

In either case the result is the same; I am left Godless. I do not choose it to be so; I would far rather have it otherwise; therefore I am not responsible for it. I know it is not power He lacks, for He has revealed Himself to you—who, a few months ago, were as far off Him as I—in such an unmistakable way as to force you into recognition and obedience. I do not understand the process, but there is the result. You love and honour where you once disliked, to use a mild term. Now I have been as anxious as you to discover the one true God, and in one sense I have found Him. That is to say, I acknowledge your God as *the* God; but as for the spiritual manifestation of His presence, I know nothing of it. The conclusion is inevitable; God has not the will to reveal himself to me; and am I to be blamed for the consequences? *

"Are you sure that the obstacle to a clearer light is not in yourself?"

"I was prepared for that question, but by your own words man is responsible only for his will. I have *willed* to know God, and there my part ends. I do not mean a mere passive will; mine has been more than that, you know. I have used every possible means, but all in vain. What obstacles are in the way I know not, neither have I any sort of control over them. You said in your letter that the truth of God's love stood immovable; *that* I cannot endorse—at least as far as I am concerned. It is strange that Christ, the type of noblest manhood, should have so little sympathy! However, I have made up my mind to let the whole matter drop now. What is the use of making my life wretched by ceaseless conjectures? If I am not to find God, I am not to, and there's an end of it. What is the use of fighting against fate? which, by the way, seems to be only another name for Providence. You Christians say 'Providence has willed it so;' we worldlings say, 'The fates have so decreed;' and they both mean pretty much the same thing. Something we don't want is to be, or something we do want isn't to be. 'Lord! what fools these mortals be!'"

"Do you quite see what you are doing, James?" said Ericson, thoughtfully.

"I? what do you mean?"

"Only that you are robbing God of truth, honour, and justice. You are placing Him below the level of ordinary humanity."