

DISCUSSIONS

ON

Philosophical Subjects.

# DISCUSSIONS

OF

# Philosophical Questions.

BY

✓  
JOHN L. GIRARDEAU, D. D., LL. D.,

LATE PROFESSOR IN THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,  
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA.

EDITED BY

REV. GEORGE A. BLACKBURN,

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE SYNODS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, GEORGIA, ALABAMA  
AND FLORIDA.



RICHMOND, VA.:

THE PRESBYTERIAN COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION.

62638

Library of Congress  
COPIES RECEIVED  
OCT 18 1900  
Copyright entry  
Oct. 19. 1900.  
No. A.25997.  
SECOND COPY.  
Delivered to  
ORDER DIVISION,  
NOV 20 1900

B945  
G43]6  
1900



COPYRIGHT, 1900.

BY

JAMES K. HAZEN, *Secretary of Publication.*

PRINTED BY  
WHITTET & SHEPPERSON,  
RICHMOND, VA.

## CONTENTS.

---

	PAGE.
PREFATORY NOTE, . . . . .	7
INTRODUCTION, . . . . .	9
THE END OF PHILOSOPHY, . . . . .	27
CONSCIOUSNESS: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON'S VIEWS, . . . . .	49
THE AUTHORITY OF CONSCIOUSNESS, . . . . .	85
COSMOTHETIC IDEALISM, . . . . .	97
BERKELEY'S IDEALISM, . . . . .	111
OBJECTIVE IDEALISM, . . . . .	156
PANTHEISM, . . . . .	167
SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON'S DOCTRINE OF CAUSA- TION, . . . . .	209
SPENCER'S RELATIVITY OF KNOWLEDGE, . . . . .	260
THE ARGUMENT FOR THE BEING OF GOD FROM OUR COGNITIVE NATURE, . . . . .	304
MR. SPENCER'S AGNOSTIC PHILOSOPHY, . . . . .	357
PHYSIOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY, . . . . .	435
SPACE—WHAT IS IT? . . . . .	496

## PREFATORY NOTE.

---

THE frequent references to Sir William Hamilton in these discussions is due to the fact that the students whom the writer addresses are asked to read the *Lectures and Discussions* of the Scottish philosopher, in connection with the delivery of his own views, orally or in writing, in the class-room. Hamilton's philosophy thus becomes, to a large extent, a point of departure for discussions which may involve either a defence or a rebuttal of its doctrines, and sometimes enter a separate and independent field.

## EDITOR'S PREFACE.

---

DR. GIRARDEAU, at his death, left a small trunk full of unpublished manuscript, a large part of which was unsuited for publication, being in the form of notes for use in the class-room or for help in his own studies. As much of it as was suitable was offered by his family for publication to the four Synods having control of the Theological Seminary at Columbia, South Carolina. The Synods appointed a committee, investing it with discretionary power, to consider the proposition. The Rev. W. T. Hall, D. D., was appointed by the Synod of South Carolina; the Rev. Thos. P. Hay, by the Synod of Florida; the Rev. Donald McQueen, by the Synod of Alabama; and the Rev. J. T. Plunket, D. D., and Ruling Elder W. C. Sibley, by the Synod of Georgia. This committee was organized by the selection of Dr. Hall as chairman, the Rev. Mr. Hay as business manager, and the Rev. Geo. A. Blackburn, representing the family of Dr. Girardeau, as editor.

While every member of the committee has been zealous in furthering the work intrusted to it, the ability and persistence of the Rev. Thos. P. Hay, and the advice

and assistance of the Rev. J. K. Hazen, D. D., Secretary of Publication, have been chiefly instrumental in making it possible to begin publication.

These *Discussions* were prepared by Dr. Girardeau for the press; they were found in a bundle to themselves marked "complete." He had expressed the desire that, in case any of his manuscript should ever be published, this would be the first issued. The committee, therefore, after examining this manuscript, decided that it should be published first. This explanation is made because it was thought by many of the friends of the work that his *Life and Sermons* ought to have preceded this volume.

The capitalization in the book is not that of Dr. Girardeau, nor is it exactly what would have been chosen by the editor. It is the system of the printers, who have conformed to the style or fashion now adopted in the modern printing office, and in publishing centres.

No apology is needed for offering this book as a part of the literature of the Presbyterian Church. For every system of theology must have a system of philosophy associated with it; and no theology will long remain more sound than its coördinate philosophy. Every advance, therefore, in sound philosophy is an additional buttress to true theology.

Dr. Girardeau has been recognized by the church at large as a great preacher; by the ministry as a great

theologian and preacher; and by his students as a great philosopher, theologian and preacher. His extensive library was more theological than homiletical, and more philosophical than theological. Probably the study in which he naturally took most delight was philosophy.

As to the *Discussions* themselves, their main purpose is to advance the Scottish school of philosophy. They are not intended to be a system in themselves. This book is really a supplement to Hamilton's *Metaphysics*, in connection with which it ought to be studied. It seeks to correct what is considered incorrect in Hamilton; to develop more fully his system; and to bring it down to the present time—answering the objections and refuting the errors of opposing systems in their latest expressions.

These discussions were prepared by the author in his mature years, some of them having been written, and all of them having been revised by him since 1890. They fairly represent, therefore, his ability, his scholarship, and the final conclusions of his life of study.

The committee hope to follow this, as soon as the way is clear, with one volume of Theological Discussions, and one volume containing his Life and Sermons.

GEORGE A. BLACKBURN.

COLUMBIA, S. C., Sept. 20, 1900.



## INTRODUCTION.

---

SOME things deserve to be noted as introductory to the discussions which follow.

1. For the sake of clearness somewhat needs to be said concerning at least some of the leading *terms* which will be employed.

Knowledge may be regarded as spontaneous or reflective; spontaneous, when it is attained without voluntary effort in the unimpeded exercise of the cognitive powers; reflective, when the crude materials furnished spontaneously are by the thinking faculty reduced to some degree of order. No merely spontaneous knowledge can properly be denominated science, nor is all reflective knowledge entitled to that designation. Most men reflect to some extent, and perhaps most men in some measure arrange, classify and systematize their knowledge. Something more is necessary to constitute scientific knowledge. Science is knowledge arranged, classified and systematized, with the end in view of reaching an ultimate principle of unity. Science aims to be a unifier of knowledge. In this view the writer is disposed to concur with Mr. Herbert Spencer.

Science is, in a broad way and without an excessive refinement of terms, distinguishable into physical and metaphysical. It is only a loose, popular usage which

contradistinguishes science to metaphysics. If it be possible to investigate and systematize the phenomenal facts of the mind with the end in view of attaining to unity, it is obvious that there may be a metaphysical science. Physical science is employed in the observation and registry, and also the logical classification of the phenomenal facts of nature, including those of the bodily organism, but excepting those of the human mind. When one passes beyond this field of material phenomena, he crosses the boundary between physical and metaphysical science, and enters the domain of the latter. Metaphysical science, or, what is the same thing, mental or intellectual science, is concerned about the phenomenal facts (including the laws as facts) of the mind, and the inferential judgments of the mind considered as noetic.

Metaphysics, in the wide sense, and philosophy the writer regards as for the most part signifying the same thing, and distributable as generic, into psychology and ontology. Psychology is the science having for its object-matter the facts (including the laws considered as facts) of the mind. Ontology is the science having for its object-matter the inferential judgments of the mind contemplated not as dianoetic—with it, logic has to do—but as noetic. Whether logic should be embraced as an instance of nomological science, in this distribution, does not appear to be a matter of much consequence. It is not usual to speak of it as metaphysical or philosophical, and it might, perhaps with propriety, be assigned the place of an independent science. Possibly this might be a classification preferable to that of Hamilton, who

distributes psychology into phenomenological, nomological (including logic) and inferential.

It is not denied that there is a philosophy of physical science, as Herbert Spencer claims, but it deserves to be remembered that such a philosophy is but the derivation by the mind of metaphysical inferences, in the form of ontological, from the phenomenal facts observed and recorded by physical science.

If any should object to this distribution that philosophy is wider than metaphysics, inasmuch as it embraces in its scope the moral nature, while metaphysics does not, be it so. A broader division would then be of philosophy into metaphysics and moral philosophy, metaphysics being distributable into psychology and ontology. But, in strictness, psychology is, in part, concerned about the phenomenal facts of the moral nature; and ontology, in part, about the inferences which are deducible from those facts; and if we exclude moral philosophy on the ground that it is not concerned about the intellect proper, on the same ground we would be obliged to exclude the scientific consideration of the feelings and the will. Further, it may be replied to the objector that, as psychology partly deals with the phenomenal facts of the moral nature, it may come to this: that moral science—and by this is here meant the special science conversant about the moral nature, and not moral science more generally considered as sometimes contradistinguished to natural or physical science—will have to be reduced with logic under the head of nomology, as treating of the development and application of the laws by which our moral nature is governed. As, however,

the writer has no disposition to be contentious about the use of terms, which depends so largely upon taste and custom, let it suffice to have indicated the senses in which they will be mainly employed in these discussions.

1. It deserves remark, however, that in a narrow sense metaphysics coincides with ontology. In that sense, they both pursue the inquiry for ultimate principles—fundamental being and first causes; an inquiry which, pushed to the utmost, seeks the Being who is alike the First Substance and the First Cause. Perhaps, strictly speaking, this is the signification in which philosophy also should be used. But the attempt to restrict these terms to that narrow, and it may be proper sense, would be like rowing against wind and tide. Popular usage would render its success almost hopeless. The chair which Sir William Hamilton filled in the University of Edinburgh was entitled, the Chair of Logic and Metaphysics, and the learned editors of his works denominate his philosophical lectures, *Lectures on Metaphysics*, notwithstanding the fact that they are mainly concerned about psychology, and only to a small extent about ontology. The same nomenclature is well-nigh universal in Britain and America. Metaphysics, accordingly, must, at least popularly, be conceded a wider sweep than ontology. The same is true of philosophy; and further, it must be admitted that the *usus loquendi* makes philosophy cover a larger field than metaphysics. It would be eccentric to talk of moral metaphysics, while it is common to speak of moral philosophy. In like manner, it would be inadmissible to say the metaphysics of science, although it is usual to employ the terms phil-

osophy of science; not as implying that science is philosophical, but as designating the effort to account for the phenomenal facts of science upon unphenomenal and ultimate principles.

While, then, it may be proper for one to guard himself against the supposition that his ignorance induces him to comply with prevailing custom, it would be both pedantic and quixotic in him to traverse its current in order to secure technical accuracy. None but an overmastering genius, which would compel the homage and the obedience of the learned world, could venture to make such an attempt.

2. These discussions proceed upon the ground that metaphysical science is progressive.

The taunt is sometimes heard that the science makes no progress. A few considerations will serve to show that this charge is unwarranted.

(1.) For a long time the deductive method too exclusively prevailed; but the inductive has come to be very generally employed, not as extruding the former, but as furnishing the data upon which it competently proceeds. This is true even in Germany, where the absolutist philosophers were accustomed to speak slightingly of consciousness and the processes of the inductive school. The almost universal habit of now interrogating consciousness by painstaking psychological inquiry, for the purpose of ascertaining the facts upon which the conclusions of metaphysics ought to be based, is certainly an indication of progress.

(2.) There has been a decided advance in the enunciation and development of *a priori* principles—the

fundamental laws of thought and belief in relation to the processes of the logical understanding and the noetic reason, and of the original laws of morality in relation to those of the moral nature, relations indicated, as facts, by psychological investigation.

(3.) For centuries the majority of philosophers adopted the hypothesis of representative preception, or hypothetical realism. Especially since the rise of the Scottish school, the tendency of philosophical thought has been marked in the direction of abandoning that hypothesis, and of adopting the opposite theory of the immediate knowledge of the external world, so far as it is related to our faculties. Progress has been made in the matters of the duality of consciousness as affirming matter and spirit—to use the exquisite language of Hamilton—in the synthesis of knowledge and the antithesis of existence, and as testifying to the certainty of objective reality. The thin line of witnesses to “the one catholic and perennial philosophy” of common sense has swelled into the army of modern thinkers.

(4.) There has been notable progress in the evolution of the doctrine of presentative and representative knowledge—of immediate and mediate cognition.

(5.) There has been, in some degree, progress in fixing the certainty of principles and doctrines, arising from the conflict of opinions, analogous to that which in theology has resulted from controversies in the church. The scepticism of Hume, for example, stimulated profound investigations which have gone far to settle the all-important question of the certitude of human knowledge. The sensationalism of Condillac

and the French encyclopædists, and the associationalism of the Mills and others, have contributed to define the difference between the knowledge derived from sense-perception and that originating in certain fundamental laws of our mental constitution. The absolutist controversy has tended to fix the limitations of the mental powers, particularly the boundaries of the thinking faculty, and at the same time it has enhanced confidence in the existence of native principles in the mind which, while they ground the possibility of experience, depend upon it in turn for their development. It has made more distinct the divisions between the domains of conception and faith, and so has clarified the obscure inquiries of ontology by assigning the restrictions under which thought proceeds, and by determining the proper office of faith, and the sweep of the peculiar judgments which it necessitates, in contradistinction to those which are the appropriate results of the comparative faculty.

3. It is not uncommon to hear it asserted, that the conclusions of physical science are more trustworthy than those of mental. But it must be remembered that, in the last resort, the physical investigator employs the same organ as the psychological. The former depends on the trustworthiness of consciousness as well as the latter. It is true that the observer of external phenomena employs the senses. But the senses are instruments through which consciousness operates. The real observer is consciousness. That this is the fact is proved by the consideration that immediately after death the sense-organs may be as perfect as they were before. How can we account for their inoperativeness, except

upon the ground that consciousness has ceased to act through them? If this be so, the ultimate trustworthiness of observations made by means of the senses is based upon the veracity of consciousness. Is it not obvious, then, that however different may be their methods, the physical inquirer and the psychologist alike assume the necessity of relying upon the deliverances of consciousness? The ground of certainty to both is precisely the same.

It is, moreover, pertinent to suggest that in the case of the physical investigator the senses intervene between consciousness and the external facts—the relation between them is not immediate<sup>1</sup>, while in that of the psychologist nothing comes between consciousness and the internal phenomena—the relation is direct. In view of this fact it is hardly legitimate for the physical observer to say, that his reports of phenomena are more certain than those of the psychologist.

It must be added that in relation to conclusions derived from phenomenal facts with regard to things which are themselves not phenomenal, the physical investigator and the psychologist stand upon the same foot, so far as trustworthiness is concerned. They both resort to inference. Their method is the same. It will not be denied that inference is a mental act. They both, therefore, employ the metaphysical method. Both are liable to the mistakes resulting from wrong inferences, and the trustworthiness of their inferences believed to be right rests exactly upon the same grounds. That the

<sup>1</sup> Of course, there is no reference here to an intervening mental modification.



physical observer should indict the psychologist because of the untrustworthiness of his metaphysical inferences would be, for the same reason, to indict himself. How, for example, does the physical man know the existence of his ultimate atoms? He has never observed them. It is clear that he infers them. How does the metaphysical man know his First Cause of all things? He has never perceived it. It is equally clear that he infers it. The respective inferences depend upon the same fundamental laws of our intellectual constitution. If false in their application in the one case, they are false in the other; if true in the one case, they are true in the other. The charge of uncertainty and untrustworthiness as to ontological results, if preferred by physical science against metaphysics, recoils, as to those results, upon itself. Either, then, physical science should refrain from the allegation, or confine itself to the simple observation, registry and classification of phenomenal facts. But should the latter alternative be adopted, what would become of Mr. Herbert Spencer and his objections to positivism?

4. It is one purpose of these discussions to oppose the following philosophical schemes: Idealism in all its forms, pantheism, materialism, and agnosticism. As to physiological psychology, it is admitted that there may legitimately be attempted a science concerned about the relations between the mind and the nervous organism, and consequently between psychology and physiology. But the crypto-materialism which is in a greater or less degree insinuated by some of the writers on this subject, and the undisguised materialism of others, is

resisted. Sensationalism or pure empiricism on the one hand, and, on the other, pure subjectivism as developed in transcendental absolutism, are to a greater or less extent criticised. Herbert Spencer's theory in regard to the relativity of knowledge is antagonized. Argument is presented to show that space and duration are neither relations, nor conditions either of existence or of thought, nor substances, but are perfections of the Infinite Spirit.

5. It is necessary to say something definitely in answer to the question, What school of philosophy do these discussions represent? The answer is, The Scottish school—mainly. It may briefly be indicated in what respects they agree with the doctrines of that school, and in what they differ from them.

(1.) They concur with it in maintaining the great *a priori* laws and principles contended for by the philosophy of common sense; the doctrine of natural realism or absolute dualism, which affirms the substantive difference between matter and spirit “contrasted in the antithesis of existence,” but “related in the synthesis of knowledge”; the immediate knowledge of the external world, and—with Hamilton—the consciousness of the external world, so far as it is related to our faculty of preception; the position that the fundamental laws of thought and belief, as Stewart terms them, need to be elicited from latency, and actually developed into formal expression, by the conditions of conscious experience; the principle of the conditioned, as stated by Hamilton, *so far as* it holds that the sphere of positive thought is bounded on all sides by the sphere of the Inconceivable;

the limitation of consciousness to phenomena, internal and external; the distinction between presentative and representative knowledge; the broader distinction between immediate and mediate knowledge; and the significance and validity of mediate knowledge. In regard to some of these points Hamilton's utterances are sometimes difficult to be reconciled with each other, and sometimes incapable of being brought into harmony; but the statements made above are believed to exhibit his real, catholic doctrine.

(2.) They differ from doctrines held by members of the Scottish school in these particular respects: from the doctrine of Reid, that we are conscious of the act by which we perceive an external object, but not of the object itself; from the view of Hamilton, that we are conscious of the act of perceiving the external object, it being here maintained that the act of perceiving the external object and the consciousness of that object are one and the same; from Hamilton's theory, that consciousness is a generic, and not a special faculty, it being here, on the contrary, held that it is a special faculty, with a catholic relation to the operations of all the other faculties; from Hamilton's inconsistent hypothesis, that, in being conscious of the operation of any faculty, we are at the same time conscious of the object about which that operation is concerned; from Hamilton's position that every effect is made up of its causes as its constituents; from his doctrine in regard to the genesis of the causal judgment, he referring it to a mental impotence, and it being here contended that it is the affirmation of a positive power; and from his advocacy of the possibil-

ity of an absolute commencement, as illustrated in every free act of the will.

6. Should the question be asked, What ends are sought to be accomplished by these discussions? the answer is, in the general, that the writer desired clearly to explicate and enounce the views derived from his own reflections, and that this desire was enhanced by the duty, bound upon him professionally, to deliver a brief course of philosophical lectures, during each session, in the institution to which he is attached. More particularly—and the answer is given in all modesty—the end contemplated by the writer has been to contribute something, so far as his abilities would allow, towards a fuller development of the distinctive principles of the Scottish philosophy.

Those principles constrained his adherence by their agreement, in his judgment, with the data of consciousness and their necessary consequences, with the common convictions of mankind, and with the doctrines of divine revelation. But although considered to be for the most part sound and superior to any other system, the Scottish philosophy did not appear to be free from certain grave defects, or to have reached the point of a consummate development. This seemed to be true, notwithstanding the fact that the extraordinary learning and acumen of Sir William Hamilton were employed in the effort to bring it to maturity. Indeed, it must be confessed that the attempt of the great philosopher to expand, systematize and perfect it was attended with certain inconsistencies of statement and questionable doctrinal utterances, together with some ambiguity in his

positions, which resulted unhappily. They exposed him to the unfriendly criticism of his associationalist opponent, John Stuart Mill, gave some plausibility to the claim of Herbert Spencer that his agnosticism is justified by Hamilton's doctrine touching the knowledge of the Infinite, and—"most unkindest cut of all"—induced some of the supporters of the Scottish philosophy to impute to him the maintenance of the utter incognoscibility of God, and the atheistic tendencies of that view!

The opportunity is thus offered to friends of the Scottish philosophy, as having received its fullest expansion at the hands of Hamilton, of endeavoring to clear up ambiguities in the form in which he left it, to reconcile incongruities where that is possible, where that is impracticable to correct the wrong or imperfect statements by those which are most clearly established, and even to disprove untenable positions and substitute in their room those which are tenable; and in this way to bring the system into harmony with itself. Some little has been essayed along these lines in these discussions.

This, however, is not all. The effort is also made to bring out into explicit and formal enunciation principles which, though implicitly contained in the system, depend rather upon scattered intimations than upon formulated statements, and thus, in some degree, to assist in advancing the Scottish philosophy towards a completer and more definite development. Some of the points will be briefly noticed at which the attainment of this result is sought.

(1.) The doctrine in relation to consciousness.

The Scottish philosophers, especially Hamilton, treat

consciousness and perception as different powers. In Hamilton's case, the reason is plain. He regarded consciousness as a generic faculty of cognition containing under it all the subordinate cognitive faculties as species. Considering perception as one of these specific powers, he was of course led to affirm a difference between consciousness and perception. In these discussions argument is submitted to show that this is an illegitimate reduction, according to Hamilton's own principles. The argument proceeds on the *nature* of these powers.

In connection with this, Hamilton's canon that consciousness is to the philosopher what the Bible is to the theologian—that is, that it is possessed of supreme authoritativeness, needs to be supplemented by the addition to mere consciousness of logical, necessary inferences from its data.

(2.) The doctrine as to the generic source of knowledge.

Instead of consciousness as the generic source of knowledge, the reason or intelligence is here represented as that generic source. Under this undisputed genus comes the species—immediate and mediate knowledge. Consciousness being immediate knowledge, nothing more and nothing less, is the sole occupant of that category. The faculty of mediate knowledge includes under it specific faculties of that kind of knowledge—namely, the representative, the thinking, and the believing. At the root of all these faculties lie their appropriate laws: at the root of consciousness the laws of immediate knowledge; at the root of the representative faculty the laws of representation; at that of the thinking faculty the

laws of thought; and at that of the believing faculty the laws of belief. Each one of these faculties, operating in obedience to its own laws, furnishes a specific kind of knowledge peculiar to it; and all these specific knowledges are gathered up into a generic result—knowledge. This reduction gets quit of the vexed question touching a generic difference between reason and faith on the one hand, and faith and knowledge on the other. There is no generic difference between them. To this the Scottish philosophy logically tends.

(3.) The doctrine as to a believing faculty.

Careful argument is here presented to prove the existence in our cognitive nature of a faculty of belief or faith. Without such a faculty the Scottish philosophy is restricted to the merely phenomenal, indeed, is rent by self-contradictions. One of its canons is that thought cannot transcend consciousness. A faculty, therefore, is postulated which can transcend the materials furnished by consciousness. That faculty is faith. It is a faculty of knowledge.

(4.) The doctrine as to the distinct provinces of thought and faith.

It is admitted here that Hamilton is right in affirming that thought cannot give substance, immortality and God. They are not thought-judgments. To what power then are these transcendental apprehensions to be assigned? He answers, To belief. We believe in the substance of matter, in the substance of the soul, in immortality, in God. Now the question is whether these faith-judgments are knowledge. Do we, for instance, know God? His utterances upon this vital question are am-

biguous. At times he intimates that we mediately know him; at other times, even under challenge, he hesitates to call our belief in God knowledge. But there ought upon this subject to be no hesitation, no uncertain sound. In these discussions it is contended that our faith in God is a real knowledge, as valid as immediate knowledge and infinitely more valuable—that our faith-judgments constitute the most significant knowledge that we possess. It is mediate knowledge, but it is vastly more precious than immediate.

(5.) The question, How does thought deal with matter that transcends its scope?

The difficulty is common to philosophy and theology, how a science can be constructed which involves an infinite element. The thinking faculty is the organ of science. But it cannot know the infinite. How, then, can it embrace the infinite in its syllogistic reasoning? If faith which does apprehend the infinite could reason in regard to it, the difficulty would be met. But faith does not deal with logic. The difficulty, therefore, returns. The answer here given is that faith and thought are attributes of the same man. It is he who believes and he who thinks. His faith communicates the knowledge of the infinite to his thinking faculty, and the latter, receiving the information, uses it symbolically in its logical processes, somewhat as a child learning algebra expresses an unknown quantity by  $x$ , and reasons from it and about it as if he comprehended it. The matter is given by faith, and the form by thought. Take this syllogism: Only an infinite being had power to create the universe; God is an infinite being, therefore he had



power, etc. The terms in both premises express unthinkable realities. Nevertheless the syllogism is valid. The wonderful synergism of the believing and the thinking faculties solves the problem. Had Hamilton evolved his principles as he might have done, and as he ought to have done, he would not now, when he is sleeping in his grave, be unjustly claimed as the logical parent of agnosticism.

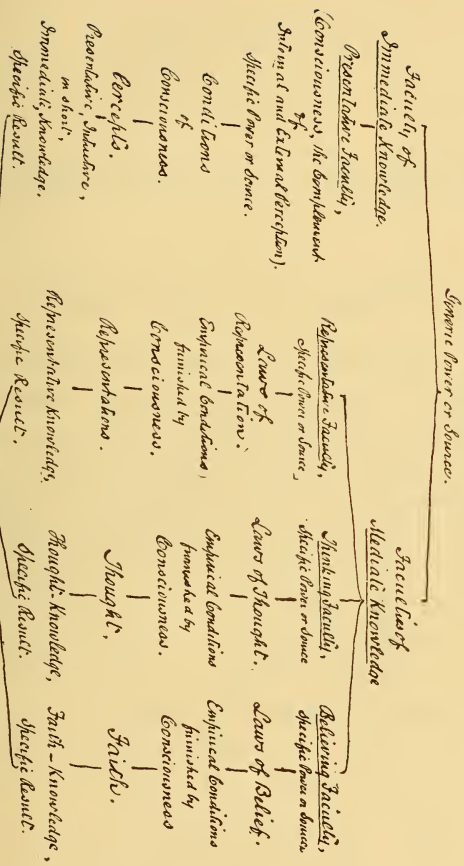
The Scottish philosopher was, to some extent, confessedly influenced by the views of the profound German philosopher, Jacobi, and it is a pity that he had not, with his masterly powers, reduced them disencumbered of certain blemishes to a more systematic form. For a time the sound principles of Jacobi were overborne by the brilliant but fallacious speculations of the absolutist school, and may now, in measure, be lost sight of while the pendulum of thought vibrates to the opposite extreme of materialism; but, with the exception of the defects implicated in them, they will, in the destined triumph of truth in a golden age, be brought to the front and win a wider and happier recognition—"a consummation devoutly to be wished."

Should he, who is the Creator of our minds and the "Enlightener of their darkness," vouchsafe to use these discussions in stimulating some able thinker to advance the development of the common sense philosophy, and the Scottish which is its chief exponent, they will not have been written for naught.



Talbot's statement,  
Relating the Theory held in regard to the Development of  
Man's Knowledge.

Reason or Intelligence.  
 (The Development of the Cognitive Faculties).  
 General Power or Sense.



Knowledge,  
 Generic Result.



DISCUSSIONS  
OF  
PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTIONS.

---

THE END OF PHILOSOPHY.

PROCEEDING upon the assumption that the method of philosophy is that of analysis and synthesis, we go on to inquire, What is its *end*? In the general, the answer is, An ultimate principle of unity, a principle, that is, upon which the diversified and innumerable elements of the soul, the external world in immediate contact with us, and the universe at large, may be collected into unity. Hamilton says that the end sought by philosophy is a First Cause in the sense of a First, Efficient Cause. Agreeing with him as far as he goes, I am constrained to broaden his statement so as explicitly to include in the end of philosophy a First Substance. The end which it seeks may then be considered as an ultimate, fundamental Being, who is alike First Cause and First Substance. The process by which we are led from effect to cause is not more imperative than that by which we are conducted from attribute to substance. Given cause, we necessarily infer a power which causes, and with equal necessity refer

power as an attribute to a substance in which it inheres. This Hamilton would of course have admitted, but it would seem best to give both elements of the process express and formal enunciation. We shall see, it is hoped, as the analysis advances, that this ultimate Being—this *Principium Essendi*, who is both First Cause and First Substance, cannot be either the blind force of the agnostic, nor the unconscious ground of existence of the pantheist; that while as Infinite, he transcends all finite analogy, he is characterized by attributes which are dimly but really shadowed forth by those of finite spirits.

In the attempt to indicate the process by which we seek an ultimate principle of unity, let us notice the mode in which that process operates in the spheres respectively of the spiritual and material systems.

I. Let us endeavor to observe its operation in the spiritual system.

1. It is proper to begin with the individual soul, and show, if we can, how through our various phenomenal states and acts we are irresistibly conducted to its unity. Our cognitive operations are diversified. We perceive, imagine, remember, conceive, judge, reason, believe. But different as these operations are from each other, we are compelled to observe a feature which is common to them all. They are all cognitive. We are obliged to refer them to one cause of which they are effects. That cause is a power of cognition. We cannot by any effort assign each of these cognitive functions to a separate and independent cognitive power. They have one and the same cause. But power is an attribute, and we

are impelled by a native conviction, call it a fundamental law of belief or by some other name, to refer an attribute to a substance. Hence we assign this cognitive power to a cognitive substance. That substance is what we denominate the soul. We affirm a cognitive essence to which the power of cognition belongs, a power which causes those phenomenal effects that fall under the designation of cognitions. Along this special line, therefore, we are led to a principle of relative unity in one intelligent soul. It cannot be one soul that perceives, another that thinks, and another that believes, etc. The supposition cannot for a moment be endured. It is one and the same soul which energizes in these diverse ways.

A similar process of analysis will hold good in regard to the feelings. The phenomenal manifestations of feeling are various. These we ascribe to a common power of feeling as their cause, and again attach this power as an attribute to an emotional substance. That substance is the soul, which abides one and the same while manifesting itself in these different modes. Along this line also we are conducted to relative unity in one emotional essence. It is not one soul which feels hate, another which feels love, etc. It is the same soul which expresses itself in these differing feelings.

The same is true of our voluntary states and acts. They are many, but we are constrained to collect them into unity upon a voluntary power, which by an equal necessity we refer to a single voluntary substance. It would be absurd to speak of several wills, as expressed by different inclinations, conations and voli-

tions. It is one and the same will which energizes in these various forms. And it is pertinent to remark that it is in this way that the native conviction of personality and of our personal identity is mainly elicited into formal expression. The seat of personality is in the will. A being might be conceived to possess intelligence and feelings without a will, but he could not be a person. Thus, in still another method analysis conducts us to relative unity.

The same process obtains in the sphere of conscience. We postulate unity for our moral powers in the soul as moral. Conscious of the laws of rectitude at the root of the conscience, we demand a common seat for them all. It cannot be one soul which delivers the law of truth, another which enforces the law of justice, and still another which gives the law of benevolence. It may not be possible to reduce these laws, intrinsically, to the same category, but we necessarily infer that they express one and the same moral essence. We are also conscious of moral perceptions, of moral sentiments, of moral judgments, of moral emotions which are the sanctions of those judgments, but we cannot believe that they represent different moral substances; we are compelled to collect them into unity upon the power which we denominate conscience, and which we necessarily attribute to one and the same soul, developing its moral energies in these different modes of manifestation. The same soul which possesses moral laws, perceptions and sentiments, and in accordance with them issues its categorical and penal imperatives, is that which passes judgment upon itself in the shape of approval or condemna-



tion, reward or punishment, and experiences the satisfaction of its own favor or the sting of its own remorse. We are thus led to predicate unity of our moral phenomena, and of the power which they manifest, in consequence of a common relation to a single moral essence.

So far, in pursuing our analysis, we have been conducted to points of unity, upon which are collected distinctive phenomena and powers—points of unity related to these phenomena and powers, and determined by their peculiar characteristics. Shall we rest here? Is there no higher unity upon which these relative units may be collected? Are there several souls manifested by these various operations? a cognitive soul, an æsthetical, a voluntary, and a moral? With such a reduction we cannot be satisfied. We are constrained to go on in our analysis until we reach one soul which, as a unit, collects upon its single essence all these distinctive powers, and to which they are referred as attributes—a soul which is alike intelligent, emotional, voluntary and moral.

(1.) We necessarily believe in the common relation of the different mental powers to one personal self. Each individual human being is conscious of referring intellectual acts, feelings, volitions, and moral judgments to himself as one.

(2.) Every individual believes in the relation of each mental power to every other mental power as belonging to one and the same personal essence. It is his mental perceptions which affect his feelings, his perceptions and feelings which influence his will, his will through which he reflectively determines the current or the direc-

tion of his intellectual acts and his feelings. They are all his as one and the same self.

First, this is proved by one's sense of responsibility for this reciprocal influence of the mental powers.

Secondly, one has no such sense of responsibility for another man's states or acts unless he influenced them. He is not responsible for another's states of mind or feeling which induced a criminal act. The reason is plain. His soul is different from every other man's soul, but is one and the same soul which expresses itself through his different mental powers.

Thirdly, at fifty years of age one has a sense of responsibility for the influence of his perceptions, imaginations and feelings in producing a bad volition, or a criminal act at twenty.

(3.) If certain bodily powers, different from one another, are consciously one's own—are unified upon one's personal self; certain mental powers, different from each other, are also consciously one's own—are reduced to unity upon himself as one indivisible essence.

(4.) The processes of law, human and divine, prove the unity of the soul; that is, the fact that each individual man has only one soul. To plead that an intellectual soul, and a feeling soul, and a moral soul, condemned the criminal act of a voluntary soul would not avail to save a man's neck. And the fact that no such plea is ever presented by the ingenuity of man is sufficient to show that it would not be regarded as rational. Only an insane man could use it. The inference is clear. All the mental powers belong to one and the same soul.

But it may be urged that the quest for unity is not

yet ended; that even though it be admitted that all the various mental powers may be collected upon one soul, that soul may not be simple, but compound. Against this supposition but two arguments will be used.

(1.) The conviction of the race is that the soul is an essence, simple and indivisible. This is proof enough by itself. What all men believe must be true, or human nature is radically deceptive.

(2.) The argument of Bishop Butler is submitted: "Since consciousness is a single and indivisible power, it should seem that the subject in which it resides must be so too. For were the motion of any particle of matter absolutely one and indivisible, so as that it would imply a contradiction to suppose part of this motion to exist, and part not to exist, *i. e.*, part of this matter to move, and part to be at rest; then its power of motion would be indivisible; and so also would the subject in which the power inheres, namely, the particle of matter: for if this could be divided into two, one part might be moved and the other at rest, which is contrary to the supposition. In like manner it has been argued, and, for anything appearing to the contrary, justly, that since the perception or consciousness, which we have of our own existence, is indivisible, so as that it is a contradiction to suppose one part of it should be here and the other there; the perceptive power, or the power of consciousness, is indivisible too: and consequently the subject in which it resides; *i. e.*, the conscious Being."

It has thus far been shown that in contemplating the diversified phenomena of consciousness we are impelled to refer them to appropriate causes; that these causes

infer several powers, and that these powers as attributes are collected into unity upon the essence of an individual soul.

But every soul is different from every other soul, and as there are multitudes of souls, the question arises, Can they be reduced to unity upon one ultimate cause? That they can will first be shown by some general considerations, and then by separate proofs derived from the rational, the moral, and the religious nature of man.

(1.) Every soul is finite. The consciousness of each proves that fact to itself. Should any exceptional thinker assert the contrary, it can easily be evinced by challenging him to solve some inexplicable problem—and there are many such—or to visit the moon, the nearest heavenly body, and give an account of it from observation. It were folly to deny the finiteness of every human spirit.

Now each was either spontaneously produced, or immediately created, or evolved by descent. Spontaneous production, as implying an absolute commencement, is contradictory and absurd; and the hypothesis is now very generally abandoned. Immediate creation would give unity to all finite spirits upon the causal production of one Creator. It would be absurd to suppose as many creators as there are finite spirits, for to create one spirit implies infinite power, and there cannot be as many infinite powers as there are created spirits. If immediate creation be denied and evolution affirmed, then every spirit is held to have descended from one original source (by whatever name designated), and subordinate unity is conceded.

The dilemma then occurs: That original existence was either spontaneously generated or immediately created. Spontaneous generation must be rejected, immediate creation allowed; and we are conducted to ultimate unity upon a First Cause. Cause infers power, and the ultimate unit must be a First Substance possessing infinite power.

Again: The plurality of spirits proves the finiteness of each. For, if not finite, they are infinite. But there cannot be more than one Infinite. If two, they would limit and condition one another, which is contrary to the supposition of infinity. All spirits, being finite, must have had a beginning. Either, then, they were spontaneously produced, or evolved, or immediately created. They were not spontaneously produced; but if either evolved or immediately created, they infer one, ultimate, Infinite Being. Final unity is reached.

(2.) The *essential* likeness between all human souls infers one origin. Either all had the same cause, or each had a separate cause. If the latter, there would be as many causes as souls. But it is absurd to suppose a multitude of causes, or even two causes, acting separately, to produce results essentially the same. Was there a convention of causes which issued in a common agreement to produce exactly similar effects? And could a convention of causes which, on the supposition, were finite have determined to do what only an infinite cause could accomplish? If the former—that all had the same cause, we arrive at unity in the First Cause.

More particularly:

(1.) Consider the soul as intelligent.

First, it has a fundamental belief in unity. This cannot meet ultimate satisfaction in relative unities. For they require, in accordance with its demand, to be reduced as many to one. The regression of the intelligence, in obedience to this fundamental law, is necessarily to absolute unity, and that can only be found in an absolute and infinite Being.

Secondly, the soul has a fundamental belief in space, and, as is well-nigh universally admitted, in space as infinite. Now either space is merely a subjective belief or an objective reality. If the former, the subjective belief is infinite, which is a contradiction, for an infinite element cannot be predicated of a finite subject; and the belief itself in infinite space, if it have no objective reality, would be a lie. If the latter, as there cannot be two infinite realities, independent of each other, space must be the mode of an infinite substance—the viewless, all-comprehending immensity of an Infinite Spirit.<sup>1</sup> If, therefore, the belief be not deceptive, the fundamental intelligence of the soul points to ultimate unity in an ultimate Being.

Thirdly, the soul has a fundamental belief in cause. This, as has been shown by theists and Christian theologians and conceded by Mr. Herbert Spencer himself, when developed upon empirical conditions, inevitably leads through the contingent and finite to a necessary and infinite Cause. But cause supposes power, and power substance; and a necessary and infinite Being is confessed as reducing everything to ultimate unity upon his causal efficiency.

<sup>1</sup> This view is not singular. It was held by Philo, Derodon and Samuel Clarke, and, substantially, by Sir Isaac Newton.

Now, as every soul possesses these fundamental beliefs, the intelligence of each, like every strand in a spider's web, converges with that of every other to a common centre. That centre is the point of absolute and ultimate unity; and that unity is found alone in God.

(2.) Contemplate the soul as moral.

The consciousness of moral obligation—the ineradicable sense of duty and conviction of responsibility—infers a law-giver, ruler and judge by whose will we are obliged. Either this law-giver, ruler and judge is the soul itself, or one extraneous to the soul. That the former supposition cannot be true is conclusively settled by the desire and the inability of the soul to escape from the condemnation and the punishment which it would not inflict and yet is compelled to inflict upon itself. It is manifestly under the government of another, who is superior to itself. It cannot be either the original source or the enforcer of its own morality.

But there are as many moral units as there are souls. We must seek a higher unity. Of every one of these various souls the same things are true as those which have been affirmed of a single soul. They are all fundamentally alike as to their moral constitution. This is so evident that it need not be sustained by argument. Whatever special differences may exist in the application of the laws which lie at the foundation of the moral nature, there can be no denial that all men have a moral nature and are conscious, to some extent, of moral obligation. The feeling of duty is a universal characteristic of the race. If this be so, what has been said in regard

to the individual soul must hold good of every other. But if this be admitted, the law-giver, ruler and judge of all must be one and the same. It would be infinitely contradictory and absurd to suppose as many law-givers, rulers and judges as there are moral subjects. There has, however, been an ancient hypothesis, devised by speculation to meet the obvious fact of the co-presence of moral good and evil in the world, which postulates two original, co-eternal principles or beings, the one the author of good, the other of evil. Does such an hypothesis possess plausibility enough to arrest our search for ultimate unity in the moral sphere?

(1.) An eternal being would be an infinite being. The two predications cannot be disjoined. To this it may be replied that there is no contradiction in supposing a thing to be eternal which yet is not infinite. Two lines, for example, may run out *ad infinitum*; that is, may be co-eternal. The rejoinder is that, strictly speaking, no line can be eternal. For a line is a series of points. *E concessio*, each point is finite. If finite, it must have had a beginning. For if it had no beginning, it would be infinite, which is contrary to the supposition. But if it had a beginning, it could not be eternal, since the very definition of an eternal thing is that it had no beginning, and will have no end. Now, whatever is predicable of all the parts of the series is predicable of the whole. The series of points, the line, therefore, cannot be eternal. If duration be conceived simply as a line, it cannot be eternal. Eternal duration infers a being who is infinite, and therefore immense. Such a being excludes another infinite and consequently im-



mense being. For each would limit and condition the other, which is contrary to the supposition of infinity involving immensity. A finite eternal being is a contradiction in terms; and two infinite eternal beings would be a contradiction in reality.

Neither can there be an eternal plane. For a plane is a congeries of lines, and what is predicable of one line is predicable of all. As all had a beginning, so must the plane. If it had a beginning, it could not have been eternal.

Nor, further, can there be an eternal sphere, for a sphere is bounded in every direction, consequently in the direction of length. What then is true of a line must be true of it. It had a beginning; therefore, cannot be eternal.

But it may be asked, whether a point may not be eternal. The answer must be in the negative; for a point, strictly speaking, is the opposite of the immense. The immense is the immeasurable. If a point could be eternal, it would, in one respect, be immeasurable. It would in one aspect be immense; which involves a contradiction, since the immense and a point are the opposite of each other—the one being most easily measurable, the other immeasurable. A point, therefore, cannot be eternal. No more can any number of points massed into a bulk, a world, a universe. It may be said that the schoolmen described the eternal Being as a *punctum stans*. The language is figurative, and cannot be construed in strictness. But whatever may be thought of the propriety or impropriety of the language, it never entered into the head of a schoolman that there could

be two such points. He meant one infinite Being, exclusive of the possibility of another.

(2.) Two infinite beings would be mutually exclusive: nothing would be the result of the supposition. Either there is but one infinite being or no infinite being. The supposition of two is a contradiction in terms. For the two would necessarily limit each other—that is, both would be finite, which is contradictory to the supposition of the infinity of both.

(3.) *A fortiori*, two infinite beings, one good, the other evil, would be infinitely opposed to each other, for one would be infinitely good, the other infinitely evil. Good and evil are contrasts, and infinite good and infinite evil are infinite contrasts. The contradiction, if possible, deepens. The old puzzle is suggested. If an irresistible force should encounter an immovable obstacle, what would be the result? The supposition involves a contradiction, and is, therefore, impossible. If a force is irresistible, it can encounter no immovable obstacle; if an obstacle is immovable, it can be encountered by no irresistible force. If a force be infinite, there can be no infinite force opposed to it. The supposition is impossible that an infinite good force could be resisted by an infinite evil force. Consequently, there cannot be two ultimate principles, one of good, the other of evil.

(4.) Whatever exists eternally exists by necessity. If it be true that a being who necessarily exists is infinite<sup>1</sup>, we would have upon the supposition of two co-

<sup>1</sup> For an elaborate argument upon this point see Howe's *Living Temple*.

eternal beings two infinite beings, and that hypothesis has already been convicted of absurdity.

(5.) The doctrine of a duality of ultimate beings contravenes the fundamental faith of the human mind in an infinite Being. Unless that faith be delusive—and if it is, our mental constitution is a source of falsehood—there cannot be, for reasons already specified, more than one eternal Being.

It does not fall within the scope of this discussion to show how the co-existence of moral good and evil consists with the supposition of one infinite, eternal Being. It is sufficient to have presented reasons which appear insuperable against the old Manichæan hypothesis of a duality of ultimate moral beings.

To return now to our inductive argument: Every soul is conscious of moral obligation, and that fact necessarily infers a law-giver, ruler and judge. This again supposes a Being who is possessed of universal authority, universal knowledge and almighty power. More than one such being, we have seen, there cannot be; for universal dominion, omniscience and omnipotence are characteristics of an infinite Being; and it is contradictory to suppose more than one such Being. We have reached our point of ultimate unity—we have been conducted to God, the First Moral Cause, the First Moral Substance. He who produces moral beings must be a Cause possessed of the attribute of morality, and we are by our mental constitution impelled to infer a Substance to whom that attribute belongs. We arrive at a Fundamental Moral Being, and, unable to go further, we bow down and adore.

(3.) Look at the soul as religious.

First, man is naturally religious. Of course, the term *religious* is here used in its broadest sense, as designating a native element of the human constitution, without reference to the rightfulness or wrongfulness of its exercise. Man's nature was made to worship, and if throttled by speculation will still cry out for gratification in this direction. Rather than not worship, men idealize the objects of nature, the persons they love, or even their consciously imperfect selves, and sublimate them into deities. The feeling of dependence, the dread of evil, the craving for protection, and the profound æsthetic emotions demand a deity to whom supplication can be addressed and homage paid.

Secondly, even in those nations in which the popular mind, following poetic myths, has peopled every wood and mountain, every river and sea, with divinities, polytheism has never commended itself to the philosophical intellect. Reflection has always tended to the affirmation of one supreme Intelligence. The religious thinkers of mankind have sought for unity in the object of worship.

Thirdly, this postulate of the reflective intellect is grounded in the deepest principles of human nature, and the necessary progression of the human faculties. For, in the first place, the fundamental principle of causality requires one First Cause as the explanation of the world of contingent and finite effects. In the second place, the sense of obligation imbedded in our moral nature necessarily leads to one supreme Lawgiver, Governor and Judge. In the third place, it is un-

natural to suppose that the will is obliged to act in conformity with many superior wills. One must be regarded as supreme; many sovereigns is out of the question. In the fourth place, the heart must of necessity love one object supremely; and as the religious nature absorbs the perceptions of the true furnished by the understanding, the convictions of the right given by the conscience, and the affection for the beautiful, the lovely, the glorious felt by the heart, and gathers them all up into its own sublime unity, it seeks a corresponding unity in the being whom it loves and adores—a unity which collects into itself all that is apprehended as true and right, all that is good, beautiful and glorious, projected to transcendent, to infinite perfection. It offers its incense of worship *τῷ θεῷ ἀριστομεγίστῳ*.

What is true of one soul is true of all souls. The worship of all supposes in the Being worshipped the possession of omniscience and omnipotence. That is, he must be infinite, and as there cannot be more than one such Being, we are also conducted by this line of inquiry to ultimate unity.

Having attempted to indicate the process by which we arrive at an ultimate principle of unity in the spiritual system, intellectual, moral and religious, let us—

II. Notice the operation of this process in the material system.

The method by which, in the spiritual sphere, we have been led to the discovery of ultimate unity holds as well in the material. External perception acquaints us with the phenomena of the world around us. They

are innumerable, but many, if not most of them, so far forth as this earth is concerned, exist in the form of given syntheses, groups of phenomenal properties, and these, in accordance with a tendency of our minds, we proceed to analyze, and are induced by a fundamental law of our constitution to refer to substances of which they are manifestations, and which constitute to each of these groups respectively a bond of unity. Here we reach subordinate unity at the first stage of our inquiries. What is true of each one of these separate collections of phenomenal qualities holds also of that larger collection, that complex totality of phenomena which we call the world. It is capable of being resolved into its component substances, as by synthesis we group them into its grand unity of complexity. And as for each one of these constituent substances to which we refer phenomenal properties as their point of unity, we demand a cause, so for the world as a whole. We are not satisfied with the conclusion that it is uncaused any more than with a similar conclusion in regard to the substances which enter into its composition. Shall we say that these substances and the world itself which is composed of them are self-generated, are spontaneously produced? It is not necessary to adduce a metaphysical proof of the untenableness of this hypothesis, however incontrovertible that proof may be; we need not appeal to the argument that to make a thing both cause and effect at one and the same time involves a contradiction. The experiments of physical science have themselves, as is confessed, settled the question whether there is in nature such a thing as an absolute commencement;

the hypothesis of "spontaneous generation" has upon grounds of observation been frankly relinquished.

But there are forces of nature which reveal their existence by their effects. May not the substances which exist be caused by these physical forces? Or, may not the substances and the forces coincide? Now were these suppositions admissible, and there is no proof that they are, we would still be confronted by the inevitable inquiry, What is their cause? The supposition of their spontaneous generation would be attended with the same difficulty as opposes that of the spontaneous generation of material substances, and would be confessed to be fatal upon the hypothesis that substances and forces are the same. What, then, is their cause? Are there as many causes as there are forces? It is admitted by Mr. Herbert Spencer, the philosophical exponent of the agnostic school, that the diverse forces of nature are special manifestations of one central force, and that this central force is infinite and eternal. Mr. Frederic Harrison has found fault with Mr. Spencer for granting the existence of but one infinite and eternal force—was it because he feared that the admission leaned too much towards theism? But it would be contradictory to suppose the existence of more than one infinite and eternal force. Here, then, we have unity allowed, and not only the unity of the multifarious phenomena of this world, but the unity of all worlds. For an infinite force must be conceded to operate upon the whole universe. I have no disposition to controvert Mr. Spencer's position, so far as it establishes the unity of the material system. It lies in the very direction in which this discussion

tends. The considerations already presented in connection with the intellectual and moral systems show that Mr. Spencer's infinite force is but the power in exercise of an Infinite Spirit, the intelligent, moral, personal First Cause and First Substance, from whom the universe is not necessarily evolved, but by whom it was freely produced.

Apart, however, from this important concession of the great agnostic, the question arises, Why, in the regression of inquiry, we are not conducted to more than one ultimate principle as accounting for the material system? Why one only?

1. The constitution of the human mind determines it towards unity. This is a fundamental law. Unity is an ultimate category. The mind cannot be satisfied until unity is reached.

2. Each separate line of investigation conducts to unity; why not all combined? The presumption is a powerful one in favor of an ultimate principle which accounts for all existence. Self-consciousness leads us through the diverse phenomena, mental and moral, of the soul to the unity of the soul itself. If external consciousness reveals many souls, a kindred process conducts to a supreme Spirit as the one cause of them all, a supreme Law-giver, Ruler and Judge, to whom all are alike accountable. So with the diversified phenomena of matter: one world, one Cause. And as there are many worlds, analogy of procedure produces the conviction of one Cause for these many worlds. This presumption is enhanced by the evidence, first, that one law of attraction seems to prevail in all and binds them into



a harmonious whole; secondly, that the materials composing them, so far as known, by the spectroscope, for example, are alike. One plan infers one planning mind.

3. The argument is resistless, founded upon the universally admitted axiom: What is predicable of all the parts is predicable of the whole. All matter is finite. For if some be finite—and that is demonstrated by experience—no matter can be infinite. Otherwise we would have infinite matter *plus* finite, which would be a contradiction. We are obliged, therefore, to postulate a cause outside of the finite series to account for its beginning. If there were many causes, they would be finite; for they would limit and condition each other, and consequently could not be infinite. Each of these would be an effect, and must have had a cause for its beginning. We strike the path of an infinite regression of causes and effects; which is absurd. The same axiom would hold in regard to such a series; all the parts are finite, therefore the whole is finite. We must get a cause outside of these causes which is not itself finite. Such a cause must be infinite. But more than one infinite cause would imply a contradiction, since reciprocal limitation would be the result. We reach, therefore, one Infinite Cause. Now, cause necessarily supposes power; a cause without energy, potential or active, would be a contradiction. But power is an attribute. Infinite power infers an infinite Being of whom it is an attribute. We reach One Ultimate Principle—*principium essendi*—the First Cause and the First Substance.

4. The fundamental law of belief in the infinite

necessitates belief in one Ultimate, Infinite Being. Kant has denied that the existence of a concept is a guarantee of the objective reality of the thing conceived. Very true; but the existence of a fundamental law of belief is in a different category. It must guarantee real existence, else our nature is fundamentally false. In this respect I must subscribe to such illustrious thinkers as Anselm, Descartes, Leibnitz and Cousin. True, the fundamental law of belief needs to be elicited from latency and developed into formal expression by the conditions of experience, but when those conditions obtain, it necessarily utters itself in the positive affirmation of a First Cause, who is the First Substance. The name of God is inscribed with his own finger upon the foundation stones of the human constitution, and the light of experience reveals it. Every power of the soul, from its deepest recesses, cries out for God, and cannot be appeased until it finds him; and finding him, the soul grasps the principle of ultimate unity. Philosophy has touched her coveted goal; her aspirations are satisfied, and speculation is transmuted into praise.

## CONSCIOUSNESS:

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SIR WILLIAM  
HAMILTON'S VIEWS.

---

THE design of these remarks is to maintain the position, that consciousness is the faculty or power of immediate knowledge; or, in other words, that it is the complement of internal and external perception—the presentative faculty.

I. There is no dispute worth speaking of in regard to the question whether consciousness is the immediate knowledge of the internal, subjective phenomena of our own souls. By immediate knowledge is meant the knowledge of that which is now and here present to us. Of the phenomenal activities—the facts now and here present—of our inward being as contrasted with the external world of phenomena, it is, on all sides, admitted that we are conscious. We immediately know them. But what is denominated internal perception is exactly the same thing. Perception gives us the knowledge of what is now and here present to us; internal perception, of the phenomenal facts of our subjective being which are now and here present to us. We are conscious of them, we perceive them, we immediately know them,—these affirmations are one and the same. The language is different, the thing asserted is identical.

II. The second question is, Have we by consciousness an immediate knowledge of the external world? If we have, consciousness, immediate knowledge, and perception, in relation to the external world, are proved to be one and the same. If we have not, consciousness and external perception are proved to be different.

There are two theories which are here encountered—that of representative perception, and that of Reid, which makes a distinction between the act by which we perceive the external world and the consciousness of that act. Of each in the order in which they have been stated.

The theory of representative perception has been variously termed hypothetical realism, hypothetical dualism and cosmothetic idealism. It is denominated representative perceptionism because it holds that the perception of the external world is mediated through a mental image which represents it; hypothetical realism or hypothetical dualism, because it hypothecates the real existence of an external world different from the knowing subject upon a vicarious image in the mind; cosmothetic idealism, because it posits the external world, the cosmos, by means of an ideal representation.

The masterly argument of Sir William Hamilton in opposition to this theory appears to me to be irrefragable, so far as it goes, with the exceptions that, inconsistently with his own principles, he concedes the consciousness of the act by which we perceive the external world, and that he represents the external object of visual perception to be modified by the mind, and to be in contact with the bodily organism. If his view be cor-

rect that in perceiving the external world we are conscious of it, the concession excepted to, would involve the position that we are conscious of an act of consciousness. But of that more anon. The other exception it is not material to this discussion to signalize. Holding that, with these exceptions, the argument is convincing, I take leave to refer to it, and at the same time venture to add some considerations which tend in the same direction.

1. One great difficulty urged by the representative perceptionist against natural realism is, that it is impossible that spirit can be brought into such a relation to matter as to suppose the immediate cognition of the latter. To this it may be replied, that the argument proves too much; since it involves the denial of the intuition of matter by the divine Spirit. On the supposition that the substance of matter is not identical with the substance of God, the question must arise in regard to God's knowledge of matter as different from himself. As it is well-nigh universally admitted that his knowledge is intuitive, and not mediate, whatever inability there may be on our part to comprehend the relation between him and matter, we must admit his immediate knowledge of it. The argument therefore proves too much, and is, consequently, invalid. But if we concede the possibility of the immediate knowledge of matter by him who is a pure Spirit, what difficulty is there in allowing an immediate knowledge of it by the human spirit?

2. It is assumed, that as cognition is an immanent, and not a transitive act of the mind, to suppose the mind to

act immediately upon matter is to suppose it to act out of itself; and that would be contradictory to the nature of knowledge and absurd. But why, it may be answered, should not the mind act where itself is not? Is it less active than matter is deemed to be? One body influences another body by the attraction of gravitation, although the two are not in contact, but may be at a great distance apart. Now, either the force of gravity is a property of matter or of spirit. If the former, the denial to spirit of the power to act upon what is not part of itself, reduces it in the scale of being to a place inferior to that of matter, which is absurd. If the latter, it is granted that spirit can act upon matter, and act upon it immediately. If so, the ground of the difficulty is removed.

3. It is contended that in order to the immediate cognizance of matter by mind the two should be analogous substances.

(1.) The argument used above, derived from God's knowledge of material things, also applies here. Is there an analogy between the infinite Spirit and matter?

(2.) The position necessarily leads to monism. God cannot act upon matter if it be different from himself as a Spirit. He and the universe are one substance. Pure idealism or pure materialism is the inevitable result. Upon this principle the hypothesis of representative perception is utterly illogical. Matter could no more act upon spirit than spirit can be cognizant of matter. There is no inter-action possible. Whence then the representative image? If it be a mental modification, how does it bring the mind into a near relation

to matter? It is mind still, and the gulf is not bridged. If it be material, how does a thing so destitute of analogy to mind get into the mind? If it be neither spiritual nor material, but a *tertium quid* different from both mind and matter, what, in the name of sense, is it? The only answer is, *Quid?*

4. It may be contended that the existence of a representative image is not an hypothesis which is framed to account for the fact of an external world, but that it is delivered as a fact by consciousness; and the fact of a representing image being given, we must infer the thing represented, as when we see an image reflected in a mirror we infer the existence of the object which caused the reflection. To this it is replied:

(1.) If an appeal be taken to the common sense of mankind to determine what the deliverance of consciousness is, the answer would be to the fact of an external world.

(2.) Consciousness delivers the fact of a mental modification when a mental modification exists, and in those cases in which the external object is not now and here present to our faculties, delivers also the fact of a conviction or belief that the vicarious image truly represents a past event or an absent object. But when the external object is now and here related to our faculties, consciousness does not deliver to us the fact of an image which represents the object, but the object itself. We are no more conscious of a representing image than we are, in an act of visual perception, of the image of the object upon the retina of the eye. The hypothesis of representative perception obliterates the distinction between

perception and the imagination. They become the same faculty, sustaining different relations: at one time to the present, and at another time to the past or the future, or the absent, or the possible, object.

(3.) Our belief that the image reflected in a mirror supposes an object which causes the reflection will, upon examination, be found to rest upon experience. If we had never discovered the fact by observation that the appearance in the mirror was simply a reflection, we would believe that appearance to be an underived phenomenon—a real object, and not an illusion. So is it with children and animals, until their first impressions are corrected. Thus, on the supposition that we mediately apprehend an external object through its image mirrored in the mind, we could never know the representative character of the image, without having first been cognizant of the object imaged. We may be conscious of an image as a fact, but we could never know it *as an image* of something else, without first having known that which is imaged. Representative knowledge pre-supposes, and is grounded in, presentative. How can that be re-presented which was never presented? We cannot image anything of which, in whole or in part, we have had no previous intuition. The wildest fancies of the poet, the lunatic, the dreamer, are but compounds of intuitions or percepts. To adopt the hypothesis of representative perception, consequently, is to suppose a knowledge without foundation or reason—to put the child before the mother, the effect before the cause. This single consideration is fatal to that hypothesis.

This conclusion, which was reached independently of



Hamilton's discussion of the question, is clenched by an argument, in which he proves that the representative perceptionist reasons in a circle. "On this theory," he remarks, "we do not know the existence of an external world, except on the supposition that that which we do know truly represents it as existing. The hypothetical realist cannot, therefore, establish the fact of the external world, except upon the fact of its representation. This is manifest. We have, therefore, next to ask him, how he knows the fact that the external world is actually represented. A representation supposes something represented, and the representation of the external world supposes the existence of that world. Now, the hypothetical realist, when asked how he proves the reality of the outer world, which, *ex hypothesi*, he does not know, can only say that he infers its existence from the fact of its representation. But the fact of the representation of an external world supposes the existence of that world; therefore, he is again at the point from which he started. He has been arguing in a circle. There is thus a see-saw between the hypothesis and the fact; the fact is assumed as an hypothesis; the hypothesis explained as a fact; each is established, each is expounded by the other. To account for the possibility of an unknown external world, the hypothesis of representation is devised; and to account for the possibility of representation, we imagine the hypothesis of an external world."

To put the case more sharply: When we ask the representative perceptionist, How do you know the existence of the external world? he answers, Through a mental image which represents it. When we ask him,

How do you know that the image is representative? he replies, Because there is an external world which it represents. He knows the external world as existing because it is represented; he knows it as represented because it exists.

I cannot forbear appending a condensed statement of another of Hamilton's arguments which he puts in the form of dilemmas:

Either the mental image represents a real external world, or it does not. If it does not, the result is pure idealism. But as that is abjured by the representative perceptionist, the first alternative must be accepted.

The question, then, is, What determines the mind to represent the external world which, *ex hypothesi*, it does not immediately perceive?

Now, again, either the mind blindly determines itself to this representation, or, it is determined by some intelligent cause different from itself. The former supposition is irrational. The mind would represent that of which it knows nothing, and that would violate all the laws of representation. The latter supposition implies a supernatural and miraculous element. But this is unphilosophical, provided a simpler explanation is possible. That is furnished by natural realism, which accepts the datum of consciousness that we immediately know the external world as a phenomenal reality.

If the hypothesis of representative perception be discarded, we are shut up to the doctrine of an immediate perception of the external world. For there are only two conceivable alternatives: either we mediately, or we immediately, know the external world. If the latter

be true, perception is its immediate knowledge. There is no other power to which that knowledge can be attributed.

The remaining question is, whether in *perceiving* the external world we are *conscious* of it. Reid maintained the view that we are conscious, not of the external object itself, but of the act of perception by which we immediately know it—that is, he held that consciousness is limited to mental phenomena. The argument of Sir W. Hamilton in opposition to this view is twofold: First, the knowledge of relatives is one: in being conscious of one term of the relation—perception, we must be conscious of the other term—the object perceived; secondly, we could not in consciousness discriminate an act of perception by which we know a certain object from another act of perception by which we know a different object, unless at the same time we were conscious of the object itself which impresses a specific type, a particular denomination, upon the perceiving act. How otherwise, for example, could we be conscious of the perception of a man as contradistinguished to the perception of a horse were we not also conscious of the man and of the horse?

Concerning these arguments of Hamilton I would say that they are valid if regarded as *ad hominem*—that is, as founded upon the supposition of Reid and his followers, that there is a difference between the act of perception and the consciousness of that act. But upon Hamilton's own principles they must be considered unnecessary, and as appearing to concede the truth of the doctrine that perception of the external world and con-

sciousness of it are not one and the same. Granted that the hypothesis of representative perception is incorrect, the true answer to the Reidian position is that in perceiving the external world we are conscious of it—that the act of external perception is the act of consciousness. This view is enforced by Hamilton's principles and by the nature of the case.

1. Hamilton held that consciousness and immediate knowledge are convertible. A collection of sentences scattered through his lectures will sufficiently evince this fact. "I may here also observe, that, while all philosophers agree in making consciousness an immediate knowledge, some, as Reid and Stewart, do not admit that all immediate knowledge is consciousness." "Consciousness is an immediate knowledge of the present. We have, indeed, already shown that consciousness is an immediate knowledge, and, therefore, only of the actual or now-existent." "*Consciousness and immediate knowledge* are thus terms universally convertible; and if there be an immediate knowledge of things external, there is consequently the *consciousness of an outer world.*" "Perception, or the consciousness of external objects, is the first power in order . . . Is our perception, or our consciousness, of external objects mediate or immediate?" As, according to Hamilton, perception is an immediate knowledge of the external world, so must be consciousness, with which he uses perception convertibly.

Now, if we are conscious of the perceiving act, we are conscious either of a mediate knowledge of the external world, or of an immediate knowledge of it. If of a

mediate knowledge, the whole doctrine of Hamilton and of the Scottish school is contradicted. The hypothesis of representative perception is admitted. If of an immediate knowledge, it follows that we immediately know that we immediately know the external world. For consciousness is an immediate knowledge, and so is perception. To be conscious that we perceive is, therefore, immediately to know an act of immediate knowledge. But this is inadmissible, for—

(1.) It would be excluded by the law of Parcimony.

(2.) We would have a regression of acts of immediate knowledge *ad infinitum*. For if one act of immediate knowledge may be known by another act of immediate knowledge, so may that other act. We could never reach an ultimate act. It is true that we may immediately know an act of *mediate* knowledge, but the same is not true of an act of immediate knowledge. It is autopistic, or rather self-revealing. We cannot go behind it. And this is perfectly clear upon Hamilton's principles, for we have seen that he uses consciousness and perception convertibly. If, then, we may be conscious of an act of perception, we may be conscious of an act of consciousness, and we would strike a regression of consciousnesses—an absurdity which no man has more emphatically condemned than Hamilton himself.

(3.) If we are conscious of an act of perception, we would have a percept of a percept. For it is on all hands admitted that consciousness is a perception of our subjective phenomena. A subjective phenomena, therefore, of which we are conscious, or which we perceive, is a percept. But the act of perception by which we ap-

prehend the external world is a subjective phenomenon of which we are conscious, or which we perceive, and is, therefore, a percept. At the same time it terminates upon an external object as its percept. It is manifest, therefore, that if we are conscious of a perceiving act, we would have a percept of a percept, which is absurd. To put the case differently, we would have a perceiving act terminating upon a perceiving act. For an act of consciousness is a perceiving act, and the perception of an external object is also a perceiving act. To be conscious, therefore, of the perceiving act is to have a perceiving act terminating upon a perceiving act as its object—a perception of a perception, which is absurd.

The argument might be pursued farther, but enough has been said to show that upon the supposition of the falsity of the hypothesis of representative perception, external perception, by which we immediately know the external world, and consciousness are one and the same, so far as relation to that world is concerned—that is, consciousness also includes the perception of the inner world.

The conclusion, consequently, has been reached, that consciousness, as the complement of internal and external perception, is the faculty of immediate knowledge, or, briefly, the presentative faculty.

III. To this view sundry objections may be urged :

1. It may be objected that it is novel and exceptional. But, were this objection pertinent, it would not be proved that the view is, on that account, untrue. Unless ultimate truth in every department of psychological inquiry has been attained, it might happen that even a new con-

clusion would be true. The objection, however, does not lie, except in the sense that it is false. Sir W. Hamilton again and again makes express statements, and still more frequently gives implicit intimations, which involve the doctrine here maintained. The fact that he did not formulate it in so many words, and that sometimes his utterances conflict with it, cannot invalidate his substantive maintenance of it. The conclusion enunciated in this discussion is really the logical result of his views. It was to be expected that as he over and over asserts the convertibility of the terms, *consciousness*, *perception* and *immediate knowledge*, some one would come after him, who, agreeing with him in that respect, would formally take the ground that consciousness, perception and immediate knowledge are one and the same.

2. It may be objected, that the spheres of consciousness and perception are not coincident, that consciousness does what perception does not, or *vice versa*. This could only be substantiated were the differentiating circumstances pointed out, by which one is distinguished from the other. Until that is clearly done, the objection has hardly a nominal value. *Stat nominis umbra*. I confess to an inability to detect the peculiar quality.

3. It will be objected by those who maintain Hamilton's position upon that point that the view here contended for makes consciousness a special faculty. Hamilton had, in the nineteenth century, no superior as a philosopher, and deserves to be held in profound admiration for his imperial genius and his massive erudition; nor need it detract from his brilliant reputation

to perceive that he sometimes enunciated views that are inconsistent with each other. Perhaps no thinker has ever lived who was always self-consistent, or who fore-saw all the consequences that could be logically deduced from his doctrines, some of which would have been rejected by him had they been brought to his attention. Locke, could he have forecast the logical use which was made of some of his principles by Condillac and the French encyclopædists, and of others in an exactly opposite direction by Berkeley and ultimately by Hume, would have modified statements from which, on the one hand, sensationalism and materialism could be developed, and, on the other, idealism and scepticism. Could Jonathan Edwards, who indignantly denied that God was the proximate producer of sin, have seen his speculations in regard to philosophical necessity in the hands of Emmons logically employed to prove that blasphemy, falsehood and theft are due to the efficiency of God he might have endeavored to render impossible a result which his piety abjured. And if Sir William Hamilton himself, who held to faith in God, could have anticipated that from his persistent adherence, even under challenge, to a technical phraseology which denied the knowledge of the Infinite, there would spring the atheistic doctrine of the utter unknowableness of God, he would probably have recoiled from the exaltation of immediate knowledge as the only proper knowledge, and the depression of mediate as scarcely worthy of the name. A history of the inconsistencies and shortsightedness of great thinkers would afford a lesson suited to humble the pride of the human intellect.



In holding that consciousness is not a special faculty Hamilton was inconsistent with himself. Regarding him as, on the whole, teaching a true doctrine in relation to the nature, office and authority of consciousness, and as, in particular, presenting as able a defence of the wrong doctrine in opposition to the view that consciousness is a special faculty as can be furnished, I shall attempt to show that he is inaccurate, both in his didactic statements, and in his polemic argument, touching the question.

(1.) Let us gather up some of his *didactic statements*.

“Consciousness comprehends every cognitive act; in other words, whatever we are not conscious of, that we do not know.”

“Whatever division, therefore, of the mental phenomena may be adopted, all its members must be within [!] consciousness itself, which must be viewed as comprehensive of the whole phenomena to be divided; far less should we reduce it, as a special phenomenon, to a particular class. Let consciousness, therefore, remain one and indivisible, comprehending all the modifications—all the phenomena, of the thinking subject.”

“Such is the highest or most general classification of the mental phenomena, or of the phenomena of which we are conscious. But as these primary classes are, as we have shown, all included under one universal phenomenon—the phenomenon of Consciousness—it follows that Consciousness must form the first object of our consideration.”

“Consciousness cannot be defined; we may be ourselves fully aware what consciousness is, but we cannot, without confusion, convey to others a definition of what we ourselves clearly apprehend. The reason is plain. Consciousness lies at the root of all knowledge. Consciousness is itself the one highest source of all comprehensibility and illustration.”

