

stroy. The Intellectual god is a false god and it is leading multitudes astray—multitudes who in the worship of their minds forget God and refuse to admit that there is in the universe anything higher than their own puny selves.

Sixth among the false gods—the third in the second class is the Travel God, the god worshiped by those who wander to and fro in search of something new. I would not underrate the value of travel when one travels with a purpose. I can testify that one can learn more in a day by visiting a country than he can learn in many years by reading. One day in Japan or China or India is worth more than many books. You can learn more about idolatry in one hour upon the Ganges than you gather in a life time from returning missionaries.

And you never know when you start on a trip what will most impress you. When I visited Europe for the first time I had in mind a visit to the Tomb of Napoleon, and, remembering that Ingersoll had described in beautiful words the impression which a similar visit made upon him, I secured a book containing what he said. I intended to quote from Ingersoll in writing about the tomb, but when I visited it myself I saw something which Ingersoll did not see, or which, if he saw it, did not impress him. It was a picture of Christ upon the cross in a stained glass window just beyond and above the sarcophagus "In which rest the ashes of this restless man." I do not know whether it was by accident or design that this god of war thus sleeps at the feet of the Prince of Peace, but to me it symbolized the victory of love over force, the final triumph of that philosophy which finds happiness as well as greatness in doing good.

But while nothing is more instructive than traveling with a purpose, nothing is more unprofitable than traveling simply to say that you saw the interesting places of the earth. Such traveling if not only worthless but really harmful because such a traveler is apt to become dissatisfied with the commonplace things that make up every day life.

But these three gods, the God of Ease, the Intellectual God and the Travel God, though they make life worthless, are of a higher order than the last three to which I invite your attention. The three on the third shelf are degrading. The first of these is the God of Chance, the gambler's god. Those who worship this god soon find themselves unfit for the ordinary work of life because they are not satisfied with legitimate accumulations. When one sets his heart upon getting rich by the turn of a card or by the whirl of a wheel of fortune he rejects God's law of rewards. There is a divine law of rewards. When God gave us the earth with its fertile soil, the sunshine with its warmth, and the rains with their moisture, He proclaimed as clearly as if His voice had issued from the clouds, "Go work, and in proportion to your industry and intelligence so shall be your reward." This is God's law of rewards and it must prevail except where cunning evades it, government suspends it or force overthrows it. I am not sure but that it is harder to reform a confirmed gambler than a confirmed drunkard, for while drink diseases the body, gambling rots the moral fiber of the man.

The next false god is the God of Passion, the god whose worship turns human beings into beasts and robs man of the likeness of the God in Whose image he was made.

The last of the nine false gods is the Rum God—the God of Drink. Do you know what the worship of this god costs this country today? Something like two billion and a half per year. And what does it do for man? It silences every noble impulse and deadens every humane instinct. The worship of this god leads the boy to forget the mother who brought him into the world; it leads the husband to forget the vow which he made to his wife at the altar; it converts the father into a brute and makes his children flee when they hear his returning footfall. It robs man of his patriotism; he sits in a drunken stupor, indifferent to his country's peril. In this Christian land five times as much is spent on alcohol as is spent in the worship of Jehovah, and three times as much as is spent on education!

And now, having exhibited before you each for a moment, these nine representative false gods, I remind you that they are but one. What

I have shown you are but the masks of the one false god worshiped today—self. If we worship gold or fashion or fame it is for self; if we worship ease, or intellect, or travel, it is for self. And it is self that we worship if we worship the God of Chance, the God of Passion or the God of Drink. To us, therefore, the commandment means, thou shalt not put thyself before God: thou shalt not, in thy love of self, forget the God who planned the universe, who created the world and who rules over man's destiny.

Conversion, if I understand the term, is surrender of one's self to God. I am not a theologian; in fact, I have very little knowledge of the theological distinctions that separate the churches, and my family connections are such that I would not dare to lay much emphasis upon church lines. My father was a Baptist and my mother, when I was born, a Methodist, though she afterwards joined the Baptist church with my father. I joined the Cumberland Presbyterian church when I was fourteen, and a year later took my letter to the Presbyterian because there was no Cumberland church in the town where I attended college. I did not join the Cumberland church because of its creed and I did not know the differences between this church and the Presbyterian church until some years later, in fact, I did not know until I was thirty-nine the doctrinal differences between these two branches of the Presbyterian church, and about that time they united, so that the knowledge was of little value to me. My wife's father was raised a Presbyterian but became a Methodist. My wife was a Methodist when I married, but afterward joined the Presbyterian church with me. We are Presbyterians, in good standing, and I am an elder, but we usually attend a Methodist church at home because it is near. We have three children—our oldest daughter is an Episcopalian; our only son is a Methodist and our youngest daughter is a Congregationalist; and we have eight grand children through whom we hope to connect ourselves with other branches of the Christian church. I mention the church connections of the members of my family that you may see why I am restrained from discussing the points of difference between the churches, but I yield to none in my devotion in the fundamentals of Christianity which underlie all the churches.

