

# The Divine Programme of The World's History Chapter I. The Adamic Programme. – Part II



Continued from [The Divine Programme of The World's History Chapter I. The Adamic Programme. – Part I.](#)

It is thus with the long conflict between the serpent and the woman's seed. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus practically won the day, though the full fruits of victory are not reaped yet. In Him, man, born of a woman, resisted Satan's temptations, fulfilled all righteousness, suffered the just for the unjust, tasted death for every man, broke its bonds and rose again from the dead, triumphant alike over the wiles, the malice, and the power of Satan. There is ample and unquestionable historic evidence of these facts, and this virtually decided the struggle. The author of evil had met his match, and been wounded in a vital point. One member of the human family had vanquished him, and became thenceforth the champion and deliverer of His brethren. It was all over with the Philistines when Goliath was slain, though much remained to be done before they were finally driven from the land of Israel.

Since the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the ultimate triumph of the seed of the woman has, in spite of all appearances to the contrary, been a settled question; and the final issue becomes continually clearer in the light of the actual course of mundane events.

The victories of moral good over moral evil which have resulted from the influence whether of Judaism or of Christianity, whether direct or indirect, may all be fairly regarded as the achievements and initial triumphs of "the seed of the woman." In considering a few of the most notable of these, we must distinguish between results that have been and are the proper outcome of the doctrines and example of Christ—the fruits of *real* Christianity—and the results of the existence in the world of the great corrupt outward organization that bears His name—the professing Christian Church.

This, alas! has too often completely misrepresented the religion of Christ, and acted in opposition to His laws and to His Spirit. It has cultivated bigotry and hatred, instigated religious wars and persecutions, opposed liberty of thought and action, established bloody courts of inquisition, upheld cruel and inhuman systems of slavery, sought for itself earthly power

and wealth, and by its enactments and practices encouraged a host of terrible social evils and degrading popular superstitions.

The mischief done by the so-called Christian Church must not be laid at the door of true Christianity. Its effects are to be traced by the changes which its doctrines have produced in the world through the influence exerted by its *true* professors. In all ages, even the darkest, there have been such consistent disciples of Christ, filled with His spirit and followers of His example, whose lives have been potent for good, and whose influence, though they may have themselves been martyred, has been mighty enough to shame men out of some of their evil deeds, and move them to a measure of self-reformation, even when it did not make of them true converts.

A work was published ("Gesta Christi." By C. Loring Brace) by an American writer which carefully traces the history of human progress under Christianity. The author is one who has had the opportunity of practically testing for thirty years on a large scale its power in diminishing poverty, misery, and crime; and of estimating the part *Christian ideas* had in the great effort of the United States to remove the giant evil of slavery. There can indeed be no question that they were the foundation of this greatest of modern reforms, and that they stimulated and supported the country through its long and costly struggle to deliver itself from this dread incubus. This author had also studied for many years the laws and history of the later Roman period and of the middle ages, and had been struck by the ever-recurring traces of the silent yet profound working of "the great reforming power of the world." He had also been engaged in examining and presenting in public writings the influence of the Christian faith in the more modern period on international law, arbitrations, and the relations of nations. This experience fitted him to do—what he has very cautiously and candidly done in the work alluded to—trace the progressive influence of Christianity in the earth. He writes:

"There are certain practices, principles, and ideas, now the richest inheritance of the race, that have been either implanted or stimulated or supported by Christianity. They are such as these: regard for the personality of the weakest and poorest; respect for women; the absolute duty of each member of the fortunate classes to raise up the unfortunate; humanity to the child, the prisoner, the stranger, the needy, and even the brute; the duty of personal purity and the sacredness of marriage; the necessity of temperance; the obligation of a more equitable division of the profits of labour, and of greater co-operation between employers and employed; the right of every human being to have the utmost opportunity of developing his faculties, and of all persons to enjoy equal political and social privileges; the principle that the injury of one nation is the injury of all, and the expediency and duty of unrestricted trade and intercourse between all countries; and, finally and principally, a profound opposition to war, a determination to limit its evils when existing, and to prevent its arising by means of international arbitration."

Space forbids us to enlarge as we would fain do on this theme, but we may say in a sentence the world little knows how deeply it is indebted to

Christianity and its parent Judaism! Light, love, liberty, peace, preservation, progress, happiness, harmony, hope have all flowed to mankind from the advent of the woman's Seed. Take away from the human family the nations and peoples who have more or less fully come under the Redeemer's influence, and what remains? Nothing but polytheism and idolatry, paganism and fetishism, despotism, slavery, degraded womanhood, female infanticide, inter-tribal wars, depopulated countries, and dwarfed, stunted races who have retrograded through vice almost to the level of the beasts.

