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THE

POSSIBILITY

OF

SPIRITUAL SCIENCE.

A

*CRITICISM OF MATERIALISM AND EXCLUSIVE
PHENOMENALISM.*

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THE POSSIBILITY
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SPIRITUAL SCIENCE.

FOUR hundred years ago it would have been almost impossible to ask European thought this question; yet, had our inquiry been made, but one answer would have been elicited, — an unqualified affirmative. In the thought of Europe to-day the question has not only been asked, but, in some directions, it is considered that the final answer has already been given, — a negative as unqualified as would have been the mediæval affirmative. The great movement in which the intellectual attitude of the present has become, in large part, opposite that of the past is one of the most important events in human history. The discovery of the truth or error of the denial of our question is one of the most prominent objects demanding critical investigation.

It is the purpose of this essay to try to show that the denial of our question is erroneous. That I may do this, it shall be my endeavor only to indicate some facts which are an insurmountable obstacle to the logic by which spiritual

science is declared to be an impossibility. Previous to this, however, it may aid to a better understanding of the position of the essay to make a brief review of the history of the general movement to which I have alluded, so far as it has resulted in a negative answer to our inquiry.

Towards the close of the middle ages, the Roman Church held the thought of Europe in abject bondage. The word of the church was the ultimate law. The work of thought was simply to conform reason to ecclesiastical dogma. Probably there was never so complete a servitude of mind as in scholastic Europe. But, in the presence of this bondage, some fugitive Greeks, in Italy, gave an impulse to the study of the original writings of the ancients. The lately invented printing press was made to propagate the results of their work, and Europe began to be inspired with a new life. "Gradually a band of men, classically educated, opposed itself to the stereotyped, uncritical, and tasteless manner in which the sciences had been cultivated; new ideas came into circulation; and the free, universal, thinking spirit of antiquity was born afresh."

With this event, known as the Revival of Letters, the middle ages closed, and the modern enlightenment opened. Thought became conscious of its degradation. It rose against the assumptions of the church. It rebelled against scholasticism, and claimed the right to put itself above dogma. It turned away from its dreams to the world of realities, and, what was of the chief importance, began to give an honor to nature and experience, as free and enthusiastic as its association with Rome's arbitrary intellectualisms had been servile and dull.

At length, as the conception of nature was enlarged by the discovery of the American continent and the way by sea to the East Indies, and as it was magnified still more by Galileo's declaration of the revolution of the earth on its axis, by Kepler's discovery of the laws of planetary motion, and by the Copernican theory of the universe, the assertion of thought to the right of self-possession, and its direction to the facts of the external world and experience, were embed-

ied, and found expression, in two great minds, the English Lord Bacon and the French Descartes. From Bacon and Descartes proceeded, in clearly marked directions, the development of the liberated thought. It is sufficient for the present purpose to say of these directions, that, while both Bacon and Descartes were actuated by the one spirit which had set Europe free, while they both threw off the incubus of the irrational *dictum* of the founder of scholasticism, "I believe that I may understand," and accepted, as their inspiration, the assertion of self-conscious, independent thought, "I will understand that I may believe," the one directed his work "to an observing and an experimenting investigation of nature," and the other aimed at discovering, in the human consciousness, the principles of fundamental knowledge. The result has been, that, under the influence of the Baconian method, the immense body of physical knowledge and experiment known as the natural sciences has matured, and, guided by the method of Descartes, the great body of metaphysical knowledge and speculation known specially as philosophy.

As it is not within the province of this essay to give any account of the development and influence of metaphysical science, I will only make this allusion to the different directions the freed thought took, under the guidance of the two master minds, and will now confine attention to the effects of the progress of the method of which Lord Bacon was the originator and guide.

