

told that their condition was due to the law or to society. 'Work while ye have light,' is a divine injunction. The parable of the talents is a justification of the man who is enterprising, who accumulates, who enters into the spirit of the present industrial system. The golden rule is not a demand upon the strong to cease striving, nor upon the weak to continue in their weakness. It commands kindness, thoughtfulness, gentleness. Christ taught responsibility. He taught self-reliance. He taught all the doctrines which justify a man in working out his own salvation—industrial, mental, physical as well as spiritual. The drone, the grumbler, the disorganizer can find no case against society in the Bible. Christ was not a revolutionist. He rendered 'unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's.' He laid no evils to the system of government. He only cried against wicked or corrupt individuals. The responsibility of the rich in being rich was not put upon society. It was put upon the rich man's pride and avarice and thoughtless selfishness. Everywhere individual responsibility is taught, and everywhere in the Testament the man who makes excuses, the man who attempts to explain, to put the blame from his own shoulders, the Socialist who charges crime to the industrial system—everywhere in the Testament where Christ speaks, the Christian Socialist is rebuked. Individual responsibility is the key note of society."

#### ATTITUDE OF LINCOLN'S MEN OF WEALTH

Lincoln, as is well known, has been built up and developed more by enterprise than by capital. The city has had the benefit of comparatively little outside capital. Millions of dollars of Boston money have been poured into Sioux City, and the magnificent structure that has been reared at the western extremity of the state of Missouri and named Kansas City was established with money sent in large quantities from New York, Pennsylvania and other portions of the east. But Lincoln has had to struggle along with very little assistance of this sort. The town has been built up by the toil and loyal enthusiasm of the citizens; and the efforts that have been put forth have not been sustained by unlimited stores of wealth in eastern cities. So when hard times came, destroying the prices of real estate and decreasing revenues, these men who built up the town have been the ones who have suffered most. Name over the ones who have given their time and money to enterprises that have made Lincoln what is, and see how many of them are to-day disabled. The men who were considered wealthy a few years ago are no longer regarded in that light. They are going to get on top again, but just now they are in the dry dock. But there is another class of men in this city that are as rich, if not richer, than the were before the commencement of the hard times. They have profited by others' misfortunes. Other men have grown poorer—been bankrupted; they have grown richer. And these men by a policy of selfishness and avarice are prolonging the depression from which Lincoln suffers. They have made their money in Lincoln, and yet they are daily giving the city a black eye. They have withdrawn their money from business enterprises and disposed of their real estate; their wealth is hoarded. Occasionally they make a small loan on gilt edge property at a high rate of interest. But they will not invest a dollar in real estate themselves, and will not lend their assistance to any business enterprise. They sit in obscure offices and cry down the town and belittle the efforts of those who are striving to push forward. They laugh at honest effort and sterilize the activity of those who would be moving. Having done nothing to develop the city they now stand as so many barriers in the way of progress. There are rich men in Lincoln today who are not a credit to the town. The men who have been public spirited and who are now unfortunate and entitled to sincere respect. So much cannot be said of some of the men who belong to the other class.

#### ARE CHRISTIANS HYPOCRITES?

**T**O THE EDITOR OF THE COURIER:—The article in a recent issue of THE COURIER entitled "Are Christians Hypocrites?" voices a sentiment, widespread, and which is probably destined to become ever more prevalent in the not distant future than it is to day. The title, nevertheless, is somewhat startling inasmuch as it seems to question the soundness of the whole Christian dogma in its relations to modern civilization.

The writer is professedly a Presbyterian, and although caring but little for the refinements of theological doctrine in its diversified form, he is disposed to resent even the imputation that genuine

Christians are or can be hypocrites in any sense of the term.

The present difficulty appears, in a measure, to grow out of what might be termed the inertia of a prior status. It can hardly be questioned, but that the great structure erected upon the holy scriptures as a basis through human agency and known as the Church has been through its creeds and dogmas the great conservator of the Christian propaganda through historical times, and that such artificial interpretations are necessary, do serve a useful purpose in the proposition that the masses lack sound intellectual development. This engine of Christianity will necessarily project itself somewhat beyond the object of its creation.

The diversification of human nature is infinite in degree as compared with the creeds, philosophies or any other human interest. And it would seem to be the part of wisdom to "look about a little" before coming to the *a-priori* conclusion that this or that dogma is false or without foundation. All human reason is relative, not absolute; in other words, we are utterly incapable of reasoning any given proposition except by analogy or relation to certain known principles or facts of an axiomatic character. No sound scientific hypothesis has ever yet preceded or foretold a valuable invention; the invention generally comes first, the explanation afterward. The history of science shows that an elaborate hypothesis constructed upon a known basis and leading to an ascertainable and unknown end is almost certain to be fallacious to some degree when all the facts become known.

Then there are the different interpretations of the same facts or conditions, to suit the peculiarities of the interpreter. For instance there are many people, ordinarily accounted to hold sound views, who believe that real Christianity possesses more vigor to-day than ever before in the history of the world; the census returns showing an increasing number of Church attendants, and witness the Christian or religious spirit which seems to have taken hold of American politics recently in certain quarters. Nothing will raise such genuine and durable enthusiasm, as that which is at least not opposed to proper religious views. On the other hand there are those, who, viewing the world through colored spectacles, believe there is no efficacy in prayer. Then we have Dr. Ernst Haeckel, who in an address at Altenburg in 1892, declared: (1) That the belief in an immortal soul inhabiting the body during life and leaving it at death is an exploded superstition. (2) That there is no such thing as immortality. He characterized Christianity as a bundle of irrational dogmas based upon an impossible mythology, destined "before the present century is ended, to drop out of currency throughout the entire domain of truly scientific philosophy," the God of Christendom being a "gaseous receptacle." More commonplace illustrations of personal bias may be found in the frequent division in courts of justice upon questions which can have no application to selfish or political ends, the wonderful division of scientific opinion in explaining any given phenomenon, the lowest division among jurors all of whom have listened to the same evidence, political differences; in short differences of opinion permeate the uttermost recesses of human activity and thought.

Dr. Patton says that doctrinal theology bears the same relation to Christianity, that the treatises do to astronomy, botany, chemistry and the like, inasmuch as it collects for the student the results of all prior investigation and thought in the same field.

Denominational theology is but the outgrowth of personal bias of the Christians themselves, and it is a recognized truth that the division of the church in respect to the non essentials promotes its development inasmuch as it is the better suited to the ever varying tastes of the people. Many, losing sight of the essentials, would doubtless forego their church relations if all denominations were made to conform in respect to the non-essentials.

In respect to particular dogmas, such as predestination it will be self evident that the real truth or falsity of the proposition cannot be affected in the slightest by the fact that many deny it, while others believe—this is according to the bias of the individual. Some minds can see nothing but truth and radiance in the theory, while others look upon it with horror and dire forebodings. Its truth can