

The answer is:—This discovery is most momentous, if true. Let the law, or set of laws, be stated, and its or their existence demonstrated by reference to the facts of human life or history, and we will accept them as we accept any other hypothesis which is distinctly propounded and satisfactorily verified. But at present, not only is there no verification, there is not even a hypothesis before us. . . .

Sir Isaac Newton did not go about the world asserting that the motions of the planets must have a law, and railing at people for doubting his assertion. He propounded the hypothesis of gravitation, and verified it by reference to the facts. We only ask the discoverers of the Law of History to do the same.

In the same way, when philosophers proclaim with angry vehemence, and violent expression of contempt for gainsayers, that there is a better religion than Christianity, we only ask them to produce a better religion.

I have indeed suggested a reason for surmising that the verification of a law of History will be rather a difficult matter, since, History being but partly unfolded, a portion only of the facts are before us. The *Westminster* vehemently asserts that "the human race does not increase in bulk: it changes in character. In no respect does it remain the same. It assumes ever new phases." The universal postulate of Science is that things will continue as they are. But here is a science which postulates that the things with which it deals will always be changing in every respect, so that the truth of to-day may be the exploded chimera of to-morrow. Direct verification of a general hypothesis in this case seems to be impossible. And as we have no other history wherewith to compare that of the inhabitants of this planet, verification by comparison is, of course, out of the question.

In regard to the individual actors of which the sum of history is made up, our "instincts," which the *Westminster* allows are to be taken into account, as well as historical induction, tell us plainly that at the moment of action, all the "antecedents" being as they are, we are free to do the action or let it alone. They tell us, when the action is done, that we were free to do it or let it alone. And, in the form of moral judgment, they praise or condemn the actions of other men on the same supposition. This is not "metaphysics," nor is it part of any obsolete controversy about "predestination." It is at least as much a matter of common sense, and a ground of daily feelings and conduct, as the sensation of heat and cold. Till the sense of moral freedom, conscience, and the instincts which lead us to praise and blame,