In Lord Bacon was embodied, to a pre-eminent degree, what is called the "modern spirit." He gave expression to the longing which actuated the emancipated mind of Europe, even more fully than his worthy co-laborer. Perhaps thought never felt poverty so truly as at the close of the middle ages. Released from bondage, and aroused from the lethargy of servitude, it became conscious of a great debasement and immeasurable want. What it had been compelled to call science it discovered to be almost empty of knowledge. The degrading influence of ecclesiastical dogmatism had made its work almost barren of genuine gain. So that,

once freed from ecclesiasticism and scholastic dreams, it rapidly became hostile to both, and invested the neglected facts of nature and experience with an exalted honor. As Lord Bacon made nature and experience the sole spheres of knowledge, and as he compelled the mind to approach these lordly realms with the humility of the spirit of the little child, he gave the most satisfactory expression to the want of the liberated thought. Dr. Schwegler says, "Bacon directed anew the observation and reflection of his contemporaries to actual fact, proximately to nature; he raised experience, which hitherto had been only a matter of chance, into a separate and independent object of thought, and he awoke a general consciousness of its indispensable necessity. To have established the principles of empirical science, a thinking exploration of nature, this is his merit." It is to Lord Bacon, therefore, that we trace the beginning of the wonderful growth of the natural sciences during the past two hundred years, and it is to the influence of his method, sustained and increased by the necessities for physical discovery and invention which the opening up of the world, by international commerce and the settlement of America, have caused, that we must attribute their present dominant interest and importance. Meet a double demand, the want of the freed thought of Europe for real knowledge and the necessities of an extending civilization, the effects of the Baconian method have prominent place to-day in every department of European and American life.

But, while this fact is worthy of a cordial approval, in some respects, it is open to criticism. While every one must admit that the allegiance of thought to the method of Lord Bacon has given humanity a farther advance, and promoted a greater welfare in some directions than ever before, yet it is evident, to many who have studied the history of the past two centuries, that the Baconian induction has, so far, had a tendency to cause thought to neglect other directions where mankind can make a still farther advance and gain a still better welfare. Undoubtedly the animating idea of Lord Bacon, that it is the chief aim of thought to minister

to the physical well-being of man, was conceived in a noble spirit, and, certainly, it was a natural consequence of intellectual reaction against ecclesiastical usurpation, to which the Baconian method gave the best expression; but, undoubtedly, it is just as true that there is another well-being of man than the physical, and certainly this as well as the former must be served. The errors of the middle ages were not wholly unmixed errors; and the rebellion of thought against scholasticism was not against wholly unreal dogmas. Beneath the errors of the church there were eternal truths, and the dreams of scholastics were in large part of imperishable realities. The self-consciousness which observes nature and measures experience is as worthy and real an object of study as the nature which ministers to physical need and pleasure. And, because the emancipated thought sought the truths of the material world almost wholly, and because Lord Bacon did not give the inner consciousness the honor he bestowed upon the outer nature, the heroic effort of the popular mind and the noble impulse of its chief were at fault, and to these must be traced, not only two centuries of grand achievement in natural science and mechanical art, but, also, two centuries of an increasing struggle of the human soul against a tendency to merge the observing self in the nature it observes, or to deny to self any knowledge that should be other than merely phenomenal; in other words, the prevalence, in thought, of the Baconian method has resulted, not only in a magnificent array of the physical sciences and the useful arts, but also in the dogmatisms of materialism or an exclusive phenomenalism. Consider briefly some of the results at which thought, under the guidance of the Baconian method, has arrived.

The extreme culmination of this method, opposed, we know, to the thought of Lord Bacon personally, yet a legitimate outcome of the exclusive use of his induction, is materialism. How it was reached it is needless here to show at length. It will be sufficient, for the present purpose, to say that in one direction the work of the English philosopher was taken up by Locke, whose logic was accepted by Condillac, in France, and,

through him, carried forward until the French "Encyclopaedia," and Baron d'Holbach's "System of Nature," were published, when the extreme word of a wholly natural philosophy was spoken, and a coarse materialism affronted thought. As expressed in France, at the close of the last century, it professed to have discovered that there is but one substance in existence, and that that substance is active matter. It asserted that nature alone is the field of research. It declared that man is simply a perishable mass of organization; that his "mind is but the development of his sensations," and that his highest life consists in serving self-interest, and ministering to self-gratification. It also declared that God is but "the diseased fiction of an unenlightened and enthusiastic age." In England, also, materialism has had bold advocates, and at present it is, perhaps, most fully expressed by some German thinkers, whose conclusions, while not so grossly antagonistic to spiritual truth as those of their French associates, are yet agreed with them in this, that the investigations of nature and experience discover the universe to be but the result of the activity of one material substance.

