of which only does specialization take place anywhere. The primary dependence is that of the individual on society; the secondary dependence is that of society on the individual. Each, in transition, is instituted narrowly for itself; but each must ultimately recognize and embrace the other under the law of the affections. If society halts in its development at any partial attainments, it is soon forced back on some previous position to do over again its incomplete work.

We have in hand to show the weakness of the present industrial stage of society, and the possibility of advancing beyond it by the spirit of love only, the Gospel of Christ. The coming of Christ would seem to have been ordered in time in reference to these successive phases, and to have occurred at the earliest period in which any new principles could take root amid the conflicting forces of war and the unrestrained selfishness of production. The repeated failures of the past render plain the insufficiency of either war or industry to build up a nation in permanent prosperity. The progress achieved by the race has not been made in straight lines, but in zig-zags, as lightning forces its way in the air. Resistance has accumulated in one path, till farther advance has been impossible; and there has been a pause till the movement has been taken up in some new direction. Men have begun to conclude that a circumscribed life belongs, from the nature of things, to nations as to individuals, and that all organic growth is discontinuous, its genetic transitions being its most favorable and striking features. The actual occasion of the arrest of social growth from time to time in the past has been the unwillingness of men to advance from the industrial to the spiritual phase. Society has expended its energies under the industrial type, till this movement has become self-destructive. Roman power began to perish within itself before it began to crumble away under external forces. This inner weakness was due to the curdling of social elements under a purely selfish system. Classes became more widely separated, were more intensely hostile, and were enervated by wealth on the one side, and by poverty on the other. Here were the rich men who fared sumptuously every day, and here the beggars, full of pollution, who were laid at their doors. Neither

of them could win manhood for themselves or bring strength to society.

The conditions of national life have been somewhat altered by the permanent division of nations, and the general extension of civilization. There is now no area left in which barbarous and hostile powers can be nurtured, and no ability in inferior civilization to resist superior civilization. Exterior pressure is so far reduced by this fact, or rendered so amenable to public opinion, that the precise method of overthrow which is liable to overtake a state weak by decay is less obvious. But this much is plain, that the simply industrial spirit tends constantly to deeply divide classes and to weaken social ties, and is, therefore, hostile to the continuous growth and prosperity of the state. Arrest and overthrow will follow, whether we are able or not to anticipate its precise method, or to point out the successive steps in which internal decay and external violence will unite in the result. India and China and Japan have presented examples of a civilization hopelessly balked by the poverty of the working-classes. In European nations the disaster may come as communism, since communism gains an ever-growing incentive out of the increasingly unequal rewards of industry. Or, one nation may engulf another; as it is plain that a civilization which cannot secure common development for its citizens, or bind them by a sense of justice to the existing state of things, cannot long impose any sufficient moral restraint on simple violence. We can not escape the liability of an unexpected appeal to force, so long as a full and fair appeal to good-will has not been made. It is vain to suppose that the selfishness of the few will not, in due time, and in some inevitable way, be met by the selfishness and violence of the many. Even within the present cen-

tury, all portions of Europe have suffered by devastation; the most civilized nation playing the part of a barbaric horde led by an Alaric.

Though the repeated failures of the past have somewhat the force of inductive proof against continuous civilization, this conviction would be readily overcome did we not clearly see that an industrial type, built upon the desires and so upon the appetites and passions of men, is within itself full of increasingly repellent forces, which must ultimately find expression in a disaster of some sort. The century just finished has contained a complete rehearsal of this law on a large scale. Slavery in the United States, in that century, passed through all the phases of censure, tolerance, justification, stern maintenance, each prompted in due order by an industrial sentiment and industrial incentives. Yet the conditions of a terrible, and, in spite of all prediction, unexpected retribution were accumulated in that one century, and broke upon us in such terrific force that another century will hardly more than suffice to wear out the penalty. Industry simply—political economy without ethics—rests on our selfish impulses, and in the operation of all its laws, gives power to those who have power, and so widens the divisions between men. This it does in its later stages with startling rapidity, a rapidity so great that the world is not rich enough for a continuous movement in this direction, any more than it was large enough for the conquests of Alexander. There are not sufficient resources of labor in the poor to glut the appetite for wealth, and the process is arrested by the simple exhaustion of extreme poverty. This industrial tendency may be softened and delayed by various measures of good-will, but it contains within itself the certain promise of catastrophe.

To give to those who have is an important and broad moral principle, but if we narrow it down into an economic or social law, as some are willing to do, it plays only a subordinate and unsafe part. We may begin with it, but we can not end with it. If we refuse to expand this principle to its full limits under the divine law of love, and simply cling to the rule that each man shall hold what natural forces, expressed under the social facts of free competition, assign him, we shall discover that we are approaching a final and not very remote bound of individual and of general well-being. This result is hidden from thoughtful minds, first, because they overlook the fact that the affections are constantly breaking in on the industrial desires, and soften them when they can not control them; and, secondly, because they clearly see the vigorous and needful discipline of natural laws, the many ways in which society has suffered from hasty and awkward efforts to escape them, and do not so distinctly discern the lines along which these lower laws must always, in a truly spiritual economy, be merged in higher ones. We can not accept the statements of those who look upon society as a field of laws, in their nature and severity allied to physical laws, and who thus anticipate its redemption, so far as it is capable of redemption, from the continued pressure of these forces. "All that we can affirm with certainty is that social phenomena are subject to law, and that natural laws of the social order are in their entire character like the laws of physics." "Every successful effort to widen the power of man over nature is a real victory over poverty, vice, and misery, taking things in the general and in the long run. It would be hard to find a single instance of a direct assault by positive effort upon poverty, vice, and misery, which has not either failed, or,

if it has not failed directly and entirely, has not entailed other evils greater than the one which it has removed. The only two things which really tell on the welfare of man on earth, are hard work and self-denial (*i. e.*, in technical language, labor and capital), and these tell most when they are brought to bear directly upon the effort to earn an honest living, to accumulate capital, to bring up a family of children to be industrious and self-denying in their turn."[1]

This is the gospel of industry, the inspired canon of Political Economy. The error it contains is not less in magnitude than the truth it holds. It regards a transient phase—which must be, if it is to be of any use, a transitional one—as the permanent form of society. It discards higher forces because they are not at once or fully applicable to lower conditions; and that too in face of the most significant facts of our time. No assertion concerning society could well be made more profoundly untrue and misleading than that every direct assault upon poverty, vice, and misery has miscarried. We have only to instance the educational institutions of other countries, and yet more those of our own country, to disclose the rashness of the assertion. These institutions almost universally include, and that usually in a high degree, a moral and eleemosynary element, and their success has been more than proportioned to the generous effort they have involved. There are very few in the United States who have acquired any considerable education, to say nothing of a liberal one, who have not been aided therein either by private or public liberality. One can hardly gain with us the knowledge which helps to entitle his opinions to

[1] Sociology, *Princeton Review*, Nov., 1881.

respect without being compelled, in the censure he may pass upon benevolent effort, to stand as an illustration of the opposite principle.