China is the only apparent exception; and even there, alongside of an ancient and comparatively high civilization, idolatry, superstition, female oppression, judicial cruelties, and social miseries prevail.

Mohammedan countries must be included among those which have, though very slightly, come under the Redeemer's influence, for their monotheism was derived both from Judaism and Christianity.

The point we have to settle is, whether the Eden prediction of the triumph of the seed of the woman seems likely, from what has already happened, to be ultimately fulfilled? Or, to put the question in another form, are idolatries, cruelties, and degrading superstitions passing away before the liberating, ennobling doctrines of Christ? Are the more corrupt forms of the Christian faith itself giving place increasingly to purer and more beneficial ones? Is a constantly increasing section of the human race enjoying vast temporal and spiritual benefits traceable to the advent of Christ? The answer to these questions must be an affirmative one. In an ever-increasing ratio, the faith of Christ is spreading in the earth; the most marked increase in our days (the 19th century) is in the purer Protestant forms of that faith; and everywhere civil, political, social, and religious elevation follow as a consequence.

Contrast the moral and social condition of (19th century) Protestant England, Scotland, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, North America, Australia, New Zealand, with the condition of India, Burma, Siam, China, Central Africa, Zululand, or with that of the American Indians. The more thoroughly the two groups are studied, the more apparent will it become that the contrast of condition between Christian and heathen countries is like that between night and day. Roman Catholic countries, which, though Christian in profession, have been moulded by a worldly and corrupt ecclesiastical system, rather than by the pure doctrine of Christ and the open Bible, occupy an *intermediate* position; as witness Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Mexico, Haiti, and the States of South America, where, instead of wealth, might, prosperity, progress, and peace, we see poverty, feebleness, disaster, retrogression, perpetual unrest, and constant wars.

The following statements are taken from a recently published pamphlet, entitled, "Political Issues of the Nineteenth Century, with Important Statistics drawn from the most Authentic Sources":

"The social progress of the last century has been signal. That progress has been chiefly a Protestant progress. The Catholic nations have been comparatively torpid, and exhibit little movement, except when by tolerating

a Protestant minority they have admitted an infusion from the reform.

"The general decay or comparative stagnation of Catholic countries is patent, but a prolonged insight shows more. It is evident the Catholic nations advance more slowly in proportion to their complete subjection to the religious influence of Catholicism, while, on the contrary, strong religious sentiment among Protestants seems favourable to rapid advance. Historians remark that the Reformation has given extraordinary force to every nation which embraced it, and that history cannot explain this force.

"Protestantism being founded on a book reciting covenants between God and every man, it claims that every man should read. Hence the necessity for education. Personal covenant implies individual liberty and individual intelligence. With the exercise of private judgment comes discovery. The conscience is reached by a higher sense of moral contract than in the adherents of a system subordinated to some fellow creature, who assumes solely to interpret obligation and regulate duty. The enthusiasm of Protestants has remodelled the most important States of Europe on a basis of deliberative assent and representative government. Catholic communities, when they aspire to imitate this conception, invariably fall into disorder, for Catholicism requires unthinking submission. In the States founded by Protestantism in America, liberty and industrial energy are concomitant with order. Wherever Protestantism prevails, there is more frankness, more affiance, more culture and morality. . . .

"This is the secret of the strength of Protestantism. It rends the cerements (shrouds for the dead) which have long enwrapped the Church, and gives to every member the breath of life. M. Renan says: 'The formation of new sects which Catholics bring, as a mark of weakness, against Protestants, proves, on the contrary, that the religious sentiment lives among the latter because it is creative. There is nothing more dead than that which is motionless.' Protestantism substitutes a Christian republic of genial intelligence for a pharisaic cabalism of hierarchs, The laity are no longer the proletores of the clergy, and both escape the deteriorating immorality of the confessional. The estates and judgments of men are freed from *the figment and the exactions of a vice-Christ who conveyances the invisible world to others and the visible to himself.*

It seems incumbent on the nineteenth century to examine the extent and nature of this evil before transferring the burden to the next. Let us dispassionately ascertain how much of it is traceable to Christianity, travestied with paganism, whether the intellectual nonage of nations is not prolonged by it only in a less degree than by the vitiated theisms of Asia. Judged by the gradual corruption of the Church from Lactantius to Luther, but for the Reformation of the sixteenth century Christianity should by this time have sunk so low as to be unrecognisable, and Europe would know no more of the writings of Moses, Isaiah, Paul, or John, than do the votaries of Buddha, Siva, and Mahomet. The condition of the Jesuit-ruled portions of America and their painful history for three hundred years would raise a further question, Does *such* Christianity sink populations lower than it finds them?"

