

The Rediscovered Universe
or
The Power of Right Thinking
and Righteous Living

BY
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TO MY DAUGHTER
ELIZABETH PHILLIPS DOWLING
THE JOY OF MY LIFE
MY CHUM THROUGH LONELY YEARS
AND
TO HER EXCELLENT HUSBAND
ZELNER DOWLING
MY DEVOTED FRIEND

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PREFACE

This book was never planned; it was never contemplated, but is the result of conditions.

My boyhood was astounded by the mysteries that were taught, which is almost a universal experience; but thought is laborious to most minds and, pursuing the line of least resistance or effort, men only wonder while they reply, "My Mother taught me," when one vibration of gray matter would disclose the fact that it was not his mother at all, for she, good woman, had never been allowed to indulge a single thought. In her absolute integrity she was conscientiously carrying forward to the next generation that which had been handed down from age to age since primeval idolatry first offended Nature's Law.

My busy mind was never satisfied, and revolted against startling claims impossible of proof, and it wanted to learn the cause or why of things, or what was being's end and aim.

In my need for aid and guidance in the wilderness of thought, the book of Nature, constantly written by her unfailing hand, was eagerly perused and thoughts came welling up from the realm of universal supply responsive to earnest seeking.

More than a half hundred years ago there was

commenced the making of notes or memoranda of Truth as it appeared above the enchanting horizon. This volume is the printing of that journal for aid in the unfoldment of other people who seek for truth and strive for their own upliftment.

Born into an atmosphere that was strongly religious, where parental belief had been emphasized by reading from a Book, "As you spare the rod, you spoil the child," my boyhood days felt the stinging switch applied with pious zeal.

While my fingers were employed pulling weeds from carrot and onion beds, a naturally inquiring mind sought, through the inspiring solitude of that garden, to find weeds that might be found intruding upon more precious soil; the discovery was inevitable that the Book, with all of the partisanship that the system promotes in its dogma, is logically deficient and wrong.

Punishment may subjugate and subdue for a time, but it awakens intrigue and the invention of methods to evade infliction for other misdemeanors more likely to follow in the hardened conscience. Punishment is humiliating and engenders bitterness, resentment, fear, anger, jealousy, envy, revenge and contempt, and all the long train of evils that await opportunity, eager to make assault upon unguarded innocence.

Appeal to the higher selfhood awakens interest and arouses to nobler purpose, while encouragement and appreciation uplift and lend zest to ac-

tion for accomplishment undreamt before; and responsibility wisely placed nerves the will, stimulates ambition for applause at times of a good accounting and the glory of achievement.

Commandment implies and is an accusation of evil tendency; government weakens the will and humiliates; both should be substituted and supplanted by a teaching of righteousness for the reward of peace that only upright living can bring. While there must be rigid and exacting discipline in loving consideration, and earnest appeal, there should not be any government in the home, in the schoolroom nor in the community except a teaching of self-government, which is the noblest discipline, is education, is the essence of Christianity, the highest upliftment, the truest leadership and the surest helpfulness.

My search for knowledge of Truth through joyous years has brought me peace, poise and contentment; has awakened sympathy for everything that lives and hungers; has made the world my church, all men my brothers; has utterly banished and obliterated all fear or dread of death, which in mature years is only a fulfillment obedient to law, a quiet, beautiful restful slumber.

Ever since the beginning of their work, the band of men running the new religious machine have found that to establish belief in mysteries they proclaimed was the burden of their toil,— a consummation important to success, impossible of full attainment. Distrust of their scheme and

doubt of their truth has been the bug under the chip, the fly in their ointment, the scorpion in their herbage, and shall remain an insurmountable obstruction so long as reason sits enthroned in her citadel of light.

In their extremity they wrote into the new bible of dogmatic authority, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Ever since a time three score and ten years ago, well remembered by your author, those splendid people the Church followers wandered in the discouraging mazes of doubt and uncertainty and they fervently prayed: "Lord, we believe; help thou our unbelief." But they could only accept beliefs that they were taught. In the unfailing light of experience, their judgment still confronted them.

That condition of uncertainty has not abated; rather it has been increased and intensified in advancing thought down the growing years until a condition of unrest prevails not recorded in human history since the time of the crusades. "The Rediscovered Universe" shall lend voice to that wail, soothe a cry that has refused to still and give the first intimation of an avenue for escape from Jewish error that has been given to the world in nineteen hundred years. Go forth, little book, bearing your message of freedom, and bring joy and peace to lips that too long have trembled in fear and doubt.

INTRODUCTION

This book was not written to fret the hearts of men with weary argument. Its statements are direct and positive. Rather it is not a book in any goodly sense, but a jotting down of conclusions, a memoranda of thoughts as they have come intuitively, from Nature's realm, responsive to my own urgent need, the fruits matured in ripened years, and bequeathed to other seekers to aid in their search, that they may gain strength and poise in their love for Truth.

Its pages are fearless, full with positive assertion, regardless though human selfishness be stunned and the thoughts and beliefs entrenched in six thousand years of imperious dogmatism be rudely reversed.

With due respect for every opinion it is just that the claims made or postulates assumed be set forth in synopsis as they are elaborated in the body of the work.

First, it is claimed that Nature is a creative principle, the embodiment and consummation of endless wisdom and boundless power whose only incentive is love. All of the sciences are instruments helpful in her hand.

Nothing happens; everything in earth or sea

or sky or in the waters under the earth came obedient to the mandate of Nature's Law. No being, person or idol with power for command could invade the sacred precinct—else whence came he, or his unauthorized commission?

In the undimmed light of experience it is inconceivable that a lump of clay could be made animate with the breath of life.

It is an unsolved problem in the logic of events that a serpent could discover the one spot vulnerable in the body of untrained innocence and prompt a newly made pair of people, molded of clay and carved of bone, to an act of disobedience and plunge the whole race into a vortex of iniquity; and the more astounding plan of redemption thence through the shed blood of their own offspring, himself made animate out of nothing or the son of a virgin untouched in human act.

At its birth, humanity was discovered to be endowed with reverent devotion. Led by the unfailing hand of progress, humanity is eager for achievement, always aspiring to better conditions and nobler life.

Priestcraft was early in the field and took unfair advantage of unsuspecting innocence to mystify, to terrify, to fill with fear and chill in despair.

In that ancient Sanhedrin a plan that they named Religion was formed to control the masses of people. Its purpose was to gratify their ambition and to supply abundant revenue for partisan

purposes. It was all a partisanship, the embodiment and progenitor of its kindred. In private committee was adopted a platform of principles with instructions for methods of procedure and execution of details.

It was called a Holy Bible; its history was a recital of unremitting crimes; its descriptions revolting, its ethics an offense to intellect, a shame to refinement, an outrage upon modesty.

Moses, famed in their activities of obscure childhood and forgotten sepulture, was not a living entity. He was a fictitious individual, purely mythical, formed in imagination, the henchman for demagogues, the scapegoat for their iniquities.

That man Jesus, born of lowly parentage, had the princely privilege, after he became a youth twelve years old, of being associated with men of kingly aspiration to learn the language of Truth in the forest, among whispering trees and echoing rocks where Nature vibrates her tenderest chords and scintillates her sweetest notes.

Moses a fiction, the fruit tree story a fable, no act of transgression was involved in the "Fall" of mankind. We fell into a vortex of delusion when our infant credulity accepted belief of the calumny that we were guilty, unworthy, grovelling creatures, and frightened us from our native universe; and thus the work of subjugation, oppression and destruction was begun, through which the power of individual assertiveness was confused and we were wronged out of the priceless inheritance of

personal responsibility to work out our own salvation from error and find strength in framing our own destiny.

Jesus emerged from the wilderness where he had been uplifted, only in response to a world-wide need that he bring a message of deliverance from oppression. That he was slain by the jealous hand of the prevailing Religion to silence the teaching which the multitudes followed and which decimated its armies, was appalling.

But the foulest act that ever shamed the face of perfidy or ever smirched the cheek of villainy was that the newer organization, veiling its crimes behind the name "Christian" religion, misconstrued, perverted and polluted those teachings and pretended that to them was delegated power to carve our destiny and contravene the mandates of Heaven's high chancery.

In perusal of this work many repetitions may be found, nor is this accidental, but is a necessity of the conditions.

Beliefs have been implanted and deeply entrenched by suggestions repeated many times every hour through six thousand years of industrious effort by a busy horde impulsed in easy reward. To stem error so widely diffused and to reverse the trend of thought so firmly fixed cannot be shortly accomplished. That sort of Satan cometh not forth but by the same method of repeated suggestion. Only the blood of that beast can heal his bite, so deep and widely torn.

Stern reality confronts us all along the pathway of life. Our observations and experiences are our surest educational guide.

Your author is a plain, practical man who would not, if he might, conceal his meaning by involved or obscure sentences, innuendo or blind insinuations; nor is any apology offered to any one that an implement formed of steel, used to mix and mellow garden soil, is bluntly called a "spade."

Nowhere in these pages is immortality or future life doubted or denied. It were no more strange that we live beyond the dark river than that we enjoy existence now. But in every line, on every page, it is stoutly and emphatically asserted and denied that any band of men possesses any authority or power to influence or control happiness or misery in any other sphere of existence.

All time is only one passing Now. We are in eternity now much as we ever can be, and every man must comprehend his individuality, assume his own responsibility and assert his own unfoldment active in building his own destiny *now*.

Any group of interlopers are disturbing, irresponsible meddlers, whose steps go down to a hell of mischief. They are as ignorant in the claims they put forth as we, or the donkeys they bestride.

Neither in the earnest search, continuing to four score years, nor in scrolling these lines has there been a vain attempt to evolve anything that is

new, but simply joy to find and resurrect the Truth that is old, but which has been crucified down the fretful ages.

The work is submitted in the hope that it may fulfill its mission of helpfulness, for the Truth shall make us free.

Pax vobiscum.

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I

EVOLUTION

Of that period when time was young, there is no record. What time in the primal impulse occurred the first vibrations that gave promise of approaching life, the stillness makes no answer. How many millions of years ago man first took form! Progress casts a far-away look and is silent.

Very long ago the tribes of man inhabited remotest corners of earth and peopled the islands of the seas. Endowed with the instincts of activity, ambition and selfishness, they toiled, they struggled, they builded and laid waste, always striving to a condition higher, nobler and better. Governments were formed, usually assuming some form of adoration or worship, and flourished for ages, or until jealousies crept in, engendering estrangement, and all was wasted in deadly warfare. Empires were formed, and long time gloried in their might, then sank back into the vortex of time, like pebbles in its ocean lost in forgetfulness. Cities rose, gathering the strength of hoary centuries, and were buried under the lava of time, leaving no trace of the joys and tears that were built into their very walls.

Governments are the administration of public affairs by men supposed to derive their authority from some higher power; whether that power is genuine and legitimate or whether it is fraudulent, fictitious or imaginary, is of no consequence, provided the masses who are ruled submit to the dictation imposed. If there is any distinction between ecclesiasticism and politics, it is very dim and indistinct at the most; the one is partisanship, the other is partisanship. Very true, there have been heads of tribes and kings and kingdoms, but all have been under the dictation of the clergy. It was at the behest of religion that John the Baptist was beheaded. It is only in recent years that separation of Church and State has been advocated or attempted.

Among the first families of nations recorded in history, the Hebrew nation was the first-born and continued active long after the others had gone into decay. The Egyptians were profound students, delving deeply into the investigation of science and the advancement of useful arts and architecture. The Greeks were proud of learning and their prowess and valor in warfare. The Romans gloried in their extent of empire and the dignity of their senate, but it remained for the Hebrews to enact in their senate or Sanhedrin laws that are promulgated in legislative halls, guide the decisions in our courts and are shouted from every pulpit throughout the Christendom of today. The wily Jew in his little shop around

the corner, lone pilgrim in a land of strangers, feeble remnant of a scattered race, ostracized from society, despised by his fellow-craftsman, is the most surely successful merchant in the market place. Panics may come, bringing disaster and ruin, but the Jew will come up smiling amid financial wrecks that strew the ground, because his methods have been direct and incisive, shining with a sheen; and to call him a "sheeney" is no term of reproach, rather it is a tribute to his genius and his acumen, an inheritance from his ancestors, for he was descended from the tribes of Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, Jephtha, David and Solomon. All of these were great men in their day and generation; they were headliners and star actors in the great Bible drama, faithful laborers to aid the building of the Bible as it was unfolded in its growth through the ages. But these men were not constructive; they were not creative; they had nothing to do with the inception or the infant growth of the Bible. They were pigmies compared with the power from which they had sprung,—a power that thundered its commands from the heights of Sinai, under the lofty crags of Gibeon, through the echoing valley of Ajalon, across the wide plains of Moab, under Pisgah's towering top, and down through the terrified and trembling ages during thousands of years until, in its dotage, fretful of its waning influence, it struck the fatal blow on Calvary's gory hill, when the sceptre of power fell from its

nerveless grasp, and its palsied arm hung limp and helpless.

The great realm of Nature is a realm of universal plenty, a realm of law, a realm of love, a realm of divinity, a divinity of soundless love and bounteous power. The sun, the moon, the stars, the planets, unnumbered systems, suns and worlds are the product of that bounteous law.

The attempt to concentrate divinity in any being located beyond clouds or imagined anywhere in the realm of space, whose hands hold the reins of law, who at once is a being of love and a fiend of anger, and who has delegated to any group of people here upon the earth the power to execute his imperious will, is political usurpation of the most dangerous character, worthy of the ancient Jews in whose Sanhedrin during executive sessions behind closed doors the crafty scheme was concocted. Nor was the plot strictly original with these; it was a growth. When man, in his evolution, ceased to be a quadruped and stood erect upon two feet, the first problem that confronted his awakening intellect was the problem of life, and naturally a devout being, he reverently bowed his head in adoration of a divinity capable of bestowing a gift so bounteous.

Priestcraft was early on the field and then, as now, pointed its sanctimonious finger at the fact of death, and assumed to solve the unknowable problem of life and the equally inscrutable problem of death, thus taking advantage of the race

in its infancy, to control and enthrall by its own pretense of superior wisdom.

There never has been recorded in history, transmitted by tradition, preserved in legend, celebrated in song, or dreamed in delirium, a deity carved upon wood or stone or otherwise, whether his name was called Shekinah, Jehovah, Joss, Jove, God or Lord, that was other than a figment, a man of straw, an excuse by ambitious men for the exercise of authority falsely pretended to be delegated to them.

The Jewish hierarchy, more cunning, more crafty, carved their Shekinah wholly upon their own imaginations, and placed him beyond the stars in the firmament to preclude any possibility that he could be traced. They said his wrath was as a cloud and his vengeance as a whirlwind, then called him a God of love as a modifying halo. They hurled the commandments they themselves had formulated to appall the shrinking masses of humanity with manifestations of their power with no evidence of authority, no other credentials than their own specious declaration: "God said unto Moses," yet Moses himself was only their man of straw.

A single human thought is a center around which a great system may grow. There are always busy people ready to offer gratuitous suggestions, and a few thousand years will suffice to build a great Bible. As advancing years and the encroachment of age caused some workers to

retire from the field of action, younger men with warmer blood in their veins, with purposes of keener selfishness to accomplish and fresher ambitions to gratify, each with some cherished scheme to develop or an idea to advance, hastened to fill the vacant places.

Every age of the world, so far as history makes note or tradition relates, produced men of giant minds and every variety of talent. There were powerful men of sterner purpose, unscrupulous and designing, forming plans to subjugate, to tyrannize and conquer nation against nation, and kingdom to devastate kingdom, usually quoting some dogma as authority for their deeds of darkness, as there were also cunning dogmatists and demagogues, men of much speaking and many words which they sought to justify with the specious reply, "Thus said the Lord." In all the annals of evil there is not a crime they failed to describe with revolting detail and teach by suggestion.

Among the ancient Jews were statesmen of wondrous wisdom, there were sagacious politicians and crafty demagogues; as warriors they were unmatched, as financiers they were incomparable. The Hebrews could trace their ancestry through an extended lineage back to the ancient mythologists; and through that inheritance they were apt fable writers, and probably it did not require many decades for such talent to evolve the Creation story with its awful, far-reaching conse-

quences. As those results can only be comprehended through psychology, we may well pause in passing for an investigation into what psychology is or can be.

The books tell us that psychology is the science of the soul and leave us helpless, confused, as they cannot define a soul or prove the existence of souls. A learned prelate by the name of Rev. Murphy has written an elaborate treatise on what he calls psychology. He gives endless lists of impulses, emotions, sensations, and so on, but as all his efforts are directed to the upliftment of the Church, we will have nothing of Murphy or his partisanship. The principal in a well-known academy has written a textbook used in our public schools in which he refers to psychology as a "science little known or understood." Diligent search has failed to find any definition of psychology that is rational and is not contradicted by well-known facts. In the common mind it seems to be regarded as an art or some mystic influence that is forbidding. Whether it has been purposely obscured or intentionally misconstrued, or its vibrations are too delicate for discovery, the difficulty will add zest to the spirit of our inquiries. What can it do for us? What is its ministry? What message does it bring? What golden fruit may lie hidden in its husk?

Nothing can exist in Nature but by lease of her gracious law; her realm is full of analogies. Everything is analogous to something that is akin.

8 THE REDISCOVERED UNIVERSE

Mankind lives on two planes. Psychology is activity on the mental plane. At last we have found the needed definition. Psychology is the influence or control of mind over mind, or, more broadly, psychology is the thought activity, its sphere wide as the universe. A definition of psychology will enable us to trace its functions, to make many discoveries and solve many problems that have held us in bondage. Psychology is not a science; it is the mother of all sciences,—infinitely more exacting and important in our daily life than all the sciences combined. The sun will set and rise again, indifferent to our comprehension of astronomy. We can eke out an existence without music, mathematics, or mining, or their books; our food will be digested and furnish nourishment, like the ox's, without the science of physiology; but unlike the ox, no sane man can live one wistful moment without thought activity. The mind of the monk in his cell and of the recluse in his solitude is active, destiny building for good or ill through unheeded moments.

Scientific men agree in the conclusion that light is vibrated through space on the particles of ether at the rate of 186,000 miles in one second of time. In one minute it would travel far, in one hour, in a year, and after it had advanced untold centuries of years, and covered space beyond the power of mathematical figures to express, it would be no nearer the limit of space than when it started. Everywhere the same law

would be found to prevail. Everywhere twice two is four; everywhere it is wrong to steal. Myriads of systems, suns, and worlds, revolve obedient to that law in the realm of soundless love and boundless power, the realm of all knowledge, all understanding,—a realm of universal exhaustless resources; a realm where the same justice waves her unfailing wand; a realm of thought activity; a realm of supply for every need; a realm of intelligence that in our poverty of language we can only call a realm of Universal Mind; a realm of the infinite; a realm of the eternal; a realm of Nature's love, whose only purpose is the upliftment of mankind,—man, himself a divinity as high, transcending, any conception of a being beyond the clouds as a Jewish idol surpasses a tiny microbe; a realm from which our thought has been diverted; an inheritance to which we may return through right thinking and righteous living as taught by the meek and lowly One on the shores of Galilee, and our troubled waves be quieted in the realm of newly discovered peace.

Ignoring all this uplifting fact, a deadly fungus has sprung up from some unhallowed soil, watered from polluted spring, contravening all law, all truth, and it is a delusion. Man is not a prenatal criminal, guilty of crimes committed centuries before his birth; condemned from the beginning; flung out alone, unprotected, upon the restless tide of time, to walk the weary waste of

life in shame; a miserable sinner, prone to evil as the sparks are to fly upward.

Be not startled, gentle reader, though unheard before, if another fallacy more unsuspected, more subtle, more injurious be exposed. Be not surprised, though it reverse the ponderous trend of human belief entrenched in six thousand years of precedent, if we have been walking on the ceiling of error, rudely pawing the atmosphere of doubt, blindly confessing impossible crimes, crimes that law forbids, that reason denies, that nature revolts against,—if we have been chasing a mirage of hope that is always elusive.

Write it indelibly, carve it deeply on the tablet of your memory,—man does not possess a mind he can call his own. He is not so limited, he is not so circumscribed. There is only one ocean. Every drop of water in the world is of that ocean; is of itself ocean. So, analogously, there is only one mind in all the vastness of the universe. What we have been blindly taught to call the human mind is something vastly higher, nobler, more capable of lofty aspirations and infinitely wider possibilities. It is a flash from the Eternal, the Infinite, the One Divine Mind of Nature's unfailing wisdom, individualized in the person, a precious gift endowing him with wondrous power. The human brain is not all a center of emanation; it is a wireless station that can receive impressions from whatever influence may interpose. Shielded in faith it can draw from the divine realm of Nature

supply for its need. Posed on the wings of contentment, enthroned on its citadel of power, the higher self of mankind may look down upon the heart that faints and nerves that fret, and command them. Peace: Be Still and Know that I *am!* Until we made a study of psychology we worried in fear, believing a relentless fate rudely marked out our pathway. Now we know that by faith in our own thought force we can control our environment, and carve our destiny at will. In the towering strength of meekness and humility, animated by the spirit of love, Peace shall hover her guardian wings about your pillow and you shall waken in the smile of helpfulness to all that lives, while you go about with a song of joy welling up limpid from your happy tongue.

The tiniest blade of grass that springs from the affectionate bosom of Mother Earth brings a message of tender love, so gentle that it vibrates in harmony with Nature's softest notes.

Thought activity is excited by suggestion, and suggestion may be made in any one of many different forms. Whether for purpose of intrigue and control, or in a spirit of helpfulness, suggestion is often made by mind upon other minds. Environment may suggest mental activity, or it may originate in the mind of the individual. In almost every community there is an oddity, a genius, or half-witted fellow of whom it is sometimes said, "He has told that lie so often he actually believes it himself." Turn not idly from

your jest, for in it is involved a principle of the most tremendous import, the most vital to humanity, more important than medical science. It proves the force of auto-suggestion that if you assert health until you believe health you will be healed. This is correct principle, or Jesus was mistaken. It is this very philosophy he taught when he said to the leper, "Thy faith has made thee whole."

Psychology is not in any sense a personality, philosophy or science. And right here is where the monumental mischief has been done,—in calling it a science. It functions only on a single line of thought, independent of other lines; it cannot be systematized, nor classified. It is unfortunate that through ignorance or cupidity it has ever been called a science. Psychology cannot be taught; it cannot be learned; it cannot be recorded; it is indelible in the subjective mind of the individual who entertains it, and may be recalled at any time, line upon line. But thought activity may not be foretold; it is only unfolded in the moments as they pass. No brush can paint its image, no pencil trace its outline; no tongue can lisp its language. Yet it is only on its vibrations that the smile of dimpled infancy is sent out; the soothing of sympathy is felt, the hand of helpfulness is recognized, or the cheerfulness of love stills the throbbing heart.

When that plodding individual, the merely intellectual man, has performed his daily task by

producing an abundance of nutritious food, and has eaten it, his duties are well performed. Good and faithful servant, he may sit in the corner and smoke his pipe.

Physiology then takes up her cheerful task and by digestion and assimilation produces the required myriads of cells, and a current of good rich blood to aid in the wonderful work to be performed, and physiology, her work well done, may stand an interested looker-on.

But now the heavy individual labor all done, a duty of intensest importance must be performed, a very grave responsibility must be assumed,—the innumerable hosts of cells on that field must be commanded with unerring skill. Fortunately the accomplished chieftain is in the saddle. “Follow where you see my white plume shine,” is his rallying cry, his banner waving majestic in the passing breeze. It is the psychic activity in the lower lobe of the brain that never tires, that never sleeps but keeps up the pulsation, digestion and circulation, while the perceptive brain rests from its labor; it is the higher self of the man, a creative force directing how that tenement of clay he inhabits shall be built and kept in repair. If fear, that deadly enemy with its thousand poisoned feet, has never been permitted to invade, to encroach upon the soil of his mind, his faith in the divinity *within him* should carry him triumphant around the cycle of a century.

The hand of psychology was compelled to swing

the whip of scorpions, to wield the bludgeons and thrust the spears that robbed and plundered helpless people for more than four thousand years, deluged the plains of Moab and Palestine in blood, and put out the light that for three years had flashed its helpful beams across those weary plains.

A torch in the same unwilling thought force lighted the fagots that for twelve hundred and sixty years blazed on all the hill tops of Christendom. But the tardy wings of time have at last brought a change to the fitful human dreaming. The mighty arm of advancing thought force that revived psychology is delivering the blows that are laying low the hydra-headed, creeping, crawling monster, that scaly Trinity, mystery, mythology and superstition. Mythology clothes with imagination to conceal unsightly shapes; superstition flares its unsteady gleam, now luring with hope, again blanching with fear; while mystery is a deceitful dynamic influence, the only vital spark of any religion, a will-o'-the-wisp that lures to deadly miasm. All are mischievous in every tendency; the world will be well rid of them while we proceed to loftier planes of helpfulness. It is the cheerful hand of thought power that vibrates the hopper and runs the stones that busy grind in the mills of Truth. It is her deft fingers that throw back and forth the shuttles that weave the fabric of freedom in the untiring looms of progress. It is her willing hand that holds aloft the

light that rifts the cloud which has so long frowned, its blackened front concealing the spirit of Christianity.

It is her downy pinions attending the return of Christianity in the Second Coming of the Christ spirit here on the earth, where it shall continue to shed its rays in exalting helpfulness to humanity, unhurt or undimmed by any cup of wormwood and gall administered by jealous hand on any gory hill.

Psychology, or the influence of mind over mind, flows clearly through all the arteries of life, and perhaps its most potent field is the inclination to helpfulness. The vast multitudes thronged the plains of Palestine to hang noiseless and breathless over the gentle teaching that fell from the lips of Truth's able advocate, which brought them freedom from the bondage that had so long enthralled them.

There is no excellence without effort; there is no attainment without struggle. Our difficulties are opportunities to overcome; and by overcoming we gain strength. Did all the land flow with milk and honey, did fruits and food grow spontaneous, abundant, were all the rivers filled with wine from exhaustless fountains, life would be ravished of its meaning, and we should be puny, helpless creatures that would show a frown at each thought of toil, a dimple and a smile at each touch of sin. Yet they tell us in their great fable that labor is a curse pronounced upon unnumbered millions

of her descendants because a female child less than a week old was alleged to have been guilty of disobedience. With all their ample knowledge of psychology that was a remarkable suggestion, giving them control, and has borne ample fruit through all the weary years. Another phase of their curse was that the woman should bear children with pain, and as a result approaching motherhood too often causes a shudder of fear and terror that has caused widespread ill health. But "back to Nature" is our inviting cry, and by assuming her own responsibility, asserting her own individuality, it will not be many centuries until woman will come back to her own and will perform her natural functions happily, as always have done her sisters of the forest and plain.

The chronological references found in the margins of Bibles are believed to have resulted from the labors of Bishop Ussher, a prelate of the Irish Church, who lived in the sixteenth century and who was a famous Bible scholar. According to Ussher's calculations about six thousand years have elapsed since the creation of the world. The religionists accepted Ussher's conclusions and based their statements wholly on his theories. Later developments, however, in the science of geology prove by the silent, unassailable testimony of the rocks that our earth was an evolution from atomic cells untold eons of ages gone by. Ussher is discredited and the religionists ad-

mit that they are adrift on the chronological sea, *sans* sail, *sans* rudder.

The masterful bulls in every herd toss their horns and bellow aloud in boastful strength. In every community, in every society, everywhere during all periods of time there have been men thirsty for power, ambitious to rule and control and to tyrannize. It required millions of years for Nature's law to evolve the earth and the vast universe. It was in comparatively a recent time, only six thousand years ago, that those skillful Jews, marvelously wise, with their own crafty hand created their world, their own little world. From time to time, as necessity seemed to require, they wrote the Bible, as a sort of mythological Atlas to carry on his back and support their little world. It is this little world, this Jewish world, whose end is so freely prophesied; and well they may prophesy, as its end is fast approaching. It is even now at hand. Commandments, punishments, penalties, creeds, dogmas and all the uncanny brood go down to hell with that self-conferred authority. For nearly two thousand years the new Judaism has used Christianity as a shield to conceal its shape, shedding, so long as it held the power to do so, rivers of human gore in the name of the meek and lowly Jesus. At last uncovered, religion must sink in the sands its own streams have shifted; at last the Christianity taught by John and Jesus, smothered in its cradle on those trou-

bled plains,— a gospel of peace on earth, good will to men,— is reviving, is displacing fear of avenging wrath unprovoked. Bread of life more abundant and love unspeakable cast upon the waters is returning after many ages. The trusts shall disgorge their ill-gotten gains, suicide become unknown, and divorce courts be thrown out of commission, for peace is resuming her gentle reign, and contentment spreading her inviting smile. History repeats with unimpaired fidelity; religions and religions that have imposed their bondage for thousands of years, their cycles rounded in the weakness of their fallacies, have been obliterated on their own funeral pyres, lighted by the torch of progress. Within the next century of our era, children's children will hold aloft their astonished hands, and cry aloud, "Can it be possible that our parents accepted such stuff as teachings to guide them?" Many sincere people are inquiring whither shall we fly for refuge if we abandon religion. The answer is clear as sunshine. Listening no longer to lessons of grating turmoil, they may return to Nature, in whose laws there is only peace and harmony; through the teachings of Jesus and other ancient sages, cultivate a spirit of Christian helpfulness, of poise, of contentment, of charity, of love, and they shall find freedom from a gospel of despair like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

There had been religions and religions and bibles

and bibles written or unwritten that had become obsolete and had fallen into obscurity and decay before Judaism grew out of mythology; and all of the preceding religions had frankly given an accounting about their deity, his origin and his office.

The first sentence, the first five words of the Eden story, left two positions exceedingly vague, obscure and indefinite. It merely says, "In the beginning God created" without telling what "beginning" or who this God was or whence he came. But these men were wondrous wise; they were original in their methods, refusing to copy custom or follow precedent. In their council chamber they decided to invent and create a lieutenant, an intermediary, a lackey, an outside agent, a cat's-paw or chore-boy to do their bidding. But this middle man must appear to be made of flesh and blood like themselves; they gave him a parentage obscure to the verge of bewilderment, the name of neither parent being given. They only said that a man of the tribe of Levi took to wife a daughter of Levi who conceived and bore a child so beautiful in her eyes that she hid him for the space of three months; then she took an ark of bullrushes and daubed it with slime and pitch, and placed the child in the ark on the eddy of a river presumably covered with green scum, among frogs and serpents as neighbors. But it was a happy thought, a stroke of policy worthy their well recognized acumen, that they had him rescued by a

princess, the daughter of a king, and this gave him a rich halo of royalty that could not be effaced. A wonderful man they made him.

Another thought arising from association of ideas, partaking of the habits of his childhood neighbors, he became a snake faker and frog manipulator. He cast his rod upon the ground and it became a serpent; he lifted it up by the tail and it became a rod again in his hand. But how sharper than serpent's tooth was the ingratitude that impelled him to cause a plague of frogs to invade the royal palace whose hospitable roof had sheltered him, within whose walls his childhood had been nourished, for the frogs invaded the palace of the king and the houses of his friends and the houses of his servants, and their kneading troughs, where they were piled up until they stank. Then he turned the waters of the rivers into blood and filled them with frogs, a filthy, putrid mass, a plague upon the land, a breeding place for vermin and microbes.

They made him a great historian, claiming that he wrote the famous first five books of the Bible in which he mentioned his own death, and continued to write until, four hundred years after his death, he wrote this strange sentence, "No man knoweth the place of his sepulchre until this day." Summing up all the statements, the conclusion seems inevitable that this greatest man of all history, the great law giver, this elaborate historian, this man Moses, without a birthplace

or parentage worthy of mention, filling an unknown grave, was merely a fake,—the Big Noise of the Bible machine.

Nothing is more frequent in the activities of life than suggestion; it is so common that little note is made concerning it except in the larger measures, and even then it is little comprehended. No community was ever purified or made more peaceful by the act of murder, whether or not it was legally committed; more likely the act will be followed by other enormous crime. Suggestion may be classed under the head of associated ideas,—that is, that one idea suggests further idea. Everything must exist in ideality before it can be produced materially. An idea persistently entertained and often expressed vocally becomes an entity to him who entertains the thought. It is as certainly true as any proposition in philosophy can be proven that we invite the things we fear.

It is a matter of well authenticated history that in a western city often visited by the writer, a city noted far and wide for the excellence and force of newspapers, a suicide was committed. It produced a great sensation and was a rare morsel of news in a little town of perhaps twenty-five thousand intelligent, active, enterprising people. The newspapers vied with each other in printing columns of sensational stuff. Very soon another suicide was committed, followed by two suicides in a single day. The newspapers

were admonished to cease, but they still were filled with awful scare head announcements until conditions became alarming, and the whole city was aroused. The newspapers were then visited by a committee headed by the honorable mayor of the city and their managers notified in no uncertain language that if any more sensational articles were published their buildings would be dynamited in broad daylight by leading citizens. Those publishers became convinced that they were doing wrong. There were no more such articles and no more suicides, but it was an awful demonstration of what psychology is and that suggestion is the method it employs. The pictures of agony from disease appearing in advertising columns of the newspapers, and the scare head statements that many people have kidney trouble and don't know it,—“If you have any of the following symptoms you need my cureall dope,”—and many other suggestions of disease by advertising quacks are very pernicious.

The statements that man is an unworthy worm of the dust, that he is a rebel violating some law, and is altogether wicked are suggestions made by quacks on another plane of life that is intensely human and selfish and have caused unmeasured misery down weary centuries, but are being dimmed in the light of reason that has long been obscured.

A moral code is a moral impossibility of efficiency or continuance. A moral code inevitably

resolves itself into dogma, and dogma is the strong arm of oppression and bondage. Morality cannot be enforced, and any attempt at enforcement of morality vexes, annoys, aggravates, and promotes the evil sought to be eliminated. Morality is not a rule of action; rather morality is a principle, a sanctity, a beatitude that should only be mentioned with bated breath. Morality can best be inculcated by example rather than taught by precept. Mankind is instinctively moral and can be led by the hand of love and gentleness, not driven by the rod of punishment or the hand of fear.

When the hierarchs had completed their man Moses, whom they made out of the dust of their imagination, they kept that individual very busy. The time had arrived when they were answerable to other peoples for the deity whom they had mentioned in their fable; his origin must be made known to satisfy curiosity and silence criticism. As an excuse, they made him a herdsman and sent him driving the cattle across the moor even to Mount Horeb, when, in the silence of the valley and all unknown to human ken, he obediently discovered the required deity in a flame of fire out of a burning bush, and he looked and "behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed." In the realm of boundless space there are worlds on worlds, world without end, but to us who inhabit its surface this planet is more intensely individual, more vital than any

other. As in the astronomical realm, so analogously in the social realm there are worlds innumerable. Each college town is a little world all its own; each profession, each partisanship, each religion, each nationality is a world all its own.

Of all the worlds created, built, fabricated or fashioned by the hand of man or conceived in his wildest imagination, the Jewish world stands alone, preëminent, unapproachable; its scheme, its plot, its plan touches the greatest vibrations responsive in human impulse. Both the finest brush that retouches its alluring picture and the master drive-wheel of its ponderous machinery are hypnotic.

In the creation of their world the Jewish priesthood utilized the eye of a serpent as the crystal on which the gaze of the unguarded woman was fixed; its vicious influence put her consciousness to slumber, she forgot her own interest in the eternal Now, temptation entered her vacated mind and she committed that act of disobedience, violated the commandment that formed the first link forged in the chain that has enthralled the race for six thousand years. That was, indeed, a very excellent "beginning," but a large crystal was needed for the wider purpose that the whole human family might fix its gaze upon and lose itself in the service and to the use and benefit of the priestly hierarchy we have served so long and faithfully at our own direful cost. Descended from mythologists, their inherited ability as fable writers enabled them to carve on their inflated im-

aginations a glittering crystal that they concealed behind a cloud, an idol, from whose nostrils issued hissing sounds to appall; from whose dragon mouth is perpetually vomited a stream of wrath and vengeance to poison, to hypnotize and fill with deadly fear. They christened their figment a God of Love, an ingenious trick of their trade to purloin from Nature's realm of freedom her tenderest shading to conceal the deformity of dogmatic bondage.

Organization is the method by which men obtain control over their fellowmen. A lone bandit may terrorize half a hundred brave men pent up in a coach because he is organized with a deadly weapon in either hand, but it is not a square deal.

An organized body of men may mount a platform, and, looking down upon the single individuals that constitute the teeming millions that people the earth, say, "Thou shalt not," but it is an act of oppression. Of all the statutes advocated by crafty demagogues and enacted by wily statesmen in the secret chambers of the Jewish Senate the Ten Commandments was and is the coarsest, the cruelest, the vilest, the most iniquitous and the most mischievous. Each commandment is a forceful suggestion of the sin it forbids; each commandment must, therefore, serve a double purpose; it promotes the crime it forbids and furnishes a pretext for domination, control and punishment of its victims.

The dismal deliverance of four thousand fateful years was a succession of raids for murders, robberies, pillage and plunder, rape and rapine; the first five books of the Bible, including nearly two hundred chapters, are devoted to accounts of their escapades. The Book of Ruth tells that this frisky maiden crept in the tent of Boaz and lay down, but left in the morning when none could see. This is racy stuff for a Sunday School lesson, yet the Book of Ruth with its teaching of sex worship affords some relief, for it is the first book of the Bible that does not give account of any murders. The vast territory devastated in one raid included five kingdoms of pastoral, industrious defenseless people, where no one person was left alive. No estimate is given of the number of persons whose graves were vultures and wolves, except thirty-two thousand virgins who were left alive for the use of the plunderers, including the Lord, who took his share. In this one raid upon the spoils of the Midianites, besides slaying all the people, there were jewels of gold, chains, bracelets, rings, earrings and tablets. The number of cattle taken and how they were divided is recorded in the Book of Numbers, Chapter xxxi, verses 31 to 40 inclusive. And the booty, being the rest of the prey which the men of war had caught, was six hundred and seventy-five thousand sheep, seventy-two thousand beeves, sixty-one thousand asses, thirty-two thousand persons that had not known man by lying

with him, of which the Lord's share was thirty-two virgins.

During all this fearsome time, their statement of authority was the Ten Commandments, their battle cry, "The Lord commanded Moses"; and until this day in the twentieth century of our era the Decalogue is a cat-o'-nine-tails, a whip of scorpions with forked tongues, frothing wrath and vengeance from its mouth, and ending foul, in many a scaly fold and viperous sting.

The sun, the moon, the stars, all move in cycles. The events of history, the experiences of human life, and everything in the broad realm of nature moves in cycles. Progress, with her unceasing toil, has accomplished much, for everything in the universe bears her indelible imprint.

The old foundations of society were unable to sustain a sterner fabric. Egypt, with her pyramids and all her wonderful architecture, had forgotten her heritage and lay a waste of darkness. The wisdom of Greece had turned to folly, all her glorious achievements were but harrowing memories along her dumb, voiceless shores, and the proudest people under the tread of whose victorious armies the earth had ever trembled was practically a race of slaves. Rome, powerful in senate and proud in her extent of empire, had crossed her last Rubicon of power. Boasting Rome, that sat on her seven hills and from her throne of beauty ruled the world, her matchless strength wasted, was floundering in the dust and

ashes of her own greatness. No new world had then been discovered, and those great nations, the powers of the earth as we recognize them today, were slumbering undreamt in the matrix of time, so that there was no power to which society could appeal for protection against her numerous foes, foes within and foes without. Sex worship was intruding its vile head; the age was insanely licentious, venal and corrupt, and thoughtful men watched with bated breath for the next act in the drama of human history. The philosophers of Athens, Alexandria, and other centers of learning had contemplated some method for the relief of society but no plan had been formulated; they had delayed at the imminent risk that some intruder might invade and usurp the field, hence the time was not yet. Another paragraph of history must first be written. The atmosphere was filled with dust of worlds perished in the forgetfulness of time; the cycle of the Hebrew nation had rounded to its end. Her great books were closed. The tribes that wandered in the valley of the Nile had listened to strange whisperings and there was universal unrest.

The wheel was broken in Herod's prison, its guillotine had beheaded its last victim, and nails and spears were rusting in the guiltless blood they had shed; the bodies of Jesus and John were crumbling to silent dust in gory graves. Christianity, so recently active, lay smothered in her cradle; Truth, crushed to earth, lay bleeding,

quivering at the foot of the cross; again the sun stood still on Gibeon and the moon in the valley of Ajalon; the planets faltered in their orbits; a pall of thick darkness overspread the face of the whole earth and the earth trembled and quaked in its paroxysms of fear; Nature made a pause, an awful pause; the silence was painful, the pen of history was silent and unused. Time slumbered on unrestful couch and lent his glass to Hope; Hope died with her first glance at the appalling gloom, and all was still.

Time waves his wand unceasingly and does not pause to view what wrecks may strew his path or the tombs he may have filled; nor sleep nor weariness nor night, sable goddess, stay his rushing pinions.

Time had winged his busy flight over the space of nearly three hundred years before priestcraft aroused from the stupor into which reaction from the blow he had struck on Calvary had thrown him. With his first crafty glance he discovered the forlorn situation, and tearing off his garment of sackcloth, donned raiment of sheeps' clothing and rushed into the unoccupied field where he set up his standard. He was soon surrounded by a horde of hungry demagogues; before many moons had waxed and waned a strong organization had been formed; a chrysalis opened, the fledgling moth fluttered gaudily about, a new religion was born.

Immediately upon the eastern horizon ap-

peared the figure of a man. His giant form was bowed with the weight of many centuries; his grizzled visage was furrowed deep with the care of many a weighty problem. He was rich with the spoils of war, never having given equal battle. He was clad in purple and finest linen, his ornaments, the mines of Ophir might not buy. His name was Judaism; he was the father of the new-born religion.

Upon the western horizon appeared the figure of a woman; her merry eyes twinkled and her jolly face was wreathed with smiles; she had long been the ruler of a great people, but had never engaged in warfare, wise in the knowledge that her national resources were best developed by an earnest culture of the arts of peace. Her raiment was the finest creation, bearing the aroma of rarest spices; her gold and jewels the wealth of Ormus or of Ind might envy. She was haloed with all the splendor that the gorgeous East might shower on its barbaric kings. Her name was Paganism. She was the mother of the new religion. These two persons, the father from the East and the mother from the West, joyously flitted down the rugged peaks of many thousand years to meet in the valley of the Tiber River under the shadow of Rome's famous seven hills in mutual congratulation that they were the parents, he the father and she the mother, of a new religion, bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh.

Upon the occasion of their first visit to their

child, the father, whose name was Judaism, said,

“ Now, son, behold how I and my people have toiled and labored and become a great people, but our right hand forgot its cunning; we conspired against a man who possessed a power we knew not of. The multitudes who were as the sands of the sea or the leaves of the forest all followed him. We were without a people and the sceptre of power fell from our grasp. But you shall be our heir to inherit all of our inheritance that we have built up in these toilsome centuries. The fame of our victories in battle shall be an inspiration to you, and the songs that we sang shall cheer your fainting heart with gladness; our synagogues shall be your council chambers, and our temples your places of abode. The laws that Moses handed down to us by the mouth of prophets shall be your laws; our commandments that we commanded shall also be your strong tower of strength that no man can tear down and no people can assail. So shall you have plenty wherewith to build your own great temple.

