

The Acceptance of the Christian Conception of Life Will Emancipate Men from the Miseries of Our Pagan Life

Freedom cannot be bestowed on or taken from a Christian or Christians.
Freedom is an inalienable possession of the Christian. (126)

. . . the aim of his life is the fulfillment of God's law, and that law will replace all other laws for him, and he will give it his sole allegiance, so that by that very allegiance every human law will lose all binding and controlling power in his eyes. . . . The Christian is independent of every human authority . . . (126)

For a Christian the oath of allegiance to any government whatever . . . is a direct renunciation of Christianity. (127)

The Christian is independent of human authority because he acknowledges God's authority alone. (127)

"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (128)

. . . this advocacy of slavery, which is promulgated among the masses, not by governments, in whom it is inevitable, but by men who, in advocating socialistic theories, regard themselves as the champions of freedom. (129)

Why am I to hand over the fruits of my labor to them in the shape of taxes, knowing that the money will be spent on the support of officials, prisons, churches, armies, on things that are harmful, and on my own enslavement? (131)

. . . it is perfectly clear to me that if we our own selves do not flog ourselves, no one will flog us. (131)

Nothing hinders the emancipation of men from slavery so much as this amazing error. Instead of every man directing his energies to freeing himself, to transforming his conception of life, people seek for an external united method of gaining freedom, and continue to rivet their chains faster and faster. (132)

All state obligations are against the conscience of a Christian—the oath of allegiance, taxes, law proceedings, and military service . . . Revolutionary enemies attack the government from without. Christianity does not attack it at all, but, from within, it destroys all the foundations on which government rests. (137)

Evil Cannot Be Suppressed by the Physical Force of the Government--the Moral Progress of Humanity Is Brought about Not Only by Individual Recognition of Truth, But Also through the Establishment of a Public Opinion

Christianity in its true sense puts an end to government. (142)

. . . serious-minded man of our day can [not] help seeing the incompatibility of Christianity—the doctrine of meekness, forgiveness of injuries, and love—with government, with its pomp, act of violence, executions, and wars. (142)

. . . [theory that] the authority of government must not be suppressed till all the wicked and rapacious people in the world are extinct. (144)

The good cannot seize power, nor retain it; to do this, men must love power. And love of power is inconsistent with goodness, but quite consistent with the very opposite qualities—pride, cunning, cruelty. (144)

Consequently, ruling means doing to others what we would not they should do unto us, that is, doing wrong. (145)

All the revolutions in history are only examples of the more wicked seizing power and oppressing the good. (146)

If the oppressed are more wicked than their oppressors, they attack them and try to overthrow them; and in favorable circumstances they succeed in overthrowing them, or what is more common, they rise into the ranks of the oppressors and assist in their acts of violence. (147)

The seductions of power, and all the wealth, honor, and luxury it gives, seem a sufficient aim for men's efforts only so long as they are unattained. Directly a man reaches them, he sees all their vanity, and they gradually lose all their power of attraction. (148)

Power selects and attracts the worst elements of society, transforms them, improves and softens them, and returns them to society. (149)

Men do not only assimilate a truth through recognizing it by prophetic insight, or by experience of life. When the truth has become sufficiently widely diffused, men at a lower stage of development accept it all at once simply through confidence in those who have reached it by the inner spiritual way, and are applying it to life. (150)

“Let the murderers,” say the champions of state violence, “set us the example by giving up murder and then we will give it up.” But the murderers say just the same, only with much more right. They say: “Let those who have undertaken to teach us and guide us set us the example of giving up legal

murder, and then we will imitate them.” And they say this, not as a jest, but seriously, because it is the actual state of the case. (152)

But these savages within and without Christian society, who are such a terror to us, have never been subjugated by violence, and are not subjugated by it now. Nations have never subjugated other nations by violence alone. (153)

“But how are we to cast off the visible tangible protection of an armed policeman, and trust to something so intangible as public opinion?” (155)

Moreover, the dread of the suppression of the visible protection of the policeman is essentially a sentiment of townspeople, that is, of people who are living in abnormal and artificial conditions. People living in natural conditions of life, not in towns, but in the midst of nature, and carrying on the struggle with nature, live without this protection and know how little force can protect us from the real dangers with which we are surrounded. (156)