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ART. I.—THE WONDERFUL NATURE OF MAN.

SCIENCE, as it has to do with the world of Nature, unfolds to our view, in every direction, objects and scenes of surpassing interest. Each different province of knowledge is found to embrace a whole universe of wonders, in some sense, within its own separate bounds. Who shall pretend to set limits to the grand significance, in this way, of Astronomy, of Geology, of Chemistry, of Natural History in all its divisions and branches? Nay, who may pretend to exhaust the full sense of any single object or thing, included in these vast fields of scientific research? The relatively small here has its mysteries of wisdom, its miracles of power, no less than the relatively great. Vistas of overwhelming glory, stretching far away in boundless, interminable perspective, open upon us through the microscope and telescope alike. Every drop of water shows itself to be, in the end, an ocean without bottom or shore. The flowers of the field, the leaves of the forest, the worm that crawls upon the ground, the insect that sports its ephemeral life in the air, all, all are telling continually—in full unison with the everlasting mountains, with the rolling waves of the sea, with the starry firmament on high—the endless magnificence of God's creation; the music of earth rising up everywhere, like the sound of many waters, responsive to the music of the spheres, and echoing still forever, in universal triumphant chorus, *The hand that made us is divine.* In whatever direction our eyes are turned, under the guiding light of science, above, beneath, around, we are met with occasions for adoring admiration, and may well be

led to exclaim with the Psalmist: "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is full of Thy riches."

In the midst of all these wonders of Nature, however, it is easy to see that the central place belongs to *Man* himself. This indeed is plainly signified to us by the Mosaic account of the Creation, in the first chapter of Genesis; where the different parts of the world are represented as coming into existence in a certain order and course; each lower stage opening the way always for a higher, and one part of the process leading over continually to another; until all is made to end at last, on the sixth day, in the formation of Adam—as though the whole work previously had been concerned with the preparation simply of a fit platform or theatre, on which he, the last sense and crowning glory of all, was to be finally ushered into being. On which account, moreover, a new special solemnity is thrown around his advent, a sort of heavenly circumstance and pomp, showing forth sublimely the greatness of the occasion. All else being complete, and the preliminary arrangements of creation brought forward in order to this point, there follows as it were a pause in the process; and then the voice of God is heard once more: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." *Man* thus is declared to be something higher and greater than the whole world of nature besides. He is the head of the natural creation. All its mysteries and glories culminate at last in his person, and find here only their full significance, their proper conclusion and end.

The actual structure of the world, as it unfolds itself continually more and more to the observation of science, is found to be in striking agreement with this ancient representation of the Bible. It is plainly a single system throughout, subject everywhere to the presence of a common law, pervaded universally by the power of a common idea or

thought, and reaching always, with inward restless nismus, toward a common end. The inorganic is in order to the organic. The crystal is a prophecy of the coming plant. Rising continually from lower to higher and more perfect forms of existence, the whole vegetable world serves to foreshadow, in like manner, the sphere of animal life above it. This again is an upward movement throughout, an ever ascending series of types and forms, reaching always toward an ideal, which on to the last it has no power to actualize, but can faintly prefigure only as something far more exalted and far more glorious than itself. The organic order comes to its rest ultimately in Man. He is the true ideal of the world's universal life, the last aim and scope, we may say, of the whole natural creation. He is the fulfilment of all its prophecies, the key to its mysteries, the exposition of its deepest and most hidden sense.

As being then, in such view, the last, full sense and meaning of the world, Man necessarily represents to us its main interest and glory, and must be more worthy of our regard than all it offers besides to our contemplation. It can be no extravagance to say, that his existence and presence in the system of nature set before us the greatest and strangest part of its wonderful constitution—a fact, which surpasses in significance, and transcends in interest, all its other phenomena and facts combined. Man is an object immeasurably more lofty and grand, in the universe of God's works, than the towering hills, the swelling seas, or the stars even, that look down upon him from their infinite distances in the calm, blue vault of heaven. He ranks higher in the scale of creation. He embraces in his being more stupendous realities, profounder mysteries, wider and far more enduring interests. Well might the Hebrew Singer cry out, overwhelmed as it were with the contemplation of his own nature: "I will praise Thee, O Lord; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well." Yes, of a truth, fearfully and wonderfully made. The declaration applies in full force to the entire being of Man. He

is to be gazed upon with a sort of trembling admiration, first of all, in his simply physical nature ; still more so, afterwards, in his intellectual nature ; but most of all, finally, in his moral nature—where only, at the last, the full boundless significance of his life, and along with this, the whole terrible sublimity of it also, may be said to burst completely into view.

