

# Cold Philosophy

Physiology, says the wise man, is an unfixed science, "but its uncertainties, such as function and organisation, perception and sensation, and at last thought and will, which belong to anatomy and metaphysics, all exhibit God in the tenderness of numberless adaptations and the unattainable perfection of mechanical skill."

We look about us to-day and find a marvellous advancement in every branch of science. Indeed it is almost frightening when we pause to consider the great amount of time that is necessarily consumed in research, and the perfecting of these minute details and mechanisms. We perceive also that, contrary to the mind of the old philosopher, man scarcely ever reduces these wonderful problems and achievements to their proper foundation, God.

It is frightening, because we know that Time is a very precious possession, that it passes quickly. The very watch that rests above our pulse or near to our heart is hurrying our life away with every moment. A second, an hour, but we may not turn back however much we would.

Time is a very peculiar thing. We cannot understand it. We have been told by theologians that in the next world it will probably bear no analogy to the hours and the days that we were accustomed to count in this. What, for instance, is a day to the Creator of the universe? We cannot say. What are a thousand years in His sight? Possibly as a brief moment of our earthly existence. We do not know. Of one thing, however, we are certain, and that is, that we came from God, and that we return to Him when our Time here on earth is no more.

We enter the Zoo and watch the antics of the giant elephant as he sways this way and that, with friendly eye following the capers of the children who share their luncheon with him and thereby earn his gratitude so far as he can be supposed to have such. This marvellous creature, that eats and sleeps and performs other functions of a living organism, cannot reason or think. In this alone he is unlike man. He was fashioned by the Creator's Hand, but something was left out of him. God, we may say, stopped short of the infinite perfection of His masterpiece. Therefore the elephant remains an inferior design in creation as compared to man, made to the image and likeness of his Creator.

Look up to the window, and note the tiny creature flitting hither and thither upon the curtain. It is a species of small fly or mosquito. It is exceedingly finely proportioned. It has a mouth, eyes, other organs, but we must use a microscope to discern any of them in detail. It has a certain powerful life, however, for it is able to wreak its vengeance upon man. In the still hours, when he is slumbering peacefully, it suddenly descends upon him, and fastening itself to his flesh, draws forth a drop of his very life blood. And yet, with the slightest pressure of his little finger, man can crush the life from this tiny organism that came from God.

Man passes through the museums and laboratories, and wonder at the skeleton of the man-eating shark. He looks upon the sharp-pointed instrument of the sword-fish where-with he condemns his opponent to a speedy death. He wonders, and speculates, and makes scientific calculations. But in them all he generally omits one thing. He gives no credit for all these wonders where it properly belongs. These creatures, one and all, were fashioned by God, tirelessly working to fill His universe with wonderful masterpieces.

To the man of faith, all these wonders are but another revelation of the Omnipotence and goodness and wisdom of the Creator. His thoughts advert to that far back day when, having separated light from darkness and the earth from the sea, God fashioned, as so many toys, all the creeping and flying and gliding things that sustain their life from His all-supporting Hand. In all, the man of faith sees and reverences the Mighty Maker of the universe.

"I would not enter on my list of friends," said Cowper, "though he be graced with polished manners and fine sense, the man who needlessly sets foot upon a worm." So we would not enter on our list of friends the scoffer, the irreverent man, who says that all these wonderful things came "by chance."

The great scientist, who was very poor in the things of the spirit, sat by his study table, delving into the wonders of a subject that had long obsessed his mind. Through the open window a beautiful moth came flying and, with unwonted temerity, alighted on the page of his book. And the great one, annoyed that it left a trail of pollen on the immaculate page, crushed it in his palm, uttering imprecations on this little, helpless,

beautiful thing he had so wantonly put to death.

In his study a religious sat poring over his Breviary. He was contemplating in spiritual vision, all the beauties of the earth, calling on all nature to praise God Who was responsible for such wonders and such beauty. And, behold, he looked on the sleeve of his holy habit, and there was a tiny insect, of a pale green color, its slender body scarcely larger than the head of a pin, its delicate legs scarcely more than a thread of finest silk.

The man of God admired and revered the tiny creature, knowing that it was a specimen of the artistic handiwork of One Whom he served and loved. He did not disturb it, but suffered it to remain while it would, that he might make the longer meditation on the generosity and goodness of Him Who, while creating this wee atom, had gone many steps farther and made man with a brain to think, hands to fashion, and a soul to wonder and to love!

Surely there was a vast difference between the two types of men. The power and wisdom of the one came from the Infinite Maker of the universe, of the other from his own distorted idea of his importance in the world.

Do not all charms fly at the touch of cold philosophy? asked the poet. And we think that the answer is Yes.

—The Pilot (Boston).

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