Industry as industry is thoroughly selfish. It involves a perpetual division of interests, and a desertion of the poor by the rich so far as their own gains, narrowly viewed, will allow it. As industry so ordered aims not so much at any thing that can be termed absolutely well-being, as at relative superiority in the external circumstances of life, poverty and degradation may remain in entire consistency with its purpose, while ready and humble service may be a part of it. Every inferior class gives relief and advantage to every superior one. Superiority is present by contrast, and pliancy is the fruit of necessity. Industrial laws, natural though they are, gather power rapidly, in their development, into the hands of the few, and a power of the most searching, exacting, and irremediable order. If wealth can be left to an unrestricted use of all the conditions of acquisition which easily and in due succession fall to it; if poverty is to be left to the entire weight of the growing disadvantages which overtake it; if civil law stands by as an indifferent umpire in the conflict, simply preserving that peace which is necessary for its progress, then no bondage and no hopelessness are comparable to that slavery and despair which are liable to overtake the working classes under a simply industrial system. We may theoretically affirm that there are thus present immense forces of propulsion, developing industry and economy, but they lack almost wholly that one element which makes them effective social forces—hopefulness. "In an over-populated country the extremes of wealth and luxury are presented side by side with the extremes of poverty and distress. They are equally the prod-

ucts of natural social pressure. The achievements of power are highest, the rewards of prudence, energy, enterprise, foresight, sagacity, and all other industrial virtues are greatest; on the other hand, the penalties of folly, weakness, error, and vice are most terrible. Pauperism, prostitution, and crime are the attendants of a state of society in which science, art, and literature reach the highest development."[1]

After this vigorous statement of the evils which attend on the natural unfolding of an industrial system, the author has no remedy beyond that of an increase of speed, a still more remorseless application of the very principles under which the mischief has arisen. Over-population, in its entire entail of misery, is simply another incentive, pushing men onward into a position of foresight and broader moral responsibility. This is the only remedy of over-population. The term is relative, and expresses a life disproportionate to the intellectual, and still more the moral, resources of a nation. It is simply the crowding of physical forces upon spiritual powers. Nothing is to be feared from over-population when the moral impulses have the lead; in this lead lies the remedy.

If there is any one truth that has come clearly out in the history of the race, it is that progress is never secured by the simple addition of gross motives. Flogging as a punishment does not improve character. Cruel inflictions do not redeem society. Wretchedness does not correct vice. The sufferings of barbarians do not civilize them. The final and sufficient incentives must come, like a flock of doves out of heaven, in gentleness and in beauty.

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[1] *Idem.*

When the intelligence and strength and virtue of a community are found forgetful of its ignorance and weakness and wickedness; when the better classes desert the inferior ones, and attempt to march on alone, the poor, in their grovelling qualities, will only the more basely betray themselves; and the rich, in their selfish ones, will fall off from true greatness and substantial well-being.

The industrial method thoroughly recognizes self-interest,—undistinguished from selfishness—and relies on it as a prevailing prudential incentive. The indulgences of wealth are as much a part of the programme as the privations of poverty. The one is the pull and the other the push of the same movement. If we deny the luxury we lose the one impulse; if we alleviate the misery we lose the other. It is for the sake of these enjoyments that men exercise their sagacity. A Derby race, with its five thousand dollars paid to the jockey that rides the successful horse, is a typical force that moves the world. A right-hand corner-stone in the social structure is the luxury of the luxurious; a left-hand corner-stone is the wretchedness of the wretched. These, again, are the two pillars on which our temple rests; and unfortunately there is a blind giant of force standing between them, with an arm wrapped about each; we can not tell when he will bow himself and bring our revel to an end. Certainly these laws of industry, which are of the nature of physical laws, have no power to assuage grief, call out sympathy, or placate passion. It has been in this very mill of industry that our giant has been grinding, till his mind is full of sullen hate.

This notion of the unchangeability of the forces that rule in any social phase proceeds on a false view of the moral world. The author referred to regrets that soci-

ology has been included in moral science, and been "confused and entangled by its dogmas." Herein is the bold assumption that society is not the field of morals, and that sociology, the science of social forces, should be ordered without reference to man's moral nature. On the other hand we venture to think that the chief difficulty in society has been and is that its action is ordered without sufficient reference to morals, and that the correction of its evils lies in the growth of the moral sentiment. Morality, as social law, means this much or it means very little. The only possible organic harmony in a spiritual universe must arise under the two laws of love; the only possible harmony in society must appear under the second of those laws. This statement is hardly less than axiomatic. Where there is not mutual regard, there is not moral organization; there are forces still in conflict, and these must reduce happiness and impede growth. Moreover, the affections are constitutionally the very seat and source of our highest and most enduring pleasures, and we cannot mar these affections, or put any thing in their place, without corresponding loss. The pure, generous, and hearty nature is the permanently happy one; and this is an irreversible law in the moral universe. But the industrial phase of society strives to set aside this law by a law of its own. The force of gravity may as well contend for exclusive control of the human body as the law of self-interest for the entire government of the human soul. Happiness is annexed and forever annexed to the gracious affections, and this is a fact that cannot for a moment be forgotten in a successful sociology. It is profoundly better, in every way better, to give than to receive; and the practical denial of the fact in industrial society shows the error and bondage still in it.

We do not set aside the industrial regimen; we cordially assent to the fact that we must grow through it and by means of it. No man can be generous till he has won that which is his own. The mistake is that when he has won it, he insists that an unscrupulous and selfish consumption of it is the best cousumption, the very consumption he has had in view from the beginning, the only incentive of his labor. When the mind is in the midway ground between lower and higher motives, it suffers from a variety of attractions and illusions. A revel of the passions, hard labor for the desires, the sweet intercourse of the affections, all draw it; and it does not find its true centre till it approaches the goal. The refinements of society are felt to be valuable, and so they are. The industrial temper, when it is brought near enough to the spiritual temper to feel the need of self-justification in its forgetful and selfish methods, is likely to set it up in this wise. Refinements are the staples of civilization, its most manifest gains; they must be preserved at all hazards; the divisions in society serve to fence them off and fence them in from that vulgar herd which grazes on the open common, and which, once admitted, would trample these plants under foot, without gain to themselves, and to our infinite loss. Here is an important plea, and the industrial temper makes the most of it.

There is another supplementary truth, which it sees less clearly. These refinements, while they are in some sense the products of seclusion, suffer immensely from it. They are like a garden which has not only been fenced in, but roofed in, till the sunlight of heaven can not reach it, and bring forward its plants to flowering and fruitage. Our satirical writers have discovered this fact; and we ourselves have framed words on purpose to express these

phases of society. The refinements of wealth, when not sustained by intellectual cultivation, we term shoddy; the refinements of cultivated society which are not sustained by good-will, we term snobbishness. How searching and bitter and just is the satire of Thackeray, and against what is it all directed but the refinements of an industrial system in its later stages; refinements that are not bedded in the moral life, offer no sufficient pleasures, and give no inner strength; refinements that have been roofed in from the pure light of heaven, and have contracted the pallor of disease. Even these refinements can not be long preserved on these narrow conditions. They are perishable fruits, and must in time decay; or rather they are in a state of chronic decay. As the refinements of wealth must at once be supported by cultivation, so those of cultivation must be immediately sustained and extended by good-will. These refinements are in part what industry gets to give, and forgetting to give them, they perish on her hands. No miser can ever be blessed by his gains. It was with a perfect insight into this inner weakness of mere luxury, in its ever-returning and futile efforts, that Christ commanded his disciples: When thou makest a dinner or supper, call not thy friends nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen nor thy rich neighbors, lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed, for they can not recompense thee. He then proceeds to the parable of the great supper,—the true blessing—from which one and another excuses himself on the ground of this and that narrow private interest. No one craves a part in the festivity of love.

It may seem surprising that, in the highest stage of de-

velopment which the industrial type has ever attained, and among its well-to-do classes, the question is so vigorously put: Is life worth living? and is so often answered in a pessimistic spirit. Yet it is not strange. Disappointment is the most depressing feeling. It extinguishes light, it destroys hope, it tramples out the fire and enthusiasm of effort. But the industrial system as it reaches its goal discerns more and more clearly that the objects gained are of no new worth, that it has been the victim of a mirage that leaves its thirst unquenched. Whither shall it go? What shall it now do? Whence is to come a new promise and a fresh labor? These are questions it can not answer; and without an answer life is not worth living.

Yet the answer is plain, if we freely accept our higher, spiritual nature. Industry has not miscarried, life is not ended. So far as there has been an apparent miscarriage, it has been because we have taken means for ends. If society were any happier than it is, that happiness, in the present selfishness of men, would be an accusation against Heaven, and would obscure the path of progress. As long as men and women really prefer that play of sensibilities which attends on the possession of diamonds to that which accompanies an extended exercise of goodwill toward other men and women, the happiness of the world can not be materially increased; nor ought it to be. There is no basis for such increase. Selfishness has run itself out of breath, and love will not come in to take up the race. To vary the image, we are landed on a farther shore, we have reached a new carrying-place; only by making this neck of land, can we launch our boats on fresh waters.