“Is there any knowledge of which we are not conscious? Is there any belief of which we are not conscious? There is not—there cannot be; therefore, consciousness is not contained under either knowledge or belief, but on the contrary knowledge and belief are both contained under consciousness.”

"We know; and we know that we know: these propositions, logically distinct, are really identical; each implies the other. The attempt to analyze the cognition *I know*, and the cognition *I know that I know*, into the separate energies of distinct faculties, is therefore vain."

"Consciousness . . . is not one of the special modes into which our mental activity may be resolved, but the fundamental form—the generic condition of them all. Every intelligent act is thus a modified consciousness; and consciousness a comprehensive term for the complement of our cognitive energies."

These statements, taken by themselves, are not free from ambiguity and indefiniteness; but the two which follow bring out into light the position of which we are in quest. In antagonizing Reid's doctrine that we are not conscious of the external world, and in professedly attempting to prove that consciousness is not a special faculty, Hamilton says: "Is consciousness the genus under which our several faculties of knowledge are contained as species—or, is consciousness itself a special faculty coördinate with, and not comprehending, these?" He maintains the former alternative. This is definite enough. The other passage is as follows: "We distinguish consciousness from the special faculties, though these are all only modifications of consciousness—only branches of which consciousness is the trunk," etc. This is also clear.

Hamilton must be acquitted of the charge which has been preferred against him, that he represents consciousness as a genus, including under it as species not only cognitions, but feelings and volitions. His language is so sweeping as apparently to justify this opinion. But this is not his meaning. He held that we cannot feel without being conscious that we feel; that we cannot will

without being conscious that we will. That, however, is very different from reducing feeling and willing under the generic denomination of cognition. But it can hardly be disputed that he makes consciousness the genus under which every kind of cognition, nay, every cognitive faculty, is included as a species. It is on this account that he refuses to consciousness the designation of a special faculty, and claims for it a generic character. It is this doctrine which it is difficult to reconcile either with his catholic teaching or with fact.

First, if consciousness be a genus under which the special faculties of cognition are included—the trunk of which they are the branches, it follows that it is a generic *faculty*; for to include faculties as species under a genus which is itself not a faculty would be inadmissible. Further, this being granted, the generic faculty, consciousness, as confessedly discriminated from the feelings and the will (or, to use Hamilton's distribution, the conative powers), must be admitted to be a special faculty contained with them under the highest genus, the mind itself, the bond of unity of all the mental faculties.

Secondly, if we confine the question rigidly within the sphere of cognition, of knowledge, it will still be evident that consciousness must be regarded as a special faculty. When Hamilton declares consciousness to be a genus containing under it all the faculties of knowledge, he must mean either all the faculties of immediate knowledge, or all the faculties of knowledge, immediate and mediate.

If all the faculties of immediate knowledge, the re-

duction is, on his own principles, inconceivable, or rather impossible. For there is no faculty of immediate knowledge but consciousness. It is the sole, the exhaustive specimen of immediate knowledge, as Melchizedek, in the olden time, was the only occupant of his order of priesthood. It is the solitary instance of presentative knowledge. It has already been proved that it is the complement of internal and external perception. This Hamilton, as has been shown, explicitly admits. There is no dispute about the question, whether consciousness and internal perception are one and the same; and upon the question, whether it is identical with external perception, Hamilton, against Reid, maintains that it is: in perceiving the external world we are conscious of it. It is, then, *ex hypothesi*, impossible to reduce internal and external perception as powers of immediate knowledge under consciousness as a genus; and if you could, the very reduction would demonstrate consciousness to be a faculty of immediate knowledge specifically distinguished from the faculties of mediate knowledge.

But if it be insisted upon with Reid and Stewart, who are in this respect exceptional thinkers, that consciousness and external perception are different, it would follow that as consciousness is universally admitted to be an immediate knowledge of mental phenomena, and external perception is by those philosophers affirmed to be the faculty by which we immediately know the external world, each would be a faculty of immediate knowledge, terminating upon its own peculiar objects, and neither would contain the other under it. They would be sepa-

rate, but co-ordinate faculties included under the generic faculty of knowledge. Thus we would be again shut up to the concession that consciousness is a special faculty.

It is evident that there is no other power of immediate knowledge which, as specific, can be contained under consciousness as generic. It is, in that sphere, itself both genus and species. It fills the *ordo* of immediate knowledge. If one might be allowed to take an illustration from the division of ecclesiastical offices, consciousness is to immediate or presentative knowledge what the deacon is to the distributing office. There is no genus, distributing officers, under which he is contained as species; there is no species, distributing officers, which is contained under him as genus. He exhausts the order of distribution.

If by the affirmation, consciousness is "the genus under which our several faculties of knowledge are contained as species," all the faculties of immediate and *mediate* knowledge are intended, the first obvious consideration is that, if the preceding argument is valid, immediate knowledge must be excluded; and then the only question remaining is, Are the specific faculties of mediate knowledge included under consciousness as a genus?

The very statement of this question enforces a negative answer. It is evident that knowledge is a genus containing under it the species, immediate knowledge and mediate knowledge. Here the generic attribute, knowledge, is included in both the species, while they are distinguished from each other by the qualities of im-

mediateness and mediateness. But it would be utterly illogical to make immediate knowledge a genus containing under it mediate knowledge as a species, since the generic quality, immediacy, would be included in the species, which would then be an immediate-mediate knowledge; and that would invest the species with contradictory qualities. Now, it is admitted by Hamilton that consciousness is immediate knowledge. Consequently, it cannot contain under it faculties of mediate knowledge. The reduction ought to be: the generic cognitive faculty, containing under it the species, faculty of immediate knowledge, and faculties of mediate knowledge. The definition of consciousness then would be the faculty of immediate knowledge; knowledge being the generic quality, and immediate the specific difference.

But Hamilton contends that we cannot have mediate knowledge accruing from a representation, a concept, a belief, without being conscious of the representation, the concept, the belief. Very true; but the distinction is between the means of knowing and the objects known. By means of a representation we know the thing represented, of a concept the thing conceived, of a belief the thing believed. We know by consciousness the representation, the concept, the belief, for they are mental phenomena, but we do not know by consciousness the things represented, conceived, believed. Take his own position—knowledge is a relation. The relation between consciousness and the mental phenomena, representation, concept, belief, is immediate knowledge; the relation between these mental acts and their appropriate

objects is mediate knowledge. Unless, then, immediate knowledge can embrace mediate, consciousness cannot include mediate knowledge. Let Hamilton's explanation of memory serve as an example. We have a mental image of a past fact. We know the mental image by consciousness; this is immediate knowledge. We know the past fact by the representative image. This is mediate knowledge: it is belief, not consciousness. The knowledge is due to memory, not to consciousness; it is an act of representative, and not of presentative, knowledge.

It may be said—and this is the only other supposition I can conceive to be possible—that though consciousness be not the mediate knowledge itself, yet we are conscious of the knowledge as a fact. But this cannot be; for were we conscious of the knowledge, we would be conscious of both terms of the relation implied in the knowledge—namely, the representing image and the past fact represented. Hamilton holds that the knowledge of relatives is one. He correctly contends, however, that we are not conscious of the past fact. If so, we are not conscious of the knowledge. The same indivisible knowing subject knows the whole case in two ways—presentatively and representatively—distinct in themselves, but reduced to the unity of knowledge. And the spontaneous transition from the presentative to the representative act is so magically swift, that the distinction between the two can only be reflectively apprehended.

The formula, "I know and I know that I know are the same," needs to be seriously qualified. As unquali-

fied it is not true. If immediate knowledge is meant, the formula amounts to this: I immediately know that I immediately know; I am conscious that I am conscious. This, as tautological, is out of the question. I immediately know that I mediately know—that would hold good, under proper restrictions. For, I am conscious of a representation which guarantees a reality out of consciousness: I am conscious of a belief by which I mediately know substance, occult force and God. But if the meaning be, that my representative knowledge and my faith knowledge are the contents of consciousness, one is compelled to demur. Mediate knowledge cannot be a part of the contents of immediate. This conducts us to the consideration of—

(2.) Hamilton's *polemic defence* of his doctrine that consciousness is not a special faculty.

There is really but one argument which he employs to prove his point. It is, that in being conscious of any cognitive act or operation we must be conscious of the object about which it is concerned. Let us hear his own statement of the case.

“If consciousness,” says he, “has for its object the cognitive operations, it must know these operations, and, *as it knows these operations*, it must know their objects: consequently, consciousness is either not a special faculty, but a faculty comprehending every cognitive act; or it must be held that *there is a double knowledge of every object—first*, the knowledge of that object *by its particular faculty*, and *second*, a knowledge of it *by consciousness*, as taking cognizance of every mental operation. But the former of these alternatives is a surrender of consciousness as a coördinate and special faculty, and the latter is a supposition not only unphilosophical, but absurd. . . . The whole question, therefore, turns upon the proof or disproof of this principle, ‘that to be conscious of the operation of a faculty is, in fact, to be



conscious of the object of that operation;’ for if it can be shown that *the knowledge of an operation necessarily involves the knowledge of its object*, it follows that it is impossible to make consciousness conversant about the intellectual operations to the exclusion of their objects. And that this principle must be admitted, is what, I hope, it will require but little argument to demonstrate.”

This argument, I shall endeavor to show, is contradictory to Hamilton’s principles, and in itself inconclusive.

First, the argument is from the universal to the particular: All knowledge of an operation involves the knowledge of its object; consciousness is a knowledge of an operation; therefore the consciousness of an operation involves the knowledge of its object. But it is evident that the term knowledge in the major premise is equivocal. The meaning may be: All immediate knowledge of an operation involves the immediate knowledge of its object; or, all immediate knowledge of an operation involves the mediate knowledge of its object. Let us examine each alternative in the order stated.

All immediate knowledge of an operation involves the immediate knowledge of its object. This is exactly the same as consciousness of an operation involves the consciousness of its object, for Hamilton restricts immediate knowledge to consciousness, maintains that there is no other immediate knowledge than consciousness; and in this he is clearly right. The two propositions, therefore, are identical. One cannot be treated as universal, the other as particular. The class and the individual asserted to be in it are one and the same. There is, therefore, no argumentative progress. There is simply the affirmation that consciousness or immediate know-

ledge of an operation involves the consciousness or immediate knowledge of its object. The argument is naught; the affirmation remains to be proved. This is really Hamilton's position, and it can be disproved.

The other alternative is, that all immediate knowledge of an operation involves the mediate knowledge of its object. Now, since immediate knowledge and consciousness, according to Hamilton, are the same, the proposition amounts to this: that consciousness of an operation involves the mediate knowledge of its object. This is true—in the sense that consciousness of an operation *conditions* and *conduces to* the mediate knowledge of its object. But, although this is exactly what Hamilton uniformly teaches, it is not what he means here. He means more. He expressly says, as we have seen: "If consciousness has for its object the cognitive operations, *it* must know these operations, and as *it* knows these operations, *it* must know their objects"; and also: "to be conscious of the operation of a faculty is, in fact, to be conscious of the object of that operation." Nothing could be more explicit. Consciousness not only conditions the mediate knowledge of the object of every operation, but it "involves" it, "comprehends" it, coincides with it.

This, then, is the principle for which Hamilton contends in his polemic against Reid: *The consciousness of an operation is the consciousness of its object.* As he applies this principle to the concrete cases of perception, imagination and memory, it behooves that each of these applications should be considered; and—

In the first place, as to external perception. The as-

sation, in this particular case, is, that the consciousness of the operation of perception is the consciousness of the object perceived. This has already been criticised in the foregoing discussion, and, therefore, little need be said about it now. There is no consciousness of the operation of perception. Consciousness is precisely that operation. Otherwise, as Hamilton's doctrine is that we are conscious of the external object, we would have a consciousness of a consciousness, which cannot be allowed. The argument, as against Reid, ought to have been that in the very operation by which we perceive the external object we are conscious of it. This position he could have sustained upon the ground of Reid's own doctrine in opposition to the hypothesis of representative perception—namely, that nothing intervenes between the mind and the external object. For, upon the supposition that consciousness and perception are different, it must be admitted, either that the operation of perception intervenes between the conscious mind and the external object, or that the mind must pass through the state of consciousness to reach the operation of perception. On either hypothesis there would be no immediate knowledge of the external object.

The question, then, upon Hamilton's principles is non-existent, whether the consciousness of the operation of perception is the consciousness of the object of that operation.

In the second place, as to the imagination. The affirmation is, that in being conscious of an operation of the imagination we are conscious of its object—that is, in being conscious of a mental image we are conscious of

the thing imaged. There are two cases in regard to which this question may be raised: First, when we imagine an object which has no reality, such as a hippogryph or a centaur; secondly, when we imagine an object which has reality, such as a well-known city, or river, or mountain. Strangely enough, Hamilton considers only the first of these cases. "Now," says he with reference to this case, "nothing can be more evident than that the object and the act of imagination are *identical*. Thus, in the example alleged, the centaur imagined and the act of imagining it are one and indivisible." That is, as there is no objective reality answering to the image, the image is all. Of course, in being conscious of the image we are conscious of the object imaged, for the image *is* the object imaged, the object imaged *is* the image. To say, then, that in being conscious of the image we are conscious of the object imaged, as though one act of knowledge "involved," "comprehended" another act of knowledge, would be the same as if one, gazing upon the tower of London, should say: In being conscious of the tower I am conscious of the tower. When a phenomenon is purely a "subject-object," or purely an "object-object," to say that the consciousness of it is the consciousness of its object, is to employ an unmeaning affirmation.

But it is pertinent to inquire, whether in being conscious of the image of a real thing we are conscious of the real thing itself. Hamilton does not argue this special case. If he had done so, he might have urged that the knowledge of relatives is one; therefore, in knowing the image we must know the real object imaged. Here

the ambiguity would have to be unmasked. *What* knowledge is spoken of? Is it meant that having an immediate knowledge of the image we have an immediate knowledge of the object imaged? That is not possible; for imagination of an object supposes the object to be not now and here present, and immediate knowledge is of an object now and here present. A contradiction emerges; for it is affirmed that immediate knowledge is always of an object now and here present, but that *this* immediate knowledge is of an object not now and here present. Now, what is true of immediate knowledge is true of consciousness. It would, then, involve a contradiction to say that in being conscious of an image now and here present we are conscious of the object imaged, which is not now and here present. There must be some other sense in which the maxim, the knowledge of relatives is one, is applicable.

That other sense is, that in immediately knowing the image we mediate know the real object imaged. That is true, and is undoubtedly Hamilton's doctrine, when he speaks apart from this criticism of Reid's hypothesis. But mediate knowledge is not consciousness. While, therefore, we are entitled to say, that in knowing the image we know the real object imaged, we cannot say that in being conscious of the one we are *conscious* of the other. That would be to make immediate knowledge the same as mediate, presentative knowledge the same as representative.

A passage from Hamilton himself will confirm this argument.

"I call up," he remarks, "an image of the *High Church* [a cathedral edifice in Edinburgh]. Now, in this act, what do I

know immediately or intuitively; what mediately or by representation? It is manifest that I am conscious, or immediately cognizant, of all that is known as an act or modification of my mind, and, consequently, of the modification or act which constitutes the mental image of the cathedral. But as, in this operation, it is evident that I am conscious, or immediately cognizant, of *the cathedral as imaged in my mind*; so it is equally manifest that I am not conscious or immediately cognizant of *the cathedral as existing*. But still I am said to know it; it is even called the object of my thought."

Yes; but thought is a mediate knowledge. What, therefore, I mediately know by thought, I do not immediately know by consciousness. I am conscious of the thought, not of the object thought.

In the third place, as to the memory. Hamilton refutes Reid's position that memory is an immediate knowledge of the past. But Hamilton contends that consciousness and immediate knowledge are convertible. Therefore, one would infer we cannot be conscious of the past. How, then, can Hamilton hold that consciousness, as a generic faculty, includes a knowledge of past objects remembered? But does he hold this? Let us hear him.

"If," he observes, "our intellectual operations exist only in relation, it must be impossible that consciousness can take cognizance of one term of this relation, without also taking cognizance of the other. *Knowledge, in general, is a relation between a subject knowing and an object known*, and each operation of our cognitive faculties only exists by relation to a particular object—this object at once calling it into existence, and specifying the quality of its existence. It is, therefore, palpably impossible that we can be conscious of an act without being conscious of the object to which that act is relative. This, however, is what Dr. Reid and Mr. Stewart maintain. They maintain that I can know that I know without knowing what I know—or that I can know the

knowledge without knowing what the knowledge is about; for example, that I am conscious of perceiving a book without being conscious of the book perceived—that I am conscious of remembering its contents, without being conscious of these contents remembered—and so forth. The unsoundness of this opinion must, however, be articulately shown," etc.

Here Hamilton puts, unaccountably puts, perception and memory upon the same footing. We perceive the contents of a book, therefore we are conscious of them. Most certainly; for the contents of the book are now and here before us. We gaze upon them—we have an intuition, an immediate, a presentative knowledge of them. Likewise, argues Hamilton, we remember the contents of a book, therefore we are conscious of them. Most certainly not, for the contents of the book are not now and here present. We do not gaze upon them—we have not an intuitive, an immediate, a presentative knowledge of them; therefore, we are not conscious of them. What we are conscious of is the mental representation of the contents of the book, and through that representation we know, not presentatively and immediately, but representatively and mediately, those contents; we are not conscious of them. That Hamilton himself maintained this view will be evinced by the following passage, extracted from the very discussion in which he attempts to show that consciousness is not a special faculty:

“What are the contents of an act of memory? An act of memory is merely a present state of mind, which we are conscious of, not as absolute, but as relative to, and representing, another state of mind, and accompanied with the belief that the state of mind, as now represented, has actually been. I remember an event I saw—the landing of George IV. at Leith. This remembrance is

only a consciousness of certain imaginations, involving the conviction that these imaginations now represent ideally what I formerly really experienced. All that is immediately known in the act of memory is the present mental modification; that is, the representation and concomitant belief. Beyond the mental modification we know nothing; and this mental modification is not only known to consciousness, but only exists in and by consciousness. Of any past object, real or ideal, the mind knows and can know nothing, for, *ex hypothesi*, no such object now exists; or if it be said to know such an object, it can only be said to know it mediately, as represented in the present mental modification."

This is a convincing statement, and it makes the explicit declaration that, in being conscious of an operation of memory, we are *not* conscious of the object of that operation. If this be so, what of the thesis contended for: that consciousness of the operation of any cognitive faculty involves the consciousness of its object?

Might Hamilton have intended by the object of an operation to designate not the really existing external object, but the object as subjectively contained in the mental representation—the object representing the real external object represented? This supposition is opposed by the fact that he applied the principle to perception, and it is perfectly certain that he did not hold that in the operation of perception there is contained a mental object representing the real external object. Think of the prince of natural realists holding such a view! Further, if that supposition is made concerning the representative faculties, it could not relieve the difficulty. For the subjective object contained in the mental operation is the whole ideal matter of the operation. It is impossible to separate between the repre-



sentative operation and the ideal, representing object, They are identical. To say, then, that in being conscious of the operation we are conscious of its object, would be to say that in being conscious of the operation we are conscious of the operation. That surely would not prove consciousness to be a generic and all-comprehending faculty!

The possible supposition, that Hamilton may have meant that we are conscious of the mediate knowledge furnished by the operation of a faculty of mediate knowledge, has already, to some extent, been considered. Let us now test it by the mediate knowledge of the Infinite, of God. Can we be conscious of that knowledge? Hamilton contends that we cannot think God, *as infinite*. Of course, then, we cannot be conscious of him, as infinite. But he also holds that we mediately know him, as infinite. How? We believe in him, as infinite. Now, of this belief, as a mental phenomenon, we are conscious. Does it follow that we are also conscious of the mediate knowledge itself? It is clear that this knowledge cannot exist without involving its object. The object is the very thing about which it is concerned. The Infinite Being—to speak reverently—is its object-matter. Think away that, you annihilate the knowledge. To be conscious of the knowledge, therefore, is to be conscious of God, as infinite. But that Hamilton denies, and justly denies. Hence, consciousness of the belief, as an act or operation which is phenomenal, does not involve a consciousness of the knowledge which it furnishes.

Let us come down to the finite, and also test Hamilton's position by belief in human testimony. We read

the Commentaries of Cæsar. We believe the testimony, and have a mediate knowledge of the facts reported. Now three things happen. First, we have, as grounded upon the author's descriptions, representative images of the battles as past facts. Through them we have a mediate knowledge of those facts. Are we conscious of the battles? Have we a conscious *knowledge* of them? No. We are conscious only of the representations through which we mediately know. Secondly, we believe in the existence of Julius Cæsar. In this case, we can have no trustworthy representative image. Our knowledge of Cæsar is furnished by a belief mediated through testimony. Are we conscious of the knowledge of the great commander? If so, as he is the object-matter of the knowledge, we are conscious of Cæsar. That is out of the question, if the knowledge that consciousness furnishes is immediate, presentative, intuitive. Is Julius Cæsar now and here present to us? He is not even imaged. He is believed in. Thirdly, those who have never been at Rome know the city, but not through a representative image of a thing formerly presented. I never saw Rome. Yet it is at present existing. Were I to visit it I would be conscious of it. Now I am not even conscious of an image of it. How, then, do I know its existence? Believing in testimony I mediately know it. I am conscious that I thus believe, that I thus mediately know Rome. I am not conscious of the knowledge itself, for I am not conscious of Rome, its object-matter; and will probably never be conscious of it, as I never expect to go Romeward! Here, then, we have past events, a non-existent person, and an ex-

isting place, of neither of which we have conscious knowledge. Our knowledge is a faith-knowledge mediated through testimony.

The last defence which may be resorted to is, that there is a distinction between a conscious knowledge and a consciousness of knowledge. This, however, is an incompetent distinction, for the reason that wherever consciousness exists there are but two terms: consciousness itself and the object of consciousness; and the relation between the two is knowledge, which can be no other than consciousness. To say that there may be a consciousness of a knowledge without conscious knowledge is to say that there may be a knowledge of a knowledge without a knowledge of the object of knowledge.

To take opposite ground from that which has been in this discussion maintained is to make consciousness the generic cognitive faculty; that is, the reason or intelligence, and to attribute to it *all* the functions of cognition. It would be distributable into the faculty of immediate knowledge, the faculty of mediate knowledge, and the faculty of laws or first principles. It would, by virtue of this reduction, immediately know, and would also represent, think, and believe. This cannot be true if consciousness is the faculty or power of immediate knowledge; and that it is, is Hamilton's doctrine—a doctrine which can be established upon solid grounds of reason. On this supposition, it cannot be true, for, it is clear that the essence of the genus, immediate knowledge, could not descend into such species, said to be contained under, it as representative knowledge, thought-knowledge, and faith-knowledge.

Is there, then, any knowledge, possessed by us, of which we are not conscious? The answer is: None, of which it cannot be said that we are conscious *that* we know; much, very much, of which it can be said that we are not conscious of *what* we know. In his sweeping denial of this Hamilton's consistency and discrimination alike failed him. He confounded consciousness with mediate knowledge. We cannot, it is true, be conscious without being conscious of the object known in consciousness; but we can mediately know, without being conscious of the object mediately known—such as cause, substance, occult force, infinity, God. Otherwise, we would have a double knowledge of objects mediately known—namely, a mediate knowledge of them by the particular faculties appropriate to them, and an immediate knowledge of them by consciousness; a thing which Hamilton himself pronounces not only unphilosophical, but absurd. Either consciousness is one kind of knowledge, or it comprehends all kinds of knowledge. It cannot be both. Hamilton affirms that it is both. Between the contradictories I am compelled to elect that which makes consciousness a specific knowledge, and reject that which makes it generic. The one indivisible, personal subject which knows, knows immediately and knows mediately. It were folly to postulate two specific kinds of knowledge, and reduce them to unity upon one of the species as generic. Both authenticate themselves, resting ultimately upon the trustworthiness of that fundamental nature, which is at once the product of God, and the expression of his veracity. We are conscious, we represent, we think, we believe,—all these

cognitive processes are brought into unity upon the generic faculty of cognition, and the validity of them all is guaranteed by faith in the immutable truth of him who created the human soul.

Before this discussion is closed two things must be signalized :

1. Although it has been maintained that consciousness is a specific, and not a generic, faculty of cognition, it is not intended that, strictly speaking, it is to be coördinated as a species with the specific faculties of representation, thought, and belief ; but rather as the faculty of immediate knowledge, with the faculty of mediate knowledge, the latter being distributable into the special faculties of mediate knowledge—the representative faculty, the thinking faculty, the believing faculty.

2. While it has been contended that consciousness is not a generic faculty, comprehending all the other faculties, of cognition ; it is also maintained that, as the faculty of immediate, presentative, intuitive knowledge—the complement of internal and external perception, it sustains a catholic relation to all the others. *It is the generic condition of their operations.* It is the faculty of experience, the original observer, the office of which is to furnish the materials which are employed by the other faculties. It is to them what psychology and physical science are to philosophy. It explores the fields of the inner and outer worlds, investigates, notes and registers facts. It is, indeed, the organ of the psychologist and the scientist. As immediate knowledge it is the condition necessary to the development of all mediate knowledge.

The conclusion has thus been reached that consciousness and perception are one and the same; that they are different names for the same special faculty—the faculty of immediate or presentative or intuitive knowledge, sustaining a common relation to all the other faculties, and furnishing the necessary condition of their operation.

## THE AUTHORITY OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

---

THE authority of consciousness depends upon its trustworthiness, and the question of its trustworthiness resolves itself into the question of its veracity.

When we speak of the authority of consciousness, two things are included: first, the authority of consciousness as the immediate knowledge, the perception, of phenomenal facts, internal and external; secondly, the authority of the necessary inferences derivable from those facts. These inferences are given in consciousness, are testified to by it as facts, but the authority of the inferences themselves rests upon the fundamental laws of thought and belief. These laws are, in the first instance, beneath consciousness. They are developed into activity by the empirical conditions furnished by consciousness. They then formally express themselves in the necessary inferences derived from the data of consciousness. The inferences are the explicit evolution into actual thoughts and beliefs of what was previously contained implicitly in the phenomenal facts of consciousness. The authority of consciousness, therefore, is comprehensively the authority of both the phenomenal facts delivered and the inferences logically deducible from them.

The question is similar to that of the authority of the Bible. Of its express statements we are conscious. As facts they are authoritative, but the good and necessary consequences which are deducible from the explicit statements of the Scriptures are of equal authority with the statements themselves.

I proceed briefly to indicate the proofs of the veracity, and consequently the authority of consciousness, considered in this comprehensive sense.

1. There can, from the nature of the case, lie no appeal from the clear deliverances of consciousness. If we take such an appeal, it must be made to another consciousness, or to nothing. If to a second consciousness deeper and more authoritative than the first, we are again compelled to appeal to a third for confirmation of its data. It is plain that we strike the path of a regression of consciousnesses which must be *ad infinitum*. As this is absurd, nothing is left us but to rely upon the first clear deliverances of consciousness as possessed of decisive authority.

2. Consciousness is the testimony of God in our nature. It is fundamental, and it must be admitted by all but professed atheists that the foundations of our mental constitution were laid by our Maker. If, then, consciousness could be supposed to lie, we would suppose that it was intended by God to lie; that our nature was constructed by him as an organ of falsehood. This is contradictory to all our apprehensions of the divine character. To say that our nature may have been the product of a malign creator would be to adopt the old Manichæan absurdity, and to contradict the principles of



theism—principles which are enforced by reason itself. Rejecting that hypothesis, we must believe that our nature was created by the God of truth; and, as consciousness is a radical power of that nature, that it expresses the veracity of God—that it is his testimony uttered by our mental constitution.

3. If consciousness could be false, the root of our nature would be falsehood. We would be radical liars. The whole development of our constitution would be in the direction of falsehood. To advocate such a view would be to approve lying as a natural and therefore justifiable habit—a procedure which the moral sense of mankind would not tolerate. Nor can it relieve the difficulty to take the ground that consciousness may not always, but only sometimes, deceive. For if it were false in one respect, it would be universally untrustworthy. A prevaricating witness can never be trusted: *falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*.

4. The practice of mankind, the structure and relations of society, the business and conduct of every-day life, all depends upon and suppose the veracity of consciousness. This is, in itself, sufficient to settle the question. Even the nihilist could not carry out any plan upon a contrary supposition.

5. If the testimony of consciousness were false, all ground of certainty would be gone. All beliefs and doctrines would be reduced to absolute indifference. Why should Hume have argued to prove the perfect absence of certitude from human knowledge? Were not, according to his hypothesis, his own grounds of argument destitute of all certainty? He refuted his own scepti-

cism. The veracity of consciousness gone, the whole fabric of human knowledge is demolished, as well scientific as philosophical, religious as natural. For

(1.) Observation through the senses—the organ of science—is alone trustworthy, because founded on the veracity of consciousness.

(2.) This is still more obvious in regard to philosophy. If it cannot rely upon consciousness, it could have no beginning, and what is called philosophy would have an end. It would be zero.

(3.) The same is true of religion. So far as it is natural, it is grounded in the testimony of consciousness in regard to the facts of our religious nature, and so far as it is supernatural, it supposes the deliverances of consciousness as to the evidences of divine revelation, and its trustworthiness as to the statements of the Scriptures.

6. Ultimately, our reliance upon consciousness, as the immediate knowledge of phenomenal existence, is grounded in a law of belief imbedded in the very foundations of our mental structure. To doubt its veracity, therefore, would be to discredit the fundamental principles of our nature. We would doubt ourselves, we would doubt everything. Universal scepticism would result; all ground of the certainty of knowledge would be swept away. The vacuity of nihilism would remain—not even a vast and howling wilderness, for there would be no wilderness, and if there were, there would be nothing to make it howl. Hamilton remarks truly: “A fact of consciousness is thus,—that whose existence is given and guaranteed by an original and necessary belief.”

7. So far I have been able heartily to subscribe to what Hamilton has delivered in regard to the authority of consciousness; but there is one of his positions which does not command my assent, if I have correctly apprehended it. He will be allowed to state it in his own words. In his *Lectures* he says:

“The facts of consciousness are to be considered in two points of view; either as evidencing their own ideal or phenomenal existence, or as evidencing the objective existence of something else beyond them. A belief in the former is not identical with a belief in the latter. The one cannot, the other may possibly, be refused. In the case of a common witness, we cannot doubt the fact of his personal reality, nor the fact of his testimony as emitted; but we can always doubt the truth of that which his testimony avers. So it is with consciousness. We cannot possibly refuse the fact of its evidence as given, but we may hesitate to admit that beyond itself of which it assures us. I shall explain by taking an example. In the act of External Perception, consciousness gives, as a conjunct fact, the existence of Me or Self as perceiving, and the existence of something different from Me or Self as perceived. Now the reality of this as a subjective datum—as an ideal phenomenon, it is impossible to doubt without doubting the existence of consciousness, for consciousness is itself this fact; and to doubt the existence of consciousness is absolutely impossible; for as such a doubt could not exist, except in and through consciousness, it would, consequently, annihilate itself. We should doubt that we doubted. As contained—as given, in an act of consciousness, the contrast of mind knowing and matter known cannot be denied.

“But the whole phenomenon as given in consciousness may be admitted, and yet its inference disputed. It may be said, consciousness gives the mental subject as perceiving an external object, contradistinguished from it as perceived; all this we do not, and cannot, deny. But consciousness is only a phenomenon; the contrast between the subject and the object may be only apparent, not real; the object given as an external reality may only be a mental representation, which the mind is, by an unknown law, determined unconsciously to produce, and to mistake for

something different from itself. All this may be said and believed, without self-contradiction; nay, all this has, by the immense majority of modern philosophers, been actually said and believed."

The same distinction is thus maintained in his *Notes to Reid*:

"There is no skepticism possible touching the facts of consciousness in themselves. We cannot doubt that the phenomena of consciousness are real, in so far as we are conscious of them. I cannot doubt, for example, that I am actually conscious of a certain feeling of fragrance, and of certain perceptions of color, figure, etc., when I see and smell a rose. Of the reality of these, as experienced, I cannot doubt, because they are facts of consciousness; and of consciousness I cannot doubt, because such doubt being itself an act of consciousness, would contradict, and, consequently, annihilate itself. But of all beyond the mere phenomena of which we are conscious, we may—without fear of self-contradiction, at least—doubt. I may, for instance, doubt whether the rose I see and smell has any existence beyond a phenomenal existence in my consciousness. I cannot doubt that I am conscious of it as something different from self; but whether it have indeed any reality beyond my mind—whether the *not-self* be not in truth only *self*—that I may philosophically question. In like manner, I am conscious of the memory of a certain past event. Of the contents of this memory, as a phenomenon given in consciousness, skepticism is impossible. But I may by possibility demur to the reality of all beyond these contents and the sphere of present consciousness."

The language here employed is not perfectly clear, at least not so clear as to exclude all uncertainty touching Hamilton's meaning. It may be said that he distinguishes between the *possibility* and the *validity* of doubt in regard to the things which consciousness testifies to. While it is possible to doubt in relation to these things, it is not legitimate to entertain the doubt. It is possible, but not valid. The possibility of such doubt, it is urged,

is proved by the fact that so many philosophers have actually indulged it. This, however, is not conclusive. The question is in regard to the mind in its regular condition, and in the normal exercise of its faculties. There have been some who professed to doubt their own existence, and, of course, the existence of consciousness itself. If possibility of doubt be made the measure of uncertainty, all things are uncertain—the existence of ourselves, of the universe, of God. Absolute scepticism is not impossible, for there have been avowed Pyrrhonists in modern as well as in ancient times.

A mind that violates its own laws may do anything, may adopt the wildest and most senseless vagary. The grotesque fancy of centaurs resulted in the belief of an actual battle between Hercules and those impossible existences. What is impossible to a sane mind is possible to an insane; and the argument is not concerned about possibilities to a disordered intellect. A man may pretend to deny the existence of the external world, but if he persist in the attempt to accomplish the impossible, the conclusion must be that, like Fichte, he will be to himself “but the dream of a dream.” One may doubt his inability to fly to the moon, but he would only prove that in that respect he is a lunatic. It is true that it is possible for him to doubt his inability to perform the feat, but only as, *quoad hoc*, a crazy man.

To say, then, that it is impossible to doubt the fact that consciousness testifies, but possible to doubt that to which it testifies, is to take a position concerning which there may be dispute. The distinction between the certainty of the existence of consciousness and the certainty

of its deliverances vanishes, if the existence of consciousness itself is susceptible of doubt. This, however, does not seem to be all that Hamilton's language conveys. It implies that the knowledge of the things to which consciousness testifies is less certain than the knowledge that consciousness actually testifies. The degree of certainty is less in one case than in the other. This supposes that the testimony delivered by consciousness is not attended with the highest degree of certainty. It is against this position that objection is now offered.

(1.) Consciousness never infers. It is the occasion of numerous and most important inferences; itself never produces them. It is not an inferring faculty. It is at this point that Hamilton, usually the sure-footed analyst, trips. He grounds the possibility of doubt in regard to the testimony of consciousness in the supposition that it is sometimes inferential. We may not doubt the phenomenal contents of consciousness, but we may the inferences from those contents. "In the act of external perception," he says, "consciousness gives, as a conjunct fact, the existence of me or self as perceiving, and the existence of something different from me or self as perceived. Now the reality of this, as a subjective datum, as an ideal phenomenon, it is impossible to doubt, without denying the existence of consciousness, for consciousness is itself this fact." This he clearly proves, and then goes on to observe: "But the whole phenomenon as given in consciousness may be admitted, and yet its inference denied." This means, as he proceeds to explain, that the direct testimony of consciousness to the phenomenon is undeniable, but its inferential

testimony that the phenomenon is external to the me or self is disputable. The direct testimony is to the phenomenal existence, the indirect or inferential is to the distinction between the Ego and the external world, to the antithesis between the subject knowing and the object known. This accords with the special view which he elsewhere maintains, that in every act of external perception, a "judgment" is furnished by consciousness affirming a contrast between the mind and the material object.

Sir William's doctrine of the nature and office of consciousness cannot be harmonized with this position, and it is a doctrine which is characterized by truth, and places the Scottish philosophy as expounded by himself in advance of previous systems. Consciousness is equivalent to immediate knowledge; it is the faculty of presentative knowledge. Its office, its sole office, is to give phenomena. It is the observer of facts. This being its province, it never thinks, judges, compares, reasons. Consequently inference, both mediate and immediate, lies out of its field. This must be made by other powers, by the faculties of thought and belief. Hamilton is not consistent with himself in admitting that the inference of the distinction between the self and an external object is furnished by consciousness. That judgment accompanies the testimony of consciousness to the phenomenal facts of the mind and those of matter, but is not the product of consciousness itself. The judgment, in the form of a special, immediate inference, is enforced by a fundamental law of belief, an *a priori* principle of our mental constitution, developed into exercise

by the conditions of consciousness—that is, by the empirical knowledge of phenomenal facts afforded by consciousness.

If, therefore, it were conceded to Hamilton that this inference, and others like it, may possibly be doubted, that would not affect the authority of consciousness as absolutely trustworthy in all its testimony concerning phenomenal facts. Hamilton's general doctrine holds good, without exception, that it is impossible to doubt the testimony of consciousness to a phenomenal fact without doubting the existence of consciousness itself. For how is it possible to apprehend consciousness itself as a fact without apprehending the object of which we are conscious. Annihilate the object, you annihilate consciousness. Consciousness is an actual, not a potential, knowledge. It is immediate knowledge actually existing. Think away the object immediately known, you think away the immediate knowledge.

It remains, therefore, that the knowledge of the things to which consciousness testifies is of the same degree of certainty as the knowledge of the fact that consciousness testifies. The authority of consciousness, in its sphere of immediate knowledge, is unimpeachable—it is absolute.

(2.) While it is true that the inferences derived from the facts presented in consciousness are not made by consciousness, but by other faculties, we are entitled not only to affirm the certainty of the knowledge which consciousness directly communicates, but to hold that good and necessary inferences from the facts of consciousness are of equal validity with the facts themselves. The



knowledge attending these necessary inferences, although mediate, is possessed of certainty equal to the immediate knowledge involved in consciousness. It is a maxim of the highest value, and one universally admitted, that necessary inferences from original propositions or facts are of equal validity and authority with the propositions or facts from which they are derived. In this class must be placed the inference from the phenomenal facts presented in consciousness to the existence of our souls, of the material universe, and of God. The knowledge thus attained is the consummation of conscious, immediate knowledge, the crown and glory of its development. By faith we climb up the ladder of consciousness, with its foot on earth, to God, to heaven, to immortality.

8. The inquiry may be raised whether the veracity of consciousness may not have been impaired by the fall of man into sin. It may be said that, although the essential constituents of his nature were not destroyed by the fall, they were impaired, and that consciousness may have shared in the damage that was inflicted by the revolutionary force of sin. This, I think, cannot be maintained.

(1.) The fact of sin could not discharge man from his obligation to obey God. The sense of legal obligation could not be obliterated. Otherwise the perception of guilt would have been destroyed. But the divine Ruler could not have left himself without a witness in the human constitution. That witness is precisely consciousness. It bears true testimony to the fact of crime, and thus justifies the retributive measures of the divine gov-

ernment to the transgressor himself, measures which, without such a testimony, would have only the force of mechanical inflictions.

(2.) Whether what is done by man be right or wrong, consciousness as the unerring observer certifies the fact. A witness may lie upon the stand, but his consciousness tells the truth in bearing witness to the lie as a fact. Conscience, through the influence of a false understanding or of corrupt emotions, may render a wrong decision in a concrete case, but consciousness testifies to the wrong decision as a fact.

The fall obliterated from man's nature the separate quality of holiness, but the essential power of consciousness remained as the knowledge of sin. It survived the storm which wrecked the spiritual qualities of the soul, an unerring witness alike to the guilt of man and the justice of God. This alone could ground the conviction in the breast of transgressors that their punishment is inflicted in righteousness. Take away the veracity of consciousness, and you remove the fidelity of memory, and so the procedures of violated law and penal justice would be reduced to the arbitrariness of mere brute force. They might crush, but they could not convince.

## COSMOTHETIC IDEALISM.

---

THIS title is here adopted in order to align the theory with other forms of idealism. The theory is also designated by the following names: Representative perception, hypothetical realism, and hypothetical dualism. The reason for these different titles was furnished in a preceding discussion. The arguments of Sir William Hamilton in refutation of this theory I regard as masterly and convincing. It is now proposed to present a condensed statement of his arguments, with occasional interpolated notes, which will be indicated by square brackets, and to add some reflections of my own.

I. It is urged that nothing can act where it does not exist; therefore the mind cannot immediately act upon matter. The immediate cognition of matter is impossible. Hence there must be an intervening something.  
Answer:

1. Consciousness testifies to our immediate perception of matter. Its incomprehensibility makes nothing against this deliverance.

2. The objection proves too much, and is, therefore, worthless.

(1.) It would make the termination of volition on our muscular organism impossible. But consciousness and facts alike affirm it.

(2.) It would prove all action and re-action in the universe impossible. That, also, is contradictory to facts. It would limit each thing to the sphere of its own existence.

3. The objection, while denying transitive efficiency to mind, concedes it to matter. The ideal image is the result of the projection of the material object into the mind, or at least of some influence of that object. The two must come together in some way, and the cosmthetic idealist assigns more activity to matter in effecting the mysterious junction than to mind, which is absurd.

II. It is contended that mind and matter are substances of the most opposite nature; but what immediately knows must be of a nature analogous to that which is known. Answer:

The latter assumption is purely gratuitous, and, therefore, needs no labored refutation. We know nothing, *a priori*, of the capacities of mind. But our *a posteriori* experience contradicts the assumption that mind, as out of analogy to matter, cannot immediately cognize it. The testimony of consciousness is clear upon this point.

III. It is urged that mind can only know immediately that to which it is immediately present; but as external objects cannot come into the mind, nor the mind go out to them, they can be known only mediately through some representative object whether that object be in the mind and of it, or in the mind but not of it.

There have been several methods of meeting this objection:

1. It has been denied that external objects cannot

come into the mind; that is, it has been affirmed that they may come into the mind. [This Hamilton pronounces absurd, and so brushes it aside along with Sergeant's argument: I know the very thing; the thing is, therefore, in my act of knowledge; that act is in my understanding; therefore the thing is also.]

2. It has been asserted that the mind actually goes out to the external object. Vision, it has been held, is a perceptive emanation from the eye. This was a doctrine of Empedocles, the Platonists, the Stoics, Alexander the Aphrodisian, Euclid, Ptolemy, Galen and Alchindus. Lord Monboddo pushed it out to absurdity: The mind must exist where it acts; it acts beyond the body; therefore it exists out of the body in the distant object. [Hamilton only states the hypothesis.]

3. The view has been held, as by Reid and Stewart, that though the mind neither sallies out to the external object, nor does it intrude into the mind—though they are not present to each other—the agency of God comes in to effect an immediate perception by the mind of the external object. This is almost identical with the Cartesian doctrine of occasional causes or divine assistance.

Answer:

(1.) This is a mere hypothesis, not a statement of fact.

(2.) It assumes an occult principle; it is mystical.

(3.) It is hyperphysical: brings in a *deus ex machina*.

(4.) It is out of harmony with Reid and Stewart's doctrine of an immediate perception of the external world. [Here Hamilton introduces his own view as to the external object which is immediately perceived, in

order to show that the doctrine of the immediate perception of the external world is not unintelligible. Whatever may be thought of this view, it does not contribute anything to the solution of the philosophical riddle, how the mind comes in contact with external objects. The chasm is not bridged. The bodily organism is matter, however near the mind it is held to be.

Here also Hamilton argues against the localization of the mind. But it makes no difference whether it be seated at a point of the brain or occupy the whole body. If it be in the body, it is localized. Either the soul is somewhere or it is nowhere. If somewhere, it is in a place; if nowhere, it is non-existent. The Deity alone is in no place; that is, as contained in it or restricted to it. The doctrine of the *illocalitas* of spirit is unintelligible. It certainly is not, as finite, ubiquitous. Pass with as much speed as possible from point to point of space, it must, at any given instant of time, be at a certain point and nowhere else. Is not that to be localized?]

IV. Hume's view was that external objects are only images. A table, for example, diminishes as we recede from it with our gaze fixed upon it. This is answered by referring to the real object perceived; that is, one in contact with the organ of sense. [I have grave doubts in regard to the competency of this answer of Hamilton's, and venture to suggest another. Let a man be stationed at the table, while another recedes from it. To him who keeps his stand at the table it retains its bulk unchanged. It cannot, therefore, actually diminish. The explanation is to be found in the laws of light and vision. The

illustration given proves it absurd to hold that the external object perceived really changes with our distance from it. It is impossible that the table could be to one man actually of one size and to the other actually of another. To say that the table is but an image to both men will not answer, for if a third man should dash the table to pieces with a hammer, there would be no impact of the hammer upon the image; and that it is a reality independent of any image is proved by the possibility of its being broken to pieces by a hammer in the hands of a blind man who could have no image of it—might not even be previously in contact with it by touch, but be informed what place it occupied.]

V. Fichte's argument is that the will must terminate on objects within the mind. Hence representative realities are in and of the mind. Answer:

1. It is a pure assumption as to the termination of the will.

2. No distinction is made between cognitions which move the will itself and other cognitions—the first respecting the future, others the present.

#### ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE THEORY.

1. It is unnecessary. This is proved from the grounds upon which the cosmothetic idealist would vindicate his rejection of the fact of consciousness—namely, the immediate cognition of the external object.

(1.) It is not shown that the alleged fact of consciousness is impossible.

(2.) The alleged incomprehensibility of the datum of consciousness does not necessitate the representative

hypothesis. The incomprehensibility of a fact of consciousness is no ground for its displacement by a substituted hypothesis. Every ultimate fact of consciousness must, from the nature of the case, be incomprehensible. Every demonstration is deduced from something given and indemonstrable.

(3.) But let it be supposed that the hypothesis is more comprehensible than the fact of consciousness; that would only shift back the difficulty which would have to be ultimately met. For a comprehensible fact cannot be ultimate. It must be explained by something preceding which grounds its comprehensibility; and so on by regression until an ultimate fact of consciousness is reached, which *ex necessitate*, is incomprehensible.

(4.) But the representative hypothesis is not, in reality, more comprehensible than the fact of consciousness; that is, the immediate cognition of the external object. It maintains this incomprehensible position: that the mind can represent that of which it knows nothing. It supposes that there can be re-presentation where there has been no presentation. Further, the hypothesis, in this view, appears contradictory. The representative hypothesis—that of cosmothetic idealism—therefore, violates the first condition of a legitimate hypothesis—it is unnecessary, and, besides, explains nothing. It is an incomprehensible solution of an incomprehensible difficulty.

2. The hypothesis is self-destructive. It destroys the trustworthiness of consciousness, and so subverts the foundations of knowledge. Consequently, it annihilates itself.



3. The hypothesis assumes the facts which it professes to explain. It invents an hypothesis to explain an hypothesis; and so revolves in a vicious circle. What are the facts which it assumes? First, the external object as existing; secondly, the mind knowing. For it is devised to explain the correlation of these facts. Now, when we ask the cosmothetic idealist, How do you know the existence of the external object? he answers, Through a mental image which represents it. When we ask him, How do you know that the image is representative? he replies, Because there is an external object which it represents. He knows the external object as existing because it is represented; he knows the external object as represented because it exists. To put the case still more compactly: The external object exists because represented; it is represented because it exists. Verily, this is a circle.

It amounts to this: He hypothecates the external object upon a representative image; and he hypothecates a representative image upon the external object. It is an hypothesis to explain an hypothesis, and must, therefore, ramble round and round in a circle, in which it ever returns to the point from which it started. The fact is, that all which the hypothesis really affirms is the ideal image, and the logical result would be absolute idealism.

[It gives no ground upon which we can know the existence of the external world as different from ourselves. It only supposes it to exist, and that only by a vicious circle of hypothetical reasoning; unless it be admitted that it is legitimate to infer the existence of an object

reflected in a mirror from the mirrored representation of it previously to an experience by which we verify the relation between the two. But as Hamilton does not discuss this supposition, it will be reserved for consideration in the sequel.]

Hamilton's fourth argument I omit, in consequence of some doubt as to its validity or, at least, its conclusiveness, and pass on to

5. The hypothesis excludes the fact to be explained from the sphere of experience. It thus violates another canon as to a legitimate hypothesis. All that it grounds in professed experience is a mental image. Of the external object alleged to be represented we have, *ex hypothesi*, no empirical knowledge. [Remarks upon this point are also postponed in connection with the last which has been considered, as they seem to be closely related.]

6. The hypothesis is destitute of simplicity, and so furnishes another violation of the laws of a legitimate hypothesis. It must not depend on a subsidiary hypothesis; must not involve anything hidden or supernatural. That would be to attempt the explanation of what is hidden by another thing which is hidden; to elucidate the natural by the supernatural.

Now, either the mental image represents a real external world or it does not. If it does not, the result is pure idealism. But as that is abjured by the cosmthetic idealist, the first alternative must be accepted. The question then is, What determines the mind to represent the external object, which, *ex hypothesi*, it does not immediately perceive?

Now, again, either the mind blindly determines itself to this representation, or it is determined by some intelligent cause different from itself.

The former supposition is irrational. The mind is said to represent that of which it knows nothing, and that infringes all the laws of representation.

The latter supposition implies a supernatural and miraculous element, such as are suggested by the theories of Descartes and Leibnitz.

But this is unphilosophical, provided a simpler explanation is possible. That is furnished by natural realism which accepts the datum of consciousness, that we know the external world by immediate perception of its phenomenal reality.

Such is a sketch of Sir William Hamilton's argument in opposition to the theory of cosmothetic idealism or representative perception—an argument remarkable alike for its originality, its acuteness and its power.

#### SOME ADDITIONAL REFLECTIONS.

1. One great difficulty urged against natural realism, which affirms the immediate perception by mind of material phenomena, is that it is impossible that spirit can be brought into such a relation to matter as to suppose its immediate cognition of it.

To this it may be replied that the argument proves too much, since it involves the denial of the intuition of matter by the divine mind. For the distance between God, a pure spirit, and matter is infinite. On the theory that the substance of matter is not identical with that of God, the question must arise in regard to his

knowledge of matter as different from himself. And as it is universally admitted by theists that his knowledge is intuitive, and not mediate and indirect, whatever inability there may be on our part to comprehend the relation between him and matter, we must admit his immediate knowledge of it. The argument, therefore, proves too much, and is, consequently, invalid. But if we concede the immediate knowledge of matter by him who is pure Spirit, what difficulty is there in admitting the lesser supposition of an immediate knowledge of it by the human spirit?

2. It is assumed that as cognition is an immanent, and not a transitive act of the mind, to suppose the mind to act immediately upon matter is to suppose it to act out of itself; and that would be contradictory to the nature of knowledge and absurd.

But why should the mind not act where itself is not? Is it less active than matter is deemed to be? One body influences another body by the attraction of gravitation, although the two are not in contact, but may be at a great distance apart. Now, either the force of gravitation is a property of matter or of spirit. If of matter, the denial to spirit of a power to act upon that which is not part of itself reduces it, in the scale of being and dynamical influence, to a place inferior to that of matter, which is absurd. If of spirit, it is granted that spirit can act upon matter, and act upon it immediately. The question of an *external* medium is not involved on one side or the other of this question. If this be so, the ground of the difficulty is removed.

3. It is contended that in order that the mind should

be immediately cognizant of matter the two should be analogous substances.

(1.) The argument used above, derived from the divine knowledge of material reality, also applies here. Is there an analogy between the Infinite Spirit and matter?

(2.) The position necessarily leads to monism. God cannot act upon matter if it be different from himself as a Spirit. He and the universe are one substance. Pure idealism or pure materialism is the inevitable result. Upon this principle the hypothesis of a representative perception is utterly illogical. Matter can no more act upon spirit than spirit can be cognizant of matter. There is no interaction possible. Whence, then, the representative image? If it be a mental modification, how does it bring the mind into a near relation to matter? It is mind still, and the gulf is impassable. If it be material, how does a thing so destitute of analogy to mind get into the mind? If it be neither spiritual nor material, but a *tertium quid*, different from both mind and matter, what, in the name of sense, is it?

4. It may be maintained that the existence of a representative image is not an hypothesis which is framed to account for the fact of an external world, but that it is delivered as a fact by consciousness. But the fact of a representing image being given, we must infer the thing represented; as, when we see an image reflected in a mirror, we infer the existence of the object which caused the reflection.

To this it is replied:

(1.) If an appeal be taken to the common judgment

of mankind to determine what the deliverance of consciousness is, the answer would be instantly, would be, except where there is partisan zeal for an hypothesis, universally, to the fact of an external world, or, at least, to the immediate knowledge of an external world.

(2.) Consciousness delivers the fact of a mental image, when a mental modification exists, and, in those cases in which the external object is not presentatively related to our faculties, delivers also the fact of an intuitive conviction or belief that the vicarious image truly represents a past event, or an absent object. But when the external object is now and here related to our faculties, consciousness does not deliver to us the fact of an image which represents the object, but the object itself. The object is the percept. The hypothesis of representative perception obliterates the distinction between perception and the imagination. They become the same faculty, sustaining different relations—at one time to the present, and at other times to the past, or the future, or the absent, or the possible, object. In short, the name representative perception is a solecism. It is as if we should speak of a seeing blind man, or of other sameness, or of white blackness.

(3.) Our belief that the image reflected in a mirror guarantees an object which causes the reflection will, upon examination, be found to rest upon experience. If we had never discovered by observation that the appearance in the mirror was simply a reflection, we would believe that appearance to be an underived phenomenon—a real object, and not merely an illusion. So is it with children and animals until their first impressions

are corrected. A child will at first hold out its hand to the other child in the glass, but soon learns that it is but an image of itself. I remember once taking a large, sagacious pointer-dog to a mirror under a pier-table and showing him his image. He instantly bristled up, growled, evinced every disposition to fight, but was evidently reluctant to tackle an animal which, like himself, was preparing for battle, and was exactly his match. He was taken by the neck, encouraged to begin hostilities, and thrust up against the glass, when the explosion occurred. Surprised at the result, he deliberately walked to the rear of the table and looked between it and the wall to see if the other dog were there. Satisfied by the reconnoissance, he at once became placid, and never afterwards could be cheated by the illusion in the glass. He had learned something by experience.

On the supposition that we mediately apprehend an external object through its image mirrored in the mind, we could never know the representative character of the image without first having been cognizant of the thing imaged. We may be conscious of an image as a fact, but we could never know it *as an image* unless we had previously known that which is imaged. Recognition infers cognition; representative knowledge presupposes, and is grounded in, presentative.<sup>1</sup> We cannot image anything of which, in whole or in part, we have had no previous intuition. The wildest fancies of the poet and the lunatic are but compounds of presentations. To adopt the hypothesis of representative per-

<sup>1</sup> To that conclusion my own reflections had led me, before Hamilton's argument had been read.

ception, therefore, is to suppose a knowledge without foundation or reason—to put the child before the mother, the effect before the cause. This single consideration is fatal to that hypothesis.

We have here an instance, it may be added, in rebuttal of the frequently uttered opinion that metaphysics makes no progress. For a long time cosmothetic idealism was the common doctrine of philosophers. In establishing the truer view of the immediate knowledge of the external world the Scottish philosophy made a decided advance in developing the science of the human mind.



## BERKELEY'S IDEALISM.<sup>1</sup>

---

A SPLENDID edition of Bishop Berkeley's works was issued, in 1871, by Professor Alexander Campbell Fraser, the incumbent of the Chair of Logic and Metaphysics in the University of Edinburgh—the chair once illuminated by the genius of the illustrious Sir William Hamilton. The elaborate dissertations in which the accomplished editor expounds the bishop's idealistic system, and the fact that they have emanated from one who has succeeded the great exponent and defender of natural realism, have had the effect of calling attention afresh to the principles of Berkeley's philosophy. In proceeding to discuss them we deem it important to furnish a brief preliminary statement of the main features of Berkeley's system:

1. The denial of abstract ideas.
2. The denial of the existence of matter as substance. There is no such thing as material substance.
3. The denial of even the phenomenal existence of matter, separate from and independent of spirit: denial of natural realism. Material things have no reality in themselves. Whatever reality or casuality material things possess, is dependent and relative.
4. *Esse est percipi*: the so-called material world de-

<sup>1</sup> *Presbyterian Quarterly*, July 1887.

pendes for existence upon the perception of spirit. A thing exists only as it is sensibly perceived.

5. Ideals, sensations, and sense-given phenomena are the same. The material or external world of these ideas, sensations or sense-given phenomena depends for existence upon perception—that is the perception of spirit. “The existence of our ideas consists in their being perceived, imagined, thought on.”

6. These external things or ideas constitute a system of symbols which (1) furnish a medium of communication between different spirits, (2) interpret to finite intelligence the being and casual efficiency of the Infinite Spirit.

7. There is no real causality in the external world of ideas. The only relation between them is that of antecedence and sequence.

8. The permanence of the sensible world of ideas is grounded to us in the fact that our present sensations are signs of the past and of the future. “Physical substance and causality” (so-called) “are only the arbitrarily constituted signification of actual sensations.”—*Fraser*. “Substantiality in the material world is permanence of co-existence among sensations. . . . Causality of phenomena is permanence or invariableness among their successions.”—*Fraser*. This permanence of matter (so-called) is in God. Sensations and sensible things are neither permanent, nor efficient. “The sensible world consists of significant sensations in perpetual flux, and sustained by the divine reason or will.”—*Fraser*.

9. We now see what Berkeley meant by *ideas*. They

are what are ordinarily termed material things or phenomena. They are in the mind, but not of it. Their origin is subjective, but they become objective. Material phenomena are ideas objectified and externalized. What we call the law of nature is only the order of the succession of these ideas.

10. God calls forth in us our ideas in regular order.

11. Real ideas, that is, ideas externalized, do not depend on our will for their production. Imaginary ideas depend upon the will. Real or sense-ideas are caused by the Infinite Spirit.

12. We are prepared to understand what Berkeley meant by *externality*. It is simply externalized ideas: not a phenomenal reality independent of the perception of spirit.

13. What then is spirit? Berkeley says: "The mind, spirit or soul is that indivisible, unextended thing which thinks, acts and perceives. . . . That which perceives ideas, which thinks and wills, is plainly itself no idea, nor like an idea. Ideas are things, inactive and perceived; and spirits a sort of beings altogether different from them."—*Hylas & Philonous*.

14. We are directly conscious of the *substance* of our spirits. This consciousness he sometimes denominates reflection: we know, he says, our souls by reflection.

Thought, volition, perception,—these are properly constituents of the soul; they are in it and of it. But ideas, while they are in the soul as sensational impressions, are not of it. They are not elements which belong to its substance. They are not the self—the Ego.

Berkeley distinguishes between real ideas and im-

aged ideas. The real are phenomenal, sensible things; the imagined are purely mental and subjective—*merentia rationis*. Now it is important to notice his doctrine of causality as applied to these two different sorts of ideas. The real, he contends, are not caused by us, but by the Infinite Spirit, who puts us in relation to them, or them in relation to us. The imagined are caused by ourselves. The nature of this causal relation between our minds and these imagined ideas he defines from the will. They are caused by the will. We can mentally construct, at will, unreal combinations of the real ideas which we have perceived.

We must also notice his doctrine of the immediacy of our knowledge of real ideas or phenomenal and sensible things. He was not a hypothetical realist, but rejected the doctrine of representative perception. Between perception and these real ideas there is, according to him, no intervening modification of the mind, vicarious and representative of the so-called external reality—his real idea. We have an immediate knowledge of it by perception. But while he cannot be ranked as a cosmothetic idealist or hypothetical realist it must not be inferred that he was a natural realist or absolute dualist. There is in his doctrine, as Prof. Fraser, the interpreter of his system, endeavors to show, a species of dualism, but it was not that of the Scottish school. It is merely the dualism of the conscious spirit and its own ideas, conceived as external phenomena. The existence of material things separate from and independent of spirit, it was the very point of his philosophy to deny.

He is evidently to be classed with monists, who af-

firm the existence of but one substance, and as he contended that this one substance is spirit, he must be assigned to the specific class of idealistic monists.

Let us now group the features of his system as they have been enumerated, so as, if possible, to get a brief and comprehensive statement of his theory. If possible, we say, for any one who attempts to accomplish this will find himself balked by discrepancies and inconsistencies which it is difficult to harmonize, and which reveal the want of mature elaboration of the theory by its author himself.

There is no such thing as matter, according to the ordinary conception of philosophers and the common people. No material substance can be proved to exist. It is therefore to us nothing. Nor are the so-called phenomena of matter realities which have an independent existence as such. They depend for existence upon their being perceived by spirit: *Esse est percipi*—their very being is to be perceived. Abstract the perception of spirit from them, and they are zero. They are consequently ideas, not separate from the mind, but in it as impressed upon it through the media of sensations. Indeed, they are represented as sensations themselves. Phenomena, which are denominated external, are, therefore, but objectified ideas or sensations. The mind gone, they are gone. But these ideas are not limited to any one spirit. They are related to the aggregate of finite spirits, and ultimately to the infinite Spirit. Finite spirits being supposed to be out of relation through perception to these real ideas or sensible phenomena, they continue to find the reason of their existence in the per-

ception of the omnipresent Spirit. In fact, they are creatively caused by God—are God's ideas. The universe, consequently, is a collection of God's ideas. Whoever, then, perceives the universe, or any part of it, perceives God's ideas, and has presented to him by the ordinary experience of the perceptive faculty incontestable evidence of the existence of God as an intelligent and omnipotent Spirit. For all phenomena constitute a symbolism of sense which is a medium of communication between finite spirits, and which signifies to us the divine attributes. As we put together letters to form a word, so we collect these sensible symbols to spell out the great name of God. These external phenomena, thus systematized, and having their unity in their relation to the Infinite Spirit as caused by him, have no other coherence in themselves but that which springs from a divinely ordained antecedence and sequence. The only cause which operates in them and through them is that which originated them; and as God's ideas they meet their continuity and persistence alone in his immediate efficiency.

It will be seen from this brief and necessarily inadequate sketch of Bishop Berkeley's philosophical theory of idealism that his pious purpose—as he himself avowed it to be—in its construction, was to resist and overthrow the prevailing materialism of his times, and to vindicate the doctrine of God's existence, and of his immediate relation to the phenomenal universe as his product against the objections to it which materialists were wont to urge. It remains to be seen whether, in the prosecution of this laudable design, he did not go far

towards the opposite extreme of asserting, at least by logical consequence, an idealistic pantheism, which cancels the difference between the Deity and his works, which makes God the universe and the universe God.

In proceeding to consider the theory let us understand, at the outset, what are *not* the questions to be discussed.

First, it is not the question, whether any so-called material things actually exist as unperceived by some spiritual intelligence, whether any unperceived or unperceivable matter exists. This cannot be made a question, since *it may be* that wherever matter in any form exists, there also finite spirits exist and are in perceptive relation to it; and since *it is certain* that no material things can exist out of relation to God, as an omnipresent spirit.

Secondly, it is not the question, whether any finite thing can have the cause of its existence in itself. The existence of God being admitted, all matter (so-called) and all finite spirits must be regarded as caused by his infinite power. Separate being, as caused, they may have, but it is necessarily derived and dependent.

Thirdly, it is not the question, whether the material system depends for continued existence upon spirit. Every opponent of materialism admits the fact that it depends for that existence upon God as the infinite Spirit. In this they all concur with Bishop Berkeley. They may differ from him as to the mode of the divine *concursus* and support.

Fourthly, it is not the question, whether matter is an original and underived cause of any effects, whether it

possesses an independent power to cause phenomenal changes. It may be a question whether matter (so-called) is endowed with properties which as second and subordinate causes are adapted to produce phenomenal changes, but it is not made a question in this discussion, whether it has the efficiency of a first and original cause. That the pure materialist may affirm, but its denial is here assumed.

These, then, are not questions with which the present argument has to deal, and must consequently be thought away. What, then, are the questions about which it is concerned?

I. The first question which falls to be considered is, whether or not there be such a thing as material substance. Bishop Berkeley denies that its existence can be proved, and explicitly affirms the contrary. It is one end of these remarks to evince the incompetency of his hypothesis.

1. Berkeley begins by denying and ridiculing the alleged existence of what are termed abstract ideas. The substance of matter is one of these ideas. As there are no such things, there can be no material substance. It is a play upon words, a mere fancy and crotchet of philosophers. Now there are two kinds of ideas, denominated abstract, which are to be carefully distinguished from each other. An oversight of the distinction must involve the discussion in confusion. First, by the terms *abstract idea* is sometimes meant the idea or conception of a phenomenal quality which is common to several individuals, while at the same time they possess other qualities which as peculiar distinguish



each of these individuals from the others. The question being, whether such a common quality can in thought be abstracted from its connection with others and made a separate object of contemplation, Bishop Berkeley at times takes the negative, and at others seems to admit the affirmative. His ordinary doctrine is, that there can be no such quality to which we can attach an idea. He contends that what we conceive is an individual thing, in the concrete, whatever it may be, and that we make that individual the standard with which we compare others in order to form a class. While pursuing this line of reasoning, he declares it impossible and ridiculous that there can be an abstract idea of a common quality in the sense of a quality containing in itself the general marks of different individuals. But, on the other hand, he sometimes speaks of a quality which, although particular and not general, sustains a common relation to several individual objects. He says, for example: "A man may consider a figure merely as triangular, without attending to the particular qualities of the angles, or relations of the sides"; and again he observes: "An idea which, considered in itself, is particular, becomes general by being made to represent or stand for all other particular ideas of the same sort."<sup>1</sup>

This looks very much like giving up the question as to the possibility of abstract ideas. Once admit that the abstract idea does not involve a general inclusion in itself of the ideas of all the qualities which belong to a class of individuals, but is a particular idea—that is, an idea of a single quality which holds a common rela-

<sup>1</sup> *Principles of Human Knowledge.*

tion to several individuals, and that is all that we care to contend for. And Sir William Hamilton, who concurs with Berkeley in his nominalism, attributes to him, and himself holds, the doctrine of the possibility of such abstract ideas. The question is, What grounds the relation of resemblance between the individuals composing what is called a class? The answer is, and must be, Some quality which is common to them. And this is the answer which Hamilton gives in expounding the nominalistic theory.

When, in maintaining the first mentioned of these views, Berkeley says that a general notion, or, what is the same thing, an abstract idea, is merely a name, and that we delude ourselves when we suppose it anything else, he loses sight of the obvious consideration that a name is significant, or it is an unmeaning cipher. It is the symbol of something. If then there be not some quality which is signified by what is called a general term, the term is mere gibberish. We have seen that Berkeley stated the true doctrine when he granted the existence of ideas of particular qualities having common relations. It is precisely such ideas or concepts as are symbolized by general terms. If, then, there may be, according to his own admission, abstract ideas of phenomenal qualities, his general doctrine is invalidated, that no such things as abstract ideas can exist. This argument, however, has no direct bearing upon the question in hand, namely, whether there can be the abstract idea of the *substance* of matter; for the abstract idea of phenomenal qualities being conceded, it does not follow that such an idea of substance may exist. The indirect

office discharged by the argument—and it is a valuable one—is to break down the universal affirmation that no abstract ideas are possible.

Secondly, there is another kind of abstract idea which it is more pertinent, and indeed which it is vital, to the discussion, to consider. It is the abstract idea of things which are not phenomenal, but which it is common to infer as the substrates of phenomenal qualities, as their ground of manifestation and their bond of unity. Such an idea is that of cause, which it is usual with men, not biased by some philosophical hypothesis, to infer from phenomenal changes. Such an idea is that of substance, which it is also common to infer from phenomenal qualities—the substance of the soul, the substance of God, and the substance of matter. Berkeley confines our knowledge of matter (so-called) to perception. As it will be confessed on all hands that we cannot *perceive* substance, it follows from his datum that we have no knowledge of material substance, or, to use his phraseology, we can have no abstract idea of it; the terms mean nothing. The thing signified by them is a chimera.

In the first place, the *argumentum ad hominem* may be employed against this view. Bishop Berkeley, as a Christian theologian, admitted the existence of the substance of God. That he, or any one else, could know that transcendent substance by perception, internal or external, is out of the question. How, then, did he construe the apprehension of it? The answer must be by one of these very abstract ideas of substance which he vehemently rejects. He contends that we know God, apart from the direct testimony of revelation, though

those phenomenal manifestations of himself which he denominates ideas—the objectified, externalized ideas of the Divine Being. Of course, then, he inferred the existence of the divine substance from these finite manifestations. As the substance is not, cannot be, perceived, it cannot be a concrete percept. What then? It can only be apprehended as an abstract idea. But the bishop's position is that there can be no abstract idea of substance. This one, eminent instance to the contrary, negatives his assertion, and negatives it by virtue of his own confession. But, if we may have an abstract idea of the divine substance, why not of material substance? The alleged impossibility of such an idea will not answer. The argument from the incompetency of perception to furnish it palpably breaks down.

In the second place, Berkeley expressly admits the existence of the substance of the soul, but he contends that we know it by consciousness. Now consciousness is equivalent to immediate knowledge, and unless we utterly misconceive his doctrine, it is precisely that consciousness involves such knowledge. But we may safely challenge the proofs from any quarter that we have immediate knowledge, or, what is the same, an intuition of the substance of the soul. If we have, we can describe it, as we can every object of immediate knowledge. Who ever succeeded in doing this? It is too obvious to require argument that what knowledge of the soul's substance we possess is not derived from a direct gazing upon it in consciousness; it is not an intuition, a percept. We immediately and necessarily infer its existence from its phenomenal manifestations of which

we are conscious, and therefore have immediate knowledge. The idea, then, which we have of the substance of the soul is an abstract idea. Here we have another instance of a knowledge of substance which is not directly derived from perception, a knowledge without which we must apprehend our mental being as a mere bundle of phenomenal qualities ligated by no bond of unity—appearances of something which has no existence, qualities of nothing to be qualified. If, therefore, the substance of God and the substance of the soul cannot possibly be percepts, we have a knowledge of them through ideas which are abstracted from any concrete appearance. Why not—the question recurs—why not a similar abstract idea of the substance of matter? There is certainly nothing in the constitution of our minds to preclude such knowledge. It must be shown that there is something peculiar in the very nature of what is called matter, which exempts it from the possibility of being thus apprehended.

