

asks God's blessing? No; he is scarcely disposed to acknowledge that he needs a blessing, or he doubts whether the blessing would be given. The practical conclusion to which he comes is, that it may be as consistent in him to betake himself to sleep without offering to God what he feels would only be a mockery. What is he to do the following morning? It is a critical time. Confess his error? No; cherishing as he does the recollection of the gay scene in which he mingled, and with the taste and relish of it yet upon his palate, he is not prepared to acknowledge his folly. Morning and evening now go and return, and bring new gifts from God, and new manifestations of his goodness; but no acknowledgment of the divine bounty on the part of him who is yet ever receiving it. No doubt there are times when he is prompted to prayer by powerful feelings, called up by outward trials or inward convictions; but ever when the storms of human life would drive him to the shore, there is a tide beating him back. His course continues to be a very vacillating one; now seeming to approach to God, and anon driven farther from him, till he obtains from books, or from lectures, a smattering of half-understood science. He now learns that all things are governed by laws, regular and fixed, over which the breath of prayer can exert as little influence, as they move on in their allotted course, as the passing breeze of the earth over the sun in his circuit. False philosophy has now come to the aid of guilty feelings, and hardens their cold waters into an icicle lying at his very heart, cooling all his ardour, and damping all his enthusiasm. He looks back, at times, no doubt, to the simple faith of his childhood with a sigh; but it is as to a pleasing dream, or illusion, from which he has been awakened, and into which, the spell being broken, he can never again fall."—*Method of the Divine Government*, p. 224.

O, what a change would this world exhibit, were the whole Christian church to exercise full faith in God's ability to answer prayer, without a miracle, only to the extent pointed out by philosophy, to say nothing of the Bible; for, in fact, a large proportion of that church, confounded by the specious argument derived from nature's constancy, have virtually yielded this most important principle to the demands of scepticism. When natural evils, such as war, famine, drought, and pestilence, came upon our forefathers, they, taking the Bible for their guide,