

But how much deeper the thrill when we consider the higher spiritual nature of man: its power of contemplation, its wonderful stretches of imagination, its capabilities of penetration into the hidden recesses, and exploration of the vast domain, of the universe; and above all, the grandeur and greatness of its moral possibilities! In such observations we behold numberless marks of joy and gladness, of beauty and purity, of majesty and sublimity, of wisdom and goodness.

The question very naturally arises, What is there in nature in its varied aspects to produce such emotions and ideas within us? Can we believe that the mere fact of the phenomena, as they are occurring and persistently recurring to the mind, is sufficient to explain them? Is it not rather the idea of *personality* which seems to underlie them all? Is it not that we feel that we are standing in the presence of some great Person who inspires us with these feelings of awe and sublimity, or wonder and surprise, or delight and admiration? Whenever we contemplate these qualities as exhibited, the mind immediately brings forward its idea of personality, and we feel that we are in the presence of Nature's God.

On this ground, we believe that we have full authority from the facts of nature, as perceived in man's religious experience, for predicating the existence of a God. And although we cannot set our conclusion on a strictly deductive basis, yet we can set it on as firm a basis as almost any other fact of human knowledge. From a metaphysical standpoint we observe the phenomena of nature; but thought must superinduce its principles before these phenomena can become objects of knowledge. And just so from a religious standpoint, we observe qualities in nature which produce certain emotional feelings, and the mind superinduces its conception of personality. This is not a Pantheistic conception; for the God our consciousness bears testimony to is a person, existing in the universe and yet distinct from it. We can say with the inspired preacher on Mars' Hill, in Him we live and move and have our being, and yet, we cannot believe that God is the world-soul coming into consciousness in us.

As the universe demonstrates the existence, so it displays the attributes of the Eternal. Is it not somewhat remarkable that the very terms which we use to describe the excellent qualities of natural scenery and natural productions, such as lovely, grand, glorious, pure, tender, noble, etc., are also the terms by which we express the excellence of moral character which belongs only to a person. Such terms, when used by any one fully imbued with the corresponding emotions, cannot act otherwise than inspire with feelings akin to those excited by the conception of personality. It is by this echo to man's religious sensibility that nature to a very large degree reveals the moral perfections of her great Author. But while all may learn lessons from nature as she presents herself, yet she unfolds her treasures only to the thoughtful and meditative mind. Many a person may behold some of the most entrancing scenes, and for want of proper thought—which implies culture—take little or no notice of them; while another with a contemplative mind would be filled with wonder or delight, as the case may be. There are, no doubt, relations producing states of mind which naturally indispose for beholding those qualities which are fitted to inspire us with the emotions of beauty and sublimity. Familiarity, for example, may dull the perceptive faculty and cause the grandest scenes to be regarded as commonplace affairs. Those who live in regions of romantic scenery, where the landscape is of surpassing beauty, and all nature wears the garb of sublimity and is clad in robes of majesty, from their very