But the excuse is ready. Direct assaults on vice and

misery have lamentably failed. Doubtless they have in part failed, because they have not been thoroughly sustained by wisdom and inspired by love. Love that is careless and heedless is by so much less than love. Love is not off-hand in its work, it carries with it the utmost patience and attainable skill. Now skill, patience, and love have not failed; on the other hand, all the social successes of the world are due to them in their minor and major forms of application. Indeed the latter forms are of the two less often complete, and so we are confused and misled by the results. Skill and good-will more readily run between man and man, than between class and class; they pass more perfectly by slight methods than by great manifestations; but in either case, when they are present, they do not fail to do their work, and a great work. As long as we give in the spirit of self-indulgent wealth, satirized by Horace: "Take these things home to your children; if you do not, I shall give them to the pigs," we have not tested the force of good-will in the world. Its failures hitherto have been the failures of incipiency, not those of maturity. What seer, in view of the facts of history as they pass before him, is afraid to predict the fortunes of good-will, provided it be good-will fortifying itself with the appliances of wisdom.

It is plain that men are becoming aware, and more and more completely so every day, of the present and prospective failure of mere industrialism. Many have already at hand their remedies in some form of communism or socialism. That communism is often the search for a truth, and even the partial expression of a truth, that lies before us, one may be quite willing to admit; yet the spirit and methods of both these "isms" are usually retrogressive. A communism that has in it any disposition to confisca-

tion, any desire arbitrarily to redivide the fruits of past labor, is in antagonism to the forces which rule industry, and is seeking to escape existing evils by retreat and not by advance. Such a movement involves a misunderstanding of the problem. A communism of this order does not see that the strongest incentives out of which the laws of production spring, have not been too strong for the work they have had to do, and that they can only be advantageously and permanently softened by struggling up through them and not by sinking beneath them. If we do these laws essential violence by arbitrary redivision, we shall soon find ourselves in a position in which we shall be compelled to restore them in full force as a condition of regaining lost ground. If we can supplement self-interest with good-will, very well; but if we propose to expel one form of self-interest by another form of self-interest much less justifiable and not less exacting; if we put the self-interest of the less intelligent classes in place of the self-interest of the more intelligent, we shall certainly fail, and be compelled to restore the more primitive and natural relations of men to each other. Government that is truly progressive is coherent in its successive steps; still more are the laws of society coherent in their unfolding, and any accumulation of pressure indicates an occasion for progress, not for retreat.

In the present conflict between labor and capital, the wrong involved in existing circumstances is strongly felt by the working classes. They understand this much, that current relations can not be, must not be, accepted as ultimate; that they are in some way to have a brighter future; that toil is to lighten its burdens as it progresses. In the restlessness begotten by hard labor, and by the just sentiment that they too should share the growth of the world,

they are ready for any sudden and violent change that makes promise of being remedial. The proper counsel, under the circumstances, to workingmen, is not patience and submission, but wise effort. This counsel must include a plain path forward along the lines of unfolding that belong to our higher nature. The naked enforcement of laws of sociology, which are only the harsh rendering of impulses based on self-interest, a self-interest that has taken sides with the rich against the poor, is fitted only to enflame and embitter passion. Those who are below can not be successfully exhorted to lie quiet for the sake of those that are above, nor will they willingly believe that there is any satisfactory and just law that holds them in their place. It is not now true, and will become less and less true with every advancing year, that society, in its foundations and superstructure, is built simply on self-interest. It is true, and must remain true, that without first sustaining the laws of self-interest, we can not reach those of benevolence. But having established production, we must make it minister more and more to good-will, a good-will that constantly softens the conditions of production itself. We can not supersede justice by benevolence, we may greatly modify it by benevolence.

A true communistic movement must be rooted in the concessions of good-will, must spring freely up under the laws of our higher nature, those very laws that make these progressive unfoldings expressions of profound truths, chief among which is, It is more blessed to give than to receive. In the measure in which the individual understands that the community is after all the grand reservoir of personal powers in the physical, the intellectual, and the moral world; that personal well-being can be gotten in no other way so fully, so fortunately, and of so high an order, as by

a free and constant contribution to the common life, will uninterrupted progress be possible in those later stages in which it enters the true moral domain.

For more than two thousand years it has been distinctly seen—and it is a truth that in the meantime has found many practical enforcements—that in all free or proximately free governments, the great struggle lies between the rich and the poor. So to reconcile and organize these two extremes that the inner forces of society shall be attractive and not divisive, organic and not destructive, is the great problem of social life.

Liberty and democracy, said Aristotle, can not exist without equality of conditions. Equality before the law that issues in gross social inequalities ceases to have the force and even the appearance of a great principle. This social and civil conflict between the rich and the poor is one that is coming, with each advancing year, to touch us as a nation more nearly, and to hold in itself more manifestly the future of the republic. Society and civil law can not long be divided in their temper. If the possession of wealth defines social relations and social power, it must come in time to govern civil ones also. The greater contains the less.

Some have thought that the true remedy for this conflict is a return in the tenure of land to the primitive method of common ownership, with yearly division. This view overlooks many things. It overlooks the fact that states and societies do not move backward. Growth does not return to previous conditions. The forces of individuation have been sufficient, in most instances, to overthrow this tenure; much more will they be sufficient to prevent its re-establishment. This opinion does not sufficiently consider the fact that a common tenure of

land is applicable to an agricultural population only, and to one relatively stationary in civilization and in numbers; while the great evils of modern society chiefly develop themselves in cities, and cities are gaining increased social weight as contrasted with rural districts. This view also forgets that modern civilization can afford neither to spare, nor to materially reduce, that personal energy and enterprise, that increased life, which have accompanied individuation. There is no general principle which will justify regression at this essential point. The true solution of the social problem is a husbandry of these awakened powers and a subjection of them to the general well-being. Their repression would be a pitiable confession of weakness. Progress must quicken personal activity and extend personal responsibility, checking them only at the line at which they begin to trespass on the action of others, and so to undermine themselves.

Those who look backward rather than forward for the remedy in this conflict fail also to see the anomalous moral attitude in which they are ready to place society. Rarely will one tie his own hands lest he should commit a crime, or fill his ears with wax lest he should hear the Syren of temptation. Still less will society do this. Men will not peacefully lay aside great and valuable powers lest they should abuse them; nor will society as a whole enter on such a method. The moral strength sufficient to lead to such a measure ought to lead, and would lead, to something far better than it.

Moreover, counsels of this extreme order are wasted. Society will accept no heroic treatment, will yield itself to no man's panacea; its stages of growth will not be the long strides of theory, but the short, tentative steps of experience. It is of comparatively little use to con-

struct complicated theories, or theories which involve extensive changes, for the reorganization of society. Society will hardly give them so much as a hearing; and the boldness, the rashness of the spirit which would lead to their adoption would augur poorly for their maintenance.

Society will, doubtless, in reaction against excessive individuation—an individuation that tends to anarchy—and pressed by urgent dangers, learn both in theory and in practice to assert more vigorously its own superior rights. It may set limits to individual acquisition, especially in landed property; it may restrict the amounts which it will pass from the dead to the living in inheritance,—a measure that would rapidly reduce excessive wealth; it may compel wealth to bear its full arithmetical proportion of the public burdens,—which it now so generally and so extensively evades—or a geometrical proportion, which would serve to compensate the extravagant power of accumulation which falls to great possessions. The right of society in this direction will be recognized in connection with the circumstances which call for its use. He who holds millions and transmits millions almost without effort; he who easily and safely gathers into his own hands the best opportunities of a great commercial community, is able to do so by virtue of that pervasive presence of civil law which the state maintains. It is for this same state, as a wise and just presence, to decide in what method, to what extent, and at what price, guided by the public weal, it will cast this protection over individual wealth; how far it will aid the individual in gathering in the conditions of advantage which it itself confers. The incentives to effort which society needs carefully to guard are chiefly found in connection with

poverty and with moderate wealth; they exist in excess rather than in deficiency in connection with extreme wealth.