In the third place, unless there be some philosophical speculation which gives their minds a peculiar bent, men are accustomed to infer the existence of substance from perceived phenomena. This is well-nigh a universal law; it finds utterance and proof alike in the language which is almost universal in its employment. The term *phenomenon* has scarcely any meaning, unless there is something which grounds appearance, unless all reality is reduced to mere appearance, and everything around us and within us which is an object of perception is “mere shine.” The term *manifestation* implies that there is something which is manifested. *Quality* sug-

gests something which is qualified; *property* something to which the thing so denominated belongs. *Mode* infers something which is modified. *Attribute* guarantees something to which somewhat is due. *Accident* probably signifies etymologically that which falls upon something else for support. The term *substance* itself, which belongs to the language of at least every cultivated people, would be a meaningless collection of letters, unless it signified something which is under other things and serves in some sort as their support. And we cannot here forbear remarking that although the bishop makes great sport of the thing called substance, and facetiously asks what kind of pillars it has, he very naturally, like ordinary mortals, talks of the substance of the soul as supporting its qualities. We might have craved of him the favor to tell us what its pillars look like, and how they hold up qualities!

The terms which have been mentioned, used as they are almost universally, sufficiently indicate the common belief of the race in the existence of substance; and as all of them are more or less commonly applied to the substance of matter, the common belief of the race in the existence of that kind of substance. Berkeley's endeavor to show that his theory really interprets this belief is only an ingenious attempt to quadrate his speculations with the convictions of mankind. It is certainly a powerful presumption against any opinion that it traverses universal conviction.

2. There pervades all Berkeley's reasoning in support of his theory the confusion of the knowledge of existence with existence itself. If this were an oversight,

it would certainly be curious, and all the more curious that it is not noticed by his distinguished commentator, Professor Fraser. If it were designed as an inherent element in his system, it behooved him to rebut the presumption which lies against it by an articulate consideration of it. Whatever may be thought of the doctrine of the relativity of knowledge, as expounded by Sir William Hamilton, as a whole, the position that, while all that is known by us must in some way be in relation to our faculties, still our knowledge is not the measure of existence, is so obviously true as to commend itself to an almost unquestioning acceptance. In this affirmation the great Scottish philosopher limits knowledge to perceptive knowledge, which is substantially Berkeley's position. But Hamilton admitted and contended for the doctrine that there are realities, transcending perception, which must be believed,—realities which are close to us, such as the occult substance of the soul and the equally occult substance of matter. But however close to us an alleged reality may be, Berkeley declares its non-existence, except it be perceived. Now, the doctrine is so astounding that perceptive knowledge grounds or even conditions real existence, that only arguments of the most demonstrative character could induce its reception. It is to violate common sense to say that knowledge is efficiently causal of existence. We necessarily attribute it to power as its efficient cause. Power is productive, knowledge apprehensive. It may direct power, but cannot be conceived as substituting it. And this is all the more remarkable, inasmuch as Berkeley holds—and attention is particularly invoked to the fact—that the sen-

sible phenomena which he calls ideas and maintains to be grounded for existence in perception are caused by the creative power of God. Granted that he admits realities which our perceptions cannot reach, and that they exist because God perceives them, how is that position to be reconciled with the other, that God causes their existence by his will? But if God may cause the existence of realities which, in consequence of their distance from us we cannot apprehend by perception, he may cause the existence of substance very near to us which may equally lie beyond the scope of the mere perceptive faculty. The truth is that neither our own knowledge, perceptive or not, nor that of other finite beings, nor that of God himself, is the ground, or efficient cause, of existence. It is true that nothing exists without God's knowledge, but it is another thing to say that nothing can exist except it is produced by his knowledge. If this be true of the Infinite Spirit, much more is it true of our spirits. And if it be true of all knowledge, it certainly is of perception. The mere fact, therefore, that alleged material substance is out of relation to our perceptions in no degree affects the question of its existence. There may be and probably are a thousand existences around us of which we can have no knowledge by perception. God himself is around us and in us, but we perceive him not.

3. Berkeley's theory, in restricting the knowledge of material existence to perception, takes no account of the fundamental laws of belief, and the faith-judgments which spring from them when elicited into expression by the conditions of experience. It was one of the great



offices discharged by Kant and the philosophers of the Scottish school that they called attention to the fundamental forms of thought and belief which are imbedded in the very foundations of our nature. Perception furnishes the conditions upon which they emerge into consciousness and affirm themselves, but once drawn forth from their latency, they originate the grandest knowledges of the human soul. It is not our perceptions, it is our faith-judgments, which impart the highest import to our knowledge, and stamp the loftiest significance upon our duties, our relations and our destiny. It is such judgments as cannot be furnished by perception, judgments which give us cause and substance, God and immortality, that lend the truest dignity to our being. To leave out of account these fundamental laws with their accompanying inferences is to sink out of view by far the most important elements of our knowledge. Now, it is exactly these principles which lead to the inference of substance, and it is no wonder that Berkeley, in overlooking them, has been led into the capital error of concluding that because perception cannot affirm the existence of material substance, therefore it cannot exist. This is the point at which his theory especially breaks down.

So far as to Berkeley's denial of the existence of material substance.

II. The second question which claims consideration is, whether phenomenal things, ordinarily termed material, are as ideas dependent upon the perceptions of spirit; for Berkeley's regulative principle is *esse est percipi*—to be is to be perceived. Let it be observed

that the question is not now in regard to the substance of matter. That question is discharged. It is in respect to what are ordinarily termed the phenomena of matter. And in order that this question may be distinctly apprehended let us for a moment recall Berkeley's doctrine. He maintains the view that there are no material phenomena as such. The phenomena so called are dependent for existence upon the perception of spirits. They have no separate, independent existence. There is no such thing as a material system. Materiality is denied and immateriality affirmed. All sensible phenomena are ideas, and these ideas are dependent upon perception, and are all *in the mind*. Properly speaking, they have no external objective existence, except so far as ideas in the mind can be said to have existence. All the so-called qualities of matter are contained under this denomination—ideas. These ideas, further, are sensations, for whatever is an object of perception is a sensation. Sensations include all the qualities of so-called matter—the primary as well as the secondary. Ideas, sensible things, real ideas, real things, sensible objects, sensible phenomena, sense-given ideas or objects, sensations—these all, however, Berkeley's phraseology and even his statements sometimes vary, are by him treated as the same. This may safely be affirmed to be his catholic doctrine. The question before us is, then, in regard to the position that all so-called material phenomena, as ideas, are dependent for existence upon their being perceived by spiritual substance.

1. The theory is chargeable with the logical fault of wanting scientific coherence and self-consistency.

(1.) In stating the main principle which regulates it—namely, to be is to be perceived, it was absolutely necessary that the question be met upon the perception of *what spirits* do material phenomena, or ideas, depend for existence? This question Berkeley answers by saying that some ideas depend upon the perception of human spirits, others upon that of non-human finite spirits, and all upon that of the Infinite Spirit. It would seem to be evident that he started out with the hypothesis that it is the perception of the individual human spirit which conditions phenomenal existence. And to this he adhered until the difficulties attaching to it shut him up to the admission that all phenomenal existence cannot depend upon the perception of an individual finite spirit. This is made apparent from the way in which he dealt with the difficulty raised by the absence of the individual from certain phenomenal realities, and the impossibility, consequently, of his perception conditioning their existence. He states the case himself. While he was present in his study, the existence of the books it contained depended upon his perceiving them. But was their existence suspended while he was absent and could not perceive them? No, he replies, when absent I can imagine them, and the imagination of them conditions their existence.

Subsequently, he saw the absurdity of this position, and took the ground that their existence depended, in the absence of all human percipients, upon the perception of the omnipresent Spirit. This ought, in consistency, to have led him to the abandonment of the supposition that any phenomenal reality depends for ex-

istence upon the perception of human spirits, or even upon non-human finite spirits, and to the assertion of the view that all phenomenal reality depends for existence upon the perception of the Infinite Spirit. But this he did not do, and the consequence is that he jumbles the perceptions of finite spirits and of the Infinite Spirit as the ground of phenomenal existence. One or the other ought to have been affirmed, not both. They cannot possibly be made the conjoint or common ground of phenomenal existence.

(2.) Another evidence of inconsistency in the theory lies in the fact that ideas and sensations are treated as the same; for Berkeley says that sensations are internal feelings, and that ideas are external things. How can mental phenomena be at the same time internal and external? To escape this inconsistency it may be said that they are not at the same time both internal and external, but as the same things they are first one and then the other. Let us take that supposition. If they be first internal and then become external, the difficulty occurs that as sensations are necessarily subjective feelings, there would in the first instance be nothing to originate them; there would be no external reality to which they would correspond. Another difficulty would be, as ideas and sensations are the same, to account for their becoming external. For Berkeley holds that external ideas are not caused by the will. But their externalization could only take place in consequence of some mental effort or energy. They must therefore externalize themselves, which is absurd, since it is contended that they possess no causal force. These difficulties are fatal to

the supposition that ideas or sensations are first internal and then become external.

But, on the other hand, let it be supposed that they are first external and then become internal. The difficulty then would be to account for the transition. As external they must be conceived as grounding themselves as internal, which is absurd; and besides, the supposition is inconsistent with Berkeley's main principle, that perception grounds ideas or sensations. It cannot be true that ideas or sensations as external ground themselves as internal, and that perception grounds their existence whether as internal or external. In addition to this, it is obvious that as a sensation, from the nature of the case, is a mental feeling, and therefore subjective; it is incompetent to represent it as first external and objective, and then internal and subjective. But whether this reasoning be correct or not, the principal feature of the inconsistency returns in force, namely, that ideas and sensations being treated as the same, it cannot be maintained that ideas are external phenomena and sensations are internal feelings. If ideas are not external phenomena, absolute subjective idealism is the result, and that Berkeley does not affirm; if sensations are not internal feelings, but external phenomena, materialism is the result, and that it is the main purpose of his philosophy to deny.

(3.) Still another element of inconsistency may be noticed. Berkeley contends that there can be no phenomenal realities, or, what is the same, there can be no ideas, except there be the perception of them by spirit. Now this must mean, if it mean anything, that the per-

ception of spirit grounds the existence of ideas. What else does the great maxim signify—*esse est percipi*, being is to be perceived? The being of ideas depends on their being perceived. Yet Berkeley explicitly says that ideas are not caused by finite spirits, but caused alone by the will of God. Here the ground of the existence of ideas is declared to be God's will. There are then two grounds for their existence—the perception of finite spirits and the will of the Infinite Spirit. This is certainly a confusion of thought. If it be said that the ground of existence which is assigned to finite perception is different from the cause of existence, the distinction is unintelligible. And, further, if the ground of existence in perception is shifted from finite spirits to the infinite Spirit, inconsistency still emerges, for it is inconsistent to say that the ground or cause of the existence of ideas is at the same time in the perception and in the will of God. Whatever may be thought of the hypothesis that God's knowledge is the cause of finite existence, it is not unintelligible. And it is certainly competent to say that God's will, on the other hand, is the cause of finite existence. But it is unmeaning to say that such a cause is to be referred in the same sense both to the knowledge and the will of God. Such are some of the inconsistencies which inhere in Berkeley's theory; and if they have been proved to exist, they cannot but damage its truth.

2. Having pointed out the logical inconsistency of Berkeley's theory in its attempt to find a ground of phenomenal existence, first in the perception of individual finite spirit, then in that of a number of finite spirits,

and lastly in that of the Infinite Spirit, or in the perception of both finite spirits and of the Infinite Spirit, we proceed to show that the theory involves real inconsistencies—inconsistencies not merely of arrangement, but of a metaphysical character. When, as was inevitable, it became apparent that no individual finite spirit could possibly be at all times in the relation of perception to any section of phenomenal existence, however limited, or at any time to the whole of phenomenal existence, the view had to be abandoned that phenomenal existence is grounded in the perception of individual intelligence. This is conceded by the editor of Berkeley's works, and was substantially admitted by the bishop himself. Recourse was then had to the view that the ground of phenomenal existence was to be sought in the aggregate perceptions of all finite intelligences. This supposed that there are no phenomenal realities which are not in relation to the perception of some finite spirits. But it soon became evident that this supposition could not be maintained. It is not only a fact which must be acknowledged that even that small part of phenomenal reality which at some time may be related to the perception of the individual is not at all times so related, but that there can be no proof of the relation at all times of the whole or even of a part of phenomenal reality to any finite perception. On the contrary, it is easy to suppose the existence of phenomenal reality apart from relation to the perception of any finite intelligence. If, for instance, the moon be uninhabited, its particular features would exist out of relation to intelligent finite beings, and their existence could not be said to be

grounded in the perception of such beings. So, upon the geologic assumption that the world existed long before it became the home of intelligent beings, its existence could not have been conditioned by their perception. Nor can we resist the conviction that if this globe were now stripped by some dread catastrophe of all its intelligent occupants, it might continue to exist, although out of relation to all human perception. The hypothesis of the existence of spirits, of whom the Bible alone speaks, is hyperphysical, and therefore cannot enter as an element into a strictly philosophical argument.

Now, how were these obtrusive and admitted difficulties met by Berkeley's theory? In this way: the sensations which are at any given period of time experienced by finite intelligences, although they could not have been always experienced by them, nor can be in the whole future experienced by them, are, while experienced, signs of past and future sensations. It is easy to detect the insufficiency of this extraordinary hypothesis, framed to account for the existence of sensations or ideas when they stood or will stand in no immediate relation to finite perception. Let us not lose sight of the thing to be proved. It is that phenomenal existence abides when no finite being perceives it. The proof furnished is, that present sensations, which *are* perceived, are signs of the existence of past and future sensations. But it is, *ex hypothesi*, admitted that these past and future sensations are out of relation to perception, and are signified by present sensations which alone are in relation to perception. Now Berkeley's great principle is that perception grounds or conditions phenomenal existence.



According to this principle, then, these past and future sensations or phenomenal realities being conceded to be unrelated to perception can have no existence. It is not sensations or ideas, according to Berkeley, which ground the existence of other sensations or ideas—that he denies; but it is always perception which is the reason of their existence. As then the only ground of past and future phenomenal existence which is assigned by this hypothesis is significant sensations or ideas, the hypothesis is signally out of harmony with the main theory.

Further, it is obvious to remark that the supposition of these significant sensations in order to show that phenomenal realities may exist out of relation to finite perception is a clear abandonment of the principle that any phenomenal realities depend for existence upon the perception of finite intelligences. If some confessedly exist apart from that relation, all may.

If, in reply to this reasoning, it be urged that these sensations which are signs of past and future phenomenal existences, out of relation to the perception to finite spirits, are signs of phenomenal existence in relation to the perception of the infinite Spirit, and having its ground of continuance in that perception, it must be rejoined that this would be to change the issue. If in an attempt to show that present sensations, as signs, prove the continued existence of phenomenal realities in relation to finite intelligence, it be at the same time maintained that their persistence in being is due to God's perception, the question is altered, and the procedure is illegitimate. This but serves to fortify the stricture already passed upon the theory that it inconsistently

tries to found phenomenal existence alike upon the perception of finite and of infinite intelligence. The theory ought to have been purged of this inconsistency, and to have sought the ground of phenomenal existence simply and alone in the divine perception. It would in that case have had, at least, the advantage and the merit of unity.

3. It is clear that in those cases in which phenomenal realities or ideas are in immediate relation to our perception Berkeley's doctrine is that they depend for existence upon that perception. There is an evident difficulty which lies in the way of this hypothesis. Most, if not all, of the phenomena which come within the scope of our perception operating through the senses are not simple, but compound. Now, it is certain that some of the fundamental elements of these complex realities are beyond the reach ordinarily of sense-perception. It is only the art of the chemist and of the microscopist which can avail to reveal to us their sensible existence. Nor can it be proved that there are not still simpler and more ultimate elements in existence than those which even that art has brought to light. These elements lying out of the reach of perception are, according to Berkeley's theory, destitute of a ground of existence. As they are not perceived by us, they do not exist. And yet these very unperceived and consequently non-existent elements are the ground-forms of those complex wholes which are obtrusively presented to perception.

4. Upon Berkeley's theory representative knowledge is impossible. Let us remember certain of his principles: perception is immediate knowledge of ideas or

phenomenal realities. All external phenomenal realities are known by perception. Their existence depends upon perception. It follows that unless they be perceived, unless they be immediately known, they cannot exist. Now Berkeley distinguished ideas into two classes—real and imagined. Real ideas are sensible phenomena, which are not caused by us, but caused by God's will. Imagined ideas are mental phenomena of our own creation; they are caused by our wills. From all this it is plain that Berkeley grounded the existence of all phenomenal realities in perception. The question then is, When we do not perceive these real phenomenal existences, how do we know them? The ordinary answer would be, by representing them in the imagination. Apprehending by immediate knowledge, that is, by internal perception or consciousness, the representing images, we necessarily believe in the existence of the objects represented. We have a knowledge of the formerly presented objects which is mediate, it is true, but is, at the same time, valid and trustworthy. But Berkeley could not, consistently with his theory, thus answer. Nothing but perception, that is, immediate knowledge, of the object can ground its real existence. Where that is wanting, the ideas we cognize are mere creatures of the imagination, in themselves unreal, and having no ground of existence. They represent no realities; they are spectral and illusory. Representation is not perception: perception alone gives us real, objective existence; consequently, the representative faculty cannot give us that sort of reality.

Let these remarks be applied to memory as a repre-

sentative faculty. The external, phenomenal facts once presented are no longer in relation to perception. They have, therefore according to Berkeley's theory, lost their ground of existence. To be is to be perceived. They are not *perceived*, consequently they *are* not. If we imagine them by the representative faculty, we can have no guarantee of their reality. All the past, as it has slid away from relation to our perception, is irrecoverably gone into the region of unreality. The largest section of our knowledge is obliterated. The representative faculty as one furnishing the knowledge of the real is *nil*. This consequence may appear too absurd to be imputed to Berkeley's theory. Let him who thinks so apply the controlling principle, to be is to be perceived, to the processes of our faculties of representative knowledge, and he must be convinced of the legitimacy of the consequence.

5. It revolts common sense to say that a phenomenal reality would cease to exist were there no finite spirit to perceive it; that a mountainous pile of rock, for example, would not exist, if some spirit were not perceiving it. The case does not bear reasoning. It so traverses common conviction that its enunciation provokes derision, and deservedly provokes it. So sensible was Bishop Berkeley of this, and also his interpreter, Professor Fraser, that it was deemed necessary to invoke a hyperphysical ground for the persistence of objects not perceived by finite beings, and in that way to supplement the deficiencies of the theory. This retreat from the hypothesis that phenomenal existence is grounded in finite perception was its deliberate sacri-

fic. When its friends forsook it, what could be expected for it from the tender mercies of its foes? When the Israelites retired from Saul, the Philistines decapitated him and fastened his body to the wall of Bethshan. Why, then, it may be asked, attack an abandoned hypothesis? Is it not most conclusively refuted by the fact that its originators gave it up? The answer is, that they gave it up, and they did not give it up. They confessed its insufficiency and continued to speak in defence of it, as one would mention some of the virtues of a forsaken friend. It is right to shut them up to its complete relinquishment and to the advocacy of another hypothesis—the grounding of phenomenal existence in God's perception.

No reasoning, however subtle, supported though it be by the genius of the accomplished Bishop of Cloyne, can succeed in practically convincing men that their sensations are the same with the external, phenomenal things by which they are surrounded, and which they are accustomed to regard as only the occasions of the sensations. They cannot be argued into the belief that the pain they feel is the very same with the fire to which they attribute it—with the wood and the flame; that the sensation of hardness they experience is the same with the great iron pillar that helps to sustain a massive roof; that the sensation they feel when beholding the glories of the starry heavens is the same with the measureless systems that stud the amplitude of space. When, in the elegant dialogue in which Berkeley defends his theory, Hylas, the representative of the existence of matter, confesses his entire conversion to the

views of Philonous, the exponent of immaterialism, he utters the confession amidst throes and misgivings which suggest the nausea and vomiting of a man who, in the intervals of the spasms, endeavors to laud the virtues of the medicine which has sickened him.

That a powerful presumption lies against a philosophical hypothesis which is contrary to the common convictions and belief of men is explicitly admitted by Berkeley himself, and he exerts his power of argument to show that his view upon this subject is not opposed by the weight of that presumption. He succeeded, as was to be expected, in persuading his imaginary interlocutor, Hylas, of the tenableness of this view, but not much is risked by the statement that his argument would not meet with the same success if addressed to the mass of mankind. It is at least certain that the very need of such an argument supposes that the ordinary belief of men is opposed to the bishop's doctrine.

7. That element of Berkeley's theory is incapable of justification, in which the doctrine of the school of associationalism is maintained, that the only relation between sensible phenomena, ordinarily termed material, is one of mere antecedence and sequence. This view flows from his position that the will of God is the only cause which operates in the system of phenomenal relations, that ideas are caused alone by his will, and have their connection with each other determined by a causality which is entirely foreign both to their own intrinsic nature and to the will of finite intelligences.

(1.) This doctrine is paradoxical; it is out of harmony with the common beliefs of the race. Whatever

philosophers may hold, it is idle to argue that men in general do not entertain the conviction that there is the relation of cause and effect between sensible phenomena, and between the will of man and the objects of the external world: Even those philosophers who hold that the judgment which affirms the relation of cause and effect is not an original principle of our mental constitution, but is the result of experience, maintain the view that it is a necessary judgment unavoidably arising from empirical conditions, while the drift of modern philosophical thought is towards the assertion of the law of causality as one of the fundamental and original elements of our nature. And it cannot well be denied that this tendency falls in with the ordinary belief of mankind. Is a phenomenal change observed? The natural inquiry which spontaneously arises is, What is its cause? Let it be observed that this demand of reason is not made with reference merely to the origination of substantial existence or of phenomenal being, but also and most frequently in regard to changes which are recognized as taking place in the realm of simple phenomena. The hypothesis of antecedence and sequence does not satisfy this requirement; and, to the extent of its involving that hypothesis as an integral element, Berkeley's theory clashes with the instinctive judgments of men.

(2.) In regard to the position that the human will exerts no causal influence upon the relations of external phenomenal objects, we venture to take the ground that it contradicts consciousness, for consciousness delivers to us the fact that the will is competent to institute the

relation of antecedence and sequence between external things. It can bring them together in that relation. And if so, the invariableness of the relation as a law which is not subject to voluntary control is disproved by a datum of consciousness. Nothing is more common than the collocation of sensible things by voluntary action for the purpose of securing desired results. And further than this, consciousness also delivers the fact that the continuance or interruption of the relation is within the power of the human will. This could be illustrated in numberless ways. The hypothesis, then, that there is a fixed relation of mere antecedence and sequence between so-called material things, which cannot be affected by the free elections and the causal force of the human will, is evinced to be contradictory to the deliverances of consciousness, and they must be regarded as decisive, or there is no ground of certitude in existence, no ultimate authority, an appeal to which ought to put an end to strife. Of course, there is no assertion here of the power of the human will to cause ideas, in Berkeley's sense of the word, as equivalent to phenomenal existences. What is affirmed is, that the relations between these ideas are, to a large extent, determinable by the causal efficiency of the will.

It might be objected to this view that there is no causal power in the will itself, and that the only relation between mental phenomena themselves, including volitions, is that of mere antecedence and sequence. But, however Berkeley may have prepared the way, by logical consequence from his hypothesis as to material phenomena, for this sceptical result, as he did not himself



advocate, or even intimate it, it would be irrelevant here to discuss the question. Were the doctrine of Brown, Hume and the Mills under consideration, the case would be different.

8. It is, however, legitimate to say that the theory of Berkeley logically led the way and conduced to the nescience of Hume, and to the agnosticism of the positivist school of the present day. For, if the immediate inference from the testimony of consciousness to the real, substantial existence of matter as distinct from that of spirit be refused, the step is easy to the denial of the inference from its testimony to the real, substantial existence of spirit, as distinct from matter. The way is opened for the maintenance of any hypothesis which men may fancy, unembarrassed by the deliverances of consciousness. Hume took the path to the denial of the certainty of any substantial existence, and Spencer has taken that which led him to sink spirit in matter, and to affirm the unknowableness of God himself. Sir William Hamilton is right when he says that consciousness undoubtedly gives us in the same indivisible act the existence of spirit and that of matter, related in the synthesis of knowledge and contrasted in the antithesis of existence. Any other doctrine must logically tend to absolute idealism, or materialism, or nihilism; and we are disposed to think that there is no logical halting place between the acceptance of the deliverances of consciousness in their simplicity and integrity and the adoption of the desolating doctrines of atheists and nihilists. These remarks are reluctantly made in regard to the logical tendencies of Berkeley's theory. The

pious bishop would have repudiated with horror the consequences which a rigid logic in the unscrupulous hands of infidels has deduced from it; but still, in the light of the developments which followed his death, it must, in candor, be allowed that his theory was the egg from which was hatched the philosophical scepticism of David Hume.

9. There is another difficulty in Berkeley's theory which is so obvious that it cannot fail to be noticed. How, it may be demanded, does it ground our knowledge of other personal spirits than ourselves? Berkeley holds that we know our own spirits, as thinking, willing, perceiving, essences—in a word, as personal substances, by self-consciousness. All that is objective to us must be known by the perception of ideas. These ideas he carefully distinguishes from the properties of spirit. As our own ideas are not part and parcel of ourselves as spirits, so neither are ideas part and parcel of other spirits than ourselves. How, then, do we know other spirits? As we cannot be conscious of them as spirits, our knowledge is limited to the perception of ideas. But perception is, in this case, restricted to bodily organisms, and the language spoken or written through the instrumentality of these organisms. Now, according to Berkeley, they and the words produced by them are non-spiritual; they are merely ideas. Granted then that we apprehend these ideas by perception, the question is, how we know the spiritual substances to which they seem to be related, and to which, in the judgment of common sense, they *are* related. Consciousness alone can give us spirit; perception only gives us ideas. This difficulty cannot pos-

sibly be met by saying that we infer the existence of other spirits from these ideas, for Berkeley vehemently denies that we can infer occult realities from phenomena. The ideas are phenomena, consequently we are not allowed to derive the inference from them to spiritual essences. If, inconsistently with the principles of the theory, it be admitted that we must infer their existence, that we must have a faith-judgment which affirms it, the logical consequence would be that in the same way we might be entitled from phenomena, which Berkeley asserts to be non-spiritual, to infer the existence of non-spiritual substance—that is, in the ordinary language of men, to infer from material phenomena the existence of material substance. As this would contradict the very principles of the idealistic theory, there can be no resort to inference to ground the knowledge of any substance, spiritual or non-spiritual. It would seem, then, to be evident that upon Berkeley's theory we can have no knowledge of other personal spirits than ourselves.

In reply to this reasoning it may be said that Berkeley regarded ideas or sensible phenomena as a system of symbols—a language by means of which spirits hold intercourse with each other. He did; but how that opinion or hypothesis of his helps the matter, it is difficult to see. For, even in our own case, he holds that ideas do not ground the existence of spirit, but the contrary: the perception of spirit grounds the existence of ideas. We do not get the knowledge of our own spirits by ideas; we get it by the immediate testimony of self-consciousness. How, then, can the perception of ideas

give us the knowledge of other spirits? We cannot be conscious of them; we cannot perceive them—we perceive only ideas, and they are non-spiritual. How, then, do we know them? The theory furnishes no answer to this momentous question. It fails to account for, nay, it renders impossible, the knowledge by the individual personal spirit of other spirits like itself, and so destroys the possibility of communion between spirit and spirit: of all society based upon the fellowship and reciprocal action of personal intelligences—of the family, the church, the State. I know my own body only as a collection of ideas, from which it is illegitimate to *infer* the existence of my spirit. In the same way I know other human bodies; they are simply bundles of ideas from which I cannot infer the existence of other spirits. It would seem then that one personal spirit can know the existence of other personal spirits neither by consciousness, nor by external perception, nor by inference from phenomenal qualities or acts.

No doubt it will be urged in answer to this grave allegation that there is another means of knowledge by which spirits may become acquainted with each other's existence that has been left out of account in this indictment. What should hinder their knowing each other by the *testimony* of each to its own existence? But the difficulty is not removed. How is this testimony delivered? The answer must be: through words, either spoken or written. These words, however, are, according to Berkeley's theory, a part of those sensible phenomena which he calls ideas. Certainly they are cognized through sense, and thus become objects of per-

ception. How, then, can we go beyond these percepts to reach the existence of other spirits than ourselves? Shall we infer from them that existence? This we are debarred from doing by Berkeley's principles. From perceived phenomena to argue the existence of unperceived substance—this is in no case warrantable; if it were, we might be unphilosophical enough even to believe in the substance of matter as revealed by sensible phenomena! As, therefore, the testimony which other spirits than myself furnish must itself be a collection of ideas, I am shut off from depending upon it as a means of knowing their existence.

In order to turn the edge of this criticism, it may be charged with misconceiving Berkeley's doctrine, for he distinctly teaches that ideas are not caused by the personal will of finite spirits, and as testimony delivered in language is caused by personal will, it cannot be considered as belonging to the category of ideas. To this it is obvious to reply that the testimony must consist either of sounds or of written characters. As sounds are perceived through the sense of hearing, they are, according to Berkeley, sensations. They could be perceived in no other way, and in no other way could they be cognizable by us. They are consequently to be classed with Berkeley's ideas. Written or printed characters are perceived through the sense of sight. They also are sensations, and, therefore, to be ranked among his ideas. We must return then to the assertion that as they are ideas, they can, upon the bishop's principles, afford no ground for knowing spirit. If they be ideas, they are not caused by spirit, and we are excluded from referring

them as effects to a spiritual cause. But if it must be admitted that they are caused by the personal will of spirit, there are some ideas which are caused by spirit, and Berkeley is made to contradict himself, since he affirms of all ideas that they have no such cause. The only escape from this contradiction would lie in holding that they are not ideas; and that would be to deny their phenomenality, which has been already shown to be impossible. To say that Berkeley proves the existence of God by the phenomenal world as his ideas is no answer, for he holds that God's ideas are caused by his will. Consequently, it would be legitimate to infer from them as effects his personal existence. There is no analogy between the cases. It has thus been evinced that upon Berkeley's theory one spirit cannot know the existence of other spirits.

10. We come now, in the last place, briefly to consider that aspect of Berkeley's theory to which, in the final analysis, it was brought by himself—namely, that all phenomenal realities, commonly called material, are God's ideas. Let it be noticed that we do not depart from his own definition of ideas, as distinguished from thought, volition and perception, which he is careful to designate as the properties of spirit alone. God's ideas, then, will be treated in accordance with his own notion of them, as distinct from God's thoughts and from his perception. His doctrine is that the so-called material universe is a collection of God's ideas, created by his will, and dependent for existence upon his perception. At the same time it must not be forgotten that Berkeley to the last also contended that there are phenomenal

realities which are human ideas, not indeed caused by the human will, but dependent upon human perception for their existence. In regard to this final development of his theory we make the following observations:

(1.) God's ideas are represented as being identical with fleeting, sensible phenomena, which, if any meaning can be attached to the language, is shocking to common sense.

(2.) God's ideas are in part corruptible, for it is manifest that some phenomenal realities, as, for instance, the human body, are corruptible. They dissolve, decay and rot, and what sense can be attached to the affirmation that divine ideas are thus corruptible it tasks the power of man to conceive.

(3.) As all phenomenal existences are God's ideas, and some are man's ideas, some are both divine and human ideas at one and the same time. This involves a contradiction and an absurdity.

(4.) As all ideas are said to be sensations, God is said to have sensations.

(5.) As all ideas are God's ideas, and some ideas are our sensations, some of God's ideas are our sensations.

(6.) As all ideas depend upon perception for existence, for *esse est percipi*, God's ideas depend upon his perception for existence; yet Berkeley contends that God's ideas are caused by his will, which is the same as to say that they depend for existence upon his will. Now, either his perception and his will are held to be the same, and that is absurd, or they are held to be different, and then the contradiction emerges that his ideas

depend for existence upon his perception, and at the same time depend for existence upon his will.

(7.) Either God's ideas are held to be a part of himself or not. If they are not, the contradiction ensues that they are affirmed to be his ideas, and not his ideas at one and the same time. If they are a part of himself, as the universe is said to be a collection of God's ideas, it is a part of himself, and idealistic pantheism is the inevitable result.

(8.) God's ideas and his will are made one and the same. We cannot resist the conviction forced upon us by the analogies of our own being that force is an expression of will. But there are forces in operation in the so-called material system, and that fact Berkeley admits. Now that system being, according to him, nothing but God's ideas, it follows that its forces as phenomenal are parts of his ideas, and consequently that his ideas and his will are the same. But if they be said to be the same, a contradiction occurs. For God's ideas are said to be caused by his will, and a thing cannot without a contradiction be said to be caused by itself.

(9.) Berkeley admitted the fact of creation. But the universe, he contends, is God's ideas. Consequently, God created his own ideas. But Berkeley, in his *Siris*, confesses his leanings to the Platonic doctrine of eternal ideas, and so Professor Fraser interprets him. We have then an eternal creation, which is a contradiction in terms, for that which is created had a beginning, and that which is eternal had no beginning. But if it be held notwithstanding, as Origen maintained, that an eternal creation is possible, and further, that the uni-



verse was eternally created, we have a Christian version of the old Greek doctrine of the eternity of matter, or, in Berkeley's phrase, of the phenomenal sensible system.

One fails to see how this congeries of absurdities and contradictions can be denied as logically involved in Berkeley's theory, if it comprise as integral elements the two positions, that sensible phenomena or ideas are dependent for existence upon the perception of finite spirit, and that they are at the same time dependent for existence upon the perception of the Infinite Spirit. If the first of these elements be eliminated from the theory, in order to save it from self-contradiction and reduce it to unity, it is confessed that the bulk of Berkeley's writings, in which it is defended, are nothing worth; they have lost their significance and their interest. If it be retained, it must be granted that his most ardent admirers would find it an office which would task their utmost ability to adjust it to his latest thinking. What his latest thinking was, we collect from his *Siris*, which was the production of his age. In that remarkable speculation we find him speaking in terms of approbation of Plato's eternal ideas, the only true realities in conformity with which the universe of unreal and fleeting phenomena was brought into being. It cannot be denied that this subjects him to the criticism of changing the meaning of his terms. The term *ideas*, which plays the most important part in his previous reasoning as representing created phenomena of sense, is now made to signify the uncreated thoughts—the eternal ideals and archetypes of the Infinite Mind. Formerly ideas were treated by him as phenomenal objects, sensible

things, dependent for existence upon finite perception; now they are magnified as the concepts of the eternal intelligence.

There are two hypotheses, each maintained by a writer of genius, upon one of which it is conceivable that an attempt might be made to relieve this inconsistency. One is that of the elder President Edwards, who was a contemporary of Berkeley, was preaching at Northampton when the dean was sojourning in Rhode Island, and held an idealistic theory which, to a remarkable extent, coincided with that of the latter. The other is that supported in his work on metaphysics by Professor Borden P. Bowne, of Boston University.

A few remarks will be made touching the hypothesis of Edwards, but that of Professor Bowne must be reserved for separate consideration. In regard to the question, how sensible things, which, with Berkeley, he held to be ideas, could continue to exist without finite minds to perceive them, Edwards took the ground that they exist in God's uncreated idea. Now, if all that the New England philosopher meant was that all phenomenal things are transcripts of the ideas which eternally existed in the divine mind, what theist would care to deny the doctrine? But this was evidently not his meaning. The difficulty which he is meeting is this: A sensible thing or idea is supposed to be in actual existence, but unperceived by any finite mind. How is its existence to be accounted for? He distinguishes. Some things exist as created ideas, some in God's uncreated idea. The thing supposed exists in God's uncreated idea. There he finds its ground. But—

First, if, upon the supposition, the thing is in actual existence, although unperceived by any finite mind, it must be a created idea, for why attempt to account for the existence of an idea unperceived by finite mind, unless, being created, it might be perceived by such a mind? It is, therefore, contradictorily represented as at the same time a created idea, and as being only in God's uncreated idea.

Secondly, if it be only in God's uncreated idea, and yet, as Edwards holds, in actual existence in that idea, why suppose its creation? The law of parcimony would exclude the creation of an idea which is already actually existent in uncreated idea? The fact is that we have a finite thing represented as actually existent, and not created at the same time, which amounts to this, that it is actually existent, and not actually existent, created, and not created, at the same time. How the master of argumentation by contradictories could have slipped into this contradiction it is hard to understand, except upon the principle that he who refuses to accept the data of consciousness has no safeguard against any error. The question whether a thing may not actually exist in God's uncreated idea, but which neither actually exists, nor may actually exist, in relation to our intelligence, is for us a non-existent question. We may as well inquire into the ground of existence of inhabitants of Aleyone, or even of our sun. But, whatever may be thought of Edward's speculation, his uncreated idea cannot lift Berkeley out of his inconsistency. For, if he taught anything, it was this: that all sensible things or ideas are created by the divine will; and how God's

*uncreated* ideas could be *created* by his will, it would take more than Berkeley's or Edwards' abilities to show.

This discussion of the idealism of Bishop Berkeley, however inadequate it may be, cannot well be deemed untimely. The main current of thought at the present time, in consequence of the prodigious advance of the physical sciences, and the absorption of many acute investigators in the contemplation of outward phenomena, may be setting in the direction of materialism. But as one extreme of speculation tends to produce another, it is probable, it may almost with safety be predicted, that there will come a powerful re-action towards idealism. The distinguished editor of *Berkeley's Works* not obscurely intimates his leaning to the theory they maintain<sup>1</sup>, and the brilliant reviewer of Herbert Spencer's philosophy<sup>2</sup> declares himself an "objective idealist." As in the past the philosophical intellect has vibrated between the opposite extremes of materialism and idealism, it is to be expected that there will be a similar oscillation in the future.

Meanwhile the sober student of the facts of consciousness, and the Christian theist who accepts the obvious teachings of the Bible, will be content, as heretofore, to tread a middle path. They will continue to affirm the difference between the indissoluble and deathless spirit with its grand endowment of intellectual beliefs and moral intuitions, on the one hand, and divisible, cor-

<sup>1</sup> In this opinion we are sustained by Dr. Noah Porter: App. to Ueberweg's *Hist. Phil.*, Vol. II., p. 438.

<sup>2</sup> Professor Bowne.

ruptible matter, on the other; and holding to the doctrine of creation as the only safe moorage, they will refuse to sublimate the world to unity with God, or sink God to identity with the world. Of any other theory, whatever may be its prestige, the similitude may be used, which was beautifully employed by Cardinal Pole, in a letter to the elegant scholar, Sadolet, with reference to the Platonic philosophy since the introduction of the divine system of Christianity:

“Est in conspectu Tenedos, notissima fama  
Insula, dives opum, Priami dum regna manebant;  
Nunc tantum sinus, et statio malefida carinis.”

## OBJECTIVE IDEALISM.

---

PROFESSOR BORDEN P. BOWNE, of Boston University, in his able work on metaphysics, claims to be an "objective idealist." What objective idealism is, in his conception of it, may be compendiously described in his own words:

"In discussing matter and force, we saw the difficulty which attends the atomic theory of matter viewed as an ontological fact, and we decided for the view that the elements are not properly things, but only constant forms of the action of the Infinite according to fixed laws. In addition, the discussion of interaction has shown that the impersonal finite can lay no claim to existence. For, as impersonal, it is without subjectivity; and, as finite, its objective action is mediated by the infinite; that is, it is done by the infinite. It has, then, no longer any reason for existence; and there is no longer any ground for affirming its existence. It does nothing, and is nothing but a form of thought based upon the activity of something not itself. This view we reproduce as our final verdict. Matter and material things have no ontological, but only a phenomenal, existence. Their necessary dependence and lack of all subjectivity make it impossible to view them as capable of other than phenomenal existence. This world-view, then, contains the following factors: (1) The Infinite energizes under the forms of space and time; (2) the system of energizing according to certain laws and principles, which system appears in thought as the external universe; and (3) finite spirits, who are in relation to this system, and in whose intuition the system takes on the forms of perception."<sup>1</sup>

Elsewhere he represents the universe as God's thoughts objectified. As it was incumbent on him to

<sup>1</sup> *Metaphysics*, pp. 465, 466.

show how this objectification takes place, he maintains that God's thoughts and his acts are the same; that is, if the language means anything, in thinking the universe God produced it; and being thus acted or produced, it continues as God's thoughts continuously acted out. The doctrine of continuous creation is more than obscurely hinted in this theory; it is expressly referred to as illustrating the theory. "We may," he says, "get some hint of what this may mean from the scholastic doctrine of preservation or continuous creation. Such creation could be nothing more than a movement of the divine activity according to the idea of the thing."<sup>1</sup> This theory professes to differ from Berkeley's in the following particulars:

In the first place, it does not ground phenomenal<sup>2</sup> existence in the perception of finite spirit. It denies real existence to the phenomenal universe, and makes it simply the objectified and concrete forms of the divine thoughts. These are apprehended by us under "the forms of perception;" that is, to us they would have no existence were they not perceived. They would still be God's thoughts, but we could not know them. In this respect, it must be granted that the theory is not identical with Berkeley's—at least, in its earlier shape.

In the second place, Berkeley's ideas, or phenomenal existences, were, in his first thinking, inert and passive; they were created by the divine will, and have their

<sup>1</sup> *Metaphysics*, p. 466.

<sup>2</sup> The word *phenomenal* is used here in the sense of these writers. I believe that there are phenomena of spirit as well as of matter.

condition of being in the intelligent apprehension of spirit. According to Professor Bowne, the phenomenal universe is a collection of God's thoughts, and its elements are, therefore, active. The phenomenal elements have in themselves no real existence, not even derived and dependent, but are simply the concrete and observable expressions of God's intelligent activity. In this regard, also, the two theories differ, and I cannot help thinking that the Bishop's has the advantage, to the extent of avoiding a tendency to idealistic pantheism, so far as the non-spiritual universe is concerned—a tendency which seems to be lodged in the theory of the American metaphysician.

In the third place, Berkeley, in his earlier speculations, distinguished between ideas or phenomenal realities and thoughts as properly belonging to spirit alone; and, on the supposition of the universal validity of this distinction, must be construed as having discriminated the phenomenal universe as a collection of God's created *ideas* from his eternal *thoughts*. On the other hand, Professor Bowne represents the phenomenal elements of the universe as being the divine thoughts themselves. This constitutes another point of difference between his theory and Berkeley's—at least, in its earlier and most elaborated form.

But, on the supposition that Berkeley's theory, in its latest stage of development, involved the doctrine that the so-called material universe is but a manifestation of God's thoughts, an expression simply of his intelligent activity, the two theories must be regarded as so far coinciding; and what has been advanced by the later



philosopher comes in relevantly for consideration as applied to the views of the earlier. There is, it must be confessed, room for serious doubt as to the legitimacy of this supposition; and it is but just to Berkeley that the grounds of this doubt should be indicated. It is, in the first place, not likely that he ever abandoned a doctrine so vital to theism as that of the creation of the universe, non-spiritual as well as spiritual, by the power of God. If, however, he be regarded as having, in his last speculations, which led him to speak admiringly of the Platonic ideas, adopted a theory identical with that of Professor Bowne, he relinquished the fact of creation as related to the so-called material universe; for the Professor holds that only spirit is created, while the impersonal finite was not created, but evolved from the intelligent activity of God. He remarks: "We must say, then, that only self-hood suffices to mark off the finite from the infinite; and that only the finite spirit attains to substantial otherness to the infinite. Apart from this, there is nothing but the infinite and its manifold activities. The impersonal finite attains only to such otherness as an act or thought has to its subject. Finally, the spirit must be viewed as created."<sup>1</sup> It is extremely doubtful whether Berkeley ever came to hold this view. In the second place, it is supposable that Berkeley meant by his encomiums upon Plato's ideas simply that they were eternal concepts in the divine mind, in conformity with which the universe of phenomenal ideas has been fashioned, archetypes, of which so-called material realities are the ectypes. There would

<sup>1</sup> *Met.*, p. 137.

be confusion of language in the affirmation that ideas are the copies of ideas. Still, it is conceivable that he may have intended to say, that ideas as phenomenal and temporal are transcripts of ideas as transcendental and eternal. Such a construction of his views would not implicate them in Professor Bowne's theory, that the phenomenal universe is God's thought.

But while it is due to Berkeley to give him the benefit of this doubt, it must still be allowed that in his *Siris*, which embodied his latest reflections, he affords some color to the supposition that he leaned to the adoption of views very like those expressed in the theory of Professor Bowne. Some brief strictures upon that theory will now be adventured.

1. Either it is maintained, in this theory, that God is the Creator of the phenomenal universe, or it is not. If it is, then, as that universe is said to be a collection of God's thoughts, or his thought, objectified and made perceivable by finite spirit, God is represented as the Creator of his thoughts. This is self-contradictory and absurd; for, in the first place, no analogy derived from the constitution of the human mind would lead to the view that thought is creatively caused by will. In the second place, if God's thoughts, any of them, were created, they had a beginning, and the infinity and perfection of the divine intelligence are denied, which is equivalent to the denial of a God. If it is not maintained that God is the creator of the phenomenal universe, as that universe is said to be an assemblage of his thoughts, or if the expression be preferred—his thought, it is contended that it is evolved from his

intelligence as a part of himself; and idealistic pantheism is affirmed, so far forth as the so-called material system is concerned; and how such a theory consists with the fundamental principles of theism it passes one's ability to comprehend; for, surely, whatever, upon those principles, the relation of God to the material universe may be conceived to be, it is one which does not involve the identity of God with any part of the created system: in no sense is the universe he, or he the universe. This it is of the last consequence to theism to maintain.

If, in resistance to the first member of this dilemma, it be said that God may be the creator of his acts; whatever may or may not be held as to the truth of this position, the answer is incompetent to the supporters of the theory under consideration, for it asserts the identity of God's acts and his thoughts. Consequently, the contradictoriness and absurdity charged upon the position, that God is the creator of his thoughts, are equally imputable to the position that he is the creator of his acts. They are, as related to the non-spiritual universe, held to be one and the same, and are, therefore, susceptible of common predication.

2. It is affirmed, in this theory, either that the phenomenal universe is infinite, or that it is finite. If infinite, either it is God or not. If it be God, pantheism is the result. If it be not God, there are two separate infinities, and they would be mutually exclusive; and as God must exist and the universe be excluded, nihilism is the result. If the phenomenal universe be affirmed to be finite, as it is held to be God's thoughts, some of God's thoughts are finite; and how that can be main-

tained by a theist it is impossible to see. It is intelligible that God may manifest himself finitely, but that is quite a different thing from saying that his thoughts are finite. Finite thoughts of an infinite being—that is a contradiction. Nor can it be believed that any aggregation of finite thoughts, however multiplied, could ever amount to the infinite. But if it could, the universe as that aggregate would be infinite, and the difficulties opposing the supposition of two infinities would again be encountered.

3. This theory necessitates the absurd inference that God's thoughts are contingent, fluctuating, corruptible; for, if anything is universally admitted, it is that these predicates may be affirmed of the world as phenomenal. It is no answer to say that there are laws and forces which are fixed, uniform, permanent. Besides these elements of nature, the unchanging character of which is not, strictly speaking, phenomenal, but inferred, there are others which are certainly subject to a perpetual flux; and since *all* the parts of the phenomenal universe are said to be God's thoughts, these contingent, mutable, evanescent parts are his thoughts, and the absurdity is not removed.

4. The question must be encountered by the maintainers of this theory, What meaning can be attached to the affirmation that the phenomenal universe consists of the objectified thoughts of God? The divine thoughts are supposed to be first immanent and subjective, and then to become transitive and objective. It is incumbent on the supporters of this theory to show how this is possible. What is the nature, what the effect of such

an objectification of the divine thoughts as constitutes the world of phenomena, and renders it perceivable by finite intelligence? According to the common theistic doctrine, God, in conformity with his thoughts, or, what is the same thing, his intelligent plan, by an exercise of creative power, originates realities, which are different from himself, and, therefore, different from the thoughts of which they are the transcripts and reflections. Although the fact of creation, in its strict acceptation, is transcendental, in the sense that it cannot be conceived by the thinking faculty, it is not contradictory to the laws in accordance with which the processes of the reason are conducted. On the contrary, the thinking faculty furnishes, in connection with cosmical phenomena first perceived by the presentative faculty, then represented in the imagination, and finally mounting into concepts under thought-relations, the empirical conditions upon which a faith-judgment is reached that positively affirms the fact of creation. This is conceded by the abettors of the theory before us, with reference to the origination, by causal efficiency, of personal spirits. They deny it, however, in relation to sensible and impersonal phenomena. Such phenomena are not created; they are the objectified thoughts of God.

The supposition of creation being, upon this theory, excluded as furnishing an account of the existence of the so-called material universe, there are, the being of God assumed, but three suppositions that need to be taken into account: first, that of the dualists, who contend for the co-eternity of God and matter as two independent substances; secondly, that of the eleatics, who

deny the existence of the world, and admit only the reality of the Infinite; thirdly, that of the pantheists, who reduce the infinite and the finite to unity upon the same substance. That of spontaneous generation is thrown out of account.

The co-eternity of God and matter is professedly denied by the theory under consideration, for it denies the existence of matter, as ordinarily apprehended; but, at the same time, it admits sensible, impersonal phenomena, which are cognized under the forms of perception. Now these phenomena are held to be the thoughts of God; and as they are not created they must be eternal. The theory, therefore, agrees with the dualistic, so far as it asserts the eternity of the phenomenal universe. Its advocates may possibly disclaim the holding of this hypothesis, but logic inevitably deduces it from the theory itself. Either, the phenomenal universe was created or not. If created, it began. If not, it did not begin; that is, it is eternal. The theory denies that it was created. Consequently it affirms its eternity. There is no pause here to consider the question whether creation may not be eternal. Although backed by the name of Origen, an eternal creation is self-contradictory and absurd. This theory is to be acquitted of maintaining the independence of the phenomenal universe, but not of holding its eternity.

In answer, it may be said—and it is the only reply which, to my mind, is conceivable—that it is the manifestation of the divine thoughts which constitutes the phenomenal universe. One can easily perceive the difference between manifested and unmanifested thoughts,

a difference only of relation to percipients, but how the thoughts themselves are intrinsically different it is hard to see. The thoughts which are manifested are the very same as those which existed before manifestation. If manifestation made new thoughts, it would be creation, and that the theory denies. What then? Why this: the thoughts of God are eternal; the phenomenal universe is the thoughts of God; therefore, it is eternal. This element of the dualistic doctrine cannot be grafted upon a theory professedly theistic.

The second hypothesis—that of the eleatics—denies the existence of the finite. Now that is what is done by the theory of Professor Bowne, so far as the so-called material system is concerned. The theory denies to it real existence, and affirms that the only real existence which appears is that of God's ever-active thoughts. We have, then, a slice of the eleatic hypothesis in this theory: not that it denies the existence of finite spirit, but so far as it denies that of finite matter.

The pantheistic hypothesis makes the so-called finite material system the evolution and manifestation of the infinite substance. Now, as this theory posits a phenomenal system, but makes it the evolution and manifestation of God's eternal thoughts, it is impossible to perceive how it differs, in this respect, from the hypothesis of idealistic pantheism. The personality of God is affirmed by it; otherwise, how could it assume to be a theistic theory? but creation of the material world is denied, and that is pantheistic. The evolution of the finite phenomenal system from the infinite being is affirmed: that, *pro tanto*, is pantheistic. We have, then,

an element of the pantheistic hypothesis in this theory.

The result of the analysis which has been instituted is the proof that the theory under consideration is partly theistic, partly dualistic, partly eleatic, and partly pantheistic. It would be a splendid instance of a comprehensive eclecticism, were it not for the unhappy fact that it attempts to integrate into unity jarring and irreconcilable elements. Unity, the great quest of philosophical inquiry, is the crown of a theory, but it cannot be won by an assemblage of contradictions. The acuteness of this speculation will elicit admiration, but its self-inconsistency will provoke a smile.

“Humano capiti cervicem pictor equinam  
Iungere si velit, et varias inducere plumas  
Undique collatis membris, ut turpiter atrum  
Desinat in piscem mulier formosa superne,  
Spectatum admissi risum teneatis, amici?”

To the sacrifice of the doctrines of natural realism, and the creation of the material system, the theistic philosopher and the Christian theologian cannot quietly consent. The battle for them is for “altars and fire-sides.” They are essential alike to a true philosophy and a true theology.



## PANTHEISM.

---

THE cardinal principle of pantheism is, that there is but one substance. It is in the highest sense a monistic system. Not only does it deny the dualism of finite spirit and matter, but it also denies the difference between finite spirit and matter as a common substance, on the one hand, and the infinite substance on the other. All that is finite is reduced to unity upon the primordial, infinite substance, which is called God. God is everything, and everything is God.

There are three principal forms in which pantheism has been advocated :

I. Spinozist pantheism, which affirms that God, as the one substance, is both thought and extension, that this substance manifests itself in what is called finite spirit, and also in what is called matter.

II. Idealistic pantheism, which affirms that the one substance is simply spirit: matter is nothing.

III. Materialistic pantheism, which affirms that the one substance is simply matter: spirit is nothing.

It will be seen that all these forms of the theory are collected into ultimate unity by the assertion of the existence of but one substance, primordial and infinite.

The leading features of the theory are :

1. There is but one substance in existence.
2. That substance is impersonal: God is not a person.

3. That substance is not creative: strictly speaking, God creates nothing.

The order of this statement of elements will be followed in the presentation of arguments against the pantheistic theory.

I. Let us consider the position that there is but one substance in existence.

1. The explicit testimony of consciousness is opposed to it. That testimony is, that the ego and the non-ego are different, though related, realities. In interpreting the testimony of consciousness, we are warranted in deriving from it those necessary inferences which are implicitly contained in it, and the evolution of which is enforced by the fundamental laws of belief, the original principles of cognition, which lie at the root of our mental nature. As we are obliged to infer, from the internal phenomena of our minds which are presented to consciousness, the existence of a subject which they manifest, and which is the bond of unity between them, so we are constrained to infer from the external phenomena presented to consciousness the existence of a substance similarly related to them.

If these inferences are denied, our nature is an organ of deceit. The deliverances of consciousness, and the necessary inferences which flow from them, are, apart from a supernatural revelation, our only ultimate grounds of certitude. Refuse credence to them, and the hypotheses which are advanced in regard to any reality, to any alleged existence, to the primordial substance itself, are mere vagaries. Pantheism, like every other theory, vanishes into the mists of nescience.

It is plain that if, upon grounds of consciousness, we cannot affirm the substance of mind or matter, we cannot assert the substance of God. All is a dream—"the dream of a dream." Upon what possible ground will the pantheist find his proofs, if the data of consciousness are pronounced untrustworthy? It is evident that ontology must begin with consciousness. If not, it has no assignable beginning, and is in the category of an absolute commencement.

2. It is impossible to reduce the incompatible qualities of spirit and matter to unity upon the same substance. If this cannot be done in regard to finite substance, infinitely less can it be accomplished in relation to the infinite substance. The problem before the great absolutist speculators of Germany was to reduce all things to ultimate unity. The apparent chasm between spirit and matter had to be bridged. Fichte was consistent in his earlier thinking, when he affirmed pure, subjective idealism. Matter, as such, had no real existence: "all that is, is the Ego." There was, indeed, the thesis and the antithesis of the Ego and the non-Ego, but this opposition was by an ultimate synthesis brought into unity in an exclusive subjective idealism; but the problem was encountered in a different manner by Schelling and Hegel. Acknowledging the material reality of physical nature, they had the thesis and antithesis of matter and the absolute spiritual substance to overcome. The synthesis by which that result was achieved is, if the whole thing is not misconceived, one of the extraordinary curiosities of philosophical speculation. The Absolute develops by a sort of self-aliena-

tion into nature, and so passes into "alterity," or otherness than itself. Not content with this marvellous exile in a foreign sphere, it seeks to return to its identity. The leap would be too sudden, the transition too abrupt, from nature to the Absolute; though one, for the life of him, cannot see why, if it was accomplished *to* nature, it might not as well be effected *from* it. The passage, in this wonderful circumnavigation, is first made from nature to spirit, and then back to the Absolute. The self-alienation is completely removed, and there ensues an *absolute* self-reconciliation. We are not told, by the narrators of this transcendental voyage, what, after the Absolute has got home to itself, becomes of nature; but that in passing. What is here emphasized is the confession, uttered by these deep, very deep, thinkers who wore the crown of the Kantian development, of the otherness of matter to spirit, and their desperate *conatus* to reduce the formidable alterity to the repose of indifference, the unity of identity. A becomes, by self-estrangement, non-A, and again non-A becomes A in that transcendent sphere in which all difference disappears, and contradiction and identity are one and the same in the bosom of the Absolute. A German may perhaps get a glimpse of some meaning in all this, but an Englishman, unless he chanced to be born of a German mother, may safely be defied to point out where, in this profound "history of God," one spark of intelligibility gleams. He would exclaim, Matter I know, and spirit I know, but who is this material-spiritual Absolute?

It is no wonder that Kant is reported to have had no

use for Christianity, and that he applied to man in his present moral condition the superlative nonsense of the aphorism: Because I ought, I can; that Fichte groaned out the mournful lament: I myself am the dream of a dream; that Schelling regarded "the so-called Bible"<sup>1</sup> as the greatest hindrance to the progress of true religion; and, with the ecstasy of the lunatic, affected to gaze in the rapture of intellectual intuition upon the Absolute itself; and that Hegel reached the climax (or the bathos) of human speculation in the identity of the Absolute and Nothing! Nor is it any wonder that, when from the summit to which these eagles of philosophic fancy had soared, the "down-grade" began, Schopenhauer should have pointed to pessimism as the last iron-bound station of poor, human nature, the only escape from which is through the impossible negation of all appetite, desire and volition, or that Hartmann should have found in "the unconscious" the final goal of philosophy. In one respect, perhaps he was right: in the judgment of charity he may have been unconscious of the folly that he wrote.

3. Consciousness affirms the existence of finite substances, and the difference of one from another. If this testimony be refused, an end is put to argument: the foundation of philosophy is destroyed. If it be accepted it is impossible to reduce different substances to unity upon another substance; for—

(1) As it is absurd to regard substance as mode, one substance cannot be a mode of another substance.

<sup>1</sup> Schwegler, *Hist. Phil.*, Sec. xliii., Schelling.

(2) Two differing substances cannot be modes of a common substance.

(3) We would have different substantial manifestations of one and the same substance; which is not only inconceivable, but absurd.

4. The pantheist holds that the universe is an evolution of the primordial substance. Its phenomena are modes of that substance; but the law of evolution cannot, without absurdity, be conceived to operate in the production of contrasted and contradictory modes. It is manifest, however, unless our faculties cheat us, that these modes are often contrasted and sometimes contradictory. This alleged process of evolution is, therefore, self-destructive. It is, of course, conceivable that contrasts, leading to ultimate unity, should characterize the government of a free intelligence, who is not only necessary substance, but elective cause; but the same is not predicable of a process enforced simply by impersonal necessity. The pantheist's Becoming is suicidal, his necessary substance the source of conflicting forces. Like the Spartan boy, it utters no groan while in the cloak of its dignity is enfolded the fox which is gnawing at its vitals.

Either this one substance—relatively one—is characterized by intrinsic unity, or it is not. If it is, it is impossible to see how contradictory modes can manifest it. If it is not, there is no unity predicable of the fluctuating phenomena of the universe. They have no common ground. Nothing but chance and contingency emerge. Law is denied, and chaos is the principle of the world. How God can be affirmed it passes the power of

reason to conjecture. Let it be observed, that the pantheist denies the existence of personal, creative will. He must, then, account for change in the manifestations of the impersonal substance upon some other ground. What other ground? Evolution? That supposes unity in the thing evolved. Is it necessity? That equally infers unity. If a number of primordial forces be postulated to account for inconsistent manifestations, the *relative* unity of the primordial substance is denied; but that the pantheist affirms: it is the core of his theory. So that if *intrinsic* unity be affirmed or denied of the primordial substance, the pantheist is confronted by insuperable difficulties.

II. Against the pantheistic doctrine of the *impersonality* of God as the Absolute substance the following arguments are submitted:

1. The consciousness of our own personality irresistibly leads to the inference of God's personality. It is an indubitable faith-judgment.

(1) This may be conclusively proved upon pantheistic grounds themselves. Most pantheists admit the fact of our own personality as attested by consciousness. Indeed, they maintain the extraordinary position that God comes to personal consciousness in man; but their theory necessarily involves the evolution of the finite and phenomenal from the one infinite substance. This law of evolution supposes that the thing evolved is, at least, virtually and potentially in that from which the evolution proceeds. This has been the old, accepted view, as the etymology of the term *evolution* indicates. The declaration is both surprising and revolutionary,

which is made by Professor Sully, in the last edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, that this view is no longer held by evolutionists; that what they now understand by the law of evolution is the law of progress. The Professor performs a singular and conspicuous function: he pulls down the flag of evolution, and hauls up another in its place. The terms of the controversy are changed, the issue is shifted. It is no longer evolution, but progression, whatever that may mean. Believing that the evolutionary pantheist will not accede to this incontinent surrender of his old principles, I proceed with the argument upon the supposition that his prescriptive views are retained.

If the thing evolved is *implicite* in the evolver, as our admitted personality must, according to the pantheist, be evolved from God, it follows that he must be potentially possessed of personality: he cannot be impersonal. In fact, the denomination by the pantheist of God as *He* is a concession wrung from him to God's personality. For, the hypothesis, that in this particular he speaks metaphorically, would be very like an insult to one who professes to sink the imagination in the profoundest speculations of the pure reason. To return from this slight digression: it is impossible that personality could be evolved from impersonality. The proposition that God comes to personal consciousness in the personality of man, if it mean anything, must mean that he originally possessed a potential personality. If it does not signify that, it is meaningless. If the pantheist concede this, he gives up his doctrine of the impersonality of God. If he deny it, he gives up his doctrine of the evo-



lution of the finite from the infinite. The dilemma is fatal.

Granted, then, that we are personal beings, it follows, from the essential principles of the pantheistic theory, that God is personal. Were he not, we could not be; if we be, he must be.

If it be replied, that the impersonal substance develops, by a process of Becoming, into personality, the rejoinder is easy, that, upon such a supposition, perfection is denied to the perfect Being, fulness to the Infinite; that a change occurs in the absolute substance, not merely in its manifestations, but in its very essence; and, finally, that this change is a degradation of the infinite and absolute into the finite and relative: an unbecoming Becoming, forsooth! This is but an instance of that amazing circumgyratory process—already adverted to—by which the Absolute abdicates its crown in order to enjoy the pleasure of resuming it; by which it first “steps down and out” in order to step up and in!

(2) There is another method by which the same conclusion may be reached upon the principles of pantheism. Are we possessed of personality? If the pantheist answers in the affirmative, it follows that, as we are not different from God, but are *manifestations* of his substance, God is personal in our personality; which is to relinquish the doctrine of his impersonality. Is that denied? It follows that God and we are not one, and the fundamental assumption of pantheism is abandoned.

(3) If it be admitted that God, originally impersonal, comes to personal consciousness in man, it follows that

man is God improved; for it must be granted that a being possessed of personality is greater than one destitute of it; and if God had it not until he attains it in man, humanity is the crown of the divine development, the climax of the divine glory; and then these ineffable absurdities result: that the absolute and infinite reaches a higher degree of perfection in the finite, that infinite strength is supplemented by finite weakness, and that God is conscious of increased excellence in beings who are, if honest, obliged to confess their degradation from their first ideal, and to criminate themselves for folly, meanness and shame.

The force of this reduction to absurdity could only be blunted by showing that personality, instead of being a perfection, is really an imperfection. Without laboring to refute this paradox, it is sufficient to say that the whole fabric of human society, of the family, the church, and the state—the whole social development of man—rests on the fact of personality as its corner-stone. Remove it, and mankind becomes a mere aggregation of units, with no relation subsisting between them but the possession by each individual of a nature similar to that of others. Every impersonal man would be a machine, like an ancient war-chariot, armed with scythes to mow down the impersonal machines around him; just as the impersonal God of the pantheist, a centre of repulsion to the universe, can only become a centre of attraction by borrowing his personality from man; that is, as he and man are one, he is both a centre of repulsion and one of attraction, both impersonal and personal, at the same time!

It may be urged that this argument is inconsistent, inasmuch as, at one time, it charges the pantheist with degrading the Infinite substance by representing it as descending to the finite, and, at another, imputes to him the absurdity of elevating it by conceiving it as coming to personal consciousness in man. The inconsistency is not in the argument, but in the self-repugnant elements of the pantheistic theory. It is that theory which develops the Absolute downwards, even into physical nature, and again develops it upwards into human consciousness. The argument has only pursued it into its own self-destroying absurdities.

(4) If God comes to personal consciousness in man, he must have as many personal consciousnesses as there are men, and, therefore, would be as many persons as there are men; for a personal humanity which is not individual would be contradictory to our fundamental conceptions. The solemn processes of human law, which, with all their weighty results, are based upon the notion of personal rights, would be a tissue of farces. The only escape from the above-mentioned absurd consequence would lie in maintaining the view that personality attaches to generic humanity alone, and not to individual human beings; and that is so extravagant a supposition that it is not asserted even by those who, like Cousin, affirm the impersonality of the human reason. But if it be conceded that God is not as many persons as there are human persons, nor generic humanity as personal, it is admitted that men as persons are different from God; and then the following consequences ensue: first, the pantheistic theory is aban-

done, for it asserts the identity of man with God; and, secondly, man being possessed of personality and God not, man would *pro tanto* be greater than God, the finite greater than the infinite; and such an absurdity it would take the capacity of an Absolutist speculator to swallow.

(5) The consciousness of personality involves the necessary judgment that other persons are different from ourselves; but it is absurd to say that different and often conflicting personalities are evolved from an impersonal substance. That personality should be evolved from impersonality is contradictory enough; but that millions of personalities differing from each other and frequently contending to death against each other should be evolved from one impersonal substance—this is a contradiction of contradictions.

(6) Consciousness delivers to us the law of causality as fundamental to our constitution. The chief empirical condition upon which that law is elicited into energy is furnished by the will. Will supposes personality. Thus we get personal will which is causal—so far as the production of phenomenal changes is concerned. If we cannot infer the causality of God's personal will, we are confronted by two results: first, our personal causality could not have been evolved from the divine substance, and that would contravene pantheistic principles; and, secondly, we would be greater than God, and that would contradict reason and religion alike.

2. It is one of the elements of pantheism, that the primordial substance is simply a necessary substance, destitute of personality and elective freedom, and an-

other is, that all its cosmical manifestations, involving innumerable changes, are determined by an invincible necessity. These co-existent elements of the scheme are contradictory to each other; and, if this can be evinced, the theory will be proved to be fatally, because self-destructively, inconsistent with itself.

A merely necessary, an impersonal, substance—if the terms mean anything—is one which must immutably be precisely what it is. It can, at no period of its existence, be other than it eternally was; for, if it change, it is not, *ex hypothesi*, what it once was; which is the same as to say that it was not necessarily what it was. Change implies something more than simple necessity. Was it necessary that it should have always been what it was? This question must be answered affirmatively, upon the supposition that it ever was a necessary substance. A simply necessary substance which changes is a contradiction in terms.

Several answers may be given to this argument against the consistency of pantheism:

(1) It may be said that the necessary substance is free. This was maintained by Spinoza. He attributed to the substance which he called God a free necessity; but what he meant by this language was merely a spontaneous necessity, or a necessary spontaneity; it matters not which; and to say that this exhausts the notion of freedom is to contradict the most obvious facts of consciousness and observation; and if from them we cannot reason by analogy to God's freedom, we use the term without any definite meaning when we apply it to him. By analogy, I say, but an analogy which, while real, is

of course checked and modified by the infinite distance between ourselves as finite and God as infinite. Now there is another sort of freedom than that of spontaneity. It is that of otherwise determining, *facultas aliter se determinandi*—the power to elect between contrary alternatives. With spontaneity necessity may coincide, but not with the latter kind of freedom. But take the position of the pantheist as he states it, it follows that whatever direction the spontaneity originally took, that direction it must always take. It proceeds by the law of evolution, and all evolution is necessity; but some of the changes which occur in the phenomenal manifestations of the primordial substance are changes which involve contrast and contradiction. The change from holiness to sin, or from sin to holiness, from a good character to a bad, or from a bad to a good, are clear instances of this kind. These changes it is simply impossible to adjust to the hypothesis of mere spontaneity. To say that there may be a spontaneous change from good to bad, or from bad to good, is to speak absurdly. If a thing is necessarily good, it cannot become bad; if necessarily bad, it cannot become good. The necessary freedom, or the free necessity, of the pantheist cannot account for changes which actually occur. If it be said that such changes do not occur, the ground is taken that our faculty of observation is mendacious, and then its testimony to the occurrence of *any* changes is untrustworthy; and consequently the affirmation of the pantheist, that the one substance manifests itself in phenomenal changes, has no foundation upon which to rest. He simply raves when he uses such language.

(2) It may be urged that the primordial substance is also a necessary and eternal cause, that is, a cause acting necessarily and eternally. This is self-contradictory. A cause, if human language is worth anything, is the correlative of an effect. A necessary and eternal cause supposes a necessary and eternal effect; but an effect is a thing which begins to be. As necessary and eternal it could not begin; as effect it must have begun. Such an effect is one, therefore, which begun to be, and did not begin to be. If, then, the Absolute substance was a necessary and eternal cause, it was a necessary and eternal contradiction.

