An Empiricist Manifesto

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An Empiricist Manifesto

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Abstract
A call to empiricists to rise up and reclaim reality.

Keywords
empiricism, fact, reality, truth

Three cheers for empiricism.
Not your new empiricism, Deleuze and all that.
Don’t be deluded.

No, back to the good old empiricists.
Not that they knew they were empiricists, of course.
Just underlabourers of science, helping to build knowledge.

Let us search for facts worth knowing.
Not “facts” clothed in scare quotes, but naked facts.
We’ve gone round the ontological bend, after all.
No need for squeamishness about “reality” or “truth.”
Truths about reality are just what we need,
Hasn’t that always been the task?

No need for a “theoretical lens,”
You are not a brain in a cultural vat,
But free to discover how things are.
Look, listen, and think; over and over again.
No guarantees, but there is no other way.

So, as Husserl had it: Back to the Things Themselves!
Though not the transcendental things he poked around at.
A social science instead, focusing on
The real things that make a difference to our lives.
The things that cause misery and despair.
The things we need to understand if we are to change them.

Empiricists of the world unite!
You have nothing to lose,
And a reality to rediscover.

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