

and dams he stores up the water in time of plenty to provide against the time of scarcity, or uses it to turn the desert into a garden. The science of seismology is rapidly becoming an exact one. It has discovered the weak spots in the earth's crust, and has explained the causes of earthquakes by a perfectly natural pulling and straining of the strata in process of adjustment, and the activity of volcanoes with an understandable explanation of their causes.

Flood and fire and lightning have been chained and controlled, and made to perform in man's service, and the ancient tale that they were the manifestations of an evil supernatural power, let loose to punish man for his transgressions, or in malignant spite, is smiled at, and reserved as a tale to frighten little children into being good.

The veil that hid the unknown has been torn aside, and the terrors that were inspired by the very existence of the unknown have been brushed aside with it.

In the same way, he has discarded the idea of a beneficent supernatural deity who was his friend and protector, and the enemy of the Evil One. Observation of the effects of his own activity on the materials supplied him by nature has shown him that many of the results obtained are superior to what he had previously considered the gifts of a good spirit. With the growth of his knowledge and understanding of natural laws he can perform wonders of creation, that, in spite of the Bible, "add cubits to his stature," and multiply his strength a thousand-fold. By pressing a button he can provide or deny light to thousands of his kind. By pulling a lever he can set in motion mighty machines, his own creation, that perform the work of a host. Time and distance he has annihilated, continents and oceans are made to serve his ends, the empire of the air is surrendering to his assaults, and the heavens he scans with his telescopes, searching their innermost recesses, classifying, tabulating, weighing the planets, following them in their paths, predicting their coming and going, in perfect understanding of the laws that govern them in their movements. And in all he finds no God superior to himself. He has found that all things, animate and inanimate, but himself are the blind subjects of natural forces. He alone is able to look these mighty powers in the face, bend them to his will. He has discovered that the universe is eternal, yielding implicit obedience to inexorable cosmic laws of birth, growth, and decay, operating in an eternal cycle of change, in utter disregard of puny humanity. The light of scientific research has been turned on the dark places, and God and the Devil are rolling their blankets.

Supernatural religion has lost its hold on the masses. Priest and parson see their influence dwindling, and the ruling classes are correspondingly uneasy at the growing independence of thought among their subjects. The "divine right" of kings of all descriptions, whether they be of dynasty, or of mine, rail, and soil, is being seen in its proper light as but the might of the strong to oppress the weak. The spell of creeds and litanies is vanishing, and the disinherited are getting ready to measure their might against that of the Lord's anointed. The churches, handmaidens of the rulers, are behaving like hens that have hatched out ducklings, beating the air and waking the echoes with their cacklings of reproachful distress at the unnatural perversity of their erstwhile docile wards,