

to understand a force which has been always bearing upon us. It is almost terrible to think of the many other secrets of the universe which must be thus still knocking at our doors, and waiting to get in to us, and to imagine how senseless and unreceptive we must seem to an omniscient mind, when so many blessings meant for us are beaten back from our closed minds and wills. And think, still further, how it is that such truth does reach men when it reaches them at all. It is not by lying idle and passive for its approaches. It is not without effort and discipline that such insight arrives. No, it is by training the mind, so that it can *open its doors*. This is the end of education,—the opening of the door of the mind. It is the making one's self quick with receptivity toward truth, so that, when truth speaks, we hear its voice, and recognize it as the voice of truth, and let it in. Most men are so sluggish that they do not hear the knock; many men are so feeble that they cannot open the door. But when a truth is first heard and then welcomed, then it is that a great discovery is made. We say that the man discovered the truth; but, to the man himself, it is as if the truth spoke to him, and he had heard its voice, and let it in.

The same thing is true in a man's relations to his duty. When we have to determine between right and wrong we are apt to take refuge in the idea that it is hard to find out what is right, that our duty hides from us, and that we are trying to find out what it is; and, because it does not let us in when we are knocking at its door, therefore we make our mistakes and commit our sins. But the fact is that this is very rarely true. If we set ourselves, with a perfectly open mind, to see what is right and to discover what is wrong, it is one of the rarest things in the world that duty is not made clear. How do we act? We do not honestly try for this one end alone. We shut out from ourselves this clear distinction. We mingle it with other motives. We do

what is wrong, and pretend to ourselves that it is right. We think that what is manifestly wrong will change itself some day into right. I suppose that even great crimes come about thus. A man in his business moves step by step into fraudulent practices, until at last both he and society are smitten with a great disgrace; and yet, at every step, he defends himself with the assertion that he has done nothing wrong. He blurs his sense of right. It is not that his duty is not there, but that he will not hear its voice. It is knocking at his door; but he pretends that there is no knocking, and bars himself against the summons. And then, at last, he looks back over the whole awful series of slight perversions of the right, and sees that at each step his duty stood before his life, plain and persuasive, if only he would have heard its voice, and let it in. There is no greater self-deception than this imagining that it is hard to find out what it is right to do. The difficulty lies not in the revelation of the right to us, but in the opening of ourselves to the revelations of the right. Duty stands, for the most part, close at hand, unobscured, simple, immediate. If any man has the will to hear her voice, to him is she willing to enter, and be his ready guest.

Now, this which is true in the world of thought and in the world of duty is—as I want to say, with even more of seriousness—true of the largest relations in which we find ourselves, the relations of the religious life. When we first think of religion, it seems to us a matter full of difficulty. God seems to hide himself, and we seem to be searching for Him with our books and our learning amid the mysteries of His hiding-place. Christ seems to us a problem which we have to solve, and which has perplexed the wisest of inquirers. The blessings of the religious life, such as the forgiveness of our sins, seem to be kept under lock and key, as though we were knocking at the door of a severe Divinity and asking, as suppliants, to be let in. But what