Further, if it were not only an eternally operating, but an infinitely operating, cause, as even Cousin contends, and was eternally determined by necessity to put forth its causal energy infinitely, it follows that the universe must have been eternal and complete. There could be no room for farther exertion of causal efficiency, and, consequently, no room for change. The universe must continue to be immutably and exactly what it eternally was; but changing phenomena are affirmed by the pantheist as manifestations of the primordial substance. Here, then, we have another self contradiction; and still further, the universe must be infinite as well as eternal. If not, a part only of the infinite substance was determined by necessity to causal exertion, and a part not, which would be contradictory to the position that the infinite substance *as one* is determined by necessity; but if the universe be infinite, there could be no finite changes of which it would be susceptible. If there were, the infinite would be finite, and another con-

tradiction emerges, which none but an assertor of an infinito-finite substance could stomach.

(3) It may be contended that, as the theist admits the necessity of the divine Being, he is encumbered by the very difficulties which have been urged against the pantheist. To meet this charge it is hardly needful to do more than state the positions of the respective parties. Both agreeing that God is a necessary substance, they differ in the following respects: The pantheist denies that he is a person; the theist affirms that he is. The pantheist, so far as he admits that he is cause, holds that he is so by virtue of an immanent necessity; that is, he never transcends the limits of his own being, but simply evolves its contents: he never creates. The theist holds that God is a *free* cause; that is, he is free to create or not to create, to exercise or not to exercise certain of his perfections—at least, to manifest or not certain aspects of his perfections, in relation to objects which, as created, are not himself.

While, therefore, the pantheist makes a necessary substance change, as such, the theist is chargeable with no such inconsistency: he holds that, as substance, God abides unchanged and unchangeable. While the pantheist makes the Infinite *become* finite, the theist is not guilty of that huge contradiction: he holds that the Infinite God *creates* the finite. The pantheist makes phenomena manifestations of the primordial substance itself, in this sense, that they are its modes; the theist holds that phenomena are effects of the *causal will* of God. When he says that God manifests himself finitely, he does not intend to assert, with the pantheist, the



supreme contradiction that the finite is part of the Infinite, but that the finite products of the will of God, reveal, to a certain extent, his existence and nature.

The pantheist ascribes only spontaneity to his absolute substance; the theist also attributes elective freedom to God, that is, the freedom which elects between alternatives. This is a point of great consequence. It is, it is almost needless to say, the doctrine of the theist that God is spontaneously and necessarily holy. Holiness is his life—the infinite love of the infinite norm of rectitude in his being and character. Necessarily holy, he cannot act except holily; but it is not his doctrine that God is under the necessity of acting whenever he acts. He is not fate; he is a free, Personal Cause. Between acts which are alike holy he is free to choose; and he is free to perform a conceivable act which is holy, or to abstain from performing it. The pantheist holds that the universe is a necessary emanation of the primordial substance; but the theist maintains that God, in the exercise of his elective freedom, might, consistently with his intrinsic holiness and happiness, have refrained from creating the universe.

The pantheist will, in reply, allege that the theist is obliged to admit change in the modes of the divine will, as, for example, a change from a will purposing to create and a will actually to create. Concerning that question I have spoken elsewhere, and will now make but a single remark. Let it be conceded that the theist encounters the difficulty of at least an apparent change in the modes of the divine *will*, that difficulty is vastly

less than that created by the pantheist's doctrine of change in the divine *substance*. In the one case there is a modification of an attribute, in the other of the essence which grounds attributes. It may be said that the distinction is without a difference—that the attributes and essence of God are identical. It is true that some theologians maintain—I cannot help thinking for utterly insufficient reasons—that view, although out of all analogy with our convictions in regard to our own constitution, in regard to our souls essentially considered, and the powers which manifest them. No strenuous endeavor to secure unity can avail to obliterate the venerable distinction between substance and attribute, or to reduce intelligence and will to one and the same attribute, identical with each other because identical with the same essence.

3. We are conscious, at least to some extent—to what extent will not now be inquired—of elective freedom as causal agents—that is, freedom to do or not to do certain acts. This kind of liberty is utterly inconsistent with the evolution of a substance proceeding in all its modifications upon the principle of rigid necessity, the principle demanded by the pantheistic theory.

(1) This elective freedom—to do or not to do, to choose between differing alternatives—cannot, without contradiction, be supposed to be evolved from necessity. For whatever necessarily is could not possibly be otherwise; If it could be, one and the same thing would be necessarily determined in two different directions.

(2) Elective freedom, if evolved, requires an electively free substance from which it is evolved; but an

electively free substance must be personal. It is absurd to ascribe such freedom to impersonal substance.

(3) If we are electively free, God is electively free, or we are freer than God; but if he be electively free, he is a personal cause who may or may not, in certain respects, exercise his causal efficiency.

4. We are conscious of moral qualities. Among the facts to which consciousness distinctly and unequivocally testifies is a sense of duty, necessarily inferring moral responsibility. This calls for an objective law-giver, ruler and judge, or our moral nature is a lie; but to talk of an impersonal substance as administering moral law is to utter unmeaning gibberish. Our moral nature, therefore, demands a personal God.

But, if he be an impersonal substance—let the solecism be pardoned—and human beings, as moral, are necessary, finite modifications of him or it(!), one of two positions must be assumed by the pantheist: either there are no such things as moral distinctions, and sin and crime, as manifestations of God, are good; or these distinctions are admitted to be valid, and then the same impersonal substance, proceeding by the law of necessity, evolves itself in the most contradictory modes. If the first of these alternatives be elected, and the distinctions between sin and holiness, duty and crime, are held to be nothing, pantheism stands self-convicted of being, what some caustic writer pronounces it, Pandiabolism. If the second alternative be chosen, and a necessary and impersonal substance be held to evolve itself in absolutely contradictory modes, the system which

would necessitate such a doctrine would relinquish its title to be considered rational. It would be a philosophy for a madhouse.

5. If God were an impersonal substance, it is perfectly obvious that religion would be an impossibility. Any pretence to it would be a mockery and a sham. If we cannot say, *Thou*, to God, it needs no argument to convince us that we can neither pray to him, nor praise him, nor obey him. To *say*, *He*, *Him*, would be to contradict the fundamental principle of the theory: to call an impersonal substance *He*, would be to make the impersonal personal. If we could be supposed to worship what we term God at all, we would, of course, begin our homage with the address: O Impersonal Substance, infinite, eternal, and changeable, we beseech It to hear us. Let its blind eye look upon us; let its deaf ear listen to the voice of our supplications; let its heart, that knows no pity, commiserate our necessities; let its "infinite and eternal energy" that has no hands supply our wants and relieve our woes! Is it not inexplicable that some theologians, in a semi-apologetic tone, should allow themselves to concede the religious warmth and fervor of such a system? Warm? It is colder than "the rocks on Torneo's hoary brow." It takes away our God, the source of light and love, and leaves us to freeze in the darkness of despair.

But experience in moments of critical emergency proves that the religion which demands a personal God cannot be pitched out of our nature with the fork of a perverse speculation. We instinctively cry for help to one who is able to save unto the uttermost; and this

“sure instinct of prayer” is vindicated by the judicial reflections of reason.

It constitutes one of the most formidable counts in the indictment of this impious and detestable hypothesis that, driving us with our worship from the altar of God, it not only legitimates, but logically necessitates the worship of man. God comes to consciousness in man. If, therefore, we are to worship at all, inasmuch as we can only worship a conscious God, we must offer our homage to man. This is the climax of execrable wickedness. The worship of leeks, onions and garlic, I hesitate not to say, would be preferable to this spume of Schelling and Hegel, Carlyle and Compté, Emerson and Mill. If we must enthrone a creature in the seat of God, by all means let it be a vegetable or a reptile rather than the monster who first dethrones his Maker, and then usurps his crown. If a hero is called for to receive conspicuous worship, a hero of more than a hundred battles, let the Devil be summoned to the throne. He has more being, more intelligence, more courage and more impiety than any of the sons of men, and no man would be restrained from worshipping him by the personal consciousness of the Devil's sins. But that one conscious of his own wickedness should worship himself, or a sinner like himself, or fallen humanity idealized, sublimated, apotheosized—this is the consummation of folly and crime, and were it universal the damnation of the race would slumber not.

6. Were this doctrine true, it would follow that individual immortality would be impossible. What would be the individual? A phenomenon “that appeareth for a

little time, and then vanisheth away;" glittering for a moment on the surface of infinite being, like phosphorescent foam on the sea, and then re-absorbed into the impersonal substance whence, for its brief hour, it emerged. The future, the unutterable glory, the transcendent heavenly home, the blissful fellowship with God and angels, which Christianity reveals—all would be swept away by the besom of this desolating doctrine; and this is the philosophy we are asked to accept in the place of the gospel!

7. The pantheistic theory renders miracles impossible. That a system proceeding by an undeviating reign of necessity should admit of supernatural interpositions is, of course, inconceivable. The position of the pantheist is logically taken, when he denies the possibility of miracles; but were that true, God cannot prove a religion to be from him. Christianity is incapable of being proved. What remains? "Let us eat and drink; to-morrow we die." They have taken away our Saviour, our God, our heaven: let us wallow like swine in the sty of Epicurus!

III. The third leading feature of the pantheistic theory is its denial of creation. That, on the assumption of the existence of the material and spiritual systems, they are not identical has in the previous discussions been evinced. Idealism and materialism have been shown to be destitute of adequate support. They are paradoxes which traverse the common sense of mankind. It is now proposed briefly to show that the universe is finite, and, therefore, was created.

1. Matter is finite.

(1) This is the common belief of the race. The presumption is terribly against one who would contradict it.

(2) Matter is divisible. The fact that division cannot be actually effected in some cases affords no proof that matter is incapable of division. The experiments of the laboratory prove the belief that matter can be further divided than it has been. The quest for a minimum stimulates the effort to go on with division.

(3) If matter is divisible, it is mutable.

(4) If it be divisible and mutable, it cannot be infinite. A divisible and mutable infinite is a contradiction in terms.

(5) We necessarily infer from the facts of consciousness that our bodies are finite. One absolutely knows that his body cannot pass through the desk on which he writes. Our material organisms are limited and conditioned on every side. It is certain that *some* matter is finite.

(6) If some matter is finite, no matter can be infinite. Otherwise, we would have infinite matter *plus* finite matter, which is a contradiction.

Unless it can be shown that there is a general substance of matter, of which material phenomena are special manifestations, it is not difficult to see that the substance of matter is finite. Every phenomenal form or manifestation of matter is evidently finite; and if the material substance, which we are led by a fundamental belief to infer, is one which corresponds with such specific phenomena, the only general notion we can frame of the substance of matter is that of a congeries of special and, therefore, finite substances. If

that were admitted, it would follow that, as what is predicable of all the parts is predicable of the whole, and finiteness is predicable of all material substances, finiteness is predicable of the substance of matter as a whole. But it is impossible to prove the existence of a generic substance of matter which reduces all material phenomena to unity. If that be so, it is impossible to prove the infinity of matter.

This reasoning is countenanced by the speculations of those philosophers who have affirmed the eternity of matter, and the admissions of scientific men of the present day. The atoms of Democritus were the very opposite of an infinite whole; and the ultimate particles—the elements, molecules, or what-not—of atheistic evolutionists are equally so. To assert the infinity of separate, and, therefore, limited and conditioned, atoms, is to affirm a contradiction. We are at liberty, then, to return to the position that as some matter is finite no matter can be infinite.

To this it may be objected, that the same reasoning would prove that no spirit can be infinite; but the objection does not hold, because the analogy which grounds it is deceptive. Material bodies have the property of displacing, at least, of limiting and conditioning, other material bodies; but the same cannot be proved of spirit. It may be so, but we do not, and, for aught that appears to the contrary, cannot know it. Until, however, it can be shown that spirit must displace spirit, it cannot be inferred from the fact that there are some finite spirits, that no spirit can be infinite. There may be a spirit which pervades all matter, and every other spirit, uncon-



ditioned and unlimited by either. For this we have the testimony of the Bible. Its positive doctrine as to the infinity of the divine Spirit cannot be legitimately contradicted by any merely probable speculations.

The remark has just been made that the existence of one general substance of matter cannot be proved, and that it is, therefore, impossible to prove the infinity of matter. But is it possible to furnish positive proof that there cannot be such a general substance of matter?

We reach the substance of matter alone by inference. It is not an object of perception, of consciousness. It is not presentatively given, and, consequently, cannot be presentatively known. That which is perceived, and, therefore, immediately known, is phenomenal properties. From them we are led by an irresistible law of belief immediately and necessarily to infer the substance to which they belong, which they manifest, and upon which they are collected into unity. Now, it may be safely affirmed that the substance cannot be more extensive than the sum of its phenomenal properties. Are they limited? So must it be. But each phenomenal property is limited. It would be absurd to deny this. If all are limited, the sum is necessarily limited, or contradiction emerges; for it is universally granted that what is true of all the parts of a whole is true of the whole itself.

Are we, then, justified in inferring from the fact of the sum of material properties being limited, that the substance is limited to which they pertain? We are; for the only knowledge we can have of material substance is derived from its properties. If there could be

material substance greater than the aggregate of its properties, it would be unknown to us and unknowable by us. Not only would it be impossible to affirm its existence—for how could we assert that to exist of which we know nothing?—but such substance could not exist, for the reason that it would be, to some extent, unqualified by any property—that is, to the extent to which it would transcend properties. Substance and property, like husband and wife, are correlatives: no wife, no husband; no property, no substance. The very term *substance* would lose its significance and become an unmeaning cipher, if it were not used as related to property. No part of matter, therefore, can be unqualified by properties; but it is certain that the complement of material properties is finite; consequently the whole of material substance must also be finite.

2. Our spirits are finite. This requires no protracted argument.

(1) We are conscious of the limitation of our faculties. He who would deny the fact would afford the strongest proof that *his* faculties are limited.

(2) We know by observation and testimony that there are other human spirits than our own. They limit and condition each other, and are, therefore, all of them finite. If there be non-human spirits, which we have reason to believe, their difference from ourselves, and their plurality, would prove them to be finite, for many differing infinities would be a supreme contradiction.

3. If both matter and spirits, human and non-human, are finite, the universe which is composed of them is finite. But if finite, it began.

Here it may be contended that, although the universe may be conceded not to be infinite, still it may be eternal; but if it be finite, it follows conclusively that it cannot be eternal; for every finite thing must have had a beginning. If it had no beginning it would in one respect be infinite—that is, as to duration, which is contrary to the supposition, and that a thing should be partly infinite and partly finite, finito-infinite, would be self-repugnant and absurd. If, then, the universe is finite, it began; if it began, it cannot be eternal; for eternity is without beginning and end.

Again. Either mind and matter are co-eternal, or matter precedes mind, or mind precedes matter. The first supposition would destroy the infinity of both, for they would limit and condition each other; but if matter cannot be infinite, it cannot be eternal. The second supposition is met by the following presumption: Our experience teaches us that matter never changes its formal type, except by the action of intelligence upon it. A log of wood, or a block of stone, only passes into structural shape and order by virtue of the purpose and skill of the human mind. A statue is never the result of merely material forces; not even a fowl-coop is. As mind precedes the arrangement of matter into order and beauty, we warrantably infer that intelligence preceded the cosmical organization of the universe. As the organization of matter never, experience being our informant, issues in intelligence, but the contrary is true, it is a presumption, at least, that intelligence precedes the existence of matter. The whole force of analogy would go to show that, if matter and mind are not co-

eternal, mind precedes matter. It is absurd to suppose that intelligence is the last result of evolution, for the contemplation of such a result of the process must have proceeded from intelligence. If man be the crown of race-development in this world, then there must have been at its beginning an intelligence at least equal to that of man. The supposition that germ-cells, or any infinitesimal particles of matter, could without intelligence, without plan, without direction, have developed themselves into the *City of God*, or the *Principia*, or the *Paradise Lost*, is inconceivably absurd. Intelligence begins where the end is intelligence. Why not admit a creating God, and end the business?

What has been said with reference to matter will apply with increased emphasis to mind.

4. If the universe began, there are two alternatives; either it came into existence spontaneously, or it is an effect produced by a cause other than itself—either it was uncaused or caused.

(1) It could not exist spontaneously. Both metaphysics and physics consign the hypothesis to the category of impossibilities. Spontaneous existence would be an absolute commencement. That supposition would contradict the fundamental belief of the human mind, that everything which begins to be has a cause; and would, moreover, involve the self-contradiction that the same thing is at once cause and effect. The attempt of Sir William Hamilton to show that in the free causation of the human will we find an instance of absolute commencement has, in a preceding discussion, been evinced to be groundless.

In this independent and impregnable judgment actual experiments, eagerly and exhaustively instituted, have led physical science to concur, as is illustrated by the following utterance of Professor Huxley :

“For my own part, I conceive that with the particulars of M. Pasteur’s experiments before us, we cannot fail to arrive at his conclusion, and that the doctrine of Spontaneous Generation has received a final *coup de grace*.”<sup>1</sup>

(2) The universe is an effect of a cause other than itself. As it could not have been produced by itself, so it must have been produced by a cause antecedent and extraneous to itself. The only escape from this conclusion is in supposing it to have been absolutely uncaused. The argument may be resorted to which was employed by Kant, in order to discredit the cosmological proof of God’s existence: If it be maintained that the principle of causality demands a cause for every new appearance, or, in general, for everything that exists, the same principle would exact a cause for God’s existence; and, if it be replied that his existence is uncaused, then the same may be true of the existence of the universe. To this it is answered :

As the world consists of finite parts we are obliged, in the quest of a first cause, to pass by regression through the series of relative effects and causes to a beginning. However far we may, by analysis, proceed in this regression, we will be confronted at every step by relative production, of effects caused from previously existing material. Say that the world itself may have been produced out of pre-existent material, this only shifts the question

<sup>1</sup> *Orig. Species*, Lect., III.

from this world to the universe. We are forced to ask the cause of the universe—of matter itself. Here the same process is necessary, of a regression through finite effects and causes to an ultimate cause. Now a regression of the finite must conduct either to an infinite series, or to a beginning of the series. An infinite series is impossible. The old argument against it is incontestable—that whatsoever is predicable of all the parts of a whole is predicable of the whole itself. Every part of the series is finite; therefore, the whole series is finite; but the principle of cause holding, we must believe that the universe had a cause. This cause could not have been itself. *E concessio*, spontaneous generation is ruled out. It could not have been in the initial point of the series, for that is contrary to the previous concession, and would make the first element in the series both cause and effect—the effect of itself. The universe must have had a cause outside of itself. Whatever, then, may be held in regard to God, as caused or uncaused, it is clear that the universe could not have been uncaused. It cannot be inferred that if God is uncaused, so may the universe be. Kant's *may be* uncaused is met by the positive proof that it *is* caused. Otherwise, our intellectual nature is fundamentally false; and were that granted, no dependence could be placed upon the testimony of our moral nature to God's existence, a testimony which, Kant contended, was alone incapable of subversion. Our nature is one, and the tongues of all her powers unite in the *mia glossa*, which affirms and worships God. We have now reached the conclusion that the universe was caused by a power other than itself.

5. A cause which begins existence is creative; and the cause which began and, therefore, created the universe is God, who is himself uncaused.

Although the principle of cause is applicable to all finite existence, it cannot be applied to an infinite substance. What is, in this respect, predicable of the finite is not of the infinite. God must be an exception to the scope of the principle; for the cause of the universe, as a series of finite elements, must have been either *in* or *out of* itself. In itself, it has been shown, it could not have been. Out of itself, therefore, it must have been. If not in, but out of, itself, it could not be finite, for all that is finite is in the universe, and that supposition is excluded. It must, therefore, be infinite, since between finite and infinite there is no middle supposition possible. If the cause of the universe be infinite, it could not have been caused, for an effect is conditioned by its cause; but this cause, being infinite, must be unconditioned, or a contradiction ensues.

Still further, there can be but one such Being, who, himself uncaused, is the Cause of all else.

First. There cannot be two infinite substances, or two infinite causes. The supposition is self-contradictory.

Second. This Being must be either caused by something out of himself, or caused by himself, or uncaused. The first supposition is impossible, for the infinite cannot begin, nor be conditioned. The second is inadmissible, if for no other reason for these: that cause and effect would be identical, which is absurd, and God would be represented as being before he began to be, or

as beginning after he already was; which is, if possible, still more absurd. The third supposition, consequently, is true: the Being who is the cause of the universe is uncaused. He is, therefore, independent and unconditioned. Another supposed uncaused being must likewise be independent and unconditioned; but two such beings would at the same time be independent of and unconditioned by each other, and dependent on and conditioned by each other; which is an infinite contradiction.

The cause, therefore, which begins the existence of the universe is the Creator, and the Creator is God.

If to all this the pantheist réply, that he holds the beginning of the universe as a general modification, and of its parts as special modifications, of the infinite substance, the rejoinder is that this is no answer to an argument the purpose of which is to prove a beginning of the universe in the sense of origination, of production from no pre-existent substance. If that proof has been established, the pantheist's so-called beginning by evolution or emanation has been disproved. According to him an exploding rocket and the commencement of the universe are on the same footing, except that the former is a lesser and the latter a greater educt of the same primordial substance. The alternatives are: the creation of the universe, or its eternity. If created, it was not eternal; and the pantheistic hypothesis fails.

A few observations, in conclusion, will be made in regard to the fundamental errors of the pantheistic school.

1. The distinction between substance and property,



on the one hand, and cause and effect, on the other, is obliterated. The two categories are confounded, and made the subject of common predication. This is done with reference to the human soul itself, and, therefore, the plainest deliverances of consciousness are contradicted. To say that the power of thought is not a quality of the substance of the soul, but an effect of it as a cause; or that an act of thought is a property of the soul, and not an effect caused by the power of thought, would be to deny a distinction affirmed in consciousness, and embodied in the languages of the race. Now an *analogy* between us and God, not in degree, but kind, is well-nigh universally admitted. In violating consciousness, therefore, we deny the inferences it necessitates with reference to the nature of God; but the pantheist goes farther than this, and is, consequently, still more burdened with the difficulty now urged. He maintains the *identity* of man with God, and, still further, affirms that God comes to consciousness in man. He is, therefore, involved in the contradiction of denying to God the distinction between substance and cause, as he is Absolute, and of being compelled to admit it of him, as he is conscious in man. But what matter? Why urge self-contradiction against the logic of the pantheist when his infinite and necessary substance evolves and manifests itself in contradictions by virtue of the law of its being?

2. The distinction between a necessary and a free cause is denied. There is no need to dwell particularly upon this point. The argument just employed equally applies here. The pantheist violates alike the dictates

of consciousness, and the demands of his own theory. If we are conscious of free causality, then, according to him, God, who comes to consciousness in us, is also conscious of free causality. Yet he is affirmed to be a necessary cause. The pantheist is confronted by a fatal dilemma: If he assert the development of free causality out of necessary, he talks nonsense; if he deny the consciousness of free causality, he wipes out responsibility, subverts government and unhinges society. He is dangerous to the interests of mankind, and he and his school should be banished as a colony to Anticyra. A liberal use of hellebore might possibly qualify them for restoration to the fellowship of the species.

3. The transcendental philosophers, pantheists and absolutists disregard the limitations upon the human faculties, in that they deal with the measures of faith as if they were the measures of thought. Since Jacobi vindicated himself from the charge of appealing to human and ecclesiastical authority when he insisted upon faith as the organ of transcendental truth, it has become almost superfluous for those who, in the general, concur with him in that position to guard themselves from like gross misapprehension. The answer of that great thinker was sufficient—namely, that instead of invoking external authority, he appealed to the innermost, *a priori* principles of the soul. His defect consisted in divorcing the testimony of faith from the the empirical processes of the discursive understanding; in making our faith-apprehensions direct revelations, intuitions of transcendental facts, instead of viewing them as existing at first as latent aptitudes or fundamental laws, de-

pending for formal expression, in the shape of *inferential judgments*, upon the conscious processes of the perceptive, the representative and the comparative faculties. He affirmed too sharp a dualism between the energies of what he properly termed the "faculty of faith" and those of the faculty of thought. Different in their nature as they are, they are closely related and interdependent in respect to their attainments. The human mind is one, and all its powers, however diverse, cooperate in the production of joint results. This much of a precautionary character has been briefly said in order to forestall any misconception with reference to what may follow.

(1) These philosophers were right in affirming the existence of the Infinite; in treating with contempt a philosophy, if such it could be designated, which would confine itself to the narrow domain of phenomena, whether physical or psychological; and in demanding an unphenomenal reality as answering to the profoundest principles and yearnings of the human spirit. In a word, they were right in asserting the claims of ontology, in contradistinction to a *mere* scientific analysis and classification of the facts of external nature or of the mind itself. There is a degree of truth in the *a priori* arguments of such thinkers as Anselm, Descartes and Leibnitz for the existence of an infinite and perfect Being. From the lowest foundations of our nature there comes a cry for such a Being. He is not the creature of a mere negation of thought; he is the positive affirmation of intelligence. The argument is in itself insufficient; it cannot be completed without the complemen-

tary addition of *a posteriori* elements; but it furnishes alike the indispensable starting point of those elements, and the climax of their development. Justice compels this acknowledgment, but—

(2) These philosophers committed the fault, the intellectual crime, of confounding the infinite with the finite, the indemonstrable with the demonstrable, the incomprehensible with the comprehensible.

It is admitted that the infinite, the indemonstrable, the incomprehensible are, as facts, delivered to us by the reason in the discharge of its highest cognitive functions. But in performing this high office it acts as a complement of faiths, mysterious and inexplicable in their origin, and developed into actual judgments upon the empirical conditions furnished by the processes of the intuitive, the imaginative and the dianoetic faculties. Were we restricted to the operation of these subordinate powers we could never apprehend infinite, indemonstrable and incomprehensible realities. They are confined in their matter and, therefore, in their range to the phenomenal. There are necessary, uncontingent truths which transcend their scope, and, while it is true that to some extent they use those truths in the procedures of the *reasoning* faculty, they are indebted for the origination and delivery of them, to the reason as the "place of principles," the seat of faith. These first principles are given. The very roots from which the tree of knowledge grows, they belong to that fundamental nature which, from the necessity of the case, must have been inserted by the hand which created our being. So far from being the results of education, the

products of culture, they underlie, legitimate, necessitate all cognitive energy. They are the bases, not the fruits, of demonstration. In themselves indemonstrable, they must be accepted by the very necessities of our mental constitution, and thus accepted from the hand that laid the foundations of our nature, they ground the demonstrative operations of the elaborative faculty. Deny them, in the madness of a perverse contradictoriness, or demand their proofs in order to their acceptance, and there can be no start of the reasoning process: the mind becomes a blank, a desert barren of ideas, an engine without its motive power. Intellectual stagnation results.

What, then, was the error of the pantheistic and absolutist philosophers? It was, first, that *they treated faith-judgments as though they were concepts*. Instead of accepting the infinite, and what they called the Absolute as data of belief, incapable of analysis and comparison, they dealt with them as data of thought, to which those processes are applicable. It is obvious that a concept of the dianoetic understanding may be analyzed into its contents. The stuff of which it is composed is supplied by perception and representation, nor can it transcend that material. It is also obvious that one concept may be compared with others, and that it is in this way of comparison that the premises of arguments are framed. Now dealing with the infinite as if it were a concept based upon intuition and representation, these philosophers made the attempt—impossible to even their Titanic powers—to analyze it into its contents, and to make it a term of comparison in syllogistic

processes. Of course, they failed. As well might they have endeavored to comprehend the ocean in a thimble as to pack the infinite into the narrow capacity of their thinking faculty. They made the prodigious mistake of substituting the dianoetic for the noetic reason, of regarding noumena as phenomena; in short, of enthroning conception in the seat of faith. This, in brief, was their first great error.

Their second error was, that *they refused to receive some of the judgments of faith*. Upon the very same ground as that upon which we know the infinite, we also know cause and personality. Both of these latter apprehensions are indemonstrable and incomprehensible. They are furnished by faith, and are to be accepted on the ground of the veracity of our radical nature as reflecting the veracity of its Author. There is no justification for receiving the datum of the infinite and refusing the data of cause and personality. When, therefore, these philosophers separated between them, accepting the former and rejecting the latter, they violated our mental nature: they tore asunder elements which were bound together in the unity of our intellectual constitution, and trampled under foot some of its fundamental postulates. They set the mind against itself in unnatural conflict, divided its house, and the necessary alternatives were; either that the house should fall, or that the revolutionary intruders should be resisted and expelled. The latter alternative, as might have been expected, has been realized. The erectors of a Babel of pride have had their tongues split, and every man's hand, by a just retribution, has been lifted against his

fellow. One extreme by reaction breeds another, and the world now beholds the land of Fichte, Schelling and Hegel tending to the crypto-materialism of a physiological psychology!

4. This school is open to the criticism of neglecting to profit by the example of the Greek philosophers. If Cousin is right, idealism and sensualism (better, perhaps, empiricism) have ever been the poles of philosophic thought. In Plato, on the one hand, and Aristotle on the other, these two great principles received a definite and typical shape, and their respective followers more and more widened the interval between the lines of their separate development. The result was a protracted conflict between theories both grounded in principles equally belonging to our fundamental constitution, and a failure to evince their harmonious and complementary operation as corresponding with the unity of the human mind. When the freedom of speculation was secured by the decay of the dominating influence of a false ecclesiastical system, Descartes and Bacon projected modern philosophy along the same old tracks of idealism and empiricism. Not that the Frenchman was exclusively an idealist, or the Englishman exclusively an empiricist, but the prominent trend of the former's thinking was in the direction of idealism, and the latter in that of sensualism. The pantheists and transcendentalists, inexcusably unmindful of the lessons of the past, again violated the harmony of philosophy and the unity of the mind by giving to their speculations an exclusive development of idealism. Having launched forth in search of the Absolute, without the compass of experi-

ence, they foundered in an ocean of mists without bottom and without shore.

Furthermore, they were doubly inexcusable for going farther than the Greek idealists ever went, in affirming, as the last conclusion of philosophy, an absolute something, or, with Hegel, nothing, without consciousness or personality, and evolving, by the law of immanent necessity, into the matter and spirit of the universe: a climax of folly which the regulated genius of the Greek never reached.

5. It may be added that these philosophers are liable to the grave charge of having contemned the modifying influence of the Bible and Christianity upon the course of modern philosophy. It cannot be successfully denied that the Bible, as well as philosophy, utters itself in the sphere of ontology. It declares the existence of a personal God, who is the creator of the world, and its providential preserver and ruler. This testimony is, for its own sake, entitled at least to be respectfully considered. Contemplated simply from the point of view of its ontology, the Bible justly challenges attention; but even were the boast of philosophy allowed, that it is an altogether independent inquirer in a field which it claims for its own research, and not to be trammelled by religion in any form, yet so far as the Bible assumes to speak on philosophical questions, as to a certain extent it unquestionably does, it is entitled to the same rights. When, therefore, philosophy and the Bible meet on the same field—a field which both legitimately occupy—and announce opposite doctrines, the question of superior authority inevitably arises; and it is clear that it can



only be decided upon grounds of evidence; and then the tremendous mass and force of the evidence which supports the authority and the truth of the Bible, which differentiates it as well from philosophy, ontologically considered, as from every form of extra-biblical revelation, not only necessitate examination, but demand assent. What analogous evidence has mere philosophy to submit? None, absolutely none, which the Bible, *minus* its extraordinary credentials, does not possess. Add those credentials, and there is no possibility of comparison, for one of the terms to be compared has no existence. It would be a comparison of an alleged supreme evidence and none. It would be madness to say that historical evidence cannot outweigh the abstract inferences of the speculative intellect.

Now the whole volume of evidence, external, internal, and experimental, in favor of the Bible and Christianity these modern sages affect to throw out of account, and arrogate to themselves the right to pursue their own independent investigations and to reach their own separate conclusions. What has been the issue? This: That, as before the first advent to this despairing earth, of an incarnate God, philosophy had failed in its utmost development, and "the world by wisdom knew not God," so is it now. Modern philosophy, blindly and arrogantly refusing to bow to God's supernatural revelation of himself, and insisting upon walking in the light of its own sparks, has scaled the summit of speculation, and thence proclaims a God unknown in heaven, earth, or hell. Again, the verdict must be, that the world by wisdom knows not God. Is it not time for the close of this

present period of audacious speculation, of profound ignorance of divine things, of widespread infidelity, and the introduction of that "golden age," when the knowledge of the LORD shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea?

# SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON'S DOCTRINE OF CAUSATION.

---

## PART I.

IN the consideration of Hamilton's doctrine in regard to causation, some comments will first be made upon his views concerning the nature of cause itself, and then his theory, with reference to the origin of the causal judgment, will be examined.

I. There are two special views in regard to cause, which he very much insists upon, and which, if not entirely defective, need greater qualification than he himself imposes upon them.

1. He maintains that every effect is the product of more than one cause—is the product of concurring causes. "Every effect," he declares, "is only produced by the concurrence of at least two causes."<sup>1</sup> Had he affirmed that this is ordinarily the case, no valid objection could be taken to the position; but the assertion is unqualified: the predication is made of "every effect," and it is affirmed that it is "only produced" by a concurrence of causes. Nor is the utterance cited at all singular, or peculiar to the connection in which it stands. It is true that in one place Hamilton does impose a qualification upon this general law. "I have already,"

<sup>1</sup> *Met. Lect.*, p. 42.

he observes, "noticed to you the error of philosophers in supposing that anything can have a single cause, of course, I speak only of second causes. Of the causation of the Deity we can form no possible conception. Of second causes, I say, there must almost always be at least a concurrence of two to constitute an effect."<sup>1</sup> The use of the word *almost* here is noteworthy. It obviously limits the scope of the maxim for which he contends. Yet, it is strange that the limitation is admitted in immediate connection with the exposure of the alleged error that *anything* can have a single cause. I know of no other instance in which the qualification is employed. It is the common doctrine of Hamilton that every effect is produced by con-causes.

(1) The assertion of this law is made in the very midst of a discussion, the design of which is to prove that the end sought by philosophy is a first cause of effects, and the discover of unity in that one, ultimate cause. Now if a series of effects begin in a cause which imparts unity to the whole, it is perfectly clear that the first effect in the series can have but one cause. *Ex hypothesi*, analysis, carried back regressively, conducts us to an ultimate cause, and consequently a plurality, or even a duality, of causes is excluded. The universal affirmation of Hamilton, that every effect must have more than one cause, is invalidated by his own doctrine touching the quest by philosophy of an ultimate cause, as satisfying the demand for unity.

It will, no doubt, be objected that injustice has been done to Hamilton by this criticism, since he is only

<sup>1</sup> *Met. Lect.*, p. 554.

speaking of second causes. To this objection the reply is obvious.

In the first place, the scope of the discussion, in which the passage which has been cited as the occasion of these remarks occurs, does include, in fact, a reference to the efficiency of God as the first cause. Hamilton had not long before elaborately argued that one of the most useful ends of philosophy is to conduct us to the knowledge of the divine existence and the divine causality. The discussion, therefore, cannot simply apply to second causes.

In the second place, the scope of the discussion must, from the very nature of the case, involve the causal efficiency of God. For what, according to Hamilton, does philosophy seek? He answers, Unity. How is this to be attained? He replies, By an analysis of effects into their causes, an analysis to be continued until we arrive at the first cause. Now if, as he contends, every second cause is itself an effect, which is produced by more than one cause, it would follow that, upon his own doctrine, philosophy would be doomed to perpetual disappointment in its search for unity along the line of second causes. The *nisus* is confessed; but it is one, like the labor of the Danaides, destined to everlasting failure. Its sweat evaporates into nothing. Nature would cheat us with an illusive hope; but this effort, induced by the fundamental laws of the mind, is an inspired prophecy of a definite result. There must be some point, in the regression through effects and causes, at which the demand, the insatiable thirst, for ultimate unity may be satisfied. That last point, that Ultima

Thule, of our investigations can, of necessity, only be reached when we apprehend one simple, uncompounded cause, which, by its sole efficiency, originates the whole series of second causes and effects, and therefore stamps the series as a system, in itself complex indeed, but characterized by the attribute of unity. Hamilton's discussions, consequently, cannot be restricted to second causes, but must involve the first cause. In this view of it, it is liable to the charge of inconsistency. The universal affirmation that every effect is only produced by concurrent causes needs to be seriously modified. Otherwise, it is not true.

It may also be objected, that Hamilton is not speaking merely of efficient causes. His affirmation includes all kinds of causes; for he says: "By *cause*, be it observed, I mean *everything without which the effect could not be realized.*" But in answer it may be said, that he expressly uses the terms *efficient causes*. "The ends—the final causes of philosophy—as we have seen, are two: first, the discovery of efficient causes; secondly, the generalization of our knowledge into unity; two ends, however, which fall together into one, inasmuch as the higher we proceed in the discovery of causes, we necessarily approximate more and more to unity." Here he not only limits the view to efficient causes, but declares that it is in approaching the ultimate efficient cause we approximate to unity. The only kind of causes of which, in this relation he speaks, are those which produce effects, abundant proof of which might be adduced from the language that he constantly employs. In the passage just quoted he explicitly discriminates final

causes from efficient, the former leading to the discovery of the latter. Formal causes Hamilton was too good a metaphysician, too thoroughly acquainted with Aristotle, to rank with efficient, or to represent them as coöperating with efficient in the production of effects. To say that material and instrumental causes are co-efficients in producing the effect is to say that the marble and the chisel produce the statute. The one is but the matter, the other the instrument, which the efficient cause, the producer, uses. If it be still urged that Hamilton treated material and instrumental causes as efficient, it must be said that he used his terms with an inaccuracy strange in so precise a thinker, and that he confounded producing causes with the *conditions* upon which they operate; that, in other words, he coördinated occasional with efficient causes. It is perfectly manifest that if there be a first cause, enforcing unity, it cannot be either a material or an instrumental cause, nor can it be one combining both; it must be simply an efficient cause. This leads to the remark that the reason why so much is here made of this question is that, if philosophy conducts us, as it certainly does, to God as the First Cause of all things, it points out as the goal of its inquiries, not a complex, but simply an efficient, cause. He is absolutely one, not many. Even Mr. Herbert Spencer refers every effect to *an infinite and eternal energy*.

It may further be objected that Hamilton speaks of causes, only so far as they are apprehensible to thought—as they are conceivable by the thinking faculty; and that he does not include the data of faith. This objection is rendered plausible by the following remarkable

passage—remarkable as penned by Sir William Hamilton :

“These first causes do not indeed lie within the reach of philosophy, nor even within the sphere of our comprehension; nor, consequently, on the actual reaching them does the existence of philosophy depend. But as philosophy is the knowledge of effects in their causes, the tendency of philosophy is ever upwards; and philosophy can, in thought, in theory, only be viewed as accomplished—which in reality it never can be—when the ultimate causes—the causes on which all other causes depend—have been attained and understood.”<sup>1</sup>

The objection, apparently supported by this passage, would be valid were philosophy, like logic, confined to the domain of thought; but I have not so understood Hamilton in other utterances. Philosophy is not a mere registry of concepts. It is vastly more. Passing outside of the facts of psychology—the field of empirical knowledge—it peculiarly expatiates in the realm of inferences. Let us hear Hamilton himself when discoursing of the divisions of philosophy :

“In the First Branch—the Phænomenology of mind—philosophy is properly limited to the facts afforded in consciousness, considered exclusively in themselves. But these facts may be such as not only to be objects of knowledge in themselves, but likewise to furnish us with grounds of inference to something out of themselves. . . . Although, therefore, existence be only revealed to us in phænomena, and though we can, therefore, have only a relative knowledge either of mind or of matter; still by inference and analogy, we may legitimately attempt to rise above the mere appearances which experience and observation afford. Thus, for example, the existence of God and the Immortality of the Soul are not given us as phænomena, as objects of immediate knowledge; yet, if the phænomena actually given do necessarily require, for their rational explanation, the hypotheses of immortality and of

<sup>1</sup> *Met. Lect.*, p. 41.



God, we are assuredly entitled, from the existence of the former, to infer the reality of the latter. Now, the science conversant about all such inferences of unknown being [*i. e.*, not immediately known] from its known [immediately known] manifestations, is called ONTOLOGY, or METAPHYSICS PROPER. We might call it INFERENCEAL PSYCHOLOGY."<sup>1</sup>

This is wisely and truly spoken; and, if so, one fails to see why, from the phenomenal effects of the universe, we are not entitled to infer a First Cause. The only question is, whether such inference is knowledge. It would be trivial to say that it cannot be knowledge because it is not immediate knowledge; that is, that involved in consciousness—that a species cannot be included under a genus, because it is not another species! It is, indeed, mediate knowledge, but its mediateness in no degree derogates from either its reality or its importance. Of what real and ultimate advantage would be our immediate knowledge of mere phenomena, did it not condition the higher, the eternal knowledge of our souls, of immortality, of God? What folly it would be to dignify the perception of the “vesture,” “incomparable,” though it be, in which the Deity condescends to array himself, with the name of knowledge, and to deny that appellation to the apprehension of the Deity himself! The First Cause is none the less known because he cannot be thought—cannot be conceived and comprehended; and the same, although in a far lower degree, is true of finite cause. No cause is thought; it is believed. Thought furnishes its phenomenal manifestations, and faith, proceeding upon these thought-conditions, affirms cause itself.

<sup>1</sup> *Met. Lect.*, p. 88.

(2) The sweeping affirmation that every effect is the product of more than one cause meets another limitation in the causal efficiency of the human soul. Here the question is disembarassed of relation to the "hyper-physical" causality of God, at least as immediately exercised. Hamilton speaks of "first causes," as among the ends sought by philosophy in its endeavor to attain to unity. These first causes are, of course, viewed by him as specific, derived, relative, not as generic, original, absolute. This determination is admitted. Now, upon this assumption, the human soul must be assigned a place among these first causes; and as it is confessed to be one and indivisible, it must be regarded as being, in relation to its own activities, a single and not a concurrent cause.

Let us think, away from the question before us, the *concursum* of the Deity with the operations of the soul. That, contemplated in a certain sense, is granted; but the fact is now left out of account. The problem is concerned about the causal activities of the soul, considered apart from the agency of God. Let us also purge the question in hand of all reference to social effort. That, it is needless to say, involves a concurrence of causes, the coöperation of soul with soul in the production of joint results; but the inquiry is now restricted to the relation of an individual soul to its own separate acts.

Hamilton, his whole school, and all sober thinkers, admit that the soul is a substance, and that, as such, it is characterized by simplicity. Now is it denied or conceded that it is also a cause? If denied, one—to compare Mantua with Rome—is compelled to adopt a view

of the soul akin to that which the pantheist holds in regard to God. The latter contends that the universe, with all its phenomenal facts and occult forces, is an emanation from one primordial substance, which he, by a tremendous solecism, calls God. Hence the name, pantheist. The latter would maintain that all the activities, all the phenomenal acts, of the soul are but a spontaneous evolution from its substance. He would, therefore, be fairly entitled to the appropriate name of pansychist. To the one, God is all, and all is God; to the other, the soul is all, and all is the soul, within the sphere in which it manifests itself. The faculties of cognition, the feelings and the will may be admitted to be powers inherent in and qualifying the soul as it is a substance; but actual thoughts, feelings, volitions, are products which are caused by the soul operating through those powers. There is, however, no need now to argue this question. The hypothesis, that the soul is simply a substance and not a cause, would have been scouted by the great Libertarian who zealously contended that the soul is the free, undetermined cause of its own acts, and in that fact grounded its responsibility, indeed the very possibility of a moral government. The argument is *ad hominem*.

If, on the other hand, it be conceded that the soul is a cause as well as a substance, it must also be granted that the regression, by analysis through its subjective effects and minor causes, conducts us to the soul itself, as relatively the ultimate cause of the series; but, as it is confessed that it is one and indivisible, it must be so, both as a cause and a substance; and we are constrained

to allow that, in this instance, there are effects which are not the products of concurrent causes.

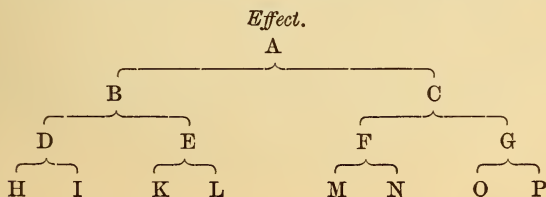
Hamilton could not, in answer to this, have resorted to the necessitarian view, that the outward circumstances to which the soul is related—its external environment—determine its causal activity. He was no necessitarian. Nor did he maintain, but expressly argued against, the supposition that the causal efficiency of the soul is determined by a subjective spontaneity in the determination of which it had no agency. This is but another phase of the necessitarian hypothesis. In this he was clearly right, so far forth as man in the condition in which he was created is concerned; and even one, who holds that the first free decision of the soul for evil, determined ever afterwards, without supernatural, divine interposition, its moral spontaneity in the direction of evil, maintains that it is responsible for the acts which it causally produces in conformity with that spontaneous condition.

If, in rebuttal, it be urged that the motives which lead to every act are complex, and that we have not escaped from the necessity of supposing a concurrence of causes for every effect, the rejoinder is threefold. First, it is denied that motives are efficient causes. Secondly, if the motives are conceived as not caused by the soul, but as springing from it simply as a substance, it is conceded that they have a single ground of existence in the substance of the soul which is a unit. Thirdly, the motives which spontaneously arise from the very make of the soul must by its elective action, through the will, be appropriated ere they become the proximate

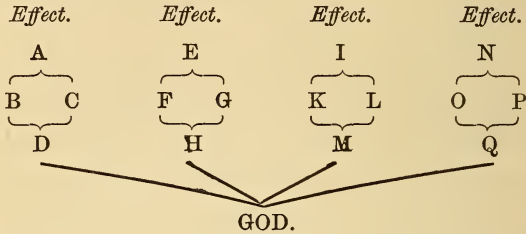
inducements to determinate acts. However many and complex the motives may be which conduce to volition, it is, after all, the one, indivisible soul itself which must be regarded as the ultimate cause of its acts. But if this be so, we have the operation of a single efficient cause in the production of effects.

The same kind of argument, *mutatis mutandis*, may, for aught I know to the contrary, be employed in regard to the elementary forces of nature. What proof, for instance, is there of a concurrence of causes in the attraction of gravity? It operates in a vacuum. When lightning kills a man, what causes concur with it? To say that there must be a concurrence of a negative and positive-electric state is to confound receptivity with activity, and mere conditions with efficient causes.

(3) If Hamilton's doctrine be true, it would follow that, in the regression from effects to causes, instead of approximating unity more and more, we would be more and more multiplying particulars, and increasing diversity. Starting with a given effect we would have at least two causes. Viewing them in turn as effects, analysis would give us two causes for each of them, making four. For each of these four considered as effects we would have two which would yield eight. We would increase the number of particular causes at every step. The subjoined table will illustrate what is meant:



But take the contrary view, and we first encounter relative and subordinate first causes, which are single, and we refer them to one ultimate and supreme cause, thus :



The conscious activities of each human soul must, for example, be assigned to that single soul as their relative first cause. What is true of one is true of all; but all these souls as subordinate first causes, characterized by unity, must be attributed as effects to the causal efficiency of God.

2. The second special hypothesis of Hamilton, in regard to the nature of cause, to which attention is now asked, cannot be more clearly expressed than in his own language. He says :

“We have seen that causes (taking that term as synonymous for all without which the effect would not be) are only the co-efficients of the effect ; an effect being nothing more than the sum or complement of all the partial causes, the concurrence of which constitutes its existence.”<sup>1</sup>

The same view is propounded in connection with his theory of the conditioned in its application to cause. It

<sup>1</sup> *Met. Lect.*, p. 68.

is, in fact, the office which it is summoned to discharge, in that relation which attaches to it its chief significance, and on account of which its validity is now challenged. The view, as stated by Hamilton in an unqualified form, is exposed to serious objections.

(1) It does not appear that, in every case, all the reputed co-efficients of an effect enter into its very constitution. Take his instance of a neutral salt. He mentions three con-causes of its production: an acid, an alkali, and a translating force, say, the human hand. Granted that the two former enter into the composition of the salt, and go to constitute it, what becomes of the translating force? Does either the hand itself as a collection of nerves, muscles and bones, or the force exerted by the hand, enter into the salt? Surely neither of them is one of its constituents. Here, then, we encounter an obvious limitation.

There are effects in relation to which it is impossible that Hamilton's law should hold good. A man, for instance, is killed by a pistol-shot. Here the effect is death. How can it, in any sense, be considered as the sum or complement of the causes which produced it? Is death a compound of the homicide's volition, the weapon, the pulling of a trigger, the explosion of powder, the propulsion of a ball, and its penetration into the body? Should it be said that the power of the man who fired the shot, acting through these conditions, passes into act in the effect, death, a contradiction is asserted; for death is the *negation* of life, and how a *positive* living power enters into it and constitutes it is impossible to see. The fact is that Hamilton's law seems to

exclude the whole class of events as contradistinguished to substances and qualities.

There are, indeed, effects into which the cause does not enter at all as a constituent. The cause ceases to act upon the occurrence of the effect, and, in the particular relation in which it has acted, ceases to exist. It expires, *quoad hoc*, in the transition. It does not pass over into the effect. The illustration just given of death by a pistol-shot is in point. Not one of the so-called concurrent causes enters into the effect as a constituent of it. They all expire in the transition. To this it may be replied that the argument from the transitoriness of the causes is vain, since there are instances in which the effects themselves are but instantaneous and evanescent; but the rejoinder is that the argument based upon the expiration of the causes in the moment of production has been employed with reference to effects which continue after the causes have vanished. Death, as an effect, continues after the pistol-shot has ceased. It was enough for the purpose in view—namely, the disproof of Hamilton's universal affirmation, to adduce some instances in which it does not hold. Another sort of argument, however, was also used—namely, that from the nature of the case: it cannot be true that causes always enter as constituents into the effect. The supposition is absurd. It is in accordance with that argument that this particular objection is to be met. From the equal transitoriness of the causes and the effect produced by them nothing is gained in favor of the law that causes enter into and constitute the effect. Take an example furnished by the illustration already employed. The *sound*



of a pistol-shot is a transitory event, it immediately expires; but it would be absurd to suppose that the homicide's volition, the pointing of the weapon, the pulling of the trigger, the impact of the hammer upon the cap, and the explosion of the powder entered as constituents into that sound as one of the effects. For aught that appears to the contrary, the same is true of those mental and moral acts which are instantaneous, which expire at their occurrence.

(2) The law in question meets another and a decided limitation in the case of the divine causality in relation to human acts; unless we assume the principle of the pantheist, and merge all effects into the First Cause, simply as modifications of the original substance, on which supposition we abandon the theory of free causation. Blind necessity would rule all relations. But if we admit that the divine Being is a free cause, it may be asked how he, as cause, or his acts as causes, can be apprehended as passing into effects and becoming a part of their composition. If, for example, God's power enters as an element into my power, which, by a creative act, it has caused, the unmixed responsibility of which I am conscious for my free moral acts is not a fact, unless it can be shown that a thing can act independently of another thing, which, *ex hypothesi*, is part of itself. This consideration is damaging to Hamilton, inasmuch as he was a staunch assertor of the pure freedom of the will as grounding moral obligation.

If, again, it be urged that Hamilton speaks only of the *positive concept* of cause, and, therefore, not of the creative causality of God, as originating existence, which

though he believes he pronounces to be inconceivable; it is replied that, upon the supposition of the validity of the law that every effect is the sum and complement of the causes that produce it, the power of our wills must be *believed* to be caused by an act of God's power, and as we are conscious of exercising our power in willing we must be conscious of exercising that which it embraces as an element, which goes to constitute it, viz., God's power, and surely we are able to form a *concept* of that of which we are conscious; and so we must be conscious of the effect, within us, of the divine causality, and would be able to form a corresponding concept of the exercise of our own causality as embracing that of God; which would destroy Hamilton's favorite doctrine of the pure freedom of the will as conditioning responsibility. That is, to be explicit, we would be conscious of exercising a power into which God's power enters as an integer, and, therefore, could not be conscious of exercising only our own power. The consequence would be that we are not wholly responsible for the acts of our wills. But consciousness, according to Hamilton's contention, and to truth as well, does testify that we are. His doctrine in regard to consciousness is inconsistent with his view of the complementary nature of effects.

As has been already intimated, the chief interest attaching to the questions which have been discussed lies in their bearing upon the all-important subject of the creative causality of God. If we apply to that subject the law that every effect is produced by a concurrence of causes, we must suppose that in the act of creation, strictly speaking—creation in the first instance—there

was a concurrence of causes in the production of the effect. But the supposition of a concurrence of strictly efficient causes must be ruled out since, manifestly, God alone is the efficient cause. The coöperation with his efficiency of any other cause in the creative act would involve the absurdity of the concurrence of the finite with the infinite in accomplishing what only the infinite can achieve; for none but an infinite power could create, and as there cannot be two infinite beings, since they would limit and condition each other, which is contrary to the supposition of infinity, any other cause of creation than God himself must needs have been finite.

But let this be granted, and the ground may still be taken that the unity—the absolute singularity—of the Deity as creator does not conflict with the supposition that the concurrence of divine causes, causes existing only in himself, was necessary to the production of the created effect. Now, what causes? The material cause is excluded by the nature of the creative act, considered strictly. There was, *ex hypothesi*, no material antecedently to creation out of which the effect could be produced. Creation itself produces all materials. Hamilton, if he is not misunderstood, would have denied this, inasmuch as he held that creation is but the actualization of the virtual power of God. According to that view the divine power, considered *virtualiter*, was that *out of* which the universe was produced. In this sense, a material cause concurred with the efficient in the creative act. This doctrine, to my mind, logically leads to pantheism. All things were created *by* the power of God, not *out of* it. They are in him, but they are not He.

This view does not compromise the doctrine of God's immensity and omnitude. He is not displaced by either matter or spirit. We cannot believe that space is displaced by either. Shall we say, then, that all things were produced *from* or *out of* space, as a material used by the creative cause? The sum of God's being is not increased by creation, but it is another thing to say that the sum of all other being than he is not increased by it. To say that it is not, because what is created and appears to begin, was really contained in God's power, virtually existed before it actually became phenomenal, is to confound the material cause with the efficient. It is precisely God's power which is the efficient cause in creation; power is the very essence of efficient cause. The affirmation that the divine power, exercised in creation, is, at one and the same time, both efficient and material cause, is a contradiction in terms.

An instrumental cause as concurring in the creative act must also be ruled out. The very apprehension of creation proper is that it is immediate; that is, exclusive of a medium. An instrumental cause is one *through* which anything is produced. It is the means of production. It is idle to discuss the question whether, outside of God himself, there could have been such a cause. Before creation, there was nothing extraneous to God, nothing but God himself. As to the question whether there was in the divine being itself an instrumental cause through which the efficient cause operated, it is enough to ask that such a cause be indicated. Until that is done, the question is non-existent.

But what of the formal and the final cause? Is it not

necessary to suppose that even the divine causality was exercised in accordance with a concept of the form of things to be created, and of the end to be subserved by them? Let it be borne in mind that the question is in regard to the efficient production of effects. The distinction must not be overlooked, between what was necessary *in* their production, and what was necessary *to* their production. There is plausibility in the view that the material and the instrumental cause concur in the production of an effect. It may be contended that they are, in a sense, producing; but who would dream of affirming the same of the formal and the final cause? The truth is, that neither the material nor the instrumental cause is a part of the power which produces. They are both the products of power—of the divine power, for it is that which is under consideration. This difficulty can only be avoided by regarding those causes as intrinsic to the divine power itself—as forming, so to speak, a part of its contents, a position which has already, to some extent, been criticised.

As to formal and final causes, we may adopt one or the other of two theories. We may, with some of the schoolmen and the modern objective idealist (in part), hold that God's knowledge is identical with his power, his intelligence with his will. Upon that supposition, the concurrence of formal and final causes with efficient in the divine causality is out of the question, for, according to the theory, they are one and the same. If intelligence be the power that creates, it is very certain that intelligence cannot coöperate with power, unless a thing can coöperate with itself.

But if we adopt the view that God's intelligence and will are not identical, then, first, we reject the theory that his intelligence causes the universe just as it causes its own thoughts, that the universe is the "objectified thought" of God; whatever that remarkable phraseology may mean. Secondly, we must hold that the determinations of the divine will are not arbitrary, but, to speak reverently, directed by the divine intelligence. At the same time we must also believe that the divine will is the seat of causal efficiency. Its determinations and exercise accord with infinite wisdom, but it is not wisdom, it is the power of the will, which is causally efficient. Wisdom is a *sine qua non* of creation, but it is not wisdom, it is power that creates. Intelligence is *in order to* the creative act; it is not a co-efficient *in* producing it. It is power that produces. If, therefore, we seek unity by regression along the line of causes—and Hamilton tells us that it is along that line we must seek it—we are conducted through all subordinate causes, however characterized by relative unity, ultimately to the will of God, the primal fountain of power, the efficient cause of the universe of being. Thus far in regard to the unqualified dictum: every effect is produced by a concurrence of causes, in its application to the divine causality—an application with which we are authorized to deal, not by the concepts of the thinking faculty, which are incompetent to apprehend the Infinite, but by the judgments of the believing faculty, about which philosophy and religion are alike concerned. The question is a difficult one, and opens up measureless expanses to investigation, but no more in relation to it can here be said.

Concerning the application to the divine causality of the other dictum: every effect is the sum and complement of its causes, but little need be added. Such an application would seem to be impossible. It cannot be true that the intelligence and power of God—even if they be viewed as con-causes—enter into and constitute finite effects. If God be immaterial he cannot become a part of the material system; if he be infinite he cannot become a part of the finite. To say that he is not a part of them, he *is* the material and the finite, is to fraternize with the pantheist.

I cannot close this part of the discussion without repeating the conviction already expressed in the course of these discussions. It is that the First Cause is not, *as such*, the ultimate principle of unity. That principle is the First Substance as Fundamental Being, who, in the exercise of the attribute of infinite power, is the personal cause of all being but his own. The ultimate answer to that “questioning impulse” that ever asks, Why? can only be reached when we apprehend by faith the divine essence itself, uncaused, necessary, self-existent, of which the divine causality is but the omnipotent energy. The infinite, personal substance is the absolute goal of all inquiry. Itself incomprehensible, it is the explanation as it is the free origin of the universe. Here philosophy and religion together rest: here they kneel together and render their united worship.

## PART II.

I PROCEED now to examine Hamilton's doctrine in regard to the origin of the causal judgment.

Let us hear him state, for the most part, in his own language, his position, in the first place, in regard to the theory of the conditioned, and, in the second place, concerning the application of that theory to the origin of the causal judgment.

What is the conditioned? What the unconditioned? He answers: "The conditioned is that which is alone conceivable or cogitable; the unconditioned, that which is inconceivable or incogitable."<sup>1</sup>

The unconditioned, as generic, he distributes into two specific aspects as "repugnant opposites." "The one is that of unconditional or absolute limitation; the other that of unconditional or infinite illimitation. The one we may, therefore, in general call the absolutely unconditioned, the other the infinitely unconditioned; or, more simply, the absolute and the infinite; the term *absolute* expressing that which is finished or complete, the term *infinite* that which cannot be terminated or concluded."<sup>2</sup>

He thus, in general terms, states what he denominates the law of the conditioned: "The law of mind, that the conceivable is in every relation bounded by the inconceivable, I call the law of the conditioned."<sup>3</sup> Again he says, more particularly: "The conceivable lies

<sup>1</sup> *Met. Lect.*, p. 530.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 530.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



always between two inconceivable extremes.”<sup>1</sup> “I lay it down as a law which, though not generalized by philosophers, can be easily proved to be true by its application to the phenomena: that all that is conceivable in thought lies between two [inconceivable] extremes, which, as contradictory of each other, cannot both be true, but of which, as mutual contradictories, one [upon the principle of excluded middle] must.”<sup>2</sup> The words in brackets are elsewhere employed by himself. What he here speaks of as conceivable in thought he in other places terms “positive thought.”

Having collected from himself his theory of the conditioned, let us attend to his application of that theory to “the causal judgment.”

It would be superfluous to quote Hamilton in proof of his rejection of the hypothesis that the notion of cause is simply that of invariable antecedence and sequence. He fully admits the productive character of causes in relation to phenomenal changes. Cause is, in a word, efficient. Hence the legitimacy of the term *effect*—a term abusively employed by the advocates of the hypothesis of antecedence and sequence.

He explicitly concedes the *necessity* of the causal judgment. “It is plain,” he remarks, “that the observation, that certain phenomena are found to succeed certain other phenomena, and the generalization consequent thereon, that these are reciprocally causes and effects, could never of itself have engendered not only the strong, but the irresistible belief, that every event must have a cause.”<sup>3</sup> “We have here to account not only for

<sup>1</sup> *Met. Lect.*, p. 528.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 527.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 544.

a strong, but for an absolutely irresistible, belief.”<sup>1</sup> “Do we find that the causal judgment is weaker in the young, stronger in the old? There is no difference. In either case there is no less and no more; the necessity in both is absolute.”<sup>2</sup> It is enough, upon this point, to add that, in the table of theories he has furnished, he formally includes his own theory under the general class of *a priori* principles.<sup>3</sup>

But he distributes *a priori* necessity into two kinds—negative and positive.

“It is agreed,” he observes, “that the quality of necessity is that which discriminates a native from an adventitious element of knowledge. When we find, therefore, a cognition which contains this discriminative quality, we are entitled to lay it down as one which could not have been obtained as a generalization from experience. This I admit. But when philosophers lay it down not only as native to the mind, but as a positive and immediate datum of an [?] intellectual power, I demur. It is evident that the quality of necessity in a cognition may depend on two different and opposite principles, inasmuch as it may either be the result of a power, or of a powerlessness, of the thinking principle. In the one case, it will be a Positive, in the other a Negative, necessity.”<sup>4</sup>

On the one hand, he attributes to a positive necessity the origin of “the notion of existence and its modifications, the principles of identity, and contradiction, and excluded middle, the intuitions of space and time, etc.”<sup>5</sup>

On the other hand, he ascribes to a negative necessity the origin of the notion “of cause and effect, and of substance and phænomenon or accident. Both are only

<sup>1</sup> *Met. Lect.*, p. 545.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 545.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 540.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 525.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 525.

applications of the principle of the conditioned, in different relations." <sup>1</sup>

Although the principle of causality is assigned by Hamilton to the class of pure or *a priori* conditions of intelligence, he holds that it is not original, but derived; not original, in the sense of a primary, affirmative datum, a special, positive principle which is a revelation of intelligence, but derived, in the sense that it is necessitated by and conditioned upon a mental inability, a mental impotence. "The eighth and last opinion [that held by himself among the eight enumerated] is that which regards the judgment of causality as derived; and derives it not from a power, but from an impotence, of mind; in a word, from the principle of the conditioned." <sup>2</sup> It is not, however, derived from experience: "The causal principle is considered not as a result, but as a condition, of experience." <sup>3</sup> That is, if I understand Hamilton, it is not originated by experience, but by a native inability of the mind which antedates and conditions experience.

What is the causal judgment? Hamilton says:

"When we are aware of something which begins to be, we are, by the necessity of our intelligence, constrained to believe that it has a Cause. But what does the expression *that it has a cause* signify? If we analyze our thought, we shall find that it simply means, that as we cannot conceive any new existence to commence, therefore, all that now is seen to arise under a new appearance had previously an existence under a prior form. We are utterly unable to realize in thought the possibility of the complement of existence being either increased or diminished." <sup>4</sup>

Elsewhere more briefly:

<sup>1</sup> *Met. Lect.*, p. 532.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 547.    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 538.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 532.

“It is the inability we experience of annihilating in thought an existence in time past, in other words, our utter impotence of conceiving its absolute commencement, that constitutes and explains the whole phænomenon of causality.”<sup>1</sup>

Again:

“To say that a thing previously existed under different forms, is only, in other words, to say, that a thing had causes.”<sup>2</sup>

What, now, is the bearing of the theory of the conditioned upon the causal judgment. To cite all the passages which are necessary to furnish a full answer to this question would be tiresome. The sum is this: The law that all positive thought (or conception) lies between two inconceivable and contradictory extremes, one of which, upon the principle of excluded middle, must be true, controls the specific positive thought (of concept) of cause. It, therefore, lies between two inconceivable and contradictory extremes. They are, on the one hand, an absolute commencement, and, on the other, an infinite series of relative commencements. As we are impotent to think an absolute commencement, we are compelled to think that what begins to be had a previous existence in another form, or other forms; that is, that its present form is but the effect of its previous form or forms. Such is the genesis of the causal judgment.

But betwixt the two contradictory extremes between which that positive thought of cause lies, we are compelled to choose one as true, and reject the other as false. The extreme of an absolute commencement is proved to be the true alternative by a deliverance of consciousness, either direct or indirect. How? In this

<sup>1</sup> *Met. Lect.*, p. 554.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 554.

way: In every free act of the will, of which we are conscious, we are conscious, directly or indirectly, of an absolute commencement. As the authority of consciousness is ultimate, we must accept its testimony to the fact, although inconceivable.

This last point is important, and it will be confirmed by quotations from Hamilton:

"If," says he, "the causal judgment be not an express affirmation of mind, but only an incapacity to think the opposite; it follows, that such a negative judgment cannot counterbalance the express affirmative, the unconditional testimony of consciousness—that we are, though we know not how, the true and responsible authors of our actions, nor [not?] merely the worthless links in an adamant series of effects and causes."<sup>1</sup>

The same view is elsewhere presented with only some variation in the language:

"If the causal judgment be not an affirmation of mind, but merely an incapacity of positively thinking the contrary, it follows that such a negative judgment cannot stand in opposition to the positive consciousness—the affirmative deliverance that we are truly the authors—the responsible originators, of our actions, and not merely links in the adamant series of effects and causes."<sup>2</sup>

"In favor of our moral nature, the fact that we are free is given us in the consciousness of an uncompromising law of Duty, in the consciousness of our moral accountability."<sup>3</sup>

"How, therefore, I repeat, moral liberty is possible in man or God, we are utterly unable speculatively to understand. But practically, the *fact*, that we are free, is given to us in the consciousness of an uncompromising law of duty, in the consciousness of our moral accountability."<sup>4</sup>

"There is no conceivable medium between Fatalism and Casualism; and the contradictory schemes of Liberty and Necessity are

<sup>1</sup> *Discussions*, p. 596.

<sup>2</sup> *Met. Lect.*, p. 557.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 558.

<sup>4</sup> *Disc.*, p. 597.

themselves inconceivable. For, as we cannot compass in thought an *undetermined cause*—an *absolute commencement*—the fundamental hypothesis of the one; so we can as little think an *infinite series of determined causes*—of *relative commencements*—the fundamental hypothesis of the other. The champions of the opposite doctrines are thus at once resistless in assault, and impotent in defence.<sup>1</sup> Each is hewn down, and appears to die under the home-thrusts of his adversary; but each again recovers life from the very death of his antagonist, and, to borrow a simile, both are like the heroes in Valhalla, ready in a moment to amuse themselves anew in the same bloodless and interminable conflict. The doctrine of Moral Liberty cannot be made conceivable, for we can only conceive the determined and the relative. As already stated, all that can be done is to shew—1<sup>o</sup>, That for the *fact* of Liberty we have, immediately or mediately, the evidence of consciousness; and, 2<sup>o</sup>, That there are, among the phænomena of mind, many facts which we *must* admit as actual, but of whose possibility we are wholly unable to form any notion.”<sup>2</sup>

“If our intellectual nature be not a lie—if our consciousness and conscience do not deceive us in the immediate datum of an Absolute Law of Duty (to say nothing of an immediate datum of Liberty itself)—we are *free*, as we are *moral agents*.”<sup>3</sup>

Another passage is cited, for the reason that it appears to throw some light upon the *end* which Hamilton contemplated in this remarkable speculation.

“We admit,” he tells us, “that the consequence of this doctrine is—that philosophy, if viewed as more than a science of the Conditioned—is impossible. Departing from the particular, we admit that we can never, in our highest generalizations, rise above the Finite; that our knowledge, whether of mind or matter, can be nothing more than a knowledge of the relative manifestations of an existence, which, in itself, it is our highest wisdom to recognize

<sup>1</sup> *Gladium, non scutum, habent.*

<sup>2</sup> Hamilton’s *Reid*, p. 602, note. The illustration might have been omitted from the quotation as not necessary to the point in view; but it is inserted on account of its great beauty. Kant gives it in substance.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 624.

as beyond the reach of philosophy; in the language of St. Austin, '*Cognoscendo ignorari, et ignorando cognosci.*'"<sup>1</sup>

Yet, in the very midst of this discussion, Hamilton is constrained to admit a source of knowledge which transcends the compass of thought.

"By a wonderful revelation," says he, "we are thus, in the very consciousness of our inability to conceive aught above the relative and finite, inspired with a belief in the existence of something unconditioned beyond the sphere of all comprehensible reality."

Hamilton's position having been stated, for the most part in his own words, the way is open for a consideration of its merits. Before, however, the grounds of dissent are submitted, it is proper that the points of concurrence should be distinctly indicated. I admit—

First, That Hamilton is right in maintaining that the relation between what are termed causes and effects is not that of mere antecedence and sequence, even though invariable, but that it is a relation supposing productiveness. The thing which begins to be not only follows another thing denominated its cause, but is produced by it—that is, it is really an effect, not simply a sequent.

Secondly, That Hamilton's theory of the conditioned is correct, so far forth as it holds that the thinking faculty is bounded on all sides by the unthinkable, that the power of conception is in every direction limited by the inconceivable; in a word, that thought cannot apprehend, much less comprehend, the absolute and infinite; that the power to apprehend that which transcends thought, to rise to the infinite and affirm it as a datum

<sup>1</sup> *Discussions*, p. 14.

of intelligence, belongs to belief or faith. In this respect he has enounced a master-distinction, which is suited to unravel some of the profoundest difficulties alike of philosophy and of religion.

Thirdly, That there are at the root of our mental constitution certain native principles, fundamental laws of thought and belief, necessities of thinking and believing; that these laws are at first implicit and beneath consciousness; that, while they are not dependent for *existence* upon any conditions of experience, they are dependent for *formal expression* upon the empirical conditions furnished by perception, representation and conception; that, when thus elicited from latency and developed into definite shape, they become great judgments, standards, criteria, in accordance with which the processes of thought and faith are enforced and regulated. Here there is, in this discussion, not only no dispute, but full and cordial agreement, with Hamilton's views, views in which he concurred with the ablest and soundest thinkers of ancient and modern times.<sup>1</sup>

Fourthly, That the causal judgment is characterized by necessity. It is not contingent; we must form it. But assenting to Hamilton's doctrine of its necessity, I am compelled to differ with him in regard to the specific character of this necessity. He maintains that it is negative. On the contrary, the true view would seem to be, that it is positive. This touches a vital point in Hamilton's theory, and it will be more particularly considered as the discussion advances.

