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PANTHEISM AND COSMIC EMOTION

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BY

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PANTHEISM, AND COSMIC EMOTION.

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OUTSIDE the borders of the orthodox theologies—indeed to some extent within them—three great ideas seem to hold men's thoughts: the modernised idea of a single and simple Godhead, the metaphysical idea of Divine Majesty in the Universe, the historical idea of human dignity and progress—Theism—Pantheism—Humanity.

I do not come to speak of the first or the last of these. I do not come to criticise the general conception of Theism; nor to enlarge on the general conception of Humanity. My purpose is simply to examine on general grounds of religion and morality, the claims of Pantheism to be an adequate basis of our lives, the final issue of the mighty Assize of religions, which this generation and the next are destined to try out.

The claims of Pantheism are not small. It is a vague term; its field is indefinite; its formulas curiously elastic. It is the faith of idealists everywhere: of the poets, of the metaphysicians, of the

enthusiasts. It has so many forms, and so few formulas, that it gathers round it sympathies everywhere ; and seems to illustrate everything, even when it explains nothing. A generation ago, it could be assigned only to a poet, or a philosopher here and there. Pantheism would seem to have no hold on the public at all. But then, a generation ago, the fountains of the great deep of orthodoxy had only begun to break. It is otherwise now. Now, the problems of orthodoxy ; of Theism ; the very bases of Creation, Providence, and Judgment, are being debated in the market-places and the street ; the great dilemma of Infinite goodness with Omnipotent power, making and ruling the world we know and see to-day, is exercising the thoughts of men, and women, even of children, and the answers are very various, and sometimes obscure. And thus, Pantheism, in the widest sense, is become the great halting-place between the devotion to God and the devotion to humanity.

Not Pantheism in any precise form ; not as a philosophical doctrine, not as a creed that can be stated, often not consciously held at all. We may include under the somewhat technical term Pantheism *all* those types of thought, and conscious or unconscious tendencies of thought, which have this common sign—that they find the ultimate and dominant idea in

some divine Mystery of the Universe, in the sense of Beauty and Power of Nature, in the immensity of the sum of Life and Matter, it may be in a pious trust in the general good of all things, be the things human and moral, or be they physical and unconscious.

Now Pantheism in this sense is a very wide-spread frame of thought. Many a subtle intelligence, shrinking from the logical difficulties of an Omnipotent Providence, seeks in the sum of all things that type of Beauty and universality which it can no longer gather from the Bible. Many a sympathetic heart that would feel pain in frankly rejecting the possibility of religious hopes, and yet finds the religious hope of Humanity too definite, earthly, and prosaic for its ideal, falls back on some half-uttered vision of Beauty, Goodness, Mystery—a vision which admits nothing so formal as a Person, and nothing logical enough to make a proposition. Some of the best brains and hearts float in this dream; impatient of Theism; indifferent to Humanity: cherishing in their souls this transcendental possibility of a something beyond, that is neither some *one* nor any actual thing at all: merely a promise of Good, or Fair.

There are all kinds of degrees and modes in this tendency we call Pantheism, from the artist's thirst for nature, to the thinker's rest in the Unity of Law,

and so on to the practical man's respect for external force, and the mystical theologian's habit of seeing God in everything and everything in God. These are, no doubt, very different types of mind ; but they agree in this :—they all find not only a religious value to the human spirit in the mystery and majesty of the World without ; but the Supreme Power and Truth. The physical beauty of a sunset touches some ; the range of physical law touches others ; these are the happy natures of constitutional optimism ; those are the mystics to whom the definite is the vulgar and the logical is the misleading. All are alike in this, that they yearn to pass far beyond the range and realm of Man ; and yet they will not face the Person of a living God.

We are all familiar with that fine temper—man's love for the unfathomable glories of the scene around him. How many a sensitive nature has gazed deeper and deeper into the firmament of stars, till the imagination seemed, like the watchman on the halls of Agamemnon at Mycenæ, to see new lights burst out ; as if worlds were being born unto worlds in myriads. Then the exhausted spirit feels almost on the threshold of immensity ; and half believes that each instant the heavens are about to break open to their highest, and these human eyes are about to behold the reality of the Unseen. We have all known that

moment ; but the veil has never been parted, and we have lain down with aching eyes and a delicious void in our hearts : feeling that there is something, we know not what in Space ; but that *we* are as far off from it as ever. And the next morning we go to work and the Universe fades away in the noontide light, and the clear voice of our children, and the emergencies of our daily anxieties, the care of our fortunes, or our public duties, move us with ten times the force and reality of the Milky Way.