One thing is plain, a happy, social organization will be a free and a highly moral one. The pressure of present dangers are the very incentives which are to bear us forward through the next stages of progress, lifting our moral level. No perfect organization is consistent with selfishness, or can be the product of selfishness. Society must be organized within itself by the possession of a liberal and beneficent spirit, the spirit of Christ, and by giving this spirit constructive force as rapidly as it is gained. Only thus can we escape one phase or another of conflict. Most true is the assertion of Immanuel H. Fichte, that Christianity is "destined some day to become the inner organizing power of the state." The social spirit and civil law will grow together, and together struggle against the spirit of division and anarchy, and win their victory only by a slow infusion of the mind of Christ.

But these transitions are already incipient, and the forces that are to make them complete are in action. Hence the question of social progress is not one of general principles simply, but one of specific applications also. General and extended education at the cost of society has probably been thus far the most effective social agency in growth, and is one which still admits of a far more perfect and complete use. Knowledge is a primary condition of skilful and successful action; and if it be true knowledge, it supplies also the most immediate incentives to such action. No one who believes in the steady and general development of human life, will expect this result without knowledge. One of the most direct and certain ways in which society can use its strength for its conjoint interests

is education, improved in quality and increased in quantity. Any effort that reaches any mind as knowledge, attains that which in itself is good, and can only be turned into evil by perversion. The more extended the knowledge the less become the motives for its abuse. It is urged against education that it is often not well adapted to the particular and immediate ends of life. Quite true; and the remedy lies in a more careful adaptation. Or it is said, that knowledge does not necessarily improve character; that character is a thing of incentives and habits. If this be affirmed of some forms of knowledge, it is true; but it is not true of knowledge widely or wisely taught. This gives us the range alike of physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual laws. The motives and methods of virtue are also themselves proper subjects of that large discipline which is covered by education. Occasionally it has been said that there are more convictions for crime in well-educated than in ignorant communities. It is possible; where there is no law there is no transgression. All the reasons urged against education betray their origin in indifference, by the simple fact that no good man thinks them applicable in the case of his own children.

While the essential forces and laws of industry are not to be set aside, they can be constantly softened and reshaped for ends of equalization. The increasing power which wealth acquires by the very growth of society, the excessive stimulus which it occasions on the one side, and the bitter repression on the other, can only be corrected by social sentiment and civil law. Social laws are not inflexible, neither is all legislation in modification of them mischievous. The very injury ascribed to these measures must arise from a modification effected by them in social action. The true statement is that great caution and wis-

dom are called for when we deal with primitive social tendencies, that our new methods may lie in the general direction of their social action, and be in continuation of it. Social laws are modifiable, and are suffering constant modification in the progress of society. This fact arises from their very nature. They rest on motives, incentives in the human mind, and these incentives are variable under social progress. Action and growth change the data from which the laws spring, and so change the laws themselves. These changes may be made successfully of set purpose, as well as by insensible transformations.

The conditions under which real estate is to be held are wholly within the scope of law. They may be altered again and again in the further equalization of incentives and opportunities. The pull and the push in society, the rewards of labor and the losses of indolence, need constant rearrangement as they gather too intensely at poles too remote from each other. Otherwise the advancing host has no common spirit; all is eagerness in the front, all is indifference in the rear, and an unscrupulous sentiment is everywhere. The excessive pull of wealth and the ineffectual push of poverty land men alike in vice. Education can not do much unless social sentiment and civil law keep the highways of individual progress clear, by a constant reduction on the one side, and restitution on the other, of incentives. That tenure and division and transfer of real estate are best which, the circumstances being given, confer the strongest and most general motives of industry. Between strength and generality, generality is to receive the first attention.

Monopolies of every form, whether legal or natural or incidental to the simple growth of industry, are to be removed or softened, according to the principles involved

under the general end of the general well-being. In short, society is to have a brain and a heart, with which to watch over its own growth, remembering, in the spirit of Christ, that it has but one interest, one life, one redemption; that the weak are committed to the strong, the ignorant to the wise, under the law of love.

That the state can do this, and has been doing it in a limited way in the progress already achieved, are very plain. Public education is an example; the use of public institutions as depositories of the savings of the poor is an example; national banks in the security they have brought to industry are examples; the many charities of the state and its milder penal administration are examples still waiting completion. Though these have not been administered with that uniform wisdom which would make them entirely satisfactory instances of what society can do for itself, they are none the less among the best illustrations of progress. A reactionary spirit—reactionary against the tyranny of the past—has of late years striven to cut down the state to its lowest possible terms of protection, and to cast discredit on every positive effort on the part of the state to render direct aid to its citizens. The combined action of men in the state expresses an immense power. When society is sufficiently advanced to use this power for its own advantage, nothing can, or should, prevent its use. The plea against it is individual liberty, but this is also the plea for it. Joint liberty or power wisely used will resolve itself at once into an increase of individual liberty or power. There is no ultimate antagonism between the state and the individual, between joint power and single power, but the possibility rather of combining them in the highest harmony. They are reciprocal, they minister to each other, they depend on each other.

To sacrifice one is to sacrifice the other; the discord is ill-advised and transient, the concord well-advised and permanent. The state in the progress of society will do more than it now does, not less, for its citizens, simply because it is the seat of great reserved power, a power which helps the power of individuals. When that power becomes subject to a wise and humane sentiment it can not withhold itself, it can not be withheld, from a humane work. The opposite view springs from the bad blood that is found in the relations of man to man, and man to society, is found in conditions of vice and not of virtue. As vice disappears, powers will coalesce and harmonize; the individual will find his strength in and by society, and society its strength in and by the individual. This is organization, and nothing short of it is organization. The state may thus take to itself any interests that are either burdened with too great labors or attended with too great gains to be left to the individual. The state in what it does, in what it gives and takes, will stand for all its citizens. This is the direction of actual growth, and this is the spirit of Christ.

There is, however, an organic force far more pervasive and effective than that of the state, one of which the state is only a partial expression, social sentiment. When social sentiment is infused with moral life and moral love, a life and a love as broad and inclusive as its own body, it will begin to take care of its own members in a tender and effective way. Toward this we are steadily advancing, and this means the love of our neighbor as ourselves. In this path Christ is before us. He, in word, example, and revelation, is the way, the truth and the life. Men speak as if there were a kind of salvation in the mere din of industrial wheels, and pressure of industrial forces. This is

such a salvation as we find in China and Japan. More pressure of this order is like that of steam; it tends only to explosion. As a tempered force in an engine, with a perpetual vent in the open air, steam may drag its load onward with immense power. The moral realm of hope and life is the open air into which industry must perpetually discharge its pent up energies as a condition of progress. This air of heaven Christ discloses to us. All the struggling forces of ignorance, vice, selfishness, and misery are worth nothing as propelling powers, without this free realm of hope above them.

The feeling of the need of unity is the one great impulse which lies at the basis of all great movements in society, true or false. It builds empires, and weaves together the commerce of the world. Missing its aim, in the chagrin of failure, it would take all to pieces again, and reconstruct the parts as republicanism or communism or socialism.

The Church has had this feeling, and that too when it has been least able to meet this innate desire for unity. It has termed itself the Universal Church, the Historical Church, the Apostolic Church, the Holy Catholic Church. When men have lost faith in Christ, they have not lost the vision of unity. Lessing dreamed that it might be won by a kind of free-masonry; Comte set up in its behalf a worship of humanity; Frederic Harrison accepts the synthesis of humanity as an absorbing passion and hope. The only path to this spiritual goal is the one in which Christ walks before us.