**I** Look at him first in his simply **PHYSICAL NATURE**. The human body offers itself to our consideration at once, as the greatest and most finished work of God in the outward world. When we compare it with other natural objects, there is none which can be said to be equal to it, or like to it, either in conception or in actual execution and effect.

So under a merely anatomical view. The more closely and carefully we study its conformation and structure, as they are laid open to our observation by the dissecting knife—its framework of bones, its muscles and tendons, its nerves, its curious apparatus of the senses, its organs of action and motion, its marvellous dispositions and arrangements of stomach, lungs, heart, brain, the perfection, in one word, of all its parts, and their most admirable fitness for their several purposes and ends—the more deeply and thoroughly shall we be made to feel, that taken altogether, even in this dead mechanical light, there is indeed nothing so absolutely wonderful and complete, in the whole range of nature besides.

But the case becomes of course still stronger a great deal, when we pass from anatomy to physiology, and fix our attention not simply on the mechanism of the body in a state of rest, but on this same mechanism animated and set in motion everywhere by the powers and forces of life itself, working by it, and through it, for the accomplishment of their proper ends. Such a sphere of wonders is here thrown open to our contemplation, as may be easily seen at once to leave far behind, in significance and interest, all that can be brought into comparison with it under any like physical form. Vast as the powers of nature may show themselves in other quarters, grand as the scale of

their action may be, and however much of strange, amazing mystery may seem to enter into their processes, they bring after all no such results to pass anywhere, as can be said to match in any measure what is going forward continually in the living constitution of the human body.

What, for example, is the chemistry of nature, its dark mysterious processes going forward always in the deep places of the earth, its laboratory of wonders in the air and in the sky—where the winds are born—where the clouds come and go—where rain, snow, hail, lightning, and tempest issue continually from the same awful womb; what is all this, we say, in comparison with what is taking place every day in every such living body, by the process of digestion and assimilation; through which, all sorts of foreign material are received, in the shape of food, into the stomach, wrought silently into blood, and converted out of this finally into the very substance of all the different parts of the system—meeting thus its perpetual waste with perpetual renovation and supply.

What is the ocean, with its world-embracing circulation—its waters lifted into the air, borne in every direction by the clouds, made to descend in showers upon the earth, gathered into streams, and poured at last through mighty rivers back again into their original bed; what is “this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts,” where the ships go, and where leviathan is made to play; what is the whole of it at last, in all its greatness, over against that wonder of wonders, the human heart, with its tidal flow of blood kept up day and night, and year after year, through the arteries and the veins!

What is the action of the winds, which come no one can tell whence, and go no one can tell whither, now fanning the earth in gentle zephyrs, and now sweeping over the face of it in hurricanes and storms, penetrating all things, purifying all things, stirring all things into motion and life; what is the action of the winds, we ask again, in this outward view, compared with the proper breath of life in

man, received through his nostrils, and made to fulfil its unresting twofold ministry by the marvellous economy of his lungs ?

Or the still more subtle forces of electricity and magnetism, as they are found to be constantly and powerfully at work everywhere, through the universal realm of nature, or as they are made to perform miracles, at the present day, in obedience to the will of science and art; what are they, under either view, in comparison with the brain of man, and its dependent system of nerves, extending with infinite ramification to all parts of the body, and causing the whole to be filled at every point, and through every instant of time, with the unity of a common life ?

