

kind from time immemorial have undoubtedly received so much instruction, so much divine assistance—whether they acknowledge it or not,—that today it is very difficult, if at all possible, to ascertain what reason unassisted could accomplish for the children of men. There is one way we might get an answer to this query, says Soame Jenyns, and that would be by visiting those portions of the earth where revelation has never penetrated, or, if it has penetrated, where it has been rejected, and mankind have fallen into a lower state of degradation than they were at the first. If we go into those parts of the earth, we will find those men possessed of as much sagacity and reason as we are in possession of, and yet devoid of light enough to know how to manufacture even a nail or a hatchet, let alone to form a religion or a set of moral obligations. This would seem to denote that if men are not possessed of sufficient light in themselves to commence in the most trifling matters pertaining to civilization, it would be absolutely out of their power to form for themselves what could be considered a code of moral laws. Wherever revelation has not penetrated, so far from finding men qualified to frame their religious obligations in such a way as would be acceptable to the Almighty, we find that, although they are possessed with original capacities equal with our own, they have made no advance whatever in civilization. What satisfactory reason then can be given why the European nations, for example, should have made such progress in government, in laws, in manufactures, in education, in metaphysics, in philosophy, separated only by seas and mountains from another set of people who have made no advance through all the corresponding ages—what true reason, I ask, can we assign why barbarians have made no progress, while other men all around them have made so much? Dr. Taylor, the author of an essay called "The Natural History of Society," says that we have no history of any race of savages that have ever civilized themselves. None have ever been brought into a civilized condition only by the assistance and advice of those already civilized. On the other hand, he says, men have from time to time visited savage races, and although they have kept up no constant intercourse with them, but have visited them from time to time, they find that the savages continue in pretty much the same condition as they left them. And what is the direct conclusion to be reached in these cases? It is this: that these people must forever continue in their degradation until they are sufficiently enlightened and instructed by others who possess enlightenment.

If this be true, how shall we account for the first of the human family becoming civilized? Wherever this civilization has not penetrated we find men but little exalted above the brutes—without government, without laws, without legislation. How will we account for the first introduction of these things among the children of men? If, as many believe, the first human pair were but little advanced above the brutes, how did civilization commence with them? So far as our observation and experience extend, we find civilization impossible without a communication received from those already civilized and enlightened. In the case of our first parents, how

therefore without revelation could they ever have advanced even one step toward civilization? In the common course of events we see this brought to pass by the agency of civilized men; but inasmuch as there were none on the earth then, how shall we account for the introduction in the first instance of those gifts and acquirements? We see that men are competent to advance in science, in civilization, after they have first been set upon the track, and having received the first elements they become more or less qualified for the advances that we see have been reached. But it is demonstrated by history and by observation that the first foundations thereof must have been laid in revelation. As there was no man on earth to communicate this knowledge to the first pair, it must have come from God, or from some superior being.

All admit freely enough that man could not create himself. Consequently, his existence upon the earth demonstrates that he must have had a creator. By parity of reasoning, since we see that civilization exists; for we have a living monument to that effect before our eyes; and inasmuch as it could not originate itself, it is a proof of the same character and of equal weight, that the foundations of civilization must have been laid by revelation from God.

The message that is sent forth to the world today is embodied in the words that were given through the Prophet Joseph Smith to certain Elders who were collected together to hear the mind and will of God. "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned; and these signs shall follow them that believe." That was the burden of the message that was laid upon those servants of the Most High God; and when it was given by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, He prefaced that message with these words, "And I say unto you as I said unto mine apostles"—evidently referring to that period of time when He was upon the earth in Jerusalem. One of our most learned negatists, Colonel Ingersoll, while he admits the historical facts of the life of Jesus Christ, takes occasion to deny that Jesus ever uttered those words, as recorded by the evangelist. Latter-day Saints can form their own judgment of this. They have, through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the testimony of the Savior, that he did say "as I said unto mine apostles," thus giving the direct lie to Colonel Ingersoll.

The Colonel further declares that "for the man Jesus he gladly pays the homage of his admiration and his tears." What a saying is this to come from the lips of an unbeliever! Yet he is constrained to utter it by the weight of historical evidence; for there is no fact better demonstrated in our day than that Jesus did live; did perform the mighty works that are ascribed to Him; and was a great moral Teacher, and Ingersoll is compelled to acknowledge it. He therefore gladly pays the homage of his admiration and his tears "to that grand and serene man, Jesus Christ," although in the same breath he denies His relationship to the Deity. He looks upon Jesus, so far as His being the Son of God is concerned, as an arrant impostor. What do you think of this? Is there a man that claims to be a Latter-day Saint who, if in his heart he believed Joseph Smith to be an impos-

tor, would pay him the homage of his admiration and his tears? No, there is not. While we might respect his teachings we would never forget the fact that he was an impostor, and that would overcome all such emotions as admiration and tears. Surely such "homage" is only sounding brass and tinkling cymbal.

Colonel Ingersoll moreover says: "You cannot believe as you wish; you must believe as you must. You weigh the evidence for and against, and the integrity of the soul stands at the scales and tells which side rises and which side falls." Now this is very plausible at first sight, and gives seeming force to the argument which he makes; that it would be therefore unjust on the part of Deity to punish any one for his unbelief when he could not help himself. So it would. I think it was Dr. Courtney who delivered a lecture in reply to Colonel Ingersoll and takes occasion to mention this one point. He says that the argument would be all very good if the soul stood in perfect integrity; but it does not. No matter, he says, what form of theology we have received, we are all ready to admit the doctrine of original sin, which has brought about human depravity; and inasmuch as the tendency of this depravity in man's breast inclines him to things opposed to godliness, when we look at the scales to weigh the evidence for and against, if we yield to that bias toward evil, it so affects the integrity of our souls that we do not see things just as they are, and that we are often inclined to call evil good and good evil. John Stuart Mill, one of the greatest educators of the present century, although a negatist, speaking of the doctrine of free agency, says: "I say that although our character is formed by circumstances, yet our own desires can do much to shape those circumstances; and that what is really inspiring and ennobling in the doctrine of free will is the conviction that we have real power over the formation of our own character; that our will, by influencing some of our circumstances, can materially modify our future conduct and capabilities of willing." Now then if our own desires modify our characters, do you not see that if we do not desire that which is righteous, that which is good, noble and praiseworthy, we will get a bias in our judgment, and when we are weighing sacred truths, those evil desires will give us such an obliquity of vision that we will sometimes call sweet bitter and bitter sweet? On a similar point, Soame Jenyns gives utterance to the following: "The most insurmountable as well as the most usual obstacle to our belief arises from our passions, appetites and interests; and as belief is an act of the will as much as the understanding, we oftener disbelieve from want of inclination than from want of evidence." These are the answers that present themselves to me when I ask how and why it is that this message, this divine message of love from the courts of heaven, is received by the children of men with so much indifference. I am afraid that too many love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. There is still another class that rock themselves to sleep with the idea that for their sins of commission or omission, at stated periods of time, they can receive absolution from an authority which they allege emanates from high heaven.