The more moderate and the more prevalent result of the method of Lord Bacon is what may be called an exclusive phenomenalism. I give this name to those intellectual movements which confine themselves to the examination of the phenomena in a professed endeavor to discover only their mutual relations and the laws by which such phenomena exist. Unlike materialism, exclusive phenomenalism does not assume to be a theory of the universe, nor does it actually deny the universe to be the work of a super-material Being. The claim it makes is, simply, that there can be no knowledge except of the changing surfaces of things; that phenomena do not discover to any extent the nature of the Reality which manifests them.

Among the prominent expressions of exclusive phenomenalism are the philosophy of Mr. Herbert Spencer, and a certain indefinite, unsystematized, philosophy (if it may be so named), especially represented by no one mind, but held by some religious thinkers who are students of the results of

the Baconian method. The philosophy of Mr. Spencer declares that phenomena reveal the existence of Power behind them, but that the nature of this Power is utterly inscrutable. The *quasi* philosophy of which I have spoken grants to the truths of physical science the certainty which is derived from experiment. It calls this "science." To the truths of religion it allows only the probability arising from an undemonstrable assurance. This it calls "faith." These philosophies, the one endorsed by most of the leading scientists of England and our own country, the other prevalent in some directions among theologians, are, from their intimate association with modern life, special objects for criticism.

I have now made a brief review of the history of that change in the attitude of thought which has placed it in large measure, to-day, opposite the position it occupied, as a whole, four hundred years ago, and have indicated some of the results of the development of the Baconian induction. In these results, as said before, the tendency has been to merge the observing self in the nature it observes, or to deny to self any knowledge except that which is merely phenomenal; in other words, the Baconian principles have thus far tended to push thought either into materialism or an exclusive phenomenalism.

As an evidence of how wide-spread these tendencies of the method of Lord Bacon are, I will call attention, by way of parenthesis, to the present popular estimate of the word "science," which, literally, means "knowledge" of any kind, and which, technically, means, "knowledge systematized." This word, by general consent, seems to be given over to the realm of physical knowledge, as if no other knowledge were possible. The present literature almost invariably refers to physical science without the qualifying adjective. The question asked at the opening of this essay is thus denied by a popular suffrage which elects physical knowledge as the only "science." Mr. James Martineau makes these comments on the writings of Mr. Baden Powell, who, as much as any, may be regarded as a representative of the latter of the expressions of exclusive phenomenalism to which I referred;

"Mr. Powell intended, we are sure, to be not less loyal to his Christian Theism than he was to his Inductive philosophy. When, however, after volumes of proof that the universe discloses nothing but immutable law and material development, so orderly, indeed, as to bespeak Thought, but so inexorable as to be silent of Character, after treating the supernatural as intrinsically incognizable, and the moral and spiritual as entirely out of relation to the rational faculty, he briefly relé-gates us to "faith" for our grounds of religious conviction, we certainly feel that the door is rather rudely slammed in the face of an inquiry, and that we are turned out of the select society of the philosophers who know, to take our place among the plebs who believe."

But to show that there is no satisfactory reason for our exclusion from any knowledge except of material things, or that which is merely phenomenal, I propose now to indicate some facts which neither materialism, nor an exclusive phenomenalism, can explain. If the existence of such facts can be proven, then, for the ease of distinction, naming them by the old word "spiritual," as a practical antithesis of "physical," the denial of the question of this essay is itself denied, and spiritual science is possible.

Preparatory to a consideration of this part of the subject, let the reader endeavor, as far as possible, to free his mind from the prejudices which the present importance of the physical sciences may have aroused in it. Let him remember that the present dominant influence of the study of nature is the result, first, of the reaction of thought from its bondage in the middle ages, and, second, of the necessity pressing upon it to satisfy the physical needs of mankind produced by the opening up of the world. Let no one forget, that, though four hundred years ago thought was confined to the inner consciousness, its work was almost useless, simply because it had no freedom of action, and because the outer nature, by which to aid in verifying or correcting its conclusions, was ignored. Let the wonderful material progress of the past two centuries be estimated at its full measure; let it be remembered that the skies and the earth have been yielding