It is true indeed, that these physiological wonders themselves come before us, to a certain extent, on the outside of man's nature. They belong to the animal world in general. Here too the phenomena of sentient life, upheld and carried forward by organs and functions strangely adapted to its use, challenge in every direction our profound admiration. Bodily senses are here, vital activities, powers of digestion, secretion, and self-reparation, blood coursing through arteries and veins, the curious play of lungs, and the working more curious still of nerves and brain. Many animals seem even to surpass man, in particular aspects and features of their organization. He is excelled by some in strength ; by others, in speed ; by others again, in special forms of natural art and ingenuity. Some have a more quick and acute sense of hearing ; others a far more keen and wide reaching vision. In all directions around him, they show themselves qualified and fitted for modes of existence, which are for him impossible altogether. B\_u\_t all this detracts nothing in the end from the proper superiority of his being, even in that merely physical view with which only we are now concerned. For it is easy enough to see, that any points of advantage which may seem to belong to other animal organizations hold only in single subordinate particulars ; going thus to show the comparatively partial and narrow order of their life ; while in any

whole view, considered either singly or collectively, they fall short, immeasurably, we may say, of the full proportioned harmony and perfection of the human body. Their completeness in all cases is something relative only, the dim foreshadowing of something higher and greater than itself, a defective onesided approximation at best to the idea of the absolute under some entirely different form. Thus do these organizations, in fact, give glory to the body of man from all sides, doing homage to it as being far more honorable than themselves, and proclaiming it to be, what it is in truth, the complement and crown of the whole physical creation.

In this view, it is not in virtue of his spiritual nature simply, that man is to be considered the end and consummation of the present world. As a physical system, it comes to its conclusion, first of all, in the organization of his body, through which alone it can make room for his presence under any higher form. Toward this grand final result, accordingly, all its processes may be said to reach and struggle from the beginning; while the universal order of things, as they now stand, finds here also its proper meaning and full central rest, through all time. Even the vast geologic periods, which are supposed to have gone before the creation of the world in its present form, are not shut out from the force of this rule. Through all its precious, grand, and mighty cycles, the history of the earth, as it remains still written in the rocks, was one long course of preparation for what it was brought to be finally, in being made a fit abode for man; and the signification of its manifold forms of life, its successive worlds of animated nature—rude, imperfect, and often monstrous as they were—lay mainly in this, that they served to anticipate and prefigure in their way, through the ages, the living order of the world as it is now, and so looked through this continually to the advent of man himself, by which, in the fullness of time all was to be conducted at last to its proper end.

This is sufficient to show, what small account is to be

made of mere outward powers or magnitudes in nature, set over against the living person of man. He stands before us, intrinsically greater, in his bodily organization itself, than all the geologic creations, which served so many ages beforehand to prepare the way for his coming. They were in order to him throughout; and in such view could be only of secondary and subordinate rank, as compared with him, in the scale of creation. We need not wonder then, if the whole world, in its constitution, be found owning and confessing his superior dignity in the same way. The forms and processes of nature converge from all sides toward man as their grand centre, and gather themselves up finally in his person. He is the world concentrated, consolidated, reduced to its last most comprehensive unity. All its elements and forces come together, we may say, in the wonderful constitution of his body; which becomes in this way a microcosm, the world in its inmost essence, reflecting and showing forth continually the sense of what it is in its widest macrocosmic view. Man unites in himself thus the powers of the whole creation around him. All cosmical influences stream into him and through him. Fire, earth, air, and water, mingle in his composition. The majesty of his nature, in such view, towers above the everlasting hills. Winds, cloud, storms, volcanoes, and earthquakes, do homage to his presence, proclaiming it to be something greater than themselves. The broad ocean of life, spread out in the animal world beneath him, rolls toward him, in like manner, its universal tribute of respect. Reptiles, fishes, birds, and four-footed beasts, join in seeking his presence and heralding his praise. He is said, indeed, actually to travel through all these orders of existence in his embryonic state, beginning with the lowest conformation, and passing up through the highest finally into his own proper human shape; a process, that involves in every case, a resumption or new taking up, as it were, of the life of the world in its lower forms—curiously repeating in this way the original work of creation, and verifying in the most striking manner the idea of its organic oneness and whole-

ness, as we have it so graphically represented in the old Mosaic record.