“ But you will need a corner stone for your temple; we must cast about. You remember that when the warrior Ahaz was afraid he was promised a sign even that a virgin should conceive and bear a son and before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings. And my great prophet Isaiah took with him Uriah, the priest, and another faithful witness to

record, and he went unto the prophetess and she conceived and bore a son. Now, my son, you are authorized by your own father to construe this story into a prophecy. You will only need one woman without any man or priest for a witness or any other purpose. You need only tell your people that a virgin conceived and the mystery will be so astounding that they will believe what they cannot comprehend; they will accept that which they fear. So shall you have a sure corner stone, a deity that shall be called the Rock of Ages. The last of the multitudes deserted me and my people when we slew the Nazarene whom they followed. Now you can regain the heritage we lost by reversing our methods. Give your deity the name of Jesus and they will follow him. You are lacking in the numbers of your followers, and it is plain that the multitude that followed Jesus will never desert the standard he set up. You will find it the essence of all political cunning that where you are unable to conquer a great people you need only to spring to the front and set up your own standard before them; they will follow. Then if you veil your purpose with the name Christianity, your success will be certain and secure."

Then the mother, whose name was Paganism, whose sympathies were most tender said:

"My son, my people, who were a very numerous people, were divided into a great many religious sects; there were river worshipers and sun

worshippers and fire worshippers, and I blush with shame as I confess that there were sex worshippers."

The father groaned response that "Evil sullied every page of our history."

The mother continued: "But the most lovely sect among my people were the garden worshippers. When the fields were white unto the harvests and our men went forth to the reaping they sang, 'This is fulfillment, this is the end of life.' When the fruits of the field were garnered into barns we devoted our time to science and invention of useful arts until springtime. When the floods came, and the waters had moistened and fertilized the soil, and the sun warmed the earth, the plants sprang forth into new life, and we called it the period of the resurrection; and during every resurrection period for more than three thousand years we have set apart a feast day that we called Easter. Now, my son, you will do well to continue the Easter celebration, claiming that it was the body of Jesus that was resurrected; so shall you claim a deity that twice walked the earth and the foundation of your temple will be sure and steadfast. Be not too hasty in building your temple; a few centuries will not be important. You will need to tear away and rebuild from time to time and make additions as necessity may seem to demand. While you seem harmless as a dove, be wise as a serpent, and above all take this maxim from your successful mother, 'Expediency is the

magic influence that guides the hand of cunning.' ”

The pathway of the new organization was beset with serious opposition. Epictetus and other powerful philosophers were bitterly opposed, the opposing forces clearly holding the balance of power for considerable time. Constantine was Emperor of Rome, and, although a wily politician, was not very secure in his seat of authority. He had caused to be put to death several young men, including one, his own son, whom he suspected of entertaining ambitious purposes. He craftily imagined that a vigorous new organization might strengthen his waning power, and pagan though he was, he gave the young Jewish religion hearty endorsement. Thus endowed with a halo of royalty, Roman aristocracy made a fad of the new religion and lent a balance of power never lost until all was lost. At first it was called “The Catholic Religion,” hating pagan Rome with all the bitterness of the ancient grudge the old religions owed each other. But in complement to the new accession of power it was afterward christened “The Roman Catholic Religion,” thus proving that politics has long chosen strange bed fellows.

The springtime of promised peace soon ended, twilight let her blackest curtain down, and there was begun the long dark night of history's most gory page.

Lest we forget we shall devote some attention to the Bible makers. To complete a bible seems

a task so monumental that it is beyond conception; indeed the Bible never was planned; like the oak tree, it was a growth. All that was needed to make a bible was an idea in the mind of a man or a few men as a nucleus, and the result was inevitable by accretion from surrounding influences that were abundant. As the early toilers fell by the wayside there were always younger men with warmer blood, fresher ambition and newer impulses anxious to fill the vacant places; and that is why the Bible wears the coloring and bears the imprint of each of the numerous centuries through which it came down. It should be borne carefully in mind that in all the ages of history there have been two sides to society, two separate and diverse influences, one class of men born to rule and govern complacently, willing to wear the honors and share the spoils.

Occasionally there have been men of purified natures, wise men, spiritually minded men, who have left on record many helpful truths during the last six thousand years that have made apology for many rugged chapters. The most ancient Jews were divided into many sects or classes many thousand years before the supposed dawn of the Mosaic ages.

To the unobservant mind, Jesus, son of Joseph and Mary, at the time of his mature manhood was a very ordinary and commonplace appearing individual. No man who yet was clad in raiment was ever more poverty stricken. So far as any

record shows, Jesus had never attended any school, could not read or write except one word, and that was a hieroglyphic in the drifted sand. He must have been inefficiently nourished, lean and scrawny, for he had lived for eighteen years in the depths of the wilderness, where his meat was locusts and wild honey and other supplies scanty there through most of the seasons; but he had feasted at the larger table. He had lived close to Nature, he lived in the very embrace of Nature and had been uplifted by Nature's exalting truth.

Jesus had never entertained a thought of evil; he was absorbed in contemplation of the good until he was exalted up into the great realm of universal supply for all good, the realm of divinity where his thought could command the forces in the great Unseen. Jesus could still the winds and the tempest and could calm the waves of the sea, not by anything supernatural, because nothing can be superior to Nature, but by force of her law. Jesus was not in any sense a moralist; at every turn he manifested contempt for enforcement of statute, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; in defiant manner he violated a commandment by plucking the ears of corn as he passed through the fields on a certain day of the week. Every act of his life contradicted the Eden fable. Jesus taught no religion; he did not establish any church; he did not confer any authority; he did not form any association or

affiliation with a lot of fishermen or others, but did establish a high social order that embraced every living thing. He did not condemn any person or thing except hypocrisy, and its driveling moralisms. Jesus lived and taught a life that comprehended all the moral and cardinal virtues far transcending any mere intellectual conceptions into the spiritual realm constantly inviting to higher life and purer love.

We must stand with uncovered brow and delighted visage, engrossed, absorbed, astonished before the majesty, the dignity, the power of Nature's law. The titans of the forest stand haughtily defiant, uplifted by the crooning murmur of the law. The crocus smiles its beauty, with upturned face under the snow, shielded by the mighty arm of Nature's law. The sun, the moon, all the infinite hosts of worlds that throng the boundless skies bow their proud heads obedient to the slightest behest of Nature's law.

A drop of water held in your hand or in a vessel is so aided by that law you cannot prevent its return to the ocean where it came from; you may change its form and detain it for a time; it may have been here many times, but has always found its way back home in the ocean and will again find its way back.

If the law could be so changed that water could be prevented from returning; if breath could be breathed into a lump of clay that it become a living soul; if woman could be created out of bone

taken from the side of a man; if a virgin could conceive and bear a child; if all the luminaries that skirt ethereal vastness could spring into existence at command of an impossible voice that imperiously said, "Let there be light"; if one jot or tittle of Nature's law could be abrogated, abridged, or annulled, the planets would fly from their orbits, the universe become a mass of flame in the twinkling of an eye and a condition of discord ensue to which primal chaos were but a symphony.

Yet these men with solemn visage, in doleful tones that sound like the wizard voice of time heard from the tomb of ages, repeat the ancient, stale suggestion, "All things are possible with God."

The old heathenish mythologists or Mosaic tricksters or Jewish politicians, as they may be called, well knew that such a God was a most remote impossibility. Great Nature cries aloud through all her works, and no sane person can doubt the existence of a divinity, a substance, an intelligence existing in the divine mind whose strong arm is law, whose impulse is love, whose purpose is the upliftment of humanity for whose use all things are made, to whom all dominion is given. That such intelligence can be concentrated in the brain of a being, his arm vested with such power, is a sophistry, a fallacy offensive to the starry canopy that veils the skies above us; it

can only have been imposed upon the infancy of our civilization.

That any possible misunderstanding may be avoided, let it be understood at the outset that the position taken by the author of this volume is that every statement uttered by the printing press or shouted from pulpit or rostrum is in violation of the truth and contrary to the teaching of Jesus, the meek and lowly Nazarene. Watch the proofs as they are marshalled before the reader as occasion may occur,—every proof borrowed from the Bible, or drawn from the experience of everyday life. In the comforting belief that *all people are doing the best they know*, that only through ignorance can error creep in, no person and no body of persons shall be censured. It is only a *system* that will be censured. These splendid men, the clergymen of the twentieth century, preachers, priests, prelates and popes, are teaching what they were taught to teach, what they are paid to teach, and what they are required to teach. It is the organization, the partisanship that compels the workers in the vineyard. And the laity, their church members — among the best people in every society — they are eager in their aspiration for better things from the hand of progress. They may be a trifle impulsive and thoughtless in opinion, but what workers they will be in the cause of true Christianity when their eyes are opened that they may see and their ears quickened

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that they may hear. On Armageddon or any other plain, as battling is always mischievous and never productive of good, we only need to turn away from error and abandon its precincts and it will die of inanition.

INDIVIDUALITY

That man is fearfully and wonderfully made, that he occupies two spheres, a physical and a mental sphere, each with its infinite variety of gradations, amplified the Greek wisdom that frequently declared and engraved over the doors of all its colleges this injunction, "Man, know thyself."

The ancients discovered twelve points that they called life centers in the human body, but consideration of a less number will prove adequate for purposes of our present study.

The middle brain is a cold, calculating, imperious organ, the intelligence center.

The solar plexus is the most vital of many nerve centers. The heart is the center of pulsation. The lungs are the crematory of the body eliminating needless gases and absorbing vitality from the atmosphere.

The digestive system is the nourishing center and converts food into tissue building corpuscles.

The umbilicus is the nourishment absorbing center before birth and continues the impulse absorbent center through life.

The reproductive system is the center in which life originates and continues a vitalizing center till the latest breath.

Every organ is indispensable to life; no one of them is impure except in perverted thought or polluted by some form of gluttony. Each should be regarded and appreciated as a precious gift from the bounteous hand of infinite wisdom.

A genius is the fortunate recipient or the unfortunate victim of a condition resulting from an unbalanced brain. Some convolution of the brain or faculty of the mind is abnormally developed always at the expense of other faculties cheated of their own.

Investigation makes the discovery that every person possesses some faculty at least faintly developed, that may entail the title "specialist." The physiologists fail to explain, the phrenologists do not agree and to make the sweeping declaration that no person is strictly sane is not a satisfactory solution of the problem.

We only know that the condition exists. Some persons are what we call mathematical prodigies; they can solve difficult problems in flash of thought; and thus it is along all branches of science and all lines of human activity. Progress is forever indebted to specialty; some organ or faculty is abnormally developed, a receiving station for messages transmitted from the realm of universal knowledge by wireless intuition.

The most masterful military genius of modern

centuries, if not of all time, could support his little family in comfort by chopping wood and hauling it to market for use as fuel by more versatile people, or by breaking bark in a tan yard at a stated wage per cord, and was regarded by his neighbors and friends as an honest man of very ordinary ability; and when, late in life, he was entrusted with the management of vast interests, his unquestioned integrity did not avail, for the treasury was empty, to his own surprise and to the equal surprise of other people who were interested.

He did not possess any ability for military organization or detail, nor any conception of economy of resource, but swung his saber right and left, regardless of who fell — friend or foe — only so his point be gained.

He could assume command of a vast army that other genius had skillfully organized and a generous government had lavishly equipped, could sit in his saddle under the protecting shade of a tree, chat with friends, nonchalantly smoking a cigar, his keen eye scanning the vast field, could unerringly direct his forces in attack or defense and win victories astounding the world.

We do not know now, but we shall have broader comprehension of the psychic forces in the great kingdom about us as we advance in the coming unfoldment of the universe once lost, now re-discovered, and in the great restoration already here.

“The wind bloweth where it listeth,” the

storms beat and waves lash the shore, volcanos pour forth showers of lava, and avalanches sweep the mountain side. Our hands are stayed; we can only wait while we admire the grandeur of Nature in her visible forms.

But she has given us a graver charge, has imposed upon us a more important responsibility. The individual is responsible for the thought entertained.

The community as an individual qualifies and molds the mental atmosphere that pervades its precincts to degrade or to uplift.

If we tolerate and indulge king alcohol as a companion, we must endure his impudent familiarity, for he is a disturber and like every evil rejoices in contest and gains strength in strife. The only remedy is in a teaching of discipline prompted by self-preservation.

That live wire, that topic named the social evil, — in which, as appears, only girls go wrong, — that subject, readily approached and freely discussed, copiously advertised and suggested from the pulpit and through other intrusive, officious methods, is first scorned and frowned upon by Dame Gossip, then followed by hint and squint, and finally embraced with smirk and smile. That evil, too, thrives and grows in the agitation and advertisement of strife.

It shall be mitigated by wisely establishing a single standard for all alike, by the unfoldment of righteousness, by cultivation of the Christ spirit

implanted in every breast, by recognition of the Christ, smiling sentinel at the head of the cardinal virtues, and by careful teaching of purity by example and precept, not for honor or reward, but for the solace, and the satisfaction, the peace, and poise that right thinking only can bring, leaving moral dogma to perish in its own hypocrisy.

An evil in sheep's clothing, a parasite of the ancient hierarchy that assails us to sow the wind and plant the whirlwind in the mental atmosphere of the community, is the professional evangelist,—the "Gypsy Smiths," the "Billy Sundays," and the howling charlatans and mountebanks. The only safety is in forbidding him and his tribe. He is attended by a carefully chosen coterie of helpers, blowers, and strikers, and a chorus of strong tuneful voices completes the aggregation.

Alas, that Music, spotless maiden, may be prostituted to such uses.

The business manager craftily requires that all Protestant churches be closed during the term of the engagement, and thus competition is forestalled and monopoly is assured in the business of "snatching brands from the eternal burning."

The show is splendidly advertised by newspapers that gladly fill their hungry columns with any sensational stuff to satisfy a morbid longing, and the community is hypnotized into expectancy.

The top liner and most of the actors of the company, with vulgar language and startling man-

ner, are vehement hell-howlers and boisterous exponents of a bottomless pit where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth and the very air of the place is filled with dread. The band contributes its aid again and again; melody excites sobbing emotion, and the mourners' bench is flooded with tears.

Opulent with gain, his coffers filled to repletion, the genius, the general, commanding victor on the plain, orders the tent folded to journey on to other fields and again verify the statement of the greatest showman on earth, that a large portion of all peoples must be humbugged or they could not rest on easy pillows.

After the menagerie has folded its tents and journeyed along, the mental miasm it has left behind floats away on the listless tide of the hours; the individuals, susceptible to magnetic influence, who had fallen at the altar, victims of fear, soon recover from the spell that held them much as they had outgrown mumps, measles and whooping cough in childhood; the influence of saner people again is manifest; the community as a unit turns on its swivel joint, and the endless chain of events moves on, making quiet history.

The considerable sum of wealth carried away may be little regretted in the thrift that honest industry brings, but would better have been expended for bread to feed the hungry and in other avenues of endeavor in Christian uplift and brotherhood.

III

CHRIST

Ambition to the point of aspiration to better conditions is commendable. Selfishness to the point of preservation and unfoldment of life is laudable. But these valuable gifts from the fountain head of Nature may be abused, and the perversion of them leads to all human oppression and bondage and causes man's inhumanity to man.

In our best endowment mankind is just, devout, true, noble. There has never been discovered in the remotest corners of the earth or in the islands of the seas, a tribe or race of men so fierce, so savage, that they were devoid of aspiration to better conditions, nor were they ungrateful to Nature for the gift of life they sought to preserve.

The word Christ is a common noun like faith, hope, charity; to appropriate the word Christ to the name of a man is willful perversion prompted by pernicious design. The word Christ represents a quality, the sweetest, tenderest, gentlest, human emotion, and stands at the head of all the cardinal virtues.

Love and sympathy are only elements in the Christ-spirit implanted in every human breast.

By seeking the absolute in truth we shall find unfoldment, and by seeing our good works, others shall find their faith also increased, that the things Jesus did we also can do, as he confidently assured us. That power came to him through struggle and sacrifice of comfort. It will not come to us while we recline, idly dreaming, on a bed of roses.

We must perpetually roll the stone away from the sepulchre of Hope, yet never hope for anything. We must seek as it smilingly invites us from its stand in that realm of universal supply. We must be prodigals constantly returning to our father's house. We shall find that house WITHIN us. If we seek we shall find; if we knock its portals will be freely opened to us.

IV

OCCULTISM

In our western world, including Europe and America, by invention and analysis aided by natural progress, since a period of a few thousand years ago we have grown into an environment, have reached another plane in the eternal unfoldment, have formed a thought atmosphere distinctly our own. In that olden time humanity was not divided into so many classes, human activities were less numerous, human needs less clamorous. But human longing is no less tense, human aspiration no less exacting, human nature no different under like conditions in all ages.

In each of those lesser worlds, or divisions, especially in central and western Asia, remote from Judaism and Paganism, remote from all worship and idolatry, in wildest regions where dash fierce cataracts against insensible rocks, where Nature trills her tenderest lullabies in gentlest tones, where twilight lets her softest curtain down and pins it with a star, in the long, long ago, there were found still existing little bands of men, brotherhoods who knew no selfishness, cherished no ambition, recognized no fact, sought no wisdom, knew

no knowledge as the world knows them; they are occultists who seek only understanding of fact,—the hidden secrets of Truth's commanding power. Before what height they attain, what purposes they accomplish, in view of what abundance they draw from the realm of universal plenty, what multitudes they feed from meager supply of loaves and fishes, mere intellect must stand in wild astonishment. They are the men, the truth seekers, to whom we so often allude and reverently call the ancient sages. These are the men we are proud to claim as our ancestors, these are the men to whom we are indebted for many helpful, restful, beautiful precepts and maxims that they succeeded in introducing into the Bible as it was unfolded down the ages.

That good old man, Doctor Theory, stands slightly bent, perhaps, in his sterilized raiment of spotless white, his finger toying with his spectacles, and gravely informs us that fully three hours' time is required to digest food and transform it into chyle, before it can afford any nourishment. Ask him,

“Doctor, how is it, then, that food taken immediately satisfies hunger?”

The doctor's apron is immediately removed, his gold bow glasses carefully adjusted and he peers through rows of books. Still no answer from him, we despatch a messenger to a master in any occult brotherhood. He arises from his seat on a projecting ledge of rock, a merry twinkle in his

eye, and the smile of certainty overspreads his face as he answers,

“ We have known through many thousands of years that prana is diffused the instant that food touches the teeth, and that its flow increases as it reaches the other organs of the mouth and continues into the stomach.” He explains that prana is what we call vitality. He further says, “ Digestion is only an incident, one of the many methods employed in the process of blood making, life cells and body building, in which faith is strongly involved.”

Thus we see that theories and systems are recorded in books and bibles written by hands, inflated by imagination, prompted by selfish ambition, promoted by men who, however honest they may be, are vainly pawing among husks and dry leaves, and thus are left in the mists and mazes of doubt and uncertainty, while the men without books peer into deepest recesses of Nature's mysteries, where they find the rich, golden kernels that lie hidden in the husks,—the gems of Truth that sparkle so cheerfully for those who seek.

So far as we know there has not been made any list of the number or names of the brotherhood located in the wildernesses of India, Afghanistan, Arabia or Persia. Their names include Adepts, Essenes, Vedantists, Yogis, and others. They occasionally send out a brother under the guise of a pilgrim, a teacher, or a lecturer, who returns, and thus they know all that is going on about

them, are cognizant of every human need. Dwelling in the realm of universal mind, their minds are individualized parts of the divine mind, as ours are, but they are extremely sensitive, expert in telepathy or wireless thought transference, and are very exclusive, refusing to look on the face of any person capable of entertaining thought of evil. Their shelter is caves in the rocks; their single garment is girt about the loins by a leathern girdle; their meat is mostly provided by the bounties of nature, including locusts and wild honey. Their rules are very rigorous and severe; their traditions are very precise and are handed down from master to neophyte, from *guru* to *chela*, from teacher to pupil. Probably most of their recruits are selected by the missionaries, as was the youth from Nazareth during the feast of the Passover at Jerusalem.

Very rarely does a number of people view a given subject in the same light; seldom do several people report the same startling occurrence in the same manner; no two persons can see with the same pair of eyes, which accounts for the fact that current or contemporaneous history cannot be successfully written; there are too many conflicting versions. But afterward, when many witnesses have passed away and memories are destroyed by the corroding tooth of time, some fluent writer takes up his facile pen and with inflated imagination and soaring ambition, possessing only a skeleton of story and gossip, fills full that

scanty groundwork with figments of his own imagery. The result then may not be history at all, but only HIS STORY. Different histories of the same events are often strangely contradictory.

The alleged historical portions of the New Testament furnish a striking illustration of this vitally important fact. That four histories or gospels were contemporaneously written by unlettered fishermen giving unusual, unnecessary, unimportant detail is a monstrosity of exaggeration that shall be explained in other chapters, alleged manuscripts and parchments to the contrary notwithstanding.

Every syllable of that history was written centuries after the participants and partisans whose every interest was involved in the statements they should make. Their history depicts the Master as being the victim of abjectest poverty, beneath the fowls of the air and beasts of the field, a meek, lowly man of many sorrows. As suits their better convenience, they make of him an absolute monarch, conferring upon themselves authority to invade the throne of high heaven and dictate its terms, saying, "Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven"; now every drop in oceans of tears and rivers of blood bears the impress of that authority cunningly devised to gratify their thirst for power, and much use have they made of it.

The opposing partisanship says that no authority was conferred; that it was only a neighbor-

hood unpleasantness in which the fruit of a certain tree in a garden was involved; that it was finally compromised by the shedding of innocent blood as a vicarious atonement to appease the anger of the big idol and he let up on part of his proposition. Both parties in the strife as stoutly, stubbornly and bitterly maintained their positions and fought their battles with equally bloodthirsty vengeance. Still nothing is settled. The name of Jesus remains the most thrilling name on tongue or pen, yet nothing is known of him except to puzzle the will and vex the great human intellect; the human wail and cry still disturb the thought atmosphere and die away along the barren, whitened rocks of doubt and uncertainty. If the silver lining of that dismal cloud could be discovered; if that problem absorbing all problems could be solved by the proper placement of Jesus; if a line could be discovered on the page of history where the name of the man Jesus could properly be written, it would still that awful storm raging fiercely against the senseless rock of immortality that has shipwrecked Hope in the froth and foam and driftwood of perplexity. We could then emerge from our gloom, and having cleared away the rubbish of false teaching we have accepted, we would be happy in our diligence to set our own house in order for the solution which only the morrow may bring; and we who grew faint while we worried shall gain strength while we work

and wait for the light that must come to us in the dawning.

There is some testimony concerning the great problem of much value still unpublished. It is found in the traditions of the Essene philosophers or occultists. These people had opportunity to observe every movement in the life of Jesus, and as they live only to seek and speak Truth, their statements are believed to be more reliable than any written history.

The Essene philosophers or occultists were a few select men reflecting the more stable, brighter side of Jewish society, a brotherhood formed long ago. Unlettered men, their minds — unsullied by selfish teaching — were virgin soil fit for Nature's tillage.

Behind a childlike simplicity there stood a measure of integrity unapproachable as the starry canopy above them; behind a cheerful countenance that frequently smiled there was a gravity, a finesse immovable as the rocks that sheltered them in their retirement. Before a face placid and serene a savage beast might skulk away. They were not organized; they had no leaders, no creeds, no dogmas,—a band of brothers each at liberty to assume the responsibilities he owed to himself.

They could look across a narrow sea and view the busy pyramid builders in Egypt. They were busily engaged in training the finer vibrations in Nature's uplift while the Babylonian astronomers

were surveying the heavens with powerful telescopes about twenty-nine thousand years ago.

When the ceaseless tide of time had traversed the vast reaches down to the comparatively recent period of only about six thousand years ago, there was proposed that *Beginning*, the *Creation* of a world, the Jewish world. The Essenes looked askance with grave apprehension. They well knew that organization is prompted by selfishness for purposes of monopoly; and while legitimate and proper in the activities of life, organization may become a power in the hand of tyranny and they refused to participate in the organizations of the Mosaic Dynasty.

They soon emigrated away from the peninsula at the foot of Sinai to a point farther south and established permanent headquarters in that rocky wilderness on the east coast of the Red Sea whence they sent teachers. Jesus and Johanan were two of the missionaries they sent out later, but who never returned to tell the measure of calamity that befell all Christendom. The youth who seeks instruction by the Essenes must come to them with spotless mind and prove by a trial year that he can keep his vows of absolute chastity and penniless poverty unsullied by thought of evil before he will be admitted as a novice or receive his first lesson of a six-year term.

The profoundest secrets that Nature has disclosed to the masters after years of tireless seeking are only disclosed to advanced pupils during

their senior year in muffled whisper in the silence of midnight's holy hour. The traditions of the Essene brotherhood say that Jesus was the son of Joseph, a carpenter, and Mary, his wife; that his infantile years were tame and uneventful, that he was liberally endowed with Nature's gifts and in his boyhood years was precocious, studious and thoughtful for everything that had life.

The parents, with the child, settled in Nazareth, which was an insignificant place except that it was noted for its abundance of good water, and was a camping place for caravans of merchandise trading from city to city in vast regions.

In that country of occultism there was, quite likely, one or more studious men attending each caravan resting there for days at a time and the boy Jesus spent much time in company with those men, exchanging thoughts of helpfulness.

When the youth was some months past twelve years old there was to be celebrated the feast of the Passover at Jerusalem, that all classes of Jews were expected to attend. In the motley multitudes tented there were people in all stages of poverty and want, yet all must have a pascal lamb at whatever cost or sacrifice. The extorter and the usurer were there in all their greed. The generous heart of the youth was pained to witness the oppression and he rudely tossed their tables about; the fixed look of his complacent eye and his inflexible poise forbade protest from the cowards as they slunk away.

The Essene masters, who occupied a section in the Temple, were well conversant with the history of the boy Jesus and were delighted with his questions and his answers, and his joy was full as they invited him to go with them to their center of greater unfoldment. After three days of earnest persuasion, parental consent was granted.

After his term of tutelage was fulfilled and he had become a master in the order, Jesus went forth among the other brotherhoods in the eastern countries where he spent many years, and their traditions give account of a fine young man who visited them a long time ago, teaching and learning in that unfoldment that always invites to loftier aspiration.

Meanwhile Johanan, nicknamed John the Baptist, had been laboring in the valley of the lower Jordan; he had been a thorn in the flesh of the powers that were because of the multitudes that listened to his teachings, which they sought to silence. They offered to furnish him with royal robes and begged him to declare himself the Messiah that should come. But he shunned their briberies and it was then that he announced, "There cometh one after me *mightier* than I."

There is now no longer any need for marvel; there is no mystery; nothing can be supernatural; Nature is supreme; no miracle was ever performed, nothing ever occurred, except in conformity with law. Jesus had higher unfoldment than we because of his greater devotion; the things

that he did we also can do if we have faith that we can do them; we can remove mountains of error. We have eyes to see, but we do not see; we have ears to hear, but we do not hear because we have allowed ourselves to be lured away from the center of being, and we can only retrace our steps by struggle. Back to Nature and her righteousness is our only slogan.

The world of thought and conscience was amazed, reason was astounded, thought bewildered and Nature offended by the announcement that a child had been born in defiance of law.

Down deep in his heart of hearts, judgment must forever withhold approval and intelligence forbids; but acceptance was made a condition precedent to salvation from eternal woe and the statement has been largely accepted as a teaching, a belief, a refuge from despair.

In the tumult of the conflict of Truth with error a human cry that refuses to be still has disturbed the mental atmosphere down troubled centuries.

There is not in existence, there cannot be found in all the hoary registers of time, one syllable of authentic history concerning the man Jesus, except the passing remark of Josephus, who wrote history about the middle of the first century, that "there lived in Palestine not many years ago a man of remarkable power and influence whose name was Jesus."

But the placement of Jesus has been known in universal knowledge, an open book in the archives

of Truth. The great problem in the religious activities of the world is readily solved, the human wail is hushed, and superstition, mystery and miracle fade away in the light of traditions that have been handed down by righteous men who lived at the time that Jesus lived and who encouraged him that he go forth out of the wilderness where his culture had been ripened, a savior from sorrow and sadness, a redeemer to bring the salvation of freedom from bondage and oppression.

Jesus was our elder brother, born of natural parentage, nourished like other men. There was nothing supernatural or unusual about him, except that he was learned in the law and had listened to the secrets that Nature proclaimed in her marvelous silence. A masterful disciple of Love, an able advocate of Truth, he was the wisest among many ancient sages.

He observed the creatures unfortunate through ignorance in the underworld of society, yet he did not condemn any person or thing except the hypocrisy that suffered his withering rebuke. He did not ordain any punishment. He did not prescribe any penance atonement. He did not seek any following; rather he sought to direct attention to the truth he taught.

Jesus did not formulate any creed but charity; he did not utter any dogma except that "*Ye love one another.*" His simple, childlike teaching permeated the hearts of his hearers and brought them enduring upliftment.

MARTIN LUTHER

That is a low, mean, contemptible hypocrisy of a system that would find fault or complain of hungry cannibals because they satisfy a craving hunger by devouring a few neat, tempting, appetizing missionaries when that same system is founded upon methods to make cannibalism appear a sanctity, a holiness.

A great Missionary left his happy home among the ravishing beauties of nature and came out of the wilderness to teach the helpless individuals that constituted the multitudes a measure of freedom from the bondage, the oppression, the tyranny inflicted upon them. Because the people listened to words of cheer, the jealous hand of the system murdered the Missionary. Then they ingeniously misconstrued his teachings to their own advantage and by the labor of tedious years they wove around those spiritual teachings a neat work of misrepresentation to give to themselves the coveted authority; then they misappropriated his name and in that "Holy Name" they command us to fall down in debasing idolatry of materialism, to eat of his body and drink of his blood.

Martin Luther stands charged by his enemies with having created disturbance, generating disorder, and inciting to rebellion. But Martin Luther was gentle in method and sincere and candid in his speech. No humble monk or faithful priest that bowed at its shrine or worshipped before its altar was ever more loyal or devoted than Martin Luther to the church he loved so well. He only begged in the interest of the church that certain errors of men be corrected and that some practices be abandoned. In doing this, however, he gave tongue to a great human cry and made vocal a low moan that had floated down the centuries, borne on the troubled bosoms of rivers running red with human gore. The pleadings of Martin Luther were wasted, but Progress heard and answered.

VI

HEALING

The mountain of error that rears its forbidding shape to obstruct the way of progress is the accepted belief that humanity is lumped together in one great mass and can only be moved as one integral whole.

The philosophers of all Bible time, in which our own age and time is no exception, have all been lured into the mischievous impeachment.

Every book of systematic argument, whether written by a Kant, a Haeckel, a Hume, a Milton or a Dante, and every merely intellectual magazine article, may be depended upon to minimize and slur individuality and give hint of power in the mass. The foundation on which the religious fabric rests and on which it depends for sustenance is an accusation, a charge of universal depravity. But the mechanics who built that fabric were wondrously wise. They knew that the ocean, the shore, the mountain and everything that exists upon the earth is composed of minute particles, each vibrating in his own individual orbit, and they did not make their assault upon the great mass, but cunningly, craftily endowed

each individual with a "soul," whatever that may be, and enjoined upon the individual man the need to spend his life in an effort to save his soul from some mysterious wrath that they invented and alleged was to come, and thus they riveted the shackles of individual bondage and made us afraid.

But reason has come to the rescue of the individual and he has become assertive; he has discovered that he must work out his own salvation from error; he must seek his own deliverance from bondage. The unrest prevalent in our time is only the adjustment to conditions that progress has wrought. Radical and conservative are tolerant each of the other's opinion. Religion has lost its power of absolute control. Whether the soul is a physical entity, trailing like a dog star, or whether it is an ethereal ghost to fright spirit, the discoverers or inventors, managers of corporations extend to us no word of information, but leave us to grope in doubt or make our own discoveries as best we can.

The soul, wherever it is kept concealed, in a cage or softly wrapped in a bandbox awaiting the great day of vengeance, is another figment of the imagination, a wheel within the machine, another hypnotic crystal upon which the gaze must be constantly fixed to mystify and bewilder thought and thus divert attention from the great Christian work of human upliftment, leaving the religious organization in the absolute control of the multi-

tude, the individual helpless against the combination.

But let us leave the uncanny scene and take a momentary glance back to Nature and her methods. So simple a thing as water is found to exist in many forms. In its lowest form water is crystals; infused with energy, it melts into water, again it may become vapor and so on up the scale. Analogously, everything in being's endless chain exists in gradations, and man, the divinest of them all, exists in infinite variety of growth.

Functioning on the lowest or instinctive plane, man is an animal, receptive, excitable, emotional — the plane where sensation raves, and all the passions rage, and reason is yet unborn — the only plane on which religion presents its crafty visage to fester in the emotions, chill the nerves, and fill the heart with deadly fear, itself a soulless, graceless tyrant.

Leading many advances, overcoming numerous obstacles, cheerful through struggle, mankind shades up to the next higher grade of being, which is the intellectual plane, where ambition toils, where selfishness envies, where reason wakes and works, intensifying the many activities; where all the sciences smile their presence, inviting to investigation and usefulness; where genius peers in advance and invention utilizes unseen forces. The last and highest plane possible for mankind to occupy is the spiritual plane.

That the soul is condemned to waste eternal

days in woe and pain, and must await the last great day of wrath when vengeance shall come as a whirlwind, is another figment of inflated imagination, another spoke in the wheel of power, another hypnotic crystal upon which the gaze must constantly be fixed to mystify and bewilder thought, thus to divert attention from the great need of Christian upliftment.

A few philosophers seek out some brain defective through prenatal lapse or injured by accident, and within the recesses of their library knead and mold that injured member in their thought until they imagine they hear intonations muttered by a ghost of a soul while receiving reward for the conduct of another, its keeper when occupying a tenement of clay.

These, to a man, are orthodox in the teachings they early received, and with partisan spirit involuntarily seek to bolster up that tottering frame.

Some members of the Society for Psychic Research circle about an alleged "medium" which is only a denatured negative remnant of humanity, entranced and unconscious of environment, every nerve sensitive to slightest influence.

Responsive to mesmeric touch in the envenomed atmosphere, with their ears to the ground, these men imagine they hear the soft, gum-shoe tread of human souls on some far-away mythical shore, and their emotions are aroused to wildest dreaming, excited in their narrow, infected thought.

Emotion is an inviting element in the broad domain of unseen, psychic forces; it is the element into which man dimly shades in his ascent above the animal, where the heart becomes susceptible to impressions and vulnerable to attack, — the culture field where error plants his fatal germ and impulse may grow with its growth, merging with baser forces down to lower planes of debasement.

Sentimentality, intensified by magnetism, vibrates on the atmosphere and vitalizes latent forces,— the hysteria of religious frenzy, brain storm, paranoia, the microbe of hypnotism, the poison of spiritualism — all quickened by electrical force — and lastly mediumship, usually short lived, ending in extremis. But let us return to Nature in her holier mood for more grateful lessons.

Scientific investigators, physiologists and physicians have discovered that not one particle of human flesh, blood, bone, tooth or nail that was here one short year ago is anywhere upon the earth today; it has all gone back to the soil whence it came or down the rivers, the great sewers of the world. And the fruits, meats, and vegetables that were here a year ago or produced in the interval of time now stalk abroad erect upon two feet in human form.

This wonderful transformation is in constant process of fulfillment obedient to a law in Nature's masterful economy almost incomprehensible to

finite vision; yet Nature has no secrets that she will not cheerfully divulge to the honest, earnest seeker after her wisdom, important for him to know.

Life, whence or whenever that mystery came, is the vital impulse of all being. As is intimated in other pages of this volume, the human body, flesh, blood, bone and brain matter, is composed of cells, little live, intelligent activities, so minute that myriads of them live in the space of a mustard seed and tens of thousands may dance on the point of a cambric needle with space to spare. Their individuality is not in the least assertive, and they are subservient to slightest breath of influence. They are under command of the subconscious mind of the person, itself a timid thing that shrinks and cowers, now buoyant with hope, now blanched with fear; but it is sole commander of the vast army and its organization is perfect.

The cells are divided in regiments, battalions, companies, and squads, watchmen, and sentinels, each assigned to the performance of some specific duty. Millions of the cells perish during each second of time, and are pushed or carried away to channels for elimination; and during the same time an equal number of cells emerges from minute blood vessels everywhere abundant.

All during waking time our auricular, optic, and other nerves of the five senses are observant of occurrences in the world about us. The discoveries of the nerves are quickly communicated

to the perceptive brain, the seat of conscious mind.

The pineal gland, attached to a ventricle of that brain, is a nerve center, a relay station that flashes its messages to the lower brain, which is the seat of the subconscious mind, the timid, sensitive, sleepless commander of the cell army busily building, restoring, and repairing the human body.

If calamity impends or storm hovers, the general retires from the field in discouragement, the workers faint in sympathy, and the face of the person becomes pallid with its terror. Especially if typhoid threatens the cells that sustain the intestinal lining they retire and leave the surface liable to attack by the dreaded bacillus, or if pneumonia is indicated the lung cells retreat and leave an unprotected field for the dangerous germ to invade. The exercise of will power is the best preventative.

But the fear of punishment is the ancient compulsion to despair and dogma; commandment is a terror wielded by the strong, practiced arm of theological tyranny.

In all ages of the world as far back as Legend lends his glass to peer into the darkness, and among all tribes of men anywhere discovered, have been found men who pretend to heal disease without the use of instrument or medicine, and all of the systems have been, in a measure, successful.

Numerous idolatries or religions have been built

up around the altar fires of healing, some of them degraded to lowest socialism and sacrifice of human life.

The operators of each system, from the voodoo in Congo or Guiana, with his weird incantations, to the starched and polished modern manipulator bowing low in his richly furnished apartments, have all offered some sort of an explanation of the method or law under which success is attained. No two of the explanations agree, and no one of them is logical or true.

One word of truth that could make any system of healing plain would explain all systems, but that word has not been uttered unless in the great enlightenment along Jordan's troubled shores. Possibly in our seeking we may discover that gem.

The operator in a well-known cult, omitting incantations, sends up a prayer or supplication to Deity and then smilingly assures the patient that God is healing the disease himself denied a moment before, but he carefully deposits the two dollars per in his own sanctimonious pocket.

It is foreign to professional practice that if God is doing the work he should employ some officious little Moses to dictate the method and appropriate the fee.

Let it be carefully remembered that thought influence sent out reaches its destination immediately, indifferent to distance, solid wall, or any obstacle.

When a patient is very low, taking no notice

of surroundings, the intellectual or sense consciousness entirely dormant, the subconscious mind still alert, though feebly keeping up pulsation and other functions of the physical body, it reaches the extreme of timidity and is sensitive to the slightest touch of thought that vibrates; hence the condition in the mental atmosphere of the neighborhood is of vital importance in deciding the wavering balance. Every friend who is discouraged and expresses fear exercises an unfortunate influence.

If the attending physician says, "It is too late: nothing more can be done," the sooner that doubter withdraws his presence the better, for it leaves the nurses and family free to assert their faith by restoring normal conditions. Stop tip-toeing, cease whispering, walk about the rooms humming familiar tunes unalarmed, and wind up the weights of the old family clock, that it "tick tock" in the manner familiar in childhood's joyous period.

The closer friends are grouped, no matter where,—if far out in the garden; the eyes of one of them suddenly flash and his face brightens as he repeats the adage, "While there is life there is hope"; and suggest that they call the healer living over on another street. They all cheerfully agree. The message is flashed and is caught by the supersensitive mind of the sufferer. A few cells take courage and resume effort, faith awakens, the work of healing has commenced. The

healer is seen approaching; more hope is inspired. He is a man of strong faith and deep concentrated thought. He denies disease, he stoutly asserts health.

Following closely the example set by the Healer from Nazareth, he takes the patient "by the hand" and commands the activity of health. All are encouraged, faith is restored. Careful nursing with judicious nourishing are all that will be further required, and complete recovery is assured, provided that no vital organ has been impaired by disease.

Recovery is most likely if your faith be sufficient unto you. The civilized mother prays to her idol for the recovery of her child and healing often follows.

The heathen mother prays to her deity with equal fervor for the recovery of her child, and recovery often occurs.

"What things soever you desire, when ye pray believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them." (Mark xi:24.)

A modern cult known by the lofty name of Christian Science has as its basic statement, "There is no evil." Yet it as stubbornly declares infallibility of the Bible with its history including the psychic genesis of the man Jesus. But in the light of any reason or common horse sense, if there exists no evil, why came He to shed His blood, a vicarious atonement for a monster evil,—no less than an act of disobedience to authority by

a woman, to which she was lured by a greater evil and which was an infectious disease which she communicated to the man in the case and to her numerous offspring, if we may believe the shady fable. Through their oblations and chastened culture Christian Science people are prosperous, excellent neighbors, splendid members of society, but the system is fatal to progress. No member ever intimates an intuition vibrated from the realm of universal wisdom or unfolded from his own mentality. He constantly refers to the edicts of their goddess, their leader, their "Mother," or to a yeasty book she compiled, its paragraphs corroborated by extracts from the great Jewish fable.

When we attend church in this imbecile age we hear beautiful precepts and aphorisms mumbled from the pulpit like a child stringing her beads, as if they were mere platitudes, precious gems of wisdom obscured in the muck heap of idolatrous worship or perverted into juvenile tales instead of being explained in wise diction. But when Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy shouted, "Peace on earth, good will to men," as a living gospel and declared that she would teach it and preach it as a saving grace, she became a pioneer paving the way for the acceptance of Truth, the woman most useful to humanity ever named on the voluminous pages of history.

The problem that has vexed the mind of healers since the infancy of the race, that all of them

has striven to solve, remains still unsolved on human tongue. It is the secret of the psychic power or influence that Nature employs in her healing methods.

The answer was dimly shadowed forth in a remark made by the greatest of philosophers on the plains of Samaria. He said to the leper, "Thy *faith* hath made thee whole."

Faith then is the prompting power in Nature's wondrous hand. But faith in what? To explain in parlance that all may understand, let us recall the case of that doctor of long practice in the by-gone century, whose mind was not sod bound in medical theory, but who viewed men and women on the broad scope of being.

He made the important discovery that there existed very little disease, and that it was not the body that needed medication, but it was the mind required restoration of confidence that had been destroyed by some fear, possibly inherited from ancestry that set the teeth of posterity on edge, and that aches and pains existed largely in imagination; hence anything that would purge the imagination would eliminate the error, and he proceeded to mold a quantity of pills with pure home made bread the only ingredient. Then, with uplifted finger, confidence beaming in his countenance, with firm tones he would assure his patients that if they took the medicine faithfully they would be healed.

His practice was eminently successful, and the

close of his well rounded life left a lamenting void, but his thought is germinating in the awakening atmosphere.

In the wondrous economy it matters little by what method the suggestion is made, whether with drugs, bread pills, the laying on of hands, or forceful assertion; the only need is that it reach the psychic consciousness and quicken faith. The body building and repairing cells will respond more cheerfully in their work of restoration.

The fame of Jesus always preceded his coming; the great need of the leper increased his faith when in the actual presence of the healer, and the work was begun.

But all of this is only a hint, an intimation of the great Truth. An actual demonstration was made, an illustration was given, whose example the world may emulate when our eyes are uncovered that we may see, and our ears quickened that we may hear; it will accomplish more for the healing of the nations than all medical systems combined. It was the healing of a damsel, the daughter of Jarius who was keeper of the synagogue, and is recorded in the later verses of Mark, Chapter V.

First, the Healer fortified the courage of the disheartened father with the injunction, "Be not afraid, only *believe*."

Well knowing the adverse influence of doubt and doubters, he suffered no man to follow him

save Peter and James and John, the brother of James, who were his pupils, already men of very strong faith. When he was come to the house he found a tumult of doubters who laughed him to scorn, and you will carefully observe that his first act was to "put them all out."

The parents had manifested their faith by an appeal for aid and the Healer called them and they who were with him and entered the place where the damsel was lying.

Then he took her by the hand, and uttered his firm command that she arise. In the stupor of her perceptive or intellectual brain her unresting subconscious mind was doubly active and receptive. Faith entered there, the body building cells were encouraged and sprang to their task with renewed energy, and the damsel was able to arise.

