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THE SUPERIORITY OF THE  
CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

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PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

1889

THE SUPERIORITY OF THE  
CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

A BACCALAUREATE SERMON,

BY W<sub>M</sub>. C. ROBERTS, D. D., L.L. D.

PRESIDENT OF LAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY.

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## THE SUPERIORITY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

“Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion.”—Amos 5:8.

This exhortation suggests much that is interesting to the historian, the astronomer and the Christian. The beauty of the constellations here named has been celebrated in classic myth and ancient legend. The risings and settings of the seven stars are said to have been observed by the priests of Belus more than thirty-five hundred years ago. The name Pleiades, given them in the revised version, was formerly derived from a word meaning “to sail,” because they were supposed to mark the safe time for ships to go out of port; and that of Vergiliae, from “ver,” the spring, because it was believed that they introduced the mild, vernal season favorable to farming and other pastoral employments.

Orion is the most magnificent group of stars known to the astronomer. Its form is familiar to all who have studied the appearance and relative positions of the heavenly bodies. It was pictured by the ancients as a huge giant who had warred against God, for which he was bound with adamantine chains to a fixed point in the sky. This tradition has been associated in some way with the history of Nimrod, who is supposed to have instigated the descendants of Noah to build the Tower of Babel.

The astronomical allusions in the text are full of interest. The word Pleiades is derived from the Chaldee “Chimah,” which means the hinge around which a body revolves. Not supposing that Job had any astronomical knowledge, his use of the term furnished no clew to the better understanding of the stars. Still, in later years, astronomers, without reference to the word “chimah,” have decided that the constellation known

as the Pleiades is the veritable point round which the solar system revolves. Within the memory of men still living, the world was startled by the announcement of Professor Madler, that Alcyone, the brightest of the seven stars, was the luminous hinge round which our sun and his attendant planets revolve. The correctness of this statement has been questioned, but it has not yet been proved untrue.

These constellations have a still greater interest to the Christian. He sees in them the visible displays of his Father's power and godhead. It requires no special stretch of the imagination to discover in the allusion to the Pleiades the germ of one of the grandest astronomical discoveries of modern times—a germ that had lain dormant for ages, but was at last brought out of its long concealment by the efforts of astronomers. "There are glories in the Bible," says an eminent professor, "on which the eye of man has not gazed sufficiently long to admire them; there are difficulties, the depth and inwardness of which require a measure of the same qualities in the interpreter himself. There are notes struck in places, which, like some discoveries of science, have sounded before their time, and only, after many days, have been caught up and have found a response on the earth." If it be true that one of the group of stars described in the text is the center of the solar system, we are furnished with a striking example of the harmony existing between the teachings of Scripture and the discoveries of science.

The theme to which I call your attention is,

#### THE SUPERIORITY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

This is seen, first, in the character of its object of worship. Setting aside nature, which is frequently deified, there have been but ten great religions in the world. These have urged upon men their different objects of worship. That known as Fetichism offers almost every material thing, not because it holds that everything is divine, but because it believes that a supernatural influence proceeds from it. The old Egyptian religion had for its object of worship a being which it regarded

as supreme, but which is set forth as subject to hunger, thirst, disease, and old age. It is of no importance what may have been the object of the religion of Zoroaster, for it is dead; its dualism, or two uncreated principles have long since passed away. Brahminism, whilst it assures its votaries that their god fills heaven and earth, describes him as far off—too distant to be worshiped by the most favored of mortals. The fundamental principle of Buddhism is, that there is a supreme power, but no Supreme Being. The mythology of the Greeks was intended to meet the soul's demand for an object of worship; but the philosophers, pained with prying into a voiceless and unwritten sky, turned the eyes of their countrymen to art and the works of men's hands. The gods of our Norsemen forefathers became at last the personified powers and phenomena of nature. The followers of Confucius pay their supreme homage to the shades of their ancestors, and the devotees to the false prophet bow to an apotheosis of pure will possessing neither love nor sympathy. All these are vague abstractions and intangible realities. The object of the Christian religion is set forth in the text as the maker of "the seven stars and Orion." Here is attributed to him personality. God is nowhere set forth in the Bible as the mysterious, "It," but always as the ever living "He." It brings him down from the clouds and represents him as walking with men. Every page of Scripture glows with the personality of the Supreme Being. This causes the Christian to feel that he is walking up and down life's paths in company with his loving Lord. Without some realization of God's personality, the understanding can not approach him as the object of worship, faith is compelled to voyage in an objectless universe as in an infinite vacuity, and piety is left to pine in an atmosphere too subtle and unsubstantial for it to breathe in.

