

RELIGION FOR TO-DAY

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649334476

Religion for to-day by Minot J. Savage

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

MINOT J. SAVAGE

**RELIGION
FOR TO-DAY**

RELIGION FOR TO-DAY

BY

MINOT J. SAVAGE, D.D.

*"The first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and,
behold, I make all things new"*



BOSTON

GEO. H. ELLIS, 272 CONGRESS STREET

1900

DEDICATION

IN GRATITUDE FOR THE LOVE WHICH HAS DONE EVERYTHING TO
KEEP ME FROM BEING HOMESICK IN A NEW CITY, AND
FOR THE WELCOME AND SYMPATHETIC LISTENING
GIVEN TO MY WORDS, I DEDICATE THIS
BOOK, THE FIRST-FRUITS OF
MY NEW YORK WORK,

TO THE

Church of the Messiah

PREFACE.

THE chapters in this volume are only some of the sermons preached in the Church of the Messiah during the early months of this year,—1897. As no word of any one of them was ever written, they have the faults and, it is hoped, some of the virtues of free speaking.

Those who are familiar with my work during the past twenty-two years in Boston will note many repetitions of thought. Indeed, I have not cared to avoid it. I have tried to meet the wants of this new field as though I had never occupied any other. A man should not allow his own shadow to intimidate him. So the book will help those whom it will help, and others—will not read it.

NEW YORK, May, 1897.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PRESENT RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS	1
CAUSES OF PRESENT RELIGIOUS UNREST	18
IS RELIGION DYING?	33
WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY?	50
GOD AS INSIDE THE UNIVERSE, NOT OUTSIDE	66
RELIGION NATURAL, NOT STATUTORY	83
— STANDING GROUND FOR TRUST	101
MAN NOT FALLEN, BUT RISING	119
REVELATION NATURAL AND PROGRESSIVE	136
IS GOD INCARNATE IN ONE MAN ONLY OR IN HUMANITY?	154
— THE DIVINE FATHERHOOD AND OUR HUMAN CHILDHOOD	175
IMMORTALITY FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE MODERN WORLD	191
HELL AND HEAVEN	211
— THE CHURCH OF YESTERDAY, TO-DAY, AND TO-MORROW	232



PRESENT RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS.

It is not an uncommon thing to find people discussing the question as to which is the more important element of religion, the head or the heart, the emotional side or the thought side, the power or the intelligence. It has always seemed to me a very strange question. As though there could be any possibility of doubt on the subject! And yet you find whole denominations distinguished for the manifestation of emotion in religion, and feeling that this is the one thing of chiefest importance of all.

On the other hand, you will find certain denominations — and we Unitarians are accused of it very commonly — where there is supposed to be an undue development of the intellectual side, which are spoken of as critical and cold. It is possible that the one side should be over-developed at the expense of the other; and yet it seems to me that there is no sort of question that the two are of equal importance, and neither one of them can be slighted without serious detriment to the total result.

Suppose you should find the people on board a great steamer in mid-ocean discussing the question as to which was the more important, the engine down in the hold or the man at the wheel with the compass and chart. Would you consider it a sensible discussion for anybody to engage in? Without the engine in the hold there is no movement; without the man at the wheel, with his compass and his chart,

there may be movement, but there is no intelligent, there is no safe movement.

Power alone, whether it be the wind or whether it be the power of religious emotion, may drive people, but whither? The wind or the engine may drive a ship towards port,—if it does it is purely an accident,—but unless there is a man at the wheel, it may just as readily drive the ship wildly in this direction or that, against an iceberg or upon the rocks. While, if you do not have the engine in the hold that is capable of generating steam that can be turned into motion of the ship,—if you do not have that, the man at the wheel is powerless. He may look over the wide waste of waters about him, and know in which direction he ought to move, but he has no power; so he stands intelligent but helpless.

Which, then, is the more important, the emotional or the intellectual side of religion? Each is equally important with the other; and both are needed, if religion, like a ship at sea, is ever to pursue an intelligent course and arrive at any desirable haven.

A hundred and fifty years ago the people of this country were substantially at peace in their religious ideas. The surface of the popular belief was unruffled; there was substantial agreement in regard to the religious and theological ideas which were held. And there are some people to-day who are at peace, enjoying a very desirable quiet.

Fortunate are you, friends, if any of you are here to-day who have inherited a belief that gives you satisfaction and comfort, which satisfies your intellectual demands upon it,—if you make any,—which gives you peace. Fortunate are you to have been sheltered from the influx of new thoughts and restless questionings which have invaded the

larger part of the modern world. Fortunate, I say, are you if you are still possessed of this kind of peace. But, as you look out over the world, you must recognize the fact that the great majority of the people of this modern time of ours are not in possession of this peace; and perhaps, if you think about it a little carefully, you will question whether this kind of peace, which is simply quiescence, is, after all, the most desirable possession.

There is the peace of a pool that reflects the sun by day and the stars by night, the grasses and the trees upon its borders, and which has a certain amount of life in it for its surroundings; but it goes nowhere. There is another kind of peace,—the peace of the brook or of the mighty river, the peace of orderly movement, that carries boats, ships, the world's commerce, upon its bosom, and sails out towards the mighty ocean of God, that flows round and grasps the world.

There is the peace of a bird poised in the air with motionless pinion. There is the peace of the kingly eagle sweeping on his way in spite of storms and mighty winds, rejoicing in them in his power.

There is the peace of a ship at sea which, as Coleridge says in his "Ancient Mariner," floats

"As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean."

There is that more magnificent peace of one of our great liners, freighted, full of passengers, of life, of meaning, that laughs at the puny waves along its sides, and that treads its pathway across the ocean, laughing in the face of all the winds that buffet it. It seems to me that this life-peace, peace with motion, peace that goes somewhere, that has