

result—while in endeavouring to ascertain what are apparently the guiding principles of nature's proceedings, and in expatiating upon the many thousand ways in which design, and mechanism and combination are displayed, while in doing this the coldest philosophy may be warmed into admiration at the multiplicity and intricacy, the beauty and grandeur of nature's plans and works, it is the office of religion, and of the religious teacher to see that all our sense of what is wonderful and impressive should not rest upon nature alone, but that our minds should be carried forward to that great God of whose power and intelligence nature is but the visible manifestation and exponent. Nature itself is but an effect—the production of the Omniscient Artificer; and the homage of man's heart and reverential feelings is due, not to the works of nature, wonderful though they are, but to him whose offspring nature is—to whom nature owes both its origin and its permanence.

We are permitted, keeping God in view, to admire what are popularly called the works of nature, both for the beauty with which He has clothed them, and as evidences of His being and wisdom; and while we search into her various departments, we may, if not wilfully blind, discover in every one rich store-houses of testimony to his glory. But there is often found in the human heart a disposition to rest upon what is tangible and material, to substitute philosophy for religion, and to make an idol of nature, instead of worshipping Him who has said "the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. . . . For all those things hath mine hand made." We are too prone to stop where observation stops, instead of rising upon the wings of faith to Him who has been revealed to us as the great Author of all things.

Many acknowledge the wonders of nature, for all who examine must wonder, but some refuse to go beyond. They think it solution enough of every wonder to say, it is natural—it is always so; not asking themselves, who has caused it to be so—by whose fiat has nature been subjected to all