Heaven, Earth, Sea—we feel the power of them all, and of all that is within them : the sun-rising and the sun-setting, the cloud battles with their serried ranks and marshalled battalions ; flowers, trees, and streams ; and the roll of the Atlantic on a western headland of ironstone, and the snowy solitude of an Alpine peak, and all that makes the English poetry of the nineteenth century inexhaustibly rich in its insight into nature. We all know the power of these things over the human heart and mind. Who denies it ; who doubts it ; who would weaken it ? It is in one sense a peculiar possession of our race and of our age. Words fail me when I seek to state it. I doubt to which of our great poets of Nature to turn for help—to Shelley, the true poet of Pantheism, or to Wordsworth, the poet of Nature as related to Man ? Turn to Shelley, who said :—

The awful shadow of some unseen Power
 Floats tho' unseen amongst us ; visiting
 This various world with an inconstant wing,
 As summer winds that creep from flower to flower ;
 Like moonbeams that behind some piny mountain shower,
 It visits with inconstant glance
 Some human heart and countenance ;
 Like hues and harmonies of evening,
 Like clouds in starlight widely spread,
 Like memory of music fled,
 Like aught that for its grace may be
 Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery.

I know no passage which better expresses the religious value of Nature than these words of the Recluse :—

And I have felt

A presence that disturbs me with the joy
 Of elevated thoughts : a sense sublime
 Of something far more deeply interfused,
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
 And the round ocean and the living air,
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :
 A motion and a spirit, that impels
 All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
 And rolls through all things.

Therefore am I still

A lover of the meadows and the woods
 And mountains ; and of all that we behold
 From this green earth ; of all the mighty world
 Of eye and ear ; both what they half create,
 And what perceive ; well pleased to recognise
 In nature and the language of the sense,
 The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
 The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
 Of all my moral being.

This is poetry. Is it religion? It is exquisitely touching and inspiring to the spirit. Is it enough to guide lives, to curb passions, to give light to despair, unconquering force to societies, nations, races? Can it do what the law of Moses did, or the law of Christ? because, if it cannot do this, it is not religion.

Certainly it is poetry, and more than poetry; it is fresh and vital truth, in the form of immortal art. No one of us would willingly let die a hope of it, or lose a verse from that magnificent Psalter of Nature, which, from Homer to Walter Scott, is one of the best gifts that genius has bestowed on Man. Why need we lose it; why need we cease to cherish it and extend its power? I take that passion for Nature, that worship of Nature, in all its forms and range, that sympathy with all the inner teaching of Nature, that Cosmic Emotion that Wordsworth called in the rhapsody of joy, 'the soul of my moral being'—and I ask, is that enough?

Poetry is one thing. Science, Action, Life, Religion, are far other—all much wider, and more continuous. Poetry is but one mode of Art, and Art is but *one* side of *one* of the elements of Human Nature. Poets are not (for all that some people say) the guides of life; their business is to beautify life. And after all, this Worship of Nature, this poetry of Pantheism, is

but one side even of Poetry, and not its grandest. No poets have surpassed in this field the greatest in the ancient and in the modern world: Homer the poet of the sea, Shakespeare the poet of the air: he who saw the floor of heaven thick inlaid with patines of bright gold. And yet in Homer as in Shakespeare the worship of Nature holds but a subordinate place. To these great brains the folds of many-fountained Ida, the waste of hoary brine, the moonlight sleeping on the bank, the morn walking over the dew of some high eastern hill—these are but the frame wherein are set their pictures of men, and women, and societies; of passions, sufferings, character; of hope, despair, love, devotion.

Poetry, taken as a whole, presents us with an image of Man, not of Nature; the drama of real life, not a dream of the Universe. And if the starry night is beautiful, it may be nothing to the smile of a child. One speech of Prometheus, or of Hamlet, or Faust, teaches us more than ten thousand sunsets.