Among all the works of God in the world, then, there is none which may be considered comparable, in dignity and perfection, to the human body. How could it be otherwise, if nature was to become in this form the shrine of intelligence, the organ of thought, the dwelling place of free, self-conscious mind? Must it not, for any such purpose as this, be raised into its highest state, and wrought into its most perfect mould, so as to be made as nearly as possible analogous and conformable to the quality of that superior life, with which it was to be so mysteriously conjoined? Must not the temple of the soul, in the midst of the natural world, be so framed and ordered, as to be, even in its own merely physical constitution, more honorable and glorious than the whole world of nature besides? The primacy of man in the world, the proper sovereignty of his nature, is not a prerogative belonging to him through his soul only; it comes into view most immediately, and first of all, in his body also. That of itself proclaims him at once monarch and lord of creation. His erect form, his countenance lifted heavenward, the harmony and symmetry of his parts, his firm walk, his commanding port, his spiritual aspect, the lightning of his eye, the moral thunder of his voice—all announce his imperial distinction, and authenticate his title to universal reverence and respect.

One other thought here we have no right to pass by, as going to show, beyond all that we have yet said, the incomparable excellence and worth of the human body. God has put infinite honor upon it, through the mystery of the Incarnation. "Tu ad liberandum suscepturus hominem," the Church sings in her grand, old Ambrosian Hymn, "non horruisti Virginis uterum." The Word became flesh, and was made in the likeness of men! Simply to state this awful fact is enough, in the present connection.

II. Wonderful and glorious as man may be, however, in his physical constitution, his mere bodily organization—either considered in itself, or viewed in its relations to the

world of nature on the one side and the world of mind or spirit on the other—he is found to be a great deal more glorious and wonderful still in his **INTELLECTUAL NATURE.**

Nature is in order to Mind. All her productions and processes look toward this continually, in the way of general direction, as their common end. It is as though thought or intelligence lay bound and imprisoned in her mighty empire of laws and forms, and were forever struggling to rise by means of them into the clear, full possession of its own life. We have seen already how this universal order comes to its conclusion physically in the human body, showing it to be thus the summit and crown of the natural creation. But that first conclusion is itself only in order to another and far higher end, the revelation of the human soul in the world as a new order of existence altogether. Nature culminates in the physical constitution of man, just because she can rise no higher in her own sphere, and there at last, if ever, must come into communion with free self-active mind. This it is which constitutes in fact the perfection and dignity of the human body, that it stands so nearly related to the world of mind in its whole conformation, and is so eminently fitted to become the organ and medium of its presence in the world of nature. Here, accordingly, the necessary complement of the body, and the last full meaning of the world, are reached at the same time in the knowing and reasoning soul of man; in rising to which, however, nature must be regarded as transcending herself, efforcesing as it were into a higher life, and so finding her end in another system of existence altogether.

Grand and magnificent, beyond the power of language to express, is the epiphany of Mind in this way, pouring its effulgence over the dark face of nature. It is equivalent in truth to the rising of a new sun in the universe, far more glorious than that which rules the day in its common form. When God commanded the light to shine out of darkness in the beginning, dispersing the deep night of chaos, and opening the way for its transformation into a

world of order and beauty, it was after all an imperfect symbol only of what took place in a higher form, when "the Lord God formed Man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," causing him to become thus, through his own inspiration, a rational and intelligent soul. It was as if the whole work of creation, in its previous form, had been suddenly flooded with fresh heavenly light, and kindled into new sense. For such in truth is the mysterious relation, which mind, as it lives and reigns in man, sustains through all time to the outward material world. In a profound sense, it may be said actually to make the world, imparting to it its whole form and meaning as it now stands. Not as if the system of nature had no existence, on the one side of man's intelligence and thought. It has a being of its own, we believe, apart from all such apprehension. But what that is, we can never either know or guess. It offers to our contemplation nothing better than thick, impenetrable darkness. In such view, it is for us as though it did not exist at all. To become real for us, in any way, the world must not only *be*; it must come into us also in the way of knowledge; and the forms of this knowledge, in the nature of the case, can be imparted to it only by our own minds. It is for us, therefore, only what it is made to be through our intelligence itself, and nothing more. Not only so; but we must say the world itself is made for this mode of existence—what it comes to be by entering into the types and moulds of actual knowledge—as its only true and full perfection; so that, short of this, it must ever be a rude and unformed mass, carrying in it no right sense, and representing no proper reality whatever. Thus it is that the whole world is literally brought out of darkness into marvellous light, and reduced at the same time to full order and form, by the power of intelligence made to bear upon it through the mind of man. In the waking of consciousness, all nature may be said to wake together with him into new life. It takes shape everywhere in conformity with his perception and thought. It shines, and blooms, and sings, in obedi-

