The Unity of Life

(Rev. Lewis H. Robinson)

The whole system of created things is called the “Universe” - It is one creation. It is a unity. It is made up of many elements but they are all related to each other - interdependent upon each other. Though we do not know much about the constitution of matter it is supposed that it is all made of the same stuff - electrons and protons whatever they may be. We have been interested to read within the last 2 weeks that at the Mass. Institute of Technology electro-chemists have changed platinum into gold. This was done by bombarding a piece of platinum with an enormous charge of electrons - rays of electric discharge - but the experiment proves that these 2 elements are the same stuff. A proton with a single floating or whirling electron traveling at least with the speed of light is an atom of hydrogen the lightest gas known with 2 electrons it is perhaps helium with 3 it is something else and so on up. The heaviest known substance has 98 - but there are skips - 3 or 4 and these elements may be discovered any day. I was told when a boy that there were 60 known elements - now we have more than 90. But we know that the universe no matter how big we shall discover it to be now has enlarged the new telescope will rend it to be, is one. “God is one.” The wisdom that made it is one. All things in it is one. It is a great harmony. Philosophers have always maintained a oneness to the system of all creation. It is a system as truly as our bodies are a system. We cannot separate the different organs, tissues, humors, serums, of the body and have a body - the bones, and blood the lungs, brain, liver, stomach, heart, and all the glands and humors are necessary to the living body. A disease of any of these parts is soon fatal to all the rest. A diseased heart or lung or liver or brain disorganizes the whole system and prevents its functioning. It is surprising what a triffling amount may utterly disorganize the whole system. If certain bacteria get into the blood system there causes paralysis of the body a softening of the brain, an insanity, or a degeneration of some vital organs. A slight thing may produce a monstrosity a villain a genius.

Although we do not know very much about the body. We do know more about it than we know about the mind the soul of man. It also has its diseases - its ways, bents, tendencies and organs of function. We think we have made great discoveries and found out a great deal about our physical bodies and we have, but we have made small progress in in understanding our spiritual life. Other animals have as good bodies as we have & any organ we presumably every cell and tissue as good as ours but for some unknown reason man has a faculty of mind a spiritual something about him that is superior or more advanced something more highly developed than any animal. To find out how and why offers us the field of future progress. Several have said that our greatest progress in future years will be spiritual.

In the same way society as a whole is a living organism It is a unity and we cannot in health have the organs of it out of harmony - some of them diseased - trading poisons and filling the social body with poison virus and expect to live in health - but that is just we do.

What we call social problems are symptoms of social disease. Drs. used to try to doctor symptoms. try to correct them as they said. They were not all wrong of course but no great progress in medicine was made until they discovered the causes of disease and attacked them at their source. Putting salve on scars cured them up and that was good to keep bacteria out and some of it was cleansing and helpful. But what caused the corruption? Get rid of that. Perhaps it was tonsils or teeth or diet or water or something else. Putting salve on small pox was no cure. Socially we are precisely in the salve stage of medicine - always treating symptoms we do not realize the unity of life. That all the parts must work together as a single organism. We treat our economic life as if it were something apart from our religious and political organism. We doctor slums, or business or farmers or aged or children, or
this and that - pass laws and assess taxes to put salve on sore spots, not realizing that perhaps the trouble & cause is in the mind & heart of man. More and more we leave out of consideration the function of religion.

It is like the body attempting to regain health without brain or with a bad heart. Our problems increase and multiply - one bad symptom produces another the whole social organism becomes diseased.

Our economic & political problems are not nearly so much economic and political as they are religious. Our main problems is almost wholly a religious problem - and as long as we deal with these questions of human relations separately and do not see life all life as a unity we increase our confusion, the injuries of life increase and social health becomes poorer and poorer. We treat one symptom of disease after another, and as soon as we think we have done something it crops up somewhere else in some different form and gives us more trouble than before.

We have given a great deal of attention to our material progress and wealth. It was rational enough. We should not neglect that for so much of our life is material - but we have neglected the spiritual side & aspect of life. Even while we increased our wealth and power the mind aspect of life was neglected & ignored well nigh together. We have found that it was dangerous to human welfare to give selfish greedy unprincipled men and organizations the power of wealth and the advantages of science and education. They have thrown the masses into poverty hopelessness and despair. The masses are impeccably housed and fed and clothed - they have been ruthlessly slaughtered by the millions on battlefields to make the already strong immensely wealthy.

Schools -
The Church.
The Nation-