Conscience, also, tells us of the existence, not of a mysterious "It," but of a Supreme "Him." This is not a personal rule, a generalization of experience, or an apprehension of consequences. All of us are conscious of a personal authority to

whom we owe obedience. Conscience itself is not this authority, but the consciousness of it. Nor is this personal authority our fellow-men, for we are as conscious of it in the heart of the desert as in the streets of Lake Forest. It cannot be ourselves, for that would be absurd, as is shown by Shakespeare in the words,—

“I had as lief not be, as live to be  
In awe of such a thing as I myself.”

It is none other than the Supreme Ruler of the universe.

There is no foundation to any religion, however glowing its doctrines, exalted its precepts, or sublime its promises, without a recognition of the personality of the object of its worship. This does away forever with the allegation, that natural religion is satisfying to the soul. The Greeks had all that nature could teach and human wisdom suggest, and yet they were without hope and without God in the world.

This personal God is set forth in the text as the maker of the stars, thus identifying the object of our religious worship with the Creator of the ends of the earth. This is claiming for him the highest prerogative of which the human mind is able to form any conception. Creation so far transcends the grasp of reason, that philosophy untaught by revelation has been compelled in every age to postulate the eternity of matter. It can be grasped only as an ultimate fact on God's testimony. By this, is not meant that it must not be accepted just as truly by our science as by our religion. The former, no less than the latter, is constrained to assume the original creation of that very matter whose properties form its materials of research. Science is indebted to religion for the primary fact which of itself it cannot explore, and which forms the ring-bolt connecting all phenomena with the first cause of their existence.

This Creator is represented as omnipotent and infinitely wise. Power and wisdom are taught by many to be mere names for two ideally distinguishable, but really inseparable, aspects of one reality. This becomes evident, as we contemplate the

vastness of the stars and the complexity of their motions. Through Lord Ross's telescope the astronomer discovers numberless stars varying, in size, density, and motion. He finds that some of them are hundreds of miles in extent, and others hundreds of thousands of miles, and still others containing more than eight hundred times as much matter as all the rest of the planetary system. These are more than great masses of matter which bear their testimony to the Creator's power. They are also wisely grouped together for some wise purpose. Many of them have atmospheres and seas and many have neither. Some career through space, belted with equatorial rings and accompanied by one or more satellites. They have their different densities—one as lead, another as cork, and still another as vapor. Alcyone, the center of the Pleiades, shines with a force of twelve thousand suns. Even these suns are combined again into systems of all sizes and shapes—"Systems," says another, "of two, of three, of many, of millions—firmaments which, under the name of nebulae, are the last generalization and most stupendous variety of modern discovery; sometimes rolled up into spheres; sometimes gathered into circular or ecliptic rings; now fan-shaped; now like an hour glass; now broad wheels of compacted suns, large, glittering, and sublime enough to under-roll the chariot of Jehovah."

The object of the Christian religion is further set forth as infinitely good. The reference made in the text to the Pleiades and Orion was intended primarily to set forth in figures familiar to the persons addressed this very goodness. The stars named were supposed to exercise a powerful influence over the present condition and future destiny of the nations. The one constellation rising, as it did, in the spring of the year, when all nature burst into life, emitting sweet influences from every blade, and shrub, and tree; and the other rising in the fall, when nature bound up the fountains of life and chilled the sweet fragrance of ripening fruit in the cold hand of frost,—were regarded by the ancients as having the government of these two important seasons of the year—being the gods appointed to preside over



them. Hence, the exhortation of the prophet, "Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion."

The superiority of the Christian religion is seen, secondly, in the doctrines it offers for belief. An impartial examination will convince any one that these are vastly superior to the noblest doctrines of any other religion or of all other religions combined. The first one, fundamental to every religion, is that concerning the character of the Supreme Being. This casts its hues over all the others. Of the false religions, that of Zoroaster is supposed to present the most exalted view of the Deity. It tells that he is the supporter of the universe and the promoter of life; the creator of truth and the maker of the stars; the begetter of light and darkness; and the caller forth of mornings, noons, and nights. This contains, after all, only what can be found in the teachings of natural religion.