Of vast importance is recognition of the fact that there is no disease in the economy of Nature; what we call disease is penalty for violation of her law.

Discovery of the fact was made and a great semi-Christian cult grew up around the theory and the healing of disease that it denied. That organization has extended a world of helpfulness on the mental plane of life, and shall yet live and thrive for a time, notwithstanding some contradicting visions.

Entire confidence in a startling proposition is often a plant of tardy growth, while conditions

must be met when they present their frowning front.

Deaths occur daily, indifferent to conditions, refusing to accept treatment that would mitigate discomfort and aid Nature in her effort to complete recovery.

Belief in disease was inculcated and in the interval since long ago has taken deep root in mental soil.

Pains rack and fevers toss on unrestful couch, irritated by dread and imagination in the darksome gloom.

So long and so widely have we been driven from the center of being by multiform errors fostered by human ambition, that we cannot hope to retrace the great distance in brief strides of time.

Theories of fact were planted when time began his flight, but must toil and wait for recognition in our bewildered consciousness. There is a remedy in the great resuscitation already begun and we may discover that remedy in a chapter to follow.

As there is no disease in the Absolute, any system of medication must be defective. Medical practice shall become obsolete, a lost art, a thing of the past. But not yet. Be not alarmed, dear doctor, you will be required to throw your "pill bags" across the saddle as of yore, to mount and put spurs to old Dobbin that you may attend the sick needs of children's children begotten by generations of people not yet born.

VII

MASONRY

Probably it was about fifteen thousand years ago that Freemasonry grew out of the profoundest secrets of the Essene brotherhood, and the Master Masons of today proudly claim that Jesus was a member of their order; but Jesus was more than a member. Jesus was one of the fathers in Freemasonry; and that is why, lest the secret of those eighteen years be disclosed, the appearance of a Mason in a Catholic Church would cause consternation like the stampede in a herd of wild steers when a red blanket is flaunted before them.

The demands of commerce compel trading between Catholics and Masons, but fraternizing is a plant of tender growth little encouraged.

There is little cause for doubt that King David, King Solomon, and all of the kings, seers and prophets of those far away ages were brothers in the great Masonic Fraternity.

The babe that was born in Bethlehem of Judea and self-cultured at Nazareth, matured in that wondrous wilderness, amid rippling rills, echoing rocks and whispering trees, and was invited into

and urged to join that most advanced, ancient, occult brotherhood in which he became one of the fathers and foremost teachers, and out of which Masonry had grown and to which it was indebted for its finest vibrations and profound wisdom, secrets that had made Masonry what it was then and what it remains to this day, the richest inheritance from ancient lore.

Could the common mind arouse from the torpor into which it has been led by continued false teaching to discern what Masonry well knows down deep in its secret recesses,—that Jesus did not waste those precious eighteen years of his unfoldment shoving a jack plane in a carpenter shop,—the deceit, the hypocrisy, the political vastness, the downright falsehood of all New Testament history would be discovered and the “Church,” with its self-conferred authority and abominable pretense of infallibility, would topple so that not one stone would be left upon another in the re-discovered empire of Truth; nor have we long to wait.

VIII

HYPNOTISM

Every man must be his own agent, architect and builder. Every man must eat, must partake of food if he would be nourished, or he must perish from the earth forever. Every man must himself lift the hammer to the anvil if he would develop physical strength or he will remain weak, possessing little power.

Every man must seek in the great realm for facts on which to base his own conclusions if he would be safe, must claim his own individuality, must assume his own responsibility, must assert his own manliness if he would be strong; but if he accepts opinions or beliefs handed down ready made he must become a mere machine, doing other bidding, instead of a factor working in his own shop for the promotion of his own interests. Those beliefs are sure to be found, by interest seeking in other fields, certain to be prompted by ambition or tinctured with selfishness. He should never forget the helpfulness of mutual exchange, yet never indulge in harangue or argument,—friendly with all, intimate rarely. He will discover quite easily in his search that mind is plastic and

receptive which, like all his endowments, may be a deadly pitfall or a blessing of much value.

As the unseen forces in the physical world are more numerous and important than the forces that we are able to trace, so equally there are forces in the unseen mental realm more frequently met and more important.

Hypnotism is described in the books as being akin to somnambulism, a sort of sleep superinduced by some influence that operates upon certain nerve functions as a soporific, while it quickens certain other nerves to greater activities, which seems vague and unsatisfactory, as it does not reach anywhere in particular. May not paranoia be a disturbance of nerve functions, and if so we should be taught where hypnotism ends and insanity begins as they differ only in form and extent?

So far as we have been taught, hypnotism is an activity and an abrupt encroachment upon the physical plane of life, the nervous system. If hypnotism ended there it would be well, but we shall not forget the intimate relationship of the physical with prana or vital force, imitative mind, intellectual mind, spiritual mind, and the thousand integral parts that make up that grand unity that we call life; every delicate faculty along each mental plane susceptible and liable to attack and being put to sleep by an intruding magnetic influence.

It was a kindly endowment that Nature be-

stowed: that mind was made receptive; thus, through the helpful influence of psychology we are able to avail ourselves of benefits that the sciences may bring and gain strength through the helpfulness that progress lends to unfoldment in righteousness and upliftment in the realm of spiritual mind.

Psychology and hypnotism both operate upon mind, but are opposite in purposes and results. Hypnotism is dogmatic and seeks control; it blandly offers its services in every avenue of life and in every human activity.

The sly, insidious methods of hypnotism cannot be comprehended nor can they be enumerated. In myriads of instances hypnotism inspires fear to hurry its victims, or it may excite any passion to lure and cajole. Magnetism often enters in as an element, but suggestion is never silent.

But the last word, the final decree, the method in which hypnotism never fails is in crystal gazing. The method of crystal gazing is well known and often practiced. Some bright object, frequently a glass ball, is placed at considerable elevation before the subject, and he is requested to gaze intently, closing his ears to all intruding sounds, forbidding any thought to enter. The poisonous mental influence sent out by the operator finds the vacant place as the intellectual brain nerve becomes paralyzed, and the subject becomes a victim. Handed immature, sour fruit and told that it is figs, he will eat ravenously;

accused of eating sour apples, he will stoutly maintain he had only eaten figs. He is under absolute control. Such is the power of crystal gazing. There remains, however, this unfailing assurance: no measure of hypnotism in any of its forces can ever enter the minds that forbid it. We may remain our own creators if we will.

Christianity smilingly assures us that man is a soul, constructive, masterful, the highest conception of the divinity within him; that he is vested with full control of that tenement of flesh that he calls his body; and that if he builds wisely today he shall best be prepared for what the morrow may bring to him.

Religion austere confronts man with the accusation that he is a worm or, at best, an animal, condemned to grovel through a vale of tears to a doom fated from the foundations of the world; that man has a soul that he must spend the energies of life in the hope of saving before a throne of anger. At some elevated distant point a crystal has been fixed upon which we have been compelled to gaze for the space of six thousand years. They have worked their hypnotic crystal gazing game to a frazzle, feeding us with sour apples and fruit decayed from that ancient garden, and told us that it was figs we were eating. But we lost our heritage; we were lured away from house and home that have gone to rack and ruin. The meal has grown moldy in the bins; our kneading troughs are invaded by frogs piled up in heaps;

a plague of vile insects has entered through broken window panes; germs of disease are bred in the fungus of neglected gardens, while fear, anger, lust, and the snakes of all the baser passions hiss in the nettle weeds that have overgrown the untilled fields.

Every infant whose little craft is launched, without its seeking, on the voyage of life is greeted with accusations and continued suggestions of sin until the boy, and then the man, accepts beliefs machine-made, and confesses crimes he never committed, nor does it end here. The precedent is followed in criminal courts throughout Christendom. Records in the courts of all nations give proof of rare instances in which innocent men have walked to the gallows with a plea of guilt upon their lips, a condition brought about by a hypnotic method as common as it is mischievous and unholy. Suppose the commission of a crime startles a peaceful community; a shadow has fallen, all eyes are opened, all ears are strained and grieved. Through an unfortunate coincidence the finger of suspicion is pointed toward an innocent man. He is arrested as a "suspect," and manacled; he is hurried off to prison and placed in a dismal den of terrors, its walls hung with pictures of criminals enduring torments of punishment, weeping and wailing in agony — the place is called a sweat box — and then, unprotected, friendless and alone, he is attacked by heartless, soulless, trained, artful bulldozers who

ply him with innumerable questions in direct examination and in cross examination (his guilt suggested every minute), and is often assured that his only hope for relief is in confession of guilt. His brain nerves become paralyzed; he is bewildered, beside himself. Before the sun has set below the western horizon many times, the sun of that man's sense consciousness has set, never to rise again. Unaided, and in his stupor, he gladly avails himself of the one avenue of escape from present horror; he confesses, and is hanged by the neck until he is dead. An orthodox community folds its hands in contentment that an eye has been plucked for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, and the commandment that says, "Thou shalt not kill" has been again justified, but that self-righteous community was the latest murderer because all punishment is erroneous in its foundation thought. But doubly it is a murder in this instance because Truth at last accomplishes her purpose, indisputable events occurring much later prove that the man who was executed knew nothing of the crime until accused; he was the victim of a hypnotic system, world-wide, long continued.

But education is a sure panacea, an unailing remedy; it cannot fail to induce every soul to put its house in order today to receive what the morrow will bring.

A teaching of love shall eliminate the divorce evil, a teaching of purity for righteousness' sake will mitigate every evil.

IX

MIND

Mind is an instrument of myriad strings each vibrated by slightest touch. There is infinite variety in the realm of mind, yet in its last analysis only two forces are found. One force is destructive; the other force is constructive. One force operating on the mental plane is demonstrative, dogmatic, imperious, exacting, ambitious and selfish, but ultimately becomes worn and enfeebled and perishes in abrasion with time. The other force is enduring, silent, meek, mild, gentle, unseen, unwearied with time, and ultimately brings joy, peace, contentment, and uplifts to higher unfoldment in spiritual growth.

The frost of religion's commands chills and blights the budding flower of Christian love, and is ever ready to rear a cross on which to crucify and silence its meek and lowly advocate.

X

WAR

Mysteriously there arises from some unknown source an imperceptible mist wide in extent, at times almost latent, again sweeping with almost universal, irresistible impulse. It is a psychic or mental force.

Men and women, educated, cultured and refined, in common with masses are caught in its contagion and carried along, indifferent to all the appeals of reason. It is called by the alluring name of Patriotism; "defense of home and fire-side" is the fallacious apology it makes for its intrusion; its substance is wrath and vengeance imagined in an idol; it had its origin coeval with the birth of our race and its right name is Savagery.

Europe is one of the geographical divisions of the earth, the planet we occupy in the boundless constellation of ethereal atmosphere. Europe is diversified with many powerful religions and is the throne of papacy which is the origin and parent of several hundred different sects or partisanships, each with a loud "Hurrah for our side, the other fellows are wrong."

Industry, energy, devotion and other divinities, native in the realm of mind, are always active, defiant of the limitations that clog the wheels and impede the way of progress.

Enterprising, industrious, thrifty, successful, European peoples are prominent among the powerful nations of all the earth; but also they have learned too well the art of war and the manufacture of implements of death and destruction.

Earnestly devout, they accepted beliefs they were taught, that sin and wickedness was their inheritance and that blood must be sacrificed on the altar of punishment through penance prescribed in vengeful wrath, and they bowed down prostrate before the idol.

Jealous, envious, selfish, ambitious for power, resentful of every affront, following closely precedents well established long ago on the plains of Moab, on Judean hills, and later on other fields of gory, religious, barbarism and cruelty, the great nations of Europe are now involved in deadly conflict covering wide fields. The unspeakable spectacle is presented of human bodies, men and women, piled high in one awful, red burial blent, pending surcease of strife for rude interment.

In consternation and fear, terrified by the havoc that is being wrought, popes and pontiffs, priests and preachers may supplicate their idol. The cannon's awful roar can never be silenced by prayer. They wrote in their book that he said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." Again they

wrote of him, "I will laugh at your calamity and I will mock when great fear cometh as a whirlwind."

These men have carved their own fate, are powerless as the gossamer wafted on the breeze, and in the common weal must wait the mandate.

This great war was caused by inharmonious thought disturbed in unrestful minds. As the cause is purely mental or psychic, the turmoil can best be quieted by more material or substantial influences. Hunger, want, and lack of supply would bring first aid in quieting the disturbance, but cannons and muskets will continue the work of devastation and ruin until physical causes intervene to round the awful cycle to conclusion and bring another epoch in human history.

Progress shall be found weaving at her looms and Truth still slowly grinding her mills in the advanced era that shall follow. Punishment that can never bring reform, but is ever disturbing, must fade in perspective; and, purified in the ordeal of fire, the folly of strife, contention and partizanship must waste away in the growing refinement and shall hasten the coming of "Peace on earth, good will to men," for which we long have hoped but still must work and wait.

XI

RESPONSIBILITY

That the "village smithy" vigorously wields his heavy hammer lends no strength to your arm. Did you notice those children coming out of the country school house as you drove by, and did you heed the lesson they taught you?

In their romping and shouting they were availing themselves of Nature's law; they were gaining strength by exercising strength; they had unconsciously read in Nature's book where it says, "To him that hath shall be given," and were following the helpful suggestion.

Never grow unmindful of this maxim, my child. Nature is ever ready, waiting to lend aid to whoever may seek. You made a great mistake when you heaved that alarming gasp and rushed to lift the baby when he fell; you robbed him of the opportunity to gain physical strength; ten thousand times more grievous still, you destroyed his faith in his power to rise, you robbed him of his most precious endowment, his own responsibility. You should have smiled your sweetest smile as you assured him that as he had not broken the floor, no harm was done.

Availing himself of Nature's law, he is now a vigorous boy seven or eight years old in spite of your folly. It is his right that he swings his arms and struts proudly on the smooth, uncrowded street. I shuddered yesterday as I saw him deprived of his own responsibility; his hand was imprisoned in your mistaken hand.

You would better get busy now in your thought for development of your own higher strength and your unassuming aid to the manifest need of your neighbor. Early in your work, making your most courteous bow, with many thanks because you have no use for it in your business, hand back, unused, to the preacher the curse he attempted to inflict upon you, telling him that if an apple were stolen, you did not steal it. Assure that misguided soul that the bread will yield richer nourishment if honestly earned in the sweat of his own brow.

You will be making splendid progress in your mission as you succeed in teaching people by your example to know that our difficulties are opportunities; that we gain strength in struggle; and that nothing else so nerves the will, chastens impulse, clarifies the longing of the human heart and prompts to full achievement of noble aspiration as responsibility bravely assumed in righteous purpose.

Knowing them by the fruits they produce, the methods in our common schools are bad, but those in the colleges are worse; the theories and meth-

ods there are impractical, misguided and inefficient.

So far as manifested, there is not talent within their walls to define education or to discover the purpose of education. The textbook, too much relied upon, loses its value and returns to vex and annoy. In the frenzy for a diploma that awakens inordinate pride and a measure of conceit requiring precious years to eradicate in rude abrasion with the stern activities of life, too much cramming and rushing to the point of shattering the nerves arouse cunning to make memoranda on white cuffs. Much good is accomplished, but not half the truth is told.

The thrifty farmer, as he shovels ears of corn out of his wagon bed into the crib, stored to supply future need, also winks the other eye and sagely remarks, "A 'medder' that has become sod-bound produces little juicy grass and should be ploughed under that the freshly turned up soil may 'sprout' new seed." We may glean lessons from his rugged experience.

The pupil who, ambitious to become a scholar, takes a postgraduate course, may with the aid of his teachers cram his mind, plant its soil full with seed scooped out of the textbooks until the soil becomes sod-bound, matted thick with ideas that more practical men have digged and mined out of the depths of the thought realm; no fresh seed may germinate in the encrusted soil of his mind. However urged, it is diffi-

and coulter to plow under that sod to allow a tender thought plant to send forth vigorous root into the freshened soil. Only the textbooks remain open. That young man may proudly stalk through life rehearsing statements of facts that braver men have discovered; or he is well fitted to become a "teacher" after the present model.

Of the corn that the industrious farmer, now gone to his rest, scoop-shoveled into the crib, one corner has become mouldy under a leak in the roof and much went in the wasting years, so that only a fraction remains of the estimated value.

The youth who proudly emerged from college halls, contented with his certificate of superior knowledge, meets a bewildering surprise in rude contact with the rocks and stumbling blocks in the pathway he has started to pursue. Of many of the facts superficially scooped from the crib of the textbooks, their kernels were wasted, and only husks were left which were wafted away like thistledowns on the breath of wasting memory; while much that remained was found to be yeasty and impractical. His diploma, the acme of his dreams and the joy of his hopeful mother, is not rated in market reports, nor recognized on "Change"; it will not buy him a mug of ale to soak his crust or a seat on the bleachers at a country dog fight. He must begin at the bottom, only an apprentice, to blow and strike over the anvil and toil his way up to a point where

he can plant a footstep on the plane of practical life.

A time went by in the long ago when no man that was yet born on the face of the earth could solve that problem, "What is the sum of two added to two?"

Now endless shelves are piled high with text-books, records of discoveries in the fields of science,—stupendous fact! Whence came those books of inconceivable value?

As the long train of ages glided by, Progress jogged her car noiselessly along the highway of time, and men were evolved who discovered that Nature has provided a realm of universal supply to unerringly meet every need, including the solution of every problem that can wisely tax the human mind.

In that faith those men, their arms bared to the elbows, provided with pick and shovel and sluicing pan, delved deeply in the mines of Truth, are delving yet, and must always delve. Text-books result from their labors.

The student may obtain some wisdom, he may win some preliminary knowledge, he may gain some strength by seeking in the meal that the mills have ground; but will never find understanding of the secrets that lie concealed in the mines of Truth by lapping the water that wastes through the sluiceway of her mines. He must learn to delve for his own nuggets.

To con important facts by rote may be of some

value; to copy rules onto memory's fading page may be of some avail, but it is a fatal blunder to regard the records of textbooks as a consummation, as an end to be attained, instead of only a means to an end.

The home is the proper theatre of education. The school is an auxiliary.

To train and discipline the mind and to induce habits of concentrated thought is the wise purpose of educational effort.

Ability to cheerfully meet and promptly solve the problems that confront our daily life is education.

XII

APOSTLES' CREED

The deepest laid plot of political machination and intrigue conceivable in the wide realm of thought emanated from mythological atmosphere back in ancient heathenish ages.

Inspired by hypnotic poison flashed from the glaring eyes of a serpent, prompted by a measure of monumental ambition and selfishness, those early politicians formulated a plan to accuse the whole human race of universal depravity, thus bringing the whole human family under their dominion and holding us down under their vassalage, which they did for a very extended period of time; but under the sway of immutable Law, the cycle of their power ended and its inventors became a shattered race scattered over all the desert wastes of the troubled earth suffering the stripes that retributive Justice is certain sooner or later to inflict.

But Ambition, ever selfish and alert, never slumbers long. Other political partisanship arise and other astounding plots and schemes are devised. The ablest band of politicians since that elder time was the priesthood that was resurrected subsequent to the wasting of the parent power germinating in the ashes their theories,

a parasite sprung from the fungus of decay.

An accomplishment of marvelous diplomacy, the revived Judaism formed a partnership with Roman power and sopped its crust in the very paganism that the parent Judaism had hated so bitterly down the ages, but the infant industry gained strength that was much needed.

With renewed assurance they artfully pretended resurrection from the grave of a body that had first been produced by a mystery that was offensive to the starry sky but vested them with authority.

Early in the fifth century when the organization was scarce a brief hundred years old, they framed and set up the Apostles' Creed as their motor power and the machine was ready to commence grinding in their busy mills.

With its hypnotic poison, pretense and hypocritic make believe that Apostles' Creed is more deadly, dangerous, and fatal to honest effort than all the swords and spears and bludgeons that devastated the Midians and drenched the sands of Moab with defenseless blood.

In advancing thought and growing honesty the Apostles' Creed is now outlawed by the higher criticism within the Church itself, those learned theologians unequivocally declaring that whoever further repeats the sentence "conceived of the holy ghost, born of the virgin Mary" wittingly commits a sin against the Truth, that holiest of holies.

XIII

PHILOSOPHY

The men of science proudly walk along the highway of life and talk learnedly of fact they have discovered in illimitable realm.

The plain, untaught children of Nature, the meek and lowly of the earth, "hovel dwellers," plodding along, observe the pebbles and the tiny waterfall and often discover gems of Truth possessing rarest value. The world has ever been indebted to these for its noblest and best. The philosophers occupy easy chairs in well filled libraries, and from Aristotle and Socrates and all the learned Grecians down to the present time, they have been speculating over phenomena.

The great Lamarck and his school took for discussion a very homely question; it concerned the rodent family and the canines. They readily agreed that the long hind legs of the rabbit lent him speed to escape being devoured by the fox; but whether the condition had always existed in equal balance or whether practice had lent greater speed to the fox and by the law of equalization the length of rabbits' hind legs had been increased that he might still escape, or if so, by what agency the need had been supplied, they were unable to

determine and their problem remained unsolved.

As the question came hobbling down the ages clamoring for light, the Darwinians came to the rescue and explained that the foxes had overtaken and devoured all the rabbits with shorter legs, which proved their cherished theory that only the fittest survive. This only added fuel to their fire and brought water to their pond. It was an explanation that failed to reach the root of the matter. The problem, hoary with age, is thrashed over by the bewildered philosophers of the twentieth century and nothing is settled nor ever will be settled by methods tinctured in ambition or scholasticism.

The offspring of fish placed in the darkness of subterranean waters are not provided with orbs of vision they do not need, and only scars remain of those holes that eyes did once inhabit, which proves the economy of Nature. Placed back in the waters penetrated by rays of light, later generations of those blinded fish are supplied with the eyes that have again become a need.

Survival of the rabbit family among its enemies and the supply of needed vision prove the loving watchfulness, the wisdom, and the power of Nature to supply every need of plant or animal. It is folly to search in printed libraries that men have made for wisdom that can only be found in the book of Nature, readily discovered by him who seeks to drink of its exhaustless fountains; and to him who would find shelter from the

storms of superstition and prejudice its doors shall be readily opened; he need only knock.

Mystery, miracle, supernaturalism and every effort to transcend her love, evade her law or supersede the wisdom of Nature must ripen a harvest of disappointment to worshipers at their shrine.

That illustrious philosopher, the great Plato, had exhausted vast libraries in many lands and his mind was so preoccupied to the exclusion of his own thought that he sometimes forgot his message and flatly contradicted vital statements he had made in others of the many books he had written. School men, bookworms, the modern philosophers also are scholars; their minds are crammed full, rammed down, and, worst of all, they are sealed over, thought proof, by the unction of beliefs formulated since the time of Plato, to the foundation of which that individual contributed important aid.

The philosophers have flailed and cudged their brains, constantly thrashing over that old straw about a thought emanating center. They conceived man to be only a little lever in the grand machine, complete in his physical functions like the ox, only an animal occupying a higher plane of activity. They saw that the office of the heart is to promote circulation, and they inferred that the brain, another physical organ, a perception center, was a complete thought ma-

chine. Manifestly these men rest their case, feeling secure in the delusion that brain matter is a thought producer. This is the bewildering mirage that lured our misguided feet astray; this the error that rendered confusion worse confounded; this is the bludgeon that superstition has used to convulse our race from the *beginning*; this is the Gibraltar on which we were shipwrecked, and from which our precious heritage was pirated; this is the old rut that first bound and clogged the wheels of progress. Stated briefly, brain is a physical organ; brain is matter, and all matter is the product of mind just as the clock on the mantel existed in mind before it became a product of mind. These splendid men, in all of their earnest, honest endeavor failed to discover that thought comes through a borrowed influence which we shall soon learn to call divinity.

These men blindly nodded in unison when a prominent member of their order recently declared from a great rostrum, "The origin of mind and matter is probably the same," thus placing a maimed and halting creature in advance of its Creator. As they went down stunned, in reaction from that monstrous error they shouted back, "Matter divides mind." Silence charitably veils the scene from view until they shall waken.

Our eyes unclouded, we have not far to seek for that priceless thing, the key of the universe,

and the star that shall unerringly guide earth's teeming millions struggling for light; it is expressed in three little words: *mind was first*.

Time, yet unborn, lay sweetly sleeping in embryo.

Mind was first in the field of universe, and was the primal impulse of being, the great first cause; the cause of all causes, Mind stood on the margin of that vast, limitless, unoccupied expanse in rapt contemplation of her creative plan.

When that plan was well matured, Mind lightly touched the signal bell of universe. Time, now fully fledged, mounted wing in his flight, never to end while eternity shall roll its ample rounds. Mind called Truth for a constant attendant, a sure, unerring guide and counsellor. Mind appointed Thought as master workman, commissioned for plan and detail of work. All matter, quickened, sprang into birth at call of Thought. Thought trod the skies in majesty. From her deft fingers were flung the great planets to swing obedient, eternal in their orbits, and Creation was begun.

The bell had tolled midnight's holy hour. Mind stood there alone, dominant, dignified, strong, tense, calm, serene, amid that awful stillness. At length a slight twinkle escaped her long, graceful lashes. It was a signal; a great veil was lifted; and behold! it was not only Mind, it was great Nature, magnificent in her limitless wisdom, soundless love, and boundless power, gentle

as the mist that decks the petals of the flowers, yet stern and irrevocable in her decree. Mind traversed and lived in all space where millions and billions of miles gave no token of limit. Everywhere the same law protected, dominated, exacted; everywhere purity, love, life, peace, and joy prevailed. Wisdom was eager to solve the problem of every need that should cry. All the sciences smiled their willingness to impart their secrets, and art freely lent her suggestions to all who should win the right by earnest seeking. The realm of universal supply holds abundant store for every hand that toils and toils. In that primal endowment the human brain was not overlooked; it was discovered to be quick, active, intelligent, a fit receptacle for all of the treasures that Intuition might bring, a sensitive receiving station for all messages from the empire of knowledge.

A reach from universal Mind touched that brain and became resident there. Thus man was linked with the Infinite and being the highest conception of the divine Mind, man himself is divine.

For purposes of growth and advancement, that reach from the Infinite which we conveniently call the mind of man, must need have been made receptive, and thus it was susceptible of being shaped in form and coloring, but it was also given the right of selection from the throng of impulses that swarm the mental atmosphere.

As water invariably courses down the incline,

so everything in Nature pursues the line of least resistance.

Sophistry approaches the mind with alluring smile and we follow the line of least resistance when we embrace the error rather than enter protest or wage unequal battle.

Once engaged, the individual defending against the organization, the rut grows deeper with use until the fabric of progress grows stronger to aid the victim back on the plane of reason and self-help.

Thus religion has succeeded untold religions. Each prostrated before an idol that ambition has chiselled and shaped while selfishness has polished and garlanded its surfaces. There have been about thirty religions, however, that bowed down in idolatrous worship, each before a god or deity carved on vitiated imagination, bereft of paternity, begotten in mystery, and swathed in hypocrisy.

Evil does not possess any power of attack or assault. Evil can only intrude its foul crest, and if unnoticed, evil must sink away out of sight like a speck of filth in a stagnant pool.

Opposition is the only meat upon which evil feeds, and like the oak in the storm, grows stronger and sends its roots wider and deeper in every contest. Deserted by its followers, evil cannot live a moment and scarcely has sufficient vitality to die. It is already dead and gone with its worshippers. If we abandon the vile idolatry we can

gather strength to our arm and power to our will by spreading the mantle of charity over the spot of earth its carcass polluted and sprinkling it with holy water of love.

There is hope of the philosophers that they shall develop from library students to become independent, untrammelled thinkers and find the lost trail back to the great realm of universal supply.

A gentleman widely credited with being the foremost philosopher of Europe made frequent allusions to intuition during a lecture delivered in America within the year. He also said: "The mind transcends the brain. Science can show ever new instances of mental facts which have no counterpart in the brain and of mental faculties whose operation is independent of the brain." This message to the world is well worth many times the cost of delivery, a trip across the ocean, and indicates that the speaker is approaching the line of Truth to which we all shall eventually attain. Hail! dawning Light. Long live Prof. Henri Bergson, Ph.D., in the Academy of France.

That man, Jesus of Nazareth, was the best advanced philosopher of all history; he had lived in the realm of Nature, had been nurtured by Nature; was the best exponent of Nature, and his growth in Nature made him the ablest advocate of the absolute in Truth that the world has ever known.

Back to Nature whence we were driven is our only avenue to relief. We shall do well that we emulate the example of Jesus and be guided by his teachings; so shall we ourselves become workers in the vineyard and breathe the purest atmosphere of freedom from all idolatry, all religion, all bondage, and by resuming our own personal responsibility, each to himself or herself, find pleasure in extending helpfulness to the needy, in speaking a kind word to the disconsolate, and thus, by promoting a spirit of brotherhood, we shall find ourselves revelling in an atmosphere of blissful Christianity.

What was the primal impulse? How or wherever the great world of Nature came, with its unlimited activities, is incomprehensible to finite vision. We cannot conclude that it grew by survival of the fittest because we do not know the source from which those activities emanated; nor can we infer that it was through evolution, because the substance which must first have been involved before it was evolved is unknown and unknowable.

All of the sciences combined as a concrete unit may be defined as wisdom. Happily wisdom is silent but it is an open book that all may read, and we gain the strength of wisdom by the pursuit of wisdom.

A being or a person to command is an impossibility, else whence came he?

That the number two combined with two, the

result is four, never came obedient to any decree. That fact is a principle that existed before time is; and the same principle is the vital impulse throughout being's endless chain. The ultimate is Truth.

Whether we shall live again beyond the starless night is not important to us now, or the yearning secret would have been disclosed. If we yield to the compulsion of fear we shall find ourselves in the despair of an aching void. If we are lured from our universe of love by fatuous promises, made by a selfish organization, of joys it is unable to deliver or control, we shall be deceived, plundered, betrayed, and left to perish on the desolate waste of disappointment. More fatal still, more grievous yet, we shall forfeit our inheritance of individual responsibility, our divinest dower, the ability to seek our own salvation from error.

With the certainty of assurance we may hope while waiting, and work diligently to make progress here and now in the pursuit of Truth and her helpful ways, which is the only method by which to prepare for a life of endless progress in the great beyond. By our own right thinking and righteous living we may retrace our steps, regain our lost inheritance and rediscover the universe of love and helpfulness from which we have been lured.

XIV

REFLECTIONS

All Nature is one vast realm of love. Without the helpfulness of love, every living thing is poor; indeed, must perish without the helpfulness of its vitalizing breath. Love is a substance, a commodity, that we cannot live without, and the best way to increase its store is by the bestowal of happy hearts. Helpfulness extended enables us to increase our ability to help ourselves. If helpfulness is extended without discretion, without judgment, without careful thought, it is unwise; it takes readily and vitiates the air of heaven. To accept help that is not actually needed is enervating, depleting, an offense to common manhood. The wretch who shouts aloud "that the world owes him a living," then comes to your door; you commit an offense if you give him a crumb or allow his finger to pollute your garbage cans. He should be plunged into a dungeon, without bread and without water. The deeper the darkness and the keener his hunger, the sooner his eyes will be opened to light of Truth, the beauties of Nature, and his ears will listen to the intonations of the dignity of labor and the strength that toil se-

cures. And when he is sufficiently enlightened that he begins to make the struggle, the help that is needed should be extended to him. If a man is suffering the pain of hunger or any other pain, it will not avail to his advantage that someone should preach to him about the evil deeds that have brought him to this; it were helpful charity that would supply his immediate needs, that would inspire his hopes and arouse his aspirations to struggle along the higher lines of life. Cripples and other mendicants should not be permitted to charge the atmosphere of harmony that should pervade the streets. Not that those people should be neglected for a single moment; they should be placed where their comforts could be promoted and their needs supplied in a manner that their self-respect would not be destroyed.

The Church of today is repeating the statement of Ivy, a philosopher who lived nearly two thousand years ago. Ivy tells us we can no longer endure our evils and the Church adds "that the world is growing wickeder and wickeder every day." It bases its statements only upon the fact that its own influence is waning, and the Church unwittingly makes another mistake when it repeats the added statement that the philosopher made, "Nor can we longer endure the remedy for our evils." To the philosopher who delights in the upliftment of all of the people, Men's Christian Associations, Women's Christian Associations, Big Brotherhood Clubs,

Big Sisterhood Clubs, Good Government Clubs and all the numerous charitable movements that are gracing the passing age, is very gratifying indeed. Christianity, once smothered on Calvary and since that time used as a cloak, is being welcomed back to her own. And by her encouraging smiles she is restoring the fact that worship of the cross and all forms of idolatry have vitiated and destroyed.

In our growth, in our evolution, we have not yet reached a point midway between the primal impulse and the ultimate of human possibilities, and we shall never reach that limit in this life, and possibly not in the life that may come after this. The work of progress will never be done, and labor will never end. But we should feel extremely fortunate if we reach a point where we can comprehend and measure the unseen forces that surround us. Their name is legion. In our blindness we say that steam drives the engine; but steam possesses no more power of itself than the tiny drop of dew that is distilled upon the flower. It is that unseen power that we call expansion — expansion of the particles of water of which steam is composed. The steam drives the engine with a borrowed power. We speak of water power, yet the ocean possesses no more power of its own than does a single drop of water; it is with a borrowed power that we call attraction that water drives the wheels of the water mill. These contemplations are only in the

mechanical realm, yet very valuable, because in our profound search of the depths for the absolute in truth they reach beyond wisdom, beyond knowledge of facts, to comprehend understanding of fact so subtle, so incomprehensible that we do not know of them except by the manifestations they evince; yet we learn to control and manipulate them, much as inventors learn to control electricity, though they are entirely ignorant of its nature. Fear, enthusiasm to the point of frenzy, hypnosis, and spiritualism are not forces; they are results produced by unseen, deadly mental fluids springing from emotion.

Most happily there is this distinction between mental fluids and the mechanical fluid called electricity. Mental poison is obedient to the will and cannot be infused except by consent and surrender of the will. The victim must consent to gaze unreservedly upon the crystal set up for the purpose in order that he surrender his own mind, and the hypnotist fill the emptiness with his villainous influence and gain control.

The birds are denizens of the air; they build their nests in the high branches; they seize much of their prey on the wing; birds know little of the earth or things that pertain to the ground. The boy who has held a wildwood bird captive in his hand remembers well its cunning beak, its clinging feet and downy feathers, but recalls little about the eyes of the bird. They were listless, negative, expressionless little orbs. Who-

ever has seen a snake remembers the eyes of the reptile distinctly; they were fierce, penetrating, hypnotic. If the silly bird alights upon the ground to pick up a belated worm and a snake happens to be near and she gazes upon that crystal eye, she will be transfixed, hypnotized; too late,—that bird will be a victim. This is only a weak, primitive example of hypnotism, but it was a valuable suggestion in the broader field of Jewish fable.

The Hebrew organization in the yesterday of only six thousand years ago was a scion, a growth from a very ancient and crafty root of mythology. In the bewildering fables they fixed up to confuse the infancy of our civilization they disclosed their far reaching hypnotic intention by utilizing a serpent to lure the woman into an act of disobedience, but in the broader field of activity in their protracted meetings and other seances they use that whip of scorpions, the Decalogue; they shout hoarse their voice of fraudulent authority. They found us busy in the *now*, the eternal *now*, the only time we know or ever can know, without a single moment we could afford to waste; we were discharging the duties of the *now*, building our destiny as only we ourselves can build it; we were learning lessons of helpfulness that we might receive the greater help as Nature had taught us to do, but they swooped down upon the race, chilling and filling with the hail of fear; they lured us from our obligation,

they deprived us of our own responsibilities, our richest dower, they compelled us to surrender our individuality and lose ourselves in their service. They use the name of Jesus as a shield for their own hypocrisy, but they ignore his teaching, "Take no thought for the morrow"; they deprived us of our own heritage; they drove us away from our own universe.

More cunning still the crystal they placed before us to fix our gaze upon, thus to paralyze thought, to hypnotize and make vacant our minds that they may send their influence to take control. That crystal is a triple ball affair, a triune thing, another trinity scheme. In the enchanting distance they have placed a soul whose salvation will exhaust and consume all the efforts of a busy life. On a peg in that far off wall they have hung an imaginary crown to be struggled for. At an imaginary point in remoteness they have placed an alleged being of inconceivable vengeance, our own Father, who sits in wrath, who can say to his own children, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels, and who shall judge our souls when the fitful fever is over."

Nor is there left a fragmentary gleam of life for any of earth's teeming millions, struggling through a fretful life to the blackness of inevitable despair, except for a chosen few. This is the triune crystal our gaze has been fixed upon, and by which we have been hypnotized and in-

duced rather to bear the ills we have than fly to others that we know not of. They commenced a long time ago to work up frenzy and they have succeeded well.

In what we suppose were our saner moments we conceived the idea that mother-love is inapproachable, unassailable, incontestable, and imperishable, the one unfailing treasure on the face of the whole earth. A mother will affectionately caress the child at her breast, she will fondly smooth its expanding brow, she will tenderly fondle its growing tresses, she will again and again imprint her warm earnest kisses on the tender cheek. That mother is Nature's sincerest token of integrity and devotion; yet under the influence of hypnotic religious enthusiasm her reason may be blinded, and forgetting her own child, that same mother will snatch her nipple from its boneless gums, and with a shout of exultation toss the dimpled form of her child into the Ganges River, an innocent, smiling morsel for the jaws of ravenous reptiles; and men and women gladly prostrate their bodies to be crushed under the ponderous weight of a granite Juggernaut to appease the wrath of some supposed angry God. This history they brush aside as being only idolatrous, and with good reason, for all worship is idolatrous, and nothing else but idolatrous, conceived in the darkness of the mythological ages its embers kept smoldering until this day, but now dying to ashes and dust, sprinkled with holy

water from the hand of reviving Christianity.

It need not be urged that the Juggernaut is a very ancient institution. Indeed priestcraft arrived soon after the birth of the race, and Juggernaut has never been retired from the field. The same Ganges River flows its slimy course; the same reptiles of ambition rule and control,—the same greed for gain, the thirst for power, the lust that blackens where it burns, the same old Juggernaut croaking its wizened joints along the highway of time, only that it has been compelled to change its shape to conform to the requirements of the different ages through which it was compelled to pass. When in rolling down the ages, the car of Juggernaut arrived at the point where it was required to serve the Mosaic dynasty or Jewish hierarchy, the car assumed the form of swords, spears, bludgeons and all the implements for murder, robbery and pillage, preying upon wide regions inhabited by peaceful, defenseless people whose industry had brought them much wealth.

Its cycle rounding, the religious car of Juggernaut gradually grew weaker in the strenuous toil of four thousand years. It was totally disabled by the impact when it collided with that rock on Calvary, and was laid up for repairs, never again appearing until the fourth century dawned, when it was rebuilt under the same influences that resuscitated the disabled, the fallen, priestcraft.

The two old religious organizations, Judaism and Paganism, had hated each other with a measure of bitterness that was cordiality itself during the thousands of years that they were rivals, but strangely enough, in death they were bedfellows and the new religion was the offspring of their union. But Gautama Siddartha, surnamed Buddha, must not be overlooked or forgotten, he who was the author and inventor of the Buddhist religion established nine hundred years earlier and whose followers include one-third of the earth's people today. Buddha was employed as chief architect on the new religions' building, and learned to become very influential; the water used to mix the mortar for the new structure was drawn from the wells on the plantations of Gautama, also much rock was hauled from the same place, Judaism, Paganism, Buddhism, another trinity of equal influences.

In rebuilding the car of Juggernaut, the mythological framework forty-seven thousand years old was retained; the mystery involved in Judaism was the motor power. Several important levers, notably resurrection, were disjoined from the machinery of Paganism, and incorporated in the revised machinery.

An entirely new-fangled contraption was invented, a sort of speedometer perhaps; it had a wheel within a wheel and these two wheels within a third wheel; it had one head, only one, but by a turn of the wrist three heads bobbed up where

one had stood before. On its dial plate it had three pointers, but inwardly it was full of a thousand secret springs, another mystery to bewilder the unwary. They attached it to the forward axle of the car, and labelled it TRINITY.

The car was never speedy, but true to an unvarying physical law, what it lost in velocity it gained in power. Rolling on twelve ponderous wheels, even as it did erstwhile long ago, winged with numerous swords to smite all who dared question or dispute its dogmatic authority, that religious Juggernaut crushed Truth to earth beneath its ponderous weight; its keen swords clipped the wings of Progress; the invention of useful arts was forbidden; investigation of sciences to enlighten and foster human helpfulness was punished with death; the bed of spikes was encouraged; the bench of screw frames to stretch limbs from bodies of its victims was cheered and rewarded with indulgences; sparks from its fire never failed to light the fagots that blazed at the feet that strayed into forbidden paths and scorch the tongues that dared to enter protest.

After the twelve hundred and sixty years that it reddened the rivers of Christendom, Juggernaut met another crisis. In the throes of the Reformation it lost the power to inflict physical pain, and was again compelled to change its shape and the alluring smile to mislead and betray. Priestcraft could now only operate on the mental plane of life, and busily it plied its trade, avail-

ing itself of a theory of hell fire that the vagaries of a Plato had made possible (that same Plato who advocated the socialism of beastly human herding), the priesthood preaching from a Bible whose every page suggested sex indulgence to allure, a Bible invented by their own hierarchy specially to invest them with authority to control. These men continued to fill the lay mind with terrorizing fear of a hell fire where there was weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth and other unbearable horrors from which there was no escape except for a chosen few through their purchased influence,—a deadly, sickening fear that engendered worry, despair, anger, malice, jealousy, argument, contention, demagoguery, and partisanship to blend with their own shrewd policies, convulsing, enervating, depleting, weakening, confusing, inviting disease, premature death, and the thousand ills that flesh is heir to; driving us from our heritages; diverting our attention from our duties of the now, the only now, that precludes justice to our individual selves,—duties that, well performed, forbid that we prove false to any man or that we withhold helpfulness from the faltering and needy, thus to bring strength to ourselves. All this only that the Church may live and thrive and feast and fatten upon our substance, however it impoverish our strength, and, nevertheless, at what fearful cost to our life, language falters and thought is speechless to relate.

In the infancy of our civilization mothers cast

their babies into the Ganges River and men and women in religious frenzy gladly prostrated their bodies to be crushed, that the anger of some idol might be appeased; but what changes have been wrought by the busy hand of Progress in the spirit of religious dreaming!

In the struggle of the Reformation their strong right hand forgot its cunning; their authority waned; their power of commandment was emasculated; and now at last they beseech us that we prostrate our bodies in worship of a cross crimsoned with guiltless gore shed by the jealous hand of their religion, and they hold to our mouth the quivering flesh of a man; they touch our lips with blood oozing from his wounded side in revolting idolatry,—a disgusting cannibalism to make a native Fiji Islander grin his blood reddened fangs in envy.

Their statement, oft repeated, familiar in their mouths as household words, "That all things are possible with God," that an idol carved on their own vitiated imagination breathed into a lump of senseless clay and it became a living soul; that a sane woman, the mother of our race, was lured to evil by a serpent even as a silly fledgling is charmed by a snake; that innocent blood was shed to appease vengeful wrath, all are but the grinning skeletons of foot-sore, worn out sophistries, always utilized to tear agape healing wounds afresh.

The car of Juggernaut that crushed Truth to

earth down all those dismal centuries is tumbling over, an early candidate to rust and molder on the scrap heap of time, with all the relics of barbaric and heathenish savagery that consumed the life and leeches the blood of suffering humanity, and cowed the human cry that could not be still, down all those troubled ages.

Once again that great nugget of metal or re-incarnation dream of Plato,—interpreted to mean “life afterward,”—dropped from his trembling hand and fell deep into the ocean of Time, where it lay unnoticed through the long period of eight hundred years, but it grew with accretion from the waves.

