

These objections would be perfectly valid *if* the intellect of man were always willing or able to take things at first hand and ask no questions; but any state of things rendering this possible can never more exist. In ages long gone by, our savage progenitors *may* possibly have had all their energies so taken up with the problems of mere earthly existence that the reflective self-consciousness could not spring into life. In such a case it is not hard to see that philosophy would be both impossible and useless; but it is difficult for me to conceive of a human being without this reflective consciousness and certain it is that in civilized countries at the present day these conditions are not fulfilled. To me the conviction is almost irresistible, that even to the primitive savage, natural objects meant more than their mere appearance to the senses. Consider the fact that the most degraded savages known to us, attribute supernatural powers to insignificant natural objects, and we must look with suspicion upon any theory that denies this transcendental tendency of mind any exemplification in primitive man. Nothing can be more certain than the fact that to-day we have no class of people in the world who do not see, behind natural phenomena something that transcends the mere objects of sense. What this something is it is the end of philosophy to decide, and it appears to me incredible that some persons, apparently with a just appreciation of the facts of the case, can await the decision seemingly without interest as to which way the case goes, or at the most with only the interest of an idle curiosity. Nor can I understand that view which considers it practically a matter of indifference which way the case is decided. To me the interpretation we put upon the something that lies behind natural phenomena beyond the ken of sense, is that which alone can give meaning to those phenomena, and reveal to us the highest laws under which they can be arranged. If our conception of this fundamental reality be correct, then and then only can we advance to the highest and best use of the objects of sense; but if our view be mistaken, then will also our power be curtailed.

Let us consider, then, the value of the pursuit of philosophy in developing the powers of the mind. Metaphysics has been rightly called the science of sciences, inasmuch as it considers critically the conditions, both subjective and objective of all the sciences, and a very apparent difference may be noted, in the effect upon the mind, between the study of science and that of philosophy. The effect of the study of science upon the mind will be easily seen from a few examples. Take first, the case of what we choose to call *gravitation*. To primitive men, as to children the phenomena of gravitation were as evident as they are to our keenest scientists; but to them it was simply a fact, and any inquiry after the *cause* of these phenomena, if such was made, must