

Phil. I express it only as a hope; but to give it up is impossible. In that case, if truth were in a simpler and more comprehensible form, it would surely soon drive religion from the position of vicegerent which it has so long held. Then religion will have fulfilled her mission and finished her course; she might then dismiss the race which she has guided to maturity and herself retire in peace. This will be the _euthanasia_ of religion. However, as long as she lives she has two faces, one of truth and one of deceit. According as one looks attentively at one or the other one will like or dislike her. Hence religion must be regarded as a necessary evil, its necessity resting on the pitiful weak-mindedness of the great majority of mankind, incapable of grasping the truth, and consequently when in extremity requires a substitute for truth.

Demop. Really, one would think that you philosophers had truth lying in readiness, and all that one had to do was to lay hold of it.