At length the grappling irons of the searchers drew forth that jetsam from its muddy bed. They took it to their great furnace and melted it many times until it was free from dross and was the first and finest piece of Damascus steel that ever came from their great rolling mills.

The mechanics took it to their workshops, and through many noisy conventions they hammered it on their anvils and ground it on their emery wheels until it became a flaming sword, and from its fervent heat they formed a blazing pit, burning with fire and brimstone.

They called it *immortality* and attached it to the right-hand end of the front axle. The car of Juggernaut was ready to start on another raid for conquest,—another reign of religious terror.

But the flame of that sword is extinguished;

its edge is dulled; its shape is bent; it is ready for the scrap heap of oblivion.

The will-o'-the-wisp is no longer followed; the scarecrow no longer frightens; the fires of hell are reduced to dying embers. Causing us to search for immortality in the vacant, empty regions of the unknowable realm was, after all, only directing us to gaze upon a snaky, damnable, dazzling, hypnotic crystal to divert our attention from our valuable opportunities for self-unfoldment and frighten us from our heritage of personal responsibility to ourselves. The fear and worry that they excited were snakes concealed in their nettle weeds that stung us as we groped.

We could never gather figs while we toiled through weary heat and dust among thistles that withered as they stung us while we toiled. We could never win future happiness by gnashing our teeth through a perpetual hell on earth. We must be continually earnest in our effort to live life unto life more abundant if we would win life unto life everlasting.

We shall be best prepared to meet the conditions that may confront us tomorrow if we set our house in order today.

With what amazing effrontery do they teach us immortality, "for Jesus' sake," after he had plainly instructed us to take no thought for the morrow.

If Jesus were here now, and you imagine he would withdraw his charge of hypocrisy, "you

have another guess coming to you." You do not know anything of Jesus, his justice, or his understanding. "Forgive them, they know not what they do."

The ghosts of their terrorizing are fading in the hopeful distance. The smiting arm of Religion is palsied. Truth is grinding in her busy mills, Progress, newly fledged, is winging her uplifting flight. There exists a condition of universal unrest. Revolutions have swept over the earth like troubled visions ever since the first mutterings of tradition. A revolution is coming, is even now here, with which no revolution in history can compare. This revolution is the second coming of the Christ-spirit, the reviving Christianity. Christianity never caused a pang or pain; she never uttered an unkind word. In this revolution now imminent, no drop of blood will be shed; the flush of anger will not mount to any cheek. No unkind word shall be uttered; there will be no strife, no contention, no argument; but there will be tears, blinding tears, copious tears of sorrow that the cherished must fall; tears of joy that relief has come. A golden thread of love will bind all hearts in one grand unity of helpfulness. It will be a happy reunion of the whole human family of Christendom in which no meddler shall dare intrude his insolent head. It will be a fulfillment, a realization of peace on earth, good will to men.

XV

CONSOLATION

There was a time long ago when our race was deeply involved in a system of savagery, administered by a clique of men who called themselves priests.

Progress was already stamped on the face of everything in the whole wide realm of universe, a force always to be reckoned with. The praises of the system were adoration ripened into worship and worship is idolatry; but idolatry was only an impulse and had no standard — no central point around which it might cluster — and the hapless wanderers began to carve unto themselves idols, only to discover that an idol carved of wood or stone or whatever it might be was a cold, senseless, inanimate thing. But an idol clothed with imagination from the impulses of the period and the environment that surrounded possesses unlimited power in the belief of its votaries. Imagination is the sea on which every idol has floated since first the flight of time began, and is the source from which all idolatry and all worship have derived their sustenance and gained their power.

Out of the activity of those far-away centuries Religion was finally evolved. Religion was a more stable, a more tangible force than any other; was more dominant and ruled for ages, but finally wasted in its own arrogance. Religion revived and wasted again through unnumbered reincarnations on the rolling tide of the ages. Always assertive and crafty, Religion has never had a rival who would descend to mingle with its forces or imitate its methods.

The word Religion is derived from the Latin *re-ligio*, which means looking back or remaining back. Religion not only hangs back, a clog to progress, but it has always been antagonistic to any influence that suggested freedom to the multitudes it oppressed.

When the Pagans had completed their god Osiris, whom they carved from huge blocks of wood deftly fitted together, they taxed their imaginations to the utmost in the effort to endow that idol with thoughts of highest usefulness, helpfulness and love for all of his people. Paganism never was a religion; it was not an organization, it was not a government. Paganism was a common brotherhood of all the people, banded together to promote the good of all. The jealousy and enmity that convulsed the powerful organization on the opposite side of the Red Sea still characterizes its distinguished successor, the Catholic Church. The system adopted by the Pagans was an interesting, though indirect

and roundabout method of auto-suggestion. The Pagans clothed and endowed their idol from their imaginations; and then imagined that their god inspired and prompted them to acts of highest usefulness in the interest of mankind. In reality it was the unfoldment of the Christ spirit, the Father within themselves,—an early dawning of Christianity. Those much maligned Pagans obeyed their promptings most industriously. They proceeded to the investigation of the sciences especially astronomy, and mathematics, and made voluminous records, and built enduring Pyramids in which to store their priceless records. In their invention of many useful arts, lost to us, they learned to temper copper, out of which they made useful articles, including cutlery. Their loving hands learned to embalm their dead, and in their catacombs today are mummies of persons who proudly walked the busy streets of Thebes five thousand years ago.

Paganism was not in any sense or in any measure a religion, a holding back in an exhausted past, a living over of old life to bind its bondage tighter. Rather, Paganism was progressiveness, an associated function for mutual helpfulness, while Osiris was an idol carved of wood. It was not worship of his personality the Pagans urged; Osiris was more a medium of communication to receive their suggestions of helpfulness to be reflected back upon themselves.

More than an idolatry the Pagan system was

an idealism uplifting to loftier themes. Out of that civilization grew the Rameses, the Pharaohs, the Cæsars.

The members of the Roman Senate mightiest in history consisted of Pagans in Pagan Rome. While the Egyptians in the valley of the Nile were carving their idol Osiris, whom they imagined to dispense love and comfort and cheer, the Mosaic hierarchy, across an arm of Red Sea in the peninsula of Sinai, were carving their idol wholly on their own imagination whom they named Jehovah, and placed far up in the skies, beyond the clouds and imagined him to be a being of wrath and vengeance and punishment, who could say to his own children, "Depart from me, ye cursed, I never knew you."

An idol is a necessity in every idolatrous society that its leaders may refer to as authority for their conduct of affairs; a crystal upon which continuous gaze may be fixed, an alleged being before whom the helpless masses are directed to fall down in blinding worship.

In strict compliance with the law of cause and sequence, the nature and quality of the imaginings with which any idol is clothed must partake the nature and be a part of the ambition that prompts the endowment. As the Pagans were actuated by a Christian spirit of helpfulness they imagined their idol Osiris to command helpfulness and kindness to every living thing, with the result that Paganism has written the brightest

page in human history. Paganism never engaged in any warfare, never shed one drop of human blood.

On a strictly parallel line of reasoning, but with opposite purpose and ambition, those cool, calculating Jews, greedy for gain, thirsting for power, imagined their deity whom they named Jehovah and placed remote beyond the clouds, to be the embodiment of all cruelty; reflected back to themselves it was an auto-suggestion clothed with authority for any action and to use the name of their deity.

Their first act was the invention of the Garden of Eden fable. Their very first commandment, "Thou shalt not eat of the fruit thereof," was a fine beginning and has borne them ample fruitage of authority.

As their plan developed in the centuries they imagined another being for the sole purpose to do their bidding, whom they named Moses and designated him as a law-giver. His office was to carry messages of authority from the chief idol.

In the Sanhedrin or Jewish Senate Chamber, through many executive sessions held behind closed doors they enacted their unmatched statute the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments, which was intended as a lash of authority to cover the whole wide scope of human existence. The individuals that constituted the multitudes were helpless against an organized force. Thus equipped, no influence could question. No power dared dis-

pute the might of their sway; their monarchy was absolute. Kings and kingdoms, municipalities and empires trembled at their power. They could command vast armies and devastate at will. Their edict need only bear the signet stamp, "The Lord Commanded Moses" and it was final; all else fell prostrate in their idolatry. It was religion, a looking back, a holding back; purely religion, the enemy of Paganism with its helpfulness to human effort, the arch foe of Christianity and every other aid to the upliftment of the race, and remains an unyielding clog to the wheels of progress.

Their sophistries uncovered in the experiences of life they called their idol of wrath and vengeance, a "God of love," and, behind that screen they proceeded to devastate and desolate the face of the whole earth.

The human blood shed by other hands recorded in all history does not amount to more than a trickling stream compared with the seas of the blood shed by the hand of Religion—enough to float the navies of the world, all shed in the name and to the glory of a "God of love."

Charlatanism, chicanery, trickery, duplicity, sophistry, hypocrisy,—all are respectable and honorable compared with such base prostitution of Truth in her undefended meekness and humility. The moral teaching of the religious system is a bondage of immorality; its code of morals, the Bible, on every page of which is a suggestion

of murder, licentiousness or some form of carnal materialism.

Our neighbors and friends, the men and women who are building churches and employing men to emphasize the beliefs their mothers taught them, manifest a sincerity and devotion that is native to them, a gift of the Christianity that abounds in Nature. They are not sinful worms of the dust; that is only a belief that has been burned into them for the purpose of humiliation and degradation. The man who came out of the wilderness girded in single garment, boasting only his poverty; who came to teach freedom to the multitudes suffering the whips and scars, the exaction and oppression of religious bondage, could brave the death that had overtaken his faithful co-worker and which probably awaited himself; he placed no value on his own life in the great work in which he was so earnestly engaged; yet he was a man of many sorrows and his greatest sorrow was that, in their accustomed idolatry, his followers persisted in admiring him rather than to follow his teaching, and he often exclaimed through blinding tears, "Not I, but the Father within me doeth the work." He wanted them to comprehend that the Christ spirit within them, if unfolded, would do the same work for them; in his extremity, he finally exclaimed, "It is expedient for you that I go away from you."

The great name of Jesus may be pronounced in the saloons and the gambling dens; in mining

camps, in the slums and ditches with a measure of impunity under a plea of ignorance; but every time we utter the name of Jesus in a religious church or bow down idolatrously to eat of his body and drink his blood, we spurn his teachings away and thrust again the cruel spears into his side and tear agape those healing wounds afresh to our own loss.

To supply our own yearning need let us try to recognize the real facts in the case as Jesus sought to have his followers do.

As a person, an individual, Jesus was nothing to his followers then, or his followers now, any more than many of the ancient sages that religion had failed to enslave.

It is only the Christianity he taught that is vital to us. Christianity is fellowship, good will, cheerfulness, charity, loving kindness, truth, justice, mercy, hope of blissful immortality, the brotherhood of mankind, and the motherhood and fatherhood of Nature who so generously enfolds us in her bounteous arms if we follow righteousness for righteousness' sake. The laws of Nature are unrelenting, yet sure, never inflict any punishment; pain is a friendly notice that some law is being violated. Only for the pain of hunger all life would shortly become extinct.

It is a cause for sorrow, sadness and regret that so great a system should be driven to such dire extremity, or should so far forget its heritage that it should misappropriate the name of Christianity

and call itself Christian religion to conceal its own deformity. Christianity never drew one drop of human blood; Christianity never knew any instrument of pain or torture; no unkind word ever fell from the lips of Christianity. No frown ever wrinkled the polished brow of Christianity; her countenance is wreathed in perpetual smile of tenderness and loving kindness.

Recalling the tales that the good old ladies told erstwhile about chasing wild geese, it occurs to mind that a man might dream that a wild goose passed in the night. In the morning the figment of that dream is so deeply impressed upon his mind that he is inclined to follow, though he does not know in what direction the bird flew or for certain that there was any bird. But urged on by the man who sells firearms and brimstone, he decides to give chase. While he is absent his vital interests are neglected; his garden grows thick with weeds, the fields are untilled, seed time passes unnoticed, harvest time is past, the summer is ended, his lease on the land has expired and all is lost. Nothing is saved except the little profit made by the dealer who sold him the shotgun. It was a wild goose chase surely enough — very wild — not only fruitless, but disastrous.

Consolation is comfort, cheer and encouragement that may come to dreaming sorrow, and when it comes to the afflicted, the bereaved, the widow and the fatherless, consolation is a blessing and a benediction. It is claimed that the Christian re-

ligion affords the sweetest consolation that comes to the aching heart of mankind. But the young convert, shouting with joy, who goes about sounding a warning lest ears of corn be plucked while passing through the field on a certain day of the week, and the settled deacon who reads his Bible daily, prays to the God of his fathers devoutly and lives serenely in the beliefs his mother taught him, these have no need of consolation; they should be the happiest of people, except, perhaps, on the theory of the man who sternly commanded his little boy that he should go to the Zuyder Zee for the sole and only purpose that the boy should fret and groan through a weary night; thus the father might gratify his own ambition to manifest his authority and find pleasure on the morrow when he offered the child consolation by assuring him that the order was countermanded; he need not go to the Zuyder Zee, nor ever dip his precious little hand in its murky waters. Or a tyrannical monarch might say to one of his most loyal subjects, "Because it is my pleasure, Sir, you are condemned to a dungeon of darkness and dampness and riotous breath and loathsome decay among dead men's bones and crawling things, to see only visions of fiery eyes, forked tongues and gnashing teeth, dreaming dreams of weary toil through a dark valley and shadow of death to a grave of dismal terrors; there you shall subsist on villainous bread until you utter your expiring

moan. Go now, and when your time shall have come you shall be summoned."

After many fretful months the dreaded messenger arrives; and with eyes receding and dim, his hand trembling upon a staff, the subject appears before his sovereign. Then before the throne, he is greeted familiarly thus,

"Why, John, you seem to have had troubled thought. I only wished to make an example of you to manifest my authority and to terrorize all of my subjects. Besides, somewhere it is written, 'Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.' And I so loved you that I wanted to afford you sweet consolation in assuring you that you shall not be confined in a dungeon or at least not at the present time. You are at liberty to go home now, happy and joyous with your consolation."

All must agree in the opinion that old tyrant ought to be dethroned for his falsehood of consolation.

That is a bewildering, misleading, designing sophistry which teaches that men or mankind possesses each a spirit; there is only one Spirit; and it is privilege precious and peerless, full with all glory, that man may be a partaker of Spirit as he will. Spirit holds the only key to the problem of life, Spirit lives in all life, prompts every hope, purifies every love. Spirit is the vital impulse of being. Spirit is the loftiest, the highest con-

ception in the vast range of thought. Spirit implies love, purity, justice, truth, charity.

The inheritance with which the human race was endowed as it came skipping along happy and joyous from the hand of Nature was spirituality and the possibility of unlimited unfoldment that could not be filched away, no robber hand could spoil; but with his receptive plastic mind, man could be filled with fear, worry, gloom, despair, and driven away from his heritage.

Ambition and selfishness poisoned the primal atmosphere and were fungous growth. Heathenish bondage followed many heathenisms until heathenism merged into idolatrous religion. Religion followed religion through unknown successions that hurried the race down the long vista of time until the "Fall of Man." Man did "fall" into the pit of despair which craftiness had dug for him, and after he was entrapped in the pit the first salutation he received was that he was a vile sinner, a worm of the dust. This was the fiery bed of spikes on which humanity was impaled; this the shackles of its bondage; these the poisoned links pressed down into its quivering flesh.

Here again consolation is mockery. Mankind occupies a wide range of being. Commencing with the lowest in the scale is the animal plane, with only two wishes. Its first need is food to sustain life; its only other wish is to propagate its species.

Without a line distinctly marked, being shades

into instinctive mind. This is the plane of widest activities, where Hope, the sincere, lures to lofty flight, then allows to fall, broken to ashes and dust; where Love sings her sweetest song; where Hate hisses his vilest breath; where all the passions ply their appointed tasks;—the plane of sordid, carnal materialism, where Selfishness leeches its substance from aching hearts, and ambitions tread with iron heel; where Ecclesiasticism was born; the only atmosphere from which Religion can inhale one vital breath; where Impulse is worked to exhaustion and Emotion is prostituted to vilest uses. Religion once mounted flight to the plane of reason but was convulsed in the shock of contact, and fell back into its own baser atmosphere, plucked, unfledged, with broken wings.

The next plane in the advancing scale of being is the intellectual plane, with its numerous degrees of unfoldment and multiplied activities, where Science delves deeply, explores extensive range, and climbs to loftiest peaks in search of fact,—cold, practical, useful fact; where Reason leads a cheerful path, and Truth waves her graceful wand.

But above all, surrounding all, transcending all, is the plane of spirituality, where Christianity lures her sweetest smile, inviting to constantly higher planes of advancement here and hereafter throughout the endless years of immortality. We have carefully and conscientiously explored the field of being, but lo, in all the wide range we have

failed to discover any "Soul." There is no soul existing in Nature's limitless wisdom.

The soul is another figment carved on selfish imagination, another crystal to be gazed upon and divert our thought from our own responsibility in building destiny in our own interest. The soul is their center of gravity around which cluster all their mouthings about punishment, penalty, reward and immortality that their methods imply they have power to mete out. The soul is a substance, commodity or thing, inanimate and concealed for the present, but to be trotted out in the "last day" to receive the lashes of punishment for the sin of its owner, the animal man, in his neglect to accept belief that they possessed authority and power of control in meting out punishment or doling out reward. When at last we accepted belief they drove us out, saying that the salvation they had planned was not intended for us of the multitude, but was reserved for a few that should be chosen, and we must yet run along to our punishment. But punishment never brought upliftment or reform to its victim. Punishment only chills the hearts that hear its piercing wail and reacts, a curse to community, planting the seed for fresher turmoil.

The most wayward man confined behind prison bars is the son of some mother. Somewhere on the earth or in the ethereal realm some mother is wailing, "Save my boy." Somewhere in that man's nature is a tender chord that must vibrate

responsive to gentle touch. It may be awakened and manifested by the song of a bird, the opening of a bud, the cry of a child, or the prayer of Mother, but somewhere there is evidence that that man is a product of Nature's wisdom, he is a god in process of unfoldment. Appreciated, guided and aided by the helping hand, his race shall become useful in society and we shall be proportionately uplifted by the helpfulness that we bestow.

Every overt act is the result of ignorance. We all are aware that felony is wrong, but too few of us comprehend the peace, the joy, the bliss, the happiness, the consolation, the comfort, that righteous living shall bring. Perhaps that prisoner, in his heart, was never guilty of any wrong, but his evil may have been imbibed from the environment in which he was nurtured. In many instances the parental rod and the anger in the hand that wields the rod promotes and aggravates and further disturbs the evil it pretended to cure.

The lash of punishment may cower, intimidate and subdue for a time, but it is sure to germinate further disturbance and never leads to refinement. Every living body contains dangerous poison. In the serpent the poison is concentrated and deadly to the victim stung by its tooth. In the body of man the poison is latent, but becomes active and diffused by anger, and is injurious to the body that contains it. A drop of perspiration from an angry brow sent to a chemist, and a drop of

blood from those veins sent to another chemist, both will report poison that only an angry condition can excite; it is akin to the poison of the serpent. The latest statement made by the medicine man is that anger always aggravates if it does not actually cause disease.

Fear impedes the flow of nerve fluid, vexes the heart action, chills the life cells that build the body, so that they hide away and leave the field an inviting culture ground for the germs of disease.

That insult to Truth, that blush to refinement stating that a virgin could conceive and the further statements that man was molded of mud, and that the holiest of holy influences, the finished product of Nature's wisdom, woman mother, woman wife, was fashioned from a gory bone dug out of clay; — these statements puzzle the will, are an offense to the starry canopy that must look down in sorrow and sadness on such a scene.

The lust for power, the ambition to rule and plunder, inspired the familiar impudence of that group of tricksters organized for the purpose so that they mounted to the house tops and shouted, "Thou shalt not," to the helpless individuals that constituted the bewildered multitudes below wandering and wondering without tutor, guide or leadership, like dumb, driven cattle, or sheep without shepherd that follow the tinkling bell down the precipice, a writhing mass ensnared in the bondage of tyranny and enslavement of hypocriti-

cal pretense. Those policy men, those keen, tricky politicians and demagogues who invented the tyrannical system, dared not pretend any other certificate of power, any other credential of authority than their own specious statement, oft repeated from the lips of falsehood, "The Lord spoke unto Moses." Their skill was manifested, their monumental task completed, their hope high risen in the consummation of the Ten Commandments. A commandment is a double-action, dynamic machine, eccentric and concentric, built in the workshop of hell. A commandment suggests and places a sin and clothes its author with authority to punish that sin; thus the inventor finds work for his hands to do and keeps his pot boiling and the occupation of Priestcraft is continued, its greedy belly well filled.

A code of morals by authority is a box of infernal asps, the bite of which is death. A decalogue is a whip of hellish scorpions designed to fill helpless victims with fear. Fear is the author and full parentage of nervous shock, weakness, woe, gloom, sorrow, sadness, despair, agony, sickness and death earlier than four score years.

Lest there occur any misunderstanding or failure to comprehend the meaning intended to be conveyed, let the statement be made directly and repeated with emphasis. Every human ill is traceable back to original demagoguery and perfidy.

Two voices came out of the wilderness to direct the way to that fountain whence issues the waters

that fill the river of life, health, peace, joy, happiness, and contentment. But the voices of Jesus and John were silenced by that same influence, and in our blindness we have plodded along, pursuing the line of least resistance, unmindful till now that error abandoned is dead.

A code of morals stalks rudely afield with unhallowed tread on ground too sacred to be fanned by angel wing, polluting an atmosphere of righteousness for righteousness' sake, an atmosphere on which was wafted that unfailing upliftment softly whispered by the great Teacher, "Love ye one another."

No sin committed against society can reflect so great injury upon any other individual as upon the transgressor. If he can forgive himself all should be forgiven. If you commit a wrong it is unfortunate that the day is wasted; more unfortunate if you waste another day in penance more wasteful still. Remorse is fruitless; regret is unavailing. Forgive yourself, forget the wrong and live your life more earnestly.

When that other group of demagogues stole the Catholic Bible that had cost centuries of toil to frame up and floated it to their camp on the river of blood in the Reformation that literally flowed for thirty continuous years, only terminating in the Treaty at Westphalia, A. D. 1648, to larceny those protesters added the crime of forgery, for they changed the costly "Word of God" to suit their own method of policy. They

pretended to leave the confession box behind; but ever since the adoption of immortality as the main lever, confession has been an important element in the machine and cannot be eliminated. Most of the Protestant organizations have burnished its hinges and polished its surfaces, but somehow in some measure it is always the same old box, full with creeping, crawling things, to dull, to slaver, and slime the edge of punishment in exchange for continued power and place.

Progress has discovered the Truth and solved the problem for whose solution we have long waited. Life is best lived in the interests of the individual that constitutes the community, a social Christianity, and not the domination of self-appointed authority whose cycle is rounding to its close and is disintegrating, as attested by the universal unrest and the chemicalization of society separating the pure metal of Truth from the dross of sophistry.

An association world-wide in its scope, its street harangues still trailing in the old slough, its music discordant, but behind it all the Christian spirit of helpfulness, supplying aid to the needy with unselfish hand,—the Salvation Army is bringing freedom by undermining the fortresses of oppressions, and is pioneering the way to the victory of righteousness.

Men's Clubs in the churches, promoting juvenile courts that withhold punishment and afford protection and guidance to the unprotected, the for-

mation of Young Men's Christian Associations and Young Women's Christian Associations, Big Brother Clubs and Big Sister Clubs give unmistakable evidence of a dawning.

An increasing number of church congregations are establishing each a Charity Bureau, appropriating funds for its maintenance and employing persons to search the hovels of misery, ministering to the wants of needy. This is ample proof that these good people of the churches in the twentieth century will, when their sight is clear, become wonderful forces that resolutely, quietly, silently set examples of righteous love that are lamps lighting the way to constantly higher unfoldment in spirituality, their very lives breathing a song of peace and joy. This shall bring a true consolation.

XVI

UNDERSTANDING

After you were told that water drives the wheel of the mill, you were wise, you had wisdom of the fact; when you saw the water drive the wheel of the mill you possessed actual knowledge of the fact; but if the waste gate of the dam were open the stream flowed naturally over the wheel, producing no possible result. Water possesses no particle of power, but when the gate was closed, and water piled high in the pond, its *weight* lent power to water, and then it could drive the wheel with great force. It was attraction, a borrowed power, that gave force to water. We had wisdom of the fact; we added knowledge of the fact. Now we have gained that final, all important element, understanding of the fact. Likewise steam possesses no more power than the fluttering leaf pendant from a twig of the tree. A foreign power that we call expansion enters into the heated particles of steam, usurps the prerogative, and expansion drives the piston rod that forces the wheels of the engine to pull great trains of ponderous cars helpless over the mountains and across a continent. Now, we have found another understanding, unim-

portant perhaps, in merely mechanical life; but the forces in the unseen are infinitely more numerous than those that we can see. These are the forces in which our higher or spiritual life is blended and built up, in which we live and move, and have our being, and through understanding of which we build our own destiny for good or ill. As we live rightly, thoughtfully, in justice to ourselves, that life shall lend aid to other lives and we can live life unto life more abundant. But we must be everlastingly, eternally, diligent in the Now. Nor can we afford to waste any time, or dissipate our energies, or worry about the dangerous, deadly, unknowable future life, unimportant because the search, at fearful cost, is unavailing and ends at last in disappointment that makes the heart grow sick and faint in deadly fear.

With convincing simplicity and amazing wisdom, the lowly Jesus admonished us that we take no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. But Jesus never had anything to do with any religion except to condemn it, its commandments, and its votaries, the only persons or things he did condemn; yet his name has been usurped as a shield and used as a cat's-paw.

The visionary, cold-blooded, pulseless Plato, who lived in an unethical, immoral age, and imbibed its unhallowed atmosphere to the extent that he scorned the sanctity of the marriage relation and advised drunkenness as a religious sacrament, in

his vagarious dreaming voiced some mutterings about a future life.

During fully eight darksome centuries the name of Plato was little noticed, his fame unsung. But the carpenters and builders of the New Testament, in their search for building material, eagerly scanned every piece of wreckage and flotsam that floated on the ocean of time and dived down to search the jetsam that had sunk beneath its troubled waves. They discovered the suggestion of futurity that Plato had made in his drunken vapors. This was a rare jewel, a gem to supply an immediate need. They eagerly seized it and dovetailed it into their structure as a corner stone of marvelous strength, and utilized it as the forceful piston rod to drive their machinery to its most cruel crushing; it is the brilliant hypnotic crystal they placed to confuse our gaze and make us forget our own lives. Ever since that time in the fourth century they have incessantly pounded that discordant string in their dismal harp, vibrating immortality with its blazing torments, breeding fear. Thus worry has brewed all of the mental agony that seethed and frothed in the cauldron of direful dread, and enabled them to keep the race under the iron heel of their bondage. Nails and spears of woe and terror have reddened the path down all these centuries with guiltless blood of terror, and even now sorrow sits and sips at sweetest hearts till all their life is parched and dry.

That was a very wise man and far advanced who

said, "Get wisdom, get knowledge, and with all thy getting, get understanding," and was himself bewildered by the thought that had come to him. In our frenzy, vainly we explore the books of supposed concentrated knowledge for a clear definition of the word "understanding." We are appalled; we cannot comprehend understanding. Understanding is hidden in the mazes of Truth where we can seek it, and, seeking, we find out divinest unfoldment into spiritual Life. Understanding is the goal in the spiritual realm and prompts to loftiest aspiration.

But we must carefully beware the pitfalls that cunning has concealed in our pathway.

There is no precedent; its seed has never been planted in the soil of Truth but once, and then it was blighted by a crafty hand so that we cannot reap its benefit; it never since has been cast out in the realm of knowledge; hence it will engage our most earnest thought and closest attention that we discover that line drawn with exceeding fineness, the line of demarkation between the sublime and the ridiculous,— between spiritual Truth and sophistries, fallacies, deceit and falsehood of the miraculous, the supernatural, necromancy, magic, alchemy, hypnosis, and the host of unseen poisonous influences that chicanery and trickery use to confuse the understanding, to deafen ears that they may not hear, and blind the eyes that they may not see. No miracle was performed, nothing supernatural ever occurred, for nothing

can be superior to Nature; the Philosopher of Galilee and many other occultists did and do perform acts beyond our benighted ken, but they were all performed by lease of, and under the operation of a law that is immutable and inflexible.

If Jesus was able to feed five thousand men, besides women and children, it was because his meager store of loaves and fishes was augmented by abundance drawn from the Great Universal, that realm of supply for every human need, by a law that as the centuries unroll we shall be able to command and avail ourselves of the advantages it shall bring when our understanding is unfolded, but we cannot hope to grow into that grace while we are yet in our "trespasses and sins," that is, while we are filled with worry, woe, and despair. In that infant age the word "sin" meant only the error of entertaining fear, doubt, and lack of faith in the strength of our higher selfhood.

The Bible artfully, cunningly, avoids any mention of those eighteen years in the life of Jesus that brought all his glorious achievement. That time was spent with an occult brotherhood when their meat was locusts and wild honey, in the wilderness amid the rocks and the rills, the bees and the flowers, the birds and the trees, the hills and the valleys, where the morning stars sang together while old ocean chanted his eternal bass in Nature's anthem.

Those ingenious, artful inventors and builders

of the Bible machine, direct descendants of fable writing mythologists, their imaginations inflated to utmost tension, in wildest dreaming fabricated a line of falsehoods baser than dicer's oaths, a pretended history of the infant Jesus, all about the conception of his mother, her experiences during the period of gestation, how that the babe leaped in her womb, and all of that disgusting, unimportant nonsense offensive to every sense of refinement, an insult to truth, yet elaborate in every pretended detail until the child was twelve years old, when it was conveniently dropped; all was silent, not another syllable uttered. That great fable was their crafty scheme. That damnable fable was sequent to the crime of their fathers, whose jealous hand had murderously shed his guiltless blood on Calvary. That fable flashed back a brilliant halo about the cross to dazzle the eye of Truth, to beguile, bewilder and betray,—another hypnotic crystal to confuse the mind and blind the eye.

That fable clotted and perverted innocent blood, nimbused it with fallacious power and mixed it into a false plan of atonement to conform and make potent that ancient fable of disobedience. Thus the craft was able to round a cycle of enduring oppression and to forge and rivet a chain of bondage that only the corroding tooth of Time can mar and the strong hand of Progress can fling out onto the scrap heap to rust and decay. Those men, the Bible makers, could know little

concerning the early life of the boy Jesus, which was tame and commonplace, but he was precocious, he was liberally endowed with sympathy and love.

The history of that most important period in the life of Jesus continuing over the space of eighteen years had never been written; the events of the important period had been cherished and preserved in the truthful traditions of the righteous brotherhood of which he was a member. Thought of evil had never been allowed to intrude its forbidden shape; contemplation of love and helpfulness had actuated every impulse of their being; they had imbibed soul nourishment from Nature's ample breast until they could invoke the power of her law to command water that it be made wine; could command stones that they turn to bread; could still the troubled waves on the ocean of life; could cheer the fainting heart that it become strong. This helpful fact was common talk in the legends of the times. Those intelligent men knew it too well; they excluded it from their Bible; they forbade that it be written. Because those facts were not given a useful place on the page of history, because that consummate fable was written to confuse those early Christians, multitudes, sprung from mixed religions, confused for three hundred years,—earnest, yearning people,—instead of being aided by honest leadership, were further blinded, hindered and bewildered in deeper mystery. The poisoned links of appalling fear were again and again continually pressed down

into their quivering flesh; plundered, betrayed, robbed of their heritage, they were hurried to the stake if they dared to breathe a protest.

Had not that precious blood been spilt on Calvary, had not the shackles of that dogmatic bondage been riveted upon our helpless forefathers, led by the teaching of the Nazarene Philosopher, and the other sages who have taught in the society of all the ages, we should now be advanced nearly nineteen hundred years beyond that peaceful time.

Instead of being allowed to grow in our understanding and in the knowledge of the truth, our civilization was driven back into the blackness and gory dampness of a night where the hand of Progress was palsied and the voice of Christianity was hushed in the darkening gloom. It was but in the yesterday of the centuries that the awful cloud was rifted, only rifted,—blanched in the blood of the Reformation. We are yet in the swaddling clothes of our liberty to think for ourselves, to invent useful articles for supply of our need, and to investigate the sciences to aid our progress and advancement.

But amid dissolving superstition, in the prevailing unrest, in the reviving strength of our arm of power, in the revulsion of thought and feeling, in encouraged aspirations, in the wonderful revolution of sentiment that is stifling error, in the brilliant light that is dawning, the hand of Truth is fanning away the last remnant of that awful cloud; and through its fading mists we can discover the

lost trail that shall lead us back to our heritage in the rediscovered universe by right thinking and righteous living into that enchanting realm of peace on earth, good will to men.

XVII

TESTAMENT BUILDING

Theology has never been anything other than political partisanship, a religious halo; organized in crafty thought theology is an evolved psychic power to prey upon the unthinking physical brain of helpless multitudes.

The Church is an organized body of delegates, a congress of representatives, a legislature of enactment.

The Pope is the head of the Church, the supreme ruler, the unquestioned dictator declared infallible. The Pope is elected by majority vote in council assembled for the purpose amid wild scenes of partisan favoritism and noisy, caucus jangle. A deity is an idol carved of mythology in ancient ages, an imagery, a fable, a falsehood placed beyond the clouds, existing in imagination, an angry dragon before which we are commanded by a meddling oligarchy to fall down with fear and trembling in heathenish idolatry, forgetting Nature and her unailing law.

The mystery of life and the problem of death vexing the human race from its infancy, Immortality perpetually shouted by mountebanks who

assumed to have authority for control over eternal destiny, the pulpit a perpetual wellspring of charlatanism and pretense, the primitive human race, lost in amazement at discovery of life and the approach of death, wandering up and down the face of the wide earth, eagerly accepted any explanation that was offered, not discerning that it was the sinister protection that the lion gives to the lamb. That infernal system which basely and impudently calls itself the Christian religion is the direct descendant, bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh, that crucified Jesus because he taught the truths that were Christianity. It was crafty political chicanery that induced these demagogues to reverse the methods that had wrecked their fathers, and now this same system demands that in compliance with their dogmatic ambition, we idolatrously fall down and worship the cross on which they murdered him. It is their need that they divert our attention from the teaching that constituted him a true Redeemer and for which he was slain.

In the long ago of the Mosaic Dynasty, while yet the chief activity of that organized power (and when was it not?) was pillage and plunder dignified under the name of warfare, devastating the vast plains of Moab and all the hills and valleys of Judea where lived and loved only peaceful pastoral peoples, feeding their herds and guarding their flocks from ravenous beasts,—in those ancient days there lived and thrived an unvanquished war-

rior whose name was Ahaz, the son of Jotham, but he became the victim of conspiracy, for Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, son of Remaliah, took counsel against him and he was crushed in ignominious defeat. Isaiah took with him his son Shear-Jashub and went to meet Ahaz at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field.

Ahaz begged for an armistice and asked for a sign, a pledge, or some token how long the truce should continue. Isaiah assured him, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and shall bear a child; butter and honey shall he eat and before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, before he shall cry, 'My mother, and my father,' the land that thou abhorrest shall be despoiled of both her kings." Women were not consulted. It was lawful in those days; it was a playful bit of diversion that a great prophet chosen of the Lord should commit rape and make boastful record. Isaiah himself tells it in his book, "I took unto me faithful witnesses to record; Uriah, the priest, and Zechariah and went unto the prophetess and she conceived and bare a child."

This chapter is only the recital of a compromise in gory warfare, yet it constitutes a rare gem of biblical poesy, a chapter of filth eagerly copied into a Bible already reeking in scandal and immodesty.

While the organization was searching among the

wrecks of the parent Judaism that strewed the plain, they found this gem of rare value and with crafty art misconstrued it into a prophecy that Mary, the virgin bride of Joseph, a carpenter, should conceive, and that the fruit of that mystery should become their idol, their deity, to whom they could ascribe authority that could contravene the mandates of heaven's high chancery and forever control the key that locks and unlocks its pearly gates.

Confidence in a great consuming plan of control must naturally be a plant of tedious culture. The awakened mind revolts against absolute surrender. The new organization was only a revival of the ancient Judaism with additions that time suggested. Thoughtful men daily disputed their authority and challenged their methods. The wealth, the prestige and the added numbers they had acquired from Rome had been bought in barter.

Paganism, always a power, frowned her scornful brow and the multitudes, still blindly groping, remembered traditions of the Nazarene philosopher and refused to desert the standards he had set up. Thus the pathway of the new system was beset with constantly recurring difficulties, at times even brooded by misgivings.

During thousands of years the pagans had cherished a beautiful thought picture of resurrection, mirrored forth by the annual revival of plants in their gardens in the Easter season or springtime,

THE REDISCOVERED UNIVERSE

after the blasts of winter had subsided and the rays of the sun graced and warmed the soil in the fertile Valley of the Nile.

In their desperation, the New Testament carpenters and builders decided to borrow from the neighbors they hated so cordially the Resurrection theory and harkened back through the frowning centuries, pretending the resurrection of a body crumbled to dust long ages before.

They wanted to utilize the body of Jesus as a presence to whom, like the buffoon in a puppet show, they could ascribe statements to establish credulity of their great scheme.

Those zealous laborers, inventors, and compilers of a great work to rule, to guide and control a world of humanity may have succeeded in convincing themselves that the unnatural, startling, almost tumultuous claims they made were sincerely unselfish and true. But to convince the outside world of suspicious unbelievers and to establish faith and belief in their self-endowed authority was the burden of their labor throughout those toilsome centuries.

They built their Bible to authorize the organization that they were pleased to call the Church that was infallible in all of its decrees, and the Church authorized the Bible, a wheel within a wheel, a machine of reciprocal action at once eccentric and concentric. As well might two members of the same partisanship say, "You need not trouble about our party; we admit that it is right and,

moreover, we can prove it each by the other." Somewhere on their great workbench lay this finished product, sequent in part, of the Eden fable which they had adopted and they dovetailed it into the structure. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever *believeth* on him might not perish, but have everlasting life."

Again, these ventriloquists make their puppet say, "He that *believeth* and is baptized shall be saved, but he that *believeth* not shall be damned."

To ascribe such inharmonious statements to the meek and lowly man of Palestine is far reaching falsehood.

In the yesterday of their activity they said that Jesus was an obscure, humble child of penury. Again they picture him as a standing authority in towering majesty to endow them with highest power, saying, "Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven," thus conferring dominion over the face of the whole earth and authority to challenge the very edicts of high heaven itself.

This is the foundation of the confession box and of all popery. The power of all the gold and all the wealth of earth, though it pile high a continent, is nothing compared to authority to forgive or condemn. When you teach a great people that but to touch the hem of your garment is a blessing and a benediction, that you hold in your hand

power to blast in eternal gloom or lift to regions of light, you have them bound in obedience and may do as you will with those nations and their wealth.

Having framed their own unlimited authority they wrote the awe inspiring suggestion, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall he give in exchange for his soul?"

As an element in their plot to more deeply awe with authority, they invented the fable of a land transaction which involved Ananias and Sapphira, and they uncharitably said to the terrorized widow, "Thou hast not lied unto man but unto God. Behold the feet of them who have buried thy husband and shall carry thee out also."

Although possessing some ability as inventors our Bible makers were not producers; they were plagiarists who copied from the literature of bygone ages. They built their machine largely from the wreckage of all idolatries that had floated ashore on the restless tide of time.

They gathered immortality from the fragments of ancient re-incarnation dreaming. They borrowed resurrection from paganism, more poetic; they adopted the Mosaic idol legend of discovery by "a herdsman in a burning bush at the foot of Horeb's towering peak and the bush was not consumed." Nor was it intended that the bush ever should be consumed. That was the first and most disastrous forest fire of history; that forest

fire devastated the pleasant plains and swept in fury down earth's fertile valleys these several thousand years and only now is smoldering in its embers. They assumed the Mosaic decalogue with all of its commanding fury, and set ablaze a lake of brimstone that refused to be quenched in all the waters of life.

There is not in all the hoary ages one syllable corroborating the story that Jesus was the fruit of psychic genesis. If it were true his mother was the only person who could know and she never lisped a word concerning the unnatural claim. Nor is there one word or sentence of New Testament history worthy of credence. If there was a temptation on the top of an exceedingly high mountain as these mischievous writers allege, how did they learn it? Jesus never made boastful record, and certainly these cunning men would not believe the devil who was a more voluminous liar than themselves.

Their primal, most eager purpose was to establish authority, next to establish belief that they were the rightful legatees of that authority. Their plans were craftily formulated, their shuttles thrust with no uncertain meaning. They had already woven into their fable a statement that Jesus had chosen certain men called apostles, to whom he delegated power to teach doctrine and to perform miracles. Their hungry spirit longed to partake; the wish was father of the thought and

they adopted their own often repeated auto-suggestion which they strove, and their deluded followers still strive, to inculcate.

Then at that time, as in all the ages of humanity, manifestations of its divinity, there lived "wise men," *devas*, "like unto Jesus himself," who constituted a distinctive element in society,—men who lived close to Nature, learned her wisdom in the solitudes, listened to her intonations, vocal in the silence, and were uplifted by her philosophy as we all shall be if we seek.

These men, too, were active; they taught charity, surcease from care, love and helpfulness. Their offerings were abundant and most of the teaching was eagerly accepted and cheerfully written into the New Testament, which gives reasons why tenderness, gentleness and helpful precepts are profuse in its chapters, an uplifting spirituality.

But in all the mortal line there is not a pursuit, a vocation, an industry comparable with the business of religion in results proportioned to the effort involved. It gratifies personal selfishness, lulls avarice to rest, and ambition for power folds its arms in serene contentment. The managers of the organization have little care when no rival intrudes.

Hence religion has attracted to its aid the most profound skill and the ablest talent evolved down all the ages of time's unfolding scale,—financial acumen, wise statesmanship, acuteness in discovery and political sagacity. Religion is the only trust,

the only partisanship with sufficient political influence to enable it to hold limitless wealth unburdened, while the vast expense of empire with its intricacy of detail must be wrested from the soil by honest industry with muscled arm in the sweat of sturdy brow.

Our friends, the Testament makers, constituted a crafty lot of men. They cultured every resource, availed themselves of every advantage, were wise to every passing thought, grasped every float on the restless tide of life, were suspicious of fair smooth face, challenged every offering in harshest tones, misdoubted every bush, and no leaf fell unnoticed from any whispering tree.

If the master delivered that great sermon, who was the uninvited reporter with ready pen to write it down?

When the sages of the time prepared that wondrous table of rules afterwards styled "The Sermon on the Mount," and offered it to be incorporated in the new book, it was promptly rejected by a majority vote in the noisy convention, because it showered unstinted blessings, thus unhinging their creeds and dismantling their dogmas.

Offered again and again, it was accepted on compromise, providing that the organization should be allowed to frame the setting for the picture.

The context says, "There followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee and from Decapolis and from Jerusalem, and from Judea and

from beyond Jordan." Their preamble or setting of the sermon says, "And seeing the multitudes he went up into a mountain and when he was set his disciples came to him, and he opened his mouth and taught them."

Now verily it was the multitudes that afforded Jesus his opportunity. They hungered for the bread of life he held in abundance, that abiding love whose store is augmented by bestowal. And to allege that he left the people to suffer while he hid away to instruct a band of demagogues thus to build a political machine for himself was not like him. It was sophistry to shame the face of falsehood, but it brought a great grist to their mill. The husk they rejected contained a kernel of rare value to them. It established exclusiveness of authority which remains the secret power of the Church. It is the key to the inner chamber of power they dole out for a meed of allegiance at so much per kilowat of condescending grace, blessing or indulgence.