<sup>1</sup> See Hamilton's *Supplementary Dissertations* to his edition of *Reid*: Note A, On the Philosophy of Common Sense, p. 770.



With these admissions, I pass on to state certain reasons which oppose the acceptance of Hamilton's special theory in relation to cause.

1. His position, that we are bound, by an immediate or a mediate datum of consciousness, to accept the fact of an absolute commencement, may, upon his own principles, be proved untenable.

In applying "the law of the conditioned" to the subject of cause, he holds that the "causal judgment" lies between the inconceivable and contradictory extremes of an absolute commencement and an infinite series of relative commencements. Of these, upon the principle of excluded middle, one must be true. The alternative which, in this case, we must elect as true is that of an absolute commencement. Why? Because it is certified to us, immediately or mediately, by consciousness. It is the evidence of consciousness, and that alone, which he pleads in support of the alleged fact.

What is an absolute commencement? It is, says Hamilton, "a cause which is not itself an effect." It is that which begins to be without any cause for its existence—a beginning without a beginner. This we are utterly unable to think, to conceive, for we are unable not to think that everything which begins had a previous existence in another form. The sum of existence cannot be increased. We are, therefore, obliged to refund every apparently new existence into the old complement of existence, to which no addition can be made.

But the fact of an absolute commencement, thus inconceivable, is delivered to us, immediately or me-

diately, by consciousness, the testimony of which cannot be resisted.

Now, argues Hamilton, the alleged existence of a special, original principle, or law, which necessitates the *positive* affirmation, that everything which begins to be must have had a cause, is contradicted by the deliverance of consciousness to the fact of an absolute commencement. Hence he concludes that the causal judgment is the result, not of a power of mind, but of a mental impotence.

In what way is this testimony given us? How does consciousness deliver to us the fact of an absolute commencement? In every free moral act of the will. Every such act must be either determined or undetermined. If determined, it is not free, but necessary. If undetermined, it is not necessary, but free. Now we are conscious that in every moral act of the will, we are not determined to it, we are free in its performance. We have "the positive consciousness—the affirmative deliverance that we are truly the authors—the responsible originators, of our actions." Every free moral act being an absolute commencement, in being conscious of the former, we have the proof of the latter. The testimony of consciousness, let it be observed, is the only proof which Hamilton adduces in favor of an absolute commencement. It is, therefore, evident that the question turns upon the fact of such testimony: Does consciousness furnish it? As Hamilton states, that this testimony is given immediately or mediately, it will be necessary to disjoin the two suppositions and consider them separately.

(1.) Upon his own principles it can be evinced that consciousness does not *immediately* give us the fact of an absolute beginning. He expressly and uniformly teaches that consciousness is only possible in cases in which immediate knowledge is involved. We are conscious only of that which we immediately know; and the object of immediate knowledge he defines as that which is now and here present. Indeed he explicitly acknowledges that consciousness is convertible with immediate knowledge. With him, further, the terms *intuitivo*, *presentativo* and *immediate*, as characterizing knowledge, are treated as equivalents. There can scarcely be any mistake as to his doctrine upon this subject. He illustrates it very clearly in the case in which we reproduce a past event in memory. The event itself, as past, is only mediately known through a vicarious image in the mind. What we immediately know is, not the past event itself, but the mental modification which represents it. Now, says he, we are conscious of the representing image as immediately known, but of the past event, as only mediately apprehended, we have, we can have, no consciousness. If, then, we are conscious of an absolute commencement, it follows from his own doctrine that it is immediately known—that it is intuitively, presentatively, given; but if so, we are face to face with it, we perceive it, and, of course, can subsequently construe it in thought; for it will not be denied that we can conceive what has been perceived. The perceivable is the very ground of the conceivable; the percept becomes, in thought-relations, the concept. Every object immediately known may become an object

of mediate knowledge, and thought is mediate knowledge. But Hamilton holds that the fact of an absolute commencement, as one of the contradictory extremes between which the positive judgment of cause is placed, is inconceivable—it cannot be conceived as possible. His position, therefore, involves the self-contradictory assertion that an inconceivable fact, which cannot be immediately known, is apprehended in an act of immediate knowledge; that is, an act of consciousness. He refutes himself: We are conscious only of that which is immediately known; that which is immediately known cannot be inconceivable, and, to convert the terms, that which is inconceivable cannot be immediately known; but an absolute commencement is inconceivable. What conclusion can be drawn, but that we cannot be conscious of it?

It being kept in mind that the question now is in regard to the *immediate* testimony of consciousness, it is questionable whether, in being conscious of a moral act, we are conscious of its freedom. The assumption of Hamilton that we are is challenged.

*First.* He maintains that we are conscious of acts, not of states of mind. The act expresses the mental habitude, but not being directly conscious of the latter, we immediately infer its existence from the consciousness of its phenomenal manifestation in actual energy. It is the transition from a latent state, condition, habitude, into exercise of which we are conscious. This doctrine I not only believe to be correct, but possessed of great practical value. Applying it to the special instance in hand, we would be led to the view that, while

we are conscious of a moral act of the will, a moral volition, as phenomenal, and, therefore, an object of immediate knowledge, we are not at the same time conscious of the freedom which the volition is assumed to express. If we know that, it is by an immediate inference—an inference so swiftly formed that the freedom appears to be involved in the act as a datum of consciousness. It happens in this case, as in hundreds of others, that reflection is needed to disentangle the inference from the fact of consciousness which grounds it. We are conscious of the moral act, and, by necessary inference, we instantaneously believe in the state of freedom which in the act energizes into exercise.

*Secondly.* Either the freedom, of which we are said to be conscious, is spontaneous, or it is elective—that is, involving a power to the contrary. This vitally important distinction is justly signalized by Hamilton himself; and he correctly maintains that the spontaneity of the will is consistent with necessity, while its elective freedom is inconsistent with it. Now, according to this true position, if, on the one hand, we are, in the consciousness of a moral act, conscious of spontaneity, we are conscious of that which consists with necessity, and the very fact for which Hamilton contends is overthrown; but if, on the other hand, we are said to be conscious of elective freedom—of power to the contrary, the power of otherwise determining—the ground is taken that, in being conscious of the act when performing it, we are conscious that we might have refrained, that we might have chosen the contrary alternative. Admit that the opposite alternative was deliberately

rejected, and as that is, in the moment of the act's performance, a *past* fact, it is clear that we cannot be conscious of it. We remember it. We may believe that we have the power of otherwise determining, and that, in this particular instance, we may have exerted it differently, but, upon Hamilton's doctrine of consciousness as immediate knowledge, in which I thoroughly concur, these things cannot be objects of consciousness. They are only mediately known.

*Thirdly.* It may be urged that we are conscious of the motives which induce acts, and that in being conscious of the acts, we are, at the same time, of the motives. It is granted that we are conscious of motives, inasmuch as they are transitive movements in immanent states of mind; but there are several difficulties in this view. In the first place, the question occurs, Are the motives themselves free? If so, how? If spontaneous, they consist with necessity. If deliberately elective, the choice between contrary alternatives, being a past fact, cannot be delivered to us by consciousness. In the second place, motives expire at the moment that the acts which they induce are performed. We cannot, therefore, in being conscious of the acts, be conscious of the motives, for, *ex hypothesi*, they are past. If, further, it be contended that we *were* conscious of the motives, the difficulty returns that, in having been conscious of them, the question is whether we were conscious of their freedom, in the sense in which Hamilton regards freedom in this relation. In the third place, the question concerning motives would be irrelevant and damaging to Hamilton's position; for, if in proof of the freedom of

acts we have recourse to that of motives to the performance of the acts, we admit that the motives exert a causal influence upon the acts, for, according to Hamilton, all must be considered as cause which contributes to the occurrence of a phenomenal change. But, in this particular discussion, he maintains that a free action of the will is uncaused, and hence is to be regarded as an absolute commencement.

*Fourthly.* It cannot escape notice that the very language in which Hamilton states the proof from consciousness that the free moral acts of the will are, as uncaused, instances of absolute commencement, disproves the proof. We are conscious, he says, that we are the true authors, the responsible originators of our moral acts. If, then, we produce them, we originate them, we cause them, or the language is unmeaning; but if we cause them, they are not uncaused—not absolute beginnings. It makes no difference to say that it is the generic power in the will, not its specific determinations, which is here represented as a cause of acts. Generic or specific, the will is the cause of acts. They are not uncaused. The question is given up; but this special aspect of the subject may again be adverted to.

(2.) It having been shown that the fact of an absolute commencement cannot, upon Hamilton's own principles, be *immediately* given in a datum of consciousness, it remains to inquire whether it can be *mediately* given in such a datum. By this language Hamilton must be understood to mean that from a direct datum of consciousness we derive the necessary *inference* of an absolute commencement, and of that inference we are con-

scious. He furnishes a special instance: from our consciousness of "an uncompromising law of duty," we infer that we are the true authors, the responsible originators of our moral acts. They are free, in the sense of being undetermined, and, therefore, uncaused. Hence our responsibility for them; hence the very conception of a moral government.

One might, were he disposed to be technically exact, pause here to inquire whether, in accordance with Hamilton's definition of consciousness, we *are* conscious of a law of duty. We are conscious of, we immediately know, a sense, a feeling, a conviction, of duty, and we necessarily infer a law which obliges us, and enforces upon us the sanctions of reward and punishment; but this will not be dwelt upon. It is cheerfully admitted that our necessary inferences from the data of consciousness are of equal validity with those data themselves, and this, notwithstanding the fact that Hamilton himself, in a certain place, disputes their equal certainty. It is also readily admitted that, from the direct deliverances of consciousness, we immediately and necessarily infer, and believe that we are the authors and originators of our moral actions; but we are forced by that inference and belief to hold that if we are authors we are the producers, if the originators we are the efficient causes, of our moral actions; and how that harmonizes with the affirmation that those actions are instances of an absolute commencement, it passes ingenuity to see.

Hamilton also argues in favor of an absolute commencement from our direct consciousness of the fact of liberty; but—



In the first place, according to his own doctrine, we can have no direct consciousness of liberty. What is liberty but the power to will freely our acts? We are conscious of the acts, not of the power which they phenomenally express. Were we conscious of power we could describe it as we can every object of perception or immediate knowledge; but who ever perceived power? We *believe* in its existence; we *perceive* its manifestations. We are not directly conscious of the fact of liberty.

In the second place, if, from the consciousness of the fact of liberty, supposing the fact to be a datum of consciousness, we infer that there is in every free moral act an absolute commencement, the same consequences would result, as have already been pointed out. We would infer that we are the authors, the originators, of our moral acts, which is tantamount to saying that we are their causes. The inference would, therefore, be, not that they are absolute commencements, but that they are not. That which is in any way caused cannot be said absolutely to commence: it is a relative commencement. It will ever be to my mind a matter of amazement that he who affirmed that we are the authors and originators of our moral acts should maintain that they are uncaused—that they are not produced, not originated, but absolutely begin.

If Hamilton could have meant to imply that, although, in being conscious of a free act of the will, we are not directly conscious of an absolute commencement, yet we *infer* from the consciousness of liberty the power to produce the free act, and that is an absolute

commencement, the question is abandoned; for the admission that the power to produce, or, what is the same, to originate moral acts would be an admission that they are produced by that power *as their cause*, and the commencements would not be absolute, but relative.

If he meant that we are conscious of a *belief* in an absolute commencement, the question arises, Whence that belief? Now he contends, and properly contends, that our beliefs in transcendent reality—that is, reality which is incogitable—are elicited into activity by the conditions of conscious experience from fundamental laws of belief native to our mental constitution. Would he, then, have held that there is, among those connatural principles, the law of belief in absolute commencements, like those in space, duration, etc., and that this law is developed from latency into formal expression by the empirical condition of the consciousness of free acts of the will? Certainly not. While he exceptionally held that there is no fundamental law of causality, he did not affirm, he would not have affirmed, that there is a fundamental law of non-causality. Consciousness, therefore, does not mediately and indirectly give us a belief in the fact of an absolute commencement.

Yet, as Hamilton contends that we must, upon the testimony of consciousness, believe an absolute commencement in the case of free moral acts, a serious difficulty occurs. If our mental impotence to conceive an absolute commencement necessitates the judgment that *all* things are caused, why should not the positive testimony of consciousness to an absolute commencement necessitate the judgment that *some* things are

uncaused? This contradiction Hamilton does not attempt to relieve, and it may be more than doubted whether he could have relieved it. The truth is that he was wrong in both positions—that of the origin of the causal judgment in an impotence of the mind to conceive anything as uncaused, and that of the testimony of consciousness that some things are uncaused.

The conclusion from the whole argument is that consciousness neither immediately nor mediately testifies to an absolute commencement.

The real state of the case is that when conscious of any act of the will—that is, any volition—we believe in our power to produce it. The power in the will we believe to be its cause. It is not an uncaused commencement; but the power of the will to produce it we believe to be caused by the creative power of God. The chain of cause and effect is thus uninterrupted, the first link being fastened to the throne of God, the cause of causes.

It will be said that, in asserting the *generic* power of the will to be the cause of its acts, no account is taken of the causes of its *specific* determinations. I have, for example, the power to will walking, but what is the cause of the specific volition to walk eastward rather than westward? The generic power accounts for both, but for neither in contradistinction to the other. The reply is, first, that all the specific determinations of the will are acts of the will—volitions—and each and all are immediately referable to the power of the will as their cause. To say that one specific determination must originate from another preceding it, and so on *ad infini-*

*tum*, is to deny the power of the will to choose—the power considered by Edwards himself to be its definitive characteristic. The will itself has the power to elect between the alternative of walking in one direction or in the opposite. Secondly, the question whether this election is not determined by the apprehensions of the understanding, and not by the decision of the will—the question between the determinist and his opponents—is one irrelevant to the present discussion; for if it were granted that the specific volition is determined by the last view of the understanding, it is conceded that it is caused by the power of the understanding—that it is not an absolute commencement, an uncaused cause.

Were that question pertinent, I would say that the will has the mysterious, divinely given, power to appropriate the representations of the understanding, the impulses of the feelings and the prescriptions of the conscience, and to assimilate them into its own spontaneity. They become directions to its specific determinations, furnish the final, not the efficient, causes of those determinations. The power of the will itself is their real, though derived and dependent, efficient cause. It is in this elective power of the will that our personal responsibility is grounded.<sup>1</sup>

2. Hamilton's statement touching the relation to two contradictory extremes of the causal judgment is liable to serious objection.

It is not intended now to criticise his theory of the conditioned in its general application to positive

<sup>1</sup> This question is considered at some length in the writer's treatise on "The Will in its Theological Relations."

thought, but its special application to cause. According to him, as we have seen, the causal judgment lies between—is conditioned by—two inconceivable extremes, which are contradictories. Upon the principle of excluded middle, one of these must be true. These contradictory extremes are: an absolute commencement and an infinite series of relative commencements. This statement of the case is exposed to challenge. The real contradictories are: an absolute commencement and a relative commencement. To state them in other but equivalent words: a commencement which had no cause, and a commencement which had a cause. A commencement without a cause, a commencement from a cause—these, in the first instance, are the real contradictories.

Now of these one must be false, the other true; for there is no possibility of a middle supposition. On Hamilton's own principles, it has been already shown that the alternative of an absolute commencement must be rejected. It is the false member of this pair of contradictories. The other, therefore, must be true—namely, a commencement from a cause, a relative commencement.

There, then, emerges another pair of contradictories: a self-caused series of commencements and a series of commencements caused by a power outside of itself—self-caused; caused by another. To state the contradiction distinctly: a series of commencements self-caused; a series of commencements not self-caused.

In Hamilton's statement of the two contradictories which exclude a middle, there is the confusion of a single

element with a series of elements. The comparison ought, in the first instance, to be limited to single elements. A thing must be regarded either as absolutely beginning—that is, beginning without a cause—or as caused. To bring in a series prematurely is to destroy the true state of the question.

Now, having settled the question, which of the two contradictories as to a single existence is true, we are prepared to take up the further question, which of these contradictories is true—a self-caused series, or a series begun by an extraneous cause. The first supposition cannot be true, because it involves self-contradiction. A series, *ex vi termini*, consists of parts, limited and conditioned parts. Each of these must have had a beginning, and that beginning must have had a cause. What is predicable of all the parts is predicable of the whole. Consequently, the whole series must have had a beginning—that is, the whole series must have been caused.<sup>1</sup> And as no part has the cause of its beginning in itself, neither can the series as a whole. As no part is absolutely commenced, neither is the series. We are shut up, then, to adopt the other contradictory—namely, that the series had a cause extraneous to itself.

Having thus stated the case as it really is, let us more particularly examine its distinct elements.

(1.) Let us look at the hypothesis of an absolute commencement.

*First.* We have seen that, upon Hamilton's own principles, consciousness cannot deliver to us the fact. Consciousness supposes immediate knowledge, and as

<sup>1</sup> See *Discussion of the Argument for the Being of God*, etc.

what is admitted to be inconceivable cannot be immediately known, an absolute commencement cannot be an object of consciousness. That proof of the alleged fact is destroyed.

*Secondly.* We cannot believe the alleged fact. It is as incredible, as it is inconceivable. It contradicts our fundamental convictions. We cannot believe that finite power can produce something out of nothing, or that any finite thing can exist, any event can occur, with nothing as its cause. The maxim, *ex nihilo nihil fit*, so far as the power of the creature is concerned, is impregnable; but a cause which is not an effect springs from nothing. On the contrary, every finite cause, we must believe, is itself caused by something.

*Thirdly.* What is it which Hamilton affirms that we are impotent to conceive? This: that the sum or complement of existence is increased by a free act of the will, or, more broadly, by any cause in the production of its effect. True; a free act of the will does not increase the sum of existence—that is, of existing being. No finite act can add to the complement of being, for no finite act can create being; but finite power is competent to effect a change, to a certain extent, in the phenomena of existing being; and such change alters the form or mode of being without making a substantive addition to it. We are, therefore, not impotent to conceive an addition to the phenomenal charges of being; and as every change demands a cause for it, we are positively led to postulate for it a cause. This is not the result of impotence, but a fruit of power; not of a negative, but a positive, necessity.

*Fourthly.* If these things be so, Hamilton's argument against the view that the law of causality is original and underived breaks down. That argument is that nothing is to be assumed as an original, special principle of the mind, operating by a positive necessity, which can be shown to result from a mere mental powerlessness. The causal judgment, he contends, is in this category: it is enforced by a negative necessity occasioned by an inability of the mind to conceive the contrary. Hence there is no original, fundamental law, no special, positive principle, of causality in the mind. His minor—namely, that the causal judgment is derived from a mental impotence—has been shown to be inconclusive. The law of parsimony, consequently, does not exclude the supposition of an original and fundamental law of belief in the relation of cause and effect.

*Fifthly.* The other argument of Hamilton against such a positive, fundamental law of belief also gives way—to-wit, that, as consciousness affirms the fact of an absolute commencement, it contradicts the hypothesis of an original law which demands a cause for everything which begins to be; and that our nature would be self-contradictory and mendacious on the supposition of the existence of such a law and of the testimony of consciousness in opposition to it; but we have seen that consciousness makes no such affirmation. The contradiction, therefore, does not exist.

*Sixthly.* We fall back, then, upon the doctrine that the law of causality is fundamental and underived; that is, an original, special, positive principle in the human constitution. It stands the tests of such a principle. It



is self-evident; it is simple; it is necessary. Its necessity is proved by its universality.

*Seventhly.* If, with exceptional and perverse thinkers, the ground be taken that there is no such thing as the relation between cause and effect, but that consciousness merely affirms a relation of antecedence and sequence, it is submitted that the doctrine of an absolute commencement is out of harmony with that hypothesis; for an absolute commencement supposes the absence of any antecedent having a peculiar relation to it. It is out of relation to any antecedent—it *absolutely* begins.

Upon every supposition, therefore, which can be made an absolute commencement is excluded. It is both inconceivable and incredible: it is, as to the experience of finite beings, impossible. The hypothesis of *casualism* is shown to be untenable.

(2.) We have seen that the first pair of contradictories which we encounter is this: an uncaused commencement—a caused commencement; in other words, an absolute commencement—a relative commencement. The first member has been disproved. Upon the principle of excluded middle, therefore, we are shut up to adopt the second as true; that is, what begins to be is caused. The hypothesis of *causation* is established.

Now, then, there emerges another pair of contradictories: an uncaused series of relative commencements—a caused series of relative commencements; the first the hypothesis of *fatalism*, the second, that of *theism*. Upon the principle of excluded middle, one of these must be true, the other false.

The hypothesis of an uncaused series of relative com-

mencement—that of fatalism—is self-contradictory, and therefore false. Each element in the series is a relative commencement—that is, each is caused. But what is predicable of all the parts is predicable of the whole. As no part is uncaused, neither can the whole be uncaused. The first link in the series is caused. To say that all the parts, including the first, are caused, and that the whole is uncaused, is a contradiction. The hypothesis, being self-contradictory, must be discarded. The other member of this pair of contradictories must, then, be accepted as true—namely, a caused series of relative commencements. The hypothesis of *theism* is established.

There are two additional considerations which may be suggested with reference to Hamilton's statement of his contradictories:

*First.* If our inability to conceive an absolute commencement compels us to judge that everything which appears to begin had a previous existence in another form; that is, that it did not really begin, why should not, by parity of reason, our inability to conceive an infinite series of relative commencements necessitate the judgment that it began? Hamilton substantially admits the latter of these alternatives, but evades the difficulty created by this consideration. It involves, however, as serious a contradiction as any which he has signalized.

*Secondly.* If his contradictory extremes are both inconceivable, how is the contradiction apprehended? The law of contradiction he emphasizes as one of thought. In order that the contradiction may be

thought, must not the contradictory extremes be themselves thought? But he holds that they are unthinkable. This difficulty is noticed for the purpose of calling attention to the fact that Hamilton overlooks *the great principle that in nearly all our mental processes, certainly in those concerned about transcendental reality, our thought-judgments and our faith-judgments are inseparably connected.* They cannot be divorced without making the principle of antinomy dominate our mental constitution. Kant's, Hamilton's and Mansel's antilogies may all be got rid of, or brought into harmony upon the principle to which attention has just been directed. The apparent self-contradictoriness of the human reason will, to a great extent, vanish, if we will apprehend thought and faith as discharging, according to God's appointment, joint and complementary offices. As long, on the one hand, as philosophy assays the impossible task of confining itself to the limited sphere of thought, it shuts against itself the gates of ontology; while, on the other hand, if it substitutes the measures of thought for those of faith, it may indeed assume to enter the boundless field of ontology, but it will be like a boy attempting to compass the ocean with his fishing-line. To do the former is, with the sensualist, to crawl like a worm upon the earth; to do the latter is, with the absolutist, to soar into the heavens upon the waxen wings of Icarus. "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

This leads to the further remark that Sir William Hamilton has, in this discussion, greatly erred by speaking of knowledge as restricted to thought, and by inti-

mating that a science incorporating into itself the unconditioned would be impossible. If either of these positions were true, philosophy, like theology, would be impossible. A science of philosophy, or a science of theology, dealing only with the matter supplied by the thinking faculty, and discarding the "revelation," as Hamilton himself calls it, of our fundamental laws of belief, would, let it be repeated, a sheer impossibility. Neither of them is *simply* a science of the conditioned, or a science of the unconditioned; but both weave into one great, harmonious whole, the conditioned and the unconditioned, the finite and the infinite, the judgments of thought and the judgments of faith.

3. Hamilton's theory concerning cause seems, at a vital point, to be based upon a shadowy distinction—the distinction between an inability not to form the causal judgment and the positive necessity of forming it. One finds it difficult to perceive any distinction worth mentioning between the propositions: I cannot but judge thus and so; I must judge thus and so. True, one is negative, the other positive; but they express the same thought.

Furthermore, the same predication may be made in regard to all our original, fundamental laws of belief. Some principles at the foundation of our mental nature Hamilton admits to be special and positive; for example, belief in existence, space, time. Now is it not competent to say that we are unable not to believe in existence, in space, in time? Is this not true? The sort of inability which he affirms in regard to our judgments touching cause and substance, as differentiating them, appears to

be equally predicable of those touching existence, space and time; and if this is not a mistake, nothing is gained by Hamilton's use of the law of parsimony in this matter. His negative necessity practically merges into a positive, his mental powerlessness into a mental power.

After all, according to the illustrious philosopher himself, we *must* believe in cause; and if the foregoing arguments have not wholly failed, they have shown that the principle of causality is one of the special, original, underived laws of belief, concerning which he says with equal truth and beauty:

“By a wonderful revelation, we are thus, in the very consciousness of our inability to *conceive* aught above the relative and finite, inspired with a *belief* in the existence of something beyond the sphere of all comprehensible reality.”

## THE AGNOSTIC DOCTRINE OF THE RELATIVITY OF KNOWLEDGE, AS EXPOUNDED BY MR. HERBERT SPENCER.

---

THE doctrine of Mr. Spencer seems to be: that only that which comes under the cognizance of the presentative, the representative and the thinking faculties is knowable; all else is unknowable. Phenomena as objects of sensation, perception, imagination and thought are known; the reality which underlies them cannot be known. It is not in relation to our faculties, and whatsoever is not in relation to them is unknowable. That Mr. Spencer includes thought as a ground of knowledge is evident from the following utterance, when he is professedly discussing the relativity of knowledge: "Thus, from the very nature of thought, the relativity of our knowledge is inferable in three several ways. As we find by analyzing it, and as we see it objectively displayed in every proposition, a thought involves *relation, difference, likeness*. Whatever does not present each of these does not admit of cognition. And hence we may say that the unconditioned, as presenting none of them, is trebly unthinkable."<sup>1</sup> Whatever, then, is unthinkable is unknowable. Thought is the measure of cognition.

<sup>1</sup> *First Principles*, p. 82.

But Mr. Spencer affirms a reality which transcends thought. This he denominates the absolute—the ultimate of ultimates, upon which religion and science are destined to be harmonized. This absolute something he designates as fundamental reality. What is it? It is force—the central and universal force of which the specific forces of nature are expressions, and upon which they are correlated into unity. This force he characterizes as an “infinite and eternal energy.” But this wonderful, transcendent, infinite reality, which is fundamental to the universe, is unknowable. It is out of relation to our faculties of knowledge. It is the unconditioned, and consequently lies beyond the conditioning predicates of “relation, difference, likeness.”

Of this unknowable, absolute, infinite thing it is affirmed that it exists. It is not nothing. It is, it operates, it causes; it is the explanation of phenomena—the key of the universe. It is just here that Mr. Spencer professedly breaks with the agnostic positivist of the school of Comte. The French agnostic affirms nothing beyond the phenomenal, the English affirms fundamental reality—a force which is all-pervading and collects all special forces into its comprehensive unity. Now, the question necessarily arises, Whence this affirmation? What can we affirm of that concerning which we confessedly know nothing? How does Mr. Spencer meet this difficulty? His answer is: that we are *indefinitely conscious* of the absolute and fundamental reality. This grounds our ability to make any affirmation in regard to it, and necessitates that affirmation. Let us pause to emphasize this mode of appre-

hending the absolute, which at the same time is unknowable. It is indefinite consciousness.

It is not now intended to submit this theory of relative knowledge to anything like a thorough examination, but only to indicate briefly the points at which it is conceived to break down.

(1.) Mr. Spencer arbitrarily and unjustifiably limits the number of the human faculties. Grant him his assumption, that there are no other faculties but those which are either pre-supposed by that of thought as conditioning its exercise, or constitutive of thought itself, and one would have little disposition to deny that what is out of relation to these faculties would be out of relation to the human mind as cognitive, and consequently could not by us be known, for it is conceded that what is out of all relation to our faculties cannot by us be known. But if there be any other cognitive faculty or power than those which Mr. Spencer enumerates, the case would, of course, be vastly different. What would be out of relation to them would be in relation to that supposed to exist in addition to them. If, for example, we have a believing faculty, over and beyond the thinking faculty, what is out of relation to thought might be in relation to faith. It behooved Mr. Spencer to show convincingly that there is, that there can be, no such additional faculty before he could establish his position that what is not related to the thinking faculty is not related to cognition at all—that the unthinkable is necessarily the unknowable. In defect of such proof, his argument fails to specify all the suppositions possible, and would be therefore fatally defective. But more of this anon.



(2.) Mr. Spencer unwarrantably confounds the knowable and the thinkable. He makes them the subject of common predication. Only what is thinkable is knowable. This is a tremendous assumption, and needs to be established by the clearest and most incontestable proofs. If he has not furnished them, or if it can be shown that, in consequence of this identification of the cogitable and the cognoscible, he involves himself in self-contradiction, the foundation is swept from the agnostic feature of his system.

*First*, it is sometimes intimated that Mr. Spencer has carried out the views of Sir William Hamilton upon this subject to their logical conclusion. This is a great mistake. How far Mr. Spencer has claimed to concur with the doctrine of the Scottish philosopher, and how far to differ from it, I do not undertake to say. It is certain that he did profess to adopt it to some extent. For, in discriminating his position from that of M. Comte in regard to the cardinal principles connected with the relativity of knowledge which are distinctive of the "positive philosophy," he remarks<sup>1</sup>: "Such clarifications of ideas on these ultimate questions as I can trace to any particular teacher I owe to Sir William Hamilton." This justifies the questions, Does Mr. Spencer's doctrine of the unknowable coincide with that of Hamilton? Did the views of the Scottish philosophers logically conduce to those of the agnostics? It must be admitted that Hamilton did at times restrict the term *knowledge* to what is immediately known. It is this circumstance which has occasioned the grievous charge

<sup>1</sup> *Recent Discussions*, etc., p. 122.

that he denied the cognoscibility of God. He might, it would seem, have effectually answered Professor Calderwood's criticism upon his doctrine of the infinite by simply affirming that he maintained a knowledge of the Infinite. This, however, he did not do. Notwithstanding this, it may be shown, from his catholic teachings, that a negative answer must be returned to the foregoing questions.

In the first place, he expressly makes a distinction between immediate and mediate knowledge. "Consciousness," says he, "is an immediate, not a mediate, knowledge." "It may be proper here," he remarks in another place, "to consider more particularly a matter of which we have hitherto treated only by the way—I mean the distinction of immediate or intuitive, in contrast to mediate or representative knowledge." After pronouncing this distinction "most important," and elaborately expounding it, he proceeds to observe: "Such are the two kinds of knowledge which it is necessary to distinguish, and such are the principal contrasts they present. . . . The names given in the schools to the immediate and mediate cognitions were *intuitive* and *abstractive*, meaning by the latter term not merely what we, with them, call abstract knowledge, but also the representations of concrete objects in the imagination or memory." Other passages might be cited to the same effect, but these are sufficient to show that Hamilton regarded knowledge as generic, containing under it two species, immediate and mediate. Of course, his mediate knowledge must be knowledge, or the terms are unmeaning and the reduction absurd.

In the second place, he affirmed the knowledge, through memory, of the past. This, in opposition to Reid, he denied to be immediate knowledge, and consequently admitted that there is a knowledge, a valid knowledge, which is not immediate. Let one explicit testimony suffice:

"We are said, for example, to know a past occurrence, when we represent it to the mind in an act of memory. We know the mental representation, and this we do immediately and in itself, and are also said to know the past occurrence, as mediately knowing it through the mental modification which represents it. Now, we are conscious of the representation as immediately known, but we cannot be said to be conscious of the thing represented, which, if known, is only known through its representation. If, therefore, mediate knowledge be in propriety a knowledge, consciousness is not co-extensive with knowledge."

Hamilton is obliged, in accordance with common sense, to allow a knowledge of the past through memory—a knowledge which is not immediate, for the events known are not phenomenal to consciousness. Any other view would be absurd in theory, and impossible in fact. If the past could not be known, the business of life, the relations of society and the processes of courts would be reduced to the category of the hypothetical. Past business contracts would be matters of surmise, a man at three score years and ten could only conjecture that he had had a wife and children, and a murderer would be hanged in consequence of a guess. To say that our own history is not an object of knowledge, because it is not now and here present in consciousness, would be to stultify the human intelligence, to subvert morality, and to represent the world as a lunatic asylum. It is true that Hamilton by a stubborn use of a technicality—

and this obstinacy has caused him to be greatly misunderstood and misstated—continually affirms the convertibility of knowledge with immediate knowledge; and yet he is ever compelled to admit a mediate knowledge. In this he is inconsistent with himself, and no expositor of his catholic views, who desires to do him justice, can avoid harmonizing him with himself by pointing out the view maintained by him in regard to knowledge as generic, including under it two specific forms of knowledge, immediate and mediate. That he should have assigned a pre-eminence to that which is immediate over that which is mediate, is one of the most serious defects of his philosophy. It was to exalt means above ends.

In the third place, Hamilton maintained a distinction between empirical and philosophical knowledge. Having illustrated the distinction, he thus recapitulates:

“There are two kinds and degrees of knowledge. The first is a knowledge that a thing is . . . and it is called the knowledge of the fact, historical or empirical knowledge. The second is a knowledge why or how a thing is . . . and is termed the knowledge of the cause, philosophical, scientific, rational knowledge.”

That he makes the latter kind of knowledge not only transcend sense-perception, and consciousness but *thought*, is evinced by the following passage with which the discussion of the distinction closes:

“Philosophy thus, as the knowledge of effects in their causes, necessarily tends, not towards a plurality of ultimate or first causes, but towards one alone. The first cause—the Creator—it can indeed never reach, as an object of immediate knowledge; but as the convergence towards unity in the ascending series is manifest, in so far as that series is within our view, and as it is even impossible for the mind to suppose the convergence not continuous

and complete, it follows—unless all analogy be rejected—unless our intelligence be declared a lie—that we must, philosophically, believe in that ultimate or primary unity, which, in our present existence, we are not destined in itself to apprehend.”

There are three things in this utterance that are noteworthy. First, that he allows of knowledge which is contradistinguished to immediate; secondly, that he affirms a knowledge which overpasses thought, since he steadily avers that we cannot *think* a Creator—a God; and thirdly, that he characterizes belief as a kind of knowledge—we have a philosophical knowledge of the “ultimate or primary unity” by believing in it.

In the fourth place, he ranks among the “cognitive faculties” that which he denominates the “regulative,” which he considers as the *locus principiorum*—the seat of the fundamental laws of thought and belief. These he sometimes characterizes as primary “cognitions,” and in one place while speaking of them says: “Being as primary, inexplicable; as inexplicable, incomprehensible, [they] must consequently manifest themselves less in the character of cognitions than of *facts*, of which consciousness assures us under the simple form of *feeling* or *belief*.” These roots of cognition develop themselves not alone in thought, but also in faith. It is manifest, then, that Hamilton assigned to the beliefs, actually springing from this cognitive root, the character of knowledge. Otherwise he would have contradicted himself at a point fundamental to his system.

In the fifth place, in expounding the “philosophy of the conditioned,” upon which he staked much of his reputation as a philosophical thinker, he lays down this law of positive thought: “All that is conceivable in

thought lies between two extremes, which, as contradictory of each other, cannot both be true, but of which, as mutual contradictories, one must." These mutual contradictories, as inconceivable, are, of course, inapprehensible by thought. Were thought the only power we possessed, we could not know even their existence. But, upon the principle of excluded middle, one of these unthinkable extremes must be true. Now, if we may be convinced that one of them is true, we must know the fact. How it could be to us true, without our knowing it to be true, it is impossible to see. The conclusion is irresistible that Hamilton held the inconceivable—the unthinkable, to be knowable. The limits of thought were not, to him, the limits of knowledge. While we cannot think the unconditioned, for to think is to condition, we may yet know it. How? He answers, By believing in it.

In the sixth place, he explicitly affirms our knowledge of God. "Mind," he observes, "rises to its highest dignity when viewed as the object through which, and through which alone, our unassisted reason can ascend to the knowledge of a God. The Deity is not an object of immediate contemplation; as existing and in himself, he is beyond our reach; we can know him only mediately through his works." Again he says: "We must believe in the infinity of God; but the infinite God cannot by us, in the present limitation of our faculties, be comprehended or conceived. A Deity understood would be no Deity at all; and it is blasphemy to say that God only is as we are able to think him to be. We know God according to the finitude of our faculties; but we believe

much that we are incompetent properly to know,"— [that is, to know *immediately*.]

Here we have Hamilton's doctrine of the cognoscibility of God. We cannot perceive, or conceive him. He is not thinkable. We are not conscious of him, and as he contends that "thought cannot transcend consciousness," he holds that God is not an object of thought, as he is infinite. In this he has the support of almost all theologians. But we know him mediately by faith—that is, our knowledge of him is inferential, *the inference being a special faith-judgment*, enforced by the fundamental laws of belief elicited into formal expression by the conditions of experience. What is peculiar to Hamilton's view is that this knowledge is not affirmed to be knowledge proper which he, I must think, arbitrarily confines to consciousness as the complement of internal and external perception. But whatever may have been his view in regard to the question of restricting the term *knowledge*, in rigid propriety of speech, to that which is immediate, he certainly admitted and maintained a knowledge of occult realities transcending the phenomenal sphere—of material substance, the soul, God and immortality. In a word, he was no agnostic, either professedly or by necessary implication; and—

In the seventh place, all doubt in regard to his position is removed, and his doctrine rendered conspicuously clear, by what he has said concerning the subject itself of the relativity of knowledge.

"Whatever we know," he remarks, "or endeavor to know, God or the world—mind or matter—the distant or the near—we know, and can know, only in so far as we possess a faculty of knowing

in general; and we can only exercise that faculty under the laws which control and limit its operations. However great, and infinite, and various, therefore, may be the universe and its contents—these are known to us, not as they exist, but as our mind is capable of knowing them.”

These considerations serve to show how wide is the difference between the views of Hamilton and those of Mr. Spencer. The latter limits the knowable to the thinkable, and therefore maintains that as the Infinite is unthinkable, it is unknowable. The former, while he too held that the Infinite is unthinkable, and, in that sense, unknowable, also maintained that the Infinite is believable, and, in that sense, knowable. In other words, while Hamilton denied that God can be immediately known, he affirmed that he is mediately known. We cannot know him, as infinite, by thought; we can, and do, by faith. He did not identify the thinkable and the knowable, and cannot, therefore, be regarded as logically responsible for the agnostic doctrine that God is altogether unknowable.

But with these explanations which a candid and impartial exposition of his doctrine requires it is to be regretted that so great a man as Hamilton, Christian philosopher as he was, should sometimes have asserted unqualifiedly that God, as infinite, is unknowable. It would have been better had he contented himself with maintaining that the Deity is not, as infinite, an object of consciousness, of conception, of thought—in a word, that he is not *comprehensible*. This would have been sufficient to have evinced his opposition to the doctrine of the German absolutists and of Cousin; and, in doing this, he would have been sustained by the decla-



rations of the sacred Scriptures and by the verdict of all true theology. In adhering to the employment of the term *unknowable* in application to the Infinite—to God, when his terminology was criticised by those who had not thoroughly grasped his meaning, he rendered himself liable to be misunderstood, and even misrepresented, by those who ought to have been his friends and supporters; a fact which has received an illustration in the hostile construction of his views by such writers as Dr. Henry Calderwood, Dr. James McCosh and Dr. Charles Hodge.

*Secondly*, in confounding the thinkable and the knowable, Mr. Spencer has made the prodigious philosophical blunder of restricting all knowledge within the confines of the thinking faculty. If the thinking faculty—the discursive, the comparative, the elaborative, the reasoning, faculty—is, in its operations, confined to the materials furnished by perception internal and external; if, to use Hamilton's language, "Thought cannot transcend consciousness," and there be no other faculty endowed with a higher power and possessed of a wider scope, it must be conceded that the incogitable would be the unknowable. This is Mr. Spencer's position, although we shall see as the discussion advances that in maintaining it he is inconsistent with himself. That there is a power or faculty—the name is immaterial—which passes beyond the limits of perception, which transcends consciousness, and soars beyond the flight of thought, I shall now endeavor to show. If this can be done, it will be proved that the thinkable does not exhaust the contents of the knowable—that we can know

what we cannot think. Reference is had to the believing faculty, or briefly, faith, containing implicitly the power to believe, and energizing explicitly into the special acts of belief or faith.

Belief or faith—the words will be used interchangeably—is, as the product of a power, an energy actually exerted, frequently complex. Its initial element is intellectual assent, and so far it is cognitive; but it often involves the feeling of trust, and sometimes an act of the will deliberately electing to concur with the assent of the understanding and the feeling of the heart. A student, engaged upon a geometrical theorem may assent to an axiom, with no consciousness of feeling. One may listen to a statement of fact with the same absence of emotion. But where one's personal interests are concerned the intellectual assent is colored by the feeling of reliance, and in case a struggle occurs between conflicting evidence and feelings the mental assent is accompanied by the election of the will as well as by the emotion of trust. It is almost needless to remark that the purport of the present discussion requires that our view be limited to that aspect of faith in which it is simply cognitive. The very question is, whether there be such a cognitive power as one of belief, and whether it evolves into actual knowledge.

In the first place, there is a powerful antecedent presumption in favor of the existence of such a faculty. Man is so helpless and dependent that his nature would seem to be left without sufficient provision for its wants, were it not warranted by its very constitution to believe in a power higher and greater than itself and than all

the forces which threaten it, to which it could appeal for help in distress, protection from danger and succor in need. Without such a faith, or at least without a tendency to it, the nature of man would be to him an insoluble puzzle. Reflection could only lead to the conclusion that it was either the product of chance, or had its origin in a malignant source. The case would be different were men able to defend themselves from evil by the exercise of sagacity and precaution. This, however, is not so. No amount of forethought, no acquaintance with physical forces, no mastery of science, and no knowledge of remedial agencies avail to ward off the visitation of calamity or the stroke of death. Could men help themselves, very few would suffer and die. It is no answer to this to say that men do suffer and die whether or not they believe in a Higher Power, for it might be that such a belief conditions the transmutation of suffering into happiness and death into life—a supposition actually confirmed by the Scriptures as a professed revelation from heaven.

This presumption is verified by the well-nigh universal experience of the race. No tribe of men, of whom we have any trustworthy account, has been destitute of some belief in a superior power—a belief which grounds a kind of natural religiousness. The fact that in some instances it is feeble and hardly appreciable, constitutes no objection to this view. Its feeble existence proves its existence. Reason is but little developed in some specimens of the human race, but who would argue from that fact that there are some tribes of men wholly devoid of reason? Were there no intelligence, there could be no

education. That all men are possessed of a belief—greater or less—in a superior power is admitted by Mr. Spencer himself in his account of the genesis and evolution of the religious sentiment. Concede that it begins in Fetichism, it begins. Fetichism, the evolutionist himself being judge, is but the expression of a feeling, a principle, a faith—call it what one may—which is native to the human breast. There is a natural tendency in men, growing out of or concurring with their helplessness and dependence to believe in some higher power able to bless or to curse. That fact proves the existence in man of a believing faculty. If not, the tendency has no cause.

In addition, it deserves remark that the ghosts, the other selves of the dead, which, according to Mr. Spencer, haunt burial places, hover about the abodes of the living, and become objects of worship to ignorant savages, are not perceived by them, but only believed in. Who ever really saw a human spirit? Who ever perceived one? Who, then, is able to think one? But these ignorant barbarians worship them as present. For what reason except that they believe in them? Imagine them they cannot, for imagination depends for its materials upon perception; nor can imagination combine those materials into a human spirit, for, confessedly, it is one and uncompounded. Even the physiological psychologist would hardly contend that he can create by fancy the image of a human soul; and what he cannot do it is not supposable that a Bushman could. The same is true, in a higher degree, if possible, of M. Compté's and Mr. Frederic Harrison's ideal humanity

as an object of worship. It is a pure abstraction. As such, it certainly cannot be perceived. Otherwise it would be an abstraction and a phenomenon at one and the same time. It must therefore be an object of faith. And so we have from all these writers an admission of the existence of faith as grounding the possibility of worship.

In the second place, there are things innumerable, the effects of which are matters of daily observation, that are utterly incomprehensible. They lie beyond the compass of perception, and therefore are unthinkable. And yet we are so profoundly convinced of their existence that we may be truly said to know it. No one has ever perceived the occult forces of nature, the effects of which he observes. Who has ever perceived gravity, or electricity, or magnetism, or chemical affinity? And yet can he doubt their existence? If he cannot perceive them, if he is not conscious of them as they are in themselves, he cannot think them. How, then, does he apprehend their existence? The answer is, by believing in it. What can we perceive of life itself? Nothing. Have we then no apprehension of it? We believe in it. In all these cases we know by believing. From the effects which are phenomenal we infer the forces themselves as their causes. That inference is simply a judgment of faith. There is no other way of accounting for our conviction of the unperceivable and incogitable reality. We are so constituted as to believe in existences which we cannot comprehend. What we are able to perceive of the universe, vast as it is, is but little compared with the immeasurable systems which we are convinced

stretch away beyond observation into boundless space. Why the conviction? We believe. We know because we believe. Have we, then, no faculty of faith?

To this it may be replied that we can *imagine* reaches of the stellar universe beyond the scope of perception. Certainly. But that imagination is only of objects analogous to those of perception, and constitutes no guarantee of their existence. The representations of the imagination assure us of corresponding objective realities, only when they reproduce in the images actual percepts. Otherwise, imagination gives only the possible. The imagination of worlds beyond the revelations of the telescope could never certify us of their real existence. But of that existence we are convinced. The conviction is the offspring of faith.

In the third place, the sciences, both the exact and the physical, begin, continue and end with faith.

Their fundamental principles are undemonstrated and indemonstrable. They are axiomatic pre-suppositions spontaneously suggested by the very constitution of our nature, which are necessarily accepted as the foundations and conditions of every process of thought. They are relied upon with the most perfect conviction of their truth; but if this conviction is not engendered by rational proof, if it is not the result of reasoning, there is but one other way of accounting for it, and that is, that it is a faith. By a necessity of our mental constitution we believe these indemonstrable principles to be true. Science begins with faith.

When, in accordance with these inspirations of nature, science has begun the exploration of the field of

phenomenal facts, the inquiry is never satisfied with the verification of existing hypothesis, the attainment of positive results. There follows each generalization that has been reached the belief that a further interrogation of nature will ensue in still higher and broader generalizations, with an increasing approximation to unity without which the quest of truth cannot be satisfied. It is faith in these future realizations that furnishes the stimulus to an unremitting investigation of phenomena. We push inquiry without fainting, because we have an abiding belief that it will conduct to further and grander results. As science begins, so it continues, with faith. Faith in future achievements is the prophecy of which the established conclusions of science are the fulfilment.

Nor is this all. It cannot be all. The constitution of our minds inexorably demands that we go on. The unappeasable principle of causality—a "questioning impulse," as Professor Tyndal interprets it, goads us on to the inquiry concerning origins and ends. We may, reflectively, but cannot, in fact, effect a schism between the one indivisible mind, as scientific, and as philosophical. The same man who has pursued a certain line of physical investigation, until he has secured a satisfactory registration of particular facts, and a somewhat complete grouping into classes and generalization into laws, cannot rest contented at this point. He inevitably raises the questions, *How?* and *Why?* the answers to which are expected to give the causes, efficient and final, of universal order and special adaptations. But when, under the constraint of this inborn necessity, he crosses the boundaries which circumscribe the domain of phe-

nomena, he abandons, *e concessio*, the instruction of perception and thought. He cannot perceive the unperceivable, he cannot think the unthinkable. He can neither perceive nor think the occult causes behind the veil of phenomena. What remains but that he acknowledge the guidance of faith—the only power which is the apocalypse of the unperceivable and incogitable? The forces, the power, the causes which by their phenomenal effects enforce the conviction of their existence are not data of consciousness, but postulates of faith.

So strong, indeed, as well as natural, is this tendency to believe that even when the facts of observation do not justify the conclusions of thought, it not unfrequently happens that scientific investigators themselves hasten to accept suppositions and imaginary results as though they had been proved, and pronounce established and axiomatic certain laws the existence of which may at the same time be mooted in the circles of science. In these cases, the disposition to believe is a temptation against which it behooves a sober judgment to guard. This is not rashly said: a volume might be filled with instances in illustration of the fact.

In the fourth place, the current of philosophical thought is more and more setting towards the assertion of faith as a cognitive power.

The emergence into notoriety of the common sense philosophy, as a system, has marked decided progress in the development of psychology. Appealing to consciousness as the basis of investigation, and respecting the convictions of the race, it treads a safe, middle path between the extreme of a transcendental absolutism on



the one hand, and that of a sensuistic associationalism on the other. One of the great offices which it has discharged is that it has brought into prominence, emphasized, and at least has begun the systematic development of what its most learned expounder has characterized as "the one perennial doctrine of philosophy"—a doctrine which has flowed like an unintermitting stream through centuries of fluctuating philosophical opinion until it has swelled into the volume of a majestic river. The sceptic, like Horace's rustic, has waited on its bank to see it dry up, but—

"Labitur, et labetur in omne volubilis ævum."

This doctrine is, that there lie at the very foundations of the mind as cognitive, original principles, in the shape of laws of thought and belief. To this fundamental faculty, this *locus principiorum*, the roots of every cognitive faculty converge, and from it are derived the life and vigor of them all. These general laws become, in relation to each power of cognition, special laws determining and regulating its processes—the generic regulative principles express themselves in application to the particular cognitive faculties, as specific standards in conformity with which the functions of each are performed. The representative faculty has its own peculiar laws lying at its root and necessitating and controlling the evolution of that kind of mediate knowledge which belongs to it. So is it with the thinking faculty: the laws of thought regulate its processes. And so, also, I must think, is it with a believing faculty, the results of which are determined by the laws of belief.

That identity, contradiction and excluded middle are fundamental laws of thought, few perhaps would deny. Why not also admit that space and duration, substance and cause are fundamental laws of belief? They abide, equally with the laws of thought, the application of the tests of ultimate principles. They are absolutely simple, self-evident, and necessary. If one must admit that a thing is the same as itself, that a thing is not that which is contradictory to it, that of two contradictories one must be true, the other false, he must also admit that objects exist in space, that events occur in time, that qualities infer a substance, and that phenomenal changes are due to causes. But as it is impossible to think space and duration, or to think substance and cause, they must be apprehended by belief. Apprehend them we most assuredly do. If not by the presentative faculty, and consequently not by the representative, if not by thought—for how can thought transcend the materials furnished by the presentative and representative faculties?—we postulate, we must have a power which accounts for the apprehension. There is no other which answers the demand but faith.

Let us take space as an example, concerning the existence of which in some way, either as an *ens rationis* or an *ens reale*, there is no dispute. It is conceded to be infinite. Now, either it is purely subjective, or it is objective. If subjective, it must in some manner qualify or modify the subject. But the subject is finite; and to affirm an infinite qualification, or modification, of a finite subject, would be to speak contradictorily. Is space, then, objective? If so, it is an infinite object.

How, then, is it apprehended by a finite subject? If we say that we think it, as to think is to condition, to limit, to comprehend, we say that the unconditioned is conditioned, the illimitable limited, the incomprehensible comprehended. Must we then deny all apprehension of space? It is, *ex hypothesi*, apprehensible in some way. Are we not shut up to the position that we apprehend it by faith?

It is not intended to say that the laws of belief are beliefs any more than to say that the laws of cognition are cognitions, or that the laws of thought are thoughts. These laws, however, are not mere abstract canons or rules; they are tendencies, energetic principles, necessities of cognizing, thinking, believing. It is not that we may, but we must, cognize, think, believe, in obedience to them.

If, then, there is a faculty by which we think in conformity with the laws of thought, one fails to see why there is not a faculty by which we believe in conformity with the laws of belief. The latter is as much a faculty of cognition as the former. If in actually complying with one law of cognition, we know, why not attain knowledge when we comply with another? Either the beliefs enforced by the laws of belief are delusive, or they are not. If delusive, they spring from fundamental principles which are deceptive, and our nature is radically false. If not, they are trustworthy knowledges. Our beliefs are the products and expressions of nature; they are among the springs of action and the guides of life, and if they are not entitled to the denomination of knowledge, our nature is an organ of de-

ceit; and as our nature is ourselves, it deceives itself, and is an engine of self-destruction. They are not presumptions, hypotheses, guesses; they are valid knowledges. It is not a presumption, or an hypothesis, or a guess on the part of a man that he was born of his mother. He knows it. But he cannot have known it by consciousness, or by thought, for thought cannot transcend consciousness. How can he know it except by faith in her testimony? He knows it by believing it. It may be said that it is a necessary inference from her acts. Granted; but her acts and her words are her testimony, and the inference from it to the fact is a faith-inference. Is it not faith that credits testimony?

The laws of belief are, upon the conditions of experience which are furnished by consciousness, elicited from latency, and find expression in special acts—inferences, convictions, judgments. What are these but exercises of faith? Why, then, refuse to faith the title of a faculty, and to its products the denomination of cognitions? It is as much entitled to this honor as is thought.

To this it may be objected that there would be an unnecessary multiplication of cognitive faculties. The questions then arise, Is it necessary, in any degree, to distinguish these faculties? And if so, is it necessary to rank faith as a distinctive faculty? It is superfluous to observe that no distinction of faculties supposes a division of the mind, considered essentially. As such it is one and indivisible. But with this essential unity there consists a distinction of attributes. In the general, cognition is not feeling, neither cognition nor feeling is

volition. The perception of the distinction between intellectual truth and intellectual error is not the same with that of the distinction between duty and crime. Hence it is legitimate to distribute the generic faculties in accordance with peculiar properties which obviously differentiate them from each other. So, narrowing the view, it is with the cognitive faculty itself. Perception is not imagination. In the one case, we immediately apprehend objects; in the other, we represent them. Memory represents the past; imagination does more; it images the distant, the possible, the future. There is consequently a distinction which cannot be refused between the representative functions of the memory, and some of those belonging to the imagination. Again, thought differs from perception and representation. It is marked off from them by a peculiar property. The usual sub-distribution of these cognitive powers is therefore justifiable, not merely for convenience sake, but because grounded in fact. Now it is evident that faith is a cognitive conviction that is different from the product of any of the faculties that are usually denominated cognitive, and if that be true, the power which produces so peculiar a conviction, deserves, on that account, to be assigned a distinct and coördinate place among the cognitive faculties.

That there is such a characteristic property belonging to faith the common usage of language attests. If the demand be pressed for a designation of the differentiating attribute, I would answer that it is intellectual assent *grounded upon testimony*. The peculiar conviction accompanying this assent would seem to be an im-

mediate and necessary inference from the testimony cognized to the truth of what is testified to. It is sometimes said that we believe in the existence of an object of which we are conscious—that is, of an object immediately known; and sometimes that we believe in the truth of a proposition established by reasoning—that is, one mediately known through the comparative process of the thinking faculty. And it may be argued that belief is too wide and ambiguous to constitute a differentiating property. But a careful analysis may reveal two things. First, that this language is not loosely or abusively employed; and, secondly, that faith, while a particular power, sustains a catholic relation to all our cognitive operations.

When by consciousness we immediately know the existence of an object, it is not that at one and the same time we directly know it by faith. The knowledge through consciousness and the conviction through faith are not identical. Faith assents to the testimony of consciousness, and immediately and necessarily infers the fact testified to. It is not its office primarily to give us the fact. This is the office of consciousness. But may we not be deceived? The danger is destroyed by our believing the testimony of consciousness.<sup>1</sup> If the question be pressed, Why believe that testimony? The answer is, that consciousness is the voice of nature, and nature the product of God. The testimony of conscious-

<sup>1</sup>I interpret Dr. Reid to mean this, when he says that we *believe* in the external world as immediately known by Perception. We do not directly know it by believing in it. We immediately know it by perceiving it. But we have a faith-conviction of the truth of the immediate perception.

ness is the testimony of God. The ultimate ground of assent, therefore, is the veracity of God. If our nature, in its normal and unperverted condition, deceives us, God its author deceives us. From a conclusion so shocking all but atheists would recoil. Here we must rest. To go further is to raise the question of the divine existence.

The same course of reasoning will apply to the conclusions of the thinking faculty in its regular condition. It expresses the nature, which reflects the truth of its Maker. We believe in its conclusions, not because faith actually does the thinking, but because we are so constituted that we assent to the testimony of the discursive faculty, as, in its just operations, uttering the testimony of God.

The same is also true in regard to memory. I am constrained to accept Sir William Hamilton's exposition of its operation as correct. The past event is out of relation to consciousness—the faculty of immediate knowledge. We are not conscious of it. But it is represented by a mental modification vicarious of it. This representation we immediately know by consciousness, and mediately know the event itself. Now, what is the nature of this mediate knowledge? Why are we convinced that the event really occurred? We *believe* the testimony of the ideal representation. So strong is this faith that it has sometimes been put into the category of intuitive evidence. That is, we entertain a conviction of the reality of the past event, analogous to that we experience when we have an immediate intuition or perception of an object. It is this which grounds the sub-

jective certainty of our own history. And in addition to this, it may here be remarked, we believe in our personal identity. We know by faith that we at fifty years of age are the very same persons who performed certain acts at twenty. To say that we are conscious of our past personality, or that we immediately know it in memory, is to contradict the laws of immediate knowledge. Our conviction of personal identity is an indestructible faith.

Whether or not we believe in the occurrence of *future* events ideally anticipated by the imagination depends upon the question whether they are imagined as merely possible or not. If as merely possible, we do not and cannot believe in their certain occurrence. If we believe, it is on the ground that their occurrence is made certain either by the operation of necessary laws or by the prophetic declarations of an omniscient Being, immediately or mediately made. In either case we repose faith in testimony; in the former, in the testimony of nature, which is indirectly the testimony of its author; in the latter, in the admitted testimony of God, verbally imparted.

The analysis has been pursued far enough to show that faith is fundamental and radical, sustaining to the operation of all our cognitive powers the relation of an ultimate guarantee of their truth. The authority of consciousness is final, because believed. The senses are treated as veracious witnesses, because believed. The representations of memory are relied upon, because believed. The processes of the thinking faculty are dependent on, because believed. Take away faith in the



operations of our cognitive powers and there would remain no ultimate certitude of human knowledge. Even Hume, the desolator, who attempted to abolish all human beliefs, believed in the uniformity of nature, and the invariableness of antecedence and sequence! Without such a faith, to what would his celebrated argument against the credibility of miracles amount? No; faith is too deeply imbedded in our constitution to be cast out. It is nature, and cannot be expelled:

“Naturam expelles furca, tamen usque recurret,  
Et mala perrumpet furtim fastidia victrix.”

What has thus far been said has gone to show that faith is one of the cognitive powers sustaining a catholic relation to every other as a voucher for the knowledge which it imparts. Were this the place to suggest a distribution of the cognitive powers, I would say that the reason or intelligence, as the generic faculty of cognition, may be distributed specifically into the faculties of immediate and mediate knowledge. Of the former, the presentative faculty—consciousness, as the complement of internal and external perception, is the exhaustive instance. The faculties of mediate knowledge may be subordinately distributed into the representative,<sup>1</sup> the thinking, and the believing faculties.

<sup>1</sup> The Memory is here included under the denomination, Representative. To this it may be objected that the Conservative Function of Memory is not representative. But the question is, What is conserved, or retained? The answer must be, I conceive, a representation of the past fact. I hold, with the Scottish School, that an external object is perceived, not through an ideal image, but immediately. The object, however, when thus intuitively apprehended, strikes an impression of itself upon the mind, by which

At the root of each lie the laws peculiar to it: the laws of representation, those of thought, and those of belief.

In the fifth place, the ground may be at least very plausibly maintained that in what is called intuitive evidence, the immediate inference by which it proceeds is one which is drawn, not by thought, but by faith. The element of comparison is absent, which is confessed to exist as conditioning every conclusion arrived at by the thinking faculty. The inference is not made by consciousness, or by the imagination, for it is not their province to infer. To what power, then, can the immediate inference which characterizes intuitive evidence be referred but faith?

In the sixth place, a very large part of human knowledge is derived from testimony—external, objective testimony; and faith is precisely the organ by which it is received. This is the very ground of historical knowledge. Remove it, and history is converted into a tissue of fables. To say that this is belief and not knowledge is to trifle with the subject. The testimony of veracious witnesses is a ground of knowledge valid enough to justify the hanging of a man. It would be absurd to say that the witnesses knew the fact in question, but the jury only believed. The fallacy is dissipated by the it is represented. This representation is latent beneath consciousness, until by the operation of certain laws (Suggestion, Association, etc.) it is caused to emerge into consciousness. Either this, or Presentative knowledge continues after the presentative relation has ceased, and the object presented has vanished from the sphere of objective reality—at least, to the human mind; and to this difficulty another must be added—namely, that a presentative knowledge may exist which is confessedly out of consciousness, the presentative faculty.

distinction between immediate and mediate knowledge. The witnesses immediately, the jury mediately, knew the fact.

In the seventh place, it may be briefly observed that credulity, as the exaggeration and abuse of faith, is at the same time its proof, for that which has no existence cannot be exaggerated or abused. The philosophical skeptic is no more free from credulity than the religious. To a group of his officers, whom he overheard talking in an infidel strain, the great Napoleon is reported to have said, "Gentlemen, there is nothing you will not believe but Christianity." And to the agnostics it might be said, "Gentlemen, there is nothing you will not believe but faith." To deny the existence of faith one would be obliged to deny that he believed anything; for if there were anything he believed, he would contradict his negation. If it be replied that what has been said only serves to prove a feeling of faith and not a cognition, the rejoinder is easy, that he who indulges the feeling without a rational ground for it, confesses to the weakest form of credulity.

In the eighth place, arguments have been presented, up to this point, to show that faith, as to its nature, is a cognitive power, entitled to a coördinate place among the faculties denominated cognitive, and, as to its office, it has been evinced that it acts as a voucher, *confirming* the testimony of the other faculties. I have thus endeavored to prove that, in confounding the thinkable and the knowable, Mr. Spencer has committed the mistake of restricting knowledge within the confines of the thinking faculty; but to be complete the argument must

proceed one step further. It behooves to be shown that faith discharges another and a distinctive office—that of *originating* knowledge which it is beyond the competency of the other cognitive powers to furnish. They are confined, in their operations to the phenomenal sphere. This is transparently clear with reference to the presentative and representative faculties; but it may be doubted whether it holds good of the faculty of thought. For example, in those instances in which thought forms general notions, in consequence of its power to apprehend abstract truth, it may be supposed that it passes beyond the sphere of the phenomenal. A distinction is here necessary to be taken: between the products of thought alone, which are used in arguments, and the products of another power, which are so used; for there are elements in reasoning which are in themselves unthinkable, and, therefore, incomprehensible. Wherever notions of space, cause, substance and the infinite enter into the composition of arguments, it must be remembered that they do not originate in thought. In what power they originate, it is the purpose of the ensuing argument to show. The man is one and indivisible, and when his knowledge which transcends thought is communicated to the thinking faculty, it is employed by that faculty symbolically; just as, in an equation,  $x$  may stand for a number or quantity, which it is impossible to think.

But these abstract notions—what are they? and how are they generated? Let us take an example. Here is a promiscuous collection of white and black men. They are separated into two companies, classes, of white men

and of black men. What is the principle of division and classification? The resemblance between individuals. How is that resemblance grounded? Upon the quality of color—some are white, some are black. The quality of color is, we say, abstracted: we form an abstract notion of whiteness and of blackness. What is the explanation? The phenomenal quality, white color, or black color, is perceived to inhere in a certain individual; another individual is observed to have a like phenomenal quality. They are classed together. The abstract notion here is simply the apprehension of a particular quality which belongs respectively to different individuals—a single circumstance with a common relation. It is manifest that the sphere of the phenomenal has not been overpassed. The same is true of the qualities of beauty and ugliness, as determined by the laws of the æsthetical faculty; but the case appears to be different in regard to the qualities of power, virtue, and the like. We perceive their effects in certain individuals and are, therefore, able to think the effects; but we cannot perceive power and virtue in themselves. To say, then, that we think them is to concede to thought the ability to transcend consciousness. What we call the abstract notions of power and virtue, are inferences from phenomenal effects, and are due to a faculty which transcends thought.

In fine, thought, in its elaborations, its comparisons, its judgments, uses the materials supplied by the presentative and the representative faculties, and they are phenomenal in their character. The elements which are constitutive of its processes are concepts, and they

are percepts represented, and employed in thought-relations.

What, then, is that power which transcends the phenomenal sphere, and affirms existence, which thought is incompetent to give? Let us take the apprehension of the infinite. That, as an extreme apprehension, involving all lower ones of a transcendental character, is suited to be a test. Mr. Spencer admits, as we have seen, the apprehension of the infinite. Now there are, to my mind, but four conceivable suppositions as to the way in which it can be apprehended: either, first, by the negative protest of thought; or, secondly, by the imagination; or, thirdly, by what Mr. Spencer terms "indefinite consciousness"; or, fourthly, by faith.

*First.* The negative protest of thought. By this it is meant—if it mean anything, which is very doubtful—that thought having, in its *nisus*, reached the highest concept possible to it, denies all limitation of that concept, and thus in a negative way suggests at least the possibility of the infinite. A great writer remarks:

“It is a saying of the Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite—and it has generally been accepted as a sufficient indication of the truth—that in ascending from the creature to God we proceed by the method of causality, of negation, and of eminence. In the way of causality I am constrained to affirm that every perfection which is contained in the effect was previously contained in the cause. But as the perfections of the creature exist under many limitations and conditions which are inconsistent with the notion of the Infinite, I am led in the way of negation to remove those restrictions and defects, and to posit the perfections in the abstract. Then by the way of eminence I strive to represent these perfections as expanded even to infinity. Thought struggles to magnify, until it sinks back upon itself exhausted in the effort.”

Well, one cannot help asking, if it sinks back exhausted in the struggle to reach the infinite, how, in the name of reason, does it ever reach it? It stops infinitely short of it, but in some unaccountable way gets to it. There is still another difficulty. All limitation is thought away from perfections, and thus unlimited they are posited in the abstract. Is not this as near the infinite as thought can come? But this becomes the starting point for an exhausting effort to expand the perfections to infinity. One is reminded of the frog in the fable, who expanded himself until he burst—and that was the end of the expanding process.

This criticism is passed upon the foregoing statement, only if it be viewed as describing the way in which *thought* is supposed to reach the infinite. The very first step, in the way of causality,<sup>1</sup> is one which the thinking faculty could not take, for cause itself cannot be conceived. It is a datum of faith. If the process is considered as one in which thought and faith are co-factors, it not unreasonably commended itself to general acceptance.

The most serious difficulty attending this mode of reaching the apprehension of the infinite is that a power is ascribed to thought, which it is at the same time granted, that it does not possess. The supposition is that thought has arrived at the climax of its efforts, that it has formed a concept beyond which it can no further go. It then denies to that concept all limitation. The question arises, What right, what ability, has it to make the denial? It has gone as far as it possibly can, and

<sup>1</sup> Some writers give the way of causality (*via causalitatis*) as the last.

then goes vastly further; for the denial of limitation is tantamount to the assertion of illimitation—that is, to a positive affirmation of infinity. If the challenge be made, upon what ground is the negative protest based? the answer must be, Either, there is *no* ground, and the protest being conceded to be groundless, is zero; or, there is *some* ground, and then it is claimed that thought has some knowledge beyond its highest and ultimate concept, and a contradiction ensues. The right of thought to deny limitation upon its ultimate concept is not original; it is borrowed from faith. The statement is elliptical; the faith-element is left out. Thought stops at a point beyond which it can make no predication whatsoever, and faith adds the protest against limitation.

*Secondly.* Imagination. This is easily disposed of. Imagination has, indeed, a distant flight, but it cannot outsoar its own wing. If finite substance and power cannot be imagined, it is certain that infinite cannot; and as to the phenomenal universe itself, all that imagination can do is to grasp the skirt of the infinite. No essence can be imaged, nor can any image compass the material universe. Infinitely less can the infinite be imaged.

*Thirdly.* Indefinite Consciousness. Mr. Spencer's doctrine is that we are indefinitely conscious of the infinite, and that it is, at the same time, unknowable. This is extraordinary. One may use terms in a signification peculiar to himself; but unless Mr. Spencer is greatly misunderstood, he employs the term consciousness in its usual acceptation. He holds that we know



phenomena by consciousness. He does not even make Reid's distinction between consciousness, as the power by which we know internal phenomena; and perception, as that by which we know those that are external. Now it is obvious that there may be a difference of degree in the clearness or definiteness of our conscious knowledge of phenomenal existences; but it is impossible to see how an indefinite consciousness is consistent with the total absence of knowledge. Some consciousness, some knowledge—this would seem to be incontrovertible. If, therefore, we have some consciousness—and an indefinite consciousness is some consciousness—of the infinite, it would follow that we have some knowledge of it. How, then, can it be unknowable?

Either Mr. Spencer does not limit consciousness to the apprehension of the phenomenal, internal and external, or he does. If he does not, he has no right to employ the term in a sense which would be utterly paradoxical, one in the adoption of which he would break with catholic usage. If he does, he is obliged to acknowledge that the infinite is phenomenal. That would be to outrage common sense, and also to contravene his own position that the infinite is unknowable precisely because it is not phenomenal. Further, if we are indefinitely conscious of the infinite, we have an indefinite immediate knowledge of it, and since immediate knowledge conditions thought, we would be able indefinitely to think the infinite, and that would contradict Mr. Spencer's doctrine that it is wholly unthinkable, and, therefore, wholly unknowable.

If, by indefinite consciousness, Mr. Spencer means

belief, he uses his terms not only loosely, but abusively; but, on that supposition, he partially enounces the doctrine contended for in this discussion—only partially, it is true, for while he would hold an indefinite belief in the infinite, a definite belief in it is here maintained; and while he refuses to call that belief knowledge, it is here claimed to be knowledge, not immediate, but, although mediate, yet valid, significant, priceless.

