

# AT THE DARKEST HOUR

## THE HOUR BEFORE THE DAWN

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FROM many points of view the opening of the twentieth century is humanity's brightest hour; the brightest, the most hopeful since life first came forward on the earth. Scientific discoveries are multiplying and open vistas of promise, which, even while they startle, encourage us to hope great things. And other grander discoveries are, beyond doubt, at the threshold. There is a thrill of expectancy in the air of these opening years of the new century; a conviction that all which has preceded will soon be surpassed.

Inventions have prodigiously increased the powers of men to contend with nature and deal with material substances. Foodstuffs have been improved in quality and variety. Civil liberty to live and act has become better assured. Transportation has been made easy, rapid and cheap. Throughout the length and breadth of the earth, the press, telegraph and telephone diffuse intelligence swiftly, and also enable public sentiment to find prevalent expression. The industries are organized and systematized as gigantic agencies for human advancement. Wealth, too, is wonderfully increased and, despite all complaints and forebodings, was never before so evenly and justly distributed to all men. Never even in the fabled Golden Age have all men, irrespective of rank or birth, shared the advantages which wealth confers so equally. Not that such distribution is yet ideal or complete; far from it; but the present complaints, forebodings and émeutes are themselves the signs of a progress in equalization. In no former age and at no previous time has the so-called "poor man" enjoyed so generous a share of the world's wealth. The wage-earner at two dollars *per diem* reads the same newspaper, rides in the same car, attends the same amusements and eats much the same food as his wealthier fellow, and if he pleases, may live in a house equally sanitary, if not so large, and lie down to sleep on an equally soft spring mattress. The mere possession of a great fortune, indeed, now gives the possessor more care, but little advantage over his less opulent brother-man. Curiously enough anathematized wealth comes of itself to be the instrument for making all men equal.

When we consider the humble beginnings of organic life on the earth - developing as it has done from the primitive unicellular life - the spectacle

presented by humanity at this epoch is one of reasonable promise. From the unicells multicellular organisms have developed; and from these lower animal forms, man has arisen. It has been the slow work of millions of years; but it has been done so surely and the progress has, on the whole, been so uniform and so well defined, that it appears highly improbable that this great evolutionary effort is to end in mortal man, incomplete as he is, with his many capacities for further progress undeveloped. Such stupendous balks in the order of nature occur only along the line of catastrophism; a cosmic cataclysm involving the solar system might suddenly or slowly end all things terrestrial. Otherwise a reasonable expectation obtains, that humanity will make progress in the future as in the past.

What inclines many students of history to take hopeless views of man's future on earth is the contemplation of races, peoples and nations that have risen to a degree of greatness and power, and then declined. At short range observation the Seres and Hindus, for example, seem to furnish evidence that man can move through but a circumscribed arc of progress; that the Cambodia and China of to-day inevitably succeed every upward *saltus* of mankind. Egypt, Chaldea, Persia, Greece, Rome, Baghdad, all present similar instances of rise and fall. If the student restricts his view to the history of any one nation in the past, he may be led to form a similarly hopeless opinion. The progress of humanity cannot be estimated by what takes place in any one quarter of the world, during anyone century, or thousand years. Contrasted with what the world was in the days of Pericles and Augustus, who could have seen any hope for humanity in the year 700 A.D.? Yet the greater era of the Anglo-Saxon, the Frank and the Teuton has succeeded, in due time.

In the large, mankind has developed by rhythmic advances and pauses. Collapse has followed each upward career, but always something grander succeeds. Ten thousand years is the briefest time period by which the progress and probabilities of the genus homo can be correctly measured. Ten thousand years, indeed, is but a yesterday in life's great curriculum on this planet.

Regarded in this larger light, and from the standpoint of progress in the physical sciences, art, and invention, humanity is at its brightest hour.

Grand, hopeful, and benign as is this progress, so prophetic of a mighty future for humanity, it is none the less tinged with an ever-deepening

sadness for each and all of us, personally. A magnificent future is dawning, but we shall not see it. A few months, a few years more at most, and personally we must close our eyes in death, and drop back into the insentient void. In truth, it is this very awakening of the intellect, this latter-day vision of the future, which renders death so grievous, so inopportune, so seemingly unbelievable.