ence to the magical authority of his spirit. It lives, and has its being—such phenomenal being as we know it by—only in the orb of his mind.

We have seen before, that the physical creation centres in the human body; and that this may well be dignified with the title of *microcosm*, for this reason, as gathering up into itself finally all the forms and forces of nature in its larger view, and so representing in small compass its universal sense. But what is all this, in comparison with the centralization that is here exhibited to us, in the constitution of the human soul? By this emphatically it is, that man becomes in the fullest sense a living microcosm, taking up into himself the very being of the great and mighty world around him, and so reflecting and showing forth the full sense of it, as it is not possible for it to be known in any other way. The vast, the manifold, the multitudinous in nature, is not simply reduced here to relatively small bounds, as in the other case; it is brought down to absolute unity, and so made to pass away entirely in another order of existence altogether. In such view, the microcosm is more than the macrocosm—the world intelligible than the world diffused and spread abroad in space; since it is wholly by the first alone, that the latter can ever be at all, what it seems to be in any such outward form. Here, therefore, mere physical bulk and force, set over against the being of man, shrink into still greater insignificance than before. Are not mountains and seas, bellowing thunders, roaring cataracts and storms, comprehended truly in his spirit, and made to pass through it, in order that they may be for him either outward or real? Why then should he stand aghast before *them*, and not feel rather in them, and by them, the yet more awful grandeur and overwhelming vastness of his own nature. Mind is infinitely greater than all that is not mind, enlarge the conception of this as we may. It towers above the whole material creation. It outshines the stars. It is a force more active and powerful by far, than that which bears along comets and planets in their course. The sun itself, in all its majestic splendor, is

an object less high and glorious, than the soul even of an infant, carrying in it the latent power of thought, the undeveloped possibility of reason.

We have spoken of the physical action of the brain, as something greatly more wonderful than that of the most subtle forces in nature under any different form. But what is this in its turn, when we come to compare it with the activity of thinking itself, which, however it may depend upon the working of the brain, is yet not that simply, but another order of force and energy altogether? Thought is more free than air, more penetrating than fire, more irresistible and instantaneous in motion than lightning. It travels at a rate, which causes the velocity of light to appear sluggish and slow. It traverses the earth, and sweeps the heavens, at a single bound. In the twinkling of an eye, it passes to the planet Saturn, to the sun, to the star Sirius, to the utmost bounds of the universe.

We have spoken of the circulation of the blood, as something more fearfully grand than the waters above the firmament, and the waters under the firmament, revolving continually through the heart-resembling ministry of oceans and seas. But what is all this to the mystery of consciousness—that broad, unfathomable sea in the human spirit, which serves to set in motion all its activities and powers, out of whose depths all knowledges proceed, and into whose bosom again they continually return!

Every faculty of the mind is a subject for admiration, from mere sensation up to the use of reason in its purest and most perfect form. The images of conception, the reproductions of fancy, the new combinations and grand creative processes of the imagination, the operations of judgment, the intuitional apprehensions involved in the power of ideas—time would fail us, to speak of them in any way of particular detail; but what realms of interest, what worlds of thrilling wonder, do they not all throw open to our view!

