

'Hope' asks: 'I would like to know if an Agnostic who has lost a loved one can reconcile himself to the thought that all is indeed over for the dear departed?' The thought that a loved one has gone never to be seen again brings sorrow and pain into the heart of the one bereaved, and the desire to again be with the loved one in mutual consciousness will assert itself. It is inevitable. But it is just here that the grieved one is apt to mislead himself. Do we in our human affairs get the things most dear to our hearts just because we wish for them and their acquisition would make us supremely happy? Are there not many things beyond our reach? It is hard to reconcile one's self to the thought that the loved one will not be seen again, but the Agnostic does not say he will not. He hopes he will, but he does not count on it as a certainty, for there is nothing in the stern reality of things that says he will. There are words to that effect, but they prove nothing. The Agnostic tries not to be misled by words. Truth is apart from all words. They may lead to its discovery, but they can't establish truth. The Agnostic thinks of his friend and companion as he was in this world, and leaves it a question, which he is not apt to dwell upon, as to whether they will meet again. Nor does the Agnostic 'theorize' as to 'how we got here.' He did that when a Christian, but has outgrown it. The only force apparent to us that has 'control over our existence' is nature. It is unnecessary to think of heaven in order to observe the laws of nature. According to our use of natural laws are we strengthened or weakened. The Agnostic feels that nature is all there is, and while he is a lover of its wonders and beauties, he cannot reconcile the ravages of storms and plagues, heat and cold, earthquakes and war, and cruelty to the helpless and innocent, with the existence of an all-powerful and merciful God. The Agnostic does not believe it to be necessary to concern himself about going elsewhere in order to make it worth while being here. As a human being, he rejoices in being such, and—a right-living, humane person, with kindness towards all and malice towards none—the Agnostic believes that, if there is a heaven, he will not be debarred entrance to it because of his being true to his convictions on earth."

Another correspondent, "W. B. D.," writes:

"'Hope' says he is 'looking for help, an assurance of the divine origin and end of all things.' This assurance he will never receive, if he accepts the verdict of his reason after giving to the subject his most profound consideration. There is not on earth to-day one incontestable proof that the world is of divine origin or is under divine guidance, nor is there a solitary indubitable proof that man survives the grave: Theology and science alike may safely be challenged to demonstrate the contrary. It is the habit of man to demand from nature an answer to every question he may propound to her; and when nature is silent,