

**THE UNSEEN UNIVERSE OR
PHYSICAL SPECULATIONS
ON A FUTURE STATE**

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The Unseen Universe or Physical Speculations on a Future State by Balfour Stewart

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BALFOUR STEWART

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ON A

FUTURE STATE

B. Stewart & Co. 1875

— the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are
not seen are eternal.

NEW YORK:
MACMILLAN AND CO.
1875.

Phil 8644.1

... μη σκοπόντων ἡμῶς τὰ βλεπόμενα, ἀλλὰ τὰ μὴ βλεπόμενα· τὰ γὰρ
βλεπόμενα, πρόσκαιρα· τὰ δὲ μὴ βλεπόμενα, αἰώνια. Πρὸς Κορινθίους, Β'. δ'.

Animula! vagula, blandula,
Hospes comesque corporis,
Quae nunc abibis in loca,—
Pallidula, rigida, nudula . . .

HADRIAN.

"God hath endowed us with different faculties, suitable and proportional to the different objects that engage them. We discover sensible things by our senses, rational things by our reason, things intellectual by understanding; but divine and celestial things he has reserved for the exercise of our faith, which is a kind of divine and superior sense in the soul. Our reason and understanding may at some times snatch a glimpse, but cannot take a steady and adequate prospect of things so far above their reach and sphere. Thus, by the help of natural reason, I may know there is a God, the first cause and original of all things; but his essence, attributes, and will, are hid within the veil of inaccessible light, and cannot be discerned by us but through faith in his divine revelation. He that walks without this light, walks in darkness, though he may strike out some faint and glimmering sparkles of his own. And he that, out of the gross and wooden dictates of his natural reason, carves out a religion to himself, is but a more refined idolater than those who worship stocks and stones, hammering an idol out of his fancy, and adoring the works of his own imagination. For this reason God is nowhere said to be jealous, but upon the account of his worship."—*Pilgrim's Progress*, Part III.

75* 206



P R E F A C E.

FORGETFUL of the splendid example shown by intellectual giants like Newton and Faraday, and aghast at the materialistic statements nowadays freely made (often professedly in the name of science), the orthodox in religion are in somewhat evil case.

As a natural consequence of their too hastily reached conclusion, that modern science is incompatible with Christian doctrine, not a few of them have raised an outcry against science itself. This result is doubly to be deplored ; for there cannot be a doubt that it is calculated to do mischief, not merely to science but to religion.

Our object, in the present work, is to endeavour to show that the presumed incompatibility of Science and Religion does not exist. This, indeed, ought to be self-evident to all who believe that the Creator of the Universe is Himself the Author of Revelation. But it is strangely impressive to note how very little often suffices to alarm even the firmest of human faith.

Of course we cannot, in this small volume, enter upon the whole of so vast a subject, and we have therefore contented ourselves with a brief, though, we hope, sufficiently developed, discussion of one very important—even

fundamental—point. We endeavour to show, in fact, that immortality is strictly in accordance with the principle of Continuity (rightly viewed); that principle which has been the guide of all modern scientific advance. As one result of this inquiry we are led, by strict reasoning on purely scientific grounds, to the probable conclusion that “a life *for the unseen, through the unseen, is to be regarded as the only perfect life.*” (See Chap. VII.) We need not point out here the bearing of this on religion. Incidentally, the reader will find many remarks and trains of reasoning which (by the alteration of a word or two) can be made to apply to other points of almost equal importance.

We may state that the ideas here developed—very imperfectly, of course, as must always be the case in matters of the kind—are not the result of hasty guessing, but have been pressed on us by the reflections and discussions of several years.

We have to thank many of our friends, theological as well as scientific, for ready and valuable assistance. The matter of our work has certainly gained by this, though it is likely that the manner may have suffered by the introduction, here and there, of peculiarities of style which could not easily be removed without damage to the sense.

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