The Church with all its pretended authority in temporal matters and spiritual affairs meekly bows its proud head, subservient in fresher fields of activity and changed conditions.

In czar-ruled Russia and the Slavonic provinces it rules so vigorously, it demands that candidates, as a condition precedent to ordination into the priesthood, shall be married. In free America a candidate for that office must make a pledge of celibacy and a vow of chastity.

The wide universe of activities must be searched to its furthest recesses, the heavens must be unrolled. Earth and sea and sky and the waters under the earth must be required to yield up their secrets, every hiding log must be rolled again, every line traced to its source and every political wire pulled to its utmost tension if a partisanship that seeks control of the unheeding masses that constitute earth's teeming millions would be successful.

Those industrious workers, the Bible builders, eagerly copied into their picture any beautiful coloring reflected from the mirror of the ages. It was about one thousand years earlier than the period of their greatest activity that Buddhism sent its heralds to soothe the human heart and still the great human cry. Buddhism has no priesthood, no bondage, no dogma, no idolatry. It is more a Christianity than a religion. It does not proclaim any realm of despair and does not inflict any punishment. Its only law is love, its life count closes in Nirvana where lives only peaceful silence merged in divinity. Buddhism never waged a conflict; never had an adversary, never flashed naked sword to fright the spirits of the atmosphere. The patient oxen that trailed its great chariot along, their necks imprisoned in creaking yokes, were meek-eyed, gentle, with velvet flanks.

The wheels turned round, spoke following spoke circling the hub clean, unspotted; the tires never rolled red.

Before the battle of Sennacherib, when the As-

syrians came down as savage wolves on the fold; before Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem; antedating the religion of papacy by more than eleven hundred years, Buddhism flashed its brilliancy across India's coral strand, glistened in the untrod crystals that cap Himalaya's lofty peaks and crags, and glistened on the golden sands of the Gunga Valley.

It gradually reached the remotest shores of Asia and penetrated the islands of the farthest seas. It encompasses one-third of the earth's surface; five hundred millions of people are estimated to daily bow at its shrine and repeat its formula.

Its great teacher was Gautama Suddartha, surnamed Buddha, from whom it derives its name. He was born about six hundred and twenty years B. C. in the valley of the Sacred River, Brahma Pootra, flowing fourteen hundred miles in northern India south of Thibet. Buddha was the precursor of the great Essene, the Nazarene philosopher, preceding him only in period of time. Their teaching was almost identical though, unlike Jesus, Gautama lived to the ripe age of seventy-five years, and passed on to Nirvana peacefully in fulfillment of natural law. Almost a martyr to love, possessing the wisdom of a sage, his teaching yet was gentle as the rift of dawn. Purity of thought and gentleness were the influences he used to bring the widest peace that ever came to humanity.

In conformity with all ancient customs and fashion, some mystery must attend the birth of the

leader in a great teaching to lend it force and value. Astrology was sometimes a factor in molding sentiment.

Buddha was a prince, the son of Queen Maya Siddartha. The legends state unequivocally that a ray shot from a star penetrated the palace walls, invaded the royal bed chambers, and entered the womb of Queen Maya as she lay on her right side.

Overwhelmed with delight, she wakened King Suddhodana who, slumbering yet, wist not of it all. He aroused the attendants in the palace and bade them make the glad announcement to the shepherds guarding their flocks on the hillsides, that they might rejoice with the wise men from the East already there, piloted by a star, for all things knew.

Mercury was in conjunction with the sun, and the planets all gave auspicious omen. This was Hindu astrology that vibrated down the heeding centuries, reflected from ancient mirror. Our vigilant workers caught the beautiful picture and copied it into the history they built with this difference: they said that shepherds rejoiced that a babe had been born in lowly station, rather than that a queen had conceived in gilded palace,—a trick of psychic cunning,—necromancy to aid filching charlatans and clever mountebanks, the pieces of varicolored glass changing position in the kaleidoscope of their deflected imagination.

Prince Siddartha, his life so carefully guarded he had never known the weight of sorrow, sickness, pain or death, had never heard a moan of man or

animal. But he knew he had a mission to fulfill, a message to bring. He implored Channa, the charioteer, that he be driven abroad in the city to learn if it had any need. At last with the consent of the king he was led to the chariot drawn by four white oxen with spreading horns, and humps like molehills, the sacred cattle of India's valley. The sights that he saw and sounds that he heard filled his great heart with pity; people wrinkled with age, and shapeless with prolonged agony; men with faces drawn in pain; women bearing burdens too grievous for human frame, and children wan, hungry, and emaciated in despair. He saw babes thrown to reptiles in blind ignorance of religious rite. He heard the crackle of the pyre and the low moan of the widow as her form was burned to ashes with the corpse of her husband. He said to Channa, the charioteer,

"It is enough. I will return to the palace."

He stood under a willow on the palace grounds, sad, in painful thought, and murmured,

"World, O my world, I hear, I come."

He had been reared in kingly palace with massive walls of towering height; broad, long drawn aisles and fretted vaults; wide stairs, carved; mosaic with richest ivory, painted panels, tinselled dome and gilded columns; walls hung with silken drapery and rarest lace; floors covered with rugs to make envious the palace of Ormus or the castles of Indra; every luxury that kingly extravagance

could provide; every attention that genius could invent; voluptuous nautch girls, the pride of India, with jewelled hair, spangled ankles and tiny feet dancing before him to the music of mandolin, zither, lyre, harp and deva song; unstinted devotions of a great king; the heart of his queen mother yearning for him; the light of pearly teeth, eyes of jet and sweeping lashes; the token of their mutual love, a child quickened yet unborn; — he ignored it all. The richest sacrifice ever offered on the shrine of unselfish love, the grandest renunciation known to humanity, he abandoned a world of pleasures that he might relieve a world of sorrow, and for a generation of years paced the city streets, himself in want, and trod the plain with scanty food, wearing the single raiment of yellow tint, emblem of poverty; he penetrated the jungle without thought of fear that he might learn the depth of human woe, the hunger of the wild, and the quest of myriad creeping things, that he might gain his own quest, might listen to the secrets of the silence vocal in Nature's treasure house of unfoldment.

A savage beast would hide away enchanted with the first vision of his placid countenance. Young quail between his feet chirped their greeting of welcome.

Turtle doves with wondering eyes and frequent nod perched upon his shoulders to coo their never finished love song, and the wild gazelle, timidest

creature of the glen, with silvery hoof and velvet nose would speed forth to lick his outstretched palm.

His own son, unseen, ungreeted by him because unborn at the time of his departure, had now grown to manly stature.

His queen mother was serene in mature womanhood. Yasodhara, the beautiful bride of his early manhood, though silver hairs alternated in locks that had been raven, was yet young in hope and cheer.

He had been born under a palsa tree standing on the palace grounds, whose drooping branches reached the earth, forming sheltering roof and protecting wall.

When he returned he stood near the same palsa tree to teach the listening throng, unnumbered in the arithmetic of time, wondrous words of wisdom to profit all flesh. He encouraged them that they, too, might obtain strength, poise and deliverance by listening in the solitudes; by communion with the Infinite within them; by solicitude for everything that suffers or hungers, and by acts of helpfulness to every need, and love to one another and to all humanity. It was he who first uttered that great aphorism, upleading, guiding to power, since fluttered down the ages: "As ye sow ye reap."

Thus was unfolded to the world a great Christianity and inheritance from the infinite realm without price, purchase, sacrifice, obligation or any

bondage, beyond recall, unhampered by any authority, a spiritual uplift, a brilliancy that can never grow dim while Truth shall last.

Buddhism is so long ago that it saw the last act in the great drama of Jewish history. It witnessed the fall of Jerusalem, and what a fall was there to scatter vast tribes, wanderers, homeless on the face of the earth!

Buddhism observed the boy at Nazareth, studious, availing himself of every opportunity to learn. It saw that youth retire into the wilderness, as Gautama had done, to learn Nature's wisdom and her secrets so cheerfully disclosed amid the towering rocks, the whispering forests musical with nesting song, the waterfalls tuning unceasing melodies, the stars enraptured as old ocean chants the wild, profound, eternal bass in Nature's anthem.

Buddhism was delighted to see Jesus return, after a generation of years, astral with light and to see the multitudes listening to his words of wisdom as he pointed out the path of deliverance, but it shed tears of anguish when his guiltless blood was shed by spears thrust obedient to the behest of a remnant of the Mosaic hierarchy in its fierce effort to extinguish the light that Jesus radiated.

The wheel of birth and death turned slowly round.

It was three hundred years after the time of Jesus, more than a thousand years after Gautama, that a fungous growth on the mold of perished

idolatries developed into a monster that sent his tentacles far and strong to draw all Christendom into a pool of alleged sin, iniquity and suffering,—a mass of worms condemned to crawl in the dust through a dark valley and shadow to endless gloom.

By its promise of immortality and free salvation through a plan it had invented, it succeeded in luring many into its belief, it read from a book where it had written, "Many are called but few are chosen," and coldly told them that the consolation was not intended for the masses and that its reservations were held for a chosen few.

We have made quite commendable progress during the brief centuries since papal dictation was overthrown and we regained our right to scale the sky for its wondrous lessons and learn the secrets that Nature eagerly discloses.

And although we discovered the limitless force of expansion that energized particles of water possess and have learned to utilize that other unseen, unknown power that we call electricity, we yet are many thousands of years behind those far off ancient peoples who could quarry and transport across a vast, sandy desert blocks of granite and place them high up in walls of pyramids, so huge they are impossible of dislodgment by modern enginery; peoples who could intensify copper to make sledge hammers, granite chisels, scissors and razors; peoples who invented many useful arts and appliances lost to us in our struggle with bondage down the hurtful ages.

In every activity of society those ancients were equally tense and advanced, especially in politics. They were psychologists of limitless foresight.

Our politicians may boast of a little Tammany organization, and, again, of manipulating credit, Mobilier stocks, and on up to tariff monopoly and trust oppression, yet these politicians are only vulgar thieves,—a feeble folk.

Their ancient predecessors could invent and devise plots and schemes to enthrall the whole human race, to convulse every thought and invest themselves with power of control in every avenue of earthly life.

Their immediate successors, the politicians of the new Judaism, not content with so limited a plan, devised a scheme for control of humanity throughout time and eternity, and proceeded to build a Bible, a "Testament," as a platform of principles conveying to themselves unlimited authority; and well did they avail themselves of every opportunity, every advantage. No sparrow fell, no leaf fluttered back to earth, unnoticed.

They retained the name of Jesus for a working factor to whom they could refer for authority as their Mother Paganism has referred to her god Osiris, carved of wood, and they never failed to misconstrue his sentences to their own advantage.

The man Jesus, all through his ministration, had condemned worship as being idolatrous and hypocritical falsehood. His most earnestly expressed wish was to divert attention from himself in abso-

lute self-denial, positive abnegation, yet these Bible mechanics make him use the personal pronouns "I" and "Me." They make him say, while referring to his teachings, "This people draweth nigh unto *me* with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips while their heart is far from me." (Matt. xv.)

Jesus laid down certain principles as guides along the path that he called doctrines. Among his doctrines were love one toward another; helpfulness, peace, good will.

Jesus abrogated commandments, designating who might cast the first stone; he plucked ears of corn on the Sabbath day. He said, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine *the commandments of men.*"

For some cause unknown to our logic, a dozen, the number twelve, has held a magic influence far back along the ancient line. More than twenty-eight thousand years ago the Babylonian astronomers divided the zodiac into twelve parts or constellations and gave each part a name and a sign.

They divided the day into two dozen hours; they divided the hours into five dozen minutes and the minutes into five dozen seconds.

Leaving the year as Nature had divided it into thirteen moons or months, they made no effort to subdivide the seasons.

The Old Testament makers used the number *twelve* more frequently than all other numbers.

Twelve he goats were required for a sin offering; twelve chargers; twelve precious stones; twelve bullocks; twelve silver bowls; twelve golden spoons; twelve oxen; twelve rams; twelve lambs of the first year; twelve loaves were baked; Elijah took twelve stones and built an altar; Elisha, the son of Japhat, was found tearing up the earth, plowing with twelve yoke of oxen; there were twelve tribes of Israel. Nebuzar-adan took away twelve brazen bulls out of Jerusalem in ruins. Ahijah rent the raiment of Jeroboam into twelve pieces.

Among his other imperious orders Pope Gregory merged the thirteen solar months into twelve calendar months with their vulgar fractions.

The artful New Testament workers kept well in the foreground their idol whom they claimed had been resurrected from the dust.

They assigned to him a group of political workers, wire-pullers, log-rollers, demagogues, and fixed upon the magic traditional *twelve* as their number, and called them "apostles."

They then invented that fable, that falsehood, monumental of all the ages. It was to one of this dozen that they pretended their puppet, their idol, had delegated that measure of authority to challenge the high chancery of heaven, contravene and supersede its mandates, saying, "Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven."

Thus vested with pretended authority, they could

forgive or condemn at will, and perpetually control and convulse the great human heart throbb. This is the main drive wheel of the whole machine.

But it is a sophistry, a hypocrisy, a pretense to make the body of Joseph and Mary's son, the modest, retiring, unassuming, unpretentious, meek and lowly Jesus of Nazareth, turn in its gory grave could he but know.

The wonderful task of building a New Testament had, after all, for its purpose only to operate as their certificate of authority and to outline many details for the management of their plot.

This body of men that calls itself "The Church" was organized to surround their idol of pretended resurrection with a vast political machine intended only for their own inheritance.

The Mosaic religion was organized for the purpose of promoting the accomplishment of selfish ends. It was crafty as it was cruel; so carefully planned, so complete in every detail, so comprehensive and powerful, that no influence given on earth or among men dared challenge its methods or could stay its unrelenting hand. It had been experienced down many centuries; and if ever incursions were abated it was because the people had become so reduced by the payment of tithes and other oppressive measures that their penury rendered raids fruitless; life to them was only a vassalage.

The great heart of the man Jesus overflowed with sympathy. He left the brotherhood of which he was a forceful member, working the great work

in the wilderness, to bring a message of deliverance to the multitudes so grievously oppressed. He came as a redeemer from a bondage parading under the name of religion.

His approach was unassuming, his manner was gentle, his words were simple, tender, and childlike, his sentences were brief, yet full with deepest meaning. He taught the multitudes that by doing unto others as they would be done by they would gain a commanding power for their own deliverance. He taught a gospel of peace and good will.

Thought concentrated in the subjective brain, that nerve center, the *medulla oblongata* intensified by earnest desire, re-inforced by abiding faith can reach out and draw wisdom from the realm of universal supply.

In oriental countries where occultism has long been a common study street fakirs in the large cities can sit in comfort on rocks heated intensely hot, can pass unscathed through fiery furnaces and perform many acts that seem miraculous to our astonished gaze. By their art they can do many things for the amusement of curious passers, some of them offensive to refinement, and wheedle small sums of money by which they eke out an existence.

Concentrated thought establishes faith in the subjective mind which commands the vast army of cell life in the body, the cells take courage and renew their activity, and right here is disclosed the secret of all healing, for no physician, no medication ever healed any ailment; it was Nature.

The traditions relate that during the thirty or more years in the life of that man Jesus he had been seriously thoughtful and studious. More than half of that time had been spent in the solitudes of the wilderness amid its unfailing charms of upliftment, communing with the Infinite, the "Father within." Nature cheerfully disclosed her secrets to him and he became learned in her law, and this was the law he said, "I came to fulfill."

By invoking the aid of that great law he could and did, perhaps, do many strange and unusual deeds, but no miracle was ever performed, no dead person was ever restored to life, nothing supernatural or superior to Nature ever occurred. Nothing ever merely happened, there never was any occurrence, however trivial or important, no leaf ever fell, no convulsion ever shook the earth, except in obedience to law.

No fever ever raged, no pain ever racked, no disease ever vexed, that did not result from infraction of the law.

There is no mystery; there is no problem in Nature, important to us, that we are unable to solve if we will wait, the theories of the salvation system to the contrary notwithstanding.

The historical portion of the New Testament to its latest syllable is a fabrication, built to form the foundation for their mandatory control. It is the platform of that political oligarchy.

We do not know that the man Jesus ever lived

except through faithful traditions and our firm conviction that, in all the ages of mankind there have lived men and women of special endowment, wise men, sages, devas, spiritually inclined people, who found delight in doing good to those about them, and thus brightened and embellished the ages in which they lived.

Whether one of these, or a company of them, or the man Jesus himself, compiled that table of wonderful aphorisms called "The Sermon on the Mount," and those many beautiful precepts that found their way into the Bible as it grew in the soil of ages, is not worth one word of controversy or argument, and must remain secrets hidden in the archives of time.

That which is of vital importance to us is that we avail ourselves of their helpfulness and be able to contribute some aid in the great work of human upliftment.

The centuries, as they were unrolled by the tireless hand of time, each left its footprints, each established its way marks, each inscribed its tablet on the monument of years, each made its mark on the page of history.

The first century of our era witnessed the final decadence of a very great nation, for the Hebrews carved more deeply than any other prophet of whom we have knowledge; yet they became decimated and scattered.

The new Judaism that followed, appropriating from its wreckage the old Bible with its deadly

decatalogue, was formally organized in the fourth century, and toiled wearily in its infant struggles until that craftiest of politicians, a powerful monarch, decided to join forces with it, and brought to the new partisanship the strength of the Roman Empire.

Early in the fourteenth century Reformation found its most fruitful field in England under the leadership of the learned John Wycliffe, later a professor in Oxford University.

John Huss, the Bohemian orator, had read the writings of Wycliffe, and so eloquent were his denunciations, so strong his following, that the condition became alarming, and Pope John XXIII was induced to call a general council of the Church, which met at Constance, A. D. 1414, to consider the exigency. Huss was invited to attend and promised personal safety. He boldly proclaimed his convictions of the truth as it appeared to him, and so vital was his logic that it was declared by majority vote that he was a dangerous man, and the Christian religion burned him at the stake and obscured his hated ashes in the waters of Lake Constance.

It was in this same fifteenth century, fraught with fearful tragedies, that Girolamo Savonarola, native of Ferrara, went to Florence where he became a most eloquent Catholic priest, an astronomer and patriot.

A zealous religious worker, he yet denounced

papal abuses vigorously. He was consequently declared another dangerous character and was burned, his ashes scattered and lost in the listless winds that swept the Adriatic Sea.

In the sixteenth century Martin Luther nailed his famous ninety-five theses condemning papal absurdities to the door of the church building at Wittenburg and in a letter written by the Pope soon afterwards Luther was paid the compliment of being alluded to as "that notorious son of wickedness."

In rounding the cycle of thirty years' continued warfare, in the seventeenth century the arm of papal power was paralyzed; and since thought has been unshackled and untrammelled, in that freedom we have made progress, and are learning to live our life in goodly measure.

If wide unrest prevails, it is because no controlling influence just now exists and proves the rule that the pendulum must reach its farthest swing before it can return. In her own good time Progress will heal the breach and we shall learn the mode of life that Jesus taught.

As there is no longer any hindrance we may cultivate the true Christ principles, generate a purer mental atmosphere, and by heeding those lessons of Christian brotherhood, in that grace we shall reach a higher and nobler plane of existence.

The self-appointed dignitaries who claimed that they constituted the Church of authority and of-

ficial infallibility assumed, and their successors assumed, the attitude of masterful bulls in the human herd.

The councils of the Church were called by the Pope for special purpose or convened by order of an executive committee widely chosen.

Strife and contention sometimes prevailed between Pope and king for precedence of authority. In 1302 Pope Boniface issued a bull against Philip of France. In retaliation the king caused the arrest of the Pope, charging a shameless life. The Pope was released by Italian belligerents, but died soon after. The Archbishop of Bordeaux was chosen in his stead and removed the Papal See to Avignon, France.

The Roman factionists, alarmed by the disturbing influence, feared for the stability of the papacy and called it the Babylonian captivity which continued seventy years, 1309 to 1379. After the death of Gregory the Romans elected an Italian pope and the French faction elected a pope of their own, and this rivalry continued thirty years longer. The conditions were alarming. A Council was convened in Pisa, Tuscany, 1409, another Council was convened in Kostnitz, Germany, 1414, and a third Council was convened in Basel, Switzerland, 1431. Each intended to bring harmony out of struggle, but each failed ingloriously. The green eyes of jealousy glared, strife raged, love was forgotten, peace hid away and it all terminated in discouragement, if not bitterness. Selfishness con-

tinued and was the ruling influence on the dead waste of ambition for power.

Many of the representatives in the Council that met at Basel and some others were lured by tempting offers and the Papal See drifted back to Rome where it was re-established in some measure of strength. The most decisive convention ever held by the organization was called the Council of Trent, which was first convened in 1546 and dragged its disturbing sessions through twelve weary years as they were hawked about from one state or country to another. During that fretful time three men occupied the papal chair, each for a brief period.

Where the final session of the great Council of Trent should be held became a source of wide contention and engendered much jealousy. The German contingent urged its claim almost vehemently. The English delegation contended with characteristic stubbornness that the final session be held in a city of their kingdom; Scandinavia, Bohemia,—then a greater nation,—the Netherlands, France, and all the states each urged its claim, but the reigning pope cast a deciding vote, and the coveted prize went to Italy on the banks of the raging Tiber River, almost in the shadow of the Vatican.

Remoteness of the location and limited means for travel reduced the number of delegates in attendance upon the great Convention and left the Latin races holding a large balance of power, but the whole number of representatives present exceeded

nine hundred and there was found no lack of howling enthusiasm, and clamor. At times almost Babylonish tumult prevailed.

Disgusted that so many questions were referred to the Pope, Lansac, a French envoy, mounted a seat and shouted with more vehemence than dignity, "The Holy Ghost is brought from Rome in a carpetbag."

No marvel that a Bible, sprung from bitter soil, developed in angry atmosphere, speaks often of tribulation, damnation, hell fire and gnashing teeth.

Planning a deep laid scheme of salvation by vicarious atonement for doubtful crime puzzled the will, stifled reason and challenged any possible remnant of common honesty. Consolations only moaned more deeply. The work of making creeds, dogmas, catechisms, benedictions, maledictions, sacraments and last suppers reacted upon their own minds and bewildered their thought, and the great convention broke up, without adjournment, — never to meet again in formal assemblage.

A partisan feeling is easily aroused and personal ambition is quick to find a way, but a machine made Bible is inevitably a conglomerate mass of contradictions, a concatenation of disjointed links.

A Roman Catholic missionary, delivering a course of lectures while on a proselyting tour, said in hearing of your author, "The Bible was not written in English. How, therefore, can the Protestants know that their version is the correct one?"

The epistles of the New Testament, for instance, were written, as occasion arose, to different creeds and churches to settle disputes concerning dogma and Christian principles of morality, to protect against pagan practices and warn against Judaizing tendencies." This is an indirect admission that the Testament is their own handiwork and is another denial of both their parents Paganism and Judaism. There will be more about this lecture on another page.

A great Catholic priest and educator, in a book written to prove his statement, says, "The Bible, so far as the New Testament is concerned,—the part that is important to us — is a wreck that has come down to us."

On later pages there will be copious quotations from the professor and his interesting book of three hundred and fifty pages that he named "Plain Facts for Fair Minds."

The Church had passed through many vicissitudes to try men's souls, but the most alarming was yet to come. The storm cloud of Protestantism rose dense and increased with menacing fury, for the multitudes that had witnessed rivers running red eagerly flocked to any standard that offered refuge from a condition of despair. Protestantism came unbidden by any prophecy, unheralded by any organization, devoid of shield, buckler or any word of authority. It could not offer any excuse or apology for its existence except its own

selfish need; it only brought a message of supplication, its thought indited and borne by its own hand.

Protestantism was born of the Catholic Church, offshoot from the parent tree, a parasite, a leech, a barnacle, a vampire, a fungous growth. It was indebted to the Mother Church for all the prestige it could ever hope to gain.

It was, therefore, ingratitude sharper than venomous sting of serpent, stronger than traitor's arm, vile as perfidy, an injustice to blush the face of truth, a wrong to make the infant's sinews strong as steel, or stir a fever in the blood of age, that Protestantism purloined, stole and appropriated the Bible its parent had built through toilsome centuries, and held that Bible forth as its own certificate of authority, its own credential of power.

The policy of the new partisanship was more inviting, less exacting, dogmatic or imperious; it only suggests a region of punishment, and endless gloom to which it does not pretend authority to condemn for disobedience to its mandate, does not claim so strong an influence with Peter at the gate. More courteous and enticing in its manner of approach, it is a dangerous rival for popular favor; it must be crushed out.

Dangerous microbes require heroic remedies to control their influences and eliminate their presence. At discovery it seems strange enough to hide the face of fiction, marvelous to render fable speechless, but it is a fact that the most vigorous

effort, the most earnest desire of the Roman Catholic Church manifested in church extension work and its great institutions of learning, is to discredit the Bible that was the fruit of its own travail throughout those weary centuries, because to destroy the Bible would remove the foundation on which its only rival rests and would annihilate the whole protesting party with all of its numerous factions and activities; nor is the Bible any longer so great a need or necessity to its builders because it has served its purpose to aid in establishing an organization of authority that to them is inviolable and infallible.

Some years ago, vividly remembered, his Reverence, E. F. Conway delivered a course of proselyting lectures above referred to in Saint Patrick's Church, Kansas City, Mo., of which Father Thomas F. Lillis, now a popular bishop, was then the faithful pastor.

In one of those lectures Rev. Conway declared, "The Bible is not the way to find out Christ, because it is only by the divine authority of the Church that Christians know what the Bible is or what books belong to it.

"Deny the infallible witness of the Church and you have no certainty that the Bible is the Word of God or that any particular book ought to be included in the canon. The Bible was not written in English. How, therefore, can the Protestants know their version is the correct one? Again the Bible nowhere pretends to be a formulary of belief

as is a creed or a catechism. The epistles of the New Testament, for instance, were written as occasion arose to different creeds and churches to settle disputes concerning dogmas and Christian principles of morality, to protest against pagan practices and warn against Judaizing tendencies.

"The use of the Bible alone has ever been productive of denials of Christ's doctrines. It was so in the Early Church and the same holds good since Reformation times. It is not a simple, clear volume that a child may read and understand, but a collection of sublime and mysterious books difficult to understand."

A convert to another party belief always most enthusiastically denounces the tenets he has deserted.

Rev. George M. Searle was a highly educated Protestant but was converted to the beliefs of the other party and is Professor of Astronomy and Mathematics at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C. He is also priest of St. Paul's in New York. He is the author of the book above referred to called, "Plain Facts for Fair Minds," which is distributed by the Catholic Book Exchange, 120 West 60th Street, New York City, N. Y. The Catholic Book Exchange publishes a number of books and magazines replete with argument; also sixty-five leaflets in immense quantities sold at nominal price or given away. "Plain Facts" is retailed at ten cents per copy or distributed gratis to non-Catholics who will read.

The Exchange is the strong arm of Catholic Church extension work.

“Professor George M. Searle, the author of “Plain Facts,” as stated on the title-page, is a teacher in the pulpit and in a great institution of learning. His descriptions are vivid, his logic brilliant and his argument forceful. His authority to teach dogmas cannot be impeached, nor can his ability be questioned.

In his book Father Searle has no contention with atheists or infidels. His appeal in the interest of Catholicism is made only to people supposed to entertain some sort of religious faith.

His manner is plain, direct and candid and he is entitled to the same measure of fairness that he extends to non-Catholics. In making quotations from the book the page from which the extract is taken will be noted in order that those who are so fortunate as to have access to the valuable work may examine the context and decide whether it is honorably done.

On page 7 of “Plain Facts” Professor Searle lays down the broad proposition: “It is merely nonsense to talk about a religion without any dogmas. Take away the dogmas of any religion and there is nothing left of it. Excitement and emotion may be all very well; but there must be something to get excited and emotional about.”

It will be recalled by the readers hereof that in earlier pages of this book some account was given of how all the numerous religions then existent

sent representatives to the scene of the world start-ling tragedy on Mount Calvary to gather the scattered fragment of history, men of diversified languages and babbling tongues, each of whom had worshipped in a different idolatry, had bowed before a stranger shrine that left its indelible imprint, these peoples, who made many blunders and little history in their groping, spent two hundred years carpentering on what they called the Gospels of Matthew and others, and placed them in the archives of the times.

Of this motley crew Professor Searle notes on page 10 of "Plain Facts":

"Of course this great body, this parent stock of Christianity, may have corrupted or changed the faith which Christ gave it in the beginning; may have introduced something false or immoral, or at any rate merely human into that faith; may have usurped powers which do not belong to it; may have done something, in short, which was right to protest against, and have acted in such a way that the only effectual protest was to abandon it, and start in a manner afresh." Again, on page 50, Rev. Searle says, "It is hard to see how a Protestant can have absolute certainty that all of his books are inspired. If he makes a study of the matter he will find that many learned men doubt even the authenticity of great portions of it; so he cannot rest his faith in it on a general agreement among wise men that it was really written by the authors to whom it is commonly assigned," nor

can he defend it on the ground that all pious and faithful Christians have always believed its various books to have come from the writers to which they are usually ascribed, or that they have always considered them as inspired by the spirit of God. Of course there is a difference between these two beliefs; there seems, for instance, to be no obvious reason, as has been remarked, why the writings of Mark or Luke, even if we are sure we have them, should be inspired any more than those of any other of the early Christians.

The fact is that during all the ages of persecutions,—that is, during the first three centuries of Christianity, and for considerable time after,—though the books of Old Testament had been accepted from the Jews, those of the New Testament were by no means put in a definite shape. Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea, the celebrated ecclesiastic historian, writing in the early part of the fourth century, tells us that several of the books we now accept were then in doubt.

On page 53 Professor Searle continues: “The first Christian synod which we find as sanctioning a special canon, or collection of books as properly belonging to the Bible, was that of Hippo in Africa in 393. This Canon of Hippo was confirmed by councils held at Carthage in 397 and 419 and in 494 as nearly as can be ascertained by Pope Gelasius.”

On page 26 of “Plain Facts,” Rev. Searle says: “That the Bible is not a book like the Koran, for

instance, set forth by the founder of the religion as its authoritative exposition, is, in fact, the fundamental weakness of Bible Protestantism. But the Bible, so far from being such a book, is simply, as far as the New Testament, its important part for us, is concerned, a collection of Christian writings, on its face, not essentially more conclusive than the works of other early Christian writers would be, especially if we consider the Gospel of St. Mark, and the Gospel and Acts of St. Luke; for no special reason is evident why their words should be infallible. They were not apostles; and we do not read of their having any divine commission to teach Christianity to the world."

Now this consideration opens another chasm under the feet of Bible Protestants, which would be of itself fatal to them. It is this:

What certainty have they, after all, that the books of the Bible were written by inspired men and that no others were? Why do they admit just these and reject others? How do they know for sure, even, that these were written by the authors to whom they are commonly ascribed? For one thing, do they know for sure who wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, or even the Gospels themselves?

From page 54: "Now it is quite manifest why Catholics regard just such books as belonging to the Bible, and such others as not so belonging. It is because such is the decision of the Church assembled in council and the Popes acting in their official capacity. Whatever one may think of it,

it is a clear and intelligible reason; for we regard the Church and the Popes as infallible in such matters."

From page 27: "The fact is that this blind faith in the Bible, as Protestants have the book, got together for us English speaking people under King James, but trusted in as if it had been brought to earth visibly and publicly by an angel from heaven, is an act far more unreasonable and groundless than any which they even charge us Catholics with making."

If we act honestly, we must confess that we have no certainty; if we proceed on these lines, that we have not the whole Christian faith and can never obtain it; it is something which the apostles had, but which has, perhaps now to a great extent, been lost. We have some pieces of it, but not with any certainty the whole. It is, as has been said, merely a wreck that has come down to us.

It is pitiable beyond expression of human tongue that a great Bible should be shattered in the strife of religious partisanship; a Bible that floated down the ages on rivers of tears, tears of joy and tears of despair; a Bible that has comforted the sorrowing, brought consolation to the bereaved and courage to faltering multitudes; and that has stilled the troubled deeps of the great throbbing bosom on the restless tide of time.

A great reformer challenged the tyranny of King Charles, who cheerfully cut off the heads of people who incurred his displeasure.

This vigorous reformer collected a revolting army and at the head of his favorite regiment, which he called the Ironside Regiment, he went into the battle singing "Old Hundred" and other pious tunes, and defeated the forces of the cruel monarch.

The followers of this intrepid leader, no less courageous, braved the fury of chilly winds and waves, crossed the ocean in approaching winter time and landed on a barren rock in hostile climate, among savage tribes that roamed the forests. They emblazoned the word "Liberty" upon their banners, although they did not know, nor can we comprehend, the full meaning of that word "Liberty."

That those Puritans burned witches was proof of zeal and pious devotion obedient to the Mosaic command, "Thou shalt not leave any witch alive."

The bravest body of men that ever assembled declared that all men are created free and equal and that liberty is one of the universal endowments, and in support of these propositions they pledged to each other their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

Far reaching and important as have been the results of that declaration, it was only the rift of dawn, the harbinger of a wider light, a loftier liberty,—the same cry that went up from the Plains of Judea, "Freedom from the bondage of Priestcraft."

But the Bible is not a wreck, nor can the Bible

ever be successfully attacked. It is only the theological machine that is wasting away. The drive-wheel is losing force, the levers are bent awry, the shafting is out of line, and the pulleys are loose and uncertain.

The mythological dreaming about the blood of a man shed in vicarious atonement for the fabled sin of the whole world to appease the anger of an idol in the temple of Baal or in the Hebrew Sanhedrin or in the ether above the clouds vomiting forth wrath and shouting "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," is cruel doctrine, unjust to a den of robbers, false to the honor among thieves and gains no credence in thoughtful minds.

The demagogues, the wiseacres who with eyes uplifted in holy light give details about an unseen world, are often mistaken about things in this world.

The story that was told of a babe in lowly life that grew to manhood and called a dozen men about him, who wrote credentials of authority for each other and formed an oligarchy is a fabrication and a falsehood. That one of those men holds the key to unlimited power is mythology born of fable. The mystery of a virgin impregnated by a ghost, with all supernaturalism, fades away in the light of observation and experience. Creeds wither under the gleam of reason; dogmas are outlawed by scientific criticism within their own domain; and no link of all the chain remains except an orphaned disinherited superstition.

Founded on the quicksands of selfishness and ambitious for power, the Roman Catholic fabric must crumble and fall onto the scrap heap of the many other religions that, corroded by the destroying tooth of time, have fallen and perished. And its worse imitator, its Protestant parasite that has trimmed its sails to catch the popular breeze until they are in shreds, its rudder lost,— it is a derelict, a maverick, a cormorant that, like the grave and the earth that is not filled with water, is never satisfied; its only cry is, "Give, give, give." It must soon crumble away onto the same old junk pile of perished religions.

Christianity, unhindered, cheerfully resumes her smiling reign of helpfulness, promoting peace over all the earth through the good will of man aided and upheld by the Bible, which shall forever stand a monument towering to the clouds, attesting the majesty of mankind.

Beautiful and inevitable under the law of being, the Bible partook of the purer atmosphere in the better element of society during all the ages of its unfoldment.

Men of righteous thought and purpose who arose during various periods in those centuries, wise men, devas, sages, evolved in their minds and formulated into sentences many wise sayings and precepts that percolated into the bibles, sometimes under adverse conditions perhaps, precepts that shall forever shine radiant in the constellation of Truth, whispering tributes to the devotion, the aspiration, the

justice and divinity native in the unhindered human breast; and the Bible shall endure, peacefully gliding down the stream of time,— a pilot, a guide, an ever present help in the great uplift.

CHAPTER XVIII

THOMAS PAINE

When Civil War raised its disturbing head in the United States by an assault upon Fort Sumter, the attacking party was unusually fortunate in the unity of sentiment among its people. Had a dissenting voice been lifted up it would have been stilled at once.

The opposite condition unfortunately prevailed in the other section of the country. True, the dread alarm of war aroused a strong sentiment in favor of the preservation of the Union of States, but there was a large element of faultfinders, pessimists whose partisanship had dethroned their reason and rendered appeal unavailing, and there was no power to still their busy tongues.

What happened in opposition to the struggle for preservation of the Union was an exact duplicate of what had occurred in the travail of the nation for its birth, except that in the earlier struggle there arose an influence to nullify and counteract the poisonous infection. There were Tories perniciously active; there were Royalists, loyal to tyrannical, kingly rule; there were enduring family ties that refused to be broken; the gaunt spectre of poverty snarled his forbidding fangs; grim want

pinched the half famished soldiers in the field, and compelled many of them to flee and seek sufficient comforts to prolong life.

Amid all these frowning discouragements there existed a latent power that should come forth responsive to the need of all those troubled years; a star of hope arose that lighted the pathway until an emblem emblazoned with many stars unfurled its graceful folds to the breezes on land and sea, defiant to the approach of any tyranny. That star was the fire that flashed from the pen of Thomas Paine, "mightier than any sword."

England had not yet reached that exalted plane of civilization to which the hand of progress is now lifting the world in spite of more pretentious institutions. England was then less democratic, more proud of royalty; she was exacting of her colonies, dogmatic, overbearing, dictatorial, and imperative.

While representing some American interests in England, Benjamin Franklin formed the acquaintance of Thomas Paine, where he was native, and attracted by his evident force of character, invited him to visit the new country, furnishing him with a letter that enabled him to secure a position as writer on the *Philadelphia Journal*.

Thomas Paine was a devoutly pious man, worshipping humbly before a God of Nature, a Being of truth and justice as he saw it. Though a Quaker by education, a careful student of the Bible, he was infidel to Mosaic bondage.

Thomas Paine was one among many. His earliest impulse and his latest emotion was freedom, — unblemished liberty of conscience in upright living was his foremost thought. Freedom tuned his every song, breathed forth in every prayer, was the subject of every sermon.

Thomas Paine possessed little financial skill; he recognized no value in money except for immediate use; like other great philosophers, at times he had not where to lay his head, and like them, he was at last a martyr.

In his stern integrity his judgment was rarely at fault. The power of his intellect was gigantic; his reasoning none might successfully attack; his logic was unanswerable.

No great error ever assailed by the accusing voice of Thomas Paine or smitten by his unyielding pen but fell, or is falling, under their terrible deliverance.

He held various positions of trust, both at home and in the land of his adoption. His unrestful mind caused him to travel about quite a bit. He saw unrequited labor held in bondage; his great soul was stirred,—incensed at the Government that such outrage was tolerated. His thought was prototype of the feeling that actuated Henry Ward Beecher, Wendell Phillips, Garrison, John Brown, "Jim" Lane and other active abolitionists.

Thomas Paine wrote an article, now of much historical value, severely arraiguing the Government at home for the atrocities it allowed. It was pub-

lished to the world through the columns of the *Philadelphia Journal*, October 18th, 1775.

First of all, deeply bowed by the solemnity of the conditions, he evinced a childlike faith and hope for guidance by the "King of kings." That article breathed forth the first breath that ever pulsed the vital atmosphere of these suffering colonies, prophetic of independence. That great document gave the first intimation of the ultimate freedom that should come to the slave that groaned under a weary load, accomplished in 1865. It read:

"When I reflect on the horrid cruelties exercised by Britain in the East Indies, how thousands perished by the artificial famine, how religion and every manly principle of honor and honesty were sacrificed to luxury and pride, when I read of the wretched natives caused to perish for no other crimes than because, sickened with the miserable scene, they refused to fight; when I reflect on these and a thousand instances of similar barbarity, I firmly believe that the Almighty, in compassion to mankind, will curtail the power of Britain.

"And when I reflect on the use she hath made of the discovery of this new world,—that the paltry dignity of earthly kings hath been set up in preference to the great cause of the 'King of kings,' that instead of Christian examples to the Indians, she hath basely tampered with their passions, imposed on their ignorance, and made them the tools of treachery and murder; and when to these and many other melancholy reflections I add this sad

remark that ever since the discovery of America she has employed herself in the most horrid of all traffics, that of human flesh, unknown to the most savage nations, hath yearly ravaged the hapless shores of Africa, robbing it of its unoffending inhabitants to cultivate her stolen dominions in the West; when I reflect on these I hesitate not for a moment to believe that the Almighty will finally separate America from Britain. Call it independency or what you will, if it is the cause of God and humanity, it will go on. And when the Almighty shall have blest us and made us a people dependent only on Him, then may our first gratitude be shown by an act of continental legislation which shall put a stop to the importation of Negroes for sale, soften the hard fate of those who are here, and in time secure their freedom."

A desolation of tyrannous oppression pervaded Britain. The work of subjugation had been commenced; the skirmishes of Lexington and Bunker Hill had been fought; gloom pervaded the Colonies. Near the close of the year 1775 there was met together a coterie of strong men to consider some discouraging news recently received, among the members being Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and some others. Franklin arose from his seat.

"What," he said in earnest tones, "is to be the end of all this? What should we strive to obtain in justice from Great Britain? Shall it be a change of ministry that a tax be softened? Or on what is our highest hope centered?"

Thomas Paine had entered the room in time to hear the appeal. He had spent sleepless nights; he had burned midnight oil. His thought had been matured. His great round eyes flashed with the fire of a zeal that knew no bounds; his shoulders thrown back, his fists clenched, his whole frame shaking with emotion;

"These colonies," he shouted, "must become independent of England."

Although long cherished in those stalwart minds its first utterance caused a shout; pallor pervaded all countenances; but Paine continued argument in support of his awful statement. At its close George Washington sprang to his feet, and grasping both hands of Thomas Paine in his firm grasp,

"Go!" he implored. "Go to your room and write a book explaining to the world your thought."

In a few weeks there was printed and published that gem of logic called "Common Sense." It produced a psychological crisis; public sentiment was solidified, a sentiment long feebly vacillating in thought atmosphere was firmly fixed. That little book was the fitting prelude to the immortal Declaration of Independence of which Thomas Paine, more than all other men, was the author and prompting spirit.

Dismal war waged his grim activity in unequal battle; the enemy was pompous with some successes over our meagerly supplied little army; hunger and want forced frequent desertions; half

a dozen deputies in the New York Assembly resigned; the Congress held its sessions listlessly; the letters General Washington wrote to his friends were pathetic; in one letter he wrote, "You can scarcely imagine a condition more unpromising."

The battle of Trenton with well equipped Hessians was imminent. Thomas Paine was a soldier carrying a half filled haversack and a flint-lock musket. He knew the situation painfully. On scraps of parchment, by the light of camp fires, while his weary comrades slept, Thomas Paine wrote an essay called "The Crisis." It was printed in a widely circulated newspaper a week later. Copies of "The Crisis" were read to his company by every captain in the army. It had the effect of oil upon troubled waters. It was like a vivid flash of lightning from a clear sky at mid-day; it electrified all of the colonies; generous contributions were hastily sent; recruits flocked in; patriotic deserters straggled back to their places in the ranks; the deputies took courage and hastened back to the Assembly; the Congress held cheerful sessions; the Commander of the army tapped the hilt of his sword cheerfully, as he spoke words of encouragement to smiling soldiers.

The battle of Trenton was fiercely fought, and the boasting Hessians humbled in ignominious defeat.

The language of "The Crisis" had not been classic or mild-mannered; literary critics frowned and the rigidly righteous groaned again at its blunt

arraignment. But for terseness of expression, ready argument, courage of statement, and irresistible logic it had not been excelled on the classic forum of Greece, in the thunderous eloquence in the halls of Roman Senate; had not blazed from any mighty pen or vibrated from any life before it was paralleled by the words of the only Lincoln on the battle ground at Gettysburg.

The first sentence of the pamphlet, "The Crisis," "These are the times that try men's souls," at once became a battle song, a watchword that sounded down the line on dress parade, a motto, a maxim that shall echo from human tongue while spoken language expresses thought.