Mr. Gladstone, referring to these, the vital subjects of our day, writes:

"There is a question which hitherto can scarcely be said to have been presented to the public mind, and which it seems high time to examine that question is,— whether experience has now supplied data sufficient for a trustworthy comparison of results in the several spheres of political liberty, social advancement, mental intelligence, and general morality between the Church of Rome on the one hand, and the religious communities cutoff or separated from her on the other." He proceeds then to reason that Scriptural faith will prove efficient "against the ultramontane (advocation of supreme papal authority) conspiracy," and urges the need of the purified form of Christianity. Macaulay, Ruskin, Dickens, Hallam, Hepworth Dixon, and J. A. Froude have touched the question frequently; but Continental writers, Romanist and Protestant, have dilated upon it.

Taine has recognised the Bible as "the secret of England's greatness." Agassiz says of the teaching of Romanist priests, that "as long as the people do not demand another sort of religious instruction they will continue in their downward course or not be able to improve."

M. Geroult writes in the palmy days of the second empire (1866): "The nations in which Papal, religion prevails are doomed to IRREMEDIAL DECA, the future of the world is all to the Reformed Church. What nations are at the head of civilization, and exercise a sovereign influence? The United States, Britain, and Prussia. Which, on the contrary, drag painfully along in the routine of the past without strength or grandeur? Spain, Rome, and Austria. As for France, she is indebted to a peculiar temperament and to the free spirit of inquiry with which she is long animated, not to have fallen to the rank of a fifth or sixth-rate power in Europe. But let her take care, the Catholicism to which she obstinately remains attached—why, it is not easy to say—will indubitably in the long run paralyse her forces."

Professor Emile de Laveleye remarks: "The Catholic nations seem stricken with barrenness; they cannot rest, because free and representative government is the logical outcome of Protestantism only. Catholic nations aspiring to this perpetually oscillate between despotism and anarchy. Christianity is favourable to liberty. Catholicism is its moral enemy, so admits its infallible head—the pope. If France had not persecuted, strangled, and banished her children who had become Protestants, she might have developed the germs of liberty and self-government. The fact being that the chief of a state, be he king or president, cannot be a true constitutional sovereign if he is a devotee, and confesses as an obedient penitent. He is governed by a confessor who is subject to the pope, the real sovereign. The constitutional system becomes a figment or a fraud, for it enslaves the country to the will of an unknown priest; or else when the land refuses to bear the humiliating yoke, it produces a revolution. In Protestant lands the constitutional system flourishes naturally being in its native soil; while on Catholic soil, being an heretical import, it is undermined by the priest."

"Such is its fate in Ireland, The franchises bestowed by an heretical empire to ascertain the individual will of its subjects can effect that object in a Protestant population; in Ireland it expresses nought hut the collective will of Rome. Even the juryman must submit ta the Church's interpretation of duty; he is influenced, as M. de Laveleye says the monarch or the minister is

influenced, through the confessional. He is abject before the priest, who is abject before the pope. Thus Vaticanism wields imperial sway in Ireland, and no proof can be given that demagoguism is not its puppet.

The effort to govern Ireland on constitutional principles becomes a farce and even a fraud... Would ultramontane success make Ireland happy? It has had its way in many lands, and shown that it perishes by its own corruption. Suppose Ireland was made into another Spain or Mexico. Let the history of those countries be repeated. Let property so gravitate into the custody of the Roman Catholic Church, that even the banks became monasteries, and the trader and the property-owner must borrow through the prelacy. The inquisition in Mexico became the discounter as well as the torturer. The wealth of the insubordinate was extracted by the rack. Money could always be had through the prelates, and through them only. Did this bring prosperity to Mexico? A new administration every nine months attests the fearful unrest which Romanism brings to agonized nations. . . .