It was not so with our ancestors. Life was a struggle too hard, too grim, to be greatly prized *per se*; the ills of life were numerous; they suffered from heat, cold, famine and the malignity of foes. The pleasures of life, too, were chiefly sensory and fleeting; hence their mental attitude toward death was one of comparative indifference; continued life offered too little to be very earnestly desired. This sentiment concerning death prevails largely to-day in the Orient and among savage tribes. Life is not wholly desirable, often the reverse, it holds so little of real enjoyment, so much of pain, fear and general misery.

The case of the well-to-do, well-lodged, and happily environed American of our own times is wholly different. Every day may be a pleasure, devoted to fresh achievements.

The youth of to-day, moreover, has need of vastly more time to realize his expanding ideals. Hitherto it was a hut, food and a wife that formed the sum of a young man's ambitions, the goal toward which his life developed: all obtained during twenty years of youthful effort. The aspirations of men have vastly enlarged. Fifty years scarcely suffices to realize the plans necessary to success in life. Formerly when the pleasures of life most sought were sensory, the realization was not far to seek, and when attained the vital incentive slackened in old age. But the pleasures most prized by the educated young man of our times require a longer initiative, three or four decades of patient study and sustained exertion. Life and the purposes of life are laid on wider lines for a loftier superstructure - the kind of living that outgrows the brief lifetime of our forebears.

Our ancestors, too, were solaced by pleasing illusions concerning a mythic life-after-death. The "soul" of man was believed to live on, disembodied and self-conscious, after the body died. The founders of religious cults made skilful use of this illusion and framed vast systems of ritual and dogma, in confident reliance on which millions lived and died, and even rushed to death, recklessly, battling for creed's sake. The second of the great religious systems of our era was successfully propagated and has

been maintained by promises of paradise to those who fall fighting for the faith. The devout Christian regulates his life with reference to "heaven," and dies in the hope of going thither immediately after death, - and this although the Founder of Christianity apparently taught that the kingdom of God was the earth.

The point here made, however, is in effect, that in past centuries, so far as human beings have aspired to longer life and desired continued existence, the aspiration has been satisfied by a partial faith in "soul" life. Such belief has sufficed considerably to assuage the pang of dying, and incidentally has led the devotee to despise corporeal life and disdain the earth as an abiding place. This, indeed, is the spirit and morale of Christian and Mohammedan life. Terrestrial life is subordinate and desirable only as a period of preparation and a point of departure for a paradise beyond the grave. This has been the consolation and the mental attitude of our forefathers. We are not here discussing either the truth or the reasonableness of this faith. It is enough to say that the consensus of scientific knowledge now precludes it and robs us of such consolation. If the doctrine of evolution and all that we know of life and living matter teach anything whatever, it is that the dissolution of the brain and spinal cord is the end of the conscious and subconscious life which subsisted there. Our efforts to preserve a semblance of faith to the contrary but embarrass and delay the growth of knowledge and the normal, onward progress of mind. True, there are apostates from science, turn-backs from this normal onward march of mind, men of considerable attainments who, owing to indoctrination of the brain in youth, revert to a species of second childhood as old age steals on them. Two notable instances of such retrogression have occurred during the past decade, yet few of us really heed these "recantations," or lay much stress upon them. The biologist of to-day and the man of science generally, face the fact that death is the end of personal life; no longer the ladder to "heaven," but the brink of unconsciousness. The old faith has left us. Vainly we patch the shards of old creeds together. Nothing of it holds. At heart we know- have always instinctively known - that death is the end of individual life. We live on, that is to say, we continue on, in the brain of the race, but no longer self-consciously. In the brain of the race we sleep with our fathers; and sometime, in the far future, our dormant personalities may waken, or be wakened and called up, by our remote descendants. So far as present researches go, this is all. The "eye of faith" alone sees more. This writer,

however, is not a disputant on these themes; nor is *Salvation by Science* largely involved in the question of "spirit " life after death. *Salvation by Science* would so transform and renew the human organism as to make it the *sedes* and abode of deathless life, Even the most ardent spiritist can have no proper quarrel with an aim so purely scientific, neutral and non-partizan.

Touching Christianity the only claim made is that *Salvation by Science* will render practical the great humane doctrines of Jesus. It will, we hold, realize the Messianic ideal of a "kingdom of God" on the earth and, in that consummation, will reunite the Hebraic and Christian faiths.

Psychical Research, so called, has accomplished nothing, as yet, to alter, or relieve the facts and conclusions as outlined above; nor is there the slightest reason to believe that the outcome of its labors will do more than emphasize this "hard condition of our birth," sung by Homer four thousand years ago.

