

view, not the construction of a system by starting from some highest truth and following this down in its various manifestations, using it as a master-key by which to gain access to the many regions of science, life, and history; it rests rather upon the conviction, enormously strengthened by the later doctrine of evolution, that the different regions of human thought and activity, such as the body of scientific knowledge, the practical systems of morality, law, and society, and, above all, the religious faiths of the world, are existing facts, systems in which certain hidden truths have been established slowly and gradually and through the combined labour of many minds during long ages.

The construction of a system of philosophy on such a broad inductive basis, the attempt to lay bare the hidden truths contained in those manifold cultural systems elaborated consciously or unconsciously by the efforts of the human mind; to show their harmonies as well as their discords, and if possible to dissolve the latter; will seem to many an impossible and premature attempt. And so it has actually appeared to the generation which followed Lotze in philosophy; as, a generation earlier, a similar endeavour had appeared premature to those naturalists who read and laid aside Humboldt's 'Kosmos.'

31.  
Comparison  
with  
Humboldt's  
'Kosmos.'

This comparative failure of two world-pictures which, in the course of the nineteenth century, were drawn by two intellectual artists neither of whom would profess to have discovered any fundamentally new scientific or philosophical principle has, in both cases, led to a dissipation and disintegration in the thought