And this poetic idealisation of Nature is a choice of certain facts for the sake of their beauty and their majesty. It deliberately excludes myriads of other facts that are not beautiful, and yet are very real and act potently on us. Deep is our debt to the magicians who have shown us how to see the world radiant and harmonious. It is an ideal, infinitely precious and

invigorating. But it is not the real truth, or rather not the whole truth—far from it. The world is not all radiant and harmonious; it is often savage and chaotic. In thought we can see only the bright, but in hard fact we are brought face to face with the dark side. Waste, ruin, conflict, rot, are about us everywhere. If tornadoes, earthquakes, glacier epochs, are not very frequent, there is everywhere decay, dissolution, waste, every hour and in every pore of the vast Cosmos. See Nature at its richest on the slopes of some Andes or Himalayas where a first glance shows us one vision of delight and peace. We gaze more steadily, we see how animal, and vegetable, and inorganic life are at war, tearing each the other: every leaf holds its destructive insect, every tree is a scene of torture, combat, death, everything preys on everything; animals, storms, suns, and snows waste the flower and the herb; climate tortures to death the living world, and the inanimate world is wasted by the animate, or by its own pent-up forces. We need as little think this earth all beauty as think it all horror. It is made up of loveliness and ghastliness; of harmony and chaos; of agony, joy; life, death. The nature-worshippers are blind and deaf to the waste and the shrieks which meet the seeker after truth.

And if beauty and harmony are ascendant in these spots of earth which we fill, are they in the South

Pole, and the North Pole, and the depths of the Atlantic and Pacific ; or in the extreme icy heavens, and in the fiery whirlwinds of the Sun, and in those regions of Space where they tell us Suns explode and disappear, annihilating whole solar systems at once? The Moon of the poets is an image of peace and tenderness ; but the Moon of science makes the imagination faint with the sense of a lifeless, motionless, voiceless, sightless solitude. What a mass is there in Nature that is appalling, almost maddening to man, if we coolly resolve to look at all the facts, as facts !

Nay, has this wandering speck of dust, that we call ours, one of the motes that people the sun systems, has it always been beautiful? Parts of it now are. But in the infinite ages of geologic time, even in the vast glacier epochs, and the drift, and the like, or when this island lay drenched in a monotonous ooze—was beauty, or what man thinks beauty, the rule then? The flowers, the forests, the plantations, the meadows, the uplands waving with corn and poppies, are the work of man. The earth was a grisly wilderness till man appeared ; and it had but patches of beauty here and there, until after man had conquered it. Man made the country as much as he made the town ; the one out of organic, the other out of inorganic materials.

And what is beauty, and harmony, and majesty in Nature? Nothing but what Man sees in it and feels in it. It is beautiful to us; it has a relation to our lives and our nature. Absolutely, it may be a wilderness or a chaos. The poets indeed are the true authors of the beauty and order of Nature; for they see it by the eye of genius. And they only see it. Coldly, literally, examined, beauty and horror, order and disorder seem to wage an equal and eternal war. Morally, intellectually, truly, Man stands face to face with Nature—not her inferior, not her equal, but her superior, like the poet's last man confronting the Sun in death. The laws of Nature are the ideas whereby Man has arranged the phenomena offered to his senses; the beauty of Nature is the joy whereby he grasps the relations of his environment to his own being. When we think we worship Nature, we are really worshipping Homer and Shakespeare, Wordsworth and Shelley, Byron and Scott. As Comte said in a bold but not irreverent moment—the Heavens declare the glory of Galileo and Kepler and Newton; for the ceaseless spectacle of mysterious movement they present recalls to us the minds which first saw unity and law therein.

There is, as we say, another and a far deeper spirit of Pantheism, more subtle and more philosophical than any Nature worship, than this love of the beauty

and life in the world. It has forms infinite, that cannot be numbered : the sense of immensity in the sum of things-not-ourselves : the sense of stupendous Order around us, of convoluted Life around us, or Force around us : or it may be a trust that things are tending towards good around us : or that intoxication with the fumes of Godhead reduced to vapour which marked the metaphysical Pantheism of Spinoza. There are some whose faith is sustained on even more ethereal food ; who idealise the Universe as such, the Good, the Beautiful, the True.