The conclusion is that Mr. Spencer's "indefinite consciousness" is incompetent to account for the apprehension of the infinite; and yet it must be borne in mind that he admits the existence of the infinite, and was, therefore, compelled to assign some cause for its apprehension.<sup>1</sup>

*Fourthly.* Faith. If all the suppositions which are possible in the case have been shown to be untenable but this one, it is entitled to be accepted as true. It has already been evinced that there are at the bottom of our mental constitution, considered as cognitive, certain fundamental laws of thought and belief, just as there are at the root of the feelings laws of taste, of the will laws of efficiency and choice, and of the conscience laws of morality or rectitude. Some of the laws of belief have already been specified, and it is now added that among them is the law of belief in the infinite. These laws in the first instance—in their connate, primitive condition, are latent beneath consciousness, and are only elicited into definite, formal expression as actual

<sup>1</sup> In this discussion I have hitherto employed the term *apprehension* in relation to the infinite, as less ambiguous than *notion*, or *idea*. It is the most general term that can be used.

beliefs, upon the conditions furnished by conscious experience. They are aptitudes, tendencies, necessities, which as laws regulate the processes of the believing faculty, and when empirically developed enforce the formation of specific beliefs. These beliefs, as cognitive, as formal knowledges, are justly characterized as native notions, for the reason that they are the educts of native principles, and not the products merely of experience. I proceed to show that the apprehension, the cognition, of the infinite, is one of these native notions, evolved, through empirical conditions, from the fundamental law of belief in the infinite. It is original, not derivative.

In the first place, it is simple and ultimate. It is perfectly clear that it is not composite, and, therefore, cannot be resolved into anything simpler. Supposing the existence of the infinite, it is granted *ex vi termini* that it is one, simple, indivisible. So, likewise, must be the notion of the infinite. It is impossible to analyze into anything more simple and ultimate either the infinite itself or its apprehension.

In the second place, it is self-evident. It is certain that the notion exists. How, then, did it originate? Manifestly not in any process of thought. The infinite is not a percept; it is not an image; it is not a concept; it is not proved by reasoning—it is not thought out. It is, therefore, autopistic and self-evident; it reveals itself in its own light.

In the third place, it is characterized by necessity.

The first proof of this, which I urge, is derived from the necessity of believing in space. It is very generally

admitted to be infinite. "To set bounds to space," says Dr. Samuel Clarke in his answer to Butler's Sixth Letter, "is to suppose it bounded by something which itself takes up space, and that is a contradiction: or else that it is bounded by nothing; and then the idea of that nothing will still be space, which is another contradiction." "Space," says Kant, "is represented as an infinite quantity," and Hamilton observes: "We are altogether unable to conceive space as bounded—as finite; that is, as a whole beyond which there is no further space." As, then, we cannot deny space, we cannot deny the infinite; for if we believe in space as infinite, we believe in the infinite, else we believe and do not believe in the infinite at the same time. In fine, the necessity of believing in space involves the necessity of believing in the infinite. The notion of the infinite is, therefore, native.

The same is true of the necessity of believing in duration. Like space, it is admitted to be infinite. The notion, or faith-judgment, of the infinite, as evolved from an original law of belief is necessary, and therefore native. It is a common verbal mistake to coördinate space and time. Space is infinite, and, strictly speaking, time is finite. The antithesis is between place and time, on the one hand, as being both finite, and space and duration, on the other, as being both infinite. We *think* place as a part of space, and time as a part of duration. These thought-judgments, derived from conscious experience, become the conditions upon which are elicited from laws of belief faith-judgments in infinite space and infinite duration—in other words, in immensity and eternity.

A second proof is drawn from the general prevalence of belief in the infinite.

In the first place, to establish the necessity of this belief, it is not requisite to prove its *absolute* universality. It may be conceded that it is not developed among certain rude and savage tribes, and it must be admitted that in some schools of philosophic and scientific speculation it has been denied. Investigation into the condition of the former more and more, as it proceeds, is evincing the fact that in every tribe of men, however degraded, there exists a belief in a superior power.<sup>1</sup> This constitutes a potential germ from which the belief in the infinite is inevitably developed, whenever the affirmation of the infinite is distinctly made. Reason and conscience are developed from a condition in which at first they seem scarcely to be in existence; but it would be mere sophistry to argue that they are not connatural elements of the human constitution. In regard to the denial of a belief in the infinite by certain speculators, it is sufficient to say that the exception proves the rule. The acknowledgment of the infinite has been imbedded in the theosophies involved in Oriental religions, in the philosophies of Greece and Rome, and pervades the thought of the Christian centuries. It deserves to be remarked that the denial of the infinite has been made principally by those who were acquainted with the Bible and the doctrines of Christianity. For this there is a profound reason. Besides the tendency of certain minds to throw themselves into opposition to accepted dogmas, and even to traverse the general con-

<sup>1</sup> Upon this point, see Mr. Tylor's *Primitive Culture*.

victions of mankind—a contradictoriness which can only be accounted for by referring it to pride and the love of reputation—it cannot be overlooked that the admission of the infinite by one who knows the Bible and Christianity would carry with it the admission of an infinite lawgiver, ruler and judge, and of the infliction of punishment upon the transgressors of his law. Neither his father nor himself, John Stuart Mill informs us, was a dogmatic atheist. The God, whose existence they denied, was one of retributive justice. This fact speaks volumes. It is typical and representative. Take away infinite justice and eternal retribution, and it is more than likely that not only would denial of the infinite cease, but skepticism in regard to the existence of an infinite God. Why not? A key to the perplexing problems of the universe would be found, and men would hasten to place themselves under the protecting wing of boundless philanthropy and power; but whatever may be thought of this, the class who deny the infinite are numerically too insignificant to be taken into account in an estimate of the convictions of the human race. Mr. Spencer himself, the great exponent of the current agnostic philosophy, does not belong to that class—he admits the infinite.

In the second place, the well-nigh universal employment of the term *infinite* argues the necessity of a belief in its existence. Either this, or the term is an unmeaning cipher, and the language in which it is used is mere jargon. Words symbolize things: this word must, therefore, signify something. Nor will it do to say that nothing more is meant than the indefinite; for language

itself notes a distinction between the indefinite and the infinite—that is, to be more explicit, between the unlimited and the illimitable, between that which is not limited and that which cannot be limited. In addition to this, it may be doubted whether thought alone can give the indefinite, whether it does not always give only the definite. If so, it is the province of faith to give both the indefinite and the infinite.

In the third place, the terms *finite* and *infinite* are correlatives. Granted the validity of the one, that of the other is conceded. Hamilton, in his *Critique of Cousin's Philosophy*, denies the justness of this position. He contends that the reality of the finite does not involve the reality of the infinite. As one of these terms is, in thought, the negation of the other, instead of the reality of the infinite being suggested, it may be denied. The correlation does not necessitate "correality"; but this only holds good when the terms are used in regard to the same thing. It would be a contradiction to say that the same thing is finite and infinite; but there is no contradiction when, of different things, it is affirmed, that one is finite and the other infinite.

In the next place, even in the sphere of thought correlatives involving a negation of one of the members do not always suppose the non-existence of the member to which the negative is attached. Socrates as husband, and Xanthippe as wife are correlatives; but to affirm that Socrates was not Xanthippe would certainly not be to deny the existence of the latter. It is clear that even the negation would suppose her existence. Further, of the correlatives finite and infinite, one member of the

relation is supplied by thought, the other by faith. Hamilton was right in asserting, against Cousin, that the concept finite does not suggest or imply the concept infinite; but he was, to my mind, wrong in not admitting that the concept finite is the correlative of the faith-notion infinite, and that the reality of the finite involves the reality of the infinite. Had he done this he would have carried out his own doctrine touching the mode in which we know the infinite—namely, mediately by faith. Cousin was wrong in maintaining that in thinking the finite we think the infinite. He would have been right had he held that the finite as thought suggests the infinite as believed.

These considerations are sufficient to show that the cognition of the infinite is a native notion, elicited by the conditions of experience from an original and fundamental law of belief.

It is not necessary to the purpose of this particular discussion to go further, and evince the existence of fundamental laws of belief, enforcing a special faith in an infinite being, who is a person and a cause; although that, I conceive, might be done. All that the argument in hand demanded was the establishment of such a law and such a faith in relation to the infinite, for the reason that it was designed to disprove the assertion of Mr. Spencer that the infinite, as being out of relation to our cognitive faculties, is unknowable.

In the last place, the *argumentum ad hominem* may be still further pressed against Mr. Spencer, on the ground of his admission that the forces of nature are knowable. Science claims to be knowledge, as the very



etymology of the term implies; but the scientific man does not limit his knowledge to the mere phenomenal facts, cognized by sense-perception. How, then, does he know occult force which is beyond the reach of perception and reveals itself only by phenomenal, perceivable effects? If he says that he does not know it, he admits his ignorance of gravity, electricity, magnetism and chemical affinity; he would abdicate the seat of science. If he says that he does know it, although unperceivable and therefore unthinkable, he gives up his position; for if we may know any force, albeit not a datum of thought, we may know infinite force. Nor can Mr. Spencer refuse the inference, inasmuch as he reduces all special forces to unity upon a universal force, which he designates as an "infinite and eternal energy."

The argument must here close. It has been shown that, though the infinite, as such, is out of relation to thought, it is in relation to faith; and as it has been proved that faith is one of the cognitive powers of the human mind, the infinite is knowable.

What remains to be said must be remitted to a discussion in general of the doctrine of agnosticism.

## THE ARGUMENT FOR THE BEING OF GOD FROM OUR COGNITIVE NA- TURE.

---

IT is one of the most amazing features of the history of our race that the question in regard to the fact of God's existence should ever have been raised. It is a mournful proof of the folly and impiety to which sin has reduced mankind. One feels like making an apology beforehand for discussing the question. Yet it is conceivable that unfallen intelligences would take delight in reflectively demonstrating the spontaneous faith in God's existence, which is the necessary product of their nature. And, further, the question is forced upon us in our fallen condition in consequence of the denial of the divine existence by the atheist, and of the competency of its proofs by the positivist and the agnostic.

The view of the argument is just, which some writers propound, that it is not so much a demonstration of the divine existence as originally a doubtful and debatable fact, as it is an exposition and defence of our spontaneous faith in the fact; or rather, that it is the reflective construction of the spontaneous processes by which the native tendency to believe in the divine existence is developed into actual faith. It is, from this point of view, vindicated against the position, maintained by some, that it is gratuitous, if not irreverent.

The argument, in its completeness, involves proofs from every source—from the whole world within us and the whole world without us. Everything has a tongue that proclaims the being of God, and the union of these tongues makes a chorus of unbroken and perfect harmony. The result is a mighty testimony of concurrent witnesses combined into indivisible unity.

The chief purpose of these remarks is to show that the *a priori* and the *a posteriori* arguments constitute one joint and inseparable argument for the existence of God. They are complementary to each other, interdependent and incapable of disjunction. The argument for one God behooves to be itself one. The proofs, like globules of quicksilver running into one mass, or tributaries emptying into a great river, flow together and coalesce in one powerful demonstration.

It is not unusual to state these arguments, *a priori* and *a posteriori*, as each possessed of individual completeness. This occasions the discussion of each upon its own separate merits, and the result has been to impeach the validity of each. This is especially evinced in the tendency so common in recent times to discredit what is called the *a priori* or ontological argument. It is said that Kant gave it its death-blow. This is the consequence of confusion in the estimation of the force of the whole argument for the divine existence. Each line of proof, the *a priori* and the *a posteriori*, is sound and tenable *up to its measure*. There are two extremes to be avoided. One is to consider each, by itself, as sufficient and conclusive; the other, to regard the *a priori* element as possessed of no force in the general con-

struction of the argument. The truth is, that each brings its own valuable contribution to the whole demonstration; each is absolutely indispensable to the development of the other, and both in conjunction to the integrity of the argument. In a word, they are not two arguments; they are but one. It cannot be too frequently or too urgently insisted upon that the judgments of thought and those of faith combine in the structure of the proof as a whole.

There are two statements of the import of these arguments, neither of which lies beyond criticism. The first is, that the argument *a priori* is one from cause to effect; the argument *a posteriori* is one from effect to cause. The second is, that the former is one from our fundamental intuitions; the latter is from effect to cause.

The first of these statements is at once attractive and deceptive on account of the apparently accurate antithesis which it presents. One member exactly matches the other. There is simply an inversion of order, first from cause to effect, then from effect to cause. But it is too narrow in both members. The argument *a priori* is not confined to one fundamental law of our constitution; it is derived from many of its fundamental laws. The argument *a posteriori* is not alone from effect to cause, but from the conditions of experience, whatever they may be, upon which our fundamental laws are developed into formal expression—so far as they are related to the subject of the divine existence. The argument is not merely from effects, but, in the general, from phenomenal facts.

The second of these statements is not liable to the

charge of being too narrow in respect to its first member. It correctly represents the argument as derived from our fundamental laws. It is open to objection, however, in regard to that first member, in that it characterizes those laws as intuitions. The term *intuitions* is too ambiguous to be employed in a statement so sharply formal. It is very often used to signify the perceptions of objects presentatively given. The meaning, as here used, is that of fundamental laws of our mental constitution, and that phraseology or one equivalent to it should be adopted. The second member, namely, that the *a posteriori* argument is from effect to cause, is liable to the criticism passed upon the second member of the first statement. It is too narrow. This can be easily illustrated. We have a fundamental law of belief in substance and property. If now, reasoning merely from effect to cause, we legitimately attain to the First Cause, the process is inadequate. We must also conclude from property to substance in favor of a First Substance. The two sorts of argument, as complementary to each other, are necessary to give us the First Substance, who is the First Cause. Other illustrations of the same thing will be supplied in the development of the argument.

The statement, as I conceive, ought to be: *The argument for the existence of God is derived from the fundamental laws of our constitution in connection with the facts of experience.*

Here each element, the *a priori* and the *a posteriori*, is given, but in its due proportion and under its necessary limitations. Particularly let it be noticed that

there is no denial of the *a priori* element as a constituent of the argument as a whole. On the contrary, its force is admitted, under proper restrictions. Indeed, it is conceded to be the basis of the argument, but it cannot complete it without the conditions of conscious observation. Both elements go to constitute the totality of the argument, to bring it into the unity of one great whole—a finished demonstration.

The order of these respective elements is: the fundamental laws, or pure *a priori* principles, are first as to existence, but out of consciousness; the conditions of experience, the *a posteriori* elements, are second in the order of existence, but first in consciousness; then there follow, thirdly, conscious faith-judgments, formally expressing the fundamental laws as developed upon empirical conditions. I proceed to consider—

#### THE ARGUMENT FROM OUR COGNITIVE NATURE.

1. First in order comes the fundamental law of *existence*. It can hardly be disputed that there is such a law: an aptitude, tendency, necessity, constitutional predisposition, to believe in existence, and to affirm it. This emerges into consciousness upon conditions of experience. We perceive, or are conscious of, the effects of existence, and by an immediate and necessary inference we form a faith-judgment in existence itself. The question of the kind of existence is determined by other laws as developed from latency by experience. For instance, the famous aphorism of Descartes, *Cogito, ergo sum*, although brief, is easily separable into two parts. First, from thought, as a phenomenal fact de-

livered by consciousness, the inference is immediate and necessary to a thinking subject which exists. Secondly, the judgment that this thinking subject is I depends on another law, that of personality. Since the phenomenon of thought is subjective, it is necessarily inferred, in accordance with that law, that it is myself that is the subject phenomenally manifested. The two inferences are practically inseparable, but they may be reflectively disjoined. So with many of our formal judgments.

This fundamental law of existence is in itself incapable of conducting us to God, but it is the starting point of the process which does. We must begin with it. Howe and Clarke commence their arguments with the assumption that something now exists. The arguments of Anselm, Descartes, Leibnitz, and Cousin start with the same indispensable assumption.

2. The argument from the fundamental law of *causality* to a First Cause. Whether this be a fundamental law of belief is a question which cannot here be considered. I have discussed it in a criticism of Sir W. Hamilton's theory of causation. Nor can the question whether the relation of cause and effect be one involving production or merely one of antecedence and sequence be now undertaken. It is assumed, in accordance with the convictions of the race, that cause implies producing power.

As soon as the law of causality begins to be elicited into expression by conscious experience we begin to form the faith-judgments: that every perceivable existence, and every change which occurs, must have had

a cause. This argument from cause may be presented in two forms:

(1.) From the *contingency* and *changeableness* of the world to a necessary First Cause. That the parts of the world are contingent and changeable is proved by consciousness and observation. What is true of all the parts is true of the whole. Whatsoever is contingent and changeable began. If the world began, it had a cause which began it. This cause must have been either in itself or out of itself. If in itself, the world spontaneously began. This is out of the question. The cause must therefore have been out of itself. This cause must have necessary existence. Were it contingent, we would have the same regression in quest of a necessary being which was its cause. But a regression of the contingent to infinity is self-contradictory. We attain to a necessary First Cause of the world. There are specious objections urged against the validity of this argument.

First. The position is challenged that there is conclusive proof of the contingency and changeableness of the world. It is contended that while the phenomenal manifestations of matter are contingent and changeable, its substance is not. Substantially considered, matter is eternal. But matter cannot be eternal, for—

In the first place, it is not infinite. It is certain that some matter is finite. If so, no matter can be infinite, since we would have infinite matter plus finite, which is a contradiction.

In the second place, if matter is not infinite, it cannot be eternal, for only that which is infinite can be



eternal. If it be said that matter may be infinite in one respect, namely, duration, without being infinite in all respects; the answer is, that this involves an absurdity, for matter would be partly infinite and partly finite. That is contradictory to our apprehension of infinity as a perfect and indivisible totality.

In the third place, if matter is characterized by extension, it is divisible into parts. But what is predicable of all the parts is predicable of the whole. As, on the supposition, all the parts limit and condition each other, the whole must be limited and conditioned; that is, must be finite. All matter is finite. We reach again the conclusion that matter, being finite, cannot be eternal.

In the fourth place, if matter be eternal, it is, as has been shown, infinite. Eternity is embraced in the notion of infinity. If infinite, it is necessary. It must ever be what it was. It could not change in form, for the infinite has no form. Form implies limitation. But matter does change in form, that is incontrovertible. Therefore it cannot be infinite, and hence cannot be eternal.

In the fifth place, if, as has been proved, that matter is finite, it began. If that be denied, it is affirmed that matter is infinite in duration, which is contrary to the supposition that it is finite. If it began, it cannot be eternal, for the very definition of an eternal thing is, that it had no beginning and will have no end.

If matter is not eternal, the conclusion remains impregnable, that as it is contingent and changeable, it must have a cause which is necessary.

Secondly. It is objected by Herbert Spencer that the conception of self-existence and of a First Cause leads to insoluble contradictions. We cannot conceive them, and, consequently, cannot know them. "Respecting the origin of the universe," he remarks, "three verbally intelligent suppositions may be made. We may assert that it is self-existent, or that it is self-created, or that it is created by an external agency. Which of these suppositions is most credible it is not needful here to inquire. The deeper question into which this finally merges is, whether any one of them is even conceivable in the true sense of the word." <sup>1</sup>

In the first place, Mr. Spencer is extravagantly wrong in subordinating credibility to conceivability; in representing it as impossible for us to believe what we cannot conceive. In answer it would be sufficient to say that upon this ground we could not believe in the existence of the universe about the origin of which this question is concerned, for it is perfectly certain that no human mind can conceive it. The whole question would be non-existent, for the universe itself would be out of relation to our faculties, and, therefore, to us non-existent. Mr. Spencer, no doubt, believes in the origin of life, but can he conceive it? If he can, he would be better entitled than was Raymond Lully to the honor of being styled *Doctor Illuminatus*. We are environed by numerous facts which we must believe, although it is only their phenomenal manifestations which we can conceive.

Mr. Spencer cites Sir W. Hamilton, and quotes

<sup>1</sup> *First Principles*, p. 30, New York Ed.

largely from Dr. Mansel, in support of his views. He misconceived them. The former expressly asserts that we are compelled to believe much that we cannot conceive, and the latter, in his *Limits of Religious Thought*, did not intend to impugn the transcendental faiths of Theism and Christianity. His argument was aimed at the processes of the absolutist philosophy. Its defect consisted in not emphasizing the positive office of faith, and thus exposing itself to misconstruction.

Mr. Spencer is right in holding that we cannot conceive self-existence and a First Cause, and utterly wrong in concluding that, therefore, we cannot believe in them. The truth is, that while we cannot think them, for the tether of thought is short, we are compelled by the laws of our constitution to believe in them. This is even true of existence and cause, let alone self-existence and a first cause.

In the second place, Mr. Spencer, in explanation of the universe, affirms "an infinite and eternal energy." Now it is obvious that this necessarily infers both self-existence and a first cause: self-existence for that which is infinite and eternal, is *e concessio*, uncaused; a first cause, for if there be any cause, an infinite and eternal energy could have had no cause before it. Although he contradicts his theory of knowledge, Mr. Spencer is right in affirming an infinite and eternal energy; he is unphilosophical in stopping here, in not going on explicitly to affirm a being to whom this infinite and eternal energy belongs; for such a being is implicitly suggested by the affirmation—is necessarily inferrible from it.

Thirdly. Kant, in order to discredit the cosmological proof of God's existence, offered this objection: If it be maintained that the principle of causality demands a cause for every new appearance, or, in general, for everything that exists, the same principle would exact a cause for God's existence; and if it be replied that his existence is uncaused, then the same may be true of the existence of the universe; but, briefly—

In the first place, Kant's inference that the world *may be uncaused* is met by the positive proof that it *is caused*. whatever view may be held as to God, it is certain that the world was caused.

In the second place, if the world were uncaused, it must either have begun spontaneously, or it is infinite. The hypothesis of spontaneous generation must be thrown out of account. No one now fathers it. If infinite, we have two infinite substances, and that implies one infinite substance too many. Two would condition each other, and, therefore, neither could be infinite; which is contrary to the supposition. If the universe be uncaused, God is contained in it, unless the wild dream be entertained that there can be two uncaused substances. If contained in it, he is either finite or infinite. If finite, he is not God. If infinite, one infinite substance is contained in another infinite substance, which is harder to believe than that one incompressible atom of matter is contained in another.

In the third place, one finds it difficult to conceive—as has often been remarked—why, if we may infer an infinite moral ruler from the fundamental facts of our moral nature, we may not equally infer an infinite

maker from the fundamental law of causation in our intellectual. The great assertor of transcendental ideas was certainly inconsistent with himself. A rigorous subjectivity ought to have excluded every objective existence, or it ought not to have been maintained at all.

(2.) Another form in which the argument may be stated is from the *finiteness* of the world to a first cause. That is finite which is limited and conditioned. All human spirits are limited and conditioned, therefore finite. This is the indubitable testimony of consciousness. Matter is finite. It is divisible into parts. These parts limit and condition each other. Granted the existence of indivisible atoms; these atoms limit and condition each other. What is predicable of all the parts is predicable of the whole. Matter as a whole is, therefore, finite. The world, consisting of spirit and matter, is, consequently, finite.

If the world is finite, it began. If it began, it must either have spontaneously began, or have been begun by a cause outside of and antecedent to itself. The former supposition is inadmissible; the latter, therefore, is true. We reach a first cause of the world.

There are only two objections to his argument which appear to me to deserve consideration.

First. It has been objected that while the finiteness of a single series cannot be denied, the supposition of an infinite series of series involves no contradiction. The following argument has been supposed possible in support of this extraordinary position: "Is a past eternity any more impossible to be made up of the addition of an infinite number of finite parts than an

abstract infinite future? Surely not. Now there is to be just such an infinite future: namely, your and my immortality, which, although it may not be measured by solar days and years, will undoubtedly be composed of parts of successive time infinitely multiplied; but to this future eternity, it would be exactly parallel to object that we make each link in it have an end, while the whole is endless; which would involve the same absurdity, of a chain extended forward after the last link was ended. The answer again is: there is no last link, the number thereof being infinite. In a word, what mathematician does not know that infinitude may be generated by the addition of finites repeated an infinite number of times?"

In reply, it is enough to say that the terms used are utterly misleading. Throughout the indefinite is put for the infinite, although between them there is an infinite difference. There can be, strictly speaking, no "past eternity." The distinction verbally made between a past and a future eternity is a mere thought-distinction to aid our feeble faculties. Faith affirms an eternity which is a perfect, indivisible unity. An "infinite number" is an impossibility. The infinite and number are incongruous apprehensions. Numbers of finites may be indefinitely multiplied, but there must ever be an infinite want of approximation to the infinite. There cannot be "an infinite future": not to God, for with him, strictly speaking, there is no past and no future—he *is*; not to finite beings, for, although immortal, they are not eternal. Project immortality indefinitely, and between it and eternity there must be an infinite chasm.

The very fact of progressiveness excludes eternity. "That infinitude may be generated by the addition of finites repeated an infinite number of times" may be mathematically correct, for the simple reason that the infinite of the mathematician is not the infinite of the metaphysician. It is the indefinite of thought. The very terms *generation of infinity* would be absurd; and so the terms *infinite series* and *infinite series of series* symbolize no idea. They are mere words "signifying nothing." As well talk of a triangular, pink, raw-edged infinite!

Secondly. It may be objected, with some plausibility, that God being admitted, matter may be infinite, for it would not displace him. This is true of the material universe as now existing. The theist holds that he is present at every point of it, that he knows its every atom. If God now co-exists with matter without being displaced, why not eternally? If with finite matter, why not with infinite? Infinite matter would no more conflict with his being or attributes than does finite.

In the first place, this is a mere hypothesis; but it has been shown by positive proofs that matter is finite. Facts cannot be met by the supposition of a possibility.

In the second place, according to the supposition, matter would be uncaused, and, therefore, self-existent and independent of God. This supposes a limitation upon his power; which is contrary to the admission of his infinity; for—

His power to create would be limited. He could not create anything material, for, on the supposition, matter

would be infinite, and incapable of addition. All matter being infinite, it would have no parts to be created. It may be said that this would not limit his power considered as potentiality. That might be, but it is clear that the exercise of his power would be limited. It could only be exercised in creating spirits.

His power to annihilate would be limited. He could not, without a contradiction, be supposed to annihilate the infinite and self-existent; and as matter, according to the supposition of its infinity, would be indivisible into parts, he could annihilate no part of matter.

His power to control matter would be limited, indeed destroyed; for it would be contradictory to suppose that what is infinite and self-existent could be subject to control.

His power would be limited by the necessity under which he would lie to conform to the laws of matter. Unoriginated by him, and independent of him, he could only work in the material system by obeying its laws; all of which is contradictory to the admission that he is an infinite God.

Two considerations may be added which go to prove that matter cannot be infinite.

One is that spirits are conscious of finiteness, and as spirit is greater than matter, *a fortiori*, matter cannot be infinite. If to this the materialist reply that spirit is but matter, so much the worse for his case; for the spirit is certainly conscious of finiteness, and it would follow that some matter is finite, and, therefore, none could be infinite; and, further, if the better part of matter is finite, much more the inferior.



Another consideration is that were matter infinite, it would have the power of self-motion; but some matter, confessedly, has not. Therefore, if some has, and some has not, self-motion, it would follow that the infinite is partly self-moved and partly not; which is contradictory to the nature of the infinite.

The position of the pantheist, so far as it may be related to this argument, will not be examined here. It has been considered in a separate discussion.<sup>1</sup>

2. The argument from the fundamental law of *substance* to a first substance.

So far the argument has validly conducted us to a necessary first cause; but it may be contended, as Herbert Spencer does contend, that this first cause is only a force or energy. The purpose of this branch of the argument is to show that the first cause is also the first substance.

Sir W. Hamilton, in excepting causality from the category of fundamental, original, underived principles, also excepted substance from that category. He has not, however, in regard to the judgment touching substance, developed his views as he did with reference to the causal judgment. We may reasonably conjecture that his method of argument was the same in both cases. As he ascribed the judgment as to cause to a negative necessity arising from a mental powerlessness not to admit causes when we perceive phenomenal changes, so, no doubt, he attributed the judgment as to substance to an analogous mental impotence not to affirm substances when we cognize properties. But what real and im-

<sup>1</sup> *Discussions of Philosophical Questions.*

portant difference is there between the results of the two kinds of necessity—the negative and the positive? To say that we *cannot but* admit, is practically all one with saying that we *must* admit. To maintain that we cannot but affirm cause, we cannot but affirm substance, is tantamount to maintaining that we must affirm both. Without the repetition here of discussion in relation to this point, the present argument will begin with the assumption that there is in our mental constitution a fundamental, original, underived law or principle necessitating the judgment of substance, when properties are empirically apprehended.

Phenomena being perceived, we necessarily infer the substances which they manifest. This is done in one of two ways: immediately or mediately. Certain phenomenal manifestations we consider as properties, and immediately conclude from them to substance—as from divisibility to the substance which is divisible. Other phenomena we contemplate as effects, and while we immediately infer some causal power, we mediately through power as a property, infer substance to which power as a property belongs. From power to substance the inference is immediate, but from the phenomena perceived we mediately infer through power the substance to which as a property it pertains.

Just here it is proper to remark that needless confusion results from the attempt to distinguish, as sharply as has been done, between power, force and energy. That question will not now be raised. It is immaterial to the present argument. If it be granted that there are powers, forces, energies, which inhere in this finite

system, and which manifest themselves to observation by their phenomenal effects, we necessarily refer them to the natural substances to which they belong as properties. The inference is legitimate to the existence of these substances; but these substances, with their furniture of powers, forces, energies, we must refer to a first causal power which produced them. The world itself, as has been shown by the preceding argument from causality, must be ascribed to this primordial causal power. We are, then, compelled, by the law of substance and property, to infer from this first causal power a first substance, to which, as an attribute, it belongs. To no lower substance can it be assigned, since every other substance was produced by the first cause. It would be absurd to make the producing power an attribute of a thing produced by it. We have been conducted by the fundamental law of cause and effect to a first cause. We are now conducted by the equally fundamental law of substance and property to a first substance, as being the first cause. We are led to no merely abstract power, or force, or energy.

3. The argument from the law of *personality* to the personality of the first substance.

It is not necessary to this argument to indicate the way in which the conviction of our personality arises, whether the testimony of consciousness immediately affirms the fact, or whether a fundamental law of belief, developed upon the conditions furnished by the consciousness of our internal phenomena, enforces immediately, necessarily and with inconceivable swiftness the inference to the fact. We are indubitably convinced

that we are persons. This is true of all human beings.

The question then occurs, What account can be given of the fact? How came we to be persons? The old Greek hypothesis of man's autochthonous origin will scarcely be maintained. If we take the path of cause and effect, we demand of the Spencerian evolutionist, who affirms an impersonal first cause, how the effect comes to contain more than the cause which produced it—to possess an element which was not virtually or potentially in its cause. How came an impersonal cause to produce a personal effect? If he reply that the theist is pressed by the same kind of difficulty, for, How came a spiritual cause to produce a material effect? the rejoinder is, briefly, that the theist affirms a free Creator. Acting freely and not necessarily, he caused some being not analogous to his own. If he could not have done this he would not have been omnipotent. This is one thing; but it is another to say that a cause, acting in conformity to a rigid necessity, could have produced an effect out of all analogy to itself.

If we take the path of substance and property, we demand of the pantheist, who affirms an impersonal first substance, how the thing evolved comes to contain an element which was not potentially involved in the evolver—an evolver developing in accordance with a law of blind, immanent necessity. It will not answer to say that the principle of development was that of progression.<sup>1</sup> That would sacrifice the law of evolution, a law vital to the theory of the pantheist.

<sup>1</sup> Prof. Sully, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*: On Evolution.

If, then, we were caused by a first substance, we are entitled, we are necessitated, to believe that that substance is personal. No other just account can be given of our own personality.

It is added that, granted the personality, then, also, the intelligence, affections, will and moral nature, of the first substance are admitted. Not that it is intended to say that these are constituent elements of personality; not at all. The belief in personality is as simple and unresolvable, as it is self-evident and necessary; but intelligence, feelings, will, and moral qualities, if we may judge from the analogy of our own being, are as constituent elements of the nature, the essence, spontaneous conditions upon which the person acts. On the one hand, wherever these conditions exist, they demand personality, and, on the other hand, wherever there is personality, it requires these conditions of its activity. In a word, the first substance is not only the first cause, but a personal spirit.

4. The argument from the fundamental law of belief in the *infinite* to the infinity of the substantive, personal, first cause.

Let it be borne in mind that by such a fundamental law of belief is intended, not a formal faith-judgment that the infinite is, but a constitutional aptitude, predisposition, tendency, necessity, which, when developed upon the conditions of conscious experience, leads to such a formal faith-judgment: enforces the positive affirmation of the infinite. As the alleged fact of such a law will, no doubt, be disputed, some of the reasons will be stated which constrain belief in its existence.

(1.) The first proof will be derived from the necessity of belief in space. Space is well-nigh universally admitted to be infinite; but if we necessarily believe in space, and believe it to be infinite, we believe in the infinite. If not, we believe and do not believe in the infinite at the same time; which is a manifest contradiction. In fine, the necessity of believing in space involves the necessity of believing in the infinite. The same kind of argument is derivable from the necessity of believing in duration. Like space it is admitted to be infinite. Place and time are, strictly speaking, thought-judgments springing from conscious experience, and they become the conditions upon which are elicited from laws of belief faith-judgments in infinite space and infinite duration. Grant the necessity of believing in infinite space and duration, you grant the necessity of believing in the infinite.

(2.) A second proof is drawn from the almost universal prevalence of a belief in the infinite among mankind, evincing a fundamental tendency to the formation of that belief.

First. This again is proved by the universal tendency to belief in the-infinity of space.

Secondly. It is also proved by the universal tendency to belief in a superior power. This is conceded by Herbert Spencer himself. This tendency, when developed upon the conditions of experience, takes formal shape in the faith-judgment, which affirms an infinite power.

Thirdly. It makes no difference that the tendency to believe in the infinite may not be developed among cer-

tain savage tribes, or in densely ignorant persons in civilized communities. Reason, conscience, taste, may be undeveloped, but it would be utterly sophistical to infer from that fact that there is no reason, or conscience, or taste capable of being developed. How could that be developed which did not exist? Education supposes an original power susceptible of being educated.

Nor does it make any difference that the infinite is denied by some on speculative grounds. These exceptions serve but to call attention to the rule. They no more affect the general belief of the race than would a few drops of ink the ocean into which they might be infused.

Fourthly. The well-nigh universal employment of the word *infinite* argues the necessity of believing in its existence. Either this, or the term is meaningless.

Fifthly. The terms *finite* and *infinite* are correlatives. The apprehensions symbolized by them are, therefore, correlatives. In his celebrated *Critique on Cousin*, Hamilton denies this. As one of these terms is, in thought, the negation of the other, instead of the reality of the infinite being suggested, it may be denied. The correlation does not necessitate "correality"; but—

In the first place, to say of *something* that it is not finite is to admit the thing of which the predication is made. Otherwise the predication is made of zero; and to deny the finiteness of that thing, so far from denying its existence, is to affirm both its existence and its infinity.

In the second place, even in the sphere of mere thought, correlatives involving a negation of one of the

members do not always suppose the non-existence of the member which is the subject of the negation. Socrates as husband and Xanthippe as wife are correlatives; but to affirm that Socrates was not Xanthippe would not be to deny the existence of the latter, nor her existence as the wife of the philosopher. On the contrary, the negation supposes her existence.

In the third place, Hamilton's criticism only holds good when the same thing is the subject of affirmation and negation. To affirm that a thing is finite is to deny that the same thing is infinite. The law of identity would be violated; but to say that another thing is not finite, instead of denying that it exists, is to affirm its existence as infinite.

In the fourth place, Hamilton unaccountably confounds the spheres of thought and belief. If Cousin meant that, in thinking the finite, we also *think* the correlative infinite, he was wrong, and Hamilton, in that regard, was right in his criticism. If Hamilton meant that, in thinking the finite, we do not *believe* in the infinite, he was not only wrong, but inconsistent with his own doctrine, that we are under the necessity of believing in the infinite, although we cannot think it.

These considerations suffice to show that there is, imbedded in our mental constitution, a law adapting and constraining us to believe in the infinite. When, therefore, in accordance with the other fundamental laws which have been indicated, we are led to believe in a personal being, who is the first substance and the first cause, we are incited by this law to affirm that he is infinite. In a word, we affirm the infinite God.



Such is an outline of what is denominated the *cosmological* argument for the divine existence.

5. The next branch of the argument from our rational nature is what is called the teleological, or, after Kant, the physico-theological—the proof from final causes or from design. The argument here is from the fundamental law of causation, combined with those of unity and sufficient reason, when developed upon the conditions of experience, to an intelligent designer of the universe.

(1.) Whether we look within us or without us, we are amazed at the multiformity of nature. We are confounded by the almost limitless variety that confronts us on every hand, in the organic and inorganic realms, in the vegetable, the animal, and the intellectual domains. Phenomenal plurality and difference obtrude themselves on our observation in the worlds above us, the world around us, and the world within us. The insatiable demand for unity, ever crying out from the depths of our souls, forbids our being satisfied with this bewildering multifariousness. The principle of unity enforces the belief that the whole wondrously diversified scene can be reduced to harmony upon some all-comprehending plan; that the universe, complex and seemingly boundless as it is, is a cosmos, and not a vast, confused, howling wilderness.

(2.) This demand, created by the fundamental principle of unity within us, is alike, in a measure, appeased and gratified by the appearance of order, which meets us on every side. That this result should be reached, it is not necessary that we should know the ends of this

order. It utters a general lesson which is easily learned. Some final cause we are compelled to suppose as its explanation, or the analogy of our own experience is utterly deceptive. Nor can we evade the conviction that it originates in an intelligent, organizing mind, as its efficient cause. Such is the majestic sweep of this all-prevailing orderliness that it would be preposterous to assign it to more than one cause. A pervading law, in accordance with which all specific laws operate—a law of laws—it bespeaks one source alone from which it emanates, one sovereign authority which it expresses.

(3.) The argument to a supreme intelligence is immensely enhanced by special adaptations, too numerous to be counted, too exquisite to be sufficiently admired. Not only is science at every stride in its magical progress widening our apprehensions of general order springing from the reign of law, but multiplying the instances of particular adjustments of the most surprising and marvellous character. It were difficult to say whether the revelations of the telescope or those of the microscope impress us with the greater astonishment; whether the grand march of astronomy or the minute analysis of entomology thrills us with the profounder feeling. We stand between two oceans, the great and the small, and listening in wondering awe to the mysterious sounds of both, we gather them up into a hymn of rapturous adoration to a supreme intelligence. To deny intelligence as the cause of this general order, and these special adaptations, and as the bond of unity to all, is to stifle the voice of reason herself. Of such frenzy no other account can be furnished than the hope that, in sinking

out of view a God of intelligence, men may get rid of a God of retributive justice.

Add to these considerations the inferences necessarily springing from the law of the sufficient reason, it matters little whether, regarded as a law of thought or of real being, and the proof is completed that there is a being of power, intelligence and wisdom *adequate to* the production of the wondrous order, and the admirable adjustments which pervade the universe. Then, finally, we supplement this separate teleological proof by the cosmological, especially as it involves the necessary faith-judgment enforced by the fundamental law of belief in the infinite, and we are thus irresistibly impelled to affirm the infinite God, who is as well the organizer as the creator of the universe. We are compelled to consolidate the two arguments by the unity which reigns in our faculties.

To this argument from design sundry objections have been urged, which will be briefly noticed.

First. It is objected that this argument only proves vast intelligence in arranging the universe, not power in producing it—an Architect, not a Creator. Kant, who uses this objection, has himself gone far to neutralize it by the following admissions:

“ This proof will always deserve to be treated with respect. It is the oldest, the clearest, and most in conformity with human reason. It gives life to the study of nature, deriving its own existence from it, and thus constantly acquiring new vigor. It reveals aims and intention where our own observation would not by itself have discovered them, and enlarges our knowledge of

nature by leading us towards that peculiar unity the principle of which exists outside nature. This knowledge reacts again on its cause—namely, the transcendental idea—and thus increases the belief in a supreme author to an irresistible conviction. It would, therefore, be not only extremely sad, but utterly vain to attempt to diminish the authority of that proof.”<sup>1</sup>

Without considering the question, whether Kant can be harmonized with himself, let us note the answers which may be furnished to the objection in hand.

In the first place, even if it were granted that this teleological argument, separately considered, would not avail to prove the infinity of God, or his creative relation to the universe, it need not on that account be pronounced worthless. It would still serve the purpose of proving vast power, vast intelligence, vast wisdom, inconceivably vast, in the architect and organizer of the cosmical universe; and it might be contended that, as it is intended to accomplish only that result, it has not failed as an argument. The admission made by the objection shows its success in this regard; and as it achieves this great end, it may be urged that it is to be interwoven with the general argument in order to enhance and round it as a complex whole; that it discharges the office of a separate strand in strengthening a cable. It is not the cable, but is invaluable in its composition. In a word, it may be fairly said that even though it were incomplete in itself, it is indispensable to the completeness of the argument as a whole. Upon the

<sup>1</sup>*Transcend. Dialectic*: Max Müller's Trans. of Crit. Pure Reason, Vol. II., p. 534.

supposition that a first cause of the universe has been otherwise proved, it certainly negatives the position that that cause is a blind force operating by necessity—merely “an infinite and eternal energy.” But—

In the second place, it is not as clear as the objectors suppose it to be, that the teleological argument does not of itself avail to prove a first cause, who is the creator of the universe. Upon this point the Rev. Professor Robert Flint, of Edinburgh, has the following acute and striking observations :

“It is remarkable, too, that those who have urged this objection have never felt that before employing it they were bound to satisfy themselves and to prove to others that order is a mere surface or superficial thing—outside of matter, superimposed on it. If order be something inherently and intrinsically in matter—be of its very essence—belong to what is ultimate in it; if matter and its form be inseparable—then the author of its order must have been also the author of itself; and all that this objection shows us is, that those who have employed it have had mistaken notions about the nature of matter. Now, as I have already had to indicate, modern science seems rapidly perfecting the proof of this. The order in the heavens, and in the most complicated animal organisms, appears to be not more wonderful than the order in the ultimate atoms of which they are composed. The balance of evidence is in favor of the view that order extends as far and penetrates as deep as matter itself does. The human intellect is daily learning that it is foolish to fancy that there is anywhere in matter a sphere in which the Divine Wisdom does not manifest itself in and through order.

“There is still another remark to be made on the objection under consideration. The immediate inference from the order of the universe is to an intelligent former of the universe, not to a creator. But this does not preclude the raising of the question, Is it reasonable to believe the former of the world merely its former? Must not its former be also its creator? On the contrary, the inference that the order of the world must be the result of intelligent agency ought to suggest this question to every seri-

ous and reflective mind, and it should even contribute something to its answer. The order of the universe must have originated with intelligence. What is implied in this admission? Clearly that the order of the universe cannot have originated with matter—that matter is unintelligent, and cannot account either for intelligence or the effects of intelligence. The supposition that matter is eternal must in this case be supplemented by the admission that mind is eternal. In other words, the affirmation that the former of the world is merely its former—the denial that its former is also its creator—means dualism, the belief in two distinct eternal existences—an eternal mind and eternal matter. Whoever is not prepared to accept this hypothesis must abandon the affirmation and the denial from which it necessarily follows. And who can, after due deliberation, accept it? The law of parsimony of causes absolutely forbids our assuming, for the explanation of anything, more causes than are necessary to account for it. It forbids, therefore, our belief in an eternal matter and an eternal mind, unless we can show reason for holding that one of them alone is not a sufficient cause of the universe. Now those who grant the inference from order to intelligence, themselves admit that matter is not a sufficient First Cause of the universe as it actually exists. Do they find any person admitting that mind would be an insufficient First Cause? Do they themselves see any way of showing its insufficiency? Do they not even perceive that it would be foolish and hopeless to try to show that an eternal mind could not create a material universe, and that all they could show would be, the here quite irrelevant truth, that the human mind is ignorant of the manner in which this could be done? If the answers to these questions are what I believe they must be, it must also be acknowledged that the former of the universe can only be rationally thought of as also its creator.”<sup>1</sup>

To these considerations it may be added, in the third place, that if the thinking faculty cannot, in consequence of the evidences of design in the universe, affirm the existence of an infinite God, neither can it deny that existence. In fact, it cannot deny a vast finite intelli-

<sup>1</sup> *Theism*, pp. 171-174.

gence and power lying beyond all possible bounds of conception. The telescope, for example, has revealed stretches of the universe which were never dreamed of in thought. Beyond these expanded ranges of being the imagination is able to pursue her flight. She may imagine systems now unperceived, even by the telescope, analogous to those which come under observation; but were one to go on for a life-time, day by day and night by night, in his imagination to add systems to systems, he would in age be perfectly convinced that there yet lie measureless systems beyond, and that no sensible approximation had been made to a grasp even of finite being. What is here intimated is that, at the outmost verge of the imagination's possibilities, there cannot be a denial of a still greater scope of finite existence than has been actually compassed; that, on the contrary, the presumption is that fathomless depths of being lie beyond the line of the imagination; and that, so far from a denial of the infinite being possible, a positive presumption is created in its favor by the inability of thought or imagination to limit the finite. Were it possible for the conceiving faculty to measure the vast finite and affix its boundaries, the case would be different; but this it cannot possibly do; and as, therefore, it cannot deny the unlimited, no more is it competent to deny the illimitable. As it cannot deny the indefinite, it cannot the infinite. A vast intelligence suggested by the teleological argument *certainly is* beyond the comprehension of thought; and it *may be* an infinite intelligence. This possibility is at least hinted by that argument. Now the mind of man is one; and

the fundamental law of belief in the infinite, which accompanies the cosmological argument and projects it to the positive affirmation of an infinite first cause and first substance, also attends the teleological and exalts it to the positive affirmation of an infinite intelligence. This is a well-nigh universal *fact*, and no exceptional speculation or perverse skepticism can successfully gainsay it. Men, in general, refuse to concede that the intelligence displayed in this wondrous universe is finite.

Secondly. It is objected that the argument from design, instead of inferring an infinite and perfect, conducts us to a finite and imperfect intelligence. The remarkable proof of this position is that design implies contrivance, and contrivance supposes choice, and therefore limitation. The designer depends on means, instead of immediately producing results by his fiat; but one answer will here be given.

Intelligence without wisdom is defective. The highest intelligence embraces the greatest wisdom. Wisdom is exercised in the selection of the means fitted to secure contemplated ends. The highest wisdom displays itself in the choice of the best means to produce the noblest ends. Were the intelligence exhibited in the arrangement of the universe destitute of wisdom, it would be defective; but the order and adjustments of the universe evince, in the selection of the most fitting means to secure transcendently noble ends, the most consummate wisdom. This consideration is sufficient to refute the objection before us, and to prove the intelligence concerned about the fashioning of the universe to have been perfect. What a strange objection is this, proceeding



as it does upon the supposition that the possession of perfect wisdom infers an imperfect intelligence! One would imagine that John Stuart Mill was sorely pressed for arguments against God when he excogitated this.

Thirdly. The teleological argument has been flip-pantly dubbed as "the carpenter theory." It is objected that the theist represents God as a mere mechanic or artificer. It is hard to see either the relevancy or the consistency of this objection. How is it relevant? No theist holds that the divine being is simply a constructor of mechanisms. Even if, with Lotze, the extreme ground were taken that the universe is a mechanism, it certainly would not be denied that it involves organisms. The theist contends that God is the author of organized beings containing a principle of reproduction, and development according to the laws of life. How, then, does he represent God as a mere carpenter? It is enough to say that Mr. Spencer and others in urging this objection against the teleology of the theist mis-represent it.

Further, how is the objection consistent? Mr. Spencer maintains that there is "an infinite and eternal energy," which furnishes the ground and explanation of the universe—an unknown, but fundamental, reality. He also holds that this force proceeds by the inflexible law of evolution in the development of all things. Now, either this infinite and eternal energy is itself the principle of evolution, that out of which the universe is developed, or not. If the former, how can he account for the element of design in the intelligence of a Newton, for example, or a Napoleon? It will not be contended

that the *Principia* of Newton, or the campaigns of Napoleon were the results of mere fortuity, that they happened by chance. It will not be denied that the *Principia* and the campaigns were planned to secure ends, that they had designs in view. How, then, did these intelligences, containing the element of design, come to be evolved out of an ultimate energy entirely destitute of such an element? If it be replied that it was possible for intelligence, characterized by the element of design, to have been developed from an "energy" devoid of it, absurdity results. If, that the primordial "energy" contained potentially the element of design, then it may have designed the mind of a Newton or a Napoleon; and, further, it must itself have formed the designs of those great men, since, *ex hypothesi*, they were evolved out of it, and could not, therefore, have been substantially different from it.

If the "infinite and eternal energy" is not itself the principle of evolution, it follows that it caused the primal element or elements which constituted the evolving source. Now, either those elements contained in them potentially the feature of design, or not. If they did, how could they have originated from a causal energy destitute of design, devoid of personality, and operating by a blind, unintelligent law of necessity? If they did not, how came intelligent, designing minds to be evolved out of them? If Mr. Spencer's "infinite and eternal energy" was not characterized by purpose, it had not the sense of a carpenter. If it was, it had not the dignity of a carpenter, for he is independent of that which he constructs and superior to it. Evolution makes the

builder and the house one and the same, the organizer and the organism identical. To my mind, the so-called "carpenter theory" has the advantage; but invest, as the theist does, the carpenter with the power to create life, and to regulate its development, and the theory rises to immeasurable superiority. In fine, if Mr. Spencer's theory of evolution admits design, his objection to the teleological argument is inconsistent with his theory; and if it does not, his theory is self-contradictory.

Kant characterizes the argument from the speculative reason for the existence of God as sophistical. He maintains that the physico-theological (teleological) and the cosmological proofs depend upon the ontological, and as he holds that to be invalid, he pronounces the whole argument inconclusive. Now it is true, as has already been conceded, that the cosmological and the teleological arguments are necessitated and enforced by *a priori* elements in the form of fundamental laws of belief in our mental constitution. They are partly ontological; but it is not true that they are founded upon the so-called ontological argument, contemplated as a separate and finished whole, possessed of self-sufficient validity.

In its original and, as is claimed by its friends, its purest form as presented by Anselm, the ontological argument concludes from the "idea" or "concept" of absolutely perfect being to its necessary existence, and from its necessary existence to its actual existence. The form in which it was put by Leibnitz, and in which it was criticised by Kant is briefly: A being whose essence infers his existence, if it is possible, is; but God is a

being whose essence infers his existence; therefore, God if he is possible, is.

Kant's refutation, succinctly stated, is in the general: From the concept of an ideal being, it is illegitimate to conclude to a real, objectively existent, being. This position he presses in a specific form by appealing to his distinction between an analytical and a synthetical proposition. An analytical proposition is one in which the predicate adds nothing to the subject, but simply evolves its contents. It is merely explicative. A synthetical proposition is one in which the predicate adds something substantively to the subject. It is amplificative. In the analytical proposition you would be guilty of a contradiction should you deny the predicate of the subject, but there would be no contradiction were you to deny both the predicate and the subject. In the synthetical proposition there would be no contradiction in denying the predicate of the subject, since that holds good only of identical judgments involved in analytical propositions.

Now here the proposition is either analytical or synthetical. If analytical, the predicate, *existence*, is affirmed of *being*, the subject, which already contains existence, and naught but tautology results; and, while it would be contradictory to deny existence of the subject *being*, if the being were not merely assumed, but previously proved, there is no contradiction in this instance, for the being *is* merely assumed, as it is the very design of the argument to prove it. Both predicate and subject may, without contradiction, be denied. If the proposition is synthetical, it is admitted that the predicate

*existence* (real, objective existence) adds something to the subject not already contained in it; but there would be no contradiction in denying the predicate of the subject, inasmuch as such a contradiction is possible only where identical judgments are involved, and this proposition, as confessedly synthetical, does not involve an identical judgment. Real existence, then, may, without a contradiction, be denied of the being conceived. The peculiar force of this member of the dilemma depends on Kant's doctrine, that real existence is derived from the sphere of phenomena alone. Therefore, this proposition, considered as synthetical, employs an empirical predicate of a purely ontological subject. In short, if the proposition be analytical, it is worthless; if synthetical, it is impossible.

The answer to all this is that both the refutation, and the argument against which the refutation is directed, are founded upon the fallacious assumption that it is possible to form a *concept* of an absolutely perfect or infinite being. Kant's ideas of the pure reason are, as he himself terms them, concepts. His concepts of the understanding are but groupings into unity of the representations of sense-intuitions; and his ideas of the pure reason are but higher conceptual groupings into unity of the concepts of the understanding. Now, as, at the bottom, concepts depend upon perception for the materials which they elaborate in thought-relations, it is certain that no percept can furnish the materials for a concept of a perfect or infinite being. There can be, therefore, no concept, strictly speaking, of such a being. Consequently, no valid argument, in the form of a regu-

lar syllogism constructed of concepts, can be legitimately framed for the existence of an infinite being. Neither can there be a valid argument to the contrary, which admits the possibility of a concept of an infinite being. Both kinds of argument are baseless.

Cousin, who allows the force of Kant's criticism of the Leibnitzian syllogism, adds one of his own:

"This syllogism," he says, "is perfectly regular, and there is either no such thing as logic in the world, or the conclusion is demonstrated. But what is the nature of this conclusion? According to the laws of logic itself, it should be conformable to the nature of the major and minor premises united. Let us examine these premises. The major, as Leibnitz says, is an identical axiom (*axioma identicum*). It is a general and abstract proposition. The existence and the essence spoken of are taken in a purely abstract point of view. As to the minor, it contains a general definition of God, in which the existence of this being is also considered in an abstract point of view, and not as a real being, since it is this reality itself which is required in the conclusion, and to suppose it in the minor would be to make a *petitio principii*, to beg the question. If, then, the major is abstract, and the minor partakes of the same character, I ask again, What should be the nature of the conclusion? Necessarily an abstract conclusion, in which existence is taken abstractly, as in the premises. From the combination of the two abstract premises, nothing but an abstraction can follow. The syllogism, therefore, though good in itself, has, and can have, no other than a syllogistic value. The existence which it involves can be only existence in general, an abstract state, destitute of any true reality."<sup>1</sup>

While, however, he admits the unwarrantableness of a regular syllogism starting with a major premise containing the concept of a perfect being, Cousin contends that the Cartesian argument is to be vindicated when stated in a certain form. What is that form? That in

<sup>1</sup> *The Phil. of Kant*, Lect. VI.

which Descartes presents the argument for one's own existence: "*Cogito, ergo Sum.*" He holds that this is not a syllogism, but an enthymeme. If, however, Sir William Hamilton is right, the enthymeme is but a syllogism, imperfectly expressed, in which either the major premise, or the minor, or the conclusion may be wanting; it is not a peculiar species of reasoning.<sup>1</sup> But that question aside, Cousin's meaning evidently is that from the affirmation, *I think*, we pass immediately to the affirmation, *I exist*. So, from the affirmation, *I am imperfect or finite*, we pass immediately to the affirmation, *a perfect or infinite being exists*.

Now, what is the nature of that passage? What sort of act is it? Here this usually perspicuous writer uses terms so various and apparently incongruous with each other to express one and the same act that it is difficult to grasp his meaning perfectly. Extracts from himself will illustrate this. Sometimes he uses *perception* to designate the act. "The indirect, it may be, but real perception of the *me*." "It is the living perception of a living thought in a living personal self." "The syllogism of Leibnitz, as it stands, justifies the objections of Kant; but they vanish when it is traced to its source, to the true Cartesian proof, just as the objections of Kant against the substantial reality of the *me* vanish in restoring to the *cogito, ergo sum* its true meaning, and when instead of attempting to construct a syllogism, we invest it with the unquestionable authority of an immediate and spontaneous perception." Frequently he employs the terms *conception, conceive*. "The primitive concep-

<sup>1</sup> *Logic*, pp. 276 ff. Boston Ed.

tion of the reason." "It is an immediate conception, resting upon no principle, on nothing intermediate." "At the same time that I recognize the imperfection of my own being, I conceive a perfect being." "The truth is that primitively the reason, as soon as it conceives the imperfection of my being, conceives a perfect being." "You can imagine a gorgon, a centaur, to exist, and you can imagine them not to exist; but is it in your power, the finite and the imperfect being given, to conceive or not to conceive the infinite and the perfect?" etc. Very often he adopts the term *idea*, so often as to make it needless to quote.

He also uses the word *reveals*. "No major premise can fill up the gap which separates being from thought, phenomena from substance, attribute from subject. It is reason itself which, by its own inherent power, overleaps this abyss, which *reveals* (the word is here perfectly legitimate) the hidden, but real subject of every phenomenon, of every thought." Sometimes he even resorts to the term *consciousness*. "I am, therefore, a substance which knows itself by a science the most certain of all, since it is the most immediate, consciousness." "A primitive and permanent fact of consciousness." [This in regard to the Cartesian proof of God's existence.] The term *judgment* also occurs. "Now, this character of finite cannot be given to us, as we have seen, without the reason instantly entering into exercise, and passing this judgment, that there is something infinite, if there is something finite." This judgment is elsewhere spoken of as a "spontaneous conviction." Finally, Cousin uses the term *faith*. Speaking of sav-



ages he says: "You may be sure that what they see of themselves and of the world does not suffice them, and that they are humbled and exalted in the intimate faith in the existence of something infinite, perfect, that is, of God." <sup>1</sup>

Of these terms, designating the act by which we pass from imperfect or finite to the perfect or infinite, some must, if rigorously construed, be rejected as inapplicable. That we perceive, are conscious of, that we may conceive, ourselves as imperfect, as finite—this is evident; but it is equally manifest that, strictly speaking, we cannot perceive or be conscious of, and that we cannot conceive, a perfect or infinite being. The terms *reveals*, *revelation*, are, in a certain sense, proper, but they are vague and indefinite; they do not describe the nature of the act by which the alleged revelation is made; and they are also liable to the interpretation that by them is meant an act by which we are conscious of, have an immediate intuition of, the perfect and infinite, a sense in which Jacobi employed them; incorrectly, in this relation. In the sense in which Sir W. Hamilton used them, they are, to my mind, admissible and correct. The term *judgment* is that which expresses the true nature of the mental act by which we pass from the imperfect to the perfect, from the finite to the infinite. Conscious that we are imperfect, that we are finite we *judge* that there is a perfect, an infinite, being. This judgment is an inference, a necessary and immediate inference, so swiftly, so instantaneously de-

<sup>1</sup> These citations are made from his *Lectures on Phil. of Kant*, and his *Course of Hist. Mod. Philosophy*.

rived from the consciousness of our imperfection, our finiteness, that the difference between the datum of consciousness and the inference from it is appreciable only to reflection. Contemporaneous they may be, but in the order of thought or nature they differ and may be, therefore, reflectively disjoined. The imperfect, the finite, being given, there *must* be the perfect, the infinite; and this necessary judgment is immediately passed—immediately, both in the sense that there is no intervening medium, no middle, and in the sense that there is no perceptible interval of time, between the conscious experience and the inferential judgment.

But were there any reasonable objection to this mode of stating the matter, this form of statement may be adopted: The conscious experience of imperfection, of finiteness *constitutes the condition* upon which the judgment affirming a perfect, an infinite, being, is necessarily and immediately passed. The practical result is the same; but the former mode of statement is to be preferred, for this reason: a necessary and immediate inference from a datum is confessedly of equal validity and authority with the datum itself. Now we need the assurance of the incontestable authority of the judgment affirming a perfect, an infinite being; and as a datum of consciousness is possessed of such authority, a necessary and immediate *inference* from it is equally authoritative. The inference would appear to be necessitated by the correlation between the two apprehensions, imperfect or finite and perfect or infinite. It is as necessary as the inference from husband to wife.

What, however, is here contended for is that, given

the conscious experience of imperfection and finiteness, the *judgment* affirming a perfect, or, what is the same, an infinite, being, is necessary and immediate. It is a "spontaneous conviction" of our souls enforced by the operation of a fundamental law of our constitution. The necessity and immediateness of the judgment renders the proposition, There is a perfect or infinite being, self-evident.

This, however, is not all that is required for an elucidation of the subject. The important question arises, By what faculty or power is this judgment passed? Negatively, the answer is that it is not thought, for thought cannot transcend consciousness, and consciousness cannot supply the materials for this judgment. It is not a thought-judgment. It was in proceeding upon that supposition that the transcendental or absolutist philosophy took its fundamental departure from the truth.<sup>1</sup> Affirmatively, the answer is that the judgment by which the mind passes necessarily and immediately from the imperfect to the perfect, from the finite to the infinite, is formed by faith. It is a faith-judgment. Conscious of the phenomenal imperfect or finite, we strive by imagination and conception to think the perfect, the infinite. We expand the concept of the former to the highest possible degree. But, of necessity, we reach only the relatively perfect, the vast finite. Awakened from latency by this condition furnished in experience, the innate capacity of faith, and, in this particular relation, the fundamental law of belief in the infinite, necessitate and enforce the judgment which

<sup>1</sup> See Discussion of Pantheism.

affirms the perfect, the infinite.<sup>1</sup> As faith is, so far forth as it is intellectual, a specific function of the reason, this is the highest affirmation of intelligence. It is not a mere negative protest of thought, denying all limitation upon its most exalted concept; it is a positive judgment.

Is, then, the argument from a faith-judgment, affirming a perfect, an infinite, being, a pure *a priori* argument for the existence of God? It certainly contains an *a priori* element, but the question, whether it is, as *a priori*, complete and self-sufficient, independently of *a posteriori* elements, must be answered in the negative. Let it be borne in mind that an *a posteriori* argument is one in which we "set out from experience," and in the *a priori*, we "throw aside all experience," and conclude from the mental apprehension of a perfect, an infinite, being to his existence.

1. We must set out with the conviction of our own existence; for were we non-existent, any argument for the existence of another being, grounded upon the mental processes of one non-existent would be, of course, itself non-existent. This conviction of our existence is founded, in the last analysis, upon consciousness. It matters not, so far as this argument is concerned, whether it is held that we are directly conscious of existence, or that we necessarily and immediately infer, or, at least, judge, that we exist in consequence of the consciousness of mental phenomena. In either case con-

<sup>1</sup>The question whether there be a *Faculty* of Faith is considered in the Discussion of Herbert Spencer's Relativity of Knowledge.

sciousness is supposed, and that implies experience. We start, then, in the *a priori* argument for God's existence with the conscious experience which leads to the conviction of our own. It is conditioned upon that experience as an *a posteriori* element.

2. In the *a priori* argument there is also supposed the conscious experience of our imperfection, our finiteness. It is impossible to doubt this datum of consciousness. This conscious experience conditions our judgment that there is a perfect, an infinite, being. Here again we have an empirical, an *a posteriori*, element entering into the argument as a whole.

In regard to both of these empirical elements, it may be contended that while their existence is not denied, they do not enter as integers into the *a priori* argument itself; that that proof exists concurrently and coördinately with them, but is as native to the mind as they; that we are as directly conscious of God, as the all-perfect being, as we are of our existence and of our imperfections—in short, that we have a “God-consciousness.” But, in the first place, this, as an alleged fact, is denied. Consciousness is limited to the phenomenal, internal or external, and to say that God is, in himself, phenomenal is to gainsay common sense, as well as the best philosophy and the catholic theology of the ages. In the second place, if we are conscious of God, it would not only follow that, as the proof of his existence furnished by the direct testimony of consciousness would be, in itself, complete and irrefragable, no *a priori* argument, in syllogistic form, would be needed; but, also, that the so-called *a priori* proof would become

purely empirical and *a posteriori*, since the proof furnished by consciousness is confessedly of that character. Here the *argumentum ad hominem* is as irresistible as it is necessary.

It may be replied that, in being conscious of a concept, a belief—whatever the mental act may be called—of a perfect or infinite being, we have a conscious knowledge of him as conceived, as believed. The rejoinder is that while this might, in a sense, be true, were it only a concept which was the subject of the affirmation, the fact is, as has already been shown, that no concept, strictly speaking, of God is possible. It may, however, be contended that, in having a belief in God of which we are conscious, we are also conscious of him as believed in. This is a profound mistake. There are many things of which we have a conscious belief, while of the things themselves we have no consciousness. We have, for example, a conscious belief in the essence of our souls. Would it not be sheer folly to say that we are conscious of that essence itself? But, as that question was considered in another discussion,<sup>1</sup> no more will be now said in relation to it.

3. A judgment—however denominated—affirming the existence of a perfect or infinite being, would not, by itself, affirm the existence of attributes qualifying that being. It would be simply apprehended as the primordial substance of the Spinozan pantheist. It certainly would not be God, a personal spirit, a freely acting cause, possessed of wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth. Now, how do we get the

<sup>1</sup> Discussion on the Nature of Consciousness.

apprehension of attributes? The answer must be, From experience. We observe certain effects which we necessarily ascribe to attributes as their causes. Certain phenomenal changes which we observe, for instance, we assign to the attribute of power as their cause. So with other attributes. It may be said that this is a begging of the question; that we are obliged to do no more than to recognize these effects as related to forces inherent in nature, and these forces we are not compelled to apprehend as attributes; but this is not to beg the question, for we proceed in accordance with the analogies of our own being. Certain effects produced by ourselves we inevitably assign to power, to intelligence, to justice, to mercy, and these proximate causes we know to be attributes of our souls. They are not mere independently operating forces. In like manner, perceiving effects which could not be produced by ourselves or any other human beings, we irresistibly assign them to proximate causes, which again, by a necessary law, we refer as attributes to substance; and as we are not satisfied short of unity, we ascribe them to one supreme substance. Thus we apprehend, not a substance naked and unqualified, but one so and so characterized: we apprehend God.

Should it be urged that while this may hold in regard to a belief in an infinite being, it would not hold concerning a concept of an all-perfect being, that such a concept, from the nature of the case, embraces attributes in its contents, it would be sufficient to repeat what has already been said, that we can have no concept of such a being.

If, therefore, our belief in the attributes of God—and without attributes he would not be God—is conditioned upon our conscious observation of phenomena, another proof is added of the position that empirical, or *a posteriori*, elements cannot be detached from the *a priori* constituent in the argument for the existence of God.

4. To the foregoing reasoning the Anselmic argument, as stated and acutely defended by Dr. Shedd, and by him pronounced to be the purest form of the ontological argument for the being of God,<sup>1</sup> constitutes no exception.

(1.) Anselm himself used the terms “idea” and “conception” interchangeably with reference to a perfect being, and Dr. Shedd expressly employs “idea” and “concept” convertibly in the same relation. In the case of the great Schoolman it might be pleaded, but in that of the learned and able author of the *Dogmatic Theology* it cannot, that the precise signification of conception and its product the concept was not definitely settled. That the latter regarded the concept in its strict and proper sense is evinced by the fact that he employs it as an element of the argument evolved in the form of a regular syllogism; but, as it has been already contended, no concept of an all-perfect being is possible. It takes no elaborate argument to show that the apprehension of such a being transcends the scope of the logical understanding, and it is clear that the concept is to be assigned to that faculty. This is not captious criticism, for if we can conceive God we can, at least in a measure, comprehend him, and if anything is certain, it is that he is

<sup>1</sup> *Dogmatic Theology*, pp. 224 ff.



utterly incomprehensible. This is the testimony alike of philosophy and of divine revelation. We firmly believe in the infinite God, but who, by searching with the organ of the thinking reason, can find him out?

A concept is a class-notion; but it is evident that such language cannot be applied to an infinite being. He constitutes no class. He is wholly unique and singular. As he is infinite, there is nothing like him, nothing with which he can be compared, no quality common between him and anything else. He is not a species included under a genus, else he were not infinite. He is not himself a genus, including species under him, for on that supposition the species included under him would include his essence in them, since the essence of the genus descends into the species. He is not subject to the laws of logic, or, what is the same thing, he cannot, as infinite, be conceived. This it is true, is expressly admitted in Dr. Shedd's defence of Anselm's argument; and yet it is held that Anselm constructed "the ontological argument in a syllogistical form." This makes it employ the concept of a perfect being as a class-notion, which will be evinced by a full development of the argument, which really embraces two syllogisms. The first is: If we have the concept of a perfect being, we have that of its necessary existence; we have the concept of a perfect being; therefore, we have the concept of its necessary existence. The second is: If we have the concept of the necessary existence of a being, the being must actually exist; we have such a concept; therefore, the being must actually exist.

On the supposition, therefore, that we have a concept

of an all-perfect being, we are led to make it a sumption, implying a sub-sumption, in a syllogistic process. We get quit of this inconsistency, and of the whole difficulty, in adopting the view that we believe in an infinite being, when the fundamental laws of belief are elicited into formal expression upon the conditions of conscious experience.

(2.) Those who maintain that we have the consciousness of God's existence are involved in the inconsistency of trying to prove what is already certain, and neither needs further proof nor is capable of it. "Although the evidence," remarks Dr. Shedd, "for the divine existence which is most relied upon in scripture, and which is common to all men, is that of immediate consciousness, yet certain syllogistic arguments have been constructed which have the following uses,"<sup>1</sup> etc. Again he says: "A proof of the divine existence is found in man's *God-consciousness*, considered as a universal and abiding form of human consciousness."<sup>2</sup> This language is too explicit to bear the construction that we are conscious of the "idea" or "concept" of God; it expressly affirms the immediate consciousness of God.

