

Yet Elijah, standing on Mount Carmel, could deride the priests of Baal when from morning to evening they called upon the sun and there was no answer. He could do this, because he knew that the sun was merely a creature subject to physical law. Had Professor Tyndall been present on Mount Carmel, his view would have been thus far precisely the same; and he, as little as Elijah, would have joined the priests in their frantic leaping around their altar and cutting themselves with knives. But had he now turned to the prophet and said: "You see it is useless to pray for rain," Elijah could have answered, "True it is useless to pray to the sun, for he is the slave of inexorable law; but as you do not deny that there may be a God who enacted the law, and as this God, being everywhere, can have access to the spirits of men, it may be quite possible for God so to correlate the myriad adjustments which determine whether the rain shall fall on any particular place at any particular time, that the fact shall coincide with his spiritual relations to his people. Further, it does not matter in the least how closely all these natural phenomena are bound together by links of cause and effect, because this chain of causation must have had a beginning, and to God who knows the end from the beginning, and to whom the past and the future are both alike present, it is the same to arrange these correlations to-day or in the beginning of time. Therefore, if you cannot deny that there is a God, and if you must admit that such a God cannot be debarred from intercourse with the souls he has made, the science of nature, which merely makes known in part certain modes of God's operation, can bear no true testimony against the efficacy of prayer addressed to Him." Thus it may be quite true that it is useless to pray if we know no power above physical laws and material objects, and it would be most absurd to pray to these; but, if we have access to the mind that made and rules all these things, who can tell what answers we may invoke?

There is nothing therefore in science, any more than in Scripture, to interpose a vault of brass between us and the higher heaven. But we may go even further than this, and affirm that there are some analogical indications afforded by science of a present God, and of the possibility of access to Him. Not long ago, apparently impassable gulfs intervened between the great forces of nature, now we begin to see that they may be one in essence, and so convertible into each other that the most strange and unlooked-for mutations may arise. What if they should all be ultimately resolvable into the will of God? and may not man by his will and spirit, as well as by his reason, share

in the resources of omnipotence? Moses long ago included all the great forces of nature, except gravitation, in the one Hebrew word *or*,* translated "light" in our version, and attributed them to the Almighty fiat; and, if modern science arrives at the same conclusion as to the unity of these forces, it need not quarrel with his conclusion as to their source. Farther, the inventions which science has made, giving to man mastery over these same forces, should render us more humble in limiting the possibilities of intercourse between man and God. We can fancy the scorn with which a philosopher of the time of Hume would have treated the madman who should affirm, contrary to experience and probability, that he could stand in an office in London and dictate instantaneous commands to his agents in America or China; yet relatively a small amount of additional knowledge, attained by a few electricians, has rendered this miracle familiar to the ordinary business man, who knows nothing of the laws of electricity. Such things, while they are glories of practical science, should make it humble in affirming or denying possibilities beyond its ken.

ANTQUITY OF MAN.

We may in this investigation limit ourselves to the consideration of the earliest or Palæocosmic men; and the two main points with reference to them, embraced in our present subject, are their antiquity and their relation to modern races of men. With respect to the first point, we shall find that little certainty as to their absolute date can be attained, except that they are geologically very modern and historically very ancient; and with respect to the second, that they are closely allied to that race of men which in historic times has been the most widely spread of any. As these men are pre-historic, we can have, with respect to their antiquity, only geological evidence, and this resolves itself into the calculation of the rate of erosion of river valleys, of deposition of gravels and cave-earths, and of formation of stalagmite crusts, all of which are so variable and uncertain that, though it may be said that an impression of great antiquity beyond the time of received history has been left on the minds of geologists, no absolute antiquity has been proved; and while some, on such evidence, would stretch the antiquity of man to even half a million of years, the oldest of these remains may, after all, not exceed our traditional six thousand. With reference, for example, to the erosion of river valleys in Western Europe, it can be shown that this probably belongs to a much earlier period than that of man, and that

*Allied in derivation to the Greek *αιθηρ*.