What are all these, if we take them to be quite independent of God, and yet outside of and sovereign over Man ? I know what is meant by the Power and Goodness of an Almighty Creator ; I know what is meant by the genius, and patience, and sympathy of Man. But what is the All, or the Good, or the True, or the Beautiful ? What is the Anima Mundi, if it is neither God nor Man, neither animate nor inanimate, but both or neither ? And what is the Eternal that makes for righteousness, if only Philistines can take it to be Providence ? If God and Universe are identical expressions, we had better drop one or other. If the 'Universal Mind' is nothing so grossly anthropomorphic as the old idea of God, but really is the cause of all things and is indeed all things, if being and not being are identical and the identity of being

consists in its being the union of two contradictories, —let us, in the name of sense, get rid of these big vague words, and having got rid of God as a term of a narrow dogmatism, and Mind and Soul, as a verbal spiritualism, let us say simply Things, and have the courage of our opinions, and boldly profess as our creed ‘I believe in nothing except in Things in general.’

For, what this metaphysical Pantheism gains in breadth and philosophic subtlety over the mere poet’s worship of Nature, it loses in distinctness, even in meaning, till it becomes a phrase, with as little reality in it as the ‘Supreme’ of the latest school of unutterables. The ‘All’ is a very big thing, but why am I to fall down before it? The Good is very precious, but good for what, to whom? Cobras and mosquitoes are good at biting; volcanoes are good to look at from a safe distance; and bloody battle-fields are good for the worms underground. The ‘All’ is not good nor beautiful; it is full of horror and ruin. And Truth is simply any positive statement about the ‘All.’ When people decline to be bound by the cords of a formal Theology, and proclaim their devotion to these facile abstractions, they are really escaping in a cloud of words from giving their trust to anything; for ‘Things in general as understood by myself’ is a roundabout phrase for that good old rule, the simple plan viz. :—‘what I like.’

There lies this original blot on every form of philosophic Pantheism when tried as a basis of Religion, or as the root idea of our lives, that it jumbles up the moral, the immoral, the non-human and the anti-human world: the animated, and the inanimate; cruelty, filth, horror, waste, death; virtue and vice; suffering and victory; sympathy and insensibility. The dualism between moral being and material being is as old as the conscience of man. It is impossible to efface the antagonism between them; their disparate nature is a consequence of the laws of thought and the fibres of the brain and the heart. No force can amalgamate in one idea tornadoes, earthquakes, interstellar space, pestilences, brotherly love, unselfish energy, patience, hope, trust, and greed. No single conception at all can ever issue out of such a medley; and any idea that is wide enough to relate to the whole must be a mere film of an idea, and one as little in contact with the workings of the heart or the needs of society as the undulatory theory of Light or the Music of the Spheres.

Try any one of these sublimities in any of the crises of life in which men and women in old days used to turn for help to what used to be called Religion. A human heart is wrung with pain, despair, remorse; a parent watches the child of his old age sinking into vice and crime; a thinker, an inventor, a worker

breaks down with toil and unrequited hope, and sees the labour of a life ending in failure and penury; a widow is crushed by the loss of her husband and the destitution of their children; the poor see their lives ground out of them by oppressors, without mercy, justice, or hope. Go, then, with the Gospel of Pantheism to the fatherless and the widow, and console them by talking of sunsets, or the universal order; tell the heart-broken about the permutations of energy; ask the rich tyrant to remember the sum of all things and to listen to the teaching of the Anima Mundi; explain to the debauchee, and the glutton, and the cheat, the Divine essence permeating all things and causing all things—including his particular vice, his passions, his tastes, his greed and his lust. And when social passions rage their blackest, and the demon of anarchy is gnashing its fangs at the demon of despotic cruelty, step forward with the religion of sweetness and light and try if self-culture, so exquisitely sung by Goethe and his followers, will not heal the social delirium.

We know what a mockery this would be. It would be like offering roses to a famished tiger, or the playing a sonata to a man in a fever. To soften grief, to rouse despair, to curb passion, to purify manners, to allay strife, to form man and society, everything is vain but that which strikes on the heart and the brain of man, stirring the soul with a trumpet

tone of command, sympathy, exhortation and warning. Men on a battle-field may be reached by the ringing voice of their leader ; but Madonnas by Raffaele or Sonnets by Shakespeare are not likely to touch them ; and a man aflame with greed or revenge is as deaf as a crocodile to the general fitness of things. In agony, struggle, rage of passion, and interest, the suffering look of a child, the sympathetic voice of a friend, the remonstrance of a teacher, the loving touch of a wife, is stronger than the Force of the solar system, more beautiful and soothing than a sunset on the pinnacles of Apennines or Alps.

