

But a tinge of anthropomorphism colors all the sacred Hebrew literature. God is viewed more as infinite physical force than as infinite spirit and love. With an abundance of poetic and artistic symbolism there is wanted that broader consciousness of divine harmony, adjustment, and beauty, with which a truer concept thrills the soul. The Hebrew saw nature as moved upon by God rather than as the constant radiant expression of divine life and unfoldment. Human fellowship with it, and translated goodness through it, are later and truer interpretations than those made by the Old Testament poets and prophets. But what of modern materialistic views, even less spiritual than those of the Hebrew? We find them limited to the scientific study of phenomena on the one side, or the æsthetic pleasure of form and color on the other. The significance and vitality of nature are thereby lost; she is grasped by the intellect rather than enshrined in the heart. Art as an intellectual expression is coldly mechanical. The true artist must feel nature as instinct with divine life, whether or not he is fully conscious of such an inspiration.

During the long, gloomy period, between the decay of classic culture and the Renaissance, inspiration through nature almost ceased. The rigid austerity and asceticism, which cast its shadows over the middle ages, obliterated the beauty and harmony of the visible creation. In such a light nature appeared sickly, mechanical, and forbidding. Men found nothing attractive without, because they were conscious of no beauty within. Life became barren because nature was barred out. Humanity was under a curse, and nature shared in the disgrace. Men shut themselves up in cells, and lived behind bare walls, and put God's green fields out of their sight. Without the Immanent God the visible universe was prosaic and stern, and its aspect would have been improved even by the presence of a deity who in himself seemed unlovable. When life loses its plasticity and grows conventional, it solidifies into unyielding forms, and religion becomes an institution, and worship a prescribed service in temples made with hands. The inner soulful inter-