

Were I to follow reason, I should believe that when a man is laid in the grave, and the body returns to the dust, and the sockets become holes, and vile worms feast upon the form I loved—I should believe, if guided by reason, that when the breath is out there is an end—an end for ever. No; Nature has no voice to answer all these great questions. As I have said, Mr. Tyndall attempts it in his "Fragments of Science," when referring to the conversation which took place between Napoleon and the savants in Egypt. He repeats the answer made by Napoleon to the savants when they expressed their theory of the origin of all things, and Napoleon said: "Very good; gentlemen; but who made these? From whence came these?" And then Mr. Tyndall says, a man's mind is so much like a musical instrument, with a certain range of note power or sound; and, beyond that range, on both sides, infinite silence—infinite silence.

We are informed by Mr. Maudsley that the human mind and all the emotions thereof simply form matter, and our thoughts, and lives, and diseases, are but transformation or waste of so much brain tissue. Mr. Spencer builds up the intellect as a man would build up a house. We are taught by Sir John Lubbock that the sacred element in marriage is all a mere fancy—a mere illusion—something that we have conceived, and that is not real. Of course the brain is but a dust-heap; the soul is nothing more than a combination of atoms. The human being, with all his longings, is scarcely wider apart from the animal creation, the lower orders—perhaps not as wide—than some animals are widely separated from each other. Lindsay, in his last book on "Man and Animals," leaves the impression—though he gives no theory at all—that we can account for all that is in man as we look upon animals and all corresponding mental acts or evidences of mental life in them. When I had finished the book I remember the impression that occurred to me. I closed the second volume and I said: "Well it seems to me conclusive that a man has no more mind than a horse; that what mind is in man is just the same in a horse, or in a bird, or in any other creature." And yet I thought, but there's this difference: I can open the book of Mr. Lindsay, and I can put it before the eyes of my dear old dog, who has great intelligence and sagacity, and I can ask him to read that book, or I can read it to him, and it will make no impression whatever on that pulpy substance called his mind. (Laughter and applause.) He is devoid of something, evidently, that you and I have. Here is a marked line of discrimination that indicates a nature different in the lower animals from that which exists in us.

Now, what can we hope from such an unfolding of principles—if principles they may be called? Materialism in life, materialism in all our thinking, and all our aims—materialism destroying our fair ideals and rendering the human race not only miserable but vicious. I ask, is not the tendency to-day of this wide-spread Naturalism towards materialistic living and materialistic thinking everywhere? Look upon the race, and you do not find them living for material ends? How few of our churches are largely thronged! How many pews are empty everywhere on Sunday! While I understand you have a venerated Sabbath—and the Lord long spare it to you—(Hear, hear and applause)—in some of our cities—I blush to say it, reared as I was in Edinburgh, where the Sabbath was kept as the day of God indeed—in some of our cities Sabbath has degenerated into a mere holiday, and if there is a day when vice and crime run riot, it is on Sunday, in many of our great western cities in the States. It is a terrible, terrible fact that Sunday every godly man looks forward to with dread, and not with joy. I take up my Monday morning paper always with apprehension. I know that some man's life has been strangled out of him—that some home has been dishonoured, and that drunken wassail has run riot somewhere. That is Sunday.