The Christian religion teaches in addition to this, that the Supreme Being is a pure spirit, thus lifting him above the conceptions formed of every other object of worship. He is said to be a spirit everywhere present—filling all space, pervading all minds, and penetrating all substances. The following sentences from the pen of the Psalmist have no parallel in the teachings of any heathen religion: "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there." This pure and omnipresent spirit is further set forth as subsisting in three persons; each one of them holding a peculiar relation to the creation of the world, the redemption of man, and the preparation of the heavenly mansions. There is no resemblance between this doctrine and the triad, or the personification of fire, storm, and sunlight of Brahminism. The Trinity of the Christian religion constitutes one great God who is actively engaged in all parts of the universe, marking the pathways of planets and directing the fall of a sparrow, accompanying the pilgrim in his journey and guiding Arcturus with his sons.

The second doctrine fundamental to all religions, is the creature's responsibility to the Creator. Upon this are dependent all morals. Of the false religions, Brahminism may be said to hold the highest views of personal responsibility, and yet some of the figures it employs sweep it all away. They teach that men's souls are emanations from the universal, self-existent soul, sparks from the great central fire—separated for a time, but to be absorbed at last. They describe their lives and actions as the illusory phantoms and appearances which a conjurer calls up, and a gaping crowd, mistakes for realities.

All this sounds like the wild fancies of a dreamer by the side of the Christian doctrine of personal responsibility. Throughout the whole Bible, equity and sovereignty run in parallel lines, each standing abreast of the other, and both indicating the ways of God to man,—both forming a part of the adornment and the strength of the divine empire. Out of these spring the truths that men are dependent, yet free; acting, yet acted upon; fulfilling the divine purposes, yet responsible for every thought, word, and action.

The third doctrine lying at the foundation of all religion, is the way in which those who have violated God's law can be justified. Men everywhere feel that they are transgressors of law and in need of being reconciled to God. The false religion which has given the most satisfactory answer to this question, is that of Zoroaster. It tells its adherents that, in order to secure the good will of the offended deity, they must repent of all wicked thoughts, words and deeds; of all sins against kindred, superiors, and neighbors; and of all pride, haughtiness, and anger. This, again, does not satisfy the demands of conscience, for even unaided reason affirms that repentance, however deep and full, is not able to replace things as they were, repair wasted fortunes, recruit broken constitutions, or raise the murdered dead.

That which natural religion could not do, Christianity has accomplished. It not only demands penitence and reformation, but it has also provided a ransom. It reveals a scheme of

redemption which human ingenuity has never been able to discover. It tells us of God taking upon him the nature of the violators of his law, in order to endure its malediction in their behalf. This appearance of God in the flesh is not like the vulgar incarnation of heathen deities, but one of the grandest doctrines of the ages. The only begotten Son was spotless and pure—a lamb without blemish. He was unlike any other being seen by men or angels, and unlike every ideal ever conceived by poets or philosophers. This holy and harmless one came not to reign, not to be worshiped, but to suffer—to die! It was to die the just for the unjust—the sinless for the sinful—the substitution of the innocent for the guilty. He submitted himself to the penalty which men had incurred, and “bore their sins in his own body on the tree.”

The other great doctrine fundamental to all religions, is the soul's immortality. In spite of the loud cry of annihilation by the followers of Sadoc and Epicurus, the millions of earth have ever rejoiced in the hope of immortality. The reasoning of the philosopher, the traditions of the historian, the fables of the poet, and fancies of the mythologist, are full of the belief that men shall live beyond the present world. They have founded this belief on the spirituality of the soul, the excellency of its powers, its capacity for continued progress, its natural desire for an endless existence, the universal belief of mankind, and the need of a future life to rectify the inequalities of earth. Notwithstanding these strong intimations of a future life, the nations have derived but little satisfaction from the teachings of their religion in regard to its character. It is alleged that the religion of the ancient Egyptians sheds the clearest light upon this subject. “The very architecture of the Pyramids,” says some one, “had its creed; their massiveness produced the conviction upon all who witnessed it, that their builders hoped to live forever; the lotus flower opening with the early sun, and the sphinx rising from its ashes, taught more beautifully than any formulated dogmas the resurrection of the body; the embalming of their dead, carefully wrapped in spice to ward