Let any one consider only for a moment what is continually going forward within us, in the familiar process which

is known to us by the name of memory. Nothing so simple, it might seem, at first view ; and yet, the moment we stop to think of it, nothing more profoundly mysterious and strange. Images and thoughts are continually entering the consciousness of the mind, and then disappearing from it again, as though they were entirely lost. But they are in fact only buried, and hidden away, in the secret depths of the mind itself, so as to be capable of being resuscitated, and called back again, whenever their presence may be required ; and in this way they are in truth all the time coming and going, appearing and disappearing, in our ordinary thinking. What we hold in our intelligence thus is only in small part ever contained in our actual consciousness, at any given time. By far the most of it is in us always under a latent, slumbering form. And yet all enters into our spiritual being, is truly part of ourselves, and goes to make up continually the proper contents of our personality. But what a marvel this is ; that so much of our knowledge should be in the mind, and yet out of mind, at the same time ; that our sense of self should hold joined with it in this way such a vast multitude of conceptions, thoughts, and ideas, such a whole world of past experiences and affections, which nevertheless are in general as much unperceived as though they did not exist at all, and only come into view occasionally and transiently, ever rising and ever sinking, ever entering and ever departing—an endless succession of vanishing forms, in what remains throughout after all the indivisible, unbroken unity of one and the same consciousness. To stand on the shore of such an ocean to look forth on its broad, boundless expanse—to send the imagination down among the secrets that lie buried, far out of sight, in its dark and silent depths—may indeed well produce in any thoughtful mind an overwhelming sentiment both of astonishment and awe. There is neither height nor depth, nor show of vastness and sublimity under any other form, in the simply physical world that may bear to be placed in comparison with it for a single moment.

The case swells upon us into its full significance, only when we come to ask, Can that which has once been in the mind, so as to be part and parcel of its consciousness, ever so pass out of it again as to sink into everlasting oblivion? Some thoughts, we know, return upon us readily and easily in our ordinary experience, lying as it were near at hand to us all the time; others are recalled with more difficulty, as having got farther out of reach; while others again, the largest class of all, seem to have sunk like lead in the mighty waters, to be remembered by us no more forever. But who will pretend to distinguish here, between what is still within the reach of memory, and what has become for it thus as though it had never been? Who will undertake to say at what point of time, or under what terms and conditions otherwise, that which has once been the property of the spirit, in the way of thought, shall be so sundered and alienated from it as to pass irrecoverably and entirely out of its possession? The grand wonder is, how the past should return at all, and become thus the matter of present consciousness and knowledge—a thing past and yet present at the same time; that it should do so after a short interval, or do so after a long one, would seem to be in the case a distinction of no material account. If the power of memory may bridge in this way the chasm of an hour, why not with equal ease the oblivion of a year, or the dark void of a thousand years? We know in fact, that what has thus slumbered in us through long periods of time does often wake up within our consciousness at last, in the most surprising manner. In old age especially, nothing is more common than such a resurrection of long buried images and thoughts. In many cases, the circumstances and experiences of childhood and early youth, after being forgotten for scores of years, are so restored to memory again as to seem only of recent date. Persons recovered from drowning have said, that in the middle state to which they were brought between life and death, a whole world of such buried recollections seemed to pass before them in panoramic vision. We have been told of others,

who, in circumstances of extreme danger, falling from a precipice for instance, or exposed to the jaws of death in some like violent way, have had their whole past lives, as it appeared, brought back upon them with a sort of instantaneous rush. Who, in view of such cases, may presume to limit the possibilities of memory? And who that thinks of it may not well be filled with amazement, rising even to terror itself, in considering what is involved for himself, in the awful abyss, which is found thus yawning before him continually in the depths of his own soul?

III. But it is in his MORAL NATURE most of all, that Man comes before us finally in the full terrible sublimity of his being—"fearfully and wonderfully made," beyond all the wonders of creation under any different form.