But while I am not versed in theology I venture to give a definition of conversion. Conversion, as I understand it, is surrender of one's self to God—obedience to the first commandment. It is putting the kingdom of God and his righteousness first. And how long does it take to be converted? Not longer, I rejoice to believe, than it does to reject God. It does not take longer to be converted to righteousness than to be converted to sin. It takes but an instant for an honest man to be converted into a thief—just the instant in which he decides to steal. It takes just an instant for a law abiding man to become a murderer. And so it takes but an instant for the heart to surrender itself to its Maker and pledge obedience to God. A man may spend weeks weighing the question before deciding to steal, but the decision to steal is made in a moment; a man may harbor revenge for months and brood over a real or imagined wrong, but the decision is made in a moment. And so a man may consider for years whether he will change his course, but it takes but a moment to resolve "I will arise and go to my father."

And may I venture again into the realm of theology far enough to state one effect of Christ's coming? I shall not attempt an elaborate explanation of the theory of atonement, but I believe I know what Christ can do for man, when he takes hold of a human life and brings that life into harmony with God.

To me a spring is the most fascinating fact in nature. It is the best representation of the ideal life, just as the stagnant pool is the best illustration of a selfish life. The pool receiving the surface water from the sloping sides around it and, giving forth nothing, as last becomes the center of disease and death. There is nothing more repulsive than a stagnant pool, except the selfish life which it so properly represents.

The spring, on the contrary, pours forth its continuing flood of that which refreshes and invigorates. There is nothing more inspiring

than a spring, except a human life built upon the plan of the spring.

AND WHY IS A SPRING A SPRING? BECAUSE IT IS CONNECTED WITH A RESERVOIR WHICH IS HIGHER THAN ITSELF; it is the means through which the water from above finds an outlet. And what has Christ done by his coming? He has connected man with the Heavenly Father, so that the goodness of God may flow out through him to a waiting world. This is what Christ has done for multitudes and what he can do for all. He can take the frailest, weakest mortal and, by bringing him into living contact with the source of life and of light and power, make him an important factor in the world's work.

If we measure man in units of horse power he is not as strong as some of the beasts about him. If we measure him in units of intellectual power we soon find his limitations; but when we measure him in units of spiritual power there is no arithmetic which can compute his possibilities. When a boy I used to read how wicked cities might have been saved by a few righteous men; I can understand it better now. Cities can be saved today, and countries as well, by the spiritual power which begins with a few and spreads until the whole body politic is aroused. It is only when we understand the spiritual power of man that we comprehend the lines of the song:

"I know a land that is sunk in shame,
Of hearts that faint and tire;
But I know a Name, a Name, a Name,
That can set that land on fire."

The great need of the world today is the spiritual power necessary for the overthrow of evil, for the establishment of righteousness and for the ushering in of the era of perpetual peace; and that spiritual power begins in the surrender of the individual to God. It commences with obedience to the first commandment. I am glad to press upon your consideration the commandment—"Thou shalt have no other gods before Me;" or, as Christ phrased it, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind." "This is the first and great commandment." When one obeys this commandment, he is in position to understand and obey the second, "which is like unto it"—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." He who obeys the two will be neither barren nor unfruitful.

CONSERVE THE FOOD SUPPLY

Lincoln, Nebr., April 14, 1917.

Hon. Irving Fisher,
New Haven, Conn.

Replying to your telegram of inquiry, I believe that the federal government should immediately prohibit the manufacture of alcoholic liquors for beverage purposes. The people of the United States will need the foodstuffs that are wasted in the manufacture of liquor. We can not continue to undermine the physical and moral manhood of the country and continue to reduce the efficiency both of the producers and the defenders of the country if we hope to bring to a speedy and successful termination the tremendous conflict which the nation is engaged in. Congress should act at once.

CHARLES W. BRYAN, Mayor.

The Sioux City Journal suggests that possibly John Barleycorn is beginning to wonder if it isn't time he was attracting some "under dog" sympathy. So far the only resemblance to a dog's life that he has been leading has been furnished by the number of rocks voters are hurling in his direction.

If there is enough to eat at a party a boy regards it as a social success; if there is a comfortable place to lounge and smoke the old chaps feel that their exertions in dressing up and coming have been partly repaid.

And just to think, only two months ago we were all excited over whether Tom Lawson was telling the truth or was merely trying to get some sensational advertising in the newspapers without paying for it.

Great Britain seems likely to make equal suffrage a national policy before the United States does. Possibly it is due to her experience; she has found that a queen is as good as a king.