We of this generation share all of primitive man's instinctive shrinking from death - the natural abhorrence of death which all life exhibits - and, in addition to this grief, we foresee the grand future of man on earth and perceive that for us, like the Hebrew lawgiver, there is nothing but this early glimpse from a mountain top afar. We live a little too early to enter the land of the great achievement. We shall not quite pass from death unto life. For us death will still be an irremediable evil.

But death is not an evil, many thoughtful persons rejoin, or, if an evil, it is, at least, a necessary one. What greater calamity could befall humanity, as human society and human civilization are at present established, than to have the passing generation not pass off, but remain on the crowded stage of human life? Even war and the slaughter of thousands are, by not a few political economists, regarded as a beneficial event for relieving the social congestion of overpopulated countries. If immortality were achieved, starvation, suicide on a national scale, infanticide, or the execution of aged persons would ensue from a necessity.

These are views which are fairly pertinent, although, properly administered, the natural resources of the earth are undoubtedly adequate to the sustenance of six billions of inhabitants, without crowding or poverty, in the place of the billion and a half who now dwell on it. This latter reflection does not meet the objection of over-population, however. Nor is it necessary to meet it, in the sense of providing field for a vast population, since Nature

herself has already met it in her plan of vital evolution. The procreative instinct is intensified or diminished in ratio with the duress which human life encounters in the struggle for existence. With the hard-worked and short-lived, children multiply rapidly. Where all the conditions of life are hard and evil, procreation is active.

On the other hand, education, refinement, ease, leisure and the prospect of a long, happy lifetime redound not to increase of population, but rather to diminution. So markedly, indeed, has this been found to be true, that the inference is a fair one, that were enlightened persons, men and women, freed from the fear of death, the cruder pleasures of procreation would be foregone, from choice, for greater and purer joys in a life of higher type. We may, at least, reply confidently that those who are able to achieve greatly prolonged life for themselves will not over-populate the earth.

More specifically, death often is not an evil, but a blessing to the hopelessly diseased, infirm, and decrepit. Death may even be voluntarily and logically sought by the hopeless sufferer. There are grave doubts whether, if nothing better were to be hoped for in the future by humanity than life as the majority of our fellow creatures hold it at present, - grave doubts whether unconsciousness were not better than the burden and pain of their lives.

These phases and negations but prove the converse of the question, however. The primary instinct of life is to live. Nature, *ab initio*, makes oath that *to be* is better than *not to be*; nor have all the consolatory sophistries of creeds ever really convinced a human being of normal intellect that he will live on personally conscious, remembering and seeing, after the death and dissolution of his body. Such "faith" may assist a little to mitigate the bitter pang of dying, but never fully reassures; the common sense still perceives the real situation, and cannot, even in its ignorance and weakness, wholly believe the kindly meant promissory. At best, we resign ourselves to lapse from life with a shudder and a sense of awful heartbreak, and on the brink of the great darkness shrink back, and, feebly struggling to breathe again, turn our dim eyes to the beautiful light.

Man has literally fought his way upward; he has battled for life and supremacy, first, with the fiercer orders of the carnivora, the cave-bear, the machairodus, then with his fellow-man for political and moral freedom. His last grim foe is death. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." But as yet, -

"Death reigns. Dust unto dust must go.  
The nations wail of their dread foe.  
The bitter waters of that Wormwood star  
Which burns malign, from pole to pole.  
Arc to be drunk. Who may console  
Their mortal woe? Outwelling from afar,  
The grief of worlds bewails its dying pains,  
A cosmic dirge, moaning it comes. Death reigns."

To all normal, healthy life, death is unquestionably an evil. Nature has nothing in common with those theorists who, making a virtue of temporal misfortune, seek to persuade man that death is a blessing. Scant must be their souls. Man has developed to live, not to die; and time and space given, man is omnipotent.

How much of literature is a dirge, a cry of mortal anguish for friends departed, for self departing from the joys of life! Dread of death is the spur which will drive men to the achievement of prolonged life.

Over all the past and the present hangs a pall, shot only by the bright intuitive hope that death is not a final law. With the Romans *Mors* was a goddess in black robes, with ravenous teeth, hovering on sable wings over the whole theatre of life, darting hither and thither, snatching its prey. The imagery comports with the Roman character.