man great knowledge and wealth; that two material agents alone, steam and electricity, have been making him physically more prosperous than almost all his previous possessions; that under the growth of the natural sciences the world is becoming a new earth; that the future promises even a more wonderful natural ministry to human prosperity than the past,—but let it be also remembered, that the marvelous revelations of nature have tended to fascinate thought; that the unvarying confirmations of the perfect movements of physical law, the increasing discoveries of the relativity of knowledge, the contemplation of the treasures revealed by the telescope, microscope, retort, scalpel, and like instruments, have so absorbed thought that oftentimes man has seemed to be utterly forgetful that he is the observing consciousness of an unconscious world. So, taking the independent position characteristic of the modern spirit, and free as possible from the bias which the results of the Baconian induction has made in almost every department of the life of to-day, let the reader give the question of this essay his consideration.

The first position we will take is one to which I have already alluded, the old one which has always been asserted by the logic of common sense; namely, that every human being is conscious of two facts: first, that himself exists, and, second, that he is surrounded by something which is not himself. It cannot be disputed, that, as soon as we know anything, we not only know that there is a great world about us, but we know also that we are existences other than the surrounding world. Our first knowledge is always the *double* knowledge of self and not-self, of two unquestionable realities. This being true, it cannot be disputed that both these facts claim attention. Perpetually in the presence of our experience of the outer nature the inner consciousness appears, so that neither can be justly studied to the exclusion of the other. It becomes necessary, then, to discover what truth is presented by both consciousness and experience. Between self and the external world are the senses. Between the consciousness of self and self there is no barrier.

We know that we exist simply because we know it. Our knowledge of the nature of self is limited, but its limitations are the effects of the experience of the external world upon us, and our ability to separate between the facts of experience and the truths of consciousness. Self-knowledge, when gained, is thus a more certain knowledge than knowledge of not-self. It is an immediate knowledge, while knowledge of the outer world comes through the media of the senses.

When, therefore, we study ourselves for knowledge of ourselves, and observe that we constantly perform the act called *thinking*, we know that we think simply because we think. We are conscious that self is a thinking being. This fact, first, I offer as an insurmountable obstacle in the way both of the materialist and what I have termed the exclusive phenomenalist.

Certainly materialism, as expressed in France and as it is now understood, claims that there is but one substance in the universe, and that that substance is active matter. If this were true, thinking then would be either an effect or a form of material energy, and one of two alternatives would have to be accepted,—either that thought is produced by that which does no thinking, or material energy must in essence be all that thought is. But, as it is a truism that out of an absolute non-existence an absolute some-existence cannot come, so out of only active matter, according to every accepted definition of matter, *purposing* intelligence could not arise. If, on the other hand, thought be potential in matter, matter is no more matter, and materialism has committed logical self-destruction. Materialism to make its claim valid must prove that matter, possessing only *purposeless* force, has produced the universe as it is, with its manifold forms of life, vegetable and animal and human, with human society, state, and church. A complete materialism, however, has never been able to establish itself for any length of time. Its worst foes are those of its own household. Its own logic is the most deadly weapon raised against it.

The presence of thought in man is also an insurmountable obstacle to an exclusive phenomenalism. If self thinks self

does not *appear* to think it thinks, self is, therefore, *at least*, a thinking being. We know directly, we are conscious that this fact is true of ourselves: Thought may not indicate all that we are, but, as far as it indicates anything, it reveals the nature of the reality we call self. This truth rests upon an unquestionable basis. As thinking realities, we are, in essence, immaterial beings. If this declaration is confronted with evidence of the intimate relations of brain and thought, if it be shown that race, climate, food, and the like, produce varying physical organisms and mental individualities, yet, when the whole exhibit is made, the immaterial thought within these peculiarities remains as the evidence of the immaterial self.

But, not attempting to give the truth of man's immaterial nature a more extended proof here, observe a farther manifestation self makes to consciousness, as evidenced in our own persons, and as testified to in man's history. It is the *conviction* that over self and all else there is Supreme Existence. It does not suffice to say, in explanation of this conviction, that it is an inference from consciousness of the existence of self and knowledge of the external world. Unless it be native in consciousness, no finite existence or limited education can place it there. It is the conviction of the Infinite and the Absolute,—a conviction which, from its quality, it would be impossible by any amount of finite proof to produce. It is simply present in consciousness, and compels recognition. This fact is another insurmountable obstacle in the way both of materialism and an exclusive phenomenalism.

