

dustrial system we have that so unfairly distributes the rewards of toil. If, on the contrary, I find that it is not the fault of the system but the fault of the father; if I find that instead of spending his income upon his family he spends it upon himself in such a way as to lessen his value as a husband and father, I ask what equity there is in our courts if they will compel the return of a few dollars borrowed from a neighbor and will not require a man to live up to the sacred obligations of husband and father.

But suppose it is a widowed mother who is dependent upon a boy's wages, what then? Should she suffer? No. Neither should the burden fall upon the child. The time will come, if it has not already arrived, when the able-bodied men of a community will be willing to bear any burden that may be necessary to supplement the income of one so situated—the time will come, if it has not already arrived, when they will be ashamed to throw such a burden upon a helpless child to the impairment of its own future and of its ability to meet the responsibilities of life.

There is one other excuse, namely, that the boy will not go to school. Before giving him up, let us make one more effort. I would take him to a wood pile, a large wood pile, and put him to work with a dull ax. When he has labored long enough to know how hard it is to accomplish anything with such an ax, I would give him a sharp ax, and then when he was thoroughly acquainted with the difference between the two, I would tell him that the difference between meeting life's problem with a trained mind and an untrained mind is even greater than the difference between cutting with a sharp ax and a dull one.

But I apologize for dwelling so long upon the mind. As I said in the beginning, this is not apt to be neglected. It only remains for me to remind you before passing to the third branch of my subject, that a body, however perfect, and a mind, however thoroughly trained, will not suffice. A man may be even more dangerous to society because of his education if the energies of body and mind are not properly directed. An ignorant scoundrel can do less harm than an educated one and he can be caught more quickly. When we provide, therefore, for universal education, it is with the expectation that the heart as well as the head will be developed.

And now we come to the most important part of the subject—the development of moral character. We measure men by moral standards; we know them by their heart characteristics. If moral character is the matter of supreme importance, upon what foundation shall we build it? I know of no foundation for a moral code except a religious foundation. I am aware that in saying this I enter a field of controversy, but it has been so long since I said anything that no one objected to that a little opposition does not embarrass me. I know of no moral standard deserving of the name which was not built upon religion. And even if it were possible to find a moral standard whose foundations go down so deep or extend back so far that a religious basis for it could not be found, no such system will be possible in the future. Unless some great catastrophe shall destroy all that man now knows, there will never be found in the ages yet to come a group of men anywhere capable of formulating a moral code whose ideas on the subject of morals will not have been colored by the sermon on the Mount, so all-pervading is the thought of the Nazarene.

There are some who believe that materialism furnishes a basis for morals; I cannot agree with them. There are others who believe reason to be a sufficient guide, but I call you to witness that in most of us the foundations of character are largely laid before our reasons are mature. The law fixes the age of twenty-one as the period when the young man's reason can be trusted, but who would dare to wait until his boy was twenty-one before impressing upon him the moral principles that guide one's life? Look back at your own lives and see how little you have added in the matter of moral principles since you were grown. I confess that I cannot find much in my own life for which I can claim credit—I acknowledge my indebtedness to Christian parents, a Christian home, a Christian church, and a Christian environment.

That you may refresh your own memories I venture to refer to things that entered into my life at an early age. My mother so impressed upon my youthful mind and heart the objection to swearing that when I entered school at the age of ten I found myself unconsciously withdrawing from the crowd when boys began to swear, and I have never overcome my aversion

to an oath. Whenever I hear a man swear now, the inclination returns to get out of the range of his voice. I venture the assertion that those who do not swear can in nine cases out of ten trace the fact to the teachings of mother or father.

My father hated gambling—no man more so. With him it did not matter what the form of gambling was, whether the stakes were large or small, or whether one won or lost. He believed that gambling overthrew God's law of rewards, and before I was fifteen years old I had become imbued with his belief on the subject, and I have never abandoned it.

To my father and mother jointly I am indebted for my belief in total abstinence. I do not know how young I was when I first signed the pledge. If I were compelled to guess I would say that it was the day when I first learned to write my name, although I may have signed with my mark before that. All I know on the subject is that I have never failed to sign the pledge when I could induce others to sign it, and I stand ready while I live to sign it again and again if, by doing so, I can influence any one to give up the use of intoxicating liquor.

Here are three things which have exerted an influence upon my life and all of them became controlling influences when I was young. The fourth thing to which I refer has been even more potent. I became a member of the church at the age of fourteen, when I was only two-thirds as old as one must be to sign a deed. Did I know anything about creeds? No. I was not only too young to have any knowledge of creeds but I have been too busy since that time to give the matter much study, and I see no prospect of leisure at this time. In fact, I am almost afraid to take a deep interest in creeds for fear it might disturb my domestic relations. My father was a Baptist, and, at the time of my birth, my mother was a Methodist but she afterwards joined the Baptist church with my father. I joined the Presbyterian church, first the Cumberland and afterwards took my letter to the Presbyterian church because there was no Cumberland church where I attended college. My wife's father was brought up a Presbyterian but became a Methodist, and my wife entered the Methodist church before we married but afterwards joined the Presbyterian church with me. In Nebraska, however, we usually attend the Methodist church because it is more convenient to our home. We have three children; our oldest is an Episcopalian, our second a Methodist, and our third a Congregationalist. And we have six grandchildren, through whom we hope to connect ourselves with other branches of the Christian church. You see how embarrassing it would be for me to lay too much emphasis upon creeds, but I have a firm hold upon the principles which underlie all the churches. I have defended Christianity around the world, but I have never made a speech upon religion that could not be made with equal propriety in any church calling itself a Christian church.