With the Greeks *Thanatos* was a god whose reign men mourn, whose mission is to nip the joy of life and blast the well-springs of hope. At his approach they shrank and cried, "*Eheu! Eheu!*" The conception is characteristic of beauty-loving Hellas. Her children ever shrank from that cold, dark realm where there was no sun. The despairing cry of Electra utters the Hellenic sentiment touching death. Burdened as was their faith with the tenets of Egypt, death was still to them the end of pleasure, the tomb of joy. The Greek poets sometimes symbolized Death and Sleep as brothers, twin boys, lying asleep in the arms of their mother, Night; and again Death as a winged boy with sad, white brow and inverted torch; at his feet a butterfly. These last were poetic fancies rather than popular conceptions.

The Hebraic portraiture of death was a solemn and august angel, flying forth from God, armed with a sharp sword to slay the children of men who had sinned. Hence, the strange description of death in the Apocalypse.

To the Hindu death was personified by the soul of Yarma (Adam), the

first man who died (according to their tradition), and who thus became the monarch of the dead.

Our old Norse ancestors thought of death as a cold, misty presence, rolling darkly on, like the whirlwind storms of their own northland, wintrily enveloping its victims and sweeping them away. enwrapped and lost from sight forever. With them death was associated with the bleak, elemental forces of the air, the sea, and the night, caught in the strife of which they so often perished.

In our times and in all time the vulgar imagery of death is a skeleton. Death makes a skeleton of man, hence man makes death a skeleton. In such grisly representation he foresees his fate. It was reserved for the grandeur-loving genius of Milton to draw death at once awful and turculent:—

“The shape,  
If shape it might be call'd that shape had none  
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;  
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd  
For each seem'd either, — black it stood as  
night, Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,  
And shook a dreadful dart; what seem'd his head  
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.”

It is a curious fact that death, which is a nonentity, has always been typified by substantive imagery. In a word, the utter absence of energy, or force, has been idealized as a monster of the most forceful character. Fancy has run away with fact. Death is *nothing* in itself, the synonym of nothingness, and has never been better defined than as the absence of life. Matter is inherently endowed with that which may become sentient. The human intellect, with this element of immortality within its grasp, shudders and sighs to cease. When the real situation shall become evident to human vision, a new era of mental activity will dawn. No longer vainly praying for miraculous redemption, man will arise to work out his own salvation, and labor for an immortality which will have no uncertain hold on his faith. The task is mighty; but a grand idea never yet perished for want of soldiers. Man, at least, has this record for his encouragement. Men would not be worthy of immortal life, would not be fit for it, if they cannot achieve it for themselves. Whenever in the past man has risen superior either to brute beasts or brute passions, it has been by his own unaided exertions. However piously he may have prayed and trusted, the fight has always been his own. Overmatched,

the good and the bad have always been crushed alike. "God" is not on the hither side of matter. What is on its far side we know not. Yet Right, in the long run, appears to be a better soldier than Wrong. We may, if we please, fancy that "God" put this ingredient in matter and, having done that, retired beyond the confines of the material universe.

But during twelve hundred years the average of human life has not been raised more than twenty years at most, what hope then, of greatly prolonging life in ages to come?

The reply is that the outlook cannot be correctly estimated by this past slow gain on death. Through what unwritten ages did man wander over prehistoric continents, a wretched, fireless troglodyte, a feeder on acorns and berries, yet in one brief moment the first spark of fire was struck, - fire which made him the rich owner of all the metals, which opened a new realm of comfort, warmth and food, and spread the race over vast regions hitherto uninhabitable. In that single moment man rose to a higher plane of existence.

Within historic times, but four centuries ago, human progress was vastly accelerated by a single discovery, which was little more than a lucky accident. Up to the times of Gutenberg, what progress had been made for three thousand years in the art of bookmaking? Till then, books had been laboriously copied with style and pen, and so far as anyone could then have foreseen; bade fair always to be thus tediously reproduced. A copy of the Scriptures cost from two to three thousand dollars, equivalent to six or nine thousands in this century; but a single decade saw the art of printing born.

Dogmatic unbelief may be as greatly mistaken as dogmatic faith. The times are ripe for great discoveries touching life and its co-relative modes of energy. The epoch - and it will be the grandest of human epochs - when the protoplasmic molecule shall render up its secret to human scrutiny is near at hand. Man will then be no longer the abject serf of death, but a belligerent, contending for his freedom, with the prize of unlimited life before his eyes.