But the consciousness of an object is itself the most indubitable evidence of its existence. The consciousness of an object seen is "ocular demonstration" of its existence. This is the assumed standard of certainty. No other proof is demanded. The thing is autopistic. Were we, then, conscious of God, we would have undeniable proof of his existence in that fact. Any other proof would be as superfluous as carrying coals to Newcastle. Of each of the usual proofs it might with truth

<sup>1</sup> *Dogmat. Theol.*, p. 221.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 210.

be said that its "occupation is gone." That we are not conscious of God is proved because, in the first place, if we were conscious of him, we could describe him. Whatever we are conscious of we can describe; but it is evident that we cannot describe God. To describe some of his finite manifestations of himself is not to describe him, as the infinite God. In the second place, consciousness includes in its scope only the finite, and only so much of even the finite as is in relation to it. We may be conscious, for instance, of a section of a mountain range, or of the ocean, but only of that section of either which comes within the comprehension of vision. We may infer, or believe, upon testimony, that there is a vaster section which lies beyond the reach of the eye, but we are not conscious of it. So we may be conscious of a part of the finite, phenomenal manifestations of the infinite, while we cannot be conscious of even them as a whole; but of a part of the infinite we can have no consciousness whatever, for the simple reason that the infinite has no parts. We must either be conscious of it as a whole, or not conscious of it at all, and that a finite being can be conscious of the infinite as a whole is supremely absurd. God is not an object of presentative, intuitive, immediate knowledge. We immediately infer his existence, but cannot immediately know him. Immediate inference gives mediate knowledge. Consciousness never knows inferentially and mediately; nor does it know representatively; it knows presentatively, intuitively—in a word, immediately. Such knowledge of God no finite being can possibly have. To say that we may have a partial consciousness of him is the same as

to say that we may have a consciousness of a part of him. To be partially conscious of a mountain range or of the ocean is to be conscious of a part of them; but it has already been seen that we can have no consciousness of a part of the infinite, since it is a great whole indivisible into parts, either real or imaginary. To say that we may have an "indefinite consciousness" of the infinite is to say nothing in regard to its *extent* or *scope*, but merely to point out that it is not clear, as to its *nature*, within the limits to which it is restricted; and that is to affirm nothing as to its apprehension of the infinite, which infinitely transcends those limits. In the third place, consciousness is limited to phenomena, either within us or without us, and that God is a phenomenon, or an aggregate of phenomena, it were blasphemy to affirm.

To all this it may be replied: That consciousness is treated with a technical narrowness which is unwarrantable; that it has a wider scope than has been assigned to it; that necessary and immediate inferences from consciousness are consciousness itself, upon the universally admitted principle that such inferences are of equal validity with that from which they are derived. The solution of this difficulty, which arises from some confusion of thought, is to be found in the consideration that consciousness itself, and necessary and immediate inferences from it, are of equal validity with each other, but they are not precisely the same. A representative image may be a good and necessary consequence from a percept of consciousness, but the representing image is no more that percept than imagination is consciousness.

A concept may be logically inferable from percepts, but a concept is not a percept, any more than conception is consciousness. Beliefs may be necessarily and immediately inferred from the percepts of consciousness, but beliefs can no more be said to be percepts or acts of consciousness than belief to be consciousness. The distinction admits of general application. A geometrical theorem consists of necessary inferences from axioms, but it were a solecism to call the inferences the axioms. A law necessarily infers certain obligations, but who would assert that the obligations are the law? While necessary inferences from geometrical axioms are of equal validity with the axioms, and while obligations which are necessarily inferred from a law are of equal validity with the law, theorems are not the same with axioms, nor obligations the same with law. So is it with consciousness. Immediate and necessary inferences from its data are of equal validity with itself, but they are not the same as consciousness itself. In fine, consciousness only perceives; it never infers. The inferences from its percepts must be derived by other faculties.

This discussion of the proof furnished by our cognitive nature for the being of God will be closed with a passage from Cousin, which affords a striking testimony to the view which has been advocated:

“These two proofs,” he observes, “are excellent, I repeat; and instead of choosing between them, it is necessary, like the human mind, to accept and employ them both. In fact, they so little exclude each other that each of them contains somewhat of the other. The argument *a priori*, for example, supposes an element *a posteriori*, a datum of observation and experience; for if the

idea of the infinite and of the perfect leads directly to God, and if this idea is given by reason, and not by experience, it is not given to us independently of all experience, since reason would never give it to us without the simultaneous or anterior idea of the finite and of the imperfect, which is derived from experience; only here the experimental datum is borrowed from consciousness, and not from the senses; and again we may say that every phenomenon of consciousness supposes a sensitive phenomenon, simultaneous or anterior. An element *a posteriori* intervenes, then, as a condition of the demonstration *a priori*. So if we reflect upon it, the proof by experience or *a posteriori* implies an element purely rational or *a priori*. In fact, on what condition do you conclude from nature to God? On the condition that you admit or at least that you employ the principle of causality; for if you are deprived of this principle, you will contemplate, you will forever study the world, you will forever adore the order and the wisdom which reign in it, without ever elevating yourself to the supposition that all this is but an effect, that all this must have a cause. Take away the principle of causality, and there are no more causes for us, there is no longer either need or possibility of seeking or of finding any, and induction no longer goes from the world to God. Now, the principle of causality has clearly an experimental condition; but it is not itself borrowed from experience; it supposes it and is applied to it, but it governs and judges it; it belongs properly to the reason. Behold, then, in its turn, an element *a priori* in the proof *a posteriori*. . . . Finally, so many different effects, of which experience does not always show the connection, might well conduct not to a single cause and to God, but to different causes and to a plurality of gods; and history justifies this belief. You then clearly see that the proof *a posteriori*, which at first needs the principle of causality, needs other principles still which direct the application of causality to experience, principles which in order to govern experience should not come from it, and should come from reason. The argument *a posteriori* therefore supposes more than one element *a priori*.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Course of Hist. Mod. Phil.*, pp. 422, 423; Wright's Trans.

## MR. SPENCER'S AGNOSTIC PHILOSOPHY.

---

IN a preceding discussion, Mr. Herbert Spencer's theory of the relativity of knowledge was somewhat carefully considered. It will, therefore, not now be subjected to particular examination. That theory may fairly be regarded as furnishing the fundamental element of agnosticism. It is the justification of a system professing to deal with the "unknowable." Agnosticism avowedly differs from positivism, so far at least as the former is maintained by Mr. Spencer and his school. The latter claims not to be a philosophy, but a scientific arrangement of phenomenal knowledge. All that is phenomenal may be known, and known with certainty. All that transcends phenomena is unknown, and therefore cannot be scientifically handled; but according to Mr. Spencer's statements, in his *Recent Discussions*, in which he repels the allegation that he is a positivist of the school of Comte, agnosticism, while it includes what is deemed true in positivism, goes beyond it. It does not regard itself as restricted to the construction and classification of phenomenal facts, but as entitled to deduce inferences from them and to deal with those inferences philosophically. It is an ontology as well as a phenomenology. Admitting, with the positivist, the unknowableness of what overpasses the limits

of the phenomenal, it further claims to consider these unknowable elements as the object-matter of a legitimate philosophy. As, then, its specific difference contradistinguishing it to positivism is its philosophical treatment of the unknowable, it may justly be defined as the philosophy of the unknowable. Wonderful philosophy! It "passeth knowledge." Every intellectual effort exerted about any subject supposes knowledge—some knowledge at least. Philosophy, consequently, supposes knowledge; but knowledge necessarily implies things known. The differentiating property of this philosophy is the knowledge of things that are not, and cannot be, known. It is not only the knowledge, but the formally systematized knowledge, of the unknowable—the cognition, the philosophical cognition of the incognoscible.

Were this all, the egregious absurdity of its fundamental position, of its very essence as a pretended philosophy, would put it beyond the pale of discussion; but this formidable difficulty Mr. Spencer attempts to relieve by the statement that the fundamental reality, the ultimate force, the infinite and eternal energy, which is unknowable, is apprehended by an indefinite consciousness. We are, although absolutely ignorant of it, "indefinitely conscious" of it; but consciousness, to the extent to which it exists, whether great or small, is knowledge. Who ever heard of an unknowing consciousness? It would be equivalent to an unconscious consciousness, an unknowing knowledge. The proposition, therefore, that we are indefinitely conscious of anything is tantamount to the proposition that we indefinitely know it. Mr. Spencer, consequently, utters the contra-



diction: We have *no* knowledge of the ultimate force; we have *some* knowledge of it. That this is no peculiar construction of his position by an individual mind is apparent from the fact that it has been given by other minds. It is so patent that any one who stops to reflect upon his language must perceive it. Dr. McCosh, for instance, observes: "Though the discoverer of the unknown says it is unknowable, yet it turns out that he knows a great deal about it, and gives us information about it. He tells us that it exists and is a reality; and surely this is some knowledge. He knows it to be without limit, and speaks of it as a force or power. . . . He knows that it is a cause producing an effect, and that it is the cause of all that is known. Surely the known cause of a known thing is so far known." <sup>1</sup> The agnostic philosophy, in short, is founded upon a contradiction in terms: We cannot know the infinite, but we do know it; we are entirely ignorant of it, but we are partially acquainted with it; we indefinitely know the unknowable.

This is the first indictment which may be submitted against the agnostic philosophy. It is radically self-contradictory. Yet, paradoxical as it may seem, this self-contradictoriness gives it its polemic life, its fighting chance. It may be compared to the occupant of a castle with two apartments communicating with each other by a secret passage. Assail him in one, and he retreats to the other. Followed and forced to retire from the second, he flies back to the first. Prove that the agnostic is wrong when he asserts the unknowable-

<sup>1</sup> *Realistic Philosophy*, Vol. II., p. 269.

ness of the infinite, and he covers himself with the affirmation that it is partially knowable. Prove that his characterization of the infinite is inadequate, and he defends himself by affirming its unknowableness. First he does not know, then he knows in part, and finally vindicates his knowledge of a mutilated infinite by pleading that he does not know it. The theory is two-headed. Cut off one head, and while you address yourself to the excision of the other, the first grows again. Turn upon it, and the second resumes its place. The believer in a supernatural revelation would speedily end the contest by employing it to cauterize the wounds, as Iolaus was fabled to have seared with fire the bleeding necks of the Lernæan Hydra, with which Hercules was contending. But as the argument is philosophical, another resort must be had, and there is really no need to invoke supernatural interposition. The knot does not require it. All that is necessary is to strike the two heads against each other until they are simultaneously destroyed by the battery. Demand of the agnostic if he asserts the unknowableness of the infinite. His answer is, Yes. Demand of him if he asserts the indefinite knowledge of the infinite. Again his reply is, Yes. Then, sir, one must retort: Your unknowableness cancels your knowableness, and your knowableness your unknowableness. You commit philosophical suicide—you are *felo-de-se*.

2. If this be so, it may be asked, Why not stop just here? Why pursue the matter any further? Why not leave the system to its fate, the inevitable fate of every system which is founded upon contradictory assump-

tions, which contains in itself the elements of its own destruction? It may, in the first place, be answered: While those who have submitted it to a careful examination may perceive the fact that the edifice is based upon incongruous and explosive materials, it may be different with others, especially young and aspiring students. Not having scrutinized its foundation, but allured by its fair and imposing appearance as a whole, or by the attractiveness of the several parts which constitute it, they enter it unconscious of the danger of ruin to which it and its occupants are exposed. If, by an examination which removes its external garniture and reveals the unsafe character of the superstructure itself, its insecure joints and the unsoundness of the materials which compose it, any ingenuous youth should be deterred from accepting its dangerous shelter, the result would justify the task. Nor will this sort of labor be entirely worthless, if any who believe in God and reverence his name should by it be dissuaded from hanging about the porches of this *doubtful* structure, and tampering with its peril, like the celebrated Roman naturalist and pantheist who is said to have lost his life by approaching, for scientific purposes, too near a discharging volcano. To speak without figure, it may be serviceable to call the attention of those who have not observed the self-contradiction lodged in the general principle of the theory as to knowledge to the untenableness of its particular elements.

In the second place, it may not be uninteresting or useless to show that its fundamental fallacy affects its special developments. Perhaps it will be found that the

genius of self-contradiction which pervades its fundamental assumptions infuses itself into all its particular features. Corrupt at the root, it is natural to expect that it will be corrupt throughout. To evince this would not be uninteresting, since another and a signal illustration will be afforded of the law that false logical principles must conduct to false logical consequences; and it would not be useless, for this philosophical speculation tends to influence all the moral and religious interests of mankind, to exert a revolutionary effect upon the consentient faiths of the human race. It is not only the religionist, but the philanthropist, who is impelled to subject to a critical investigation all the prominent doctrines of a system so radical in its tendencies, so far-reaching in its results.

In the third place, it is not necessary, nor, perhaps, sufficient to restrict the discussion to the proof of the self-contradiction inherent in the agnostic theory, but one is warranted in examining both of the contradictory parts of the theory, because each, separately from the other, is essentially atheistic. The self-contradiction invalidates the theory as a whole, because it is convicted by it of a want of that coherence, which is vital to the integrity of the system; but while this must be insisted upon as damaging to the system, as such, it is legitimate to take up each member of the pair of contradictories, and exhibit its falsity; if for no other reason, for this: were these contradictories the only two which are possible, we would, upon the principle of excluded middle, be compelled to accept one of them as true; but if a third supposition is possible, it might happen that it

would prove to be the true alternative. The argument, in that case, would be obliged to show the untruth of both of the original pair of contradictories, before the truth of the third supposition could be established. Now, in the instance of this particular argument with the agnostic, both of the contradictories he asserts are atheistic; but the third supposition of theism exists. To establish this third alternative, both of the agnostic suppositions must be disproved—namely, the supposition of the absolute unknowableness of the infinite, and that partial knowableness of the infinite, which he affirms; for if either of them be true, atheism is established, and, consequently, theism overthrown. The fact that these contradictory affirmations are contained in Mr. Spencer's theory has already been evinced.

The first of these inconsistent positions, to-wit, that the infinite is unknowable, is atheistic; for if the infinite be unknowable, God is unknowable, since any other than an infinite God—that is, a finite God—is a contradiction in terms. A finite God would be no God at all; but if God be unknowable, he is, to us, non-existent. He would be out of all relation to our faculties. The agnostic may condescend *ex gratia* to say that he does not positively deny the possibility of a God; he may exist, but he does not, and cannot, know the fact. As he does not mean, through excess of modesty, to confess exceptional ignorance, he must be construed as affirming that God is unknowable by the whole race. Those who imagine that they know him are deluded fanatics. There is no such knowledge as they dream of possessing. If Mr. Spencer cannot know him, who else can? If,

then, we cannot know that God exists, he is to us zero. This is atheism. To say, No knowledge of God, is to say, No God. It has been the purport of the foregoing discussions to disprove the hypothesis of the unknowableness of God. What follows will be mainly concerned with Mr. Spencer's *knowable unknowable*.

The second of the contradictory positions of the agnostic—namely, that the infinite is indefinitely known—is also atheistic. It is insisted upon, that this statement of the position is correct. An indefinite consciousness of the infinite is some knowledge of it, or it is nothing; the terms have no meaning. Mr. Spencer affirms a transcendental reality. This, of course, is something. If it were not, if it were nothing, nothing could be predicated of it except that it is nothing. Here, then, we have an existing something. To this transcendental reality he proceeds to assign attributes which characterize it. He ascribes to it power; for he denominates it a force, an energy; and until somewhat is written more clearly than has as yet been, concerning the difference between force and energy, one feels himself entitled to use these terms interchangeably. Force is power in energy. To talk of force abstractly from power which it expresses is to speak unintelligently. This reality is, therefore, powerful. He also attributes to it infinity. He expressly designates it as an infinite energy. Here, then, is a characteristic attribute which differentiates this reality from all that is finite. He declares it to be eternal. He assigns to it the attribute of eternity; that is, it never began, and will never end. Further, he admits its omnipresence. We have, then, an infinite,

eternal, omnipotent and omnipresent reality. Beyond this Mr. Spencer does not go. He knows enough about this transcendental, fundamental reality to ascribe to it these attributes, but he does not know enough about it to say that it is spiritual, or personal, or intelligent, or moral. The inquiry naturally springs up, Why did he stop where he did? If certain phenomena justified the inferences to infinity, eternity, omnipotence and omnipresence, why should not others, equally obvious as data of consciousness, have legitimated the inferences to personality, intelligence and morality?

It is difficult to perceive a valid reason for this arrest put upon the development of necessary inferences which Mr. Spencer, as far as he went, was right in making, unless it be that he full well knew that to develop the inferences deducible from *all* the phenomena would conduct to God. It is fairly to be concluded that he meant to exclude the doctrine of God's existence; but whatever may have been the reason of this extraordinary and unphilosophical procedure, it is perfectly clear that a reality, which is affirmed to be simply an infinite and eternal energy, is not God; and it is equally clear that the limits imposed upon the enumeration of attributes were designed to exclude the doctrine of God's existence. This branch of the theory, therefore, with its inadequate characterization of the infinite reality, is atheistic.

To this it may be objected that a theological element is unwarrantably introduced into a purely philosophical discussion. This demurrer, however, cannot be admitted. There is a sphere of inquiry in which philosophy

and theology meet and blend. It is that of ontology. From its very nature philosophy cannot properly be restricted in its inquiries to the field of natural science, or of mental science, or of moral science, or of logical science. It passes beyond the consideration of phenomena and phenomenal laws, and pushes its inquiries into origins and ends. It demands causes for all that appears to be, nor is it satisfied until it arrives at some ultimate cause in which all minor causes find their centre and bond of unity—something which is the explanation of everything else, the key of the universe. This is Mr. Spencer's procedure as he is a philosopher; and so far he is unquestionably right. In this respect, he is, as to his intentions at least, incomparably superior to the mere positivist. He finds his fundamental reality in a force which is the first cause, the ultimate of ultimates. Of this force he gives the characteristics; it is infinite and eternal. This is his ontology.

No more can theology be confined to the phenomena and phenomenal laws of the religious nature, to religious states, acts and duties. It also makes a demand for origins and ends. Why not? Is it not as well as philosophy entitled to institute these inquiries? Now, the Bible has its first cause, its ultimate of ultimates. This, with Mr. Spencer, it describes as an infinite and eternal energy, but it goes beyond him and affirms that it is also a spiritual, intelligent, personal, creative being. This is its ontology. Let it be supposed, for the moment, that it made no pretension to be a supernatural revelation, but to be simply the recorded results of human speculation, as the agnostic assumes it to be. On that suppo-



sition, it would, so far as its cosmogony is concerned, be merely a philosophy. It would be an ontological speculation. Where, then, would be the difference, with reference to ontology, between philosophy and theology? None whatever, from the point of view of the *nature* of their procedures. The difference would only consist in the doctrines they might enounce in regard to the ultimate being and its relation to the universe. Concerning their views of the conceded fundamental reality, the biblical ontologist and the agnostic ontologist join issue. The one affirms God, the other excludes him. The contest, upon the hypothesis made, is legitimate and fair. The contestants occupy the same field, raise the same questions and address themselves to their solution with the same rational organs of investigation. Where, then, is the unwarrantableness, where the possibility, of introducing a distinctively theological element into the discussion—a *Deus ex machina*? According to the contention of the agnostic himself, it would be reason debating with reason upon the field of reason; and the biblical ontologist confidently undertakes to prove, upon rational grounds, that the atheistic position of the agnostic is irrational. The objection to his doing this because he is called a theologian is simply *ad captandum*. Unfrock him, and you but strip him for the fight in the lists of philosophy. The ontology of the Bible is certainly somebody's ontology, as much so as the agnostic's is his. The fact of its existence cannot be denied. There it is in black and white, a phenomenal reality. It must be met. It bestrides the path of the agnostic and disputes his passage. To treat it with affected contempt

may be convenient, but would argue an arrogant conceit ill-befitting a philosopher; to go round it would infer a timidity as little becoming a hero; and to ignore it would stamp one no scientific registrar of facts.

There are two general aspects in which the Bible may be contemplated, which are obvious upon the slightest inspection of its contents. The one is that in which it claims to state natural truths, the other that in which it professes to enounce redemptive truths. Let us limit our attention to the first of these aspects. Either the Bible as claiming to state natural truths is not a supernatural revelation, or it is. If it be contended that it is not, that contention could not affect the fact that it *does claim* to state natural truths. It would remain true that it furnishes an ontology. To say, then, that the appeal to it, in that respect, is illegitimate, because a professedly hyper-physical element is introduced, would be to speak without meaning. *Ex hypothesi*, an authority is invoked which would be purely natural; but before the agnostic is entitled to take the ground that the Bible, so far as it claims to state natural truths, is not a supernatural revelation, he must overthrow all the evidences to the contrary. To *assume* the fact would be unscientific and unphilosophical. It is sublimely preposterous for the agnostic to make that assumption. The ontology of the Bible chronologically preceded his. It professes, as his does not, to be supported by a tremendous mass of miraculous, and, therefore, supernatural evidence. It has commanded the suffrages of by far the most enlightened part of the human race, and, despite all opposition, it is daily increasing the number of its adherents, and

announces its purpose to overcome every enemy and capture the world. It cannot, therefore, be dismissed with a sneer. It is no bare negation. It is a positive resisting force which menaces the agnostic. In reply to his declaration: I do not know whether there be a God—a declaration of ignorance—it proclaims its positive knowledge of God, and proclaims it from the house-tops with a tone of triumphant confidence which resounds in every tongue of earth, and is tremulous with no presage of defeat. It challenges the agnostic to try conclusions on the field of battle, and when he dismisses its heralds with their beards shaven and their nakedness exposed, it avenges the indignity by storming his strongholds. *Fas est ab hoste doceri*; and if Mr. Spencer would deign to hearken to the counsel of a foe, he would prefix to his ponderous and growing system a refutation of the evidences which sustain the claim of the Bible to be a supernatural revelation, or at least not die until he had appended to it such a refutation. Let him, in this regard, imitate the example of the English deists. Mayhap his success will be greater than theirs. As it is, while he fondly imagines that, with his Medusa's head—the *knowable unknowable*—advanced to the front, he is pushing on to ultimate victory, he leaves behind him an undefeated army, is exposed to continual attacks from an enemy that hangs on his flanks, and is destined to encounter an innumerable and still unconquered host before him with its entrenchments stretched across his road. Mr. Spencer can only complete his system by this negative work of demolition. Otherwise, its positive bulk, its enormous size, will only enhance the danger of

a catastrophe. The more he elevates the pile, the more will it topple to a fall.

In rebuttal of this demand made upon him, the agnostic will, no doubt, say that the requirement is as absurd as it is arbitrary; that the intrinsic merits of a theory are those by which it must be judged, and that, if a theory is in itself better than another, it deserves, on that account, to be preferred, and, from the nature of the case, displaces the other. The fittest must survive. In the abstract, it is conceivable that this rule of judgment would hold. Were the circumstances attending two rival theories the same or analogous, their intrinsic merits would constitute the basis of comparison between them. Here, however, we have a concrete case in which the circumstances environing two competing doctrines are vastly different. One of them claims that in addition to the intrinsic probability of its truth arising from its internal qualities, there is the extrinsic proof, amounting to certainty, which is furnished by historical evidence. The biblical ontology makes this claim, and, further, it professes that this historical evidence evinces the fact of supernatural intervention. This claim to extrinsic proof of the highest character the advocate of the agnostic theory must rebut. He will reply that his theory is supported by the uniformity of nature; but were this allegation admitted—and it is not, for it begs the question—still one clear instance of proved miraculous and supernatural interposition, invading the known course of nature, would wreck his method of proof. One exception to the uniform course of nature would destroy the supposition of its absolute uniformity, as one crook

in a line which has been straight for ever so great a distance would upset the hypothesis of its straightness. The only resort of the agnostic is, with Strauss and the pantheists, to deny the possibility of the miracle. A single instance of miraculous fact, however, would negative his hypothesis of the antecedent impossibility of miracles. Let the agnostic lay aside his colored glasses for a while, and dispassionately consider the prophetic declaration in the thirtieth chapter of Ezekiel: "There shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt," and he may be convinced that there is such an instance. There are many more like it, but *ab uno disce omnes*. It is not intended to enter into the merits of the argument. It is only designed to signalize the logical necessity resting upon the agnostic, not only to prove his own ontology, but also to disprove the claim which the ontology of the Bible makes to be supported by historical evidence of its supernatural origin. Failing that, his system, however imposing, may be likened to "a parable in the mouth of fools," and a certain domestic bird, both of which are noted for standing on one leg; or, to speak more technically, it will afford an illustration, on a gigantic scale, of a violation of the destructive disjunctive conditional syllogism.

If, on the other hand, the Bible as claiming to state natural truths is a supernatural revelation, there is an end of the question: agnosticism is nullified.

3. The questions arise, What right has one, who has not devoted himself to scientific pursuits (in the common English acceptance of *scientific*) to discuss a system which bases itself upon the conclusions of science? Is

he not unfitted to the office which he undertakes? These questions are pertinent, and require serious answers. The treatment of facts may be regarded in several aspects. First, one may content himself with the observation of facts, including their physical and natural relations, and the careful registration of the results of that personal scrutiny. In his case the consciousness, which is common to men, becomes intensified in its relation to facts. The spontaneous consciousness, by an effort of will, is arrested in its natural course, and detained in connection with phenomena. In a word, attention is fixed upon phenomenal facts. Investigation ensues. The recorded results of this investigation are properly denominated scientific. Secondly, one may go on, and, in addition to this careful study of facts, and the record of its results, he may proceed to consider the logical relations of the facts to each other—that is, those relations which are conceived as grounding their synthetic arrangement into a system—and by analysis, abstraction and generalization, may attempt their classification. In this case, he applies, it is true, the organ of logic to the data of observation and experiment; but the systematized arrangement of the facts which is accomplished is also properly regarded as falling under the designation of science. Indeed, this may be considered as science in the truest sense of the term. Classification is the legitimate end for which research was instituted.

Now, if one, without an original observation of facts, should criticise the reported results of those who were original observers, it is evident that he would act not

only illegitimately, but foolishly. He would pit ignorance against knowledge; but when the results of original investigation have been put upon record, and one should patiently, candidly and thoroughly examine that record, it is difficult to see why he is not entitled to pass judgment upon the competency of such classifications as may have been made. He is in possession of the materials upon which a judgment may be formed, materials derived from the original observers themselves, and he is as much justified in using his logic as were those observers theirs. Upon this principle Mr. Spencer himself, if I be not mistaken, professes in great measure to proceed. Having been only to a limited extent an actual experimenter, he derives his information of phenomenal facts and their physical relations from those whom he regards as able and trustworthy observers. Using their reports concerning the facts, he makes, in a broad sense at least, his own classifications and constructs his own system. He would seem to have been, by consent, if not by express agreement, nominated to that office by the school to which he belongs. While, however, these things are so, it is not the purport of this brief paper to challenge Mr. Spencer's classifications. With his statements of facts, and with his scientific arrangement of facts, it is not principally concerned, except in regard to his doctrine of the relativity of knowledge, and the allegations of fact which it involves; and that theory has, in the main, been already criticised; but—

Thirdly, one may transcend the strictly scientific functions which have been indicated; he may pass be-

yond the boundaries which circumscribe what is commonly designated science, as the complement of empirical knowledge, and undertake to philosophize. He then enters upon the domain of philosophical knowledge as contradistinguished to empirical. This he may do both as regards natural and mental science, viewed as the observers and classifiers of physical and intellectual phenomena. As soon as this function is assumed, the procedure is one by which *inferences* are derived from phenomenal facts as empirically known. In a word, one begins to construct an ontology. This Mr. Spencer does. He is both a scientific man and a philosopher. It is not by any means designed to convey the impression that in this he acts illegitimately. On the contrary, the constitution of man is such that it is hard to see how such a course can be avoided. One may, as has already been remarked, refrain from giving expression to philosophical inferences from scientific facts, and purposely confine himself to the function of recording the results of observation and logical classification; but, as a thinker, how can he restrain the spontaneous tendency of the mind to seek for causes, and to pursue the quest for some ultimate principle of unity? and, if, by his very make, he is impelled to do this, his right must be conceded to give utterance to the judgments he has been led to form. The mind is one, and its unity, if it does not enforce the necessity of developing *all* of its fundamental laws, at least, furnishes a warrant to proceed in the actual development of them all. The same man who is scientific is also metaphysical, although by disposition or education, or both combined, he may be pre-



dominantly one or the other. It is true that the scientific man is apt to be a poor metaphysician, and the metaphysician likely to be a poor scientific man, for a universal genius possessed of all learning is a rarity, if not an impossibility. Bacon was no exception to this rule; but one's right to be both a scientific man and a metaphysician cannot be disputed. He is free to try his powers in both directions, and, if he please, to take the enormous risks of the trial. Possibly *he* may prove to be the universal genius, and master of all knowledge. The fact that so glorious a diadem has never yet been worn does not necessarily infer that it never will be.

The quarrel, then, is not with Mr. Spencer's claim to be both scientific and philosophical; it is with the doctrines of his philosophy. One has the same right to discuss his inferences from phenomenal facts as he has to make them, to derive his knowledge of facts from others as well as Mr. Spencer has; yea, to get his information from Mr. Spencer himself; and is no more bound, in order to be qualified for the discussion, to be an experimenter and expert in science than Mr. Spencer was. The meeting is on the field of ontology, and upon equal terms. The territory contended for is not that which is covered by Mr. Spencer's mass of scientific statements; it is the narrow one of inferences. The issue is definite. Upon inferential grounds he excludes the affirmation of God's existence; upon inferential grounds his atheistic position will be disputed. No profession is made of neutrality of mind in relation to the question involved. When one has examined the evidence in a case and has reached settled conclusions, the time

for inquiry is past. The attempt to destroy his innermost convictions brings on a death-grapple with the assailant. The design of the discussion, therefore, is to impeach the agnostic system at the bar of reason, and to convict it of self-contradiction and folly. The challenge comes from the agnostic side; and, although the weapon of defence may be but a pebble, it will be slung at the forehead of the Goliath who hesitates not to defy the living, personal, creative God, to treat with undisguised contempt the proofs of his existence, and to enthrone in his room a blind force compelled by a blind necessity to gender all things by a blind evolution.

4. Mr. Spencer denominates his system a "System of Philosophy," and it is so characterized by his adherents and critics. The questions then occur, To what place in the ranks of philosophies shall it be assigned? or, Is it a wholly new and peculiar philosophy? If Sir William Hamilton's division be accepted, and there is perhaps no better, philosophers are distributable first into the two general classes of nihilists, who deny substance, and substantialists, who admit it. Under the class nihilists there are no species. The substantialists again are divisible into two classes, monists and dualists, or those who allow of but one substance, and those who affirm two. The monists are of three sorts: materialists, who make the one substance material; idealists, who make it spiritual, and absolute identitists, who make it neither predominantly material nor spiritual, but equally material and spiritual, both elements being in absolute equipoise with each other. The class dualists are distributable into two subordinate classes: hypo-

thetical dualists (hypothetical realists, cosmothetic idealists, representative perceptionists) on the one hand, and absolute dualists (absolute or natural realists, immediate perceptionists) on the other.

Mr. Spencer is not a nihilist, for he admits both phenomenal and transcendental reality. He is not a dualist of either kind, for he repels the imputation to him of dualism. In replying to a critic of his views he says:

“Yet he either knows, or has ample means of knowing, that I deny every such second cause: indeed, he has himself classed me as an opponent of dualism.”<sup>1</sup>

It is not necessary to adduce any further testimony than this to prove that he does not consider himself as a dualist. He professes to be neither a materialist nor a spiritualist. He remarks:

“The interpretation of all phenomena in terms of Matter, Motion, and Force, is nothing more than the reduction of our complex symbols of thought to the simplest symbols; and when the equation has been brought to its lowest terms, the symbols remain symbols still. Hence the reasonings contained in the foregoing pages afford no support to either of the antagonist hypotheses respecting the ultimate nature of things. Their implications are no more materialistic than they are spiritualistic, and no more spiritualistic than they are materialistic. Any argument which is apparently furnished to either hypothesis, is neutralized by as good an argument furnished to the other.”<sup>2</sup>

Is Mr. Spencer, then, an advocate of absolute identity? The answer will be, No, or Yes, in correspondence with the meaning attached to the terms of the question. If the meaning be, is he a monist, in the sense that he holds to but one *substance*, equally material and spirit-

<sup>1</sup> Letter appended to his *Principles of Biology*, Vol. I., p. 491.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 491, 492.

ual? Mr. Spencer, if he is not misunderstood, would answer in the negative. If the meaning be, is he an advocate of absolute identity, in a sense peculiar to himself, he would reply in the affirmative. He is a monist, holding to absolute identity, according to his own conception of those terms. What is his conception? He claims to be a monist, in the sense, not that he holds to one substance, but to one ultimate force. Of this one force, eternally immanent in all things, matter and motion are but the forms in which it expresses itself, or, to use Mr. Spencer's language, the modes by which it is conditioned. These conditioning modes, so far as manifested to us, are symbolized by our thoughts. We think them in terms of matter and motion. He cannot, therefore, be reduced, if we allow his own professions, to either of the classes into which Hamilton, and one is apt to suppose reason itself, exhaustively distributes philosophers. Indeed, he claims a new and exceptional position. He entitles his perhaps most celebrated work, *The First Principles of a New System of Philosophy*. He is the originator of a new philosophy.

It may be thought that Mr. Spencer has been incorrectly represented as not being a substantialist. That the characterization is not unjust can, it is believed, be made apparent by his own authority. He denies, or rather ridicules, the existence of moral substance. Speaking of "three different suppositions respecting the origin of things," which he pronounces "literally unthinkable," he says:

"Experiment proves that the elements of these hypotheses cannot even be put together in consciousness; and we can entertain them only as we entertain such pseud-ideas as a square fluid

and a moral substance—only by abstaining from the endeavor to render them into actual thoughts.”<sup>1</sup>

So much for moral substance. He denies and scouts it; but if he rejects moral substance, he is logically bound to reject mental substance, notwithstanding the fact that he expressly admits the latter; for he justly reasons that if there be the quality of intelligence there must be a recondite substance which it manifests. By parity of reasoning, as he concedes the quality of morality, he ought to admit an occult substance which is manifested by it. As, however, he repudiates a substance which is moral, he is under the logical necessity of denying a substance which is mental. From his point of view, a mental substance ought to be as ridiculous as “a square fluid.” The truth is that he does not use the term *substance* in the sense in which substantialists employ it. He means by it force. This does not save him from inconsistency, for if there be an unknowable mental force, for the same reason there ought to be an unknowable moral force; but, allowing him his own illogical position, that there is a mental substance which is the unknown substrate of what he calls mind, it is clear that it is not a substance, in the ordinary acceptance of the word. It is held by him to be force—a mere mode of the primordial force, which, as the ultimate of ultimates, is immanent in all things, in things called material and in things called mental. It is one of the forms in which the ultimate force is by evolution developed. It is evident, then, that Mr. Spencer only holds that there is mental substance, so far as he holds

<sup>1</sup> *First Principles*, pp. 35, 36.

that force is substance, or substance is force. That this is his doctrine might be shown by a multitude of quotations. Let one suffice:

“And this brings us to the true conclusion implied throughout the foregoing pages—the conclusion that it is one and the same Ultimate Reality which is manifested to us subjectively and objectively. For, while the nature of that which is manifested under either form proves to be inscrutable, the order of its manifestations throughout all mental phenomena proves to be the same as the order of its manifestations throughout all material phenomena. The Law of Evolution holds of the inner world as it does of the outer world.”<sup>1</sup>

The case is plain. Mind is motion; motion is force moving. All motion is but the effect and manifestation of the ultimate force. Mind, consequently, is the evolved motion of the ultimate force. To say that mind as motion is but the known manifestation of an unknown postulate is but to say that the unknown postulate is a force manifested by motion. Phenomenal or unphenomenal, mind is force moving or non-moving. Mr. Spencer can call the unperceived mental postulate substance if he please, but he means force; and until force and substance are proved to be identical, he cannot be ranked as a substantialist.

The same is true of matter. Mr. Spencer represents it as a mode, a form of expression, a something, of the ultimate force which is immanent and operative in the universe. It is the primordial force evolved in a certain way. All may be summed up in what he says of matter as relative and absolute:

“Whence it becomes manifest that our experience of *force* is that out of which the idea of Matter is built. Matter, as opposing

<sup>1</sup> *Prin. Psychology*, Vol. I., p. 627.

our muscular energies, being immediately present to consciousness in terms of force; and its occupancy of Space being known by an abstract of experiences originally given in terms of force; it follows that forces, standing in certain correlations, form the whole content of our idea of Matter.

"Such being our cognition of the relative reality, what are we to say of the absolute reality? We can only say that it is some mode of the Unknowable, related to the Matter we know, as cause to effect."<sup>1</sup>

It is obvious that Mr. Spencer's material substance is material force. He is entitled to his own nomenclature, but he speaks a different dialect from the family of substantialists.

What, then, is Mr. Spencer? He is not a nihilist, nor a substantialist, either as dualist or monist, either as materialist, or idealist, or absolute identitist. He is an energist. His system assumes to be a system of energism. His philosophy is the philosophy of force. Whether it has the force of philosophy, is another question. As a theory of knowledge it is that of the knowable unknowable; as an ontology it is that of blind force, proceeding by the law of evolution. As a physicist, he contends for an immaterial matter; as a psychologist for an unintelligent intelligence. No doubt, however, his system has plenty of force in it. As the jurist of the universe, he would have it governed by the law: Might makes right. Force is everything. Force circumgyrates, evolves, dissipates, equilibrates, and dissolves the universe; and then circumgyrates, evolves, dissipates, equilibrates, and dissolves it again; and so on and on, through this law of roundaboutness, it operates

<sup>1</sup> *First Principles*, p. 167.

*in saecula saeculorum.* Yes, Mr. Spencer has excogitated a new system. His philosophy is force, his theology is force, his god is force. The long ascending series of philosophies and theologies have evolved into a climax of intellectual speculation beyond which, as ultimate, the human intelligence cannot go; and unless the human species is on the point of being transmuted into one of grander and loftier powers adequate more fully to grasp the unknowable, the present dispensation of the universe must be at the apex of the evolving process, and is henceforward destined, through the dissipation and equilibration of force, to sink into dissolution. Whether the succeeding dispensation, which shall, by rotary force, emerge from the nebulous *debris* of the present, will evolve a newer and higher philosophy, it might be rash to conjecture. It may be that no higher is inwrapped in the possibilities of the immeasurable future, and that the philosophic culmination of evolution has been reached. Certainly no human intellect of this present time can imagine anything sublimer than the consciousness of absolute mystery.<sup>1</sup>

5. All philosophy pursues the quest for ultimate unity. It cannot rest satisfied short of its attainment. Mr. Spencer is, it is believed, recognized as the most prominent philosopher of the school of evolution. It is true that to Professor James Sully was assigned the distinguished office of writing that section of the article in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* on Evolution, which treats of "Evolution in Philosophy," and from this circumstance it may be inferred that he ranks high as a philosopher

<sup>1</sup> *First Principles.*



of evolution; but Professor Sully himself, in that article, says of Mr. Spencer, "The thinker who has done more than any one else to elaborate a consistent philosophy of evolution on a scientific basis is Mr. Herbert Spencer." Now, Mr. Spencer more than once justly describes philosophy as the "unifier of science,"<sup>1</sup> and expresses himself very precisely to that effect in these words: "To bring the definition to its simplest and clearest form: Knowledge of the lowest kind is *un-unified* knowledge; science is *partially-unified* knowledge; philosophy is *completely-unified* knowledge." We are justified, then, in asking of Mr. Spencer, as the philosophical unifier of science, what the ultimate unity is which he has reached. To get the answer to this question we are obliged to contemplate his philosophy in two aspects—aspects imposed upon it by himself—first, as a theory of knowledge, and, secondly, as an ontological scheme.

(1.) In his *First Principles* he begins with a dissertation, first, on the "Unknowable," and, secondly, on the "Laws of the Knowable." In the first part of this discussion he makes the attempt to effect a reconciliation of science and religion, upon the unknowable as a postulate fundamental and common to both. Now, it must be evident to every one, except Mr. Spencer, that an effort to reconcile two systems which he regards as conflicting, upon any other ground than upon one which involves some element of knowledge—some known principle—possessed by both, would be as extraordinary an enterprise as was ever undertaken by man; but, as he

<sup>1</sup> *First Principles*, p. 171.

insists upon the unknowable as the only possible basis of a mutual understanding, there would present itself to him a tougher difficulty than the reconciliation of science and religion, as he views them; it would be the difficulty of effecting a reconciliation of the unknowable and the knowable. They must not only be reconciled with each other, but there must be some method by which they shall be reduced to ultimate unity. It would not do to say that this is a demand of philosophy, and Mr. Spencer limits the scope of philosophy to the knowable; for call his speculations in regard to the unknowable what one may, they are certainly of the nature of inferences, as could easily be shown by his own express admissions, and they are, therefore, philosophical whether Mr. Spencer concedes the fact or not. He cannot legitimately term some of his inferences philosophical, and deny the appellation to other inferences which he makes. Further, his inferences as to the existence of the unknowable have, in his judgment, force and reality enough to constitute a platform upon which science and religion can stand together, and shake hands with each other. Surely, he would not denominate such inferences theological. What else can they be but philosophical? Either the unknowable is given by Mr. Spencer's science or by his philosophy. By his science is out of the question; therefore, by his philosophy: this is the only possible conclusion. Further still, if Mr. Spencer limits his philosophy to the knowable, as he defines knowable, it goes no farther than the scientific knowledge of the phenomenal, since he says force, even as relative, passes understanding; and if relative force

is included in the knowable, his philosophy would stop short of absolute force, and would, therefore, fail to reach ultimate unity.

But, leaving out of view the question with reference to the term *philosophy*, we cannot fail to observe that Mr. Spencer assumes to have wrought out a "system," a "new system," which consists of two parts—the unknowable and the knowable. Now it is fair to demand unity in this system. Otherwise, it is not a system; it is an incoherent jumble of materials. There must be some point at which the unknowable and the knowable shall come together, and be ultimately unified. That point can be no other than one which shall make the unknowable knowable, the knowable unknowable. Mr. Spencer's system, therefore, at last heads up in the flat contradiction of the unknowable-knowable, or the knowable-unknowable. So much for the quest of unity in his theory of knowledge.

(2.) It has already been sufficiently pointed out that Mr. Spencer professes to be neither exclusively a materialist nor exclusively a spiritualist. He acknowledges both matter and mind, and speaks of the substance of each—the fundamental postulate of the manifestations of each; and it has been shown that he represents both as modes of the ultimate force immanent and operative in all things, our conceptions of matter and mind being but symbols of those modes of force which we call material and mental substance. Here, it must be confessed, that he collects matter and mind into unity upon force. Both, he holds, are modes of force, and these different modes of force condition one and the same ultimate

force. They are not two different kinds of force, but different faces by which the same force is manifested. This looks very much like unity. His ontological system—and his apparent aversion to the term *ontology* can make no real difference—his ontological system would seem to be characterized by ultimate unity. This necessitates the question, Has Mr. Spencer reduced his scheme to ultimate unity? and that question calls up another, Will his alleged ultimate principle of unity do what he claims for it?

These questions must be answered in the negative, upon the incontestable ground that an unknown and unknowable principle of unity can be no principle of unity. Mr. Spencer explicitly settles this matter in two marvellous ways. Speaking of the difficulties which beset “the man of science,” he says:

“Supposing him in every case able to resolve the appearances, properties, and movements of things, into manifestations of Force in Space and Time; he still finds that Force, Space, and Time pass all understanding. Similarly, though the analysis of mental actions may finally bring him down to sensations, as the original materials out of which all thought is woven[!], yet he is little forwarder; for he can give no account of sensations themselves or of that something which is conscious of sensations. Objective and subjective things he thus ascertains to be alike inscrutable in their substance and genesis. In all directions his investigations eventually bring him face to face with an insoluble enigma.”<sup>1</sup>

Here Mr. Spencer maintains that relative forces are, in themselves, apart from their phenomenal manifestations, inscrutable. They pass all understanding. If they could be conceived they would, in some degree, be understood. If they pass all understanding, they must

<sup>1</sup> *First Prin.*, pp. 66, 67.

be inconceivable. This is affirmed of material and mental forces, which are but conditioning modes of the absolute and ultimate force.

Of course, if this is true of relative force, it is *a fortiori* true of absolute force. There is no need to cite passages in order to evince what Mr. Spencer everywhere asserts—that the ultimate force is unknowable. He pronounces it “not a relative, but an absolute mystery.”<sup>1</sup>

How, then, can what Mr. Spencer calls force, although he professes to know nothing about it, although unknowable and absolutely mysterious, be a principle of unity to which his philosophic system is ultimately reducible? Does philosophy, which assumes to be an illustrious form of knowledge, which Mr. Spencer himself not incorrectly designates as the “unifier of science,” logically gathering up its multitudinous facts into splendid generalizations, and referring them to original causes and all-pervading laws—does philosophy ultimate in a blank? Is this to unify science—to affirm of its last conclusions that they are incapable of being known, to guess at its final principle?

It will not do to say that Mr. Spencer restricts the office of philosophy to relative force; for he pronounces relative force unknowable. The question would be, How can philosophy subordinately unify the facts of science upon a relative force, of which the unifying organ knows nothing? And if his philosophy, when discharging a confessedly legitimate function, cannot reach subordinate unity in unknowable relative prin-

<sup>1</sup> *First Prin.*, p. 46.

ciples, how can Mr. Spencer's system, as a whole, attain to ultimate unity in an unknowable absolute principle?

Nor will it do to say that, although we do not, and cannot, know force, relative or absolute, our knowledge being confined to its phenomenal manifestations, yet we are "indefinitely conscious" of it. Either this indefinite consciousness of it is some knowledge or it is not. If it is, Mr. Spencer is reduced to self-contradiction; for he would affirm that we possess some knowledge of what is unknowable. If it is not, the existence of force, relative or absolute, being altogether unknown, would be a mere supposition; and it is clear that such a supposition would not be sufficient to ground the existence of an ultimate principle of unity to which the known facts of the universe are sought to be reduced.

Further, Mr. Spencer's attempted solution of the difficulty attending the apprehension of unphenomenal, transcendental existence, by attributing that apprehension to an indefinite consciousness, which, at the same time, is not knowledge, is utterly inconsistent with another solution of the same difficulty which he frequently suggests, without appearing to perceive the incongruity between them, or making any effort to harmonize them. He maintains that relative force, material and mental, as modes conditioning the absolute force, and the absolute force itself, are postulates made necessary by the empirical observation of phenomenal facts. We cannot know mental substance, we cannot know material substance, but they are fundamental postulates. Much less can we know the absolute, the ultimate reality, but it is the inevitable postulate alike

of science and religion; here they meet and kiss each other.

The question occurs, By what organ are these postulates enforced? A postulate is something demanded. These postulates of Mr. Spencer are manifestly things which are necessarily inferred from or supposed by certain other things which are given. Given certain mental phenomena, we necessarily infer or suppose mental substance. So with material phenomena. We do not *know* the mental or material force which is a conditioning mode of the absolute force, nor do we *know* the absolute force, but we necessarily infer or suppose their existence—we postulate them. Now, what does the inferring or supposing—the postulating? It surely cannot be consciousness. It is not its business to infer or suppose. It immediately knows. The objects upon which it terminates are percepts. It never infers or supposes anything. If another power makes the inference or supposition, consciousness apprehends the mental act; but it does not originate it. It neither mediately nor immediately infers. It is evident that the postulation of relative and absolute force, lying as they do beyond consciousness, is done by an act of judgment. Consciousness gives the phenomenal facts which necessitate their postulation, but that is all that consciousness accomplishes. Some other power must form the judgment, occasioned by these empirical facts, that occult force exists. It is not needful now to show what the power is which infers, supposes—postulates transcendental reality. It has already been evinced that as consciousness cannot do it, and as thought cannot

transcend consciousness, thought cannot do it; and that it is the believing power which forms these judgments as to existences that lie beyond the reach of consciousness and thought. They are *faith-judgments*; and faith-judgments are as valid grounds of knowledge as are thought-judgments.

But what it is of importance to signalize here is that consciousness, indefinite or definite, cannot do the postulation of relative and absolute force, which Mr. Spencer admits to be a necessary procedure of intelligence. If this be so, he utterly fails to show how his transcendental realities of relative and absolute force becomes apprehensible—how we become aware of their existence. If he attributes them to indefinite consciousness, and at the same time asserts that they are necessarily inferred, he employs affirmations which are inconsistent with each other, and yet makes no attempt to reconcile them. His indefinite consciousness cannot give ultimate unity: it were absurd to think so; and he does not tell us how or why we postulate it.

The conclusion is that Mr. Spencer fails to reduce his system to ultimate unity. The system, as such, is, therefore, a failure. It does not advance one step beyond positivism; for he not only asserts that we can know nothing of the absolute or ultimate force, but that we can know nothing of relative force, of matter and mental substance. What, then, can we know beyond the phenomenal? Is not this the position of the positivist? Mr. Spencer vehemently repudiates the positivist position in regard to transcendental reality, and then elaborately argues in its favor. He reminds one of the



mother described by Shakespeare, who abuses her child, but when another follows her example, hugs it to her bosom, and fondly caresses it.

6. Let us examine Mr. Spencer's doctrine(?) concerning what he calls the fundamental reality, the inscrutable power, the absolute force, the ultimate force, the first or ultimate cause, the ultimate of ultimates.

(1.) With reference to the knowledge of its nature, he contradicts himself.

First. He affirms that we can know nothing about it—that it is unknowable. He labors to show that this is the final conclusion both of religion and science, and that it is upon this agnostic conclusion a reconciliation between religion and science becomes possible. They agree in affirming an "absolute mystery." They are, in this relation, joint confessors of absolute ignorance. It is unnecessary to furnish citations from Mr. Spencer's writings to prove that he holds this position. He asserts or implies it everywhere.

Secondly. He affirms the existence of this unknowable reality. Some passages will be quoted in proof of this:

"To sum up this somewhat too elaborate argument: We have seen how, in the very assertion, that all our knowledge, properly so-called, is Relative, there is involved the assertion that there exists a Non-relative. . . . We have seen that unless a real Non-relative or Absolute be postulated, the Relative itself becomes absolute; and so brings the argument to a contradiction. And on contemplating the process of thought, we have equally seen how impossible it is to get rid of the consciousness of an actuality lying behind appearances; and how, from this impossibility, results our indestructible belief in that actuality."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *First Prin.*, pp. 96, 97.

“Though the Absolute cannot in any manner or degree be known, in the strict sense of knowing, yet we find that its positive existence is a necessary datum of consciousness; that so long as consciousness continues, we cannot for an instant rid it of this datum; and that thus the belief which this datum constitutes[!] has a higher warrant than any other whatever.”<sup>1</sup>

“Magnetism, heat, light, etc., which were awhile since spoken of as so many distinct imponderables, physicists are now beginning to regard as different modes of manifestation of some one universal force; and in so doing are ceasing to think of this force as comprehensible.”<sup>2</sup>

In his *First Principles* he admits “the power manifested to us through all existence,”<sup>3</sup> frequently allows the existence of “an ultimate cause,”<sup>4</sup> and near the close of his discussion on the Reconciliation of Religion and Science, says:

“He [that is, a member of the school which Mr. Spencer represents], like every other man, may properly consider himself as one of the myriad agencies through whom works the Unknown Cause; and when the Unknown Cause produces in him a certain belief, he is thereby authorized to profess and act out that belief.”<sup>5</sup>

Thirdly. Mr. Spencer gives us a characterization—a description of the attributes of—the ultimate reality. It is power, force, energy, cause. It is omnipotent, omnipresent, infinite, eternal. It is characterized by unity. In a comparatively recent paper he designates it as *an infinite and eternal energy*—a limitation which elicited a protest from Mr. Harrison. We have, then, an existence characterized by the attributes of infinity, eternity, unity, power and ubiquity. It is useless to go into a spasm of quotations to prove this allegation; it is justified everywhere in Mr. Spencer’s works.

<sup>1</sup> *First Prin.*, p. 98.      <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.      <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 112.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 113, and elsewhere.      <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 123.

Now, put together these affirmations: that a thing is unknowable; that, nevertheless, it exists; and that it is characterized by certain definite attributes; and you have a stupendous contradiction which must sink Mr. Spencer's system. No plea of indefinite consciousness, or of necessary postulation, or of a belief constituted of a datum of consciousness can avert the catastrophe.

(2.) He is self-contradictory as to the relation of the ultimate reality to the origin of the universe.

First. He declares that no hypothesis in regard to the origin of the universe is tenable. Referring to the different attempts which have been made to solve this problem, he says:

"A critical examination, however, will prove not only that no current hypothesis is tenable, but also that no tenable hypothesis can be framed."<sup>1</sup>

Secondly. He affirms that the unknowable ultimate force is the cause of the universe. Proof that he makes this affirmation has already been furnished; but that which causes anything originates it; at least, that which is the ultimate or first cause of anything originates it. Is not this an hypothesis respecting the origin of the universe? No hypothesis can be framed concerning it; here is an hypothesis which Mr. Spencer frames concerning it. He cannot know the cause of the universe; but he knows that the ultimate force is its cause.

Thirdly. He elaborately discusses three suppositions which may be made respecting the origin of the universe—namely, either "that it is self-existent; or that it is self-created; or that it is created by an external agency."

<sup>1</sup> *First Prin.*, p. 30.

Touching these suppositions his concluding comment is in these words :

“ Here, then, respecting the nature of the universe, we seem committed to certain unavoidable conclusions. The objects and actions surrounding us, not less than the phenomena of our own consciousness, compel us to ask a cause; in our search for a cause we discover no resting place until we arrive at the hypothesis of a First Cause; and we have no alternative but to regard this First Cause as Infinite and Absolute. These are inferences forced upon us by arguments from which there appears no escape. It is hardly needful, however, to show those who have followed us thus far, how illusive are these reasonings and their results. But that it would tax the reader’s patience to no purpose, it might easily be proved that the materials of which the argument is built, equally with the conclusions based on them, are merely symbolic conceptions of the illegitimate order.”<sup>1</sup>

Here we have several first-rate contradictions.

In the first place, he elsewhere affirms the ultimate force to be infinite and eternal. Of course, then, it is self-existent; for, if not self-existent, it derived its existence from a cause preceding it; it begun, which is contrary to the supposition that it is infinite and eternal; but Mr. Spencer identifies the universe with the ultimate force. He explicitly and repeatedly says that the ultimate force is immanent in the universe, not simply as present and abiding in it—as theists affirm of God—but as being the very content of the universe. Matter, spirit, motion are but modes of manifestation of the ultimate force. They are it as manifested. He is not a progressionist, but distinctively an evolutionist. He repudiates progressionism. All things, therefore, according to him, are evolved out of the ultimate force;

<sup>1</sup> *First Prin.*, pp. 38, 39.

they are relative forces modifying and manifesting the ultimate and absolute. It logically follows, then, that the universe is self-existent. Of things which are the same with each other, the same predication may be made. We have, then, the contradiction of the affirmation and the denial of the self-existence of the universe.

Suppose that this be objected to on the ground that matter, spirit, motion, are but parts of the ultimate force, and, therefore, not liable to the same predication with it; the answer would be that parts of the ultimate force would, on the supposition, not be self-existent, while that force itself is self-existent, and that position is self-contradictory for two reasons: first, the infinite can have no parts; and, second, the infinite cannot be partly self-existent and partly not self-existent; but Mr. Spencer affirms the ultimate force to be infinite, and relative force to be the same with it.

In the second place, Mr. Spencer pronounces the judgment that the first cause is infinite and absolute to be illusive, to be a symbolic conception of the illegitimate order. Now Mr. Spencer elsewhere maintains that the ultimate force is infinite and absolute. No matter by what process he reaches this conclusion, whether by indefinite consciousness, or belief constituted of a datum of consciousness, or by necessary inference, he reaches it and asserts it. He, therefore, affirms the contradiction that the conclusion to a first cause as infinite and absolute is at once illusive and valid.

In the third place, he is not only confronted with that contradiction in regard to the existence of the absolute, but also with the contradiction that the ultimate force

is absolute and not absolute. The absolute, according to him, is that which is out of all relation—at least, is that which, as an “absolute mystery,” is not known to have any relation; and yet, he maintains that all things, material and spiritual, are modes by which the absolute manifests itself. Are the modes of manifestation out of relation to that which they manifest? Are they also out of relation to that to which the manifestation is made—to the conscious observers of the phenomenal manifestations? This is marvellous: the absolute is not known to be in relation to aught else; the absolute is manifested to the consciousness of all men. The absolute is the unconditioned and the conditioned; it is the absolute and the relative.

In the fourth place, we encounter a contradiction in regard to the first cause. It is almost superfluous to remark that the first cause and the ultimate cause are one and the same. It is termed *ultimate* when viewed as reached by an analytical and regressive procedure of the mind—it is the last cause thus attained. It is denominated *first* when contemplated as the original efficient, or producer, of all things. Let this be granted, and the contradiction becomes apparant. Mr. Spencer declares the process by which a first or ultimate cause is reached to be illusive, and the judgment affirming it to be based on merely symbolic conceptions of the illegitimate order. Now he distinctly and repeatedly maintains the existence of an ultimate cause of the universe. His ultimate force is the ultimate cause. If not, if his ultimate force is produced by the ultimate cause, it is not the ultimate force, since, *ex hypothesi*, it was pro-

duced by the force of the ultimate cause. There would then be a force preceding the ultimate force, which is a contradiction; but we understand Mr. Spencer as identifying the ultimate force and the ultimate cause. This judgment, therefore, of an ultimate cause, however derived, he affirms, and must regard as valid. He is consequently reduced to the contradiction of maintaining that the judgment of an ultimate or first cause is both illusive and valid.

To this it will, no doubt, be replied that the charge of contradiction is based upon a misconstruction of Mr. Spencer's position; that he was contending against the legitimacy of an argument in favor of a first cause, founded upon *concepts* as its materials—an argument which, using subordinate concepts, professes to arrive at the final *concept* of a first cause; whereas, he reaches an ultimate cause in an entirely different way; and it will be said that he fairly justifies himself by the authority of the Christian philosophers, Hamilton and Mansel. This defence of Mr. Spencer's position is utterly vain.

Hamilton, and especially Mansel, contended against the doctrine in regard to the infinite and absolute, which was held by the transcendental absolutists of Germany. The latter developed the radical fallacy of Kant, that the ideas of the pure reason, which give transcendental matter, are but higher concepts grouping into ultimate generalizations the concepts of the understanding which that faculty cannot reduce to unity. The judgments which affirm the infinite and absolute are concepts—they are the products of thought. This the British philosophers denied, and rightly denied. They showed

that the mere thinking faculty, when it makes the impossible attempt to conceive the infinite, becomes entangled in a network of insoluble antinomies. Now did Mr. Spencer simply pursue the laudable end of these philosophers, no objection would here be offered to his position. It is true that Hamilton and Mansel, having accomplished this negative office, ought to have gone on, and applied their mighty powers to the positive explication and systematic arrangement of those faith-judgments which alone, and which legitimately, affirm the infinite—to have formally developed the profound views of Jacobi, without the errors which crippled the speculations of the German Plato.

But, up to the point at which they disproved the absolutist assumption that it is competent to conception to give the infinite, they were right; and up to that point Mr. Spencer is right, so far as he concurs with them. That being conceded, it is, on the other hand, idle to justify Mr. Spencer in his illegitimate extension of their views beyond the limit to which, as theistic and Christian philosophers, they meant them to be restricted. He uses them in an argument designed, not only to refute absolutism, but theism; and it can be regarded as nothing less than an outrage to cite Hamilton and Mansel as being, either explicitly or by logical inference, in his favor, so far as his anti-theistic position is concerned. These distinguished men denied that we can *think* an infinite first cause, as creator, but they did not dream of denying his existence. They affirmed it as a datum of faith. What conception or thought cannot do, the higher faculty of faith does. They impaired their



posthumous influence, and left themselves exposed to misconstruction, by failing to show how the transcendental judgments of faith are symbolically, but validly, employed by the logical faculty in the construction of the theistic *argument*. Notwithstanding this defect, their authority is abusively invoked in an effort to prove that, because the theistic argument is not composed of concepts as its materials, it is illusive and invalid. It does not, therefore, at all help Mr. Spencer to defend him by saying that he was contending against the legitimacy of an argument in favor of a first cause founded upon concepts as its materials, and by alleging that, in this respect, he is supported by the splendid authority of Hamilton and Mansel.

Further, although Mr. Spencer may have succeeded in showing that an argument for a first or ultimate cause founded upon concepts is illusive, he himself professes to hold the existence of a first or ultimate cause. The question is, How does he ground its affirmation? If he says that it is a necessary postulate, the question is, What is it that postulates? He is compelled to answer, The thinking faculty; but that faculty proceeds by concepts as its materials, and so he is reduced to the contradiction of affirming and denying that we reach the first or ultimate cause by conception. If he says that we are indefinitely conscious of it, he is embarrassed by his admission of the Hamiltonian canon: thought cannot transcend consciousness; which certainly implies that thought can go up to the limits of consciousness. If, therefore, we are indefinitely conscious of the ultimate cause, we can indefinitely think or conceive it;

and we are surprised by the contradiction: we cannot and we can conceive the ultimate cause. Again, if it be true that conception cannot transcend consciousness, it is equally true that consciousness cannot transcend conception; and we meet the further contradiction: we cannot conceive the first cause, but we are conscious of it. If he says that we apprehend the ultimate cause by a belief consisting of a datum of consciousness, he confounds belief with consciousness—he identifies them; for that which consists of a thing is of the same nature with it; but who ever heard that belief and consciousness are one and the same? If he says that we apprehend the ultimate cause simply by belief, he gives up his whole agnostic philosophy, and incontinently surrenders to the theist. Taking Mr. Spencer, then, on either of the various roads—and they are divergent—by which he seeks to reach the first or ultimate cause, he is led to either self-contradiction or self-inconsistency.

Mr. Spencer elaborately endeavors to prove what few would deny—that there can be no *conception* of self-existence, or self-creation, or creation by external agency. Granted. Hamilton and others had abundantly proved that before him. Common sense had always proved it. The fallacy consists in supposing that there is any respectably supported hypothesis favoring the *conception* of the origin of the universe. The question is in regard to a *belief* in its origin. No sensible man believes in the self-existence of the finite. Almost all men believe in the self-existence of the infinite. Mr. Spencer himself believes in it. Else why his affirmation of an infinite and eternal energy? But if he believes in

it, the whole question of the conception of it is dismissed.

Mr. Spencer, moreover, argues in favor of the extraordinary supposition that the ultimate cause transcends intelligence and will. This hypothesis is advocated for the purpose of vindicating his somewhat heated declaration that he neither affirmed nor denied personality.<sup>1</sup> Touching this palpably atheistic position, he remarks:

“This, which to most will seem an essentially irreligious position, is an essentially religious one—nay, is *the* religious one, to which, as already shown, all others are but approximations. In the estimate it implies of the Ultimate Cause, it does not fall short of the alternative position, but exceeds it. Those who espouse this alternative position make the erroneous supposition that the choice is between personality and something lower than personality; whereas the choice is between personality and something higher. Is it not just possible that there is a mode of being as much transcending Intelligence and Will as those transcend mechanical motion? It is true that we are totally unable to conceive any such higher mode of being. But this is not a reason for questioning its existence; it is rather the reverse.”<sup>2</sup>

This is a desperate attempt, made with clenched teeth, to get quit of a personal God. How little force there is in it will be made to appear by one or two obvious considerations.

First. Mr. Spencer admits human personality. The following passage is in proof:

“As a preparation for dealing hereafter with the principles of sociology, I have, for some years past, directed much attention to the modes of thought current in the simpler human societies; and evidence of many kinds, furnished by all varieties of uncivilized men, has forced on me a conclusion harmonizing with that lately expressed in this *Review* by Prof. Huxley—namely, that the sav-

<sup>1</sup> *First Prin.*, p. 108.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.

age, conceiving a corpse to be deserted by the active personality who dwelt in it, conceives this active personality to be still existing," etc.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Spencer, then, must concede the legitimacy of arguing from our own personal will. Now he may be safely challenged to show how we get our belief in cause, except as it is conditioned by the conscious volitions of our own wills by which certain phenomenal changes are effected. Think away this genesis of the causal judgment, and naught would remain but the observation of the relation of antecedence and sequence; and to call that relation one of cause and effect would be to abuse the language and insult the intelligence of mankind. The law of causality is a fundamental element of our intellectual constitution, but it is the efficiency of our wills, when exerted, that affords the concrete experience which brings out the law into formal expression in actual judgments affirming the relation of cause and effect. Take away the exercises of the will, and the law of causality would be entirely dormant. Take away the intelligence, and there would be no law of causality. The existence of the law supposes the intelligence, and the consciousness of its empirical development supposes the will.

How, then, it may be demanded, does Mr. Spencer get his affirmation of an ultimate cause? He employs his own intelligence and will, which alone give him the apprehension of cause, to show that the ultimate cause transcends intelligence and will. Granted that he may get force, the question is pressed, How does he get

<sup>1</sup> *Recent Disc.*, pp. 34, 35.

cause? If his ultimate force is not possessed of intelligence, it is unconscious. If it is devoid of will, it is impersonal. It is a blind, unconscious, impersonal force. He has no ground upon which to affirm of it that it is a cause. Were he to say that he neither affirms nor denies of it causality, just as he says that he neither affirms nor denies of it personality, the case would be somewhat different; but he affirms that the ultimate force is the ultimate cause. Such an affirmation is arbitrary and groundless. He is reduced to the alternative of holding that, although called cause, it is in the category of antecedence and sequence; and then he must maintain that it is either an infinite and eternal antecedent, or an infinite and eternal series of antecedents and sequents. An infinite antecedent it cannot be, for an antecedent is limited and conditioned by its sequent; and no mere antecedent could be infinite, which implies the absence of limitation and conditions. Neither could it be an eternal antecedent, for an antecedent, from its very nature, supposes temporal succession, and is conditioned by time in its relation to its sequent. Nor yet could it be held to be an infinite and eternal series of antecedents and sequents; for a series consists of parts. Each of these parts limits and conditions some other part, and is consequently finite; but what is predicable of all the parts is predicable of the whole. Therefore, the whole must be finite. The supposition of infinity is destroyed. Further, as each of the parts is finite, it began. The whole, therefore, began, and the supposition of eternity is impossible.

Further, an infinite cause must be one to which all

the perfections that it is possible to predicate of cause actually belong; for if it is deficient in any of these perfections, it is not infinite. The infinite is the perfect. But Mr. Spencer does not assign to his ultimate cause intelligence, will, personality, and—it may be added—moral character, perfections which are attributable to a cause. Consequently his ultimate cause cannot be infinite. Yet he affirms it to be infinite and eternal.

Secondly. The attempt to get quit of intelligence and personal will in the ultimate cause is vain, because such a cause could not originate the universe, so far as it involves intelligence and personal will in its constituent parts. Mr. Spencer admits the existence of the intelligence and personal will of men. The question is, How did they originate? His answer must be, In the causal agency of the ultimate force; but is this causal agency creative? He answers, No. How, then, do human intelligence and will originate? He replies, In the ultimate force evolving itself by the law of immanent necessity. The further question then presses, How can an unintelligent, impersonal force be a cause of intelligence and personal will by evolution?

The theist concedes that as God is a free cause he may produce existence, which is essentially different in nature from his own. He is, he holds, a pure spirit, but being a free cause, he may create matter; but did the theist hold that God evolves matter, he would contradict himself. In the same way, Mr. Spencer contradicts himself when he contends that an unintelligent, impersonal cause, which is, therefore, not free, but necessary, evolves from itself intelligence and personality. An

ultimate free cause may, by its free acts, produce existences which are *essentially* different from each other, even contradictory to each other—spirit and matter, for example; but an ultimate necessary cause could not do the same, for it operates, by the law of its being, in one necessary mode, which excludes variation. Two necessary modes of operation, resulting in contradictory effects, would imply self-contradiction in the operating cause; and if it be said that the contradictory modes of operation are grounded in contradictory necessary laws or principles in the original cause itself, the case is reduced to egregious absurdity—an ultimate self-contradictory cause! Two insuperable difficulties oppose Mr. Spencer's hypothesis of an unintelligent and impersonal ultimate cause: one, that it produces, by evolution from itself, intelligent and personal existences which are essentially different from itself; the other, that it evolves unintelligent and impersonal existences and also intelligent and personal existences which are essentially different from each other. The truth is that Mr. Spencer perpetrates a solecism when he denominates his ultimate force a cause. It does not produce, it evolves. It is not efficient, it is only effluent. So much for an ultimate cause which probably transcends intelligence and personality; for an hypothesis that would make an unintelligent and impersonal thing infinitely superior to an intelligent and personal being.

(3.) Mr. Spencer is self-contradictory with reference to the relation of his ultimate force to the evolution of the universe.

Let us get a general view of his theory in regard to

this matter. The universe is subject to two great processes, which are complementary to each other, namely, evolution and dissolution. Evolution consists in the integration of matter; dissolution in the dissipation of motion. What is evolved always tends to be dissolved. The final result of the operation of these two "antagonistic" forces is the dissolution of the universal system into a nebular mass; but force is persistent, and motion indestructible. This "necessitates a reverse distribution" of matter. The nebular stuff begins again to rotate, and the competing forces of evolution and dissolution are started upon a fresh race, to end in a like result. This goes on forever. He himself furnishes a marvellous picture of this interminable circumgyration of universes:

"Motion, as well as Matter, being fixed in quantity, it would seem that the change in the distribution of Matter which Motion effects, coming to a limit in whichever direction it is carried, the indestructible Motion thereupon necessitates a reverse distribution. Apparently, the universally co-existent forces of attraction and repulsion, which, as we have seen, necessitate rhythm in all minor changes throughout the universe, also necessitate rhythm in the totality of its changes—produce now an immeasurable period during which the attractive forces predominating, cause universal concentration, and then an immeasurable period during which the repulsive forces predominating, cause universal diffusion—alternate eras of Evolution and Dissolution. And thus there is suggested the conception [!] of a past during which there have been successive Evolutions analogous to that which is now going on; and a future during which successive other such Evolutions may [!] go on—ever the same in principle, but never the same in concrete results."<sup>1</sup>

These counter-working forces of evolution and disso-

<sup>1</sup> *First Prin.*, pp. 536, 537.



lution Mr. Spencer brings into unity in persistent force. The whole integrating process of evolution is to be ultimately referred to persistent force. So, also, the whole disintegrating process of dissolution is to be ultimately assigned to persistent force. Both processes are unified upon the same principle:

"We even saw grounds for the belief that the far vaster masses dispersed at almost immeasurable intervals through space, will, at a time beyond the reach of finite imaginations, share the same fate; and that so universal Evolution will be followed by universal Dissolution—a conclusion which, like those preceding it, we saw to be deducible from the Persistence of Force.

