

When Goethe says, "the great Being whom we name the Deity *manifests himself*, not only in Man, but in a rich and powerful Nature, and in mighty world-events," he simply misuses words. "Manifests himself" is a phrase totally out of place except in the mouth of a clergyman enforcing the Design argument. What we do know is this: that though in "man, in nature, and in mighty world-events," we see wonderful transformations, no man has yet penetrated beyond the phenomena recorded so as to be able to say by what agency those transformations are brought about. The utmost that has yet been done is to observe their relations and sequences; and so far as these have been observed, they are all so uniformly regular and correlative, that, instead of manifesting an intelligence which could deal in different ways to suit the varying circumstances and needs of man, they appear to be but manifestations of powers inherent in the matter of the organizations involved in the changes—powers of a rigid and unbending nature, to which the laws of the Medes and Persians were but as a rope of sand. And when Mr. Underwood speaks of "that which underlies phenomena"—the Ultimate Reality—being *revealed in consciousness*, I beg respectfully to dissent. I contend that nothing has ever yet been revealed in consciousness but the phenomena that we term Nature, and that to speak of "inscrutable" or "infinite" things as being *revealed* is a misuse of words. Where our knowledge of phenomena ends, all we can know is, that what is beyond is unknown to us. We can feel our ignorance and a desire for more knowledge, but we cannot say that this feeling *reveals* any new phenomena, least of all any spiritual existence or "noumena."

Now, if the preceding observations are of any value, they prove that all perceptible phenomena have a physical basis; that is to say, our consciousness of the existence of things is the result of mental states produced by impressions received from the outside world. To me, it seems the height of absurdity to talk about abolishing the term "light," on the ground that the phenomenon we know as light is a psychical phenomenon; for, if this were done, the vibrations which produce in us the effect of light and enable us to see objects would still exist, and a new name would have to be invented for the observed effect. The two essential terminal factors for the production of light are undoubtedly the vibration-producing or incandescent object and the sensitive brain. To some extent only the intermediate links are known; yet, because the final process is unknown by which the light-producing vibrations cause this sensation of light, are we to conclude that some new factor has stepped in to perform the operation? Is it not sufficiently obvious that vibrations—"collisions of insentient atoms" (?)—of a certain sort, have produced the effect we call light, and that our only reason for calling it a "psychical" rather than a "physical" effect, is that we do not know the first process of change?

But Mr. Underwood, in a preceding paragraph, has only just told us,—very