

that we live here to learn how to live; to undergo a training process; to be trained and to train ourselves. So soon as we distinctly apprehend this, the ideal sense of New Year's Day begins to appear and to be felt. If education, increased knowledge of ourselves, of our weakness and ignorance, of the means of acquiring increased strength, of the conditions of our intellectual development, the acquisition of a more perfect control over our passions and perverse inclinations, if these constitute the especial purpose of our human lives, then what progress have we made in that definite period of time which has just elapsed? It is a considerable fraction of our present life which has gone; how large a fraction it may be, we do not know. What have we to show for it, in distinct and clearly defined progress? If we be quite sure that some real progress has been made, however little, then surely the time will not have been entirely lost.

But when this apprehension is distinctly and firmly acquired, a new set of ideas begins to crowd into the minds, perhaps, of many of us. We have had, perhaps, a distinct and grateful belief in God as the Creator of the natural world; as the God who has made all things belonging to the wonderfully complex natural world perfectly harmonious with each other, and each complete and perfect in itself; who has appointed such admirably adapted laws to govern and control each and all of the various parts that certainty and regularity in the continued working of the vast and complex