



Matter, Force, and Spirit: or Scientific Evidence of a Supreme Intelligence

Henry Martyn Lazelle

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From the PREFACE.

IT is believed that the advance of science has developed fundamental truths which strengthen the hands of faith. To briefly point out some of these is the purpose of this little volume.

The well-informed thinker knows that so far as determined by pure reason, the question of the existence of God is one of probability only. It is only by the accumulation of truth that learning comes to the aid of faith and hope.

In the contemplation of Nature, "Such is the order, fitness, and beauty, whether in the infinity of space, or in its unlimited division, that even with our little knowledge of things, all language loses its vigor, and all numbers their power of reasoning. Our judgment is lost in speechless eloquent astonishment."

By unavoidable convictions of cause, we complete a regression from effect to cause to a Being unconditionally necessary to such a world of life. Yet in this mental process, as in every kind of so-called proof of the existence of God, derived from speculative reason alone, we ascend from definite experience to a highest Cause existing outside of experience; to a conclusion of necessary existence, from given existence; and of course all such reasoning is fallacious and indeterminate. God is thereby disassociated from matter and force, and made a prior existence and a Creator; whereas matter, force, and God are co-existent and co-eternal. The very idea of God as spirit is inseparable from the idea of matter; and without such association He is no more conceivable than is a God without time, or space.

This concept of co-existence excludes the idea of the creation of matter, or of force, and presents the universe as an eternal reflection of spirit; matter and force being merely external expressions of Divine Self.

Conceding such Divine existence, we concede His knowledge of all the possibilities of His own laws, and of their culmination in organic life and mental power. In short we concede His prevision of man's existence on earth. And unless we regard man as a Divine plaything, the disport of an hour, a creature given being and then expunged from being, we may reasonably conclude, that his earth-life is a prelude to another life upon which he enters with the product of his earth knowledge and of his virtue.

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