

dignified or scholastic position in the land, either ecclesiastical or political. They were graded as the offscourings and dregs of the human race. They were, so to speak, the dregs of human society. Yet today, in this age of boasted Christian enlightenment, in this age of boasted Christian freedom—pardon me for the remark—they claim that these men were the servants of the Lord, men that bore in their possession the principles of life and salvation unto all the world, and these men were in their day bold to make affirmations such as fell very unwelcomely, very unacceptably upon the ears of the *elite*, of the educated, of the refined, of the professional classes of Jewish and of Roman society, and also upon those who were cultivated in Greek literature, and constituted the most refined element of human society. Yet they were bold to declare, "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." What do our Christian friends say? What do our pulpit declaimers announce to their congregations when they select such positive declarations, such strong doctrinal enunciations as the one I have quoted and many more like unto them—what do they say? Oh, they tell their Christian friends that they lament the darkness, the moral blindness, the intellectual and doctrinal opaqueness of that age; that had they lived in the days when Jesus sojourned among men, when He went about speaking words of kindness, uttering sentences of love and mercy, expressing His good will to the whole human family, and seeking to promulgate the principles of peace in a distracted age; say they, "Oh that we had lived in the days of Jesus; oh that we had had the privilege of bowing down at His feet like Mary

and Martha; oh that we had had the opportunity of surrounding Him when the precious words of life fell from His hallowed lips—the lips of Him who spake as never man spake; oh that we had had this privilege." And the tears of penitence for the sins of the dead who had gone centuries before them trickle down their face and stain the pages of the sacred scriptures from which they select their texts when they refer to the blindness and hardness of heart of the people who treated with ignominy and contempt the world's greatest reformer, the world's universal redeemer, the Son of God Himself. What do they say of them? "Oh," say they, "how strange it is, how remarkable it is that those people with the writings of the blessed Prophets—with the writings of Hosea, of Jeremiah, of Amos, of Joel, of Habakkuk, of Zechariah, of Malachi, and of all the prophets in their possession, wherein are found so many prophecies relating to the coming of the Messiah, relating to the ushering in of a new dispensation, relating to the inauguration of a reign of peace such as the world had never seen, such as God had not promised unto the children of men, until the period of the world's history when Shiloh should come—how remarkable with all this that they did not receive the Son of God. "If we had lived in these days," say they, "we believe that we would have been able to see the hand of God; we would have marked His divine footprints among the people; we would have recognized by our ears the voice of the Good Shepherd; we would have listened with hearts subdued with humility, with minds illuminated by inspiration, to the marvelous and inimitable truths uttered by the Savior of the world. Oh, how wicked it was for