off the tooth of time, implied a belief in the reanimation of the lifeless clay." With all this, the greatest of the Greeks, with the hemlock poison at his lips, said to his weeping friends, "I take comfort in the hope that something remains of man after death." How sad! Even Socrates could take only comfort in the hope that something remained after death. Poor comfort for a dying man! The Prince of Denmark is represented as reducing the doctrine of the soul's destiny into a question that cannot be answered,—“To be or not to be, that is the question.” Hadrian put it thus in his dying exclamation: “O my poor, wandering soul, whither art thou going? Where must thou lodge this night? Thou shalt never jest any more, nor be merry any more.” Life and immortality were brought to light by the Gospel. It alone has lifted the fogs of centuries, and given to all true believers a glimpse of the land that is afar off. It tells them of a light in the valley, of assistance in the struggle with death, and of a welcome on the other shore by a multitude which no man can number.

The superiority of the Christian religion is seen, thirdly, in the transformation it produces in the character of its subjects. As soon as its doctrines find lodgment in the heart, the most depraved life becomes pure and elevated. Numberless examples of this may be cited, but one will suffice. Take that of the poor man who was possessed with a devil—dwelling among the tombs. Before he was touched by the power of the Gospel, he was a terror to his family and a plague to the people of Gadara. But under the benign influences of Christianity, he broke away from the power of Satan, and came in his right mind to the feet of Jesus. From that time forth, he who had walked in lone places in the wilderness, a terror to his friends, whom fetters could not bind nor dungeon restrain, whose dwelling was in the tombs, and whose life was self-torture, appeared a peaceful man of God.

The Christian religion not only transforms individual life, but it also reconstructs the most disorderly households. It has turned scenes of riot and dwelling-places of crime into asylums

of love and circles of affection. It has converted many a father, the fruit of whose toil has been laid on the altar of Bacchus instead of being devoted to feeding and clothing the little immortals committed to his care, and many a mother who has borne a greater resemblance to a tigress than to one who is the mother of children, into loving parents who have turned their dwelling-place of revelry into a happy home in which dwell order, peace, purity and thrift—monuments more telling than sculptured statues of the superhuman power of the Gospel.

The power of the Christian religion is seen sometimes in the elevation of a whole nation. "Great Britain and the United States have been made by it what they are," in the words of another, "out of such unpromising stuff as the wild Norsemen of a thousand years ago. It has filled these lands with schools and colleges, with humane and charitable institutions, with public economies and private good, to be found nowhere else on the globe. Even heathen nations are beginning to shine under the same mighty power. Christianity is commencing to do for them what ages ago she did for the old Roman world. She found that world a cancer. Its gods were personified vices, its temples were brothels, its women were almost slaves, its slaves were ill-used cattle, and its very amusements were brutal cruelties. Christ's religion changed it all. She renewed to its center the standard of morals. Women rose in the scale of being. Slavery disappeared. The vile deities and their viler worship were cast to the moles and the bats. The weak and the oppressed found a friend able and willing to shield them from the oppressor. Gladiatorial shows and Eleusinian mysteries, and temples polluted with Bacchus and Venus, gave way to pure sanctuaries, and a society based on the Decalogue and the Sermon on the Mount."

The power of the Christian religion is not limited to nations; it is not confined to latitudes and longitudes, to mental states or physical conditions. It is universal—exerting its influence over the Laplander amid the gloom of Arctic winters; over the luxuriant Asiatic, as he revels in his sensuous paradise; over the

Brahmin and the Buddhist devotee ranked, in his own conceit, among the gods; over the Jew still glorying in his ancestors; and over the Greek speculating to this day on the mysteries of creation. Where is there another religion that has wrought changes like these in individuals, in homes, and among nations?

The superiority of the Christian religion is seen, lastly, in the position to which it lifts its subjects in the future. In this regard, it differs from all other religions. Buddhism has its heaven, which it names "The other side of the ocean of existence," "the eternal place," and "the harbor of never-ending rest;" but underneath these sweet and almost scriptural terms, lies the undeniable fact, that all of them combined imply no more than non-existence. Its very founder pronounced the eternity of the soul a great heresy, and it was not an unguarded expression, but a necessary sequence of his philosophy. For in it, he affirms that there is nothing in life but sorrow; that all of it is void and perishable; that to be is pain, and that not to be is everlasting rest. According to this, futurity is a blank, and what is termed the looked-for rest of the soul in heaven, is annihilation.