Why then, has not the Christian Church attained this end? We reason hastily concerning the failures of religion, as if religion in the abstract were chargeable with them, and not we ourselves, who have interpreted and

applied it. It is not the essential and incipient impulses of religion that are at fault, but the limitations and retardations that have been put upon them. Science is not the errors of scientific men, nor philosophy the mistakes of philosophers, nor civil liberty the aberrations of free states; no more is religion the credulities and misdeeds of faith. Every great truth or system of truths struggles with the conditions of its birth, and comes but slowly into possession of its own life. The end can not be the beginning, and preëminently, when the aim is so inclusive as to call for repeated reconstruction under a protracted series of actions and reactions.

Periods of belief are naturally succeeded by periods of unbelief, which arise in correction of the too narrow formulæ and too fixed methods of belief. Religion is the heir of all, and profits by all. In saying this we are not to confound the perfection of the end with the awkwardness and defect of the intervening means. The means do not, in their particular form, derive their character from the end, but from the obdurate and untoward circumstances about them. Chaos and creation are separated by every stage of inchoate production. Religion in its dogmas and institutions is never fully itself. Its creeds suffer all the narrowness of ignorance, and its institutions are shaped to transient and more or less unfortunate circumstances. To hold fast by a doctrine, to adhere to a rite, to rally to an organization, is to accept the husk of the seed, often with the loss of the seed itself.

We can distinctly affirm from the very nature of the problem that men can not advance collectively and individually, save by the principles and methods brought fully to light in Christ; we can as distinctly affirm that men have advanced in the past centuries, and are advancing in

the present century, by a partial and hesitating application of these very principles. It is, therefore, both a fact of philosophy and of experience, that Christ is the way and the truth and the life.

The ultimate coalescence and harmony of all elements of growth must be found in a community permeated through and through with these same spiritual principles which find their only complete expression in the life and teachings of Christ. All religious, all moral agencies expend themselves on, and are treasured in, social sentiment. This is the pervasive protoplasm of general and of individual life. Into this the truth of all beliefs, the virtue of all faiths, the piety of all churches must pass. From this come the constructive and beneficent forces of the state, and largely the impulses which govern each individual within the state. This is the vital atmosphere which sustains the daily respiration of spiritual life; and the oxygen of this air must be and will be the words of Christ, as expounded by the spirit of Christ. They assert this relation and this office for themselves by their intrinsic character, by their present hold on the hearts and actions of men, and by their power to push their way among all races and all generations of the human household. If these principles are not the root of salvation, then salvation is not yet in the world, nor is it yet an intelligible hope.

CHAPTER X.

The Natural and the Supernatural.

The intellectual clearness and the moral warmth of the words of Christ, which make them the light of the world, would be more readily discerned and cordially accepted by some minds were it not for the supernatural events with which they are associated. These have occasioned in them a cautious and sceptical temper, which has served to dim the personality of Christ with doubts and suspicions that would not otherwise have arisen. While they may fully acknowledge the excellency of his teachings, they regard his life as a medley of contradictions, and so lose that pure personal presence from which alone this wisdom and grace can properly proceed.

In consistency with our plan, we enter into no details; we find no occasion to defend either this or that miracle; we wish only to show that the overshadowing force of the supernatural which is in the words of Christ, and in the narrative of the events which accompanied them, is not present in abatement of their power, but as a thoroughly harmonious and fitting accompaniment of it. We regard these supernatural events as threads of gold in the fabric of truth, and we do not understand how they can be drawn without destroying the firmness and marring the beauty of the texture. We see, or think we see, that the peculiar lustre of the perfect work is due in no small part to these same assertions and implications of a life

inwrought in many ways and in new ways with divine power.

We are as hearty and unreserved in the acceptance of the supernatural as others are in its rejection. Some think that if the life of Christ could be wholly freed from the supernatural, his teachings would immediately gain greatly increased force. "The miracle in the sense of the thorough-going and consistent supernaturalist, the only miracle that can prove a revelation supernatural, is, we are obliged to say, impossible." These multiplied impossibilities of the Gospels thus put a heavy burden on the sober truths that travel with them.

We, on the other hand, feel as distinctly that if Christ had separated himself from the supernatural, and striven to build up the faith of his disciples on the natural alone, he would have betrayed hopeless weakness, and his words would have gained little or no hold on the spiritual world. While we do not think that the miraculous element in the life of Christ is any essential part of its intrinsic power, we do regard it as a natural, inevitable incident of that power, and one of its methods of disclosure; we do regard it as that which his life could not have lacked without being crippled, as that which his teachings must have laid hold of and held in some form in order to reach the high, free, and supernatural nature of man. Christ did stand where every great teacher of morals must stand, at the point of union between the natural and the supernatural, appealing freely to both, a master of both. Religion without the supernatural in some form is not religion. Religion everywhere and in every way must assume the supernatural. The two ideas are inextricably interwoven. Religion pertains to our relation to the divine, and the divine is supernatural. To expel the supernatural

is to expel the divine. This connection is not a weakness of religion, something to be deprecated by its servants; it is its own peculiar power. If Christ had not stood at this very centre of vision, with the brilliancy of the supernatural full upon him, he would have gained slight possession of the minds or hearts of men. Virtue is as sympathetic with the supernatural as is the diamond with light. It can not reveal itself as virtue save in this pure atmosphere. The difficulty at this point seems to arise from the confusion and partial paralysis that have overtaken our intellectual and critical vision. While we have no desire to insist on the need of any one miracle, we do believe that the supernatural, for which miracles stand, is the ineffable element in which all holy life revels; and this too in full harmony with the natural, and in most peaceful and permanent submission to it. The two as fully and as easily supplement each other as do the body and the spirit in man.

The great gain of supernaturalism is not the miracle, but the entirely different view which the miracle may lead us to take of daily events. Nature ceases to be purposeless, passionless, impersonal, and throbs in every part with divine thought and feeling. It is this which makes it an immediate inspiration, a divine presence, the constant revelation of God. It is this conception, in which nature correlates with mind, that we wish to attain, and with this conception the supernatural is in eternal harmony. The natural without the supernatural is the body of a friend, bereft of the spirit, cold, motionless, infinitely removed.

By the natural we understand all those things which have received a nature absolutely fixed in its terms and relations. This nature expresses itself in properties—

settled forms of action—and in movements. No matter what the qualities or what the changes through which any constituent in nature, as water, may pass, the circuit is a closed circuit, a defined orbit; and the elements involved, in definite amount, are somewhere to be found in it every moment. The physical world in its entire relations may thus be likened to the solar system, whose internal dependencies are constantly altered, but whose bulk of being, balance of forces, and continuity of movement are forever maintained. The ordinary expression for this great fact of nature—of the natural world—is the perpetuity of matter and energy. Fixedness, even quite beyond our knowledge, is the one thing insisted on, and that too under ever-changing appearances. Forms are infinitely variable, but between these forms there remains the same relation of equality, when rightly contemplated, as between the shifting terms of an equation deftly handled. It follows from this view that within the circuit of the material world all events, in their character and in their order of sequence, are defined, and these definitions are what we mean by physical laws. That this is one term of the universe we are all agreed.

By the supernatural we understand, as the word implies, energies or powers which are lifted above the plane of forces expressed in matter; which constitute no part of these forces, and are not subject to their laws, except so far as the higher agents work with the lower instruments. These powers are those of reason. They do not exist in definite quantity, nor do they act in closed circuits, nor do their movements follow each other under fixed laws—that is, laws which admit no variety in results. In all these respects the powers of reason are supernatural; they have not a final nature given them, foreclosing all issues. By

their own activity they can apprehend, and in a measure direct, the physical forces that lie beneath them. Thus below and above, natural and supernatural, become words figuratively applicable to matter and to mind.