The traveller in Ireland is pained and surprised to find within twelve hours of London a lawlessness, truculence, and degradation defying the philanthropy and statues of an empire which girdles the globe with its benignity. On lands where the energy of Protestantism would by emigration disengage itself from impracticable resources, the Catholic remains in chronic inanity (lack of sense) of mind and body, and priests enjoy munificent (bountiful) living among the victims of superstition and sorrow. A moral map of Europe would show in darkening circles our approach to the former States of the Church. The remark of Edmund About on prosperity holds true of morality, that *'it is proportioned to the square of the distance which separates it from Rome.'*

"Niebuhr, speaking of the Papal capital in 1830, says: 'They are a nation of walking dead men. When that which is living disgusts, can the human heart find compensation from statues, painting, and architecture? Intellect and knowledge, any idea which makes the heart throb, all generous activity seems banished, all hope, all aspiration, all effort, even all cheerfulness, for I have never seen a more cheerless nation.'

Macaulay says, 'Under the rule of Rome, the loveliest provinces of Europe have been sunk in poverty, in political servitude, in intellectual torpor, and reduced to the lowest depths of degradation.'

Mr. Gladstone ('Vaticanism') says: 'The education of the religious orders in its influence is adverse to freedom in the mind of the individual, freedom in the State, freedom in the family; all that nurtures freedom, all that guarantees it, is harassed, denounced, cabined, confined, attenuated, and starved. To secure these is the claim of civilization; to destroy them, and to establish the resistless domineering action of a central power, is the aim of Rome.'

Sir Robert Kane, an Irish Roman Catholic, says, in every country where education has been in the hands of the religious orders of Catholicism, 'it had resulted in social decay and the political debasement of the people.'

In Spain the adult illiteracy has attained the figure of seventy-five per

cent. 'The condition of Spain, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Sicily, rural France, and indeed of Southern Europe as contrasted with Northern, is instructive. In Northern we find education, municipal repose, rural sweetness, and contentment. In the South with or without education, there is municipal unrest, tumult, and licentiousness, in the rural districts, filth, ignorance, coarseness.

The virtues of content and industry come PALPABLY FROM SPIRITUAL SOURCES. The manifestation of wisdom and goodness in a Divine Being, as conveyed in the evangelic message of the New Testament, has proved itself the firm support of authority and obligation. When Christianity was pure it tamed the Goth, and Hun, and Scandinavian, who were never tamed till the gospel reached them. The nations of the South who had the advantage of starting with the developed civilization of pagan Rome have retrograded."

Statistical tables are then given to show the demoralizing effect of the Papacy, and especially of the confessional, in the countries subjected to Catholic influence. We have not space to give these, but may mention that while, in 1853, in Protestant England murders, for instance, occur in the proportion of four to a million of the population, in Ireland there are nineteen to the million, in Austria thirty-six, and in Italy seventy-eight. In 1869 the report of the French police gives still more horrible figures for the Papal States and Italy. In the former the murders were one hundred and eighty seven in the million, and in the latter one hundred and eleven.

And not only does Romanism fail to restrain crime, but it fails equally to restrain vice. The official records of the birth of illegitimate children in Protestant and Roman Catholic countries present a fearful contrast. While in the great cities of England such births vary from four to seven per cent, in Paris, Brussels, and Milan they are thirty to thirty-five per cent.; and in Prague, Munich, Vienna, and Gratz they vary from forty-seven to sixty-five per cent. In the Pontifical States, before their annexation to Italy, not only was the death-rate from crimes of violence, as we have seen, enormous, but the corruption of society was appalling to contemplate. Nowhere else, probably, was the number of illegitimate births so great: it amounted to seventy-two per cent. Or, to contrast the cities: in London, for every hundred legitimate births there are four illegitimate, in Paris there are forty-eight, and in Rome a hundred and forty three—though it has between seven and eight thousand clergy, monks, and nuns!

What has made these differences and shades of difference? Divine revelation: first the law, and since the gospel. The Lord Jesus said to His disciples, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." If mankind has been to any extent liberated from the tyranny of Satan, if foolish and degrading idolatries and ignorant superstitions have lost their hold on a considerable portion of our race, it is a result of the redeeming work of the woman's Seed. It is true that many influences—material, moral, and intellectual—have combined to effect the advance of the race in morality and humanity, and that it is not always easy to estimate the separate influence of the new moral power introduced into the world by the advent and death of Christ; but all the most important ameliorations of the condition of mankind will be seen on careful investigation to be *gesta Christi*,—achievements of

Christ.

