

build upon. He is not very likely to see wide relations in the daisy or the sensitive plant. Shelleys and Wordsworths do not spring up, like mushrooms, in the wild. The door would not open to Ali Baba without the Open Sesame. And Books are the indispensable key to Nature. They are the accumulated interpretation of Nature by the great men of all ages. To study ourselves and our environment without their aid is almost as hopeless a task as to essay the hieroglyphics of Egypt without first seeing what the Egyptologists have to say about them. But a correct interpretation of Nature is Nature, you may call it artificial if you like. The artificial as the product of man's activity is for man the highest form of the Natural. But if by the artificial any one means something unnatural, something outside of the natural, because made by man, we get back again to the misconception with which we are dealing, the exclusion of man's thoughts and works from the sphere of Nature. How can a good book or a well built church or a masterpiece of sculpture be thus excluded? Man's powers are as truly natural energies as are cyclones or lightnings. Westminster Abbey must rank *higher* in the kingdom of Nature than the stones of which it is built. So with Wordsworth's "teaching of the sages," it would be absurd to claim that their works will not inspire men more deeply than the song of a goldfinch perched on a maple bough. The works of "the sages" are greater natural forces than the "vernal wood."

A certain itinerant lecturer in addressing an Ethical Science Club on Youth and Nature, claimed that the

Greeks had no real sympathy with nature. He talked about birds and daisies and the green fields "where nature is at home," and exalted the poets of this nineteenth century as the discoverers of nature's highest beauties. The Greek poets had no charm for him because they did not rave about the microscopic side of nature, but spoke of man and the larger forces of his environment, the sea, the storm-cloud and the mountain chain. Like so many professors and poets he failed to grasp the relative importance of natural phenomena and forces for the human life. And we measure everything by its importance for ourselves. Nature is not so much at home in the green fields as she is in the crowded, sultry cities of toiling men. There her highest forces, the strivings of the complex human mechanism, are in full activity. But these nature ranters insist on everything that is minor or less essential in nature, while they crowd out of consideration the powers of man and very frequently the supreme Power whose breath informs the world and all that lives therein. The true artists give less attention to flowers and butterflies, more to the greater things of nature. We can not exclude man's works, books, paintings or statues, from the order of nature, but must place them at the upper end of the scale. There is no such thing therefore as an opposition of artificial and natural, of Books and Vernal Wood. Nature poetry will not be the product of an imagination turned away from man and his achievements to the lesser facts of the world. It will have as its main subject Man, who is not outside of nature, but its apex.