We all know how uncertain is the effect even of the most powerful human sympathy ; but nothing has a chance of effect in the terrible crises but that which speaks to human feeling and is akin to the human heart. The Universal Good, the Beauty of Nature, Force, or Harmony are abstractions, ideas, possible in the more thoughtful natures, at the sweeter and calmer moments of life, but lifeless phrases to the mass in the fiercer hours of life, out of all relation with action, and effort, work, and the play of passion. A Power which is to comfort us, control us, unite us—and a Power that is to have any religious effect on us must comfort, control, unite—must be a Power that we conceive as akin to our human souls, a moral Power, not a physical Power ; a sympathetic, acting,

living Power, not a group of phenomena, or a law of matter. The Theisms in all their forms had this human quality; the gods of the Greeks and the Romans were the glorified beings residing in things; the God of Paul and Mahomet, Augustine and Calvin, was the living Maker of all things and ruler of all things. He was always a person, and a being more or less close to the human heart and the human will. And so every form of faith in which morality, or humanity, or the progress of mankind, or the spirit of civilisation, or anything human, moral, sympathetic, stands for the highest object and ideal of life—all of these speak to man as man in a like moral, social, or emotional atmosphere.

We know how imperfectly even these act, how little men and women are affected by the love of an all-perfect Creator, and the agony of atonement by a mediating God, or by the Judgment Day, by the hopes of Heaven and the terrors of Hell, when once they have begun to doubt the authenticity of these promises and these warnings, or to find them out of place in the busy work of earth. Where the wrath of God and the love of Christ, and the Passion and Fall and Redemption have ceased to control, and soothe, and unite, it is an affectation to pretend that the pleasure in the world's beauty or the mystery of existence is to take the vacant place. Here and

there are found natures of a meditative cast, and of native refinement of spirit, in whom these ideas and subtleties supply real moral and mental food. But for the mass the result is impossible, and can only deepen the anarchy and stimulate the passion and the selfishness. These sublimities of the universe are in essence vague ; and what is vague lends itself easily to what is vicious and self-seeking. The energies and passions of men are of force infinitely more massive and keen than are their tastes, their reveries, and their meditations. The deepest of the moral impressions is often not enough to anchor the soul tossed and buffeted in a storm of passion. The mere analogies of the intellect would prove as feeble as packthread.

Let us ask ourselves what the thing is that has to be done ; who the people are that have to be changed ; what is the change that has to be wrought before Religion can be said to be doing its work. Religion is not a thing for the halting places and the resting hours of life, for a quiet Sunday afternoon, for the moments of contentment and gentle repose in thought. The strain of religion comes like that of the pilot in a gale, or the captain on the battle-field, of the heroic spirit in agony, doubt, temptation, loneliness. Where pain is, and cruelty is, and struggle is ; where the flesh is tempted, and the brain reels with ambition ;

where human justice, and tenderness, and purity are outraged ; where rich and poor hate and war ; where nations trample on the weak ; where classes rage after gain ; where folly, and self-indulgence, and gross appetites for base things and base aims settle down on a people like an epidemic ; where in crowded fetid alleys, want, and exhaustion, and disease stagger unpitied to their grave, and a heavy voice rises up, 'How long, how long!' from women pale with stitching, and children weary of wheels and bobbins—and no man listens—there Religion has to be in the midst—or rather ought to be in the midst. And is Religion to come, if it come at all, chanting a hymn to the sunrise, or with a formula about the correlations of the universe ?