The religion of ancient Egypt also taught the immortality of the soul, and the endless joy of men beyond the temptations and trials of earth, but it has degraded both by depicting the souls of the departed as eating and drinking, sowing and reaping. Gathering their sheaves and laying them up in store-houses. According to its teaching the mission of men in heaven is to cultivate fields, and the life everlasting is to consist in securing enough material good to meet the necessities of the body. This falls infinitely short of answering the deep questions of man's nature.

Brahminism, in like manner, holds to the immortality of the soul, but not in ever-conscious being. It teaches that consciousness ceases when the soul quits its clay. The highest hope which the devotees of this religion are able to entertain is, that they will be allowed to pass with all possible haste from one form of life to another, until they are at length absorbed into

that infinite Nothing known as Brahm, or the all-pervading spirit. This doctrine does violence to the strongest instincts of the soul and blights all hope of happiness beyond the grave.

Other religions teach that, in the future, men are to be transformed into gods. They represent them as being altogether separated from their humble origin and earthly conflicts. They are not allowed to cast a backward glance or to recall any of their days of humiliation. This is an abolition of true immortality, for it destroys the continuity of the soul's experience with its consciousness and memory.

How different is the teaching of the Christian religion! It assures us that death is not the end of us; that the soul, after leaving the body, is not absorbed into the Infinite, or changed into a god; but that it is then on the eve of its highest attainment, and in sight of the realization of its noblest hopes. Death is the date of immortality, when it is permitted to lay hold of faith's fruition. The day that separates the soul from the body, is the day that marks the former's triumph. It is to partake in no sense in the destruction of the body, but is to emerge from it. It quits it in order to live and act separately. At death it enters into new relations and higher joys. It is to continue to ascend forever, but with full consciousness of being in all its changes the same soul, and with a clear recollection of all the leagues it has passed over. Thus, the present and the future are to be linked together by consciousness, and the day of our humiliation on earth is to be united by memory to the day of our exaltation in heaven. We shall continue to be ourselves forever, and our friends will remain our friends through all eternity.

Thus, according to the teaching of the Christian religion, the life of heaven is a continuation of the higher life of the soul on earth, but under clearer skies and amid more favorable circumstances. Instead of being made gods, the saints are to be transformed intellectually into the image of him who maketh the seven stars and Orion. Nothing can be higher than this without destroying personal identity. Man is to grow forever more and more like God in his intellectual grasp and power.

His thoughts in heaven are to become as God's thoughts—true, not with respect to some end or standard which he does not approve, but true with the absolute truthfulness which conformity to his judgment involves. The affections occupy a still more central place than the intellect. Hence the true man in life as well as in God is not knowledge, but love. Infinite as is the Divine heart, love fills it all. And, what a love it is—a love that led him to give his only begotten Son to die for us! Even that love is to be feebly reflected by the redeemed in heaven. Man is also endowed with a will, which has power to act from within in determining its course of conduct, and hence to reflect the divine will in a way not possible to suns and stars. The will of God may not be clearly reflected by that of man, because it is infinitely superior to it in its power, freedom, and sway. He is the source of all created existence, supporter and ruler of all rational and irrational beings; it cannot be constrained or baffled, tempted or misled. It is its own law. Still even the will of man will some day form at least a dim reflection of the infinite will.

Saints in glory are to be assimilated to God, not only in intellect, but also in character. They are to be transformed into his blessed image. This has no reference to bodily properties or to physical tendencies. Hence, we need not be alarmed at the denial on the part of scientists of certain distinctions hitherto supposed to exist between the bodies of men and those of beasts. The transformation is to take place in our spiritual nature. As the sun photographs itself on the sensitive plate exposed to its light, and a likeness of it is secured by laying the object in its beams, so the likeness of God is to be photographed upon the saints in heaven by their basking forever in the light of his countenance.

The redeemed in heaven are once more to be made God's associates. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." In this sentence is found one of the most expressive Bible figures. It is that of two or more persons sitting together after the Oriental fashion. According to this they occupy the



same divan, holding close council in regard to important interests. Thus, the Creator of the stars, and sinful men are to be seen sitting, apparently on equality, to consult concerning the high interests of the heavenly kingdom. This might be regarded as Oriental exaggeration, if the didactic system of the New Testament did not agree with it. "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." And, in another place, "I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." No greater intimacy than this can be conceived!