Materialism cannot account for it, for it emphasizes the infinite superiority of this Existence to self. And, as we know that self as a thinking being is necessarily an immaterial being, it follows invariably that what supremely transcends self must also be *at least* an Immaterial Being. Nor can an exclusive phenomenalism confront this conviction better than materialism. It is true that Mr. Herbert Spencer,*

* First Principles, p. 98. I refer the reader to Mr. Spencer's chapter on the Relativity of Knowledge, First Principles, p. 87, for his argument in full concerning the positive consciousness of the absolute.

whom I have selected as the most prominent representative of an exclusively phenomenal philosophy, says, "Its positive existence [that of the Absolute] is a necessary datum of consciousness; so long as consciousness continues, we cannot for an instant rid it of this datum; and thus the belief which this datum constitutes has a higher warrant than any other whatever." In saying this, however, Mr. Spencer does not occupy his position as an exclusive phenomenalist. The Absolute can be no phenomenon. It is *the Reality*. Mr. Spencer so names it; and it does not matter whether we know it in what he calls "the strict sense of knowing, or not." We are conscious of it, and consciousness, he admits, is our source of greatest certainty.

But, what specially concerns us, is the question, "Whether any knowledge of the nature of this Reality is possible?" This question introduces Mr. Spencer as the representative of an exclusive phenomenism. As an *a priori* thinker, he posits the Reality of the universe as the most certain of existences; but as an *a posteriori* thinker, he asserts that this "Reality is *utterly inscrutable* in nature."

This, then, is the answer one of the most prominent and most highly cultured English philosophers of the present day makes to our most momentous inquiry. What wonder, then, that we feel a sense of loneliness and desolation as, out of respect to the writer, we at first contemplate the probability of his reply! For, if the Reality of which we are by nature conscious, and which Mr. Spencer so nobly asserts, be *utterly inscrutable*, we cannot know, even in the least part, the truths the deepest human longings have from time unrecorded most wished to know. We move through a wholly phantasmal existence. The ultimate Reality becomes either an eternal deception in the phenomena it produces, or a captive imprisoned forever in its works. True, Mr. Huxley,* who is in accord with Mr. Spencer, speaks of "worship at the altar of the Unknown and Unknowable," and Mr. Darwin,† also

* Lay Sermons, p. 16.

† Descent of Man, Vol. I., p. 68.

in sympathy with Mr. Spencer, defines religion as "love, complete submission to an exalted and mysterious superior, a strong sense of dependence, fear, reverence, gratitude, hope for the future," &c., — yet, how can we worship at the altar of an utter Unknown and Unknowable? and, if exclusive phenomenalism be true, how can we accept Mr. Darwin's definition of religion? As Mr. Mivart* says, it is "'love' for that of which we can by no possibility know anything whatever, and to which we may as reasonably attribute hideousness and all vileness as beauty and goodness! 'Dependence' on that of which treachery and mendacity may be as much characteristics as are faithfulness and truth! 'Reverence' for an entity, whose qualities, if any, may resemble as much all we despise as all we esteem, and which, for all we know, may be indebted to *our faculties* for any recognition of its existence at all! 'Gratitude' to that which we have not the faintest reason to suppose ever willingly did anything for us or ever will! 'Hope' in what we have no right whatever to believe may not, with equal justice, be a legitimate cause for despair as pitiless, inexorable, and unfeeling, if capable of any sort of intelligence whatever!

"This is no exaggeration. Every word here put down is *strictly accurate*; for, if that which underlies all things is to us the Unknowable, then there can be no reason to predicate of it any one character rather than its opposite."

But Mr. Spencer, even in his argument for the unknowableness of the Ultimate Reality, shows his special position to be untenable. That this Reality should be *utterly* inscrutable, no quality or attribute whatever should be predicated of it; yet when Mr. Spencer declares that "we cannot think at all about the impressions the external world makes upon us without thinking of them as caused," and in another place adds, "we are obliged to regard every phenomenon as a manifestation of some Power by which we are acted upon," he becomes inconsistent with his most prominent assertion, in then concluding that effects proceed from an Ultimate

* Contemporary Reviews, January, 1872, p. 187.