The main, daily business of Religion is to improve daily life, not to answer certain intellectual puzzles ; to raise the actual condition of the great toiling mass ; to transform society by making its activity more healthy, and its aim nobler and purer. It has to deal with the sins of great cities and the wants of great classes, the monotony, the uncertainty, the cruelty, of the industrial system. The weak side of the official Christianity, after all, is not so much its alienation from science, its mystical creed, or its conventional formulas, as the palpable fact that nearly nineteen hundred years have passed since the birth of Christ,

and the Gospel has been preached by millions of priests, and yet, in spite of it, the practical order of society is so cruelly hard on such great proportions of men, that it is still so far a world for the strong, and the selfish, and the unscrupulous. How is the stir of pleasure we feel in a starry night, or recognition of the subtle homologies which connect Life and Matter—how is the faint sense of these intellectual luxuries to change the fierce, hurried, confused battle of life and labour? And if it cannot act here, it will never be religion.

What, in a word, do we really mean by Religion? It is not enough to say that it is the answer to the questions, 'What is the relation of man to the infinite?' or 'What is the origin of the universe?' or 'What is the ultimate law, or fact, or power in the universe?' Religion, no doubt, must have something real and definite to say on each and all of these problems. But it means something far bigger, more complex, and practical than this. Religion cannot possibly be sublimated into an answer to any cosmical or logical problem whatever. Suppose it proved that the origin of the universe was found in evolution or differentiation, that gravitation or atomic force was the ultimate law of the universe, protoplasm being the first term of the series, and frozen immutability—the 'cold obstruction' of the poet—the last term in the myriad links of the

chain we call Life ; suppose that the relation of man to the infinite is the relation of the I to the Not-I, of the subject to the object, or again that it is the relation of a blood-corpuscle, or a cell, to a living animal, or any answer of the kind. Suppose any of these. Well ! it is plain that neither evolution, nor differentiation, nor gravitation could be *ipso facto* any man's religion. It would be as absurd as to tell us that spectrum analysis was religion, or the persistence of energy, the binomial theorem, or the nebular hypothesis.

Now all these grand generalisations which pass by the general description of Pantheism are at most ultimate ideas of this kind, *plus* the impression of mystery and power with which we contemplate them—cosmic emotion, in fact. But then how are we to pass from these remote ultimate generalisations, even when lighted up by the glow of admiration and delight, sentiment and poetry—how are these to pass to daily life, to suffering, to sin, to duty ?

If the beginning and groundwork of Religion is to answer this question, 'What is this world around to *me*, what am *I*, this conscious speck, to the world around ?'—if this is the groundwork of all Religion, it is but the groundwork. The substance and crown of Religion is to answer the question, 'What is my duty in the world, my duty to my fellow-beings, my duty to the world and all that is in it or of it ?' Duty, moral

wind rent the mountains and break in pieces the rocks—but the Lord was not in the wind.

And after the wind an earthquake. But the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire ; but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire, a still small voice. And the still small voice spake to him.

So now in these latter days, the spirit of Elijah still speaks to us. For that which can touch the heart with a religious awe and meaning is not the wind, not the earthquake, not the fire, nothing in the physical world outside of man. It is the still small voice of a human heart.

We may use the arguments of theologians without arguing on the side of theology. If there be a real defensive energy in the older orthodoxies as against so much that is vague and unstable in the modern scepticism, it is not at all wonderful. The faith of Christ, and Paul, and Augustine and Luther would not have done all that it has done for eighteen hundred years if it did not touch the deepest chords of the human heart. Religion, in a simple human form, will have more sympathy with Theism than with Atheism ; more respect for the Athanasian creed itself than for Pantheism ; and a firm conviction that Christianity, whatever its destiny may be, will long outlive as religion all forms of cosmic emotion.

Cosmic Emotion, I say, can yield us no scheme of duty, and hence no creed, no Religion at all. God is an idea on which Duty can be founded ; Humanity is an idea on which duty can be founded—as I think far more really and truly. But it is no part of my present purpose to contrast the two conceptions of God and of Humanity.

There are two grand questions which this conception of God has to fight out, so as to satisfy the future.

The first is—How it can solve the difficulties of science, and bring itself to square with the facts of life. The second is—whether the conception of a transcendental, eternal, perfect existence in Heaven can really be made a basis for social duty in this practical life on earth.

It is obvious that the conception of Humanity has none of these difficulties to face, neither of those questions to solve. Humanity can have no misunderstanding with science ; because science is simply the rational observations of Humanity. Nor, again, can Humanity be ever liable to the charge that it substitutes a celestial (and unreal) duty for a terrestrial and positive duty. For Humanity knows nothing of Heaven, but as a visible object of wonder and beauty It allows it to quicken and deepen the religious spirit. It will not suffer it to become the field of the religious spirit, the goal of the religious life.