There is a close, necessary connection, of course, between the moral and the intellectual. Reason and Will, thought and action, flow together, and as it were interpenetrate each other continually, in the constitution of the mind. There can be no act of intelligence without volition; and there can be no exercise of volition without intelligence. Still thinking and willing are not the same thing; and there is full room, therefore, for distinguishing between the intellectual nature of man as based upon his reason, and the moral nature of man, as based upon his will. It is easy enough to see, moreover, that the relation is of such a kind as to place the moral nature, in point of dignity and worth, above the intellectual. If it be asked, where the economy of the mind is to be regarded as coming to its main end, its grand ultimate purpose and meaning, the answer must be, in that part of it which is represented to us by the idea of the will. Thought is rightly in order to action; knowledge in order to freedom. The practical reason is greater than the speculative reason. Truth in the understanding must become truth in the will also, if it is ever to be either spirit or life.

We have seen already, that the human mind is in fact the revelation in the world of a new order of existence altogether; a result, which serves to satisfy, and fulfil the uni-

versal sense of the physical creature, struggling up to it through all its realms of existence, and that might seem to be thus, in one view, the last product of this process itself; while it is yet plain, that in reaching it nature is actually carried beyond itself, and met, as it were, in its own sphere by the power of a higher life, descending into it from above. Considered as the mere passive counterpart of nature under a spiritual view—the mirror simply of its multitudinous forms, the echo only of its manifold voices and sounds—such a manifestation is indeed wonderful in the highest degree. But the full force of the wonder comes into view, only when we look beyond this, and see the mind to be at the same time a fountain of power, a principle of free spontaneous action, in its own nature, not only open to impressions receptively from the world around, but capable also of working back upon the world again, and as it were over against it, in the most original and independent way. This is the idea of the *Will*.

There is no power or force like it, under any other form, in the system of creation. Physically considered, the world is a constitution carried forward in the way of inward, settled and fixed law, causes producing effects continually, and effects following causes, with a certainty which admits of no variation or exception. The whole process, in such view, is necessary, blind, and unfree. So in the sphere of mere lifeless matter; so in the sphere of vegetation; and so in the sphere also of animal life. The actions of animals are determined absolutely by influences exerted upon them from without, through their natural appetites and instincts. Neither is the case different with the animal nature of man, in itself considered. This likewise stands connected with the physical world by organic relations, which involve the same kind of subjection to its laws that is found to prevail in lower spheres. Appetite, desire, inclination, passion, in man, are in this view, so far as their original form is concerned, responses simply to other forces in the system of nature, and as such include in themselves neither light nor freedom. The difference here,

however, is the conjunction in which these forms of merely natural life are set with a power above nature in man, which may indeed lend itself to their service in a base passive way, but whose rightful prerogative it is rather to rule them always in subserviency to its own ends. This power, the practical reason—the will in its proper form—is no agency that serves merely to carry into effect, what has been made necessary by the working of causes going before. If that were the case, it would at once lose its distinctive character, and be nothing more at last than the continuation of nature itself, under a new sublimated and refined form. But the very conception of will implies and involves the contrary of this. It is, by its very constitution, a self-determining power. It is no blind, necessary force, like the laws of nature, but a free, spontaneous activity, which knows itself, and moves itself optionally its own way; giving rise thus to a whole universe of relations, interests, actions and systems of action, which but for such origination could have no existence whatever, and which, however it may be joined with the constitution of nature, and made to rest upon it in some sense as a basis, is nevertheless in fact a new world altogether of far higher and far more glorious character.

Let it be considered only, for a moment, what this *hyperphysical* economy—the moral world as distinguished from the world of nature—is found to comprehend and contain. It comprises in itself all the powers, functions, and operations of mind; the thinking of men; their purposes and aims; their affections, emotions, and passions; their acts of whatever kind, whether inward only or extending out into the surrounding world; the full unfolding and putting forth, in one word, of all that is involved in their spiritual being. In it are embraced, at the same time, the idea of society, the order of the family, the constitution of the State, the organization finally of the Church; all social, political, and religious relations; all virtues and opposing vices; all human privileges, duties, and rights. It is the sphere emphatically thus, of whatever is comprehended in the conception of education and history; being made up mainly in

fact, not so much of present experiences simply at any given time, as of a whole world rather of past experiences, consolidated together, and handed forward continually from one generation to another. What a mass of material, accumulated in this way through ages, goes to form the proper ethical life of civilized nations—the historical substance, we may call it, of their nationality—strangely treasured up in their language, their institutions and laws, their manners and customs, their traditions and hereditary memories of the ancient past. Among animals there is no education, and no history. The ideas are purely and exclusively human. They belong only to the world of intelligence and freedom.