To judge fairly of this fact, we must compare the condition of the Roman earth before Christianity became the religion of the empire with its condition subsequently and with its condition now. The moral and social revolution connected with the abolition of heathenism was immense and universal. It is difficult for us at this date to realize the corruption which characterized the old Roman civilization, the gigantic obstacles which Christianity had to overthrow in the laws, customs, and habits of the people, as well as in their religion. Satan's power in the world has diminished indeed since the days when parents could legally kill their children, and husbands had the power of life and death over their wives; when divorce was so frequent that Seneca speaks of illustrious and noble women who reckoned their years, not by the number of the consuls, but by that of their husbands, and mentions one man, Moecenas, as having "married a thousand wives," and Tertullian says that divorce was the very purpose of the Roman marriage. He who is a murderer from the beginning had full sway in the days when Caesar forced three hundred and twenty pairs of gladiators at once into the arena to destroy each other, or when Trajan kept up such bloody sports for one hundred and twenty three days together and made 10,000 unhappy prisoners contend for life in the amphitheatre; when human sacrifices were offered on great occasions to the gods, and noble and lovely children specially sought out as victims; when parents exposed their female children without the slightest compunction if too poor to rear them, or if they seemed weakly, leaving them to die or be devoured, or rescued by others to be brought up as the lowest slaves; when corruption of still worse and more unnatural kinds was so common that Tacitus mourned over the utter decadence of his people, and, believing no redemption possible, anticipated only final and general ruin. It was in such a world as this that the triumphs of "the Seed of the woman" began.

"The influence of the great Friend of humanity was especially seen in the Roman empire in checking licentious and cruel sports, so common and so demoralizing among the classic races; and in bringing on a new legislation of beneficence in favor of the outcast woman, the mutilated, the prisoner, and the slave. For the first time the stern and noble features of Roman law took on an unwonted expression of gentle humanity and sweet compassion under the power of Him who was the brother of the unfortunate and the sinful. The great followers of the Teacher of Galilee became known as the 'brothers of the slave,' and the Christian religion began its struggles of many centuries with those greatest of human evils, slavery and serfdom. It did not, indeed, succeed in abolishing them; but the remarkable mitigations of the system in Roman law, and the constant drift towards a condition of liberty, and the increasing emancipation throughout the Roman empire, are plainly fruits of its principles. All these and similar steps of humane progress are the *gesta Christi*, and the direct effects of His personal influence on the world."

Dr. Cunningham Geikie, in his "Life and Words of Christ," after tracing the new principles and the fresh light brought into the world by the advent of Christ, says:

"It has already largely transformed society, and is destined to affect it for good, in ever-increasing measure, in all directions. The one

grand doctrine of the brotherhood of man, as man, is in itself the pledge of infinite results. . . . Such an idea was unknown to antiquity, to the Jew, to the Greek, and to the Roman alike.

"It was left to Christ to proclaim the brotherhood of all nations by revealing God as their common Father in heaven, filled towards them with a father's love; by His commission to preach the gospel to all; by His inviting all, without distinction, to come to Him; . . . by His equal sympathy with the slave, the beggar, and the ruler; by the whole bearing and spirit of His life; and, above all, by His picture of all nations gathered to judgment at the Great Day, with no distinction of race or rank, but simply as men.

"In this great principle of the essential equality of man and his responsibility to God, the germs lay hid of grand truths imperfectly realized even yet. . .

"The slave, before Christ came, was a piece of property of less worth than land or cattle. An old Roman law enacted a penalty of death for him who killed a ploughing ox, but the murderer of a slave was called to no account whatever. Crassus, after the revolt of Spartacus, crucified 10,000 slaves at one time. Augustus, in violation of his word, delivered to their masters, for execution, 30,000 slaves who had fought for Sextus Pompeius.

"The great truth of man's universal brotherhood was the axe laid at the root of this detestable crime—the sum of all villainies. By first infusing kindness into the lot of the slave, then by slowly undermining slavery itself, each century has seen some advance, till at last the man owner is unknown in nearly every civilized country, and even Africa itself, the worst victim of slavery in these later ages, is being aided by Christian England to raise its slaves into freemen.

"Aggressive war is no less distinctly denounced by Christianity, which, in teaching the brotherhood of man, proclaims war a revolt, abhorrent to nature, of brothers against brothers. The voice of Christ, commanding peace on earth, has echoed through all the centuries since His day, and has been, at least, so far honoured that the horrors of war are greatly lessened, and that war itself—no longer the rule, but the exception—is much rarer in Christian nations than in former times." (Written before the two world wars when Protestantism was stronger.)

The writer from whom we have before quoted says on this subject:

"Peace among all men and all nations is the ideal presented by Christ. And by one class of means or other, when at length His teachings have thoroughly permeated mankind, this ideal will be attained.

