

the facts we know the basis of inference as to the nature of God's purpose.

The qualities of purpose considered in concrete life.

1. Purpose exercised between precise forecast and exact fulfilment. This only possible for the mere mechanic working in inanimate matter.
2. Inventor or artist works out new ideal in inanimate matter. Forecast less precise ; result less accurate.
3. Gardeners and herdsmen work out inward ideals in the material of life. These desire only the perfection of the life they tend, without forecasting individual variation.
4. The schoolmaster, parent, or missionary works out inward ideals in a higher form of life. The higher the material in which the purpose must be worked out, the stronger and nobler must be the purpose.

This is the law of purpose ; and we may infer from it that God executes His purpose in the sphere of autonomous life, that the divine Will is not a force that works mechanically between precise forecast and exact fulfilment.

CHAPTER II

CREATIVE PURPOSE 31

When increasing knowledge shatters the traditional pictures of the unknown, it is better to build these up again rather than seek to live by a faith unaided by imagination, always bearing in mind that all words and images are merely symbols of truth.

Assuming God as first cause, we must try to picture His relation to creation.

Metaphysical difficulties notwithstanding, we postulate Creator and creation, and must paint the unknown in analogies from the life we know.

Matter, whether organic or inorganic, is now described in a way that to the plain man implies that it is only a form of energy. Energy may be thought of as the body of life. Let us picture how this creation can have come to be.

We may conceive of creation as the gift of life.

Autonomy is of the essence of life ; for since we insist that man is self-directing, spite of scientific evidence that he is determined, we need not suppose all other things entirely different from him in this respect.

In the beginning we get motion, tension, attraction, repulsion, and by degrees what we call the "inanimate" universe—God exercising in this stage something analogous to mechanical purpose. When life begins to express itself in organic forms, autonomy becomes more decided ; God's purpose works more intricately.