We have spoken of the self-moving nature of the will, its independence of all outward constraint, its power to originate action in its own way. This freedom, however, forms only one side of its marvellous constitution. Under another view, it is just as much bound by the force of necessary law, as the constitution of matter itself. The only difference in the two cases is, that in nature the law carries itself into effect as it were by its own force, while in the moral world it cannot go into effect at all, unless by the free choice and consent of the will itself which it thus necessitates and binds. The necessity, to prevail at all, must pass into the form of freedom. But this does not detract in the least from the idea of its authority and force. The distinction serves only, in truth, to clothe it with greater dignity and glory. In this view, the law of nature, in all its generality and constancy, is but the type, in a lower sphere, of the universal and unchangeable character of the law, as it exists for freedom in a higher sphere. The first mystically adumbrates, for all thoughtful minds, the wonderful presence of the second. Some such thought seems to have been in the mind of the ancient Psalmist, when he was led to exclaim: "Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven! Thy faithfulness is unto all generations; Thou hast established the earth, and it abideth." How many have been made to feel at times, in the same way, the sense

of God's glorious moral government mirrored upon them from the contemplation of the natural world.

"There are two things," the celebrated philosopher Kant was accustomed to say, "which I can never sufficiently wonder at and admire—the starry heavens above me, and the moral law within me." The thought is at once beautiful and profound; for there can be no more fitting image, in truth, of the grandeur and sublimity of this inward law, than that which is offered to our gaze in the silent, tranquil, ever during majesty of the stars.

Along with the presence of the law again, in this department of our being, comes into view what is in some respects the most wonderful part of our whole nature, the power with which we are so familiar under the name of conscience. As a necessary and binding rule for freedom, it lies in the very conception of the moral law, that it should be able to assert its presence, and make its authority felt, in the mind itself, and not be brought near to it merely in the character of an outward and foreign force. And thus it is in truth, that the will is found to be actually autonomic, affirming and laying down in one direction the very rule, which it feels itself called upon to obey in another. Not as if it could be supposed actually to originate the law in this way, according to its own pleasure. That would be a monstrous imagination, subverting the whole idea of morality. The will does not make the law; but still it is through it alone, that the law comes to any positive legislation in the soul. In no other way, can the full force of the categorical imperative, *Thou shalt*, be brought fairly home to its consciousness. What a strange spectacle, then, we have exhibited to us here. Two forces in the same mind, transacting with one another in such solemn personal way. Here the will commands; while there again the very same will is required to obey. Nor is that all. The power that legislates in the case, goes on also to sit in judgment on its own conduct, and then to execute sentence upon itself according to the result of such trial. Obedience brings at once self-approbation, and is followed with

peace. Disobedience leads just as certainly to self-condemnation and self-inflicted pain. Such is the terrific mystery of conscience—the knowing of God brought into man's knowing of himself, and made to be thus an inseparable part of his proper spiritual being and life.

We conclude the whole subject with the obvious reflection, that the richest and most interesting field of science for man, is that which is offered to him in the constitution of his own person, and especially in the constitution of his person under its ethical or moral view. The world may be worthy of our thoughts and studies, in its other aspects; but it can be properly so, at all times, only as it is studied, under such aspects, with full regard to what must ever be considered its last central interest in the form now stated. No wonders of the simply outward creation, no mysteries of mere nature, can ever signify as much for us, as the world we carry about with us continually in our own being.

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ART. II.—THE APOSTOLIC COMMISSION.

THE incarnate Son of God lived and died for the good of men. His entire life was sacrificial—pre-eminently so His death. The spotless victim, offered upon the cross, was an all-sufficient ransom for the sins of the world. “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.” The atonement was full and complete; but its application to the redemption of the world was yet to be accomplished. Jesus Christ would not leave the work unfinished. Prior to His ascension, He made provision for the successful prosecution of His mediatorial work, in