This firm coherence of things, to which time brings changes, but no new terms and no new directions; this spontaneity of reason, which occupies time with its own growing purposes, we would make the essential characteristics of the natural and of the supernatural. The two are known as the physical and the spiritual worlds. The only possibility of confusion here is in regarding the action of the human mind within itself and in matter as natural, because there is a fixed term and limit present in this action in the human body, itself material and subject to material laws. We have here the mystery of interaction, but this mystery does not alter the endowments respectively of matter and of mind, the two terms in the interaction. That a uniform and well-known provision is made in the body of man for this intercommunication does not make the nature of mind natural, in the sense of allying it to physical forces. It makes it natural in this sense only, that nature, as a comprehensive term, may be used to include both mind and matter, and the conditions of their relation. This comprehensive use, however, ought not to confuse the mind, nor be made the means of hiding fundamental differences. The use which is pertinent to this discussion is one by which the necessary is separated from the free, the closed circuit from the open circuit, the action without comprehension from the one with it; the movement which marks forces in transition from that which expresses incipient powers. This is a distinction so basal that the world can not be understood without it; it is the proper boundary line between the natural and the

supernatural. In a most significant sense human life is full of the supernatural, and stands on equal terms with it and the natural. All other distinctions in forces and powers are quite secondary to this distinction.

The formal conditions of these two classes of actions are quite distinct. One set of events occurs in space, the other in consciousness. Forces and powers are incommensurate with each other. Forces have definite locality, and admit of definite measurement in foot-pounds. Powers are without locality, and allow of no estimate in terms of force. Forces are in no way cognizant of their own action; powers carry with them a spiritual presence conscious of their putting forth, and so may be guided by it. The laws of the two are wholly distinct. The one set is physical and causal, the other intellectual and free. This diversity of law marks a corresponding diversity of character.

A large part of the difficulty which attends on this discussion arises just here. The mind is struck, as well it may be, with the idea of law. The supernatural, as often conceived, is regarded as lawless, and so is thought to exist in limitation or overthrow of reason. This would be true were not the supernatural under law of its own higher order. Physical laws are not exhaustive of law or of reason; they do not even attain to the highest type of either. A miracle that modifies the action of physical forces may as much arise under a higher spiritual law, as does the virtuous action of man when he accomplishes a beneficent purpose through the ministration of nature. It is forgotten that law is of many orders, related within themselves by a supreme reason. Nothing is irrational in law which submits law to reason; every thing is irrational in law which asserts law against reason. Reason is ultimate, not law.

But it will at once be said the miracle stands on a different footing from the supernatural, even if we accept the supernatural as now defined. This is true formally, but not substantially. The benevolent labor may be said to be man's supernatural action, and the miracle God's supernatural action. When the variable element finds its way among fixed physical elements by the presence of man, we are able to recognize the conditions under which this takes place; when it finds its way thither by the intervention of God, we are not able to discern any special media, nor have we any right to assume their existence. But what does this signify more than saying that God can work his purposes immediately in matter, and is not bound to a medium like man. Every act of God is in its ultimate nature miraculous, one as much so as another. To make law and to modify law, to create and to recreate, imply precisely the same power. The miraculous act is intensely like the natural act, lying in the same field, and implying the same range of government.

Here is no conflict in reason, and no ground for distinction, between the miraculous and the supernatural, but the reverse rather. The miracle is rationally an event of the same order as the virtuous action; the difference between them is one only of the inevitable relations of the two agents, God and man, the Infinite and the finite, to nature. That the two interactions stand connected in a different way with human experience is plain; but we are not of the number of those who expect to find the comprehending ideas of experience in experience itself, as a sense-product. We quite understand that from beginning to end we reach the Invisible by forsaking the visible, by making it a grand point of departure for an inference which the mind alone can justify. We have not yet

reached the folly of setting up a ladder as a means of climbing to heaven.

But is there not an intrinsic irrationality in a miracle viewed as the act of God? Quite the reverse. The forces which in their complex circuits and beautiful rhythm make up the physical world are an immediate, definite, and ever-renewed expression of the action of God toward a limited end. This is one form and a grand form of action by which God discloses himself to us, making paths before our feet in which we can walk. But there is no reason why this method should be the only method. It is a piece of arbitrariness to assume that this is the only method, and must be the only one of work and of revelation, reason admitting of no other. Plainly it does admit of another. God declares himself to every human soul through every other human soul. The attributes of God are especially disclosed in those of men. The good men are the light of the world, are the sons of God. By so much as they are above nature do they lengthen our vision toward God. But this revelation may go farther without in any way altering its essential character, or losing its rational features, and that step is a miracle. The miracle is a flash of light in the darkness; it is the perfect transparency of the natural before the supernatural at a single point; it is a moral agency asserting itself in the height of moral activity; it is the heart of God making direct answer to the heart of man. Surely this is not irrational, nor need we stop to give the plain reasons why the miracle may not often recur. We can see that the reasons why it may not recur are only the counterpart of those why it may occur. It is the old story of aid between parent and child.

Religion lies, all of it, in this very region of the super-

natural. Hope, faith, prayer, persuasion, are all here. The natural covers the supernatural, as the glinting surface hides the stream from our senses. But the supernatural is every moment implied in the natural. A Christ that did not come forth from God would be no Christ. We should have only one more bewildering reflection from the mere face of things; one more mirror-view of ourselves. What man needs is a natural presentation, yet one that brings with it every instant a sense of the supernatural, of the Divine Presence that moves behind the world and stirs our hopes. The natural is in accommodation to the limited scope of our powers, the supernatural to their profound reach. The natural is the atmosphere that softens and diffuses the sun's too intense light. In a revelation of this order, a miracle which discloses for an instant the scope of divine grace is the highest appeal to our spiritual nature. Miracles are but phosphorescent points on the great ocean of spiritual being about us. The fundamental truth is the perpetual parallelism of the natural and the supernatural; while human life is developed between these two planes of activity. The quiet complacency with which men deny the supernatural shows how completely nature has run away in their thoughts both with God and man. They find no more footing for their own action than they do for that of God. This very denial is a disclosure of the need of the miracle.

Man has fallen into the cold shadow of the natural, as one dwelling at the base of a snow-clad mountain may be hidden from the morning sun. The thoughtful mind, profoundly impressed with the magnitude, stability, and duration of the physical universe, may find no admission for other truths. Men have come but slowly to this impression, and it is not strange that it should for a time

overpower them, and be attended with an intellectual paralysis. The difficulty is not so much that the estimate of the natural is excessive, as that the mind has not yet found within itself the proper counterpoise.

Understanding by the natural the entire circuit of physical things, we have one word—force—wherewith to express physical action, thing upon thing, thing with thing. That which is meant by force is supersensual, a substratum of energy which sustains qualities, interactions, changes, and makes them more than mere illusions. Force is a general word, and covers an immense variety of forces; or at least stands for that substantial existence which sustains an immense variety of manifestations. Physical things are a congeries of forces expressed in physical qualities, while physical laws are the modes of change in physical things. The one is a more statical, the other a more dynamical, expression of the same groups of forces. Yet nothing is statical. Qualities are interactions between things,—interactions which involve less change; and laws are interactions which involve more change. Qualities, as those of a rock, express themselves to the senses of men under the conditions to which it is subjected—under diverse degrees of light and different degrees of heat, under pressure, under the hammer, under the hand, under acids. If the change is manifest, the order of change we express as a law; if it is slight, we regard the manifestation as one of qualities. By forces we mean nothing more than the substantial energies which qualities and changes of qualities equally imply. The groups of forces which express qualities we know as matter; while the secondary energies involved with them, which occasion changes, more especially change in place and form, we designate as forces or energies. It is not possible to separate the two in fact, nor distinctly in thought.