Cause, or that force in nature is an evidence of an Absolute Power behind nature. To be consistent, he has no right to qualify the Supreme Existence in any way. The fact of Supreme Existence is posited by the consciousness. The attribute of cause or power must be added to it from the study of phenomena. In this respect, at least, phenomena have been accepted by Mr. Spencer as an interpretation of the Noumenon, and, so far, at least, exclusive phenomenalism is self-denied. But, in utter opposition to this self-denial, in the face of his declaration that the Supreme Reality is the Ultimate, Omnipotent, and Omnipresent Cause, Mr. Spencer continually asserts that the Supreme Reality is *utterly inscrutable*. Now I insist that by the same process with which the professedly exclusive phenomenalist has confirmed the consciousness of the Supreme Existence, and qualified it as Omnipresent Power, we can learn *more and more* of the nature of this Existence.

As illustrations of my meaning ; studying the phenomena crowding upon attention, there is nothing more clearly seen than that, so far as we know, countless *inorganic forms* exist subject to an exact order, changing conformably to invariable laws. These forms, which in part compose what has been called the material universe, and whose changes are directed by what are called the laws of matter, have made, through the modern necessities for physical discovery and mechanical invention, special claim to the work of thought. They are the source of the vast body of the classification and generalization of phenomena by which mind has felt justified in writing a history of nature's past, and prophecying its future. Geology, astronomy, chemistry, and the like, have discovered the mode of the formation of planets and stars, the laws of their motion, the qualities and relations of the material elements. They also tell us towards what the direction in nature is leading it. They say they have traced the stars from vapory nebulae, through flaming spirals, into incandescent suns and worlds. They show us how rocks, crystals, and earths came into being. They catalogue the elements that are aflame in the light of the stars, and describe, in the circling

of a storm on the earth, the paths of the winds and the places of special peril. Electricity, magnetism, gravitation, heat, and light have revealed the fact that they act in obedience to perfect order. But if, as Mr. Spencer says, "we are obliged to regard every phenomenon as the manifestation of some power," and if, as is self-evident, that which is manifested must proceed out of that which manifests, certainly a Power which manifests a perfect order must itself be, *at least*, orderly. In the material universe then, where we find perfect law and order, the Supreme Power must act by law and order. But law implies at least what we call thought, and, so we reason, a source of law must be *at least* what we call intelligent. How any one can insist that the Power of the universe is utterly inscrutable when all else he says is based upon the truth that this Power works in material forms by perfect law, is inexplicable, unless, dazzled by a favorite theory, he is blinded to the over-shining light.

Rising above the realm of inorganic forms into the world of *organisms*, the truth which appears to be so sufficiently proved, on a lower plane, that it might rest there, becomes still clearer. The organic world, which we discover rises by ascending degrees of excellence from the lowest vegetal organism to the most complete animal physiology, shows to a pre-eminent degree the possession of intelligence in the Supreme Power; and in this fact we discover even more than intelligence. The favorite doctrine of physical science, the theory of evolution, would not exist were it not animated by the truth that the process of organisms is a gradual development of life from the incomplete to the more complete, from the imperfect to the more perfect. The word which more than any other seems to inspire the study of physical phenomena is "progress;" and life, which Mr. Spencer defines as the "continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations," is, upon his own showing, constantly rising higher towards the attainment of a perfect equilibrium. As no one will question that the process of organisms is the work of the Supreme Reality, the work is certainly what in our vocabulary we call wise. The Absolute Reality, there-

fore, must *at least* possess what we call wisdom. The illustrations of this truth are numberless. All the discoveries of plant structure and growth, the sciences of the multitudinous forms of mollusk, fish, insect, bird, reptile, and mammal life, and the like, rise one above the other, a gloriously laid living temple, built by a Master Architect. Intelligence and wisdom are visible everywhere.

But it is not the purpose of this essay to more than indicate this truth. My object is only to show that the same process which discovers evidence of power in the Existence behind nature must, to be logically consistent, recognize other attributes of this Existence. By Mr. Spencer's own reasoning, we may claim to know already that there is over the universe a Supreme, Real, Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Intelligent, and Wise Cause.