"Outside of the nominally Christian nations there is no international law. The Turks appear to have had little idea of it till instructed by European nations. The Koran's teachings tended in the very opposite

direction, and made war the natural condition towards non-Mohammedan races, and treachery justifiable towards an 'infidel.' The Mohammedan peoples in the North of Africa lived in a constant state of hostility with all foreigners. The Chinese, with all their advancement in arts and sciences, seem never to have thought of any code of humanity and justice towards foreign nations.

"The Japanese have indeed recently made efforts to introduce the international law known to the Christian nations to their own people, and one proposed code at least has been translated.

"No Buddhist, so far as we are aware, has written on this topic, nor does a Buddhistic code of laws and customs between different peoples exist.

"Nor, as we have shown, does international law owe much to Greek culture or to Roman law. The first general tinge of humanity in the world's relations, mercy to the wounded and helpless, the softening the rugged face of war, the binding different nations in a certain bond (feeble though it be) of brotherhood, the disposition to refer injuries to arbitration rather than violence—these are the *gesta Christi*."

But we must turn now to the second part of the prophetic programme given in Eden—the announcements of the penal consequences of sin.

Man having rebelled against the great and good Creator, in whose image he was made, and under whose law he was placed in paradise, the threatened penalty and the natural *results* of sin followed.

The announcement of these should be read not merely as a judicial sentence inflicting penalties, but much more as a sure and certain word of prophecy, foretelling what would be the natural and inevitable consequences of sin.

DEATH was predicted as the wages of sin: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." We need not pause here to inquire what Adam's destiny and that of his race would have been if sin had not entered, nor to examine into the nature of that death which is the wages of sin. What we have to do is to observe how the prediction has been fulfilled—how, notwithstanding the redemption promised, Adam and all his seed have experienced the truth of the prophetic announcement, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." How simple the words, but how awfully sad and solemn their fulfilment! The echo of that sentence uttered ages ago in Eden rolls back upon us in ever-multiplying funereal dirges from all lands and ages. Death, death, death, universal, all-devouring death! Enthroned king in paradise, death *reigned* from Adam to Moses, and has reigned ever since. Every biography ends like the patriarchal genealogies in Genesis v., with their ever-recurring strain, "and he died." Our globe is one great cemetery. Successive generations of men have passed away to the grave, as the successive crops of grass fall in turn beneath the mower's scythe. "We cannot hold mortality's strong hand; men must endure their going hence e'en as their coming hither." Two hundred generations of men have succeeded each other on earth since their Creator put

into the hands of our first parents this programme of the experiences of their race. What these generations averaged it would be impossible to say; the one now living is computed at 1,400 millions. Average them at even a quarter of that number; then seventy thousand millions of times over has this prediction been accomplished! Each day sees it fulfilled afresh in more than eighty thousand cases, for such is the present daily death-rate of the world's inhabitants.

With two interruptions only—the raptures of Enoch and Elijah—death held unbroken sway from the fall of the first Adam to the resurrection of the second. And though the resurrection of Christ has robbed death of its sting and the grave of its victory, yet even as to believers who already have eternal life in Him, “the *body* is nevertheless still subject to death because of sin.” (Romans 8:10) Christians are no exception to the universal law, “it is appointed unto men once to die.” The *last* enemy to be destroyed is death.

Nor must we, in considering the fulfilment of this prediction, leave out of sight the universality of sickness and suffering, of disease and decay, that form no inconsiderable part of this curse of death. “We that are in this body do groan being burdened,” and each groan is an evidence of sin and death! From the cradle to the grave we carry in ourselves the seeds of death. Men are born dying as well as to die, and the sole hope of our race lies in the promise and prediction, that God will yet “swallow up death in victory.”

A second point in this Eden prophecy was that while awaiting death, man should suffer from the curse of excessive labour. All labour is not a curse. Adam in Eden while still unfallen had his appointed task to dress the garden and to keep it, and for fallen man with all his evil propensities and incessant exposure to Satanic temptation, the necessity of labour is a mercy. Without it earth would speedily become a pandemonium. But still it was as a punishment for human sin that the ground was cursed, and it was foretold that the earth ceasing to yield spontaneously suitable human food would bring forth thorns and thistles, and would in order to make it productive demand human labour, amounting to *painful, incessant, wearisome toil*, “In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread.”