One paragraph from "The Crisis" will give a good idea of the whole.

"These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands by it now will deserve the love and the thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us; the harder the conflict the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap we esteem too lightly. It is dearness only that gives to everything its value.

"Heaven knows how to put a price on its goods, and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as Freedom should not be highly rated."

After the army had been strengthened, the war went on with increased vigor for considerable time,

but each succeeding day brought changes on its tide. The sounds produced by those thunderous appeals in "The Crisis" vibrated away to their place in the archives of Time; their echoes died in the valleys left behind.

Perfidy, prejudice, and superstition refuse to be entirely eliminated, and like some other serpents, they can grow new bodies so long as a spark of vitality remains in their brainless skulls, and they grew again. The Tories and their allies had forgotten; with newly grown fangs they growled and snarled, and stung in places that want made vulnerable. They deserved to be smitten again, and they were again laid low by the same sturdy hand, with weapons that the new conditions freely supplied as the years of toilsome strife had rolled on.

Again and again Thomas Paine addressed the colonists, until sixteen pamphlets, each called "The Crisis," and written as occasion required, rounded the cycle of that war in a halo of victory.

For the colonies, Hope had mounted on sturdier wing through the waning years.

Some fire eaters in the House of Lords suggested that they arm the American Indians to waste our forces in savage butcheries. To her everlasting credit be it said the humanity of England promptly frowned upon such atrocity. If England was avaricious and tyrannous, she was not so brutal.

Thomas Paine had been the lone, sturdy pioneer whose searches made discoveries that yielded in rich fruition such glorious achievement, impelled by the

overmastering love for freedom that impulsed his being to its depths. He groped through the fogs of tyranny that hurt, blinded and stifled the suffering masses until in the constellation of justice he discovered the distant star that signalled the harbor of Liberty. With trusty pike pole he cleared away the obstructing driftwood; his own sturdy hands filled the boilers that drove the propeller wheel. The stalwart hand of George Washington, that prince of statesmen, held firm the rudder that guided the ship of state safe into the harbor where she proudly rides the wave of oppression,—a monitor ready steamed up, defiant, to any flag that dares mischievously intrude.

When war had smoothed his wrinkled front and peace assumed her gentle sway throughout the colonies, some men were big enough to render unto Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's,—to give to Thomas Paine proper credit for the masterful influence he had exerted in the most trying emergencies.

General Washington often repeated to his friends his statement that the pen of Paine had been more powerful than the cannon. It was afterward paraphrased to read: "The pen is mightier than the sword," and will remain a gem of literature while tongue lends utterance to thought, a silent tribute to genius.

History was not always complete, but many valuable paragraphs and letters have been preserved on its pages.

"It has been very generally propagated through the continent that I wrote the pamphlet 'Common Sense.' I could not have written anything, in so manly and striking a style. JOHN ADAMS."

After writing the book, "Common Sense," Paine made speeches at several points in support of its suggestions. George Washington heard some of them and he wrote,

"A few more such flaming arguments as were exhibited at Falmouth and Norfolk, added to the sound doctrine and unanswerable reasoning contained in the pamphlet 'Common Sense,' will not leave numbers at a loss to decide on the propriety of separation."

Still actuated only by his love for human freedom and the promotion of Truth, worshipping humbly before the shrine of Truth and Justice as he read them in Nature's unerring Bible, upheld by her omnipotent law, obedient to the behests of Nature's God whom he revered, always a pioneer, Thomas Paine discovered that the ancient Mosaic Dynasty was a political scheme of misrule and tyranny devised and promoted by an organization of keen, crafty, Jewish demagogues, that their Bible was a growth, a statute book enacted in their Sanhedrin through more than two thousand years of powerful human brain exhaustion, but yielding rich harvest the while. It was a Bible that compassed the whole wide scope of human impulse; it mapped out plots for murder, robbery, rape, and rapine; it was more than a hint to the licentious

and the adulterer; it was an allurements to the helpless and ignorant and a flaming sword to the disobedient who dared to make protest, although its first commandment suggested that act of disobedience that first brought death into the world and all our woe,—the original seed that brought forth that abundant harvest of four thousand woeful years.

Thomas Paine also discovered that the New Dispensation was the old Mosaic idolatry built from its wreckage, the same old dogmas, the same old Mosaic law of imperious human commandment, the same idols in their temple of Baal, the same God of wrath and vengeance pictured in imagination, the same old machine wrecked on Calvary, rebuilt in the fourth century with several important levers invented, burnished and supplied as observation suggested or expediency dictated,—resurrection, atonement, immortality, promise, reward, flaming pit, future punishment, impending gloom, eternal burning,—all new forces, smiling allurements, or demands of terror.

Thomas Paine had long deplored the conditions; his love of human freedom yet more compelling, he decided to lift that pen of his, "mightier than the sword," and write another pamphlet,—a book that he would name "The Age of Reason," and he wrote "Part First" of the book in the prime of physical manhood, yet vigorous. Then he remembered that his patriotism had been challenged in a former effort of helpfulness; he had been accused

of being a pampered hireling paid to write in selfish motive. He had then only aided a few petty colonies that a tax on tea be softened. Now the problem that confronted him was monumental, almost world-wide. That problem involved Christendom to its farthest recesses. He was attacking an evil deep-rooted through nearly six thousand years of time. Still more undaunted, with keener, stronger resolutions to make liberty more sure, Thomas Paine decided to wait until the cycle of his life, rounding to the grave, should render him immune from any charge of ambitious design.

Only when his limbs trembled with the weight of age, and his eyes were dimmed with its gathering mist, did he resume his work of love. His mind clear and strong as in sturdy manhood, his child-like method glowing with the light of a sincerity no man might challenge, Thomas Paine wrote as his creed in "The Age of Reason,"

"I believe in one God and I hope for happiness hereafter. My mind is my Church. The world is my country; to do good is my religion. Nature's inspiring realm is my Bible. I believe in the brotherhood of Man, and I believe that religious duties consist in doing good, loving mercy and striving to make our fellow creatures happy."

His challenges to theology were blunt and unmistakable. He said:

"Any system of religion that shocks the mind of a child cannot be a true system. The age of enforced ignorance commenced with the New Testa-

ment system. Let us propagate morality unfettered by superstition. Of all tyrannies that afflict mankind, tyranny in religion is the worst. The belief in a cruel God makes a cruel man. To read the Bible without horror we must undo everything that is tender, sympathizing and benevolent in the heart of man."

Every one of the voluminous arguments offered by Thomas Paine in "The Age of Reason" was proven by a passage frankly quoted from the Bible; the statement confirmed by their own witness. Reply was impossible.

There has never been or ever can be a word of argument offered in support of a proposition that hides away at the approach of reason. Religion is self-conferred authority, a boastful pretense of interested partisans.

The ancient hierarchy enforced its commandment and satisfied its lust for gain with the spears and bludgeons of robbery.

The new Judaism quenched its thirst for power and varied its authority in the crackling of burning fagots until the arm that inflicted torture was paralyzed, and since that time it has hissed its anger in bitter epithets; infidel, atheist, agnostic, unbeliever are favorite morsels rolled on its smarting, peppery tongue.

Another fearsome epoch had arrived; another shock convulsed. That book to stand, the reputation of Thomas Paine to live,— all would be lost.

Again politics found it good policy to make

strange bedfellows. Those two bitter jealousies must snuggle down in the same forbidding nest to devise methods for common defense.

The stake was yet warm in the embers; freedom to exercise thought, so recently awakened from a long, unrestful slumber, had not learned to lisp the language of reason.

Those two powerful organizations, Protestant and Catholic, practiced in their art in that century long ago, could still mold the common religious beliefs almost unfailingly. With the only weapon of attack left them since the Reformation, their ghoulish calumny burrowed low and buried the reputation of Thomas Paine deep in the grave of obscurity and disgrace.

Fortunately some letters from eminent men are on record alluding to the value of Paine's services. He had been making an extended visit in France where he received the following letter.

"You express a wish in your letter to return to America in a national ship; Mr. Dawson, who brings over the treaty, and who will present you with this letter, is charged with orders to the captain of the *Maryland* to receive and accommodate you back, entertaining sentiments appreciating the value of your services.

"It is not necessary for me to tell you how much all your countrymen, I speak of the great mass of the people,— are interested in your welfare. They have not forgotten the history of their own Revolution and the difficult scenes through which they

passed; nor do they review its several stages without reviving in their bosoms a due sensibility of the merits of those who served them in that great and arduous conflict. The crime of ingratitude has not yet stained, and I trust never will stain, our national character. You are considered by them as not only having rendered important services in our own revolution, but as being on a more extensive scale the friend of human rights, and a distinguished and able defender of public liberty. To the welfare of Thomas Paine the Americans are not, nor can they be, indifferent. THOMAS JEFFERSON."

The coming decades shall bring the time when the epitaph of Thomas Paine can be justly written. A grateful people shall erect a towering monument in appreciation and a proud nation shall carve high in its temple of fame the honored name of Thomas Paine.

To the thousand charges that the craft made against Paine was added one more charge justly brought; this count in their indictment was easily proven; he was a poor man; he died in poverty. But in bringing that charge they forgot something. In their frenzy to hold the multitudes in the materialism of idolatry to worship the flesh and blood of a man and to fall prostrate before a cross of inanimate wood, they forgot the precepts of a great Teacher. They preferred not to recognize the uplifting philosophy that may be found in abjectest poverty. In their plethora and plenty they ig-

nored the lofty spirituality of the Man who boasted that he had not where to lay his head. In pursuit of their own selfish, narrow purposes, they forgot that there had lived in direct poverty a Philosopher whose shoe's latchet they were unworthy to stoop down and unloose. Jesus rebuked their vengeful rule of an eye for an eye, and substituted his helpful injunction that "ye love one another," his doctrine being a doctrine of love. Jesus broke to fragments the tablets that their man Moses was alleged to have brought down out of the mountain when he said, "Howbeit in vain do they teach for doctrine the commandments of men"; he trampled their decalogue and the whole of it into the dust of the field, as he fearlessly plucked the ears of corn on the Sabbath day, as he taught freedom to the multitudes through a gospel of helpfulness and consideration for the rights of every living thing.

Jesus sowed seed on good ground, but the ground was sodded thick with thistles and nettle weeds of commandment and dogmas, that precluded growth of the seed through many centuries until at length, Progress withered and dried the weeds and they were burned in the fires of Truth.

The lines in the lives of those two men, Jesus and Paine, were strangely parallel, though they lived wide apart in period of time, in nativity of soil, and lisp of language; yet there was unity of method and unity of purpose; both condemned the same system, both sought to promote liberty of

will and freedom of conscience. Both found spiritual nourishment in promoting human happiness. Both were of lowly birth, lived in physical want and died in poverty without regret. In their philosophy poverty was the greatest riches,—the strongest uplift out of grovelling materialism up to sustaining spirituality.

The marvellous endowment of Jesus was fostered, encouraged, and developed through eighteen years of most helpful instruction with that brotherhood roaming the field of Nature, heeding her unerring lessons.

The kindred endowment of Paine was strengthened, made rugged, unfolded and matured in the school of adversity.

Both were martyrs. Jesus was nailed to a cross; the while that spears were thrust into his side a cup of wormwood was cruelly pressed to his lips.

Paine was the victim of wormwood injected by venomous tooth and slimed and slavered by many slanderous tongues amid the gnashing of vengeful teeth. As a lamb before her shearers is dumb, so each opened not his mouth.

But the cloud that shadowed each closing scene bore brilliant silvery lining now becoming visible. Bread cast upon the waters so long and long ago is returning.

Jesus has lain long in his quiet grave waiting for the seed sown by his loving hand to germinate; but the ground was sodded, and remained cold

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and desolated. At last, the ground is warmed and cheered to life and growth, lighted by the sunny rays that the genial Paine shed upon it; the seed has germinated and is growing to rich fruition of ripening grain, to be gathered in loving hands and garnered in the hearts of uplifted humanity.

XIX

WEALTH

Unheard of before, without a name among men, struggling with poverty in its infant years, and endeavoring to construct a Testament as its credential for authority, the Catholic organization through connivance with that shrewd pagan politician, Constantine, who was then ruler over the great Roman Empire, obtained aid, comfort, and financial assistance. In recognition of the favor that placed it on substantial basis and brought royal prestige and strength with the pagan aristocracy that flocked to the new standard, the Church forgot the ancient hatred and bitterness against Paganism that it inherited from its parent, the Mosaic hierarchy; it gratefully adopted the name, Roman Catholic Church.

During the long period of fifteen hundred years intervening, the organization has been diligent, soliciting Peter's Pence and other sums large and small; and by extortion and every method visible to political acumen it has increased until the Church is the wealthiest and most powerful trust that the world has ever known.

Deprived of sentimentality and the emotion that

readily merges with hypnosis, any religion would wither like grass mown under the rays of a midday sun.

Nunneries are useful accessories to the organization, contributing aid from many angles.

Nuns are women cajoled to long fix their gaze on hypnotic crystals in the form of a cross placed high up in imagination, and by the hour they listen to low, monotonous murmurings, unintelligible sentences mumbled from some dead language like moans heard from the tomb of ages, until they are permanently hypnotized, subservient to the bidding of any operator. Upon request they cheerfully surrender their fortunes aggregating millions and submit to rigorous surveillance. If they look out through the window or open doorway interested in the things of worldly life, they must make confession and suffer for sin as surely as did Ananias and Sapphira in the ancient fable.

One of them is never allowed on the street unattended. They are compelled to subsist on coarse diet and wear loud-wailing raiment.

They are sent out in pairs to solicit contributions to the "building fund" and supplies for hospitals to the glory and honor of the Church.

The Protestant denominations are not only in rivalry with the parent church for popularity, but are competitors with each other for prestige and power, and none of them is oblivious to the main thing.

A popular bishop retiring from Trinity Church

in a recent year reported that the investments of the parish were increasing in value at the rate of one hundred thousand dollars per year. Although it has been in the field less than one fourth the number of centuries, the organization founded by John Wesley is very prosperous and is slowly closing the gap in the race to lead. Not many more generations may pass until Methodists and Catholics shall come in under the wire neck and neck with equal wealth.

With inflated or well padded statistics and eloquent claims for what it has accomplished in the interest of poor, downtrodden idolatrous heathens, each denomination boasts that civilization follows its teaching with the Bible. But does it? "While tumbling down the turbid stream, Lord love us, how we apples swim!"

No one of them ever pioneered a foot of ground that it did not find that the Catholics had been there and already planted the Holy Bible.

As a result of eloquent pleading, tuneful songs and plaintive pleading, vast sums are contributed by a sympathetic, generous humanity. This money is used to send missionaries to foreign lands where they arrive, with baggage securely locked and every precaution taken, sometimes among people who had never known lock and key from shore to shore of the empire.

And in cities where merchants range their wares, with price attached, on the curb during early morning hours, shoppers visit the market during the

day, make their selections and leave the required shekels as purchase price. These people seem very civil, much civilized.

The missionaries, intelligent, capable people, report discovery of fields rich for agriculture, mining, timber, fisheries and other profitable employments. Commerce and industry are quick to invade the inviting fields and are protected by the powerful navies of the nations.

If intrigue, lying, cheating, horse stealing, and other indirect methods follow the invasion of commerce, the Bible ought not to be charged with the inharmony, nor should a Bible, teaching vengeance be credited with an advancement that better influences have brought.

Another of the subterfuges behind which sophistry seeks to conceal its graceless shape is the specious statement that religious hands did not shed that guiltless blood on Calvary's ruthless hill. If Roman soldiers performed the physical act they were only the instruments of law, no more responsible than the halter that dangles from the gallows or the volts shot through the electric chair.

In compliance with a treaty that had long existed, Roman officers must execute persons sentenced by Hebrew courts. Crucifixion was the method of execution then in vogue, and the result was inevitable.

XX

SPIRITUALISM

All organisms possessing life are wonderfully made. The human body is constructed with such skill that it only requires supply of nourishment to continue motor force, and with reasonable attention it will continue its functions for many years with unflinching regularity. The mind cooperates with the body and many of their methods are analogous, yet the vibrations of the mind are quicker, more tense, more refined than the pulsations of the body. To the mind is given full responsibility of guardianship and control of the organization, a responsibility that is not all a burden, for nothing else so nerves the will, chastens the impulses, trains and disciplines the forces of thought and leads to generous development of possibilities along the higher lines of life as does a sense of responsibility wisely appreciated and diligently pursued.

Snarcs await unguarded footsteps and weeds spring up in untilled fields. The mind must be open and receptive to education, which renders unremitting care a necessity, for the minions of mischief are a busy horde and we are curious about

things that are new or interesting, especially if they have attracted the attention of our friends.

The forces in the unseen world are more numerous and more powerful than the forces that we see in the visible world. In all the ages, among all peoples, from the most ignorant to the most enlightened, there have been people exercising forces whose sources they know not, forces armored with allurements boding no aid to the common good, sometimes unconsciously, often with ambitious design,—black art in all of its forms, voodooism, spiritualism, witchcraft, necromancy, sorcery, mesmerism, hypnotism and religious frenzy. Spiritualism can offer very meager apology for its intrusion; its most earnest votaries have never tried to suggest any good that it has accomplished, yet it has disturbed and vexed whole communities.

An acquaintance of the writer, in relating his early introduction into the mystery of spiritualism, said that the medium told him his mother was present and wished to be recognized, that he remained incredulous until she said to her son, perhaps he would know her if she wore the usual green breakfast shawl. He said that was just what he had in mind, and felt sure that no other person present ever knew of the shawl. It was satisfactory to him, and he served devoutly in the ranks of the organization, groping blindly through the darksome years without reward or satisfaction, for he never again so much as got

a glimpse of the green shawl. If a friend who had solved the one problem of all problems that has convulsed the whole world since time was young, had trod the realm of the infinite eternal, should really return to earth, it would be extremely unkind if he failed to communicate something of profounder interest than some silly twaddle about an antiquated green breakfast shoulder shawl. Yet in all fairness this is a true sample of the highest and best that the system can offer in exchange for the tremendous sacrifice, the surrender of individuality; nor is this system alone in its method of exaction. A spiritualist is rarely born; he is a transformation, a chemicalization resulting from the transfusion of a subtle influence, an invention perhaps of the antiquated "born again" process of ecclesiasticism.

The operators turn down the light in order that they may more certainly *turn down the light*; next they join hands around the room, forming a magnetic circuit to still the nerve forces and dull the thought sensations, and the subjects are thus initiated. The infatuation is fascinating to the point of confusion and increases by indulgence through the years, the victim living on a misty flame where he eagerly laps up all exuding froth. That deluded victim, the alleged spirit medium, is short lived and imbecile; a bruised reed; a broken vessel; a weakened, negative mind, sensitive to telepathic influence; a perverted wireless receiving station, eagerly grasping every thought

sent out or held latent in any mind, sure to find every green breakfast shawl in the minds of people present.

To call this sort of stuff evidence of spirit returned from the great unknown should make Patience restless on her couch and Reason hide his eyes in pity of it. The best authority on the subject of spiritualism is written by a fluent writer who is a cogent reasoner, from his point of observation, and he certainly is right in his statement that the whole system is a great psychological crime, his conclusions based on the results that follow, though he is an ardent member of the cult whose mind has been tinctured by the strange influence and he devoutly believes to his latest breath that the spirits of the departed, unhappy in their new environment, do return to earth only to cast their burdens of woe onto the shoulders of friends yet in the flesh and pour their vials of misery to disturb the harmony of earth, and never yet have brought one meed of helpfulness to earthly sorrow.

This earnest writer cites numerous instances in which he alleges that evil or pernicious habits in life have been transmitted back from the grim valley of death and fastened their fangs in the flesh of innocence. Especially, he claims, this is true of the liquor demon, that sober men of commendable habits have been suddenly seized and found themselves in its den imbibing the stuff that satisfies only to enrage. Let us pause to reiterate

a statement that cannot be too often repeated. Thought is the cause of all causes. Thought in the minds of men made the watches we carry in our pockets. Thought in the great universal divine mind of Nature built the limitless universe and hung the planets revolving in their orbits. Thoughts are forces that, strongly sent out, leave their impress indelible on the environments. Men who have seen the murderous knife uplifted that was to shed their blood have sent out thoughts that left the building spooky and would not be still until the man, the method and the knife were discovered, when the thoughts quieted and peace again reigned in that house.

In a certain large city not far away stands a well-known residence building, quiet in its peaceful neighborhood, occupied by a happy family with space to spare, which is furnished and rented to people in need of a place to call home. A couple of days after a recent change of occupancy, the tenant went to the landlady with a complaint, saying his wife could not sleep in those rooms because she so often heard the voices of men talking excitedly; that last night she heard them say distinctly that wheat had advanced a cent a bushel, and later oats and barley had each fallen off two points. The lady happened to be a thinker who had long maintained her own individuality, so that having eyes to see, she could see, and having ears to hear, she could hear, and she replied that was all perfectly natural, for the

men who had vacated the rooms for years were speculators in grain who had their own wire and knew all that transpired on the principal markets of the country. He and his wife might vacate if they wished and she would rent to people whose minds were less sensitive and receptive.

Our friends the spiritualists were nonplussed. They could not claim that the men who had only moved across the street had returned from the shore far off, and were trying to break the grain market. In their seances and dreamy vision with the light turned down, they may see heavy furniture moved about the room, and pianos idly tossed to the ceiling to no useful purpose. If the spirits of dead men possess more strength than live men, and they returned for any good purpose instead of mischief, it would be with better grace that they come around and load the piano into a wagon when their friends still bound in the flesh should find it cheaper and more agreeable to move than pay further rent to a grouchy, grasping landlord.

A mule is not a horse, neither is a mule an ass. A mule, incapable of reproducing his species without respectable parentage, does not belong to any race or tribe of animals. A mule is the mongrel, disreputable product of two distinct races of animals. Analogously, spiritualism is without guy-rope to stay his trembling shape, without a prop or any form of support, without an excuse for its existence. Spiritualism is the

mulatto progeny of paranoia and hypnosis,— an infatuation, a nightmare, a dream, a delirium, a delusion, an uncanny fungus breathing forth mental malaria, the product of an unrestful age,— it will live during its little day and then tumble over into the scrap heap of the isms that have vexed the race through weary ages.

Returning to the man with distorted appetite, it is in strict accordance with psychological law that the agonizing suggestions he uttered and often repeated should be a germ that would soon take root in the mind of the friend — who had sympathized all the more warmly if the victim had died — and influenced the hand to carry to the lips that fatal first glass of intoxicant. That same inflexible, infallible, psychic law requires that every suggestion, every influence, every control of mind upon mind must be transmitted here upon this plane of activity through its own native atmosphere, and cannot be flung from some unknown, far off region through the darkness and dampness of the tomb. It may be written down as an unfailing axiom that everything that occurs in our life experiences and all that exists in earth, or sea, or sky, or in the waters under the earth exists only by lease of law as it is written down in Nature's statute book, and was enunciated by her most earnest advocate on the shores of troubled Galilee, and on the shuddering plains of Palestine.

XXI

DIVORCE

Let us never forget that there are two sides to the picture that human society presents to our view.

If it is organized, the minority is more inimical, more dangerous to the helpless individuals that constitute the unorganized masses. The selfish ambition of masterful demagogues finds a way to dominate; its hoarse, grating voice drowns the gentler vibrations, while meekness silently plods along, ever ready to extend helpfulness to the hands that struggle. The laws of Nature are immutable, yet harmonious. Every effect results from some cause, and every seed must bring forth fruit after its own kind. Thorns cannot bear olives, neither can thistles produce figs. No man can serve two contending masters. No two opposite races of animals can have the same taste. Sheep cannot eat meat; dogs cannot subsist on grass.

The Church is organized and struggles desperately for its existence; and right here the line is distinctly drawn between the opposite elements of society,—impudent mendacity on one side, and

shrinking innocence on the other side. Religion could not live one fateful hour if it could not breathe the atmosphere of society. Religion is a leech, a barnacle, a parasite, that feeds and fattens on the substance of society; the spoils so rich, its opulence so attractive, that about six hundred different sects or partisanships have sprung up, each a parasite jealous of its neighbors. Five hundred and ninety-nine of those sects charge that the other one is wrong, and the one replies that they are all wrong. For once they are telling the truth about each other.

We took our little children to church and to Sunday-school, where they heard harrowing tales to shock them, and fill them with fear and dread; tales of blazing torments, and of a being of wondrous power sitting on a great white throne, pouring out vials of wrath, and before whom they must appear for final sentence after passing through a grim valley and darksome shadow. Finally they were offered a consolation more grievous than the bane it was meant to cure, more revolting still, and were told that vengeance was quieted by the murderous flow of innocent blood; thus the soil of innocence was planted full with the seeds of turmoil.

They grew in stature to manly strength and womanly courage; they wed, and lured by the fascinations of hope, they proceeded to build that goal, that highest ideal of human promise, a happy home.

As the toilsome years go wearily by, rude contact with the stern realities of life creates inharmony and the abrasion warms to life the seeds of turmoil planted thick in the infant mind; the tender shoots grow thriftily and quickly blossom in discord and ripen in contention; appeal that shames the face of society is made to the courts, and the flowers of abundant promise lie withered and dead on the coffin of hope. Turn that dismal side of society's picture to the wall of sadness.

The other side of the picture reflects inviting fields white with the harvest of the priestly sickle. With saddened visage and hands uplifted in holy horror, the pulpit howls its doleful wail against the blighting evil and turns away, proud of its achievement as the cackle of the feathered tribe.

The Master Teacher would condemn them as he did of old. He would know, as they ought to know, that divorce is the fruitage from seeds planted by their own unthinking hands. Guiltless in their intentions, they are teaching what they were taught to teach.

It is with a measure of inconsistency past finding out, beyond all limit, illogical to the point of familiar impudence, that the pulpit dares utter one syllable against unchastity, preaching, as it does, from a Bible reeking full with vilest suggestions from Genesis to Revelations, even to the blunt statement, "He sinneth not." (Corinthian 7:36.)

Only for the halo of sanctity that the craft has

succeeded in building about its "Code of Morals," it would bring both fine and imprisonment to offer it for transmission through the mails of any civilized country.

Commandment is a double-acting, perpetual motion machine, both centripetal and centrifugal, eccentric and concentric. It catches them coming and it catches them going. Their fathers early comprehended the dual value of commandment; they forbade the primal pair to eat the fruit of a certain tree, well knowing that the fruit of that same tree was the first that should touch their lips. In the fable they sent their crawling, creeping treacherous snake to hire and tempt the innocent, that they might punish the crime they themselves had suggested.

The cunning scheme is very ancient and has produced abundant harvest for the sickle of ambition; but if the wails loudly howled from the pulpit have just cause, the moral result of six thousand years of domination is disappointing. If progress has been made, it was made in spite of the "friends" that have leeches at its crib. The conclusion is inevitable; our lesson is plain and unmistakable. Morality cannot be enforced or coerced by command. Suggestion, advertisement and agitation only vex, annoy, and warm to newer life the evil that finds in strife its rarest nourishment.

The only palliative for the social evil of unchastity is through education,—the teaching to

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nobler manhood and loftier womanhood; truer ethics must be fostered; and only those strings must be touched that vibrate in harmony with the tenderest notes of truth and purity.

XXII

JOHN THE BAPTIST

Johanán, who late in life was nicknamed John the Baptist, was a very tall, broad shouldered Jew; his father was a mountain priest; his mother's name was Tabitha — she was a sister to Mary, the mother of Jesus. Those young men were cousins, but so sordid a matter was not discussed before the world.

Because his thought was pure and his mind sincere, John too was promptly admitted to the inner circle of the Essene brotherhood for unfoldment into the higher spirituality. He was an enthusiastic worker, and finally became an orator of much power. Some time after his term of tutelage had ended, it was decided that John should go to lecture and to teach in the populous valley of the lower Jordan. Before entering upon his task he spent forty days and forty nights in the wilderness of Judea to concentrate his thought afresh, and in getting the finer retouches of Nature's pencil.

Before he had labored a decade in that wonderful field, the multitudes that came from far and near increasing, his cousin Jesus, son of Joseph, had returned from a great tour, and came to aid

in the work that seemed so promising. They labored in adjacent districts, but to the same purpose. Verily these men were saviours — they came to save the people from the bondage that oppressed; they were redeemers — they came to redeem the suffering masses from tithes and excessive tributes, from daily sacrifice when there was nothing to offer on the altar of greed, from poverty, degradation, and want, that others might feast on the fatness of good things at their cost, while beating them with many stripes. But the success of their helpful teaching was too overflowing. The multitudes that flocked to their standards depleted the followers of the ruling power with which none could contend, none might question. The vengeance of desperation was aroused. One after the other those voices were silenced and the multitudes thrown back into a darkness where a thousand years were as one day, to wait in a gloom that never lifted in their time; and we, their ultimate successors, wait under a cloud that is rifting, in a twilight that has dawned.

The power of priestcraft has wasted, and we are free to build our own destiny, to set our homes in order to-day as the best preparation for what the morrow may bring.

John stood at full height amid the vast assemblage that had come to listen, in breathless silence, to every word that might fall from his tuneful tongue. His head was very erect, his eyes wore a

studious gleam; the stillness was painful until he commenced speaking, then how all was changed! His broad, massive shoulders were tense; his full round chest heaved responsive to his thought; his massive brow was full with emotion; his shaggy beard and long raven locks waved with the graceful curves of sweeping gestures; his fiery eyes shot forth piercing gleams, and his thunderous voice echoed along the distant hills as he hurled his hot reproaches and invectives full in the faces of the oppressors and their wrongs until they sneaked away, frothing revenge between their angry teeth.

The attitude of the speaker was changed as a new subject was approached. His brow now was placid and serene; his eyes beamed forth gentleness; his arms outstretched as if to shadow the assemblage with the mantle of peace; and his great voice melted to gentle cadences as he assured them that evil deserted cannot pursue, but must die of its own inanition; and that love and helpfulness, extended to everything that has life, unfolded joy within each life so bestowing cheer.

Every eye beamed with joy of hope; every cheek was furrowed with tears of joy that deliverance sparkled through the gloom and despair that dried and parched their lives; and they clustered about his feet, eager to touch the hem of his garment.

The great volume closed. That was the last sermon of John the Baptist. Before another day dawned upon that dismal night, they brought a false charge and hurried him off to Herod's cruel

prison, from which he never emerged. In righteous obedience to the great rule of nonresistance to evil, he did not utter one word of protest.

Not the least of the great wrongs that have imposed upon humanity was that the ever ready fable writers recorded some silly gossip concerning a giddy dancing girl and a love struck king. That gossip diverted attention for a time from the influence that did cause the gory crime to be committed, and eased the fading remnant of their life; and as a filler it was chinked into the new Judaism to still delude the unwary.

XXIII

SUFFRAGE

If great Nature's most skillful efforts were exhausted in making mankind, the finest chiseling of her ingenious hand was required when she fashioned woman. Woman's discriminations are keenest, her perceptives most acute, her sufferings most numerous yet cheerfully borne, her sense of justice quickest, her sincerity most reliable, her charity the tenderest, her refinement the purest — that refinement the guiding star of society, its surest anchor.

The male of the species is made of sterner stuff, and fashioned in ruder mold; his only superiority, if any, is ability to provide comforts and afford protection. He is the logical woodchopper of the race.

It is an unfailing law in the nature of things that the sweetest meats and rarest fruits are vilest in decay. Purity in public politics will always prove a disappointment to its dreamers; the unction of woman's better nature poured into its cup would assimilate and hasten corruption.

There never was man engaged in a vocation so ruthless that woman was not there his cheerful

helper, if not herself the aggressor. The wanton destruction of valuable property, riot crusades and hunger strikes lend proof of inflamed emotion and militancy to be much lamented. If woman were allowed to dig coal for fuel in competition with the woodchopper her visage would become grimed, her time preoccupied, and her finer sensibilities dulled; and society would be deprived of its holiest amenities.

Some women with untrained thought, though inspired by good intention almost a weakness, and other women uneasy in the possession of more wealth than chastened thought, glad to read their own names in public print, thus to vex the envy of jealous rivals for popularity, rush heedlessly into the maelstrom of any passing fad. If the added burden of citizenship were imposed upon womanhood and it became her duty to mingle in noisy conventions, a great sacrifice would be made and no compensation returned; increased and diversified interests would augment the clamor, as jealous delegations enhanced inharmony and disrupted the Council of Trent, most important and conspicuous in the annals of history.

Some persons might be enthusiastic for a time, and in the slums the ballot would become further an article of merchandise increasing its pollution; but many true women would soon weary in the strife and neglect performance of a duty of which too many men are oblivious, alleging dis-

gust,—that slates are made by chicanery and rarely can be broken.

Nor is it certain that any point would be gained in the interest of home. Too many women are themselves tipplers and their votes would be adverse.

The only syllable of seeming logic in favor of votes for women is itself a fallacy, a delusion, a snare, unworthy intelligent consideration. Taxation without representation, a principle for which the fathers fought, was a real grievance worthy of their bullets and their steel. They were heavily burdened in a foreign interest without consideration of any return.

Now, collection and disbursement of revenue is indispensable for protection of society, and the statutes for its enforcement are enacted by the husbands, fathers, brothers, and sons of women justly and for the common good,—the best and safest representation those clamoring, noisy women can possibly have—and themselves saved the thought and vexation. Nor is a just tax a burden; it is a need, and common integrity demands that it should be paid cheerfully, as the bills for millinery, hosiery, or bread and butter. If the sectarian serves well in her own church she will find there already too much jealousy, partisanship, and strife.

May those sane, well balanced women who form anti-suffrage clubs and labor wisely, be success-

ful, and save the sex harmless from the degrading, debasing muck heap of baser politics.

A FRAGMENT

“ An angel, wandering out of heaven
 And all too bright for Eden even,
 Once through the walks of Paradise
 Made luminous the auroral air,
 And, walking in his awful guise,
 Met the eternal Father there,
 Who, when he saw the truant sprite,
 Smiled love through all those bowers of light,
 The while within his trancèd spell
 Our Eden sire lay slumbering near.
 God saw and said, ‘ It is not well
 For man alone to linger here,’
 So took that angel by the hand
 And with a kiss its brow he prest,
 And whispering all his mild command,
 He laid it near the sleeper’s breast.
 With earth enough to make it human
 He chained its wings,
 And called it Woman.
 And if perchance some stains of rust
 Upon her pinions yet remain,
 ’Tis but the mark of God’s own dust,
 The earth mold of that Eden chain.”

SELECTED.

XXIV

THE REFORMATION

Growth is one of the forces that Nature uses and employs to accomplish her purposes. Any fertile soil when fructified will produce vigorous growth, no matter how baneful or pernicious the plant may be.

It was in the soil of innocent ignorance during the infancy of our civilization that Religion, already grown hoary with age and ripe in experiences through his many incarnations, implanted his new wanderlust, that series of curses that grew out of his transactions with the serpent in that first fruitful garden. That germ, planted in virgin soil, germinated fear and recoiled back in fouler growth. Morality could not grow under the lash of commandment viler still, and yet more immoral. Refinement or purity could not hover over such scene, or exist in such an atmosphere. The struggle of innocence with error grew fiercer down the ages that followed each other with deeper darkness. Innocence fretted with its punishments, and gradually ripened into corruption, so that our era dawned in an atmosphere reeking with impurity and villainy, insanely

licentious, working all manner of concupiscence with greediness; a fertile soil, a rich culture field in which any new usurpation might insert its talons, and it did so fasten its fangs and talons.

But let us be of good cheer. The seeds of Truth that Jesus planted were not blighted, their growth was only hindered in the storm that followed. Those priceless plants were constantly watered by the hand of Progress during the turmoil of centuries in the conflict of Truth with error and now, indifferent to the limitations that religion imposed, the petals are fallen from the flowers and the fruit of Christianity is ripening in abundant fulfillment.

We in the early years of this new century are the most favored people among the tribes of mankind.

Each individual is now free to conceive his own immortality and provide for the things of the morrow as he will, his handbook being the teachings of Jesus. He is at liberty to cultivate his own vineyard, gather its fruits, and build his destiny as none other can build.

He may fan to flame the spark of divinity within him and live his divine life more divinely. A community of thought in love and helpfulness shall make society grow more righteous as its knowledge of the truth is unfolded and it shall advance from high plane to higher plane of Christianity.

On November 28, 1898, Professor Herron, of

Iowa College, delivered a lecture, his subject being "The Conflict of Christ and Christianity."

The professor is an orthodox believer, but, like Martin Luther, he thinks that some church methods can be improved. His statements are very much advanced for that period of fifteen years ago, that space of time being considerable in our modern mode of hasty living. Copied from the "Christian Science Journal," of date August, 1899, the lecture is well worth perusal. He said in part:

"The religious problem of to-day, which has already waited with over patience for the Church, is an economic problem; it is not a problem of more churches and church members. It is a problem of how to make human life more sacred, valuable, and respectable than the abundance of things the individual or the nation may possess. Among all classes there is a growing feeling that some sort of a new religious movement is the sole hope of a peaceful social revolution. The revolution does not wait for what we call "clear thinking," which term has become the familiar cant of hypocrites and cowards; nor for the want of analysis, which has become a sort of an intellectual hysteria, exhausting to the moral nerve of both teacher and student; but for the want of spiritual adventure, which alone achieves progress and makes right. The social conscience craves a religion, the social shame and woe cry for a salvation, the world waits for a faith, for which men

are once more ready to die or live with equal joy.

"Now, the most significant fact of the hour is the appeal of the social conscience from Christianity to Christ. The rising faith of the people is everywhere turning to Jesus, while turning from the Church. To the Christian religion and its official attitude there is the strongest antipathy and social distrust; for Jesus there is an increasing reverence and social loyalty, having in it heroic elements strong enough to call churchless men to martyrdom for his name's sake.

"If the Church would furnish the faith which the people crave, and deal with the human fact we now confront, it must bring forth a new Christian synthesis in the form of an economic statement of the teachings of Jesus. But we can have no such revival as that for which we wait until we have in mind a clear distinction between the Christian life and the life that is conventionally religious. To accept the existing Christian religion may be very remote from accepting Christ and the order of things for which he stood. I know of no church that professes faith in Christ in the sense of taking him at his word and believing his life livable and workable in the world. A church may be an actively religious institution, but in no adequate sense Christian.

"Christianity began, as far as it issued from Jesus, not as a new religion, but as a mode of living. In religion as a thing in itself, Jesus was not interested; rather, he looked with profound

distrust upon what was then, and is now, both officially and popularly, understood by 'religion.' The organized cult of worship, the great ethnic religion that has grown up bearing his name, is something that Jesus never contemplated.

"Jesus had nothing occult or transcendental, mysterious or supernatural, to teach. Although we idly distinguish between natural and revealed religion, it was to show natural religion as social living that Jesus taught and worked. To rid the human mind of the distinction between the natural and the supernatural, a primitive pagan superstition which still clings to us, was one of Jesus' most faithful efforts. To show forth his own divine Sonship as the natural life of man, with the brotherhood it brought as the normal human order, was to Jesus an unending inspiration.

"Yet we must not mistake Jesus for a mere teacher of ethics, either individual or social. It was as a teacher of eternal principles that Jesus came, and his life is a revelation of love as law. He did not come as one teaching something new so much as one unfolding what was old; he came as an interpreter of what had been the human meaning of social language that was then no more unknown to the Hebrew Church than it is now unknown, in another way, to the Christian Church. It was the language of the redeemed society calling men to repentance as the condition of its realization; the tongue of the king-

dom of God calling men to a new moral birth as the first condition of citizenship.

“In neither Old or New Testament does the term ‘kingdom of God’ or ‘kingdom of heaven’ mean other than a righteous society upon the earth. Nothing else was either meant or understood by Jesus’ teaching to the people, or to his immediate disciples. Noble Jewish scholars who are friendly to Jesus, such as Dr. Emil G. Hirsch, have shown us that the term was the social cry in the Judæa of Jesus’ day. It was commonly used to signify social justice,—a justice to be fully realized when the Messiah should come.

“While Jesus’ idea of the kingdom was surpassingly purer than the popular or orthodox ideal, and his conception of the kingdom’s law and methods radically different, it was none the less the same kingdom of heaven he intended. He did not expect, nor did he once lead the people to expect, anything other than the realization of the kingdom of heaven as a holy society of universal justice. His interpretations of the kingdom have far more to do with human relations, with social facts and forces, than with what we understand by religion. They deal more specifically and frequently with the subject of property than we care to know. It could not be otherwise with the early Christian apostolate borne on by Jesus’ idea of the kingdom of God as a heavenly economy of the earthly life, with all its things and persons. For the redemption

of human life to this kingdom Jesus endured the cross, with his glorious disgrace, and gained the secret of power.

“The age that finally changed the revelation of Jesus from a social ideal to an official religion, from a mode of life to a theological system, was one of moral and religious anarchy, insanely wicked and licentious. It is a strange thing, but not so strange as the small account we make of it, that the great councils that formulated the Church’s system of truth were composed of members from whom the sense of truth had almost died out. When the philosophers of Alexandria and Athens finally got the Christian directorate, and the Roman upper classes began to make Christianity a fad, its springtime of moral glory had gone, while the summer was soon ended, and the long winter of faith of Jesus began.

“Though men know not what they see, and see it dimly yet, the recovery of Christianity from the system of religion imposed upon it by Greek theology and Roman law, from the baneful moral and social effects which the system has so deeply wrought, with the restoration of the idea of Jesus to Christendom, is the process now at work in society, and is the beatific vision mightily and hopefully attracting the common life to a wider and nobler faith.

“The new social faith in Christ comes not to destroy, but to fulfill, the Christian past. It asks to have Jesus’ idea restored as a programme

of social faith, upon which men may take their stand and consecrate their lives. The Church has lost its power of moral appeal and has no programme of faith to offer the social cry. To merely conserve the present religious system in the face of the social epoch means death to faith and anarchy to action.

“To continue in the system because of what God has wrought through it in the past is to be guilty of the very apostasy that hurried Jesus to the cross. There will have to be done for Christianity what Jesus did for Judaism before Jesus can have his day and social way. The Christian religion, we know, is not the religion of Christ. Jesus is no more the author of existing Christianity than Moses was the author of the Judaism out of which Christianity was born. You say we have been making progress. Of course. For some thousands of years the world had been making progress before Jesus was crucified by ‘the conservatively progressive.’ The world had been making progress before Bernard or Francis came; before Huss and Luther arose; before Oliver Cromwell was hurled as the incarnate judgment of God against political vice and religious tyranny; before the French Revolution put history backward as well as forward, changing the shadow of progress on the dial of history.

“The Church cannot meet the economic problem by forming ‘good citizenship’ clubs to initi-

ate temperance crusades, to organize charities for the poor, to establish reading rooms and the like. It is idle to unite churches to solve the social problem in the name of Jesus, when the said churches have but the dimmest conception of what the social problem is, and do not hear the gospel of Jesus preached.

“If the Church is in such relations to the existing order and is so dependent on its money that it cannot examine the social titles of organized wealth, nor get at the national situation to set it right, nor cry aloud and spare not against the political and economic crimes that affront the skies, nor make holy war against the system that begets and honors these crimes, then the sceptre of redemption will pass from it and a new redemptive organ will arise. It must call this civilization to the judgment seat of Jesus, or it will itself recede and a new form of Christianity take its place.

“The religious movement for which we hope will not be hostile to the Church; indeed, it will probably move on almost in ignorance of the Church's existence. It will be a distinctly human revival, drawing its motives and support from human needs and yearnings. If there is not in the people a spiritual reserve sufficient to bring forth such a religious movement, then the social revolution will doubtless come through force instead of love. I thoroughly believe and advocate Jesus' doctrine of nonresistance.