But other than the outer nature are *ourselves*. We are facts as real as any of the external world. We are thinking beings, as much the work of the Supreme Power, and as worthy objects of our own study, as any part of the array of material forms and vital evolution surrounding us. We are conscious of the Supreme Existence. We have seen evidences in the physical creation that this Existence is what we would call an Intelligent and Wise Power. Now, when we rise from the world of matter and inferior life into that of ourselves, we perceive only clearer evidences of the truths already discovered. History shows, that, from the lowest barbarisms, man has been striving after and continually approaching the enlightenment with which this century is crowning him. Degree by degree he has been raised from one plane of excellence to a higher. And since we, the glory of whose existence is intelligence and purpose, are as much the creatures of the Supreme Being as the crystal or plant, surely the Creator must at least be our peer.

But, what is of chief moment, there are evidences of more than even intelligence and wisdom in us. When we examine consciousness, we find a something we do not discover in the outer nature. We call it the moral sense. This is a fact which cannot with justice be set aside. It is an unavoidable

phenomenon which self manifests in consciousness even more certain than the sensations which reach us from the external world. It is the instinct of right and wrong, the native conviction of personal responsibility. It is this that makes human history upon one page so sorrowful, sinful, and tragic, and on another so joyous, pure, and sublime. The material organization of man is the most refined and complex of organisms. But back of all anatomy there is that for which anatomical processes can give no reasons, and which physical law cannot control. Human history is oftentimes heroic where the physical instincts would have made it disgraceful. We hear of prophets battling for truth when truth leads them to dishonor and poverty. We behold seers looking forward to the universal reign of purity and love. We see hosts of martyrs, for all degrees of noble aims, going in triumph to the stake and cross, believing in an honor and joy made perfect through shame and suffering. And, more than these, the repentance of the sinful, the remorse and despair of the guilty, as the antitheses of the aspirations and peace of the holy, defy the efforts of the operator's microscope and knife. The moral sense declares that over all our life there must be an Absolute Morality. Thus, in the presence of our own hearts and the history of human kind, as much facts as any truths of nature and natural history, we cannot help declaring that in the Supreme Power there is *at least* a good as pure as our best, a real that at least equals our ideal, a truth, a beauty, and a love, which must at least be as noble as the truth, beauty, and love which inspire us. Over us, who are thinking persons endowed with a moral consciousness, having sublime intuitions and ideals, there must be at least a Supreme Power who perfectly realizes our loftiest conception or imagining. If we have an instinctive faith there must be the possibility of satisfying it. If we long for perfection, for an absolute holiness and love, there must be as great a Holy and Loving Reality as our prayers seek. If we feel in ourselves the instinct of an imperishable life, and if in all ages all races of mankind declare immortality, though widely separated and unknown to each other, certainly there is an

Imperishable Life somewhere, and we may reasonably hope that man's personal consciousness of it assures him of personal consciousness in it.

Having now passed rapidly through some of the truths of both consciousness and experience, and indicated facts which cannot be accounted for by a materialistic or exclusively phenomenal hypothesis, I will here rest my essay, adding only, that I think it is evident, from an impartial study of ourselves and the world around us, that we can know that which is immaterial and real as well as that which is material and phenomenal. Spiritual science, using the word "spiritual" as before indicated, is, therefore, possible. Religion then is possibly more than mere "faith." Our aspirations after Deity are not futile endeavors to know an utter Unknowable. We may rest with confidence upon our intuitions. We can be loyal to conscience as the witness of a real law of Right. We can trust in goodness as a fact proceeding from an eternal Good. We can obey truth as the word of an absolutely True. As human beings seeking a Divine Being, we do not seek an utter mystery, but at least a Person who is real as we are. Physical science is useful, and is an incalculable aid to the increase of material comfort and wealth. As the instrument to accomplish these things, it should be carefully nurtured; but when it is permitted to overrule human life, when we allow it to put unconscious Matter on the throne of the universe, or to crown there an utter Unknowable, we are faithless to ourselves, and it is our duty to cherish our nobler personality, giving only Him whose right it is to reign, and those revelations which meet our irrepressible longings and endorse our immortal hopes, our reverent homage and allegiance. It should never be forgotten that above all physical truth and use, worthy as are our occupations in them, our true dignity as human creatures consists in looking "at the spiritual and immortal side of our being, and rising evermore above time and sense to that which transcends time and sense and remains where these leave us forever."