When I say that morals rest upon religion, I use the word "religion" in its broadest sense; I use it as Tolstol used it when he defined religion as the relation that man fixes between himself and his God, and he added that morality is the outward manifestation of this inward relation.

One cannot build moral character without a plan of life, and he can only plan a life when he understands that the world is built upon a plan. The first fact that confronts a man is God.

We have given the atheist too much latitude. We have allowed him to ask all the questions while we have taken upon ourselves the burden of answering. Why not take turn-about in asking and answering? The Christian begins creation with an all-wise, all-powerful and all-loving Creator—a sufficient cause for all that may come after. Where does the atheist begin? Ask him, and his trouble begins. Can he go farther back than matter and force? Can he explain the origin of either matter or force? Is it not more satisfactory to begin with God and reason down than to begin with inanimate clay and reason up? If the atheist insists that he cannot believe in God until he can fully understand such a being, I reply that his own logic will drive him to suicide. Why does the atheist desire to live when he does not understand the mystery of his own life? One need not understand the sun to believe that there is a sun and to enjoy the benefits conferred by the sun's rays. He need not understand electricity to enjoy the incandescent light, to ride on the trolley car, or to be stricken down by the lightning. Why not apply to religion the same common sense that we apply to other things? The atheist knows as little as the

Christian does of the mystery of life, the mystery of love and the mystery of patriotism, and yet he lives, he loves and is patriotic. He knows as little of the mysteries of the food he eats, the water he drinks and the air he breathes; and yet his ignorance does not prevent his making use of all the gifts of the Heavenly Father, whose existence he denies.

Let the young man who is building character discard at once the absurd theory that it is a sign of mental weakness to admit the limitation of the human mind, or to confess his finiteness in the presence of the Infinite. Let him recognize his responsibility to his Creator for every thought and word and deed. Let him make it his chief purpose, as it should be his highest pleasure, to seek to know God's will concerning himself and to do it. Let him bring himself into harmony with the divine plan and he will not need the "Thou shalt not's" of the law to restrain him.

Next to the belief in God I would place the acceptance of the Bible as the word of God. I need not present arguments in its support; its claims have been established—the burden of proof is upon those who reject it. Those who regard it as a man-made book should be challenged to put their theory to the test. If man made the Bible, he is, unless he has degenerated, able to make as good a book today.

Judged by human standards, man is far better prepared to write a Bible now than he was when our Bible was written. The characters whose words and deeds are recorded in the Bible were members of a single race; they lived among the hills of Palestine in a territory scarcely larger than one of our counties. They did not have printing presses and they lacked the learning of the schools; they had no great libraries to consult, no steamboats to carry them around the world and make them acquainted with the various centers of ancient civilization; they had no telegraph wires to bring them the news from the ends of the earth and no newspapers to spread before them each morning the doings of the day before. Science had not unlocked nature's door and revealed the secrets of rocks below and stars above. From what a scantily supplied storehouse of knowledge they had to draw, compared with the unlimited wealth of information at man's command today! And yet these Bible characters grappled with every problem that confronts mankind, from the creation of the world to eternal life beyond the tomb. They have given us a diagram of man's existence from the cradle to the grave and they have set up sign posts at every dangerous point along the path. We turn back to the Bible for the Ten Commandments which form the foundation for our statute law and for the Sermon on the Mount, which lays down the rules for our spiritual growth. The Bible gives us the story of the birth, the words, the works, the crucifixion, the resurrection and the ascension of Him whose coming was foretold in prophecy, whose arrival was announced by the Angel voices, singing Peace and Good-will—the story of Him who gave to the world a code of morality superior to anything that the world had known before or has known since—the story of Him who is the growing figure of all time, whom the world is accepting as Saviour and as the perfect example.

Let the atheists and the materialists produce a better Bible than ours, if they can. Let them collect the best of their school to be found among the graduates of universities—as many as they please and from every land. Let the members of this selected group travel where they will, consult such libraries as they please, and employ every modern means of swift communication. Let them glean in the fields of geology, botany, astronomy, biology and zoology, and then roam at will wherever science has opened a way; let them take advantage of all the progress in art and in literature, in oratory and in history—let them use to the full every instrumentality that is employed in modern civilization; and when they have exhausted every source, let them embody the results of their best intelligence in a book and offer it to the world as a substitute for this Bible of ours. Have they the confidence that the Prophets of Baal had in their God? Will they try? If not, what excuse will they give? Has man fallen from his high estate, so that we cannot rightfully expect as much of him now as nineteen centuries ago? Or does the Bible come to us from a source that is higher than man—which?

But our case is even stronger. The opponents of the Bible cannot take refuge in the plea that man is retrograding. They loudly proclaim that man has grown and that he is growing still. They