There are, it is true, degenerates who aver that all life is an evil. There are said to be clubs that seek out, ponder, and discuss modes of euthanasia. They should be wished success. Such pessimism is an evil diathesis, a mental malformation of which the world would be well rid, by the shortest method. But we are speaking of normal men. not of poseurs, perverts, drug-bemused manikins and alcoholiacs.

For the normal man of science a new and sterner gospel is requisite. The

awakening from dreams of paradise has come, and in very truth we have little enough to requite us. The devotee has much the more of solace, and many there are who will prefer the sacerdotal promise to the grim reality, It is so much easier to accept the gilded promissory of the established church than grapple with the real problems of life! Confessing one's sins is so much simpler than actual reformation! What wonder that the earth groans beneath a weight of mosques and cathedrals, or that four continents glisten with church vanes! Devotee and priest have this advantage: they die with great hopes and will never learn their mistake; whereas the man of science dies with the conviction that his course is run. Science alas, has added a pang to death for all her children. It has dissipated the beautiful mirage of dying men.

“Let the grand future pity those whose weakness  
Had to be fostered by a foolish hope;  
Perhaps without it man had died, the Earth  
Gone fallow to its dead-orb, lunar age.”

Without it, perhaps, men could not have been led or driven to work and fight. Temple and pyramid would not have been reared, nor needful experience in architecture been gained. Greek and Trojan would not have sailed the Mediterranean, nor the Hebrew slave fled from bondage to seek his Promised Land.

As soon as man rose a little above his brutal ancestry, as soon as he began to think, to ponder what he saw, he was aghast at death. He would not face the hard fact and persuaded himself that by prayer, burnt offerings, pilgrimages and self-denial, he might escape extinction. The mirage of his hope rose and loomed before his life-thirsty eyes. Erelong, then, as might be predicted. certain guilds took up the business of exploiting the mirage. That the guild itself was often sincere and benevolent does not materially alter the facts of its origin or its tendencies. For guaranteeing the mirage to be genuine Celestial landscape, priest and Levite have been the great ones of earth, Humanity is still in its childhood, but now approaches adolescent years, the age when youth becomes incredulous of fairy tales. And, lo in place of this illusion of the world's infancy, we are opening our eyes to the greater, grander gospel of manly endeavor and achievement.

If in these papers the writer appears to play the part of an iconoclast, a ruthless breaker of the sacred images of human faith and religion, it is not from any joy that he has felt in the task. Rather pain.

It is impossible to speak without emotion of that fond Hope of dying men which it is the thankless office of our science to pronounce baseless. So much of solace has centered in it, so much of consolation for the pangs of death; such sweet anticipation of future reunions with dear ones dead have grown up about it, such halos of comfort in adversity, such visions of redemption by Grace, such long ladders of creed, ascending by which we have hoped to scale Heaven and Immortality. Creeds so venerable to the human heart, so firmly implanted in the woof of brain, that the uprooting of them can but cause widespread confusion and consternation.

Such consternation and pain, indeed, that not a few will deem it illy done, if true. It has even been held that humanity would not survive deprivation of this its fond hope of "spirit" life, but like a flower deprived of moisture, would wither on a desiccant earth; that mankind, thus bereft, would shrink in a premature involution to its origins; that the genus homo, shriven of this tenet, would decline to some bestial Ape-type, some senescent, frustrate Order of the Earth-born.

But take heart, ye of little faith. It is but the natural growth of knowledge. The coasts of our Race-life are strewn with the wrecks of great Religions, the old hulks of once mighty creeds, the flotsam of a thousand once fondly cherished tenets which buoyed millions in life and consoled them in death. They were, but they are not; and this is but one illusion more. Ra and Osiris, Baal and Zeus, Og and Duiro; Tau and Brahm, Odin and Thor; and more remote in the vasty past, glimpses of a hundred ancient cults, once very precious to man, now but vanished superstitions. Once they rang all true to the human mind, and gorgeous the pageant, sonorous the ritual; for a "superstition" is but a religion outgrown: and the great plains of the past are covered with their white bones. The Ararats of philology are overstranded with the quaint-carven timbers of these old arks of religious safety, arks which once carried the world's salvation, but which now lie high and dry, deserted by man and beast. For if priest and devotee could only think so, that is the best thing about religions - they are left behind when the crisis or era that had need of them is past.