These forces involve each other in endless complexity, express themselves only in reference to each other, and are in constant yet changing circuits of interplay with each other. When we contemplate the physical world, rendered to the understanding in these its underlying forces, it offers itself as an eternal flux, the most fixed qualities being liable to give way to others. The ocean may seem quiet to the eye; yet every drop in it is penetrated with forces that are seeking in vain for equilibrium. Heat and cold are every instant modifying these energies; evaporation and rain and wind are at work on them; great currents and lesser currents, ebbs and tides, waves and wavelets are struggling with them; animal life and human life are at sport with them; earthquakes, upheavals, and subsidences are adding to and subtracting titanic forces from them, so that equilibrium is something that is to be but never is present with them. The fixedness of the physical world on which the minds of men are dwelling is found after all in relatively slow circuits of change, characterized by a few settled terms. Like qualities return under like conditions, and with like interactions come like laws of change; yet every change modifies permanently the grounds of change. Thus again the world is like a solar system, made up of innumerable bodies. The closed circuit of each planet and satellite places these bodies under proximately regular conditions in their primary relations, though each mass changes within itself, though the system as a whole is never twice alike, nor is one of its members subjected a second time to exactly the same attractions.

The world expresses its fixedness in three particulars: in the amounts and qualities of elements, in the laws of their interaction, and in the correlation of energies.

This fixedness, which is included in the law of causation, and is also a truth of experience, gives to us the range of what is known as nature. Realized forces are present in fixed circuits of interaction. This fact we express to ourselves under the terminology of natural laws. Nature stands with us for the unchangeable and inevitable, and is so within itself. What part does a term like this play in our rational lives? Certainly it does not in any way take the place of mind. Thoughts make these fixed material facts an object of contemplation; they can in no way constitute a part of them, or be subject to them. Forces that have but one line of unfolding and one circuit of results, no matter how complicated these results are; forces that are always present in some transitional stage in their effects, no matter what these effects are, can not be the basis of thought. Thought may reach this or that conclusion, may stop at this point or push on to another, may be correct or incorrect, carrying with it always the possibility of error. Thought is the action of an agent, not the product of a force. Regarded as an effect among physical effects, it has no significance; we do not know why a force should produce a thought, as a thought has no known physical form; or if a force does produce a thought, we do not know why that thought should have any correspondence to the events to which it may seem to pertain. We can give no reason why forces should occasion in the minds of men—if so be that men are men and have minds—the images of other forces. Nor if thoughts are so produced, can we regard them as either correct or incorrect. They are themselves facts, and facts that have sufficient causes, indeed the only facts that can exist under the circumstances. Nor again can these facts of thought, springing out of previous facts

and swallowed up in subsequent ones, in any way modify the flow of events, or at all discharge the offices of mind.

Material qualities, material forces, material laws can subserve no purpose and play no part, till mind is present to conceive a purpose and supply a part. All thinking about things implies an agent, who, himself outside of things, can form ideas concerning them, and frame these ideas into conclusions and actions. Herein is a distinct activity and a distinct law. Under the image involved in the word, this agent is supernatural, one that rises above the stream of events, and makes them an object of inquiry. The processes of reflection to which this supernatural agent subjects nature, are carried forward by other laws than those of forces—to wit, the laws of logic. These laws, unlike those of forces, are not necessarily obeyed, are not so hidden in the very action of the agent as to find immediate fulfilment at every step of progress. These laws are found in the relations of thought; while the thinking agent discerns them and obeys them with varying success.

The phenomena of mind are so diverse from those of matter, that the two can never be expressed in the same terms; they can explain each other only in that permanent contrast by which they stand forever separate from each other, and deepen the impression each of the other. On this side we have invariable forces, on that variable powers; on the one hand we have things, on the other thoughts; here is certain development, there uncertain progress; here necessity, there spontaneity; in this direction lie events, in that direction truths; in this field facts succeed facts in unending accuracy, in that field error follows error in unending variety, with a slow deposit of sound conclusions.

All inquiry, all reasoning from the facts gained by inquiry, all action under the conclusions of reasoning, involve this new agency and these new laws of effort. Deny these, and not only does mind become unintelligible, matter becomes so also. We know the one only in contrast with and in relation to the other. An endless, all-embracing continuity of forces can not be known in itself or by itself. It itself has not the power of knowledge, and if this power were granted to it, it must be lost again; as we lose a sensation by simple prolongation. It is fitting that mind, to which alone belongs knowledge, should be termed supernatural, in contrast with that fixed physical nature which lies below it for study, comprehension, use. But the question is not one of words. Whether in language we put the spirit of man in nature or above nature, its functions and actions are those of spontaneity and government, and so foreshadow those of the Divine mind. The only difference which lies between the two, an act of creation and an act of guidance; a miraculous act and a free act, is in the manner in which they are accomplished, and not in their inherent rational force, nor in their relation to nature. This difference of manner is plainly incident to the finite nature of man on the one side, and the infinite nature of God on the other. Man is united by a definite mechanism to the physical world as a world beyond him, and only partially submitted to his control; while God is omnipresent in nature and is its immediate source.

We are now prepared, setting the natural over against the supernatural, the material world over against the spiritual world, in a measure to comprehend both; to give nature a purpose, and assign it a part. Nor need we hesitate to talk about purposes and parts, All knowledge, all

science, all philosophy, all religion are made up by means of these ideas; the only difference between them lies in the boldness and scope with which these different forms of thought discuss these relations of thought, and spread them abroad over the Universe. One walks with a candle and inquires into narrow relations, another walks by sunlight and contemplates the broadest relations; but all alike are busy with relations of this one order—those by which mind unites things in mutual ministration to some common construction. There are no other significant relations but those of mind. Causes which tend to no construction are chaotic, have no interest for us; while construction is construction only by virtue of an end. We may deny the end if we will, but we tacitly assume it again in every word we utter concerning means and relations.

The material world is a third term between us and God, between man and man; is a language wherein thought is recorded and whence thought is taken; is a work-shop of forms and of material, where reason sees the work of reason, and can itself assay that work. Nature, to subserve this purpose, must be both fixed and flexible, and so it is fixed within itself and flexible under thought. It is the clay of the artist, neutral in its own qualities, but retentive of the work committed to it. It offers ready means to the most divine inflatus that strives to inform it with a spiritual life. If we have the clay, pliant, incomplete, yet sensibly possessed of the transforming impulses already given it; if we have the artist, renewing his labor from day to day, rejoicing in the fixed, rejoicing in the flexible, then the process going on before us presents no insoluble problem. The half-shaped clay without the artist is a strange accident; the artist without the clay is a surprising and painful piece of impotence.

The world must be comprehensible, if it is to stand on any terms of interaction with the thoughts of men; and if it is comprehensible, it must be correspondingly fixed. But if it is also to yield itself to the hands of men as themselves agents, it must be flexible; and flexible without losing the truth already committed to it. In meeting these conditions, we have both nature and the supernatural; and as the supernatural is an airy idealism without the natural, so is the natural a dead mechanism without the supernatural. If we undertake to interpret our lives by a denial on either hand, we simply call out a delusive flash of light, bewildering us for a moment, and then expiring in darkness. Matter can not shake off the dominion of reason and retain its value for reason. It must forever remain enriched by reason, retentive of the work of reason, and open to all its further uses. On no other terms can reason take any interest in it. This eternal subjection is an irreversible law of the Universe as rational, while the precise times and the precise ways in which reason will shape its work are questions of detail. It is the last point of impossibility that the infinite reason should become entangled in its own means and methods, so as to make these, in any final way, a fixed order of things, a closed circuit of events. This is for reason to overwork itself. Reason stretches on and on; its revolutions are the revolutions of wheels that bear it forever forward. There is in it continuity, evolution, but no return on itself. There is present with it the old, and still more present with it the new—a bud bursting its filaments. Creation as an act, an unending and growing act, accompanies the Creator in all the march of years. It is easy to say that "the essence of a theological miracle is the violation of natural law," but not easy to put back of the assertion

any conception of natural law which does not make the Universe sink into mechanism, and God into the supreme mechanist. If natural law is the action of God, inflexible or flexible according to the ends of reason then and there present; if law is reason, then reason may as well explain its modifications as expound its continuity. Indeed, natural laws must be subjected both in their grand sweep and at their every turn to reason; and to allow them to shake off reason is to allow them to set up against reason, having won a realm of their own. Time is not significant in this question. Reason is an Eternal Presence, not a principle, that bound fast in its first putting-forth can no longer be reshaped or shape that which is about it. When the miracle is spoken of as a violation of law, the mind has plainly come into subjection to the notion of physical laws which have a sacredness and inviolability aside from the purposes they are subserving. The one rule and the only rule that is never to be broken is that of reason, and this rule the miracle expresses. Physical laws are fixed within their own ends, and for those ends; but to regard them as fixed either without ends, or beyond those ends, is to oppose them to reason, is so far to dethrone reason, is atheism.

