

dead mechanical system. For power is by no means in itself an explanation of everything. Power may be rational or irrational, and I confess that to my mind nothing would be so terrible as a dead, remorseless power, absolutely indifferent to right or wrong, working with unerring certainty, but with utter disregard of the demands of the spirit. Therefore, philosophy cannot be contented with the conception of power or energy as a final explanation of the world. But, I must not take up too much of your time, and I will, therefore, simply say, that no philosophy can ultimately be satisfactory which does not find mind or reason to be the principle of all things. Now, when you have reached this conclusion, you see what a dreadful amount of ground you must in some way cover. All the manifestations of the human spirit are manifestations of mind. From mind proceed all the arts—painting, sculpture, poetry, music—and if philosophy is to be all-comprehensive, as I have claimed it must in some sense be, a philosopher must know the principles of all the arts as well as of all the sciences. Nor is this all, for societies and states are products of mind; and thus we are launched upon that wide and varied field, the field of history. Further, religion in all its forms is a product of mind or reason, and, therefore, philosophy must comprehend the whole wide sphere of religion.

From these considerations you will readily understand how any one who takes philosophy seriously must be kept from becoming conceited. There are few men—I have only met one—who imagine that they have a complete familiarity with all the sciences, all the arts, all history and all religion. That is one reason why philosophy is such an admirable study for young men and women; for young men, and perhaps young women, have a tendency to a high appreciation of themselves. That is quite natural and I am not blaming them. Their ignorance is so colossal that the little bit of knowledge they have acquired has nothing to dwarf it in their eyes. But, when they come to see that to be a complete man they would not only need to be

perfect in conduct, but perfect in knowledge,—that they would need to be familiar with at least the results of all the sciences, all the arts, all the religion—it strikes down their pride and they are ready to confess that they are miserable sinners and know nothing. And the teacher of philosophy has enough to keep him humble. It was with a positive sigh of relief that I discovered that Aristotle—*il Maestro di color che sanno*, as Dante calls him—“the master of those who know”—was no great mathematician. But you see what a very humbling occupation philosophy is. It is the one science which demands all knowledge and one experience, and of course in these days no all can have all the knowledge and all the experience of his time. There is, however, a sort of royal road. We are parts of a great organism, the organism of humanity. What the race achieves becomes a permanent possession, or may become a permanent possession, of us all. We do not know all the processes, but we may know the results. We can enter into the heritage of our race. It is in this way that we obtain the principles of the sciences and arts and religions, and our work as philosophers is to take due pains to become familiar with these results. Starting from them, we can obtain a whole view of things. But the way is very long, and for myself I can only say, that I feel I have but begun to understand a few things. When I hear the generous words of my old pupils I feel a sort of shame; I feel as if I were an impostor. The way is long and steep, and neither I nor any man will ever traverse it all. The full truth is for Omniscience alone. And yet we must not talk in a despairing way. We must not speak in mock humility of our absolute ignorance. We are not absolutely ignorant. Some things we must hold with the utmost tenacity. We are certain that reason is at the heart of things, that what Heine calls “the terrible doctrine that God is dead,” is not true, but a lie. We must hold that all things work together for good:

“That not a worm is cloven in vain;
That not a moth with vain desire,
Is shrivelled in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain.”