There were darker aspects. It has been characteristic of each and every great religion in turn that it arrogated to itself all the truth in the Universe, denounced every other as wicked and kindled fires of relentless persecution. Each in turn was the one and only revelation from the true God, the others devil-born.

That, indeed, is the hardest thing about them all to forgive, or to have

charity for: their horrible intolerance of each other, their ridiculous bigotry, their disgusting self-righteousness. Each in turn, Christian, pagan alike, no sooner acquired power than it reddened the earth with blood, the sky with torture-fires. Sincerity there may have been, but a sincerity merciless, murderous, abominable.

o ye who walk the Narrow Way,  
By Tophet flare to Judgment Day,  
Be gentle , when the heathen pray" \* \* \*

But gentleness there was none. From the Stone Age to Mecca and Rome, innocent blood cries to heaven against them all.

It is these dark pages of man's religious history which oftenest make us despair of his future, and which sometimes lead even the optimist to doubt whether the great brain-ape is really worthy of preservation in the universe.

“So many sects, so many creeds,  
So many paths that wind and wind,  
When just the art of being kind  
Is all this sad world needs.”

It was this terribly difficult “art of being kind” that Siddhartha sought to inculcate; yet no sooner had Buddhism become an established religion than it inaugurated saturnalias of persecution.

It was the gospel of brotherly love, mercy, and cooperation that Jesus taught, as the corner stone of his “Kingdom of God” on earth. “Love one another” and “resist not evil.” The early Christians were thrown to the lions, unresistant, and dying, prevailed marvelously over the whole world; yet no sooner was Christianity formulated as an established religion, than Christian Rome exceeded the cruelties of Pagan Rome, and taxed all human ingenuity in search of devices of torturing.

So it is well that religious systems pass. No calamity is so great as their survival over time. Buddhism, Mohammedanism, and the Christianity of Constantinople and Rome are now among the greatest obstacles to human progress. Help them to pass, not to be perpetuated.

To minds normal and unperverted, *Salvation by Science* is the most natural thing in the world, the outcome of human progress which would be

expected. But it is a curious commentary on the mental condition of people that the idea of being saved from death by natural means *often appears to them strange and unnatural!* Not unfrequently as something portentous and “wicked!” That higher life, which can only be attained by the loftiest culture of the human intellect, *is feared to be impious!* The fetters of old creeds are still firmly riveted. A few, indeed, recognize the truth; but a majority still cling to the fetish of ghost life, and incline to the belief that humanity will run through a cycle of evolution, decline toward the lower animal orders and, in the end, perish from off the earth. They fail to see the significance which attaches to the steady growth of the human brain, a growth which separates and distinguishes mankind from all previous animal orders; and they ignore or depreciate the grand fact that scientific knowledge, accumulating from generation to generation, is changing the entire course of lower nature in man. That lower course of nature is still their criterion for the future.

It is, in very truth, a sterner gospel into which we of this generation have to be baptized. We have partaken of the tree of knowledge. The pleasant illusions of man's early creeds have been brushed ruthlessly away. We face Nature's hard law with no fairy tale to disguise its inclemency. Immortal life will be achieved by the aid of applied science; it is what the whole scheme of evolution moves forward to; it is the dream of all the long-suffering ages of man; it will be initiated on earth within three centuries, perhaps within two, so rapid is the growth of knowledge, so accelerated the march of discovery. But we who have to initiate the great effort will not look upon the dawn of the achievement, nor be among the first of the sons of men who rise superior to death.

We can but feel, therefore, that we live at humanity's darkest hour - the hour before the dawn. We live too late to be buoyed and comforted by the illusions of religion, too soon to reach the goal and snatch our lives from the grasp of death.

Have we the strength to work on, quite the same, and bravely round the curve for the sake of those more fortunate who shall come after us? Have we the devotion to face the inevitable, turn in our best work and die, uncomplainingly? Shall we demonstrate the spirit, intent and real meaning of the doctrines of Jesus Christ, or see these grand doctrines lapse to a vacuous ritual?

A thousand centuries of life's hard struggle on the earth cry out to speak

through us, and bid us win the promise of evolution. We are born to this post of honor and duty. Untold labor and pain have confided it to us.

Are we worthy? Or shall we quit the task, malingering, turn sensuous, skulk back to cover of illusion and cease to be progressive?

If stronger beings on other spheres of space are watching us from afar at this dark hour of our planet's evolution, may they infuse patience and courage into our hearts. We have need of them.