

for a moment, and which we realise, through a true philosophy, less completely, but for a lifetime."

"That," said Glanville, "is a charming creed. I wish I could believe it. I could help you myself to amplify it. This morning when we bathed, the cavern from which we took our plunge seemed part of Calypso's island. I expected to see the prows of Ulysses pushing themselves round every rock. Poetry makes us one not only with all the universe, but also with all human history. The beauty of the past stirs us just as the beauty of the sea does, or the woods in which Thoreau walked and found nature his divine companion. But had Thoreau only lived a decade or two later, he need only have taken a telescope and gone up from his wood in a balloon to have seen this same nature of whose sympathy he had just boasted, pouring red-hot lava out of a ladle over men, women and babies, and thundering a mad laugh from its ogre's throat as they frizzled. What becomes of my sense—whether the sense is religious or poetic—that I am one with the universe as the thought of a perfect Deity, when I find that while this universe has been ogling me with eyes of sentimental affection, it has been sticking a pin into you, and making you spin round like a cockchafer? No, my dear Alistair—what you don't see and won't see is this—that all these visions of the general perfection of things, and of our own oneness with their perfection, are based not on the facts of the case, as our waking eyes show them to us, but are little selections of facts which we make in dreams. Out of these facts, in our dreams, we spin for ourselves a glittering web. But the moment we wake and see the things as they are, the threads of our web are unravelled and re-carded. They are woven afresh on the universal loom; and the new fabric is blank or is damasked with forms of horror. Comte knew this—though he didn't admit it to himself—when he warned the adorers of humanity not to trouble themselves about the stars. For faith, there is a nightshade in the Cosmos, as there is a nightshade for our bodies in the field. And now, if you'll be