

cali nature. The visible world is not the highest manifestation of God, but it does manifest Him. "O God," said the reverent Kepler, "I think Thy thoughts after Thee!" The material universe is not a dead machine, but, to him who has a mind to think and a heart to feel, it is saturated with the life and love of the Father. It was one of the false ideas of the middle ages, that to study nature was to turn away from the life of holiness. This separation of nature from God is but a disguised form of atheism. Nature is His visible garment. It is the great temple which enshrines the living God. The "cathedral of immensity" has been fashioned by Our Father, and its use is not to hide but to reveal Him. The innumerable host of heaven which he has "hung aloft the night," reflect the radiance of His countenance. The ordered harmony and law which join together in the nicest bonds the infinitely small and the stupendously great, the nearest with the most remote, are but the outward form which His shaping intelligence has imposed. In the immeasurable stretches of space, thick with stars, and in the eternal procession of the years, are reflected the infinity of the Ancient of Days. To him who stands with bowed head, in the contemplation of this spectacle of infinite sublimity, comes an emotion of awe and reverence which testifies that he is in the presence of the Most High. Nature does not conceal God from the devout mind, but reveals His majesty. And the perfect organic unity which pervades all nature is a type of that perfection of bodily organism at which it is our duty to aim. Our bodies must be made a "temple of the Holy Ghost." The Greek erred in making perfection of bodily grace an end in itself; but it is the rediscovery of a truth that had been for long obscured and almost lost, that religion demands the utmost care for our physical well-being. The perverted religiosity of the mediaeval monk is contrary to the ideal of the Christian life. It was but a refined form of egoism, or at least a misconception, which led him to practice self-mortification for its own sake. At any rate it is a higher form of Christian faith to reverence that delicate instrument of the spirit which is one of the precious gifts of God.

But if perfection of the body is an end which we ought diligently to seek, how much more ought we to strive for a true insight into the nature of things! Here again we must get rid of the mediaeval taint that is apt to infect our idea of the Christian life. Religion is not limited to the symbols of Christian fellowship or to the performance of certain ordinances, although these are important in helping to keep alive its sacred flame. We must learn to include in our conception all the activities by which, in realizing ourselves, we seek to attain to perfection. Christianity does not allow of any opposition of secular and sacred. None of the modes in which, in the true spirit, we realize our self-consciousness is "common or unclean." The mediaeval idea, for instance, that to devote oneself to the study of society and the state is to turn away from the religious life, is a blasphemy against God, who in the self-conscious intelligence of man expresses His essence. In every discovery of a law of nature we deepen our consciousness of the infinite wisdom of God. The more thoroughly we comprehend the constitution of the state, the better are we able to love our brother, and to pro-