To note the fulfilment of this prediction, we must not confine our attention to agricultural labour merely. Glance over the world again, look back over intervening centuries and abroad throughout all races of men! Has it not ever been so? Have not multitudes, yea, the masses of mankind, even now to endure weary, wasting toil, that they may live? Is not life to the great majority a hard battle for existence? We must not think of the few who form the exception, but of the many who fall under the rule. We must note how the races who refuse thus to toil (like the Red Indians, who prefer to live by the chase, or the Bushmen of the Kalihari, who depend on the natural produce of their country) die out by degrees and cease to be. We must note how even, with all their toil, millions of industrious Chinese, Hindus, and others are periodically carried off by famine. Millions of our fellow subjects in India do not know what it is to have more than one meal a day, and are rarely free from a painful feeling of hunger.

We must consider the overwhelming labours imposed on millions more by

slavery; the arduous, exhausting, and dangerous toil involved to still other millions in such operations as underground mining for coal and other minerals, navigating stormy seas as fishermen, or in pursuit of commerce. We must think of the life of drudgery and weariness led by multitudes of women and young children in factories of various kinds, of multitudes of poor sempstresses toiling all their lives for the barest subsistence; think of the thousands of men employed in the great cities of the world, as drivers of cabs, trains, omnibuses, and other public vehicles—men whose hands must grasp the reins for twelve or fourteen and even sixteen hours a day, and that for seven days a week! And even if we rise above the classes condemned to the lowest forms of labour, oh, how full of toil is this our world! Rest and leisure for enjoyment are the rare exceptions, the stern, rarely relaxed rule is toil, labour in the sweat of the brow!

“If little labour little are our gains,  
Man’s fortunes are according to his pains.”

So do men realize this, that multitudes die of over-work, over-wrought brains, or worn-out bodies. Some of this is doubtless self-inflicted and needless, but for all that, the curse of labour presses heavily on the race, and always has done so everywhere. There may be some lovely islet of the southern sea where no more of labour than is healthful and pleasant is needed to secure sustenance. But such spots are as much exceptions in the earth as men rich enough to afford idleness are exceptions in the race.

It is a fact proved by carefully compiled statistics, that in the State of Massachusetts alone 72,700 lives were lost *in their prime*, in the manufacturing towns, in the course of the five years, 1865–1871,—the vast majority from excessive labour, which soon destroys women and young girls especially. What hundreds of thousands of such perish annually in England, and die premature deaths from the same cause! Is not this a heavy penalty? Does it not press painfully on the human family the world over to this day as predicted? Was not the foreview of human history given to Adam correct in this particular? Let the great mass of mankind—straightening their weary backs and wiping the sweat from their brows with stiffened, aching hands—reply.

But the heaviest burden of this Eden prophecy fell not on the man. It fell where the sin was greatest, on the first transgressor—woman. Hers was a double guilt, for she not only yielded to temptation, but became in her turn a tempter. She fell not alone, but drew her husband down with her. The natural, inevitable consequences were foretold, and themselves constituted to a large extent woman’s peculiar curse, though there is superadded a Divine infliction of punishment. Given to be man’s helpmeet and companion, woman became first his tempter and then *his slave*; for man, in becoming a sinner, became of course selfish. Might took the place of right, and the weaker vessel, instead of being honoured and cherished, was oppressed and degraded. “Thy desire will be to thy husband,” or, as it is better rendered, “thou wilt be in subjection to thy husband, and he will rule (or tyrannize) over thee.”

Has this prediction been verified in the history of the sex? Alas! alas! almost too terribly for description. The shameless, brutal, cruel degradation

of woman by the stronger sex has been perhaps one of the very darkest results of the fall, and one of the plainest proofs of the ruin which sin has wrought in the nature of man.

Save where Divine revelation has shed its beams of healing light, woman is to this day a slave, or a captive, or a victim. The Indian loads his wife like a beast of burden, with all his goods and chattels, drives her before him with her infant on her back as he would drive a brute, and walking unburdened by her side, flogs her when her strength fails. The Bantu chief in Central Africa dies; straightway a dozen of his living wives are forced into the great square pit which is to be his grave, to make a couch for the corpse, and be buried alive to keep the dead man company. How often, when the Hindu husband has died, has the wife been burned on his funeral pile as a compliment to his memory! One hundred millions of women and young girls—fellow-subjects of our own—are immured as prisoners to this day in the dark and loathsome zenanas of India, doomed to a wretched, cruel, dreary lifelong captivity, and to an ignorance which degrades them into mere talking animals; and this by the laws and customs invented and established *by men*. They may never eat with their own husbands, or share any of his pleasures or pursuits, never walk abroad for exercise, or travel for health, instruction, or amusement. They are simply slaves, lifelong prisoners, defrauded of the first right of a human being, and worse off than any negro in the West Indies in days gone by.