We cannot grant to natural laws any existence, any momentum, any authority beyond that which reason each moment concedes to them. When the question of modification arises,—either of a new creation or miraculous restoration—it is purely one of reason, and if sufficient reasons call for it, there is nothing in the nature of things to oppose it. Things remain perfectly and forever in the grasp of reason. There we find them, and there we must leave them, or we begin at once to dethrone reason.

Religion always plants itself at the line of interaction

along which the natural and the supernatural skirt each other. It has and can have no significance anywhere else. In this respect it is like thought in the world, and realism in philosophy; it grasps double reins; it has two terms, and can dispense with neither of them. Any hesitancy here in religion is suicidal, is the slow evaporation of the waters of life. When we set up matter and force as independent entities, over against mind, and begin to feel the fear of them steal over us, we shall soon bow down in worship before the Unknown which they embody for the imagination.

Religion, as the highest form of reason, involves a nature compounded of fixed terms under fixed laws, a nature thereby made subject to man. Here enter the possibilities of action and with them its duties. Reason in finding a field for itself, finds one also for conscience. Every thought of man and every effort on his part imply and express this his relation to nature; nor can the most subtile reasoning deny it, without in the same act denying itself. Religion goes farther. It affirms that nature, this field of thought and action, lies between us and God, that it is a condition of rational and responsible life provided by him in reference to this very life. The world is not looked upon as something that could not have been otherwise, nor as something made rational by its own unfolding, nor by man's survey of it; but as a distinct product of the Supreme Reason in its provision for the finite reason of man. Nature is, therefore, momentarily subject to the divine thought and will, and its perpetuity is their expression; its evolution is their evolution, its flexibility under the hand of man their concession. That this nature, so framed together for the ends of wisdom, should present any obstacle to wisdom, or offer it any resistance as

mere material, is absurd. It has nothing which is not given unto it, and all having been given it in reference to mind may readily and momentarily be modified in the same service. Matter is a bond-servant to mind, and can not for an instant shake off the yoke. The obscurities which events offer in their explanation under this view to the human mind are no refutation of it, since these are but very partial, and must be present while our knowledge remains of so limited an order.

By the medium of nature we approach God, by that medium he approaches us. Nature in its fixedness, in its mobility, in its progressive unfolding, in its flexibility—for it has every one of these characteristics, one as truly as another—is simply a fitting term for reason, and if Reason, for more special and personal ends, chooses to modify its action, there is nothing in nature which can stand up against him and say, What doest thou? Reason can be questioned only by reason, and reason may deal with the particular no less than with the general, with the unusual no less than with the habitual. Man can easily recognize the presence of the permanent and the changeable and the fitness of both elements, though he may not be able to fix the proper limits of either. That fixedness is necessary is plain, that flexibility is necessary is plain, and by what right does the human reason deny to the Divine Reason either condition—more especially as both conditions are essential, in the first place, in order that reason as reason may assert itself at all in the world, or have any portion in it, and, in the second place, in order that the world may lie as a field between man and God, in which they meet each other? In the degree in which nature is eternal and unchangeable, in that degree, taken by itself alone, does it hide God from us, separate him from us; and in

the degree in which it does this, does it fail of its mission as a revealer of Reason to reason. By labor, faith, and prayer, we meet God in the world, and certainly not less by prayer than by labor, not less in living faith than in formal obedience. But these methods of action, labor and prayer, scientific effort and religious love,—if we choose so to term them—demand these two conditions, permanency and change, and our life is mutilated if we lose either of them. The spirit of faith, the spirit of prayer, the spirit of fellowship, reason with reason, is the supreme spirit in man, and if it is present in him, it makes a perpetual appeal to the Divine Spirit. Some are fearful of asking lest they should seem to strive to bend and warp the Supreme Reason. They forget that nothing is so flexible as reason; they forget that there can be no term more significant and hence more real and influential in reference to divine action than this very term of trustfulness. The trustful and earnest heart is a perpetual petition without uttering one word, and must send the force of prayer through and through the spiritual universe. Words are for men who hear them and men who utter them, not for God who heeds the deeper petition of the heart.

These general relations are the relations of reason, and must be conceded as such, or there is no basis for religion. Religion in its thoughtfulness and in its love can only spring up along this line, where the fixed and the flexible meet and mingle. If Christ had stumbled at the supernatural, or hesitated for an instant in reference to it, he would have shown that he did not stand on the broad basis of the divine government, but was entangled in the meshes of physical law, and had fallen into the shadow of nature; that he was a scientist or a philosopher of some order, and not the Son of God. He makes no such mistake; he deals freely with the supernatural, freely with the natural, and

so has in hand the three terms of our present life, man, nature, and God. It is mere trifling to distort the facts of history in order to escape one miracle or another miracle, when we see that the grand progress of events include each instant this same supreme power.

The apologetic spirit of our time in reference to the supernatural is the fruit of the one-sided and half-hearted temper of scepticism. God is to our thoughts withdrawing himself from nature, the spiritual host is in full retreat, and we are being left alone with matter and motion. Matter and motion, what are they but one thought of infinite magnitude unfolding itself before the eyes of our reason! The Infinite rushes in upon our thoughts and hearts by this work of creation, which springs up afresh every instant in our presence and his presence by the common activity of reason—the poem of the Great Poet passing in eternal rhythm before our eyes.

Nature and the supernatural in the world about us are best interpreted to us by our own bodies. In these bodies mingle freely mental energies and physical forces, changeable purposes and fixed methods, the direction of reason and the limitation of matter, spirit and form. Not otherwise do the two flow together in the world about us. The supernatural is the soul of the natural, and the natural is the significant form of the supernatural; and neither is under any bond save the bond of reason. Nature changes for and with the supernatural, and the supernatural rests in the bosom of Reason, forever above nature and the source of nature. Most petty and perplexing is the antagonism that has been set up between the two in the thoughts of men. It is as if we endowed language with forces and laws of its own as against the composite reason which creates and uses it; and this on the plea that it is not instantly flexible to each act of reason or un-

reason in each particular mind. If either of these ideas, if any of its primitive supplementary elements, are lost from the perfect circle of thought, the remainder slide hither and thither, like the falling fragments in a kaleidoscope, and we construct them, as they chance to lie, into varying and fantastic forms. Christ sets up his kingdom in spiritual power, and nature is with him only the throne of that power. So must it be in any kingdom which is to be the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

It may be thought that the elucidation which has now been offered turns on a definition—the definition we have chosen to give of the supernatural. But definitions are of value as they express facts, and the question is, therefore, whether the nature of man does involve essentially supernatural elements, and so gives us terms of transition by which to reach the supernatural in its higher and purer forms in God. The truth is that the lines of thought which have made men sceptical of the supernatural, will, if consistently carried out, sweep away every rational basis of human life, and submerge the spiritual action of man as completely as that of God. It is the human and the divine personality in Christ, in its inseparable powers and essential implications, in its hold on the present and on the future, that makes him the way, the truth, and the life. Losing him, we ourselves are lost also. We wander wearily here and there, and at length lie down to die. Once more catching sight of him, we who were lost are found, and in his footsteps we follow on to life. Once more we hope to win in ourselves what has been won in him, an incarnation in the natural of the supernatural, a Spiritual Presence dwelling with men, men wrapped into a Divine Life. If Christ can not lift us to this extent, he can not remove our burden ; but this done, all other things come of themselves.

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