"I am opposed to war in every form, military, industrial or theological. But a mere conservatism always compels progress to make its way through conflict and tragedy. We Americans have yet to learn from Jesus that love alone is the fulfilling of liberty; that the social service, not the material gain, of the individual is the end of freedom.

"Whether we would have it so or not, Jesus holds the key to the social situation and the initiative is his. But let us not seek the living among the dead, as many devout souls would have us do. The Christ we need is not in the tomb of metaphysics, where theology has stood guard these many ages, obedient to ambition in the Church, agreeable to craft in the State. The Messianic idea is risen and goes before us in the sons of men committed to the social redemption, to lead on to the holy society. Not back, but on, to Christ, is the divine meaning of the social cry."

Avoiding the classic verbiage and vague, dignified sentences of the professors in the colleges and the philosophers in the libraries, the sentences of the unlettered laymen, uttered from attic or hovel, are plain, blunt, and of no uncertain meaning.

"And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea and from beyond Jordan." (Matthew 4:25.)

The twelve years of teaching by John the Baptist in the valley of the lower Jordan and in the

wilderness of Judea had blazed well the way, and in the three years that Jesus labored, his fame had encircled the globe and his following was great.

No marvel that the religion of Commandment that Jesus so vigorously condemned was jealous of desertions that left it almost alone in its desperation. When Jesus was foully slain the shock vibrated to the ends of the earth and along the shores of distant islands.

The innumerable religions that dotted the face of the earth had harkened to glad tidings of great joy, happy in the promise, but now were appalled in the awful devastation. Every religion hastened representatives to the scene of disaster, charged to gather up fragments of teaching that nothing be lost. But there were no records; the words of deliverance uttered by the Teacher had fallen upon the ears of his hearers, and like gentle dew from the sky, had entered their hearts and melted them in abounding love.

Those ambassadors were men of earnest zeal and sternest integrity, but every one of them had worshipped in a religion of idolatry that had a deity of mysterious birth, for without mystery there can be no religion, else it would resolve itself into the helpfulness of brotherhood, and the job of the bosses would be forfeited.

These representatives, all men of righteous meaning, yet formed a motley crew; assembled, as they were, from scattered regions, there was confusion of thought and diversity of language.

Untold thousands of idols, heroes, prophets, kings, divinities, deities and gods had existed in reality or in imagination, and every one of them had been of bastard birth, his fatherhood a mystery. These had worshipped at such shrine. Precedent and prejudice are deep rooted and not to be driven by the wind that shakes the reeds.

In order to save something out of the wreck and preserve some treasures for posterity, the first work that those fledgling hands found to do was to write a history of the great Teacher. The Essene philosophers who had sheltered him and fostered him sent forth no messages, and in the absence of records, imagination must be inflated freely.

Following the precedent that had been born in their flesh and bred in their bone, it was unanimously agreed that Jesus should be accorded mysterious birth. This placement was inevitable from the existing conditions and found its way into tradition; its cogent value was recognized and Immaculate Conception was incorporated in the tenets of those demagogues who, nearly three centuries later, were emboldened to revive that ancient, murderous Judaism of authority manifested by Commandment, which they made again potent by recording it in a new Bible which they built for the purpose and called a "New Testament."

Charitably, the theory that a virgin can conceive is the figment of imagination worked overtime. Plainly speaking, it is black art or leger-

demean intended to blind and bewilder with mystery. Any theory or statement of virgin maternity is in conflict with a law that is irrevocable and inviolable, and is a tower of strength impossible of impact or approach by any falsehood.

Those pilgrim historians in the first century, finally called the early Christians, were in groups in the highways and byways, in the alleys and on the corners of the streets, eagerly, honestly planning, devising, counselling. Each would write out a theory and hand it to another group who talked in another tongue. That theory must be interpreted and recopied many times, always gaining strength by accretion in contact with other imaginations, and it came marching down the fretful ages with measured and muffled tread.

It had not all been harmonious. Jealousies had rancored and smoldered and burned in the tinder of diverse superstitions.

After a weary period, late in the second century, as nearly as can be ascertained, there came to the successors of those early pilgrims a legend concerning some fishermen who had met the man Jesus upon the shore and cast their nets into the sea in his presence. It was only a legend, a possible fiction, but these infant historians argued with themselves that if these men had actually met the man and talked with him, that fact would lend prestige to their conclusions, and the history they had incubated and matured in their own impulses was finally accredited to those fishermen.

The name of one of them was Matthew, and he was given the leadership with his unlettered pen, and the parchment was concealed in the archives of the period.

The evil seed had been planted and idolatry took root in deeper soil. It was the Man who had been pictured; his teachings had been ignored and forgotten. Religion had been aided and abetted, but Christianity had been betrayed and plundered of her own.

It was in the fourth century that Priestcraft aroused him from his stupor, and began his new activities. The organizers of the new idolatry were men of subtle thought and bridled tongue, strangers to Truth, enemies of Progress, men of deep design and cruel, crafty ambition. They could give to interpretation keener, broader scope, and could fluently write with tenses figure of speech.

Primitively spoken language was only gutturals and aspirate sounds, more liable to be misunderstood. Vowels and vocal sounds were introduced much later. Interpretation has long been recognized as a method by which other thought and other meaning may be engrafted upon the subject matter translated.

Some glass is transparent and admits rays of light to pass direct; some glass is translucent and diverts light to other lines; some glass is colored and transmits its shading to the objects it lights upon: so two men of opposing beliefs may trans-

late the same page; the framework of fact may be secure, but the conclusions may be diverse.

The first work that their eager hands found to do was to unearth from those musty archives the parchment that the alleged fishermen were supposed to have scrolled. Broadly they interpreted with sterner hand; they copied and reinterpreted and copied again through weary decades of labor. Wisely they pondered intricate problems in their new Sanhedrin or Great Council Chamber. At last, after many years of toil, they completed a history that they called "Four Gospels," and were prepared to inculcate in unguarded minds the beliefs they intended to enforce.

Without so much as a pen stroke of record or history, these men had harkened back through three hundred darksome, dismal, voiceless years, and pretended to relate in disgusting detail how a lone girl had conceived, and of incidents during the period of gestation, elaborating the life of this child which was uneventful, hence little noted and unimportant, up to the time he was twelve years old, when their busy pen became wisely silent and nothing was told concerning the events of those eighteen important years of growth and early manhood; events they well understood but dared not misconstrue, because the facts were too well-known through a channel that was truthful and reliable.

The story written in the Gospels concerning those childhood years and of the last three years

in the life of Jesus, as it was framed along the line of these men's purpose, is a fabric whose web is mythology filled in by the busy shuttles of mystery and falsehood. That story is fiction, fable, flotsam, barren froth, foam skimmed from the waves on the troubled sea of imagination they wrought so deeply.

The girl was alone. No one was present; not even one man was there when she was conceived, and if she was cognizant of the strange proceedings, there is no record that she ever disclosed one syllable concerning it. The statement that a virgin bride fourteen years old was impregnated in the absence of the bridegroom or any other man is frivolous; it is bosh.

If that occurrence transpired it would be a violent infraction of Nature's immutable law, and reverse all of her processes. The heavens would be rolled together as a scroll; the mighty deep would be cast up; the unbroken tide of human experience would be offended and turned back upon itself; and Truth would forget her cunning, hurt amid the war of elements, the wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds that would inevitably follow.

The laborious history was finished; the foundation of their structure was laid and they waited. Only disappointment came. The men of sober thought in the communities frowned disapproval of the proposed methods. They needed a strong following that failed them. They were without

means to aid their struggle,— in ill repute, without credit standing or financial pledge.

Meanwhile, across the border line sat Constantine, ruler in the greatest empire the world has ever known. Constantine was a shrewd politician, not very scrupulous himself, popular with his people, yet insanely jealous lest some usurper deprive him of his power.

The new dynasty was weak in its infancy. The emperor was weak in his tenure of office and in his dotage. Either was liable to bankruptcy of hope without notice; united, they would become a power that none might assail.

The sensitive condition was recognized and negotiations opened for an alliance offensive and defensive. But the emperor was a pagan of pagans in pagan Rome who, through rude abrasion with stern activities, had developed into a politician of rare acumen; moreover, Paganism had long centuries ago by its gentleness given rebuke to the cruelties of Judean oppression, and all down the ages Paganism had been held in contempt, the object of dread, of jealousy and bitterest hatred; hence Constantine was doubly held in the suspicion and apprehension that always haunts the designing mind. There were serious obstacles of deep-seated prejudice to overcome. It was parry and thrust of wit and wisdom in the struggle for advantage.

It was a heated contest of an enthusiastic young organization with ripe experience for the prize

of superior bargain. Proposal was met with refusal. There was much planning and dickering and bantering in the weeks and months of effort.

Necessity persistently urged her claim and Politics first made strange bed fellows. After an agreement had finally been made the provisions of the contract were kept most sacredly. The coffers of the new made Vatican were kept full to repletion with gold from the ample treasury of the Roman Empire.

A halo of royalty that nimbused the new dynasty aided its popularity and augmented the strength of its following.

The Mosaic religion could now vent the ancient grudge it held against Paganism, for its teaching of mutual helpfulness permitted it to plant its propaganda in the very hamlets of pagan regions. The now vaunting power sustained the once trembling arm of the emperor, and he reigned in triumph throughout his lengthened days.

The new Judaism ruled with cruel lash, unquestioned for a period of time, until outraged Truth arose and gave promise of a reformation at whatever cost. Only four years of warfare were required to eradicate the deep-rooted evil of African slavery in America; but many centuries, flooded with human agony, terminating in thirty years of continuous warfare, were required to subdue the evil of popery and bring to blissful fruition a hope which till then had only dared whisper its words of encouragement.

A great reformer had publicly burned a papal bull defiantly and the Pope was dethroned. The wheels of progress being unchained, great rulers of the earth, kings and emperors, no longer trembled in fierce fear of his edicts; the sciences and the arts once more had liberty to unfold their usefulness; and freedom of thought and conscience had reached its first plane of advancement after more than a thousand years of suppression during which only invention had been encouraged that instrument of fiercer torture might be produced; and the arts of painting and sculpture had been fostered for the production of images to demonstrate their idolatry and induce to bowing down in more depleting worship.

Cutlass and spears, stakes and fagots, bludgeons and bastinadoes, stocks and pillories, screws to draw limbs from bodies, and beds of spikes sharper still to penetrate the flesh more deeply were the most common instruments of torture and death.

Quoting from a history of the Reformation by John F. Hunt, D.D., substantially confirmed by all history, never successfully contradicted, the conditions under the rule of the Christian religion were of blackest night.

“The Edict of Worms’ cruel order against all sympathy with the Protestants was made binding upon the Netherlands. The Inquisition was established and the fires of martyrdom blazed all over the land. To be known as a Protestant was

certain death. Not less than one hundred thousand people are computed to have been put to death in the Netherlands alone for professing the new doctrines. After Charles V abdicated and Philip II, his son, succeeded him, there was even greater cruelty."

What was true of Holland was practically true of all the countries of Christendom during more than one thousand years. To express sympathy with Protestantism was often cause for seizure upon the street for the purpose of torture unto death.

Catherine de' Medici was queen regent of France, her son Charles, the ruling king, being only ten years old. To conceal a deep design, she professed a kind regard for all Protestants.

We quote again from Dr. Hurst:

"It was arranged by Catherine that the semblance of a thorough reconciliation between the Protestants and the Roman Catholics should take place. Charles' sister was to marry Henry of Navarre, the leader of the Huguenots. Brilliant festivities were arranged, and the whole land was alive with new joy that, at last, the Huguenots and Roman Catholics could live henceforth in peace, and each worship with equal rights before the law. The marriage was celebrated August 18, 1572, but on the night of the 24th a bell in the palace belfry gave the signal for general slaughter. This was the 'Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Eve.' The Huguenot chiefs were all

in Paris, and their whereabouts was known. Admiral Coligny, an intrepid warrior and firm Huguenot, was murdered in cold blood and cast out of the window into the stone court below. For seven days and nights the streets ran with Protestant blood. Outside of Paris the massacre was sudden and overwhelming. The Loire and the Rhone ran red and thick with the blood and bodies of victims. The cities of Meaux, Orleans, Bourges, Lyons, Rouen, Toulouse, and Bordeaux were centers of the persecution. Not less than one hundred thousand Huguenots fell beneath flame and sword. The pretext for the universal murder was that Coligny had concerted a secret conspiracy against the crown. There is not, and never was, a vestige of authority for even the suspicion of such a thing. At Rome there was great rejoicing over the bloodshed. Pope Gregory ordered the ringing of the bells of the city, and a special medal to be struck in honor of his triumph."

Womanhood! Glorious womanhood! The courage of woman's more refined nature, past all comprehension! She has never been found absent from her place in the van of Reform. Societies of women for the promotion of good works were formed throughout all those weary years. Their sessions must be held in secret; but if they were discovered they were ruthlessly dragged by cruel hands to dungeons of torture and indignities. Then, when the pulse was weak, and the eye grown

dim in deepest agony, the naked forms of those women were held high by strong arms that the spikes fixed in the bed below might penetrate the quivering flesh more deeply.

In times of greater excitement, to be suspected of sympathy with the reform movement was cause for arrest, to be hurried off to a place of torture and execution.

There were alarming reports that John Huss was teaching dangerous doctrines of reform in Bohemia. He was invited to come and explain his position before the Council of Constance; personal safety being guaranteed. He stood fearless before that host of excited delegates; his logic was invincible, his arguments unanswerable. It was decided by majority vote that John Huss must be silenced, and he was burned and his ashes scattered to the winds and the waves of troubled Lake Constance. This occurrence was in June, 1415.

When Tyranny rides his cruel rounds, smiting on the left and slaying on the right hand, he little dreams, perhaps, that the germs of his defeat follow close, nourished in the blood his own hand has spilt.

Every act of tyranny prompts to more vigorous effort for release from its bondage. In ways inscrutable to us but of unfailing result, Nature has provided in her unseen realm a law of compensation.

The name of another great man was added to the endless list of martyrs.

Savonarola was born in Ferrara, Italy, A. D. 1452. He went to Florence where he became a humble monk in the convent of St. Mark. Nature had gifted him with integrity of purpose and an earnest desire to advance human interest. He was ordained a priest, and his eloquence was a great power for the good of the Church; he was an independent thinker and philosopher; he was a patriot and a strategist. By a ruse he diverted an invading army and saved the city from intrusion.

No man more useful was known to history. It seemed that Nature exhausted her effort in making him, and then broke the mold. He was powerful and fearless in his denunciation of papal iniquities and indiscretion of methods, but it was overlooked. Religion, always busy concealing its purposes, has never dared to resent mere personalities.

But when the great philosopher disclosed that the earth is a planet revolving through space, they said it was a heresy, that it could not be tolerated, for it destroyed their contention that the earth is a flat surface with purgatory below and heaven above; and Savonarola suffered. The raven rooked her on the chimney top, an evil omen; the skies that canopied all Christendom were lurid, painted with the red glare of fagots that fried and consumed the body of Savonarola and quickened a memory that slumbered not nor slept throughout advancing years, for Progress took

careful note and hastened the shuttles that were weaving the fabric of Freedom in her tireless looms.

Meanwhile, A. D. 1498, there lived in central Germany a thoughtful youth then just fifteen years old. His name was Martin Luther. In later life he loved to tell the story that his father in the mines with weary pick and shovel earned meal, and his mother's back bore from a neighboring wood the dry limbs used for fuel to bake that meal into the bread that nourished the family.

By a fortunate coincidence, through the aid of friends and the earnest help of his parents, the lad was able to finish the education he eagerly craved.

So intense was his devotion to the Church and its requirements; so fervent his religious zeal, that his health was permanently injured by abnegation, by denial of personal comforts, and by prolonged fasting in prayer. After a strenuous retirement in an Augustinian cloister he emerged to be ordained a priest. His constant theme was purity of thought, purity of living, purity of character, but he was amazed and shocked by the constantly unfolding disclosures. All roads led to Rome.

Here and there the country was dotted with pack animals laden with souvenirs and trinkets of hallowed legend to be bartered for treasure carried home to Rome. The king on his throne equally with the peasant under his thatch was

made to understand that he was expected to buy. Neither widow nor beggar was exempt from the demand. It was urged that they, too, each had a soul to be saved. The head of the Virgin Mary must have produced tons of hair if the number of ringlets sold is an indication. St. Peter and men of his class must have exhausted the product of several factories if the number of well worn gloves is a safe indication. Fragments of tattered raiment brought considerable sums of money. This method of extortion brought sufficient revenue for the enormous current expenditure, but extraordinary occasions were an excuse for the sale of indulgences,—the building of a new private theater, or to prepare defense against a foe, real or imaginary. But it was noticed that the revenue all went the road to Rome, however circuitously or indirectly the road might lead there. In the first seventeen years of Martin Luther's ministrations as a priest, five indulgences were published, and the tickets of pardon were for sale in every market place, and the incomes were always enormous. Hundred weights of shekels in gold and silver were burdens to the transportation facilities of the time.

Against these practices of deceit, fraud, and false pretense, the heart of Martin Luther stood in firm revolt. History, amply confirmed, states that the crafty politicians who have won the struggle for election to the papal seat, with few exceptions, were men of moral obliquity; some of

them have been accused of encouraging sodomy as an act of amusement of church dignitaries in their theaters. Kings and emperors were their trembling suppliants. Answerable to no tribunal, possessing an authority from which there was no appeal, teaching a doctrine of universal depravity even as worms of the dust, the Church itself admitted that popes were erring mortals infallible only in official decree. Thus licensed, they demonstrated their teaching of depravity. The first half of the sixteenth century was conspicuously vile.

The scalding tears that furrowed the cheek of that great reformer most deeply gushed forth as he pleaded for the abatement of midnight orgies of rheumy eyed men and naked women by hundreds who were employed to practice debauchery, to make moans of envy murmur from the tomb of the infamous Nero, who first carried such practices to lowest depravity in the arena of the notorious amphitheater at Rome.

The pleading was all of no immediate avail. Truth again must wait for fulfillment through grinding incessant in her mills.

The organization refused to be influenced by any reformer, but he continued to teach his doctrine of pure and upright living, and was a thorn that festered perpetually in their flesh. How to eliminate the disturber of their peace was a problem that vexed even their great ingenuity.

The ax in Herod's prison was of unsavory recol-

lection; they recalled the gloom on Calvary that smothered their predecessors, the Mosaic oligarchy. The smoke from burning fagots that destroyed Savonarola in the previous century still hovered like a pall, and they dared not crucify Martin Luther lest his blood should return like the fabled dragon's teeth to plague them.

They decided finally to inflict a punishment of keener pang on him, which was to unfrock the devoted priest, and, accordingly, a papal bull of excommunication was issued and sent to him. This was his Gethsemane, and he was bowed with exceeding sorrow that he was driven from the association in which his fondest hopes were interwoven. What course he could next pursue to promote the interest of humanity was a grievous problem, for the way seemed very dark.

With that parchment firmly clutched in his hand, he retired to the wilderness under the shadowing trees and amid the sheltering rocks, where he fasted three days and three nights, fervently praying for the guidance, until a strange light beamed from his eyes, and his brow glowed with a firm resolution. He returned to the city, and posted notice of his purpose on the doors of all the churches, until the people roamed up and down the streets wondering and fearing.

Martin Luther paused in the street and called the multitude about him; then with an earnest prayer for his enemies murmuring from his lips, he publicly burned that papal bull and scattered

its ashes to the winds, prophetic of the fate that awaits every great error.

The Church could not have committed an error more adverse to its own interests. It was ill with Luther to point its errors; it was worse without him. Thought, so long stifled, was slowly awakening; and that they added a new outrage to an already dismal list — offense to a dawning public conscience — was extremely unwise. It warmed to prompter germination the seeds of Truth. It severed the chains that bound the great reformer, and left him free to teach his gospel of individual righteousness and to cultivate the tender plants then germinating. More cogent still, the authority of the Church had been successfully defied and a very dangerous precedent established. The number of Protestants increased with rapidity in much of the country. As the religious factions became more equally balanced in membership, the one took courage, the other grew desperate in alarm, and the atrocities became more frequent and more fierce with thirst for blood.

Occasionally some outrage of unusual regret was perpetrated. Michael Servetus decided to abandon the place of his nativity in Spain with its inquisitorial horrors, and he established a place for his helpful activities in Switzerland more free. He possessed a mind of unusual power; he was an independent thinker and philosopher; being an advanced physician and physiologist, he declared that blood circulates through veins and arteries,

which was a grievous fault because it lent encouragement to science and aid to progress, which is an offense to religion that casts only backward glances. Servetus also declared his belief in only one God; that three is not one and one is not three. This declaration was considered by both factions a heresy worthy of death. After prolonged incarceration in villainous dungeon and a tedious, unfair trial, Servetus was burned at the stake, A. D. 1553. John Calvin, vindictively pious, the great Protestant divine and creed maker, made the original complaint and argued the case against a nobler man of wiser method.

The page of history already wore a hue that was exceedingly dark. Several millions of martyrs had offered guiltless blood on the altars of priestly ambition, all in the name and to the pretended glory of him who was the meek and lowly, childlike disciple of love, its ablest advocate. Only under the influence of hypnotic fear, still enduring, is it possible to conceive how sane people can condone such appalling atrocities and follow such unspeakable hypocrisy. That methods have changed under compulsion of advancing thought does not mitigate the vital fact.

And the end was not yet. It was more than man's allotted span of three score and ten years after the accused Martin Luther had gathered up his feet in his final sleep that Forbearance fell exhausted and the dogs of savage strife were turned loose in thirty years of continuous gory warfare.

If the German mind had been tardy in arousing, it was determined and fiercer in action.

After some years of strife in Germany the grim visage confronted Dutch valor in the Netherlands, and met a resistance that was awful in results.

The war assaulted the firmness of England that once had repulsed the boasted Armada of Spain, and the results were appalling.

It continued its invasions until it compassed France, Spain, Italy, every state in Christendom, finally reaching the Scandinavian provinces, where the blows delivered by the terrible Swedes paralyzed its already wasting arm, and it all ended in that farce called the Treaty of Westphalia, A. D. 1648, a little more than a hundred years after Martin Luther, the accused, had died and was buried in Eisenbaden, Saxony, where he was born.

The sword of conflict, its two edges dulled, lay rusting in its well worn scabbard; the bayonet, worn and bent, had lost its power for harm, and the dogs of war slunk away fainting in their kennels; but the hyena of jealousy refused to lie down, and still snarls its gnashing fangs in religio-political partisanship.

The papacy had been dethroned of its power to inflict physical torture. The enthusiastic reformers, boasting their hard-earned, gory, unchristian victory, insisted upon a literal interpretation of texts found in the Scriptures they had purloined. They said, "Faith was full reliance upon the

power of atoning blood vicariously shed, rather than obedience to conscience expressed by righteous living, loving one another, manifesting helpfulness to the needy."

Thus they prepared the way for an unlimited number of lesser popes, turned loose to prey upon helpless humanity, with fear of punishment the most deadly in their laboratory of poisons. Their ceaseless cry about immortality implied that they possessed some sort of power or control in dispensing happiness or misery throughout unending years; they were the only persons and this the very hypocrisy the Master condemned.

A few years ago there dwelt in a great city two men of specially vitiated habits. With affected smile, much gorgeous raiment and unlimited wealth, they were villainously popular vampires of society, preying upon unprotected helplessness and unsuspecting innocence. Both were married, yet totally oblivious to the sanctity of any obligation. The wife of one of them was a pure woman of unblemished life; the wife of the other man, if wife she may be called, was a pretty, simpering, giddy creature clad in scanty garments, pandering to polluted taste on unhallowed stage, her shape a model for ambitious artists; the daughter of maternal folly, she had early wandered, like many another object for commiseration and zealous solicitude. Her husband, if husband he may be called, in a fit of jealous rage assassinated the other libertine, destroying a human life

he was unable to restore, nor little cared. Charged with felony, prosecuted by men of eminent ability, defended by able counsel in a court of justice, he was placed upon a trial that proved extremely sensational. The newspapers were embellished with glaring headlines and howling extras. Pen pictures were painted by extravagant writers of young girls in tinselled attire, hilarious with excitement, intoxicated with glee, forgetful of every propriety, of clattering glasses, polluting the midnight hour at feasts where wine flowed freely and champagne sparkled its enticement in gilded cafés and resorts of the unregenerate. Continuing for weeks and weeks, the inflated accounts of that awful trial were a panorama of vice and filth unfolded to the public gaze, polluting the vital atmosphere, offensive to every sense of common decency.

Some Catholic priests throughout the country, wiser in psychic thought, stood before the altar in surplice and cowl, and sternly forbade their parishioners that any of them read a single paragraph of the Thaw trial because of its bestial suggestions.

Some Protestant ministers proclaimed from their pulpits that every girl should be allowed to read all the details of the Thaw trial because of its lessons in chastity. Such preachers, deriving inspiration from a catechism without a sane thought or mature judgment of their own—a genus by no means rare, though many of them

command princely salaries — ought to be deserted until they become alley dwellers, compelled to make themselves useful and earn honest bread by cleaning the streets and alleys of the filth accumulated in gutters.

Charitably they might be allowed in plea of abatement to state that they preach from a Bible containing the decalogue with its suggestions more cogent, more foul. During the ages through which the Bible was evolved Judaism only shaded above sex idolatry and partook strongly of its atmosphere. Sexual commerce was a topic of conversation as common as daily bread, and no man was deprived of opportunity. Women were not consulted. If men were separated from society, as in an army, flocks of she goats were distributed among them. In the plundering raid upon the Midianites where five kings and all their people were slain, except thirty two thousand virgins; these were distributed, and the good Lord's share was sixteen persons. It is undoubtedly true that in the new Judaism miscalled the "Christian" religion the shame in the confessional, and the fear of future punishment, had during an extended period a restraining influence upon unchastity and other evils.

How vast the change. Now all the world with mild exception regards the confession box as only an element in the hypocritical machine, and hell, another element, has lost its power to burn and aggravate with fear. Perhaps there never was

man graced the walks of any city more popular or more generally beloved than was Rev. Henry Hopkins, D.D. He closed his pastorate of twenty-two years in Kansas City, Mo., that he might engage in his new work as President of Williams College. His last sermon was rigidly ecclesiastic, thrusting his doctrinal points home with all the old-time vigor, but with characteristic frankness he sifted those points, and in the process there leaked some admissions we may do well to consider in our search for the cause of present evils. He said in part:

“Creed statements of the past have been only waymarks, milestones and not the end of all knowledge. In the light of history of advancing thought and of Christian experience as well, these are crude, unbalanced, and in some of their statements, untrue. Evolutionary thought and scientific criticism have vastly changed our point of view both of theology and Scripture.

“The final outcome is possible only through the utmost freedom for all. Decisions by authority have always been failures, have hindered and not helped progress, and in the evolution of society are now outlawed.”

Dr. Reginald Campbell, England's most famous preacher touring America, among many forceful statements during his lecture in Detroit on “The Social Unrest,” December 15, 1911, said:

“We are approaching the idea of the church

state, when the Church will not be needed because the State has all its spirit.

"The Church as an institution, whether Protestant or Catholic, does not exercise the influence it once did.

"No movement is greater than the spiritual conscience of the age in which it occurs, and all hopes of the present are a failure unless the spiritual consciousness is great enough. We live in an age which has lost sight of a coherent purpose or aim. We have made a fetish of produce. Produce for what? We are going on; are we going up? Too many people are engaged solely in trying to make the world a pleasant place in which to live, without any aim for the whole. Comparatively few people really believe in a life beyond.

"Civilization as such has ceased to be God-conscious. It has gained immeasurably in humanitarianism, makes life more easy, is more pitying and sympathetic, but society is not God-conscious."

That venerable worker in the vineyard of the Church, Bishop J. J. Hogan, nearly eighty-one years old, forty-two years after his consecration as Bishop, then the oldest in the United States, on April 9, 1910, the fifty-eighth anniversary of his ordination as a priest, gave an extended interview to a metropolitan newspaper, in which he said that "moral life in public and private affairs is not so good as it was fifty years ago.

"Club life, love of money and the saloon are tearing down the manhood and womanhood of America. Today the Bible is looked upon as a fable by most people. The idea of God, religion and moral obligation is thrown away. The few who go to church now are grains of dust compared with the horde who stay at home. It is a corrupt, immoral age."

The good Dr. Hopkins, a man of finished education, rounded thought, and ripe observation, with commendable candor admits that creed statements of the past have hindered and not helped progress.

The eminent Dr. Campbell, whose progressive thought, unfolded from a wonderful endowment of native talent, has attracted world-wide attention, says that our civilization has ceased to be God-conscious, and adds,

"Comparatively few people really believe in a life beyond."

That grand old man, Bishop Hogan, in summing up a well rounded life, dolefully declares that "today the Bible is looked upon as a fable by most people."

This is a trinity of statements of vaster importance, made by men of penetrating observation and extended experience, yet they contain nothing that is new or startling. These statements only make vocal the cry that is wailing in the twentieth century of our advancing era. We are living in a new and darkening epoch. The light of Chris-

tianity was blurred by guiltless blood shed on Calvary. Future punishment to be inflicted by smirking Hypocrisy has lost its power to fill with fear, to awe and terrorize the unprotected human heart. Society is without quickened, active guidance or protection. We are fast drifting back towards primitive blindness. The inconceivable power of the newspaper, wisely instituted for educational and helpful purpose, is compelled to respond to perverted teaching and vitiated thought, with trained and forceful language. The press is seething, boiling full of forceful crime suggestion, much of it echoed from a decaying pulpit.

Organized police are agitating projects of segregation or elimination of the social evil. Their error recoils in more harmful suggestion. Commerce and manufacture employers of girls in large numbers send representatives to meetings where are discussed the wage question and other irrelevant problems. Their minds preoccupied, they fail to discover the root of the matter, and no remedy has been found. Without compass or rudder, society seems drifting with decadence or worse, if possible.

But let us be of good cheer. It is only a dissolving process, a resolution of conditions to higher unfoldment, the rounding of another great cycle in human experiences.

The prophecies of today all lend comforting assurance and hopeful promise. History informs

us that every great evil must reach its pinnacle before it topples.

The human heart in its native endowment is eager in its devotion to principle. The individual is filled with ambition always aspiring to better things, to loftier achievement. It was in the long time ago, in the time that the "world" was created, the Jewish world, that a body of men possessing every degree of talent, every measure of ability from the bloodthirsty warrior to the cunning financier and the developed philosopher, from the crafty demagogue to the wisest statesman, assembled in that ancient Sanhedrin or Jewish Council Chamber, after many secret sessions matured a plan to bunch all humanity in one vast multitude, a crawling mass of worms grovelling in the dust of iniquity, convicted of a crime committed only in their own crafty imagination; and they fixed a hypnotic crystal called a deity high up, to be gazed upon, and with surest plummet plunge, distract, and divert attention from individual assertiveness. They were comparatively few in numbers, but their methods made them a cruel, dangerous, deadly minority to fill the multitudes with fear and convulse with terror through their yawning commandments that implied punishment of darkest gloom. Thus, through that vast cycle of four thousand years, they ravished in a greed for gain, a thirst for power, and a bestial lust all brazenly pictured in their own boastful records.

But the shackles of our bondage crumbling, in the dawning light of liberty we may discover the hidden trail, and in the twilight, yet dim, grope our way back to Nature, where we shall find our great Mother busy only with individuality. She brings us into the world alone; her great law demands that each must partake of food for his own nourishment and not another. That law leads us along an individual line of life, holds each individual responsible only for his own acts, burns only the hand held in the fire, and finally takes us out of the world, each alone.

Let us repeat, nor ever forget, a great truth recovered from the lasting gloom; a truth that shall reverse the whole trend of human thought and human belief, brighten a hope dimmed so long, lift us into a newer atmosphere and waft us back to the heritage that our great Mother first gave to us.

As the physical man lives in an exhaustless atmosphere vital with breath, so, analogously, mankind, on the higher plane of life, lives and dwells in a realm of limitless wisdom, and may draw, if he will, from that exhaustless source; if he seek he shall find.

The universe is a growth conceived in Nature's ample mind and fostered by her generous hand. When her wisdom had formed the human brain, — active, intelligent, receptive — a reach from Universal mind touched that brain and quickened it into a receiving station — a fit receptacle for

messages from the wide realm of unbounded wisdom.

Thus mankind was linked with the Infinite. Man is the highest conception of Nature's divine mind; man is the only divinity.

With tenser thought and deeper meaning, this divinity was what Jesus called the Father within him that doeth the works. The works that he did we also can do, but we must work hitherto as he had worked all his life, and had spent eighteen developing years in the wilderness, closely communing with Nature and in association with that wonderful brotherhood doing the world's greatest work. Returning to our heritage, we may plant our own vineyards and ourselves reap and enjoy the harvests.

In our search for the absolute in Truth we find that innocence, so highly valued, is only simpering helplessness. Virtue does not exist naturally; virtue can only grow from innocence through resistance of temptation.

A noted writer saluted the shotgun and christened it, "Mute Sentinel of the Fireside," probably an efficient protection, but when the sentinel was retired innocence, a powerless, pulpy thing, would fall before the first temptation. It was about two thousand years ago that Ivy, a noted philosopher of his time, said significantly,

"We can no longer endure our evils or the remedy for them. What we call the social evil

is perversion, the corruption and pollution of a blessing, and all efforts to segregate or destroy it only aggravate and advertise by rude suggestion, and aid the evil to frown more defiantly."

The evils of life, or what we reckon such, can only be eliminated or palliated by a teaching of purity, of righteousness for righteousness' sake. The home is the planting ground, the virgin soil; the common school, too much relied upon, is only an auxiliary, a help.

One of the unfortunate results of our hasty mode of living is that the influences thrown out upon the psychic realm or atmosphere are superficial, illogical and inconsiderate. Men and women who have attained positions of prominence in some activity are possessed by an itching for display; they have an intense desire to see their names in the public print, whose columns are too open for them. In every issue there is a loud, "Lo, hear! Listen to the reason why girls go wrong!" Much of their stuff is the fulmination of inflated vanity, irrelevant and immature, nor are they capable of offering any remedy. The evil, magnified where it exists, is aggravated by the advertising suggestion. It augments where it should cure. The prescription should be a soothing sedative, not an irritating cathartic, or yet an alcoholic stimulant. Tell it not, Eskalon, publish it not in the streets of Gath, banish it from your thought that the disastrous plant of

agitation is germinated in the pulpit, watered in the ambition to be heard, the path forgotten in the home and neglected in the schoolroom.

The condition in society is not so desperate as the pessimists tied up in godly laces would have us believe. Of the class so widely denounced a larger number continues upright than is credited. The refining influences abundant in Nature's realm are not all unheeded, and the modesty and purity native in womanhood is easily susceptible of cultivation and following. It cannot be too often repeated that the prevention and remedy for indirect or inharmonious conduct is in a teaching by example and precept of uprightness for love of Truth.

Gossip should be banished from childhood as from age. When your little girl tells you with agitated tones that her playmate was naughty and rude, tell her to not remember it, for there may be some cause we know not of that made her forget. And this is your opportunity of rare value to confer responsibility and waken resolve. Answer your child that you have no fear of her and that you will trust her that she will not do wrong. See her eyes sparkle with fresher light as she goes about her play and fondles her doll more affectionately. Some European reformer, a woman, is teaching a new philosophy. Her foundation statement is, "Get the viewpoint of a child. Do not punish it. Help it." This is another evidence in the great awakening.

Right here is a point that should be approached only with uncovered head. Heed ye the warning. *The hand that guides must be chastened, purified, disciplined, unerring.* Tell it with finger uplifted and only in muffled whisper. There must not be any government of a child except self-government, by self-governed teaching. Punishment is a deadly horror, laxity no less an evil; humiliation is a twofold disaster. Yet there must be and shall be discipline, undeviating, unabating discipline, control and guidance; this can be accomplished by gentle, tactful methods.

After being carefully directed in loving tones, the child should be allowed to think that it is turned loose in laughing freedom, responsible only to a just accounting; while the eye behind the scene, ever vigilant, never sleeping, is joyous with the beautiful enfoldment without and its own growth within.

That incorrigible boy, daily beaten at home, expecting the birchen rod at school, is a very interesting subject for consideration. A little confidence reposed in him, some responsibility given him, he will be lifted onto a new earth; he may be made a model of deportment and will require only occasional direction and encouragement. All the pupils in that school, reminded that every sacrifice made, all the expense incurred, is for their benefit, that their interest only is directly involved; that the manner in which they spend the hours in school will result in an empty life or

upliftment to exalted manhood and noble womanhood; that now is their only opportunity to decide and to act; and assured that in view of the momentous importance to them, no effort shall be spared if they will work with equal zeal, a happy understanding will be reached, a burden will be lifted, social fellowship awakened, and an unflinching aspiration assured. Those country urchins can be gradually led to comprehend what too many do not know, that to discipline and establish habits of careful thought and investigation, not cramming the mind with other murmurings, is the purpose of education,— is education.

No whispering, week in, week out, will disturb those peaceful vibrations; the echoing floor will be lightly trodden; no disorder can intrude; the pent-up shouts released in the idle hour, themselves will be musical, and harmony will flow in unbroken rhythm.

This is no idealism, no idle dreaming; this method was demonstrated in ample detail by the writer of these lines full half a hundred years ago, and is the coming uplift already manifested in some of our more advanced schools; but in most of the schools, and colleges as well, the cart is creaking along in the same old misleading rut of punishment and nerve destructive cramming.

We have only considered the school—a place of secondary import. What of the home—that point of primal impulse, that holy place of equal

value and sanctity, whether in gilded palace or straw thatched hovel?

The child who is taught in church and at home that it was made by a God of wrath sure to inflict punishment is ill fitted and unlikely to form an attachment for the teacher who performs faithfully the duty of imposing restraint and requiring effort. Dissatisfaction is certain to arise in that childish mind, untrained before, and it will pour its plaint into sympathetic parental ear. The condition is tense. Finally the child is reminded that the school term will soon close, and possibly a "better teacher" will be employed for the next term.

Thus a grievous wrong is perpetrated upon the teacher, but she is accustomed to lack of appreciation and acquainted with neglect. Her feelings may be little regarded when paralleled with the dire calamity that befalls the child and shadows that den of ignorance miscalled a home. Could a single reasoning thought percolate that skull to quicken the addled brain within, the child would be promptly informed that the teacher is provided with certificate of competency, but that the child must make equal effort, and a proposition be made that they, parent and child, co-operate with the teacher in mutual effort for highest and best results. The community would be lifted up as its units were enlightened, and the value of the school would be doubled and redoubled and doubled again

and again. An indifferent teacher aided and encouraged might accomplish much good. The most competent teacher criticised must find all efforts depleted, the value of the school much reduced. A much more grave responsibility rests upon the natural parents than upon the teacher employed.

Every child half a year old in the household is attuned by the psychic atmosphere of that home; and if it be harmonious, each, from the youngest to the oldest, will vie with the others in promoting cheer; and parental hearts disciplined, chastened, happy in dispensing love intelligently, harmony will flow with joy, and monotony will be broken by growth constantly up to a higher life that shall extend its helpful influence widely. The home is the unit of the community; a little leaven promotes leavening the whole lump, and harmony of the community will be aided. A brotherhood of common interest was the ideal that Jesus taught. An upright, virtuous socialism is heaven already realized.

We have crossed the great divide; the finest pivotal point of balance has at last been adjusted, and we are free to advance without hindrance by any organization. Generous among the hopeful prophecies that gladden our advancing age is that womanhood is being more highly appreciated. Woman shall soon forget her clamor for political power, a power that is an unbalanced, corroding, and baneful strife at its best. Woman shall soon

claim her prerogative, and assume her place as the highest and mightiest, though silent, power for the refinement and upliftment of society. We cheerfully wait the fuller realization that grows with our growth. The ancients were weakened and hindered because they did not realize their opportunities. Always, those peoples have been most advanced in civilization and refinement who have held woman in highest esteem.

The profound secret of life and the equally insolvable problem of death had bewildered and mystified our infant race down all those untold eons of ages since Time first began his unending flight and mankind had been evolved in great Nature's wondrous plan.

The snake story and the consequent curses alleged of Eden's beauty garden were part of a vast conspiracy formed by ingenious demagogues who constituted a powerful organization, a cruel, unscrupulous minority to terrorize the unheeding, helpless, bewildered individuals that made up the wandering multitudes who thronged the earth.

It was cunning craftiness, it was fiendish demagogogy that invented those curses behind closed doors in that ancient Sanhedrin, or Jewish Council Chamber, and thundered them across the shuddering earth from Sinai's dizzy crags, to convulse the trembling multitudes and fill them with fear.

Priestcraft, early in the field, selfish with greed, ambitious for power, its imagination inflated, fabricated the statement that through an act of

disobedience in that mythical, never-existing garden, mankind was transformed into a mass of vile worms in the dust, reeking in sin and iniquity, and it insisted upon its hypnotic suggestions until the race was helpless in its power, blinded in ignorance and humiliated in degradation.

The clergyman and leaders in later generations, eagerly pursuing the line of least resistance, thoughtlessly followed the trail already blazed for them, and accepted beliefs that were misleading sophistry, false and untrue, for all theology and all ecclesiasticisms were conceived in imagery false and fickle, and founded on sinking sand that is wasting away in the ripples of Truth reinstated by the hand of Progress.

So insistently have those suggestions of unworthiness been made and so widely have we been driven from the center of being, that we cannot hope to retrace our steps except by struggle. And we must pursue our investigation from every honest angle of vision, whether that point be the inspiration of the rocks, the rills, the venerable woods, the church postulate, or those other prison houses, the home and the schoolroom, as these are too often conducted.

Many times welcome will be the return of the day when parents and teachers remember that punishment of a child brings humiliation, aids no reform and breeds resentful anger.

They may blandly say that the hand that inflicts suffers greater pain than the flesh that

cringes under the stinging lash. But let them no longer deceive themselves. Punishment can only be inflicted by the unchastened, unregenerate hand, the greater sinner oppressing the lesser one, the stronger breaking the weaker vessel in overbearing tyranny.

To train up a child in the way it should go you must travel that road yourself unerringly in chastened thought. That great Bible, the book of Nature, possesses unsearchable wisdom easily legible to him who seeks to read, and our great Mother is eager to disclose her secrets to those who peer for light.

The most incorrigible nature somewhere holds a tender chord that will vibrate responsive to gentle touch; *SEEK IT.*

Diligently study the disposition of each child, and you will find that every one is naturally devout to some uplift; he possesses a rich endowment of aspiration to which appeal can be made. He will rejoice when confidence is bestowed; he will eagerly accept any responsibility that is imposed, will be strengthened by its exercise and may be depended upon for honest answer at the accounting. He is a helper; he will aid you surprisingly; both will be benefited, both will be made happy, and life for both shall take on a newer meaning.

Confidently knowing that we shall be protected by Nature's law if we are obedient to its mandate, we shall abandon all fear, all apprehension, all argument, all strife, that we may grow in harmony

and knowledge of the Truth as taught by the meek and lowly man of Galilee.

The age shall surely come, is, indeed, to be hoped for ere long, when persons turned four score years shall blush at thought of ache or pain; when individuals, uplifted, shall uplift the community; when political partisanship, whether of Church or State, forgotten in the general uplift, shall learn strife no more. This is Christianity unveiled; this is a consummation devoutly to be wished, this is a reformation that works true reform, this is a fulfillment for which yet a little while children's children must work and wait.

In those trembling ages of dogmatic bondage and inquisitorial horrors that rendered reformation inevitable through gory warfare, Truth lay crushed to earth.

Progress, her helpful efforts so often thwarted, lifted the casket lid of Hope, and gazing on the pale, scant form that slumbered there, scattered withered petals, wet with briny tears, over what had wasted in disappointments. The vital air was anguished, Fear stalked through the land, coiled with the serpents of doubt and dread, for no man could know the day or hour when the pile, built high with fuel, should blaze for him, and he should smell his own flesh aroast on the coals that glowed under him.

