


“The Fall of Man.”

BY M. H. BOND.

—NOTE.—

This tract is the beginning of a series to be issued monthly, in which the religious and social problems of the day will be briefly criticised and discussed. M. H. B.

 HE word "fall": suggests an elevation: without elevation a fall is impossible.

The brute creation does not nor ever has fallen, using the word in a moral sense. In the history of man alone is there any significance attached to this word: we repeat, if man has fallen it is from an elevation.

Dreams are but the correlative history or grouping of facts. Whether we believe or not the Genesis story of that which has been called "the fall of man;" the tradition of a once higher estate for man has foundation in the existence of the unerasable idea that there HAS been sometime, a moral man in the absolute sense. This FACT and this alone may account for the presence in this world and among men of the ideal, and possibility in the future of another moral man: something which does not now exist.

I do not say that Adam if such a person did exist, was possessed of either virtue or intelligence which experience alone could give. But it is as easy in analogy for me to believe that there was a man before there was a child, and that he was a moral man and an innocent woman, as it is to believe that the stream cannot rise above the fountain or the lesser cannot include that which is the greater.

Man does not possess the power to create neither is he an originator or inventor in any absolute sense: he simply correlates or emulates. The moral ideal in man is a traditional copy.

The painter looking backward at that which does and has existed, seeks to fasten upon canvass the glory of the autumn sunset glow. The sculptor, simply looking from this, to that, undertakes with mallet and chisel to feebly, oh so feebly tell in story of marble of the hint and glimpse of matchless and unfathomable power of the great originator and design, to express a copy in form, not only of that which has an appearance, but of fact, of life, of love, of multiplied sense and significance.

In the schools of moral philosophy and education which men have invented or copied and have invested with the title of their own names since the days of Moses, has there been no example or product furnished the world of the lost ideal: the perfect specimen of the absolutely moral man.

Eighteen centuries ago there arose out of the mists of Judiasism and surrounded by Roman and Greek ideals, the central figure in the history of the world today. Have friends overrated, or enemies under-estimated his character? What and where is the true history of the "Life of Christ." Who was Jesus? God? God and man? or man? Adam and Christ: has the ideal been lost in one, and found in the other? Tradition or fact: has the world outgrown Jesus, who was called the Christ, or has it not yet become acquainted with him? Is he a—

"Dead fact stranded on the shore
Of the oblivious years."

or does he live to vindicate himself as being what he claimed to be: "The Christ," "The desire of all nations;" the hope of all mankind; the Savior of the race; the lost ideal, the perfect moral man.

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Heb. 5: 9. Not simply innocent, as Adam may have been, for that is far from what is meant by the word perfection, but absolutely virtuous was he? by a life of trial and successful resistance against the evils that beset humanity?

"Thou shalt" and "thou shalt not" has been thundered against a sin stricken and wretched race since the days of Moses, yet no moral school of philosophy; no human law or device of man, has or can legislate or execute sin out of this world.

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh (not out of it.) The fight was made with, and among us as well as for us.

"That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." Rom. 8: 3 4.

There is demonstrably, a physical law that governs men when high results are obtained. There is also, a moral code quite clearly, and quite as universally accepted, and if "there is a spirit in man," or if it so be that he has a spiritual nature, there must be then rationally a law to govern that spirit, and if this be the higher nature or faculty, then must, or should that which is beneath become subject to its direction.

There is a law, and a school of training, moral and spiritual training, designed by its author and founder, in which to perfect human character, and of the attainment unto the full stature of a perfect example.

That law, is the gospel of Christ as taught by himself and those whom he chose to represent himself and his work.

That school is his church. The faculty, or teachers of that school are of his own naming, appointment and order, and "the spirit of truth" and gifts of the Holy Ghost are the endorsement and ratification of the whole by God, the infinite father of all.

"And God hath set some in the church, first, apostles, secondarily, prophets, thirdly, teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

"Now ye are the body of Christ." I Cor. 12, 28: 27.

"There is one body."—

"And He (Christ) gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers."

"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

"Till we all come in THE UNITY OF THE FAITH, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, UNTO A PERFECT MAN, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Eph. 4: 4: 11 to 13.

Why has the race been hindered in its struggle to re-attain the lost ideal?

We answer:— Because of the apostacy from primitive faith church organization, and the destruction of the perfecting agencies introduced eighteen hundred years ago by God Himself and Jesus Christ His Son.

We plead for a return to "the old paths." For a practical test of the "Christianity of Christ." For a restoration of "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus." The gospel. The faith, which comes by this gospel: and the knowledge received through obedience only.

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro: and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by slight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they wait to deceive: but speaking THE TRUTH in love (of God and our fellow men,) may GROW UP INTO HIM in all things which is the head (and the example) even Christ." Eph. 4. 14:15.

Handwritten text, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side of the page. The text is illegible due to the quality of the scan and the orientation of the writing.