

to go beneath the surface and find out what lies there; to pass from the shell to the kernel; to look into the heart and soul of things. To those who have not this power—how small and meaningless the world is—for having eyes, they see not, neither do they understand.

You show them in early spring a snow drop. To them it is simply a little flower, nothing more. They can speak eloquently of its coloring, its structure, etc., nevertheless, they see nothing but a flower, whereas a snow drop is a little prophet, proclaiming unmistakably that the winter is passing away, and that the time of the singing of birds is at hand.

You show them a fossil. It is to them only a stone; as a matter of fact, however, it is a historian telling, in its own way, a wondrous tale of days long since gone by. You speak of an angel in the house. They incredulously ask where, little thinking that reference is made to a devoted wife and mother, or to a child in whom is developed the true child spirit in all its strength and beauty.

You point out to them a fine opportunity, and urge them to seize it, but they cannot see it.

To deal with such persons involves a heavy strain upon patience. How wide the gulf that separates them from those who are gifted with the power of insight! How instructive it is to listen to their reading of character! Where the undiscerning see nothing but a rough and repulsive exterior, they, looking beneath the surface, find a royal nature, or at least the possibilities thereof. Where the undiscerning see nothing but a nature hopelessly wrecked and ruined, they discover a son or a daughter of Abraham.

To them the outward is not all; they remember the inward, and act accordingly.

In the commercial world what a valuable power is that of commercial insight. In the political world, political insight. In the scientific world, scientific insight. The noblest and best of all is spiritual insight.

This may be looked at in a threefold aspect.

1st. In relation to nature. 2nd. Providence. 3rd. In relation to the Bible, more especially.

1st. IN RELATION TO NATURE.

Viewed from the standpoint of spiritual insight, nature has a meaning and uses which it cannot otherwise have. Then sun, moon and stars; sunshine and cloud; mountains and valleys; oceans, rivers, rippling, singing brooks; trees and flowers, are symbols or figures of great spiritual realities. Then nature becomes a school of high moral and spiritual culture. Then nature is a veritable temple of God.

2nd. IN RELATION TO PROVIDENCE.

Apart from the grace of spiritual insight, what a chaos Providence seems to be; how haphazard, purposeless and

merciless its workings. Apart from the grace of spiritual insight, the thought that is apt to be suggested by the movements of Providence is that of a kingless throne, a fatherless world—all mere chance work, bewildering and maddening in the extreme. How widely different the view which spiritual insight gives. It sees that clouds and darkness are round about the throne; but not less distinctly that justice and judgment are the basis of the throne; that through the ages a ceaseless purpose runs, and that this purpose is divinely beneficent.

In the great upheavals and overthrowings that are taking place, and that disquiet and distress timid spirits, it sees the comings of Christ; preparations for the establishment of His kingdom far and wide. It has a special faculty for interpreting what is hid from the wise and prudent. Referring to this matter, one of the poets of the Christian sanctuary expresses himself thus:

"Oh! blessed life, the mind that sees,
Whatever change the years may bring,
A mercy still in every thing
And shining through all mysteries."

"A mercy still in everything." Ah, to see gain in loss; the elements of joy in sorrow. To see love in the burdens, crooks and crosses of life. What a blessed power this! It is the power of spiritual insight—one of the secrets of the Lord with them that fear Him—a true prophetic power.

3rd. IN RELATION TO THE BIBLE, MORE ESPECIALLY.

It is quite possible to have a large knowledge of the Bible without spiritual insight. We may be able to describe the lands mentioned therein with ease and accuracy; we may be familiar with Eastern manners and customs; we may be in a position to discuss intelligently the doctrines propounded, and yet find that the Book is to us a sealed Book—sealed as far as the knowledge and appreciation of what is truest and best in it are concerned. The reason of this may be stated in a variety of ways. Paul states it thus: "The natural man receiveth not the things of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them." Neither can he know them; he lacks the necessary organ, "for they are spiritually discerned—"spiritually discerned." It follows then that the secret of understanding the Bible lies not in mere scholarship. Thank God for scholarship; its fruits are rich and precious. There are matters in the Bible which scholars alone are competent to deal with. All honor to the men who so thoughtfully and patiently have laid themselves out to deal with these mat-

ters. They have rendered, and are rendering, splendid service. All this, however, is a very different thing from see-

ing into the inmost heart of the Bible.

In the Book the spiritual element is the paramount element—hence what an artistic eye is to art, a scientific eye to science, a philosophic eye to philosophy, a spiritual eye is to the Bible. He who fears the Lord has this eye, and he has it just in proportion to the degree in which he fears the Lord.

Look at him as a reader and student of the Bible. He comes to the Book, not as a cavilling, captious critic, but as a seeker after truth—a learner—steeped in the spirit of reverence and teachableness. His prayer, uttered or unexpressed, is "open Thou mine eyes that I may see wondrous things out of Thy law." His prayer is heard, and so what mere eye-power cannot see, nor mere ear-power hear, nor imagination-power reach, is revealed to him by the spirit of God, who searcheth all things, even the deep things of God, and who is to-day a living, acting, revealing spirit, and through whose teaching it may be given to the humblest God-fearing man to see a larger meaning, a deeper significance in the words of Holy Prophets and Apostles than they themselves saw.

Is it not since we began to fear the Lord that we have found out the secret that is in the Bible, as well as the secret of understanding it?

Before then we may have been charmed by the vivid pictures given of Patriarchal times, deeply moved by the tender pathos of the Psalms and of Isaiah; greatly interested in the fourfold portraiture of the life-sayings and doings of our Lord; nevertheless we were in the outer court of the Bible temple. Now we are in the inmost sanctuary. The Book is to us a new Book, pregnant with spiritual meanings; rich in green pastures and stilling waters, because ours is the secret of the Lord with them that fear Him—the secret of spiritual insight.

It is to this our Lord refers when He says: "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

It is to this secret also that John refers when he says: "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." Again: "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true."

Blessed are they who fear the Lord, for theirs is the secret of spiritual insight.

Seize hold of God's hand, and look full in the face of his creation, and there is nothing he will not enable you to achieve.—Ruskin.

We ordinarily first bring our own needs to God in prayer. The Master reverses the order. First thy name, thy kingdom, thy will; then give us, forgive us, deliver us.—Rev. Andrew Murray.