

find the mysterious fact of degradation remain an unsolved riddle in our hands.

But though I can assign neither *reason* nor *cause* for the fact, I cannot avoid the conclusion, that it is associated with certain other great facts in the moral government of the universe, by those threads of analogical connection which run through the entire tissue of Creation and Providence, and impart to it that character of unity which speaks of the single producing Mind. The first idea of every religion on earth which has arisen out of what may be termed the spiritual instincts of man's nature, is that of a Future State ; the second idea is, that in this state men shall exist in two separate classes, — the one in advance of their present condition, the other far in the rear of it. It is on these two great beliefs that conscience every where finds the fulcrum from which it acts upon the conduct ; and it is, we find, wholly inoperative as a force without them. And in that one religion among men that, instead of retiring, like the pale ghosts of the others, before the light of civilization, brightens and expands in its beams, and in favor of whose claim as a revelation from God the highest philosophy has declared, we find these two master ideas occupying a still more prominent place than in any of those merely indigenous religions that spring up in the human mind of themselves. The special lesson which the Adorable Saviour, during his ministry on earth, oftenest enforced, and to which all the others bore reference, was the lesson of a final separation of mankind into two great divisions, — a division of God-like men, of whose high standing and full-orbed happiness man, in the present scene of things, can form no adequate conception ; and a division of men finally lost, and doomed to unutterable misery and hopeless degradation.