

and if there is no kingdom of God, they have nothing to hold out that is worth a thought or reflection.

Brother Stevenson was talking about merchants. I do not refer to them more than anybody else, for I am willing everybody should live if they will live honestly and righteously; but I will suppose that you or I was a merchant, and we could grasp at everything within our reach, could build splendid edifices, had a large amount of credit and any amount of cash, no fear of bankruptcy, and nothing in the world to trouble us, and that we die and there is no hereafter, neither hell nor anything else, but we just live like fools and die like fools, what difference is there between the poor fool and the rich fool? They will both occupy about two feet by six, that is all. No matter what their possessions may have been, or what amount of wealth they may have accumulated, they brought nothing into the world, and they can take nothing out of it. Suppose we take another view of earthly greatness: Many people are very anxious to become legislators, governors, presidents, mayors of cities, or to use a vulgar expression they want to be "big bugs" in society. Now on the principle that there is no hereafter, what difference is there between President Lincoln and the man who was killed for killing him? None. They both occupy about the same space, and if there is nothing certain with regard to the future, I know of no difference in their positions. Neither do I know of any kind of philosophy that will instruct me in these things. I am sure a president has just as much trouble while he lives as the man who works for his daily bread; and I am sure the merchant has more perplexity and annoyance than the poor man has. The man who can supply his family

with the common necessities of life is the happiest man of the two, for he has less care and responsibility. I am sure I do not envy those men at all.

What is true philosophy? It seems to me to be a true principle for men to try and find out who they are. I like to examine myself a little, and I sometimes ask who am I? Where did I come from? What am I doing here? And what will be the condition of things when I leave here?

If there is anybody who can tell me anything about these things, I want to know. If I had an existence before I came here, I want to know something about it; and if I shall have an existence hereafter, I want to know what kind of an existence it will be. I do not want to be frightened about hell fire, pitchforks, and serpents, nor to be scared to death with hobgoblins and ghosts, nor anything of the kind that is got up to scare the ignorant; but I want truth, intelligence, and something that will bear investigation. I want to probe things to the bottom and to find out the truth if there is any way to find it out.

If I have a spirit within me, which is according to the popularly received notion among men, I want to know whence it came; and if there is a God in existence I want to become acquainted with him. It is not enough for me to know that a man called Moses, who lived thousands of years ago, said he talked with God and that angels came and ministered to him. And if there was such a man as Abraham, and he lived and talked with and obtained promises from God, I want that intelligence that will enable me to do so. I want something more than that which will just take me to the grave, and there leave me to take a leap in the dark, and be forever forgotten