Officially, the saints are to be sharers of his kingly sway. They are to be the judges of the twelve tribes of Israel. This is high, we cannot attain unto it. The mind grows dizzy in its contemplation! It is wrapped in mystery impenetrable! We are not told what these thrones are, or where they are to be erected. Only the fact is revealed to us, that the redeemed are some day to be partakers of God's universal dominion. Even on earth, they are princes nominated and anointed for immortal regencies; palms and robes, crowns and sceptres, being reserved for them in heaven. Now are they able to boast of royal blood, and of ability to wield a power which all the potencies of earth and hell cannot withstand. In heaven, this power will be enlarged. To what extent, we are not told. Upon what untried forms of happy being they are to enter, in what cycles of revolving bliss they are to turn, what sceptres they are to wield amid the sublimities of eternity, what streams of ascending influence they are to originate, and what authority they are to exercise over realms as yet unvisited by men or angels, we know not now, but we shall know hereafter.

I wish to say a few words in conclusion to you, my young friends, of the graduating classes. I have endeavored as I advanced, to impress upon your minds the lessons of the text,

and yet there are two or three inferences to be drawn from the treatment of the subject to which I desire to call your further attention.

First, the identity of the maker of the seven stars with the giver of the Christian Revelation does away with all possible conflict between the discoveries of science and the teachings of revelation. If the Being who determined the form, the magnitude, and the motions of Orion, inspired Moses, Isaiah, and Paul, to write the Pentateuch, the prophecies, and the evangelical epistles, they must agree in their teachings. That there is a seeming conflict between some of them, and that the advocates of each have erred by hastiness, and zeal not according to knowledge, no one will undertake to deny. Scientists have often drawn their conclusions before they had adequate data for so doing, and over zealous Bible-lovers have at times confounded what is said in God's Word with the construction which commentators have put upon it. If both parties had pursued their investigation on the presumption that nature and revelation were equally the work of Jehovah, and that he, as an all-wise being could not contradict himself, it would have saved useless discussion and yielded richer results. Let me urge upon you the doing of this very thing in your future work. Assume at every step that the teachings of nature and the principles of religion agree, though as yet the harmony may not be clear. Aim at reaching that end, and not as showing that they cannot be made to agree. As religion is older than science, and its doctrines are better tested, rest in her teachings, until they are actually overturned by well-established truths of science. Do not come to the conclusion that the Bible is wrong, until you have used all possible means to bring them into harmony by a reconsideration of their connection and meaning.

Secondly, the incomparable superiority of the Christian religion to all others shows that it is not one of many, but the only true one. That the others had many pure doctrines and

precious precepts, no one will deny. It would be strange if it were not so. For most of them are largely based upon the teachings of nature and the principles implanted by God in the human constitution. More than one has borrowed its sublimest principles and purest precepts from the Divine revelation and the history of God's chosen people. This is true, perhaps, of the Egyptian, the Greek, the Roman, and especially of the Mahomedan, religions. It is unfair, therefore, to point to the principles borrowed by the false religions from the true, as evidence of their equality with those of Christianity. Enter upon the world's cares and duties with unshaken conviction that there is but one true religion—one only that can meet all your wants, aid you in all your trials, strengthen you in all your hopes, satisfy all your longings, and assist you in bearing all life's burdens.

The fact, that the two revelations have been given for man's well-being, teaches, further, that there is no reason for the discontinuance of the one more than there is for that of the other. As long as man's physical nature continues what it has been from the beginning, the material world must remain essentially the same. By parity of reasoning, religion must continue as long as man's moral and spiritual nature remains the same. Human nature, in all its essential characteristics, is the same as when man went out of Paradise. From aught we can see, it is bound to continue the same. The sense of sin and guilt will be felt in ages to come, as it has been felt in ages gone by. In all his future history it will follow man like his shadow. Not only the essential characteristics of human nature will continue the same, but the active busy mind will continue to ask the same questions regarding the mysteries of life. In the future as in the past, it will inquire, "What manner of being is God? Whence came man, and whither goes he when he is done with earth?" Nothing will be able to answer these questions but the Scriptures. Go forth, then, to your respective fields of labor, with the determination to carry with you everywhere the scien-

tific principles with which you have been made familiar, and the fundamental doctrines of our holy religion in which you have been drilled. Exhibit the former in the skill with which you will perform the duties of your profession, and the latter in the noble Christian life which you will lead. "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."



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