Has, then, the wonder and the beauty died out of Heaven like the setting of a sun that shall rise no more? The things that we have seen, can we now see no more? Hath there passed away a glory from the earth? Not so! The worship of nature, the love and wonder at the world, our sense of all the universal harmonies—cosmic emotion so to call it—is neither crushed, nor dead, nor dying. It is as rich and radiant a part of our soul's food as ever in the days of Homer, or Hesiod, or Omar Khayyam, or Correggio, or Goethe, or Shelley. Cosmic emotion is not only a very real part of our culture, but it is an imperishable element in religion. Only it is not religion, it is only a small part of it, or rather only the foundation and prelude of religion.

A rational philosophy must include an adequate account of this external world, and its relations to man and the homologues of the physical world without and the spiritual world within. And as rational religion must stand on, or rather must incorporate and be (in part) rational philosophy, rational religion must recognise and contain this cosmic emotion. One common error as it vitiated all the old theologies, so it now vitiates all the modern forms of materialism, pantheism, and even transcendentalism, whether in its metaphysical form or in its scientific form. No single explanation will cover the whole of the physical

phenomena and the whole of the moral and intellectual phenomena, for the excellent reason that there is no single principle running through all, and no logical means of bringing them into one category of thought. Monism cannot cover the field of thought and action, whether it be the monism of evolution or force, or the monism of God or Spirit. The Cosmos in its immensity cannot be stated in terms of God, nor in terms of spirit, soul, or consciousness. Humanity and morality, on the other hand, cannot be reduced to terms of physics, either of force, or of evolution, or of order. There always stand everywhere, and in the last analysis—matter and mind : we cannot conceive the absence of either ; we cannot identify them ; we cannot state one in terms of the other. Hence the eternal dualism of all real philosophy, and thereby of all true religion ; the eternal Cosmos, as the field and envelope of the moral life, and that moral life itself—the environment and the Life : Man and the Universe ; or better, Humanity and the World.

Our love of this rich and potent earth, our awe at this mysterious system which peoples space with a marshalled host of worlds, our sense of the profound unities and harmonies of the mighty whole, are now transfused with all the insight of the poets from Job, and David, and Sappho and Theocritus, to Shakespeare, and Shelley, and Wordsworth, and Blake, and Turner,

together with all the thoughts of the philosophers from Pythagoras and Plato to Hegel and Fichte ; to Helmholtz and Darwin. Our sense of nature never was so rich and deep as it is now ; and it gains in richness and depth immensely, when we are not asked to worship it, or to cast man's history and man's conscience and duty into its language (in short to make it a religion), or, on the other hand, to see in the mere mode of life of an absolute, perfect, and almighty will.

Rational religion stands with a firm front between these two extremes, refusing to believe on the one hand that Nature in its good and its evil, its beauty and horror alike, is God, or the expression of God, or the visible manifestation of God and his will, refusing to believe on the other hand that Nature is the measure of man, or any kind of divinity to man, or the highest term of a series of which man is the unit. It is not so ! There lies in the heart of the poorest and meanest child a force that cannot be even stated in terms of the deepest philosophy of the physical universe. Let us imagine this physical world convulsed or smitten by some mighty cataclysm. Let us imagine the human race withered off it, till all that was human had almost ceased to be. Then, whilst one mother struggling to save one child were left on this mere fleck of dust in the countless procession of the suns,

the devotion of that poor creature to her offspring, the veneration of that poor babe for her protecting parent, have a deeper religious meaning than all the music of the spheres, or the mystery of the cosmic forces. There, where these two are cowering together in trust, and love, there are still *life for others*, labour for others, endurance for the sake of something not for our own, a sense of reverence and gratitude for protection, conquering pain and leaping over death.

And if we are to seek the sources of religion, the ideal of religion in the rushing firmament of suns, or in the withering waifs and strays of humanity who are yielding up their last breath in mutual trust and love, we shall have to look for it in them, for we can find it only in humanity, and in the world around us as the sphere and instrument of humanity.