Such is the portion of woman in heathendom, and it is not much better among the hundred and twenty millions of Mohammedans. Woman is denied her just rights by the degrading custom of polygamy, denied education and culture, denied even the possession of a soul! Even the Jews in their daily ritual thank God that He has not made them women, and do not permit wives and mothers to worship God with their husbands and sons in the synagogues, but assign to them a separate gallery. Everywhere and in all ages, savage or civilized, man—black, white, red, yellow, or brown—has *tyrannized over and oppressed his weaker companion*, degraded her into his servant, regarded her as *property* to be bought and sold, and imposing on her his share of the curse—excessive toil—in addition to her own of excessive suffering in child-bearing and fatigue in child-rearing, has inflicted on her, in wanton wickedness, multitudes of other sufferings, both physical and mental.

Christianity, as we have seen, makes men new creatures in Christ, and does away with all this; and even where it is a mere profession instead of a reality, it still makes men ashamed of this undisguised brutality and selfishness, so that some forms of the degradation and oppression of the weaker sex have disappeared in Christendom. But we must not think they have ceased to be because we see them not! By very far the largest part of the sex are still—after six thousand years—victims to these terrible sufferings, so awfully wide and long continued has been the fulfilment of this part of the Adamic programme.

Even in professing Christian countries there exist still many cruel and oppressive laws and customs, indicating that the original Divine ideal of the equality of the sexes is not even yet, after eighteen hundred years of Christianity, fully recognized. Only a year ago were the abominable laws

which sanctioned the vilest form of female slavery abolished, and the same personal liberty secured to women as to men. And these laws are still in full operation in India, in our colonies, and in most of the countries of Europe—laws that condemn the young and feeble of one sex to assault and infamy, to degradation and imprisonment for the sake of securing to the other immunity from the natural penalties of vice! It is only a year or two since the law of our land shielded tender, helpless female children from the worst form of brutal assault by men, and even now it gives no protection to girls after sixteen, Thus too wife-beating and wife-murder are lightly esteemed if men can plead intoxication as an excuse; and the judges in cases of divorce may give the custody of children to a bad father, and refuse recognition to the mother's rights.

As to the remaining portion of the prediction, the more direct infliction of penal suffering, "in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children," it is needless to dwell on its mournful worldwide and still-continued fulfilment. The sufferings of childbirth are the severest known. They are used throughout Scripture as a similitude for the extremest and most distressing pain and danger. The fact that in all lands and ages large numbers of mothers actually die in them, and the fact that this process is merely a climax preceded and followed by a vast variety of related sufferings, so that the greater part of every woman's life is chequered at intervals by sickness and pain unknown to the other sex, leave no room to doubt the long-continued and universal realization in human experience of this part of the prediction.

It may of course be argued by unbelievers that phenomena so conspicuous as death and toil and female suffering could not but have been noted and pondered by Moses, and that their existence and universality in his day accounts for the "legend," or "myth," of the predictions in Genesis iii. To this we reply that it is vain to contend that the second part of the Adamic foreview of the future may have had a natural origin in the days of Moses, when it is perfectly clear, as we have shown, that the first part *cannot be similarly accounted for*. If a portion of the prophecy evinces supernatural foreknowledge, it is safe to conclude that the whole is an inspired prediction.

To conclude, This first section of the Divine programme of the world's history is, as befits its early and primitive character, fundamental and moral. It has no ethnographic nor political features; it does not distinguish between one part of the human race and another; it alludes to no special occurrences of history, gives no order of events, and no indications of chronology. Later predictions do all this, but not so the grand primitive Genesis outline. The general course of providence under the government of a righteous and holy but merciful God, the consequences of Satanic temptation and human sin, and the existence of a Divine plan for the ultimate destruction of moral evil and for the redemption of the fallen race by means of a suffering yet triumphant member of it—these were the broad, fundamental, all-important particulars contained in it. It was not a detailed foreview of any one section, but a general programme of the whole. It covered all lands and all ages, stretching in its geographical sweep to the uttermost ends of the earth, and in its chronological range from the days of Eden to a still

future time. The experience of every single descendant of Adam has harmonized with it, and the great central event of all history—the first advent of Christ—has already to a large extent fulfilled its promise, and many infallible signs indicate its perfect accomplishment in days to come.

Nothing of a similar character can be found in all the range of literature; it arches over the guilty and suffering human race like the grand vault of heaven, simple, abiding, all-embracing, vast, unutterably lofty, and illuminated by a glorious central sun—the promise of the Redeemer. Whence came it? Is this the manner of man?

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