

to lie barren and uncultivated. It must suffice, for the present, to have touched upon this point. Only one topic remains to be urged. With all our getting of knowledge we must not neglect the knowledge of ourselves or the knowledge of God; for this is the culminating point of all knowledge.

We should seek to know ourselves. In spite of all that has been said against it, there is yet much to be urged in favour of the "*Heaven-descended know thyself.*" It is true that there is always a danger of excessive and morbid introspection; but we must not therefore neglect the duty of self-examination. Whether we wish to amend our errors or to discover what kind of work we may hopefully undertake and successfully perform, we must do our best to know ourselves.

And we shall never really know ourselves, or what man is or may become, without the knowledge of God. And it is the more necessary to dwell upon this subject, since it is by many declared in our own days that such knowledge is unattainable. We have knowledge only of phenomena, it is said. The facts of the material world around us we may test in many different ways, and upon the knowledge which we thus obtain we may place a certain amount of reliance. But we have, and can have, no such knowledge of the spiritual world and of God, and therefore, whilst sentiment and imagination may go forth into those regions, knowledge and the action which depends upon knowledge must be restricted to the sphere of the seen and the tangible.

These are bold assertions, and their very boldness may win them acceptance with many minds; but for all that they are as unreasonable as we hold them to be untrue. Of course, if we are quite determined to do so, we may doubt the existence of

anything, or the possibility of our attaining to any certain knowledge on any subject. We may declare that we have no positive knowledge of an external world. All that we really know is our own sensations, and these have been explained by different persons in different ways. But however they may be explained, it is at least certain that all men live and act upon the presumption that there is an external world, something besides ourselves with which we are continually in contact, and of which we have an amount of knowledge sufficient for all practical purposes.

Now, it is so far from being true that we have a knowledge of matter, but no knowledge of mind, that the very reverse would be nearer the truth. Our knowledge of mind is immediate and direct, it is revealed in our own consciousness; our knowledge of matter is mediate and indirect, it comes to us through the contents of our consciousness. Whatever may be our theory of perception, this is true. We begin with mind. But for this we should never really know anything; and it is absurd, as has been well remarked, to subordinate the knowledge of mind to the knowledge of nature, seeing that we can know nature only by means of that very mind whose existence we are denying.*

But it is not only within ourselves that the existence of mind is revealed to us. Nature is unintelligible except as the expression of mind. Everywhere we behold the prevalence of order and the reign of law. And so

* "Among all the errors of the human mind it has always seemed to me the strangest, that it could come to doubt its own existence, of which alone it has direct experience, or to take it at second-hand as the product of an external Nature which we know only indirectly, only by means of the knowledge of the very mind to which we would fain deny existence." Lotze, *Microcosmus*, Bk. ii., ch. 5.