In a land of gardens growing green in fertile soil, blooms of beauty lading the air with fragrance, lowing herds dotting the valleys, lambs

gamboling on the hillside of verdant pastures, abundant fields ripe for the harvest, brooks rippling their unceasing melody, the branches musical with mating song, it all seemed a mockery, an irony of fate. Peace was a wanderer that had winged her flight afar; Charity was wasted figment; Joy was a demon of the night; Justice a nightmare; and the lordliness of Love was reduced to a dream of what once was, for the path onward to life unfoldment and the way back to Nature's unchanging grace were obstructed by immovable rocks of superstition and dugged deep with pitfalls of hypocrisy difficult to pass in safety, — impediments to Christianity that only religion possessed the power or was cruel enough to interpose.

While we enjoy all of the satisfaction that enlivens, cheers, and embellishes cultured life in the twentieth century, with unhindered freedom to make further discoveries, exercise our own judgment, solve our own problems, provide comfort for coming need and attain higher achievement, free to assume personal responsibility, assert individuality and claim inheritance in the domain of Universal Supply, we cannot comprehend the horrors that blot the page of history in Christendom. Our pity is speechless; our tears bitter and unavailing, our sympathy beggared and dry. Darker ages succeeded dismal centuries when to affirm strength or gain power by investigating mathematics, medicine or any of the simple

sciences, or to form and insist upon any opinion, was declared a heresy offensive to the Church. Only accused, without trial or defense, the terror followed quick; a common offender was pardoned if he would witness the infliction and cheer the success of the punishment when the sufferer uttered cries or shrieks of pain and agony.

It was a time when no man or woman was allowed to assert liberty of attainment to higher things in life, or claim dominion in his or her own little world, be it ever so humble.

The contemplation of those harrowing things is painful and must chill the blood in its arteries and make the heart grow faint in pity. But it will be of immense value if by contrast it awakens gratitude and prompts to helpfulness that we seek out the places that the setting sun of hope has left dark, that we may bring relief to the sufferer, cheer to the disconsolate, and supply to craving need.

This is the reformation that turns the wheel of birth into newer life.

XXV

PLATO

The Church has its friends to reward and its enemies to punish, and like every other human organization, it may not always discriminate wisely or justly.

Every religion must lure its priest or prophet, oracle or divinity, to whom it may ascribe authority for each of its tenets. As the new dispensation has chosen immortality as its central thought, it must discover an oracle for that teaching. Classic Greece had produced a galaxy of illustrious men, warriors, statesmen, orators, and philosophers, and none was more famed than Plato. None had quaffed so deeply at the Pyerian spring of learning. He traveled to other lands to gain knowledge of sciences that his native land did not possess. Royal blood coursed through his veins, for he had descended from kings. Socrates was his teacher and the two men were intimately associated for eight years until, with that historic dose of hemlock, Socrates paid the penalty for advancing progressive thought and his name was added to the list of the world's great martyrs. It was at the time that Greece was in the zenith of her pop-

ularity. Demosthenes, Aristotle and other illustrious men were educated in a school that Plato founded and called his Academy.

Plato was born in the year 430 B. C. at the time of Nehemiah and some of the later Jewish prophets, and when the Mosaic Dynasty was rounding to its decadence. His name was not Plato, which was only a nickname from the Greek word *Platus*, meaning broad, as his chest, shoulders and forehead, like John the Baptist, were very broad and massive. His real name was *Aristocles*; his father's name was *Aristo*, his mother's name was *Parectonia*. Plato lived to the age of eighty-one years; he was never married. Plato was a very voluminous writer; he wrote thirty-five books in the form of dialogue in imagined conversation with the authors of books he had studied. Also he wrote twelve books or theses, a summing up, perhaps, of thoughts he had imbibed in his long, arduous career that made him a wonderful scholar. But so great a scholar cannot be a thinker, a producer, a factor, or a builder; he reaps where others have sown. The garden of his mind is sodded thick and filled full with thoughts that others have advanced, and which occupy the space and employ the activities of his own mind. Opinions emanating from so many minds as Plato studied are inevitably conflicting. Plato's mind was full with vagaries, some of his statements contradicting other statements.

In his dialogue dreamed of Socrates he said

something about future life, that had come from the preëxistent theory that his great master had entertained in his lifetime.

Several centuries later the new religionists, in their search for material out of which to formulate a new doctrine, found this statement or suggestion that had fallen to Plato and he had placed on record with the great mass mixed of chaff and grain.

When the searchers discovered this precious husk they snatched it up and hastened with it to the tabernacle, without investigating the environment or the soil in which the thing had been germinated. They christened it immortality and offered it at the next session of the Council, when it was decided by majority vote that the thing should be accepted and immortality be made the dynamo to drive all the machinery of the organization.

Just why the private character of a man is important to a standard principle, or why the Church became suspicious concerning Plato, has never been given to the masses of humanity to understand, but they hastened to build a strong halo of purity about his name. So great is the power of the organization that if some persons are accused of indiscretion or impropriety they have only to say that their love was "Platonic," and society at once condones the act and embellishes it with the stamp of purity.

"In the meantime, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, in-

so much that they trod one upon another, he began to say to his disciples first of all, 'Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy, for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid that shall not be known.'

Do not ever forget this fact, important in every walk, in every day of life, that there is no mystery that shall not be unveiled to the earnest truth seeker if it is his need. Possibly, in our interesting, valuable study of the great philosopher we may happen to discover why the Church seems to hide something about Plato, or how shall it leaven their lump.

In his thesis or epistle on the Laws Plato imagines a great community in which he prescribed rules for families in trivial detail, does this bachelor. He would allow slavery, but decrees that if a man kill a slave belonging to another he shall remunerate the owner to the value of the slave. If a man kill his own slave he shall be purified but not accused of murder. Plato agreed with the Mosaic command, "Thou shalt not leave any witch alive." He would have every single man fined each year after he was thirty-five, according to his income. He had little sympathy for the poor and would have such animals as beggars banished from the community by the Governor.

The Laws is supposed to have been written in Sicily, where Plato was a guest at that time in terror of the ruler Dionysius, the tyrant who had once banished Plato from the island and had him

sold in slavery at Athens, soon rescued by his many friends there. Strange that he should have been lured back to Sicily by that same tyrant.

In his thesis, consisting of ten books, on the Republic, imagined from his many authors, Plato gave his vagaries wildest swing, and descended to the vilest socialism. Read yourself in his Fifth Book of the Republic where it says in part:

“Men and women are to engage in the same amusements and employments distributed to each according to his or her particular capacity and strength. Children, when born, become the property of the state; are to be educated for the state; and fathers, not knowing their own children, are to love all alike, and feel a parental regard for all. These women must be common to all these men, and no one woman shall dwell with any man privately. The children, in like manner, shall be common; so that parents may not know their own children, nor children their own parents.”

About the middle of the nineteenth century Enoch Pond, a Doctor of Divinity, Professor in the Theological Seminary at Bangor, Maine, took an extended vacation to study the records especially to decide whether Plato entertained Unitarian or Trinitarian views concerning the Deity. At the conclusion of his searches Dr. Pond wrote a comprehensive work which plainly manifests disappointment as to Plato but made him hold the Bible in still higher reverence. In the concluding pages Dr. Pond says,

“Look, finally, at the morality of Plato,—that part of his system which in the estimation of some would scarcely suffer in comparison with Christianity. Drunkenness expressly allowed in the worship of one God; debauchery and licentiousness in that of another; and a community of wives and children recommended, as constituting the most perfect state of society.

“Such is the religion, the philosophy, and the morality of Plato; or such, certainly, are prominent and important parts of them. And now who will venture to bring a system like this,—contradicted at a thousand points by the decisions of reason, conscience and truth,—into comparison with the Christian Scriptures? Could Platonism endure such a comparison for a moment? And yet Plato was a learned man; and most of the writers of our Scriptures were illiterate men. Plato was a noble Greek, trained in the very focus of ancient wisdom; while the writers of our Scriptures were poor, despised Jews.”

The Rev. Dr. Pond seems very severe in his criticism of Plato, but we should remember that the Doctor is a Bible teacher, and naturally, he is intolerant of anything that encroaches on theological dogma.

If the good Dr. Pond were a thinker, if he exercised the abundant reasoning faculties with which he is endowed, he would reflect that a plant partakes of the water and manifests the substance of the soil and the atmosphere in which it grows.

By a parity of reasoning, if he reasoned, he would discover that the men of any age, the leaders of its society included, are influenced by the social atmosphere that surrounds them. Those ancient scholars sought for fact, only cold, calculating stubborn fact, as they were able to delve fact out of the mines of cold science.

Like those other ancients, the men of policy, the Bible builders, the politicians, they were indifferent to the amenities of life, they were cold blooded and unfeeling, the milk of human kindness was not pulsed through their veins and they wrote into their text books the abruptness, the coarseness, the vulgarities, the indecencies for which Dr. Pond and the other theology teachers make abject apologies in their classes and which the modern pulpit orator blushinglly evades.

If we are just to ourselves, we shall give Progress credit for that measure of refinement that we have attained through the ages, in spite of the Bible and in affront of its dogma, especially that heinous decalogue with its cruel suggestions of all crimes.

If we discriminate wisely, it is a privilege that we may feast on the sum of knowledge that the great Plato succeeded in accumulating, but we must remember that it was all borrowed. Plato was not responsible for any intimation of immortality. Plato was indebted to his teacher, the illustrious Socrates, for that intimation. Whether immortality be truth or error, neither Plato

nor Socrates nor any man nor set of men should be given credit or censure for the thought. The theory of immortality is a growth, an evolution, a product of the centuries. Life is a problem that confronted the dawn of human consciousness. Life here and life hereafter must always remain a problem impossible of solution, its consideration fruitless at fearful cost. But in the very long ago some mythologists, having little to occupy their attention in that infant age and having children born to them, began to speculate and to theorize. They said life springs from life; life succeeds life; lives come again; and they flung that theory adrift on the ocean of time.

After many, many days of a thousand years each, it floated ashore. Socrates found the stranded husk and opened it. Behold, it was now a theory, re-incarnation; and that great philosopher said that if life has come again we may live again, and he handed it over to Plato, his apt pupil. Plato elaborated the thing among his thousand vagaries and it sank to the bottom in obscurity. About seven hundred years later the New Testament builders discovered it. They burnished it anew, christened it immortality and placed it in the midst of their garden. Abundant are the harvests they reaped from that sowing, while we witless dupes have blindly paid the tolls for the grists they ground in our mills.

If I possessed the influence, the power of control, over Christendom, so that I could compel each

individual to buy from me a quantity of water in the depths of ocean at so much per square foot, the trifle that each person paid, while its aggregate sum would swell my coffers full to repletion and overflowing, would be insignificant and unimportant to the purchaser. But if each were compelled to expend all energy, to waste each fretful hour from infancy to age in fruitless search to identify the blocks of water he owned, earth would be a scene of despair to which a nightmare were a soothing lullaby.

Because inscrutable to us, and past finding out, it is a matter of indifference totally unimportant to us where life began, if it had a beginning or where life shall end, if it have an ending; nor can we afford to make fruitless one precious moment in pursuit of the unknowable. Instead of longer making earth a scene of gloom, we shall find sweetest delight and ineffable joy in our effort to make the most of that bounteous gift and sublimate the issues of life to higher life now and here for time and for eternity. The religious doctrines positively assert immortality, which is only a theory that they borrowed from doubtful sources; but they needed it in their workshop, it was indispensable in their business, and they made it the basis of all their activities. They invented a sort of authority over the great ocean of immortality, and sent us out in fruitless search for some specimens that they claim to have conveyed to us in that ocean.

They filled us with dread lest we fail to find the possessions they control, and thus they secured control of us in fearful bondage, crushing us to earth as worms of dust, and kept us wandering in a vale of tears pictured by their own artists, a hypnotic result of their persistent suggestions.

The hope of Immortality is the loftiest dream of each human heart sacred to that individual heart alone. We came into the world alone and must go out alone. That hope is a sanctity, a holiness, a blessing, a benediction sacred to each person.

A wise, cunning, crafty body of Jews built a world all their own, and for the space of four thousand years held all Christendom in the hollow of their hands to control at their own will; yet they were manly enough and decent enough to leave that gem of hope, unmarred, sacred in the heart that held it and by which that heart was sustained. They did not make hope an article of merchandise or of terror.

It remained for a new organization to find a statement of immortality in order that it might seize the precious gem of hope and prostitute its value to their own selfish uses, and well was it their need for progress had made powerful strides and the old foundation could not sustain a new structure. The children learned a lesson from the experiences of the fathers; the stone that the builders refused was made the head of the corner. They made the statement of immortality alleged of Plato the chief foundation stone of their struc-

ture; they made it the drivewheel of their machine; they made that statement the leading commodity on their market, world-wide; they made it their whip of scorpions to pursue the lingering. The well worn decalogue was obsolete or only held in reserve.

On the new discovery they made the earth to be flat with a pit of gloom and fiery lake below and in the distance, for fixed gaze, they hung a hypnotic crystal called a plan of salvation to be hand worked by a lever within the machine.

Without purpose, plan or design of our own making, we have been wandering aimlessly up and down the face of the earth, confused in mystery, bewildered in amazement.

Your ability to think, to plan, to devise, to investigate and to decide for yourself is an endowment, a responsibility, a law of your being that you cannot evade or neglect without forfeiting all in life that is worth while here or hereafter.

Immortality as it has been taught to us has filled us with a fear, a terror, a gloom, a horror, a despair, a wail, a cry, a dismal nightmare that they invented and called punishment after death, and thus completed their bondage of tyrannous control, and then offered us "free" salvation at most fearful cost. They demanded that we fall down and worship idols of their choosing. Whether an idol be carved of wood, or of stone, or on inflated imagination or a golden calf, all worship is idolatry,—destructive, debasing,

devastating, depleting, enervating, humiliating, deadly, damnable idolatry,— a product of the infant mythological age when women and goats were regarded as possessing about equal value, except that the quadruped was one point ahead, its flesh was edible.

Let them hold their overflowing coffers, the richest trust of all trusts, but we object that they further fatten their ambition on our life substance.

If the religious system had ever grown an honest hair on its selfish pate; or if its inventors had ever inhaled an honest breath, they would hold their hands aloft and frankly say: "We do not know whence we came or whither we go; it is not our need or it would have been given to us." If we are obedient to Nature's law nothing shall ever come to us in any realm except that which is bestowed by her loving hand.

Hell is a myth, an invention; the fear of hell is a cat-o'-nine-tails, the poison in a cup, a lever in the machine, a bludgeon in the hand of Tyranny.

Vengeance is a seething cauldron slimed from poison pool; punishment is begotten of vengeance, is a disturbing influence that destroys peace, offends love and is an insult to that sense of justice whose name it prostitutes.

Would you know how long you shall live; how many days are allotted to you here on the earth? It is not your need that you know it, or it would have been given you to know; not how many days, but the manner in which you shall spend those

days is important to you. Would you know whether life is terminated at the portal of the tomb or whether beyond its starless night we shall waken to the light of endless day? You must wait. It is not a problem possible of solution, hence the struggle to know the unknowable is fruitless and is not worth a breath, a sigh or a thought, and the man who presumes to offer one syllable of information on the subject is a dangerous quack.

That you take no thought for the morrow, but that you be prepared for what the morrow may bring by a life of progress is of highest importance to us all.

That we have fretted and groaned under a weary load for sixteen centuries has all been wasted in the cesspool of uncertainty. Happy might we be if it were not worse than wasted.

Immortality, as it has been taught us by men who do not know, is grovelling materialism. They prate about a material idol sitting on a material throne in a land flowing with material milk and honey where we may wear a material crown. A great Philosopher attempted to lead us into spirituality through doctrine of love; but instead of inspiring us with his helpful teachings, they command us that we fall down and worship the material cross on which they murdered him, and that we eat of his material blood; all a system of gross materialism for material profit.

To wear a crown and play upon a harp; to perpetually sing fulsome pœans of praise and flattery

and adoration before an angry throne, must soon become irksome, monotonous and distasteful. Such silly twaddle invented to lure or to frighten is unworthy a place in nursery tales, and was an imposition upon the infancy of our civilization by designing tongues.

It cannot avail us any benefit that we leave the garden of our hearts to grow full with the briars and brambles of fear and worry while we chase down the highways and byways in an effort to ascertain which way the wind will blow next year or any unknowable thing. The wind shall blow where it listeth while we gain nothing, lose much of highest value in the vain pursuit.

It were far better that each individual labor on his own vineyard to the development of his own resources, to his own advantage rather than surrender his opportunities to the advantage of an organized band of men by authority wrought out in their own busy workshops.

Everything in the wide realm bears the imprint of progress. All growth, all advancement, is progress; every individual must work out his own salvation if he would be saved from error.

The immortality that Nature suggests is a plane of harmony, of progress and unfoldment of the higher self to more advanced spirituality, always inviting to other planes further on up alluring steeps, joy in reality, happiness in anticipation throughout unending years.

But we should remember that there is no past,

there is no future marked on the dial of time. We are in eternity now, building its beautiful destiny for earth life and later life; and when beyond the starless night of the tomb we waken to the light of endless day we shall take up our responsibilities just as we left them unfinished here, and progress there.

Every need is a prayer to Nature, and we supply our own need by availing ourselves of the advantages she has provided. We shall never go to heaven; but we may build our own heaven as we will.

By fanning to unfoldment and activity the spark of divinity implanted within us we shall bring aid and comfort and peace and joy to the world about us, and yet only be working in our own vineyard where we shall reap abundant harvest of peace now and make the best possible preparation to join the immortal train of progress and advancement to higher life on the other side of Nature's dividing line.

XXVI

INTELLIGENCE

That all life, animal and vegetable, possesses intelligence there can be no doubt, and in our estimate of that intelligence we may be far astray. We may not know upon what food the bug crossing our path feeds or where he can find it, but the bug knows all about it unfailingly. Animals that possess brains have emotions, impulses, passions, where fear and anger confuse the mind and convulse and poison the tissues precisely as those influences operate in our own bodies. We can very properly devote earnest attention to these problems for sanitary and other reasons; and can best learn Truth by considering the evidence. The story of an alleged occurrence is a fair illustration.

Each of two boys in a town was the proud possessor of a rooster,—not a fighting cock by any means, but a plump hail-the-day that trod the dung hill precincts with stately mien head and plume erect. Upon occasion when business was quiet in the alley, one of the boys suggested that they turn the birds loose in a vacant lot that they might have a little tilt. The other boy, with true

American vim, promptly replied, "I'll go you one if I lose," and he did lose, but determined to save something out of the wreck, when his bird stood there, well-nigh exhausted, fierce with anger, full of fear, he killed the chicken, as he said, "to save its life." He carried it home where his frugal mother dressed it and placed the meat in the pot to boil; but such strange boiling,—it frothed; skimming did not avail. Still obstinate after long cooking, that apprehensive mother refused to place it on the table, but instead fed it to the dog, which barely survived the deadly poison.

Another instance, well authenticated. A strange sickness suddenly attacked many people in a far western town; it was not an epidemic, nor like any known malady,—fierce when not fatal, from which convalescence was tedious and discouraging. Learned men came from far and near; much talent and much energy were expended in the effort to trace the cause of the singular occurrence. Finally it was recalled that an unusually wild and vicious steer had been confined in a pen where mischievous boys prodded it with poles and kept it frothing in anger and fear until the butcher came and killed the animal in its fierceness, and it was remembered the people who were sick had eaten that meat.

The farmer who pets a plump, contented heifer that licks his hand until his other hand thrusts the fatal blade has meat to eat that the Olympian gods might envy. But the manner in which stock

from the great ranges and the agricultural districts is frightened and pounded into uncomfortable cars,—hungry, thirsty, jostled about amid uncanny sights and sounds, finally hurried into a fateful atmosphere, often bellowing its fear at first scent of blood and butchered,—these are conditions that may well engage the most earnest attention of our Sanitary Commission and humane societies.

The man would better stop and reflect before he needlessly crushes an unoffending worm or kills a fly that he can as conveniently put out; yet it is the duty of that man to take the life of any animal necessary to supply human need relentlessly, as the animal destroyed the life it fed upon, which is the destiny plainly taught in the economy of Nature. The dove feeds upon the fly; the hawk feeds upon the dove; the grasshopper feeds upon the juicy corn leaf; the chicken feeds upon the grasshopper; man feeds upon the fowl. Thus the cup of life is handed to higher hand; the analogies are preserved; the gradations are in line, the law is fulfilled, but man alone possesses the right of eminent domain, and he may ascend if he will to the realm of the Infinite, the life of the Spirit.

“To be worldly minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.”

XXVII

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY

Whence ever life came it permeates everything that exists; there is nothing that is inanimate.

The filth that we abhor is a potentiality; cast it out upon the soil, and the enlivened growth of vegetation is noticeable. The glass discloses that the atom which no eye can see has its own positive pole and its negative pole. The particles composing the hardest substances, steel or granite, are in constant vibration, each in its own orbit. Life is vibration, and the measure of life depends upon the velocity of vibrations.

Growth is life incomprehensible; a flagstone imbedded in pavement may be displaced by the growth of a toadstool. The mammoth pine tree, whose topmost branches pierce the clouds, sprang from a tiny germ and furnishes shelter. Harvests grow from seed dropped in the soil and give strength to meats and fowl that nourish higher life, and so on up the ascending scale of beings' piled gradation until mankind proudly crowns its towering summit.

Mankind is the product of great Nature, conceived in her unsearchable wisdom, nurtured by

her bounteous hand, uplifted by her boundless power, sustained by her righteous will, a growth prompted by her soundless love, born of her highest thought, the consummation of her loftiest purpose, the realization of her fondest dream. Everything that exists lives only by lease of her gracious law, protected by its irrevocable decree.

That domination of exacting control and extortionate demand, a political party, is formed by an association of men organized for the purpose of gratifying ambition to rule, to feast on the fruit of others' toil, and to procure jobs for its busy henchmen. It does not change the status of the case or mitigate the condition,—rather it aggravates its presumptuous impudence,—that the party be clad in sheep's clothing, put on sanctimonious airs and a holiness of diction, adopts a diverting name and is decked with religious tint. With all its pretense of benevolence it never makes any sacrifice for the common good, nor ever extends its selfish hand to aid the waiting need. A charge of universal depravity and a dictatorial code of morals is a cunningly devised political scheme, a subterfuge to conceal a plot; and punishment is its hyena-like fangs that poison, vex, and make mad.

The most widely misled victim of ignorance behind yonder prison bars is the son of some mother. Somewhere on the earth or in ethereal realm some mother love is crying, "Save my boy."

Somewhere in that man's being is a tender chord

that will respond to gentle touch in tuneful vibration; redeemed, he can thus be saved to society in which he was a menace and which has need for him. In our poverty of language for better expression we may imagine that the mental atmosphere by which we are surrounded and in which our thoughts float is like a vapor. Like other fluids it is receptive and susceptible of corruption and pollution. Unseen, lowly, and helpless is human emotion, the victim of many attacks, the nesting place of many germs, the culture field for their growth, the place where the tares of hypocrisy take root, the mother of fallacious isms, the ladder of weakness on which, like Jacob in his dream, they climb to power and influence. The delirium of departed spirits hovering near and the poison of hypnotism are fungous growths on the body of diseased emotion. It is not the shackles riveted of iron that abrade most sorely or gall most keenly. Imagination, distorted and fretted in gloom, suffers worse tortures. It is not the nerve racking bastinado, or the bed of spikes, or yet the stake and fagots that are dreaded most, but a pit of unending gloom where devils with forked tongues hiss and gnash the teeth with eternal terror. Not because of the nails and spikes through hands and feet on Calvary, but because the purpose of his mission must be thwarted, his message silenced and the multitudes left to bear the burden of their sorrows unaided and unrelieved, the great heart of the man was pained most

deeply. The crucifixion of Jesus on the cross by jealous hand for selfish purpose was only a crowning act of cruelty; it was not the monster crime of the ages. To redden rivers with human blood and clog streams with bodies was only a pastime, a pleasantry, a comedy in comparison. But the crime that dethroned Justice, blurred the cheek of Infamy most darkly, and shadowed all other infamies into obscurity was enacted when the scheme of alleged gospels was planned to darken the star of Freedom, silence the infant lisplings of Liberty, paralyze its speech and confuse its language.

The history of Jesus was falsified and miracles pretended to mystify and bewilder the common mind, and untold multitudes of people have been deluded, to wander, during the long space of two thousand years, with vain hope in a desert of desolation and doubt. The teachings of Jesus were perjured to selfish use and a pretense of power that never was conferred, all polluted and perverted to baser meaning. His teaching of freedom through helpfulness was misconstrued; that is the inheritance out of which we were wronged and the universe of love from which we were driven; which was lost to us, and which we seek to find again; to which we can only return by the unmistakable pathway of right thinking.

Already the mental atmosphere is clouded with the dust of idolatries perished in the forgetfulness

of time down the unwritten ages; and we can afford to spread the mantle of charity while we work and wait for the common deliverance from the remaining idolatry, the worship of a cross that must crumble in the light of reason; nor need we break their images, for the Truth will find them out — the Truth that shall make us free.

It is a time for memory and for joy. Juvenile courts are established to protect helpless youth. Church societies appropriate a liberal fund and employ trusted workers to seek and bring cheer to places that want has made dark. Brotherhood clubs and sisterhood clubs are being formed responsive to the call of need, and thus the smiling face of returning Christianity is plainly seen in the dawning and is added proof of activity in the rediscovered universe, a realm of love and helpfulness.

We may speculate with theories, we may dream of empires in fairyland; and after all, life is a stern reality in which we must struggle wisely if we would win; we may talk of an instrument used to mellow the soil, to find at last that a spade is a spade.

The thought reflected from the senate of ancient Roman wisdom and the forum of classic Greece; great libraries, piled high with books of legal lore called Common Law,—it may all be summed up and expressed in one little word, sense, common sense at that; our intellect is valueless unless em-

ployed in the activities that confront life and unless we avail ourselves of the advantages ample in universal supply.

Draw your chair closer, dear reader, and let our talk be practical, along avenues of everyday life.

If you are confronted by a difficulty, if a suit at law with your neighbor seems inevitable, it is only a seeming; there is a way out.

Though it may require a struggle with yourself, you must be courageous if you would conquer yourself, which is the greatest achievement possible in life. *Get right with yourself.*

For aid, retire to the solitude and in its silence commune with the infinite — the Father within you. Consider all the points involved in the case and be generous in your respect for adverse opinion. Arriving at conclusion, inspired by courage go boldly to your adversary, and you can agree with him quickly by relating the liberal concessions you have decided to make. Almost surely the conference will end in a hearty hand clasp; you have won your case, regained a friend, conquered yourself and are greater than he who taketh a city.

When you arise in the morning with a feeling of weariness and a foreign taste on your palate you may call the family physician, who will explore your pulse and look wise; if he is wise he will discover that no organic disease disturbs — it's only the imagination that is influenced — and prescribe a few drops of *aqua pura* or a dose of

bread pills with the forceful suggestion that it will cure, and you will be healed by the faith thus restored. The doctor is entitled to the fee he has earned, but your loss is a source of regret. You surrendered your inheritance of responsibility and depleted your power of self-control. You can restore your faith by assertive will and making affirmation of health and denial of any limitation grown strong by overcoming.

A story of inspiring tone is told of a man who was engaged in land transactions. He boarded a street car and rode to end of the line to inspect some vacant acres. Becoming weary and thirsty in the warm morning, he decided to visit a cottage of inviting appearance, and was surprised that the woman who met him at the door greeted him with pleasant smile — called him by name. She explained that she had heard him preach several sermons. Yes, he admitted, he used to preach some in the doleful tones, but was learning a more cheerful language.

A pitcher of water was drawn cold from the well, and a chair placed for a little needed rest. The conversation that followed disclosed the fact that those four walls did not enclose the home that appearances indicated. The lady said she was unable to comprehend the lack of harmony, as her husband was an excellent man, a lavish provider who spent his leisure at home.

She had often prayed to God for aid, but her supplications were unavailing.

The man quickly replied,

"You have mistaken your deity, madam; you should pray to your own divinity which is the Father within you. When you pray retire to a cosy room, 'and when thou hast shut thy door' (Matthew 6:6), 'pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.' Make strong declarations vocally of peace, poise, contentment, happiness and love in your home, and denial of inharmony or any need, at least fifteen minutes every day. Meet your husband at the gate every evening and greet him as if returning from a long journey, and be unremitting in devotion. A hearty response in gladder tones will soon follow and your house shall be a paradise, a bower of love."

A few weeks later, she called at the office of her new found friend to report a happy realization, and was reminded that she was only learning the alphabet of cheer abundant to all who radiate cheer.

In this volume it is only political demagogism veneered with religion that is criticised, a religion itself a debasing idolatry reflected from ancient heathenisms, and the only foe that Christianity ever had; it delivered the blows on Calvary and in every epoch in human history.

The most earnest effort, the most eager desire possible in these lines, is devoted to manifesting appreciation of those splendid people, our friends and neighbors, who have been deluded into its fol-

lowing. Their devotion to fallacies they have been taught and have blindly received distinguishes them as a refinement from the richest of humanity's varied strata.

But dross clogs the way of progress. These people must change their method by pruning it of dry, scraggy branches; their sentiments, like their emotions, need attuning to more harmonious measure. The hireling, clad in long sable raiment, adorned with a necktie of spotless white, must be informed that his occupation of condemning to depravity is gone forever, and be instructed that henceforth his efforts must be employed in following the teaching inculcated by the Master, a teaching of helpfulness in the great upliftment to still the crying need of deliverance from error, and to point out the way to peace and poise in a common brotherhood.

Song is a more potent factor in exciting emotion, molding sentiment and establishing beliefs on which Hope fondly bases her trust for all that the heart holds dear, and the statements made in song should be pure and true. It is a misleading falsehood that all the flowers blooming in Nature's garden of beauty should be blighted, withered and deprived of fragrance in contemplation of the all absorbing fact of human villainy.

"What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle,
Though every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile,"

may be obscured in alluring melody, but its statement is a vile calumny, a deadly falsehood, and is sickening proof that the policy which prompts all such stuff is itself a vile and corrupt abomination, an offense to common decency.

" Let the water and the blood
From thy wounded side which flowed
Be of sin a double cure,
Save from wrath and make me pure,"

is a more far-reaching fallacy; a more comprehensive falsehood, thick with the same envenomed poison; a narcotic to benumb thought, to bewilder, deceive, mislead, betray and destroy; an added proof of political shrewdness; an insult to reason, logic, and the intelligence that is a precious gift bestowed by the bounteous hand of Nature in holier mood.

Anxiety and worry disturb the peace and unbalance the poise that only contentment may bring. We should be conscious that the only way to prepare wisely for the end of life and entrance upon enduring progress is to live life each day more abundantly, taking no thought for the things of the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.

Buoyant with joy, taking delight, exploring the Elysian fields of our rediscovered universe of love, we shall be mindful not to disturb church congregations or annoy church societies; rather to en-

courage them to strengthen the associations in peace and invite them to join in the great work of common brotherhood.

When Truth shall shed its radiance upon their benighted vision, all grades of religious people, Catholic and Protestant, priest, preacher, and layman, already chastened and strengthened by devotion to the beliefs their fathers taught them, will heartily join in the joyous work of upliftment, extending the helpfulness of sympathy with everything that lives and hungers.

If refusal to endorse, and to censure and condemn, prevailing methods implies infidelity, Jesus must have been the prince of infidels. Our universe of love and truth was plainly intended and clearly intimated when he declared, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. 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." (Matthew 23.)

Again Jesus explained to the multitudes, "The kingdom of heaven is *within* you." We shall never go to heaven. When we waken on that imagined shore, we shall find ourselves just here, for this is the only universe that great Nature's wonderful wisdom has provided. Heaven is not a

far off country placed high up, to be reached by a burnished golden stair. That visionary dreaming vanishes under the first flash of light that reason radiates. Heaven is not a place, or location, but is a condition of peace, poise and contentment that must come if invited through right thinking — destiny building by refusal to admit a hell of discord, gloom or inharmony to disturb our life in its quiet serenity, well knowing, as we do, that as we sow we reap. We live in the atmosphere that we ourselves do generate, and shall thus continue in the great hereafter.

Refusing to engage in contention, a disturbing factor, the source of all warfare, we should state the facts of philosophy as they appear to us, indifferent to their reception in the public mind, hopeful only that Truth be vindicated. With charity for the craft that they have assumed positions impossible of proof and inconsistent with our truest impressions they should be allowed full enjoyment if they believe the stuff themselves, their only defense consisting of unkind epithets hissed between their angry teeth. If to advocate a doctrine of peace and harmony be infidelity, atheism, free thinking, agnosticism or iconoclasm, then welcome the whole bitter nomenclature in its seething cauldron of wrath and vituperation.

Pity them! They know not what they do. Their futile weapon does not make us afraid, nor can their clamor disturb our serenity.

If they can forgive themselves their own wrongs, self-inflicted, Charity shall radiate her sweetest smile, while we continue proud, even boastful, that we are infidel to their creeds and are the only true followers of the matchless Philosopher who meekly trod the plains of Galilee and taught Christianity to all the people of the earth in his wise and helpful lessons teaching a doctrine of peace on earth, good will to men.

The conceited individual who prides himself that he is master, and insists that his wife, his superior, obey his imperious will, is a lost sheep, deaf to the tinkling bell; he has wandered off into fallow fields among thistles, and has cultivated a taste for tares and bitter herbs.

The members of his household are compelled to wander alone, seeking the flowers that bloom along the highway of life. May some touch of human sympathy yet find responsive chord and he be led back! If he will make the effort he shall win, for our difficulties are opportunities to overcome, and by struggle we get into the swing and swell of life's soothing and uplifting vibrations.

There is harmony in old ocean as he chants the wild, profound, eternal bass in Nature's anthem. There is melody in the planets as they sing together their vesper song, and lull our fretful nerves to restful slumber. There are sweet, musical notes in the silence if we listen well. There is uplifting power in contentment if we invoke its

grateful ministrations. There is increased store of love as we bestow it bountifully, for it shall return increased in manifold measure.

If we lend aid to aspiring effort we shall gain poise and power for ourselves, and be lifted higher and higher on the rising tide of life, until its waves shall cease to roll on this unheeding shore, and we shall have made the best preparation possible for what the morrow may bring if, beyond the starless night, we waken to the light of endless day.

You, dear brother, fortunate that you were cast in gentler mold, led by kindlier light, though the cares of business have been exacting and tiresome and your young hopeful may have telephoned during the day relating some calamity that befell in her little world,— the old hen and chickens have got out, or mamma's jelly won't jell,— and on arrival in the evening you find the furniture helter-skelter all through the house, displaced by decorators in unfinished work, and your wife weary, though patient and cheerful amid many cares, your geniality will shed its light and those bare walls will be home to you in all that sanctified and holy word implies, if in right thinking and righteous living your interpretations have been just and wise, and you have created a little universe of hope about you and are worthy a home of joy and happiness where contentment reigns supreme, aided by the strength and courage that struggle and effort bring.

So, long ago, awaiting the rift of dawn on the morning that Time began his flight, great Nature stood, joyous with maturity of her plan for creation, mankind being the object of her profoundest care, the ultimate of her most earnest thought, the consummation of her loftiest purpose, the realization of her fondest dream, providing for us a universe of joy and cheer, a union, a brotherhood, a fellowship of strength, a wellspring of peace on earth,—contingent, however, on effort and struggle and individual assertiveness and our assumption of personal responsibility in destiny building (our divinest dower) and industry in unfoldment of our own powers and possibilities of gaining strength by imparting helpfulness and by getting right with ourselves.

Unfortunately a selfish ambition, a serpent of miscreated form, invaded the sacred precinct, and, coiling his snaky folds around the body of unsuspecting innocence, his hissing breath polluted the vital atmosphere, stung emotion, poisoned sentiment, bewildered thought, and inflated imagination in wildest dream of horrors to come.

Our sight obscured by many fallacies, we wandered far in fields of despair, and forgot our priceless inheritance.

But no wrinkles are written on the polished brow of Time; his eye is not dimmed, his hand is never palsied; and at last his tardy finger points to the lost trail that shall lead us back to Nature and her unailing ways.

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Relieved from all peril, our vision clarified by right thinking, constructing our own fate by *righteous living*, we shall find and regain our forgotten heritage in this REDISCOVERED UNIVERSE.

Summum bonum.

XXVIII

SUMMARY

When the intelligence of man was developed so that he became aware of life and its mystery, the devotion that was native in him aroused aspiration, and he longed for something higher, nobler, better, and eagerly accepted any teaching that offered explanation, however vague it might be to reasoning powers yet undeveloped.

A selfish ambition discovered its opportunity to dominate and control and sprang into the breach, — finally growing to the stature of a hierarchy.

During those untold far-away ages since, possibly millions of years ago, there were formed idolatrous monarchies and religious oligarchies; and bibles and bibles unnumbered that had become obsolete and lost in forgetfulness down the unwritten ages before the Mosaic Dynasty sprang from its root in fabulous mythological heathenism. The fable writing instinct that was its endowment made it an easy task to indite a fable about a serpent of snaky fold, a woman carved of bone and a man fashioned from clay, an original trinity of evil guilty of disobedience to mandate deftly invented to fix a charge of infamy and villainy

upon helpless generations yet to be born and suffer unjust penalty for a crime that was only imaginary. Prompted by the savagery that was the inheritance of the dynasty, it invented the Decalogue with all of its implied punishments, a whip of scorpions to subjugate and control with terror, and the work of the machine was complete.

The great Juggernaut of power rolled its ponderous wheels down the declivity of forty hundred years, demolishing, crushing, destroying, all that lay in its unheeding pathway, for none could interpose objection or say thus far and no farther. But the unrelenting tooth of time never fails to leave its impress on all that it touches. Only Nature's great law is unfailing. All that is human must perish. The old Hebrew organization, weary with repetition, had grown monotonous with its outrages. Weak and enervated in its senility, it was between the devil and the deep sea, ethically liable at any time to dash against that great rock, the Scylla of its own crimes, or to be drawn into a monster whirlpool, the Charybdis of a newer error, and it did so fall; for in those latter ages of its decadences one Jesus, the son of a carpenter, and John, the son of a devoted mountain priest, both of them men of stern integrity, endowed with the power of meekness and humility, had passed some decades in close association with that most ancient occult brotherhood of truth seekers in the recesses of the wilderness and drew

from the ample breast of Mother Nature the milk of kindness and love, and they came forth out of the wilderness to transfuse that strength into the impoverished multitudes sorrowing under the heavy hand of oppression and greed.

They were saviors, these two men, Jesus and John, for they well knew the condition that enthralled the people and came to redeem them from bondage by teaching them self-assertiveness and the power of helpfulness and upliftment by love and united brotherhood.

The teachings sank deep and brought light and strength into hearts that were faint, quickened nerves that were palsied, and brought new life into bodies that were well-nigh pulseless.

The multitudes were joyous and their numbers were augmented by accessions that decimated the ranks of the oppressor and aroused his jealousy; in his frenzy he resorted to desperate methods that aggravated an anger that was past all surgery.

John had come first and was first to suffer death. Some demagogues of the partisanship that later sprang up out of the ruins recorded a lot of maudlin twaddle about a dancing girl for the purpose of diverting attention from the fault of the parent stock, but it was a falsehood; John was beheaded only because he lent voice to a human cry that refused to be still and radiated the light of Freedom into places that had been kept dark.

The dastardly murder committed in Herod's prison had the reverse effect of aggravating what

it was intended to cure. The man of many sorrows was not dismayed but sorrowed more widely.

The sympathies that first actuated the two great deliverers flowed more copiously in the heart of the remaining one. His eloquence was more pathetic, more touching, more tender. He wept for the multitudes and the multitudes wept with him. He taught them the wisdom and the power of self-help and they grew more helpful to each other, more assertive and more confident day by day, as they learned to harken back to Nature, appeal to her law and live life more abundantly.

Exhausted with struggle, debilitated by erosion through many centuries, its remnant of followers deserting, the man of Nazareth attracting the masses to his standard of relief through effort, its cycle surely rounding, the hierarchy forgot their ancient cunning and blindly struck a random blow upon the nearest object of their care.

They trumped up a false charge against the man Jesus, convicted him in mock trial and caused him to be nailed to a cross of execution, hoping that to silence his voice would extinguish the light of Truth he radiated. But this was their final and fatal error, for the outrage increased and intensified the multitude that flocked to the invulnerable standard of Love that had been firmly set up and was inapproachable. The jealous hand that smote fell limp and nerveless and the body of the dynasty was stunned to extremis in

the reflex action that followed and the whole Jewish fabric was shattered in feeble remnants scattered over the face of the whole earth; and, except for the activity of the shepherdless, blind, bewildered flock that wandered, quiet prevailed for several centuries of time.

Indifferent to all principles of ethics, integrity or honor that branch of business called politics, or public policy and management, yields a higher percentage of profit on the investment of effort involved than any other human industry, and attracts to its aid the ablest talent to be found in all the ages of human activity.

Priestcraft, ancient as the race of mankind, is the highest form, the very refinement of politics.

The Christian religion pretends to ignore all carnal or material things and to confine its activities to the unseen, psychic or thought realm where it is painfully apparent that fear is the deadliest narcotic in its great laboratory of mental poisons, and when religion possesses the power to do so, it descends to the physical realm and wields the keenest sword and fans the hottest flame; intolerance and punishment are its methods for coercion. Without the bestial brutality of punishment religion would be more empty than a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal, neither would it be considered worthy of a footprint on the stepping stone to hell.

Priestcraft is ever and always alert. It discovered the unguarded condition and early in

the fourth century discovered its new opportunity when it sprang into the breach and soon formed a strong organization of men who still call themselves "The Church."

The Church purloined the old Bible of its Mosaic fathers and appropriated the Eden fable with the decalogue; and adopted the great idol carved on Jewish imagination and concealed above the clouds. Then they commenced to write a new Bible all their own that required more than one thousand years, if, indeed, it is yet fully completed; some books of the New Testament still are in controversy of admission.

In writing the four gospels of the new Bible those Church manipulators harkened back to ancient mythologies and musty mysteries where they found idols, gods, deities and divinities in great numbers, all of them of mysterious or fatherless birth, and naturally they fabricated a history of the man Jesus who was born of a married woman who was yet a virgin, whose husband was one Joseph, a Jew, who was the supposed "father" of the child, and thus they connected back to the ancient Judaism that was their own parent political organization, and thus far the chain of succession was complete without hook or swivel, and proved their claim to the old Bible as an inheritance from their fathers.

Whenever these men needed proof of an assertion that they made they invented and recorded

the evidence; and wrote credentials each for the other. The Church authorized the Bible and the Bible authorized the Church; easily a nest of wheels within a wheel. A lot of crafty demagogues these Bible inventors were, for each of them had wheels of authority, self-constituted, buzzing within his own head.

They are imperious in their dogma that we fall down and worship a cross on which their fathers committed foulest murder. Among other levers that they attached to the old machine they borrowed a theory of immortality that cannot be confirmed or denied and compelled us to learn the unknowable; and after all the best way to prepare for the morrow is to set our house in order today. As we make progress now, so shall we progress in the great beyond if we waken. At the behest of a lot of fellow creatures that they may live, the pulpit is the machine of worship, and worship is idolatry.

The clergymen of our time may be excused. They have been unwisely taught and they know not what they do. Only the old organization that sprang out of ancient heathenish mythology and the craftiness and hypocrisy it developed should be condemned, and condemned unsparingly as it was condemned once long ago on the Judean plains by the most advanced of all metaphysicians and philosophers.

Let us employ our precious gift of reason,