"It may be added that in so unifying the phenomena of Dissolution with those of Evolution, as being manifestations of the same ultimate law under opposite conditions, we also unify the phenomena presented by the existing universe with the like phenomena that have preceded them and will succeed them—so far, at least, as such unification is possible to our limited intelligences."<sup>1</sup>

"The recognition of a persistent Force, ever changing its manifestations, but unchanged in quantity throughout all past time and all future time, is that which we find alone makes possible each concrete interpretation, and at last unifies all concrete interpretations."<sup>2</sup>

Let it be observed that this unifying persistent force is the same with Mr. Spencer's fundamental reality, which he variously designates as the ultimate force, the ultimate cause, the infinite and eternal energy, the ultimate of ultimates, and the way is open for the criticisms which will be made.

First. It would seem manifest that it is incorrect to term Mr. Spencer the philosopher of evolution. He is the professed philosopher of evolution and dissolution.

<sup>1</sup> *First Prin.*, p. 550.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 552.

He is not only an evolutionist, but a dissolutionist. His is not merely an evolving, but a dissolving philosophy (and since he wills it so to be, so mote it be!). An outsider has no right to quarrel with the names selected by a family, but it is respectfully suggested that the analysis already in these remarks submitted is correct in representing Mr. Spencer's philosophy as the New Philosophy of Force. His ultimate reality, upon which he reduces everything to unity, is an energy which, from itself, evolves the systems of the universe and evermore dissolves them; and then evermore evolves again the systems which it has dissolved.

Secondly. He makes the infinite finite, and the finite infinite. He holds that his ultimate force is infinite. He also contends that matter and motion—and he includes mind in motion—as relative forces are, as we have seen, modes of manifestation of the infinite force. Now matter and motion are finite. They are, as Mr. Spencer would allow, limited and conditioned. The modes of a thing are the thing itself modified. The conclusion is obvious that Mr. Spencer represents the infinite force as evolving itself into the finite; which is a stupendous contradiction. The pantheist objects to the theistic doctrine, that it makes the creative will of an infinite being in its acts terminate upon the finite; but such a difficulty is nothing compared with that inhering in the pantheistic doctrine that the infinite becomes the finite. The difference between the pantheist and Mr. Spencer—that the former makes an infinite substance, the latter an infinite force, become by evolution finite—does not affect the application of this *reduc-*

*tio ad absurdum* to the agnostic philosopher. It will not answer to say that the infinite force and its modes are not one and the same, and hence not susceptible of common predication. Abstract matter and mental substance from the infinite force, and what becomes of the infinite force itself? What is it that is immanent in matter and spirit considered as different from the ultimate force? Further, if the modes matter and motion are different from the ultimate force, another contradiction is admitted—namely, that the evolver is evolved into something different from itself.

The contradiction that the infinite becomes finite involves the other contradiction, which has been mentioned, that the finite is infinite. Mr. Spencer concedes the finiteness of matter and motion; but he says that they are the infinite force as modified. It follows that the finite relative forces, being said to be the absolute force as modified, are what the infinite force is: infinite. The case being viewed from both sides, the side of the infinite evolved into the finite, and the side of the finite identified with the infinite, Mr. Spencer is reduced to the contradiction of asserting an infinite-finite force.

Thirdly. Mr. Spencer makes the infinite pass through innumerable changes. It passes through all the changes to which the inorganic and the organic worlds are subject. It is evolved, it is nebular, it is rotated, it is crystallized, it is organized, it is differentiated, it is equilibrated, it is dissipated, it is dissolved. It is not that the infinite force decrees and effects these changes, it is the infinite force itself which is thus changed. Else what means evolution? It needs scarcely

to be observed that the theistic doctrine is not liable to this objection. That an infinite being should freely cause changes is credible; but that an infinite force, acting by necessity, should evolve into changing modes different from each other, as, for example, inorganic and organic, dead and living—this involves self-contradiction, and, therefore, passes the limits of belief. A revolving, evolving, dissolving infinite is something that imposes too severe a tax upon even a boundless credulity.

Fourthly. Mr. Spencer makes the unconditioned cause conditioned. That he represents the ultimate cause as unconditioned will be conceded by every reader of his works. For instance, he says, "Force, as we know it, can be regarded only as a certain conditioned effect of the unconditioned cause."<sup>1</sup> But it is held that relative force is the conditioning manifestation of the absolute force, which is the same with the unconditioned cause. This unconditioned cause does not manifest itself by created effects—the hypothesis of creation is rejected—but through modes which are evolved from itself and condition itself. The universe is the conditioned manifestation of the infinite evolving force—that is, in other words, it is the infinite force as conditioned in order to be manifested. There is no other way in which the conditioned manifestation of an infinite evolving force can be apprehended. The unconditioned cause is ever conditioning itself in the evolution of the universe. The universe is itself as conditioned.

Either the universe is spontaneously generated; or

<sup>1</sup> *First Prin.*, p. 170.

it is created; or it is evolved. To say the first would be to break with science; to affirm the second would be to agree with theism; Mr. Spencer holds neither—he contends that it is evolved. Well, then, the universe is the evolving force as evolved; but the universe is conditioned. The contradiction cannot be escaped of a conditioned unconditioned cause as the evolver of the universe.

That Mr. Spencer has not been here misrepresented will appear from the following utterance:

“I recognize no forces within the organism, or without the organism, but the variously-conditioned modes of the universal immanent force; and the whole process of organic evolution is everywhere attributed by me to the co-operation of its variously-conditioned modes, internal and external. That this has been all along my general view, is clearly shown in the closing paragraph of *First Principles*.”<sup>1</sup>

Fifthly. Mr. Spencer gives us a logical distribution of the ultimate infinite force, which is as curious as it is self-contradictory. This force is divided by him into self-evolved generic modes by which it is “conditioned”—space-occupying force which is not a working force; and working force, which again is distributed into actual and potential force. “The first of these—the space-occupying kind of force—has,” he tells us, “no specific name.” Touching the other specific kind of force, he remarks:

“For the second kind of force, distinguishable as that by which change is either being caused or will be caused if counterbalancing forces are overcome, the specific name now accepted is ‘Energy.’ So we have ‘actual energy,’ and ‘potential energy.’”

<sup>1</sup> Letter appended to Vol. I. of *First Principles of Biology*, p. 491.

In the first place, here is *an infinite* force divided into two different kinds of force. The infinite is divided, which is a contradiction; and it is divided into different and mutually exclusive species, which is, if possible, a worse contradiction.

In the second place, we have an infinite force supposed to be checked by counterbalancing forces, and checked when it is actually energizing, which is a contradiction.

In the third place, we have an infinite force checked by, and unable to overcome, counterbalancing forces, which are evolved from itself—that is, checked and foiled by itself, which is a contradiction.

In the fourth place, as Mr. Spencer has among his more recent utterances formally denominated the ultimate force “an infinite and eternal energy,” we have the genus infinite force distributed into the species non-working force and working force (or energy). Of course, energy as working is specifically differentiated from force as not working; and then we have one of the species (energy) made the genus (infinite and eternal energy), which amounts to the distribution of the genus energy into the two species, non-energy and energy. This is so strange that we attribute it not to Mr. Spencer—he is too good a logician—but to his “unspeakable” hypothesis, which led him to attempt logical work upon an unknowable subject. Perhaps it is as good a logical distribution as could have been effected of an inconceivable thing. It is possible that Mr. Spencer would say that when he called the infinite force an energy he meant potential energy; but, then, potential energy as generic

would include under it the species actual energy; and since the essence of the genus descends into the species, we would have the genus potential energy including under it the species potential-actual energy. It is a pity that Mr. Spencer did not adhere to the term *force* for his ultimate reality. His energy has proved a snare to him.

Sixthly. Mr. Spencer's doctrine as to the connection of the ultimate force with the evolution of religion and morality is beset with self-contradiction and absurdity.

In the first place, he represents his ultimate reality as proceeding without the least compliance with truth, by evolving all the antagonistic religious beliefs which have existed in the world. Religion as a fact could not be denied, and it had to be accounted for. Accordingly, it was assigned, along with everything else, to "that great evolution" which is the cause of the universe, with all its contents. In Mr. Spencer's opinion, religion has been gradually evolved. Beginning with fetichism, it has, under the sure guidance of evolution, passed through the stages of polytheism and monotheism up to agnosticism or atheism. As each of these beliefs is to be attributed to the ultimate reality evolving itself, each is to be treated with respect, not only on account of a common parentage with the others, but also because of "a real adaptation" to "the natures of those who defend it."<sup>1</sup> These beliefs, although absolutely contradictory to each other, were or are right, considering the circumstances in which they were or are entertained. Fetich-

<sup>1</sup> *First Prin.*, pp. 119, 122.

ism was right, in its circumstances; so was polytheism; and so, notwithstanding the kicks he administers to it, the great agnostic with a sardonic smile and a condescending air concedes the worship of the one, living, personal God to be. Not only were these contradictory beliefs necessary products of evolution, and, therefore, not to be condemned, while they successively existed in the past, but the same is true of them, so far as they are contemporary beliefs. "We must recognize them as elements in that great evolution of which the beginning and the end are beyond our knowledge or conception—as modes of manifestation of the unknowable; and as having this for their warrant." So, then, the fetichism of the African bone-worshipper, the polytheism of the Asiatic pagan, the uni-personal monetheism of the Mohammedan, the trinitarian theism of the Christian, and the agnostic atheism of Mr. Spencer are all synchronous manifestations of the ultimate reality, and have their warrant in that fact.

Every religious thinker, therefore, who, like Mr. Spencer, is in advance of his time, should consider that he is a higher product of the evolutionary force which has gradually worked upwards through lower forms of belief. He should justify his propagation of his views by this reflection:

"He, like every other man, may properly consider himself as one of the myriad agencies through whom works the Unknown Cause; and when the Unknown Cause produces in him a certain belief, he is thereby authorized to profess and act out that belief."<sup>1</sup>

Hence the sympathy which Mr. Spencer inculcates

<sup>1</sup> *First Prin.*, p. 123.



for beliefs antagonistic to one's own—a sympathy which he professes to feel for theism and Christianity at the same time that he visits them with his scorn, and is doing his best to exterminate them :

“ Our toleration therefore should be the widest possible. Or rather, we should aim at something beyond toleration, as commonly understood. In dealing with alien beliefs our endeavor must be, not simply to refrain from injustice of word or deed, but also to do justice by an open recognition of positive worth [!]. We must qualify our disagreement with as much as may be of sympathy.”<sup>1</sup>

That is, as he, Mr. Spencer, has killed our God, he will be gracious enough to shed a tear with us at the funeral !

The cool indifference to truth exhibited in these sentiments must strike the most cursory reader. Perhaps he will say that Mr. Spencer is to be excused, since the ultimate force which evolved him is the acknowledged author of untruth.

In the second place, all the conflicting theories of morality which have ever existed, or still exist, are alike the products of the same evolutionary force. There is no need to enlarge upon this point. What was urged in relation to religion is applicable, *mutatis mutandis*, to morality. In itself non-moral, this force evolves itself into morality and immorality. As evolved, it is both saint and criminal.

In the third place, it follows, from these views, that the ultimate force is, through the necessary process of evolution, the producer of sanctity and impiety, of

<sup>1</sup> *First Prin.*, p. 122.

virtue and crime. Wonderful force! Characterized by unity, it causes, by the necessary law of evolution, opposites the most contradictory to each other. The principle of organized life, it is the principle of death; it brings forth life and death from the same evolving womb. Itself is life, itself is death. The bigoted religionist who butchers his fellowman for dissenting from him is but the evolutionary force in one of its products butchering itself in another of its products. The assassin who murders his neighbor is but the same evolutionary force in one of its products murdering itself in another of its products. Not only does it discharge the transcendent office of ever evolving and dissolving the vast universe through "immeasurable periods," but it daily evolves and dissolves the finite parts of its infinite self in innumerable instances. Concentrating in its unity the several functions of the Parcæ, it spins from itself the thread of every separate life, allots its measurement, and with fatal scissors cuts it off. Mortal-immortal force! Ever dying in all its parts, and ever living as a whole!

In the fourth place, Mr. Spencer's theory, logically construed, makes the ultimate force worship itself. As an infinite and eternal energy, it is held by him to be the object of worship. As every worshipper is evolved from this ultimate force, it certainly comes to this that it worships itself. Mr. Spencer girds savagely at the Christian doctrine in this contemptuous manner. Speaking of the difficulty which the agnostic, as the perfection of evolution, experiences in dealing patiently with that doctrine, he says:

“He may think it needless as it is difficult, to conceal his repugnance to a creed which tacitly ascribes to the Unknowable a love of adulation such as would be despised in a human being.”<sup>1</sup>

Whether Mr. Spencer's object of worship is liable to the same contemptuous fling or not, it is certain that the Christian is not silly enough to offer adulation to an abstract Something which could not appreciate it, or to represent his God as offering worship to himself.

Seventhly. Mr. Spencer's evolution has no telic significance; it obliterates teleology. He admits the infinity of his ultimate force, but denies to it personal will. Consequently the evolution of the universe from that force is purposeless; but the marks of general order and of special adaptations are everywhere so conspicuous as to have been generally acknowledged by philosophers as well as by the mass of mankind. The inference is irresistible to an intelligent Designer. This inference Mr. Spencer's theory repudiates. The evolved persons are designers, but the evolver of the persons is not a designer. The contradiction is obvious. The objection of Kant and others to this argument that it fails to prove infinity—whether tenable or not—has no bearing upon the present question, for the reason that Mr. Spencer admits the infinity of the evolutionary force. What is pertinent in the argument is that the evidences of design prove a designer. Mr. Spencer can only evade the force of the argument by denying the marks of purpose in the universe, and in doing this he breaks with philosophy and the common sense of the race. The odds are supremely against him.

<sup>1</sup> *First Prin.*, p. 120.

But this recitation of self-contradictions grows monotonous. Let us gather up some of them, at least, in one concluding statement:

This ultimate force as infinite is unknowable; as evolved it is knowable: it is the unknowable-knowable. As infinite it is immutable; as evolved it is mutable: it is the immutable-mutable. As infinite it is without parts; as evolved it has parts: it is the indivisible-divisible. As infinite it is perfect; as evolved it develops, and is therefore imperfect: it is the perfect-imperfect. As infinite it is uncaused; as evolved it is caused; it is the uncaused-caused. As infinite it is cause; as evolved it is effect: it is cause and effect. As infinite it is indissoluble; as evolved it is dissoluble: it is the indissoluble-dissoluble. As infinite it is eternal; as evolved it is temporal: it is the eternal-temporal. As infinite it is unconditioned; as evolved it is conditioned: it is the unconditioned-conditioned. As infinite it is absolute; as evolved it is relative: it is the absolute-relative. As infinite it is unorganized; as evolved it is in the animal and vegetable kingdoms organized: it is the unorganized-organized. As infinite it is unintelligent; as evolved it is intelligent: it is the unintelligent-intelligent. As infinite it is impersonal; as evolved it is personal: it is the impersonal-personal. As infinite it is worshipped; as evolved it is the worshipper: it is the worshipped-worshipper. As infinite it is non-moral; as evolved it is both moral and immoral: it is the non-moral-moral-immoral. In a word, it is the INFINITE-FINITE.

It could only be paralleled, and that in a finite degree,

by a material thing which might be characterized as unextended-extended, indivisible-divisible, non-resistant-resistant, impenetrable-penetrable, spherical-flat, circular-square, high-low, long-short, thick-thin, wide-narrow, black-white, solid-liquid, and deep-shallow; especially deep-shallow.

It may be said that this is sheer extravagance. That it is not, but, on the contrary, is sober fact, is shown by a single disjunctive argument. In regard to the existence of the finite universe there are but four conceivable hypotheses: Either its self-existence, or its creation, or its spontaneous generation, or its evolution. The first two Mr. Spencer everywhere rejects; the third he also rejects;<sup>1</sup> the fourth—that of evolution—is, therefore, exclusive of the others. It follows indisputably that the finite universe which is evolved from or out of the infinite, ultimate force *is* that force as evolved. To say that Mr. Spencer only asserts that the parts, the contents, of the universe are *modes* of the infinite force is nothing worth. A thing and its modes are *essentially* identical. The explanation only serves to illuminate the contradictoriness of his theory; for who ever heard of finite modes of the infinite?

7. Some things remain to be said briefly respecting Mr. Spencer's positions as to evolution itself.

(1.) Mr. Spencer's system does not deal with "inorganic evolution." It is by no means intimated that the omission is intentional. Mr. Spencer tells us that it is not.<sup>2</sup> But the omission is a fact. The system, therefore, is incomplete. Evolution is attempted to be

<sup>1</sup> *Prin. Biology*, Vol. I., p. 480. <sup>2</sup> *Prin. Biology*, Vol. I., p. 479.

explained only in part. Should Mr. Spencer hereafter remedy the defect, he will have two questions to answer: how inorganic matter came to be evolved from his primordial force, and how, in the process of evolution, the transition was effected from the inorganic to the organic. In regard to the first question, it will behoove him to show how, if his ultimate force is living, the non-living can be evolved from the living; or, how, if the ultimate force is non-living, it is active enough to evolve anything, and how, on that supposition, the living can be evolved from the non-living. In answering the other question, how the inorganic is evolved into the organic, it is to be hoped—indeed, it may be expected, from our knowledge of his scientific qualities, his patience in analysis and his honesty in generalization—that he will not resort to the remarkable hypothesis of some, that the evolutionary force is subject to spasms, and that in one of its paroxysmal efforts it leaped over the “great and wide” chasm between the inorganic and the organic—between death and life. One is almost inevitably reminded of the extraordinary exploit celebrated in the line of a venerable household classic, “And the cow jumped over the moon.” Until these questions are answered by Mr. Spencer, the “law of evolution” comes short, so far as he is concerned, of being a generalization founded upon a sufficient induction; it is halted at a critical point. We may expect from him scientific proofs, not the mere vagaries of the imagination.

(2.) Not only does Mr. Spencer not indicate the connection between inorganic and organic evolution, which must be done before any systematic account of the evo-

lutionary process can be complete, but his brilliant attempt to expound organic evolution is destitute of a competent basis. He begins with the mere assumption that life, in the first instance, is evolved. No proofs of this postulate are furnished. Indeed, Mr. Spencer blunders in his effort to define life. He himself confesses that the definition is only an approximate one. An examination of this approximate definition at once shows that he endeavors to define, not life itself, but its functions, relations and results. The fundamental element—if such an expression can be applied to a simple and indivisible principle—which he gives is “the co-ordination of actions”:

“I have myself proposed to define Life as ‘the co-ordination of actions;’ and I still incline towards this definition as one answering to the facts with tolerable precision.”<sup>1</sup>

But it is clear that both the conception’s “actions” and the “coördination of actions” presuppose the conception of life itself as a principle of action, and of coördination of actions. We have here no account of life itself, and consequently no account of the process by which it has been evolved. Until the question is answered, What is evolved? one fails to see how the other question can be answered, How is it evolved? But Mr. Spencer knows how to evolve the unknowable. Perhaps he would say that we are indefinitely conscious of what life is, and that is sufficient to ground a scientific account of its evolution. Science, however, is knowledge; and Mr. Spencer distinguishes indefinite consciousness from knowledge. Not only, then, is there no account of inor-

<sup>1</sup> *Prin. Biology*, Vol. I., p. 60.

ganic evolution and of its relation to organic evolution, but Mr. Spencer's endeavor to explain organic evolution is "the baseless fabric of a vision." His biology astonishes us in two respects: by the mastery of scientific knowledge which it evinces, and by the fact that it rests on no foundation. It may be that this is an instance of the law mentioned by Mr. Spencer that scientific evolution must "begin somewhere abruptly."<sup>1</sup>

This is the more remarkable because Mr. Spencer pronounces biology of supreme importance in relation to the question of the origin of species. Comparing his views with those of M. Comte, he says:

"How organic beings have originated, is an inquiry which M. Comte deprecates as a useless speculation: asserting, as he does, that species are immutable.

"This inquiry, I believe, admits of answer, and will be answered. That division of Biology which concerns itself with the origin of species I hold to be the supreme division, to which all others are subsidiary. For on the verdict of Biology on this matter must wholly depend our conception of human nature, past, present, and future; our theory of the mind; and our theory of society."<sup>2</sup>

(3.) It deserves notice that Mr. Spencer makes geology unavailable to both the opponents and the advocates of evolution. It is excluded from the field of evidence bearing on the question. Speaking of Hugh Miller's arguments against the development hypothesis, arguments which he derived from geology, he remarks:

"While we purpose showing that his arguments against the Development Hypothesis are based on invalid assumptions, we do not purpose showing that the opposing arguments are based on valid assumptions. We hope to make it apparent that the

<sup>1</sup> *Recent Discussions*, p. 187.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 128.



geological evidence at present obtained is insufficient for either side; further, that there seems little probability of sufficient evidence ever being obtained; and that if the question is eventually decided, it must be decided on other than geological data.”<sup>1</sup>

This opinion of the great evolutionist merits the attention of those who as confidently expound the secrets of geology as though they had been contemporaries of the Ascidia; and to whom the language might be emphatically used which was addressed by Daniel Webster to the veteran survivors of the American revolutionary war, “Venerable men! you have come down to us from a former generation.”

(4.) Mr. Spencer furnishes us a disproof of organic evolution in his attempt to account for the origin of animal-worship. His own language will be employed in the development of the steps of the argument:

“The rudimentary form of all religion is the propitiation of dead ancestors, who are supposed to be still existing, and to be capable of working good or evil to their descendants. . . . Savages habitually distinguish individuals by names that are either directly suggestive of some personal trait or fact of personal history, or else express an observed community of character with some well-known object. . . . Now, in the earliest savage state this metaphorical naming will, in most cases, commence afresh in each generation—must do so, indeed, until surnames of some kind have been established. I say in most cases, because there will occur exceptions in the cases of men who have distinguished themselves. If ‘the Wolf,’ proving famous in fight, becomes a terror to neighboring tribes, and a dominant man in his own, his sons, proud of their parentage, will not let fall the fact that they descended from the Wolf; nor will this fact be forgotten by the rest of the tribe, who hold ‘the Wolf’ in awe, and see some reason to dread his sons.”

“Let the tradition of the ancestor fail to keep clearly in view

<sup>1</sup> *Illustrations of Univer. Progress*, p. 354.

the fact that he was a man called the Wolf—let him be habitually spoken of as the Wolf, just as when alive; and the natural mistake of taking the name literally will bring with it, firstly, a belief in descent from the actual wolf, and, secondly, a treatment of the wolf in a manner likely to propitiate him—a manner appropriate to one who may be the other self of the dead ancestor, or one of the kindred, and therefore a friend.”

“Descent from the Wolf will inevitably come to mean descent from the animal known by that name. And the ideas and sentiments which, as above shown, naturally grow up around the belief that the dead parents and grandparents are still alive, and ready, if propitiated, to befriend their descendants, will be extended to the wolf species.”<sup>1</sup>

Now it is evident that this ingenious account of the origin of worship which may be paid to the wolf, or to any other animals, admits that the worshippers are mistaken in supposing that they are actually descended from the animals worshipped. Mr. Spencer talks like any other civilized man of common sense about the illusory belief of savages respecting human descent from an animal ancestry. What becomes, then, of his organic evolution? If the analysis had been written in order to disprove the hypothesis of the evolution of species from species it could hardly be more complete and convincing. Mr. Spencer ought to be able to convince himself. Is that which is foolish in poor savages wise in persons of scientific culture? If, as Mr. Spencer professes, he is descended from animal ancestors, it is certain that none of them could have been caught in so powerful a trap as that which he has here constructed for himself, and which holds him with a grip of steel, else had Mr. Spencer not have descended. The Australian and the

<sup>1</sup> *Recent Discussions*, pp. 34–42.

Tasmanian display their ignorance in believing that they descended from animals, but the supremely cultivated scholars and gentlemen of Britain exhibit their superior knowledge in believing the same thing! Verily, these coryphæi of science must be perpetrating a hoax upon their contemporaries.

(5.) In a comparison of the theory of creation and that of evolution, Mr. Spencer contradicts himself, and virtually concedes the immense superiority of the former theory to the latter. After expounding the nebular hypothesis, and remarking "that, while the genesis of the solar system, and of countless other systems like it, is thus rendered comprehensible, the ultimate mystery continues as great as ever," he goes on to observe:

"The Nebular Hypothesis throws no light on the origin of diffused matter; and diffused matter as much needs accounting for as concrete matter. The genesis of an atom is not easier to conceive than the genesis of a planet. Nay, indeed, so far from making the Universe a less mystery than before, it makes it a greater mystery. Creation by manufacture is a much lower thing than creation by evolution. A man can put together a machine; but he cannot make a machine develop itself. . . . That our harmonious universe once existed potentially as formless diffused matter, and has slowly grown into its present organized state, is a far more astonishing fact than would have been its formation after the artificial method vulgarly supposed. Those who hold it legitimate to argue from phenomena to noumena may rightly contend that the Nebular Hypothesis implies a First Cause as much transcending 'the mechanical God of Paley,' as this does the fetish of the savage."<sup>1</sup>

One cannot help noticing either the partisan blindness or the unfairness of this self-contradictory passage.

First. He makes the genesis of the universe both

<sup>1</sup> *Illust. Univ. Progress*, pp. 298, 299.

comprehensible and absolutely mysterious. He can only be saved from this contradiction by the supposition that he used *genesis* as convertible with *formation*. That supposition is opposed, in the first place, by the consideration that ordinary usage would be violated, and, in the second place, that in this very passage he employs *genesis* in the sense of *origination*, as when he speaks of "the genesis of an atom"; for it would be absurd to speak of the formation of an atom, in the sense of construction, fashioning, arrangement. It must mean origination, if it mean anything. An atom is taken to mean something simple, un-compounded, indivisible. As it confessedly has no parts, it cannot be constructed. If brought into existence, it must be by creation—its genesis must be creation. Must there be added, then, to the swollen list of Mr. Spencer's self-contradictions the comprehensible-incomprehensible?

Secondly. Mr. Spencer declares that the genesis of an atom is as inconceivable as the genesis of a planet. Here he must mean by genesis creation—*origination*; for he has just before asserted the comprehensibility of the formation—the structural putting together of the solar system as a collection of planets from nebular matter. We have, then, the point-blank confession by him that evolution is utterly incompetent to account for the origination of the universe. In this he is certainly right; but Mr. Spencer has all along maintained the theory that the universe is evolved from the ultimate infinite force. This is his philosophy; and as his evolution must, like his *science* of evolution, "begin somewhere abruptly," we have the assertion that evolution

does account for the origination of the universe. Lo, another contradiction—an origination of the universe which can be accounted for; an origination of the universe which cannot be accounted for!

Thirdly. Mr. Spencer, after admitting that the origination of an atom, and consequently of the universe, by evolution is inconceivable, tries hard to get out of the difficulty by asserting that the doctrine of creation is in a worse difficulty; for "creation by manufacture is a much lower thing than creation by evolution." In the first place, there is no such thing conceivable as creation by evolution, but it is much higher than creation by manufacture! In the second place, creation by manufacture is as much inconceivable as creation by evolution—both are inconceivable; but one conceiving these two inconceivable nonentities must conceive that one of them is much lower than the other! In the third place, "creation by manufacture" is an absurd piece of balderdash that has no other paternity than that of Mr. Spencer and his fellow-atheists. Certainly, neither Paley, nor any other man of sense, not to say Christian, ever dreamed of a manufacture of something out of nothing. Manufacture supposes preëxisting materials. The supposition that the affirmers of creation out of nothing mean manufacture out of something is either the silly or the dishonest spawn of the atheistic imagination.

Creation from nothing is inconceivable, but it is not self-contradictory. Evolution from nothing is not only inconceivable, but self-contradictory. The evolution of something out of nothing is a contradiction in terms. As evolution supposes the thing to be evolved, while

creation, strictly speaking, supposes nothing upon which it is effected, the very contrary of what Mr. Spencer asserts is true—namely, that evolution is a much lower thing than creation. What Mr. Spencer, with equal contemptuousness and unfairness, calls “creation by manufacture” is really the *origination* of that which is supposed to be evolved. The question is, What furnished the material for the start of the evolving process? That question, which the evolutionist must face, explodes Mr. Spencer’s attempt to substitute an evolving force for a personal creator; except upon the hypothesis that the evolving force *is itself* the material out of which the evolution proceeds—an hypothesis the self-contradictoriness and absurdity of which has already in this discussion been sufficiently exposed.

It comes at last to the alternative of an absolute commencement or of creation. Neither is conceivable, but that of an absolute commencement is self-contradictory, and in the form of spontaneous generation is abandoned by science itself. The other alternative—that of creation by an infinite personal creator—must, therefore, be accepted as true.

(6.) The following sharp retort of Mr. Spencer must be briefly noticed before these criticisms are brought to a close:

“In a debate upon the development hypothesis, lately narrated to me by a friend, one of the disputants was described as arguing that as, in all our experience, we know no such phenomenon as transmutation of species, it is unphilosophical to assume that transmutation of species ever takes place. Had I been present, I think that, passing over his assertion, which is open to criticism, I should have replied that as, in all our experience, we have never

known a species *created*, it was, by his own showing, unphilosophical to assume that any species ever had been created.”<sup>1</sup>

First. Let it be supposed that neither the special creationist nor the evolutionist had ever witnessed a concrete example of his theory, there would result an equipoise between the two doctrines in this regard, and nothing would be gained on either side. The question would not be worth discussing; but—

Secondly. The special creationist does not maintain that we are to *expect* special creations. On the contrary, he holds that special creation occurred in the beginning of the present cosmical order, and that there is no need that species should again be created, unless that order should come to an end, and another should take its place. The species oak-tree has been in existence from the time that observation began to be recorded, and the special creationist looks for no change of that species. If he had looked for it, he would certainly have shared the disappointment of the evolutionist.

On the other hand, the evolutionist contends for an uninterrupted process of specific transmutations. According to his hypothesis, we would be led to expect some instances of transmutation of species as at least likely to occur in the experience of the race in historic times. Have all the lines of evolution had precisely the same periods to run? Has every particular evolution of species had an immeasurable period to run? Have all these periods spanned the age of man on the earth? If so, where is the consistency or the sense of evolutionists trying their very best by selective breeding, in the

<sup>1</sup> *Illust. Univ. Progress*, p. 377.

course of a few years, to disprove the stubborn law of hybridism by producing one clear instance of transmutation of species? Is there no expectation of seeing one such fact? Ah, that troublesome law of hybridity! Has Professor Huxley ceased to regard it as a menace to the Darwinian hypothesis?<sup>1</sup>

Thirdly. The theory of evolution of species into species is confronted with numerous facts incapable of adjustment to it. There are no facts which *contradict* that of special creation.

But, in the foregoing extract, Mr. Spencer intimates that the "assertion": "we know no such phenomenon as transmutation of species" "is open to criticism"—a mild, a singularly mild, way of insinuating that we do possess such knowledge. Now, what are his proofs? In the first place, that the theory of evolution is much more *probable* than that of special creation! In the second place, that "millions of *varieties* have been produced," and "are being produced still"! In the third place, that evolutions of species *intra speciem* are continually and marvellously occurring, as, for example, the wonderful evolution of the oak from the acorn, of the man from the infant! If any one thinks this a caricature, let him read the argument in the *Illustrations of Universal Progress*, which follows the passage that has been cited.

8. Mr. Spencer's philosophy, although ridiculously pretending to include an ethical element as a product of evolution, makes no provision, and, from the nature of the case, can make no provision, for a moral government, proceeding upon the great principle of justice,

<sup>1</sup> *Huxley's Origin of Species.*



issuing a moral law as its rule, and administering rewards to the good, punishments to the bad. The conception of such a government by a non-moral ultimate force, evolving itself alike into virtue and vice, duty and crime, is a supreme absurdity. An infinite scorpion continuing to live, yet eternally darting its venomous fangs into its own body, would furnish a poor illustration. What there is of character, the most brilliant crown of human nature and human achievement, of piety and justice, of purity and truth, of charity, philanthropy and pity, of patriotism, honor and duty—of the noblest principles and sentiments that inspire the heart of man, is bound, in obedience to the necessarily-operating law of dissolution, to sink, along with every base passion and criminal feature of humanity, into a common mass of nebulous matter. Think of it—character reduced to nebulous stuff! What a philosophy!

There is a book, venerable with age, replete with wisdom, and blazing with genius; containing the first cosmogony which ever was written, proclaiming a personal God, a perfect moral code, the genesis and development of sin, an atoning Saviour, a renovating Spirit, a source of consolation amid life's trials, a peaceful death bed, and a heavenly home of transcendent beauty, glory and bliss; a book which has, uninjured, passed through an incessant storm of hostile criticism from Celsus to the closing decade of the nineteenth century, has through all that period received the suffrages not only of saints, but philosophers, has always refused to be coördinated with the theosophies of the world, and is more and more displacing them and pushing them out of existence,

disseminating its doctrines in well-nigh all the languages of earth, and winning its way to almost universal acceptance—this book, it might have been supposed, would simply, as a religious philosophy, have been regarded with some respect, and treated with some decency by even the consummate flower of evolution—the head of the scientific agnostics. The expectation was ill-founded. He pours the gall and wormwood of sovereign contempt upon it and its doctrines. He pronounces its histories myths, spurns its God, spits upon its ethics, tramples under foot its cross, and vilifies its Holy Ghost.

What right and title to arrogance so autocratic has one who affects to render worship to a “god of forces”—a blind, impersonal thing that is neither conscious of the worship paid to it, nor of evolving the worshipper, nor of its own existence? I have not spoken depreciatingly of Mr. Spencer’s powers. He is a giant. He has piled mountain upon mountain of scientific facts; but standing like a Titan upon the loftiest peak, and wielding the thunder-bolts of modern scientific hypotheses, he will be disappointed in reaching the heavens and scaling the battlements of biblical truth. He vividly describes the fright that seizes religion “when face to face with science.”<sup>1</sup> Is he not mistaken? Why should religion—the true religion—be frightened? Has she not, without alarm, looked in the face the deists of Britain, the encyclopædists of France, and, more formidable than they, the rationalistic scholars and the transcendental philosophers of Germany? She still survives; and it is hardly probable that she would tremble lest the Bible’s

<sup>1</sup> *First Prin.*, p. 101.

consistent philosophy of creation should be overthrown by a new speculative system, the cohesive principle of which is that of self-contradiction, the parts of which are only restrained from flying to pieces through the force of mutual repulsion by the temporary constriction of Mr. Spencer's genius.

Mr. Spencer's system is not philosophical enough to be entitled to the designation human, for it conditions its success upon the suppression of the common reason and the common sentiment of mankind. It is not religious enough to be honored by the epithet heathenish, for the heathen profess to worship some god. The Athenians were religious enough to erect an altar to the unknown God; the agnostics can erect no altar, unless it be one inscribed to the Unknowable Mystery. Yet they tell us that they have a religion. What can its essence be but folly? what its ritual but pompous jargon? There would seem to be but one resort to them—to worship themselves as the highest products of evolution; and that would be tantamount to worshipping incarnate self-contradictions. One would prefer to pay his homage to abstract logic, for that has, at least, the merit of being self-consistent, and is chargeable with no moral defect.

The foregoing argument has not been concerned about the scientific aspects of Mr. Spencer's system, but about his fundamental assumptions. Grant him his cry: Great is the Diana of Evolution!—and the maid of frozen chastity may, for aught one cares, be the prolific mother of ever so numerous a progeny of rotations, differentiations, segregations, and equilibrations; may

even be given to habitual dissipation, which may bring on dissolution. It is this great Diana of evolution and her reputed sire—Blind Energy—whose existence has been challenged as a creation of Spencerian mythology. It is such substitutes for providence and for God that one labors for ability to condemn.

It will only be added that, in one respect, it may be conceded, Mr. Spencer has furnished a conspicuous proof of the evolution for which he contends. His system is an instance of a homogeneous nebula, revolving in circles, differentiating wonderfully into the heterogeneous, and destined by an inevitable dissipation of force to ultimate in dissolution.

## “PHYSIOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY.”

---

SUCH is the somewhat remarkable title of what claims to be a new and progressive science. It has been observed by more than one writer favorable to the new science, that most of those who have written in regard to the question have been professed physiologists. This fact is significant, in view of the ground assumed by many, that this new science is destined to work a revolutionary change in what they call “the old psychology.” The psychologist is advertised that the form in which he has been accustomed to view and to state his science must undergo important, and, it may be, radical alterations. He is informed that his method of inquiry has not been sufficiently scientific—that is, that he has not proceeded by experiment, the results of which can be tested by external observation. To the psychologist, therefore, the questions raised by what is called the science of Physiological Psychology are of very great significance. They involve the right of psychology to be regarded as an independent science.

In any treatment of this subject, almost everything will depend upon the point of view from which it is contemplated. We may assume or deny the assumption, that the mind and the body are essentially different, that the former is spiritual, the latter material. If we adopt the first supposition—namely, that the mind and the

body are different substantive entities—it would follow that as they cannot be reduced to unity, cannot be treated as identical, there are two different sciences which are conversant about them respectively. As all sciences are defined from the object-matter about which they are concerned, we would have to consider psychology as the science which is concerned about the mind, and physiology as one of the sciences which are concerned about the body. They could no more be reduced to the unity of one and the same science than could the mind and the body be reduced to the unity of one and the same substantive entity.

But as the mind and the bodily organism are obviously related to each other, as they act and react upon one another, there may be, even upon the assumption of their essential difference, a special science which would be concerned about their relation—a science which may, notwithstanding its objectionable ambiguity, be conceded the title of physiological psychology.

The subject, however, may be contemplated from another point of view. The second supposition may be adopted; and the inquiry may begin, either with the assumption of the substantive identity of mind and body, or with the assumption that such an identity may be proved by a thorough-going series of experiments.

It is not here proposed, even were there ability to do so, to enter into an exposition or discussion of the details of the subject. What is intended is, first, to make some remarks concerning the one science of physiological psychology, in accordance with the claim that it can only be admitted to exist as contradistinguished to physi-

ology on the one hand, and to psychology on the other; secondly, to offer some criticisms upon the counter-claim that physiology and psychology are reducible to the unity of one and the same science, with the name of physiological psychology; and, thirdly, to consider the ultimate ground upon which it is claimed that what have been usually regarded as the two different, but related, sciences of physiology and psychology may be reduced to unity as one and the same science—to-wit, that the mind and the body are, in the last analysis, not two different, although related, entities, but one and the same entity.

I. Let us begin with the admission of the legitimacy of the attempt to construct a science which is concerned about the *relations* of the mind and the body; and the term *mind* is here used, not in its restricted sense as synonymous with the intellect proper, the cognitive power, but in its widest signification, as employed interchangeably with the term *soul*.

1. The most satisfactory work upon this subject, on the whole, which I have encountered is the *Physiological Psychology* of Prof. G. T. Ladd, of Yale University. It is sufficiently elaborate to satisfy a not extravagant demand for minuteness of detail; it is marked by conspicuous ability; and it is impartial enough to disarm of most of their prejudices both the pure psychologist and the pure physiologist. One can perceive no ground at all for discontent on the part of the latter, since the bulk of the work is occupied with physiological investigation and exposition, and the former, although at first

he may feel that too much is conceded for him, and may tremble for fear the ark of his science may be surrendered to the materialistic physiologist, will be likely, ere he gets through, to see that his apprehensions were groundless. As Professor Ladd is one of the fairest and and most moderate of the advocates of a physiological psychology, let us hear him in explanation of the science:

“ We may define *Physiological Psychology* as the science which investigates the phenomena of human consciousness from the ‘physiological’ point of view or method of approach. Remembering the cautions which have already been expressed, we may also say that it is the science of the human mind as investigated by means of its relations to the human physical organism. A more accurate definition, however, requires that something further be said concerning the nature and method of that science which furnishes the adjective [physiological] to our compound term. Human physiology is the science of the functions (or modes of the behavior in its correlated action) of the human physical organism. As studied at present it implies an acquaintance with the fields of gross and special microscopic anatomy (histology), of embryology and the general doctrine of development, of biology, —including the allied phenomena of plant life,—of molecular physics and chemistry as related to the structure and action of the bodily tissues, and of other forms of kindred knowledge. It is only a relatively small part of this vast domain, however, with which *Physiological Psychology* has directly to deal; for it is only a part of the human organism which has any direct relation to the phenomena of consciousness. As will appear subsequently, it is with the nervous system alone that our science has its chief immediate concern. Indeed, it might be described—though in a still somewhat indefinite, but more full and complete, way—as the science which investigates the correlations that exist between the structure and the functions of the human nervous mechanism and the phenomena of consciousness, and which derives therefrom conclusions as to the laws and nature of the mind.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Phys. Psychology*, p. 4.



In this descriptive definition of the science with which he is dealing, Professor Ladd, first, acknowledges, if he is not misunderstood, that it is concerned about the relations of mind and body as constituting its proper object-matter, and so far the psychologist, holding, as he does, to the existence of the mind as a separate essence, has nothing to object; but, secondly, one looking at this account of the science from that point of view of the psychologist is hardly prepared to receive, without some qualifying explanation, the statement that, investigating "the correlations that exist between the structure and the functions of the human nervous mechanism and the phenomena of consciousness," physiological psychology "derives therefrom conclusions as to the laws and nature of the mind." The psychologist admits that, from these "correlations," it is legitimate to derive conclusions as to the modes in which the mind receives impressions from the bodily organism, and through it from the external world, and in which it transmits its activities to the bodily organism, and through it to the external world; and also as to the laws by which that interaction of the mind and external matter is controlled. But he is not ready to concede that from that source conclusions may be derived as to the nature of the mind itself, and the laws by which that nature is governed. This science is concerned about the correlations of mind and body, and not directly about the nature and the laws of either the mind or the body. Psychology, the peculiar province of which is to deal with the one, and physiology, the distinctive office of which is to deal with the other, furnish the conditions

upon which the construction of this new science becomes possible; but it is no more competent to talk of the physiologist, as such—investigating the laws and nature of the mind itself—than to speak of the psychologist, as such—discharging a similar office in regard to the nervous mechanism itself. This we must maintain, or acknowledge—what most of the cultivators of the new science claim—the unity of psychology and physiology, and consequently the unity of mind and body.

2. It is an undeniable fact that the mind and the body are intimately related, that they constantly act and react upon each other. The induction upon which this generalization is based is too wide, too extended, too continuous to allow of any question as to its validity. There is no need to enter into specifications. The strictest psychologist must admit that the body acts upon and influences the mind, and the strictest physiologist must confess that the mind acts upon and influences the body. It is this closeness of intimacy, this uniformity of interaction between the two, which, considered by itself alone, occasions the possibility of idealism, or of materialism, or of absolute identity. It gives rise to a presumption in favor of either a “two-faced unity” or an absolute unity, a presumption which must be checked by other facts derived from the constitution of the body and the nature of the mind. This admitted reciprocal influence renders a “psycho-physical” science legitimate and interesting—a science which shall be devoted to the investigation of the facts, the nature, and the laws pertaining to that influence. Let the development of the science proceed. It is sometimes more than hinted that

the psychologist would discourage its cultivation because he fears that materialism may be established. With equal justice might it be intimated that the physiologist would be opposed to its advancement because of his apprehension that idealism may be proved.

Certainly the psychologist entertains no fear that the mind will ever be evinced to be material. Whether, upon the supposition of the essential difference betwixt spirit and matter, this new science will, in the attempt to solve the problem of the mode of their interaction, succeed better than the old methods of solution furnished by the hypotheses of physical influence, of a plastic medium, of occasional causes, and of preëstablished harmony, remains to be seen. The presumption against its success is formidable; but modern science, like the lamp of Aladdin, is achieving undreamt-of wonders. Perhaps it may yet throw a bridge across this hitherto impassable chasm. That it will ever avail to show that the problem is non-existent, that there is no chasm, and, therefore, no bridge is needed, *credat Judæus Apella, non ego.*

3. The conditions required for the development of a science of physiological psychology are such that it must prove an extremely difficult thing to reach trustworthy and satisfactory results. It has been remarked that "young inquirers are rushing into the field as adventurers do to a newly-discovered mine." Let them rush, but it behooves them to sit down and count the cost of the enterprise, the conditions which are necessary to its successful prosecution.

(1.) In order to one's thorough-going evolution of the

science, he will need to possess a competent knowledge both of psychology and physiology, for the reason that each is necessary to supply the means by which this intermediary science can alone be constructed. Not that, as has already been intimated, it is meant that they supply the materials out of which a physiological psychology is to be built up; for that would be to suppose it a composite science, a supposition which is here thrown out of account; but they give knowledge without which, as presupposed, no progress could be made in its origination or development. In order to understand the relation between psychology and physiology, both terms of the relation must be understood. Neither a mere psychologist nor a mere physiologist could be a physiological psychologist. He must be both a psychologist and a physiologist. The difficulty which would attend the attempt to master both of these sciences sufficiently to qualify one to construct a new science depending upon them, in a great degree, for its trustworthy development—this difficulty is enough to deter the youthful rushers into the new field from haste in reaching, and especially in emitting, their conclusions. Some smatterers, however, alike in psychology and physiology, armed with a vocabulary of technicalities, have announced the conclusion that the “old psychology,” which began with the mistakes of Aristotle, and has for ages perpetuated itself through the blunders of misled genius, blunders blindly followed by such men as Descartes and Locke, Reid, Stewart and Hamilton, having come to the hour of doom, must yield to the stabs of Fechner, Helmholtz and Wundt, of Ribot, Spencer and Bain, and folding

its musty drapery about it, fall gracefully at the base of Herbart's statue. A little more mastery of both psychology and physiology, accompanied by a little more modesty, would suggest some delay in gazetting the death of the old psychology.

(2.) This is not all. Not only must there be a competent understanding of the sciences of psychology and physiology, but the relations between the mind and the nervous organism must—at least to some tolerable extent—be understood. These relations, according to most of the more recent investigators, exist in the region of the brain. Now a psycho-physical science, it is acknowledged by all its advocates, proceeds, on its physical side, by the method of external observation and physical experiment. It follows that, in order to its being adequate, this method must be employed upon the brain of the living subject—the living subject, because there are no activities in the brain of a dead man. It is evident that the relations to be observed and experimented upon are between psychical and physical activities. The brain of the living, active man must, therefore, be the object of observation and experiment. No *post mortem* process will answer. The obvious difficulties in the way of such experimentation have been confessed by writers of opposite schools. M. Ribot, who pronounces absurd the question of the relations between the soul and the body as distinct substances, and talks approvingly of "a psychology without a soul," says:

"As the whole experimental method reposes definitely in the principle of causation, physiological psychology has two systems of means at its disposal: to determine effects from their causes (for example, sensation from excitation); to determine causes

from their effects (internal states from the actions that exhibit them). There is, moreover, need that one, at least, of the two terms of this indissoluble couple called the causal nexus be outside of ourselves, outside of consciousness; that there be a physical happening as such accessible to experiment. Without this condition, the experimental method cannot be employed. In the order of the phenomena that we call purely internal (the reproduction of ideas, their association, etc.), the cause and effect are in ourselves. Although we cannot doubt that the law of causality reigns there as elsewhere; although, in some cases, the cause can with certainty be determined; yet, as both causes and effects are in us, and give no external value, their physical concomitants being little known or inaccessible, all experimental research in what concerns them is necessarily impossible.”<sup>1</sup>

Professor Ladd makes these striking observations :

“Exner has well said that ‘a physiology of the cerebral cortex in the sense in which there is a physiology of the muscle, etc., scarcely exists at the present time.’ The reasons for such a deficiency lie partly in the very nature of this organ, and the place it holds within the animal economy; as well as partly, perhaps, in certain prejudices which have hindered the physical theory of a material structure so intimately related to the action of the mind. The cerebral cortex of the animals is experimentally approached only by overcoming immense difficulties. Moreover, those physical and chemical processes of the cerebral substances, to which we must look for any strictly scientific understanding of its physiology, are placed almost utterly beyond reach of investigation. Reasoning must fill up with conjecture the great gaps that lie between a very complex series of physical occurrences, only a part of which are observable, on the one side, and on the other, an equally complex group of psychical occurrences.”<sup>2</sup>

It must be confessed that the difficulties which oppose the attainment of any definite results from experimental observation are very great, both on the side of the bodily

<sup>1</sup> *German Psychol. of To-day*. Trans. by Prof. J. M. Baldwin, pp. 13, 14.

<sup>2</sup> *Physiol. Psychology*, p. 254.

organism and on that of the conscious mind. On the side of the body, there is the opacity of the cranium, which debars direct observation, except in cases in which parts of it are removed by injury; and even then the area of the brain that is disclosed to view is small, and the injury itself which causes the aperture induces an abnormal condition of the nervous system. The three lines of evidence bearing on the action of the brain, which, according to Professor Ladd's statement, are usually relied upon, are so imperfect that their results are matters of debate among experimenters and observers themselves. These are the evidences from experimentation, from pathology, and from histology and comparative anatomy. These, even so far as they go, are attended with doubt and uncertainty, and are employed often, not without danger and not without hindrance, on ethical grounds; but the chief consideration is that they cannot, from the nature of the case, go far enough to yield satisfactory results. The analogy furnished by experiments upon the brain of living animals cannot be verified by similar experiments upon the brain of the living human subject. The inferential argument, derived from this source, is, to a great extent, a mere begging of the question.

On the side of the mind, the difficulties are no less formidable. Here the appeal must be to consciousness alone; but consciousness is a very poor informant in regard to the states, or even the activities, of the brain, and, consequently, of the relations subsisting between them and the states and activities of the mind. We know by experience that we are far more distinctly con-

scious of a cramp in a finger or a toe than we are of the molecular agitations in the mass of the cerebrum.

Were it supposed that, under the application of some powerful electric light, the cranium might be rendered transparent, and the inner structure of the brain of a sound living man be revealed to microscopic observation, it might happen that a synchronous correspondence would be noticeable between certain acts of the mind and certain movements in the cerebral mass; but even upon that extraordinary supposition—not yet realized in fact—it would be impossible to observe the mental acts themselves, and might be impossible to observe the corresponding agitations in the cerebral nerves; for, if, when some great nerve is under the dissecting knife, laid open to inspection, no microscope reveals its molecular movements, what reason would there be for believing that such movements would be perceptible in the extremely attenuated nerves which ramify through the physical mass of the brain?

Such are some of the difficult conditions upon which, with the admission of an essential difference between the mind and the body, the attempt must be made to construct a psycho-physical science. Such a science may be legitimate, and may be in the process of formation, but the likelihood is that, whatever may be its growth, it must ever continue to be incomplete. Its advancement towards perfection must be, for obvious reasons, more difficult than that of either psychology or physiology, between which it mediates, and the relations of which, inadequately mastered as they themselves are, it professes to expound. Still, so long as it is not denied



that psychology and physiology are different and incompatible sciences, growing out of the substantive and indestructible difference between the immortal spirit and its mortal environment, it is not intended to disparage the claims or the aspirations of a psycho-physical science. What it is designed to say is that the old psychologist, and the old physiologist as well, will be more apt to reap substantial fruits, each from the cultivation of his own field, than will this new adventurer—the physiological psychologist; and to this opinion one is naturally led by the fact that the labors which have so far been expended in the new field have chiefly inured to the advantage of physiology, notwithstanding that the title *Physiological Psychology* seems to be in the interest of psychology.

II. I proceed to submit some criticisms upon the claim that psychology and physiology are reducible to unity as one and the same science, under the names of *physiological psychology* and *psycho-physics*.

1. The presumption is mightily against this claim. From the days of Plato and Aristotle, the great body of philosophers, scholars and scientific thinkers have admitted the distinction between the sciences of psychology and physiology—a distinction founded upon the conceded difference between the mind and the body. This presumption can neither be ignored nor despised. It is venerable and deserves to be treated with respect. It is true that there have been pure idealists and pure materialists. They were naturally led, by their fundamental assumption of monism, to regard the science of

mind and that of matter as radically one; and the logic of their views consistently enforced the reduction of the generally acknowledged two sciences to unity. They, however, have been exceptions to the general rule. This class, let it be observed, were *pure* idealists or *pure* materialists. Such men, for instance, as Plato and Berkeley, although predominantly idealistic, could not be included in it. Neither could Aristotle be assigned to it, although predominantly empirical, since he admitted a distinction between matter and spirit. This was the judgment of so profound a historian of philosophy as Schwegler; and Sir W. Hamilton, whose learning as a critic of philosophy has perhaps never been surpassed, argued to prove that Aristotle was a natural realist.

To this it must be added that by no means all of the modern advocates of psycho-physics have favored the reduction of psychology and physiology to unity as one and the same science. Those who have done so are as yet exceptional thinkers, such as Helmholtz, Ribot and perhaps Wundt, on the continent, and the British writers Spencer and Bain. Lotze is charged by Ribot, in his *German Psychology of To-day*, not only with having been too pure a psychologist, but with having been too much of a metaphysician. Even Fechner, who is represented as deriving his "true glory" from his work in psycho-physics, is quoted by the reviewer of the *German psychology* as saying: "I understand by psycho-physics an exact theory of the relations of soul and body, and, in a general way, of the physical world and the psychical world." M. Ribot himself thus proceeds to interpret Fechner's doctrine:

“The sciences of nature, long since in possession of their principles and method, are upon a road of continuous progress. On the other hand, the sciences of spirit—psychology and logic at least, have also had their foundations in a measure laid. On the contrary, the science of the reciprocal relations of body and spirit is far less advanced than the two groups of sciences just named, between which it occupies an intermediate position.”

To all this, no doubt, it will be answered, that science has broken the shackles of mediæval despotism, that it is no longer amenable to authority, and that it has demonstrated by actual instances its right and its ability to revolutionize the opinions of the world. All this may be conceded. The liberty of science to pursue its independent investigations is now, on almost all hands, freely admitted. It is as vain to check it as to attempt to put a yoke upon light. The effort may be relegated to the Vatican as the heir of mediæval principles. But there are two considerations which cannot be overlooked.

In the first place, opinions which have been universally held have never yet been revolutionized by unverified hypotheses, whether those opinions have been philosophical, scientific or religious. They constituted presumptions that had to be overthrown by proofs. In some cases the proofs have rebutted the presumptions, but there have been others, in which the proofs have demolished the hypotheses, and the old doctrines have held their seat. Let the proofs be furnished that the soul and the body are not—as they have been believed to be from the beginning of the world—different entities, and the proofs will consequently be supplied that the sciences of psychology and physiology are not—as has

been generally maintained—two distinct sciences. Until the proofs are forthcoming, no ingenious hypothesis will rebut the presumption derived from the ancient faith of the race.

In the second place, the instances in which a thoroughgoing revolution of opinion has been effected have occurred in the physical or in the speculative sphere. In the former, may be mentioned the opinions formerly held as to the centre of the solar system, the figure of the earth and the existence of antipodes; in the latter, the views which prevailed among philosophers, that a mental image intervenes in sense-perception between the percipient subject and the external object, and that consciousness is restricted to the cognizance of subjective phenomena; but in the moral sphere the case is different. The geo-centric theory as to the planetary system has been demolished, but the theo-centric theory as to the moral system never has, although atheists, both scientific and philosophic, have been hammering at it for ages. So with regard to the accountability of man to a moral lawgiver and ruler, the seat of responsibility in the personal self, the existence of conscience, and the like. The doctrines concerned about the foundations of morals and religion have always stood, and stand now, impregnable. They have never been revolutionized. Now the hypothesis which is here combatted strikes at the very foundations of morals and religion. Science—some science—may elaborately try to prove that there is no real difference between a moral principle and a sensation. If it succeed, it would accomplish the moral disintegration of society, and plant its flag of triumph

upon the wreck; if it fail, it must experience the fate of the unsuccessful revolutionist. Science is free; let it revolutionize, *if it can*, for, as Burke says, “Hoary-headed error is not the more venerable on that account.” If it cannot, it will have to confess that hoary-headed truth has on that account a venerable presumption in its favor.

2. The investigations of the sciences of psychology and physiology proceed by different methods.

(1.) It is not designed to say that the ultimate source of authority in these sciences is different. In both the appeal for ultimate authority must be made to consciousness. Neither can reach higher proof than consciousness; and, therefore, both stand, in this regard, upon the same foot. The claim, although often preferred by the exalters of natural science in contradistinction to mental, is utterly inadmissible that the proof of the body’s existence and activities rests upon surer ground than that of the mind’s. Ultimately, the proof of the former depends upon the testimony of consciousness. Let the question be asked, Why am I sure of bodily pleasure or pain as facts? and the answer must be, Because I am conscious of them. The ground of certainty is the same as that upon which I depend in regard to mental phenomena—I am conscious of them. Take away consciousness, and what would remain of our knowledge of the phenomenal changes in our own bodies? As much as remains to the body in the coffin, to a corpse shocked by galvanism or undergoing the process of cremation.

(2.) Nor is it intended to say that the statement of

the difference between the sciences is satisfactory, which is sometimes made—namely, that one pursues the method of internal, the other the method of external, observation. The inquiry at once arises, as observation implies an observer, What is the observer? Manifestly, the mind; for no one would be so destitute of mind as to assert that observation may proceed without a mind to observe; but observation by the mind, whether internal or external, is precisely consciousness. The mind's instrument of observation is its consciousness. So that, whether the mind observes internal or external phenomena, its chief, its primary instrument of observation is attention, which is but intensified consciousness. In this respect, therefore, the sciences of psychology and physiology are not different, but similar.

So far for the observer and the main instrument of observation; but if the question be, What is it which is observed? what the objects upon which observation terminates? the answer must be: in the one case, that of internal observation, the phenomena of the mind; in the other, that of external observation, the phenomena of the body, and one cannot help pausing to say that the admission of a difference between the two methods of internal and external observation is the admission of the difference between the two sciences employing them, each being concerned about an object-matter different from that with which the other deals. There could be no unification of these sciences.

(3.) The real difference between the methods of the two sciences is that one proceeds purely by consciousness, while the other, besides involving consciousness,

proceeds by experiment with *material*, or, if that word be objected to, *mechanical instruments*. Psychology knows no instrument of investigation but consciousness, becoming, in this relation, introspection. Physiology uses the hand, the scalpel, the microscope, the galvanic battery, the electric machine, mechanical excitants, and nicely constructed contrivances for measuring the intensity of influences upon the nervous system, and the time occupied by the passage of nerve-currents from the end-organs of the body to the brain, and from the brain to those organs. The living subject is here spoken of. Upon the body of a dead man other instruments, chemical, for example, may be employed; but how such *post mortem* experiments could prove anything in regard to psychic states or acts, it may be left to him to show who maintains the identity of psychology and physiology.

The claim which such a scientist sets up is preposterous, that the activities of the mind can be *measured*. To pretend that physical measurements can be applied to the mind, in any sense, is miserably to beg the question of the unity of the mind and the body; and if the pure materialist has never yet, by all the ingenuity of the most elaborate arguments, succeeded in reducing the mind and the bodily organism to the unity of one substantive entity, it is not likely that it will be accomplished by the materialistic psycho-physicist through measurements with his mechanical instruments. His measurements necessarily are judged of by the senses. Can they penetrate into the *arcana* of the mind? When he can see a thought, or hear a feeling, or touch a volition, when he can taste a moral judgment, or smell a

religious sentiment—he may succeed in applying to them his mechanical instruments; hardly until then. He deceives himself when he supposes that in measuring the physical he is measuring the psychical. These measurements must be understood as applicable only to the physical conditions upon which mental energy, intellectual, æsthetical, voluntary or moral is manifested. They can only be expressed in the terms of physical science, and it is absurd—at least, it begs the question—to assume their applicability to the mental energies, considered as such. These energies cannot be subjected to physical measurement, either as regards intensity or time.

It deserves to be considered, further, that the measurements, such as they are, are of necessity only partial. A sympathetic reviewer in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* of Weber's law [concerning the measurement of psychic phenomena] makes these remarks:

“Weber's law, it must be added, holds only within certain limits. In the ‘chemical’ senses of taste and smell experiments are almost impossible. It is not practicable to limit the amount of the stimulus with the necessary exactitude, and the results are further vitiated by the long continuance of the physiological effects. The same considerations apply with still more force to the organic sensations, and the results in the case of temperature sensations are completely uncertain. The law is approximately true in the case of sight, hearing, pressure, and the muscular sense—most exactly in the case of sound. As this is the sense which affords the greatest facilities for measuring the precise amount of the stimulus, it may perhaps be inferred that, if we could attain the same exactitude in the other senses, with the elimination of the numerous disturbing influences at work, the law would vindicate itself with the same exactitude and certainty. It is further to be noted, however, that even in those senses in which it has been approximately verified, the law holds with



stringency only within certain limits. The results are most exact in the middle regions of the sensory scale; on the contrary, when we approach the upper or lower limit of sensibility, they become quite uncertain.”

But lest this citation from even an advocate of Weber’s law of psychic measurement should be imputed to the anxiety of “Dr. Dry-as-dust” to save the old psychology from utter discomfiture, let us listen to the words of the canonist of scientific experimentation, the able expounder of the philosophy of associational empiricism. Says John Stuart Mill:

“But if, on the other hand, it is out of our power to produce the phenomenon, and we have to seek for instances in which nature produces it, the task before us is one of quite a different kind. Instead of being able to choose what the concomitant circumstances shall be, we have now to discover what they are; which, when we go beyond the simplest and most accessible cases, it is next to impossible to do, with any precision and completeness. Let us take, as an exemplification of a phenomenon which we have no means of fabricating artificially, a human mind. Nature produces many; but the consequence of our not being able to produce it by art is, that in every instance in which we see a human mind developing itself, or acting upon other things, we see it surrounded and obscured by an indefinite multitude of unascertainable circumstances, rendering the use of experimental methods almost delusive. We may conceive to what extent this is true, if we consider, among other things, that whenever nature produces a human mind, she produces, in close connection with it, also a body; that is, a vast complication of physical facts, in no two cases perhaps exactly similar, and most of which (except the mere structure, which we can examine in a sort of coarse way after it has ceased to act) are radically out of the reach of our means of exploration. If, instead of a human mind, we suppose the subject of investigation to be a human society or state, all the same difficulties recur in a greatly augmented degree.

“We have thus already come within sight of a conclusion, which the progress of the inquiry will, I think, bring before us with the clearest evidence; namely, that in the sciences which

deal with phenomena in which artificial experiments are impossible (as in the case of astronomy), or in which they have a very limited range (as in physiology, mental philosophy, and the social science), induction from direct experience is practiced at a disadvantage generally equivalent to impracticability; from which it follows that the methods of those sciences in order to accomplish anything worthy of attainment must be, to a great extent, if not principally, deductive.”<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Mill was a stout maintainer of the derivation of all our knowledge from experience, but he did not sink the mind and the body, on the one hand, or, on the other, psychology and physiology into absolute unity. The judicious considerations just quoted from such a man ought to bridle the impetuosity of the rushers, mechanical apparatus in hand, into the field of physiological psychology, in order to demonstrate by physical measurement of psychic acts that the mind and the brain are the same, and that psychology and physiology are reducible to unity.

(4.) This argument going to show that, in view of the fact that psychology and physiology proceed in their investigations by different methods, they cannot be one and the same science, is, in some quarters, met by a denial that they employ different methods, and the assertion that they use but one method—or, at least, ought to use but one method. The method of “internal observation and reasoning” (or, as Stuart Mill calls it, deduction) is inadequate, false, effete. The old psychology, therefore, which employed that method must give way to the new-comer, physiological psychology, or experimental psychology. Its day is over, and it must be

<sup>1</sup> *Logic*, Am. Ed., pp. 219, 220.

summarily consigned to oblivion. This is the position boldly maintained by M. Ribot, who, by the way, refers to Stuart Mill as sustaining him; but if the passage above cited from Mr. Mill is taken into consideration, it appears that the appeal to his authority, in this particular matter, is erroneous and vain. The passages in which M. Ribot assumes this stand are so dogmatic and supercilious that several extracts will be given. They will serve to indicate the animus and drift of some magnifiers of the science of psycho-physics.

"Although it has cut a good figure enough, the old psychology is doomed. In the new surroundings that have recently grown up the conditions of its existence have disappeared. Its methods do not suffice for the increasing difficulties of the task, for the growing exigencies of the scientific spirit. It is compelled to live upon its past. In vain its wisest representatives attempt a compromise, and repeat in a loud voice that it is necessary to study facts, to accord a large share to experience. Their concessions amount to nothing. However sincere their intentions, in fact they do not execute them. As soon as they put hand to the work, the taste for pure speculation seizes upon them. Besides, no reform is possible of that which is radically false, and the old psychology rests upon an illegitimate conception, and should perish with the contradictions that are in it. The efforts that are made to accommodate it to the exigencies of the modern spirit, to work a change in its real nature, bring only delusion. Its essential characteristics remain always the same; one can show it in few words. In the first place, it is possessed of the metaphysical spirit; it is the 'science of the soul;' internal observation, analysis, and reasoning are its favorite processes of investigation; it distrusts biological science, associates with it only in reluctance and by necessity, and is ashamed to acknowledge its debt. Feeble and old, it makes no progress, and asks only to be let alone, that it may spend its age in peace.<sup>1</sup> . . . .

"For the old school, since taste for internal observation and

<sup>1</sup> *Germ. Psychol.*, etc. Tran., p. 2.

subtilty of spirit were exclusive signs of a call to psychology, the programme summed itself up in two words—observation and reasoning. Internal observation is, without doubt, the first step; there is always a necessary process of verification and interpretation; but it cannot be a method [N. B.]. To maintain this is to forget or to disown entirely the conditions of a scientific method. If psychology can be constructed in this way, good eyes and fixed attention will suffice for the construction of physiology.”<sup>1</sup>

“For the vague and common-place formula of the ‘relations of soul and body,’ as the old school employs it, for the arbitrary and barren hypothesis of two substances acting upon each other, let us substitute the study of two phenomena which have, for each particular case, so constant a connection that they can be most exactly designated as one phenomenon of a double face.”<sup>2</sup>

Upon these excerpts from a diatribe, with judicial solemnity consigning the old psychology—along with the old theology, of course—to a seat on the bank of the Lethe, there to suck its thumb and drivel upon its beard, until, in a fit of somnolence, it falls into the stream and its meaningless existence is ended, one cannot restrain a few reflections.

First. The lofty disdain is admirable, with which M. Ribot uses his psycho-physical staff to castigate Aristotle, Scaliger and Leibnitz, Kant and Cousin, Locke and Reid, Stewart, Hamilton and the multitudinous host of the old psychologists. Begone, he cries, to your merited oblivion! and, presto, they disappear into the chasm opened at the stamp of the great magician, and its jaws close over them forever.

Secondly. M. Ribot must have discovered a hitherto

<sup>1</sup> *Germ. Psychol.*, etc., Tran. p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8. One is reminded of Dr. Bain’s “double-faced unity”; of the meaning of which it remains to inquire. Here we have explicitly a double-faced *phenomenon*; and the marvel is that *it* is two phenomena, and yet only one phenomenon!

unknown race of peculiarly wise psychologists, whom he represents as with loud outcries and vain attempts at compromise summoning their deaf brethren to the duty of paying attention to facts and experience. Does he mean to say that there is a class of psychologists who deny that mental phenomena are facts, and confine experience to the external and sensible sphere? who regard consciousness as illusory in witnessing to the existence of subjective activities, and as discharging its whole office in testifying to nervous impressions? If there be such a tribe of psychologists they would verily be *rarae aves in terris*, and M. Ribot would be entitled to the laurels of a discoverer. One craves to know who they are and where they may be found.

Thirdly. Our learned critic finds fault with the old psychology, especially because it professes to be “a science of the soul,” whereas the truth is that the only genuine psychology is a “psychology without a soul.” It has perpetrated the unpardonable blunder of supposing that there is any soul. It is thus founded on “an illegitimate conception.” This is a damaging blow inflicted on the old psychology; it knocks the spirit, all the life and soul, out of it; but, without a pause to discuss the question whether there be no soul and the body is the whole of man, or to notice the remarkable admission made by M. Ribot, that he is a man of no soul, one may properly raise the inquiry with what consistency M. Ribot himself employs the term *psychology*. It certainly means, if anything, a discourse concerning the soul—it is a soul-logy. As M. Ribot expunges the psychical element—the soul—from man, he ought in consistency to strike out

the psychical member in the word psychology, and reduce it to the significant term *logy*; and then pursuing the path of consistent expurgation he ought to change the compound title physiological psychology into physiological *logy*; but as M. Ribot is too much of a scholar to father that jargon, let him consummate his consistency by calling his science not physiological psychology, but what he really means—namely, physiology.

Fourthly. To come directly to the point under consideration—that of method—it may be asked what M. Ribot can mean by his assertions concerning internal observation.

In the first place, he says that there is no soul to be observed. Consequently, one must infer, internal observation is an observation of nothing. The whole process or method (call it by what name you please) supposed to be pursued by the old, radically false, psychology is a delusion; but he also says, "Internal observation is, without doubt, the first step." As there is nothing to be internally observed, there can, of course, be no internal observation. Nevertheless, internal observation is the first step! This contradiction could not be evaded by saying that the internal observation intended is one of external phenomena, one originating from within and terminating on facts without; for observation is always defined from its object-matter. That is internal which is concerned about internal facts, that external which is concerned about external facts. If M. Ribot did not see this, or seeing it would deny, he may be a brilliant reciter of other men's opinions, but he has held his own powers of analysis and discrimination in reserve.

In the second place, although "internal observation is, without doubt, the first step" in the process of investigation, "it cannot be a method." This can only mean that it cannot be a whole method. Suppose that to be so, and where is the error in characterizing it as a part of a method, or as one of the methods pursued by psychology? But if, argues he, internal observation is allowed to be a psychological method, external observation may with equal justice be regarded as a physiological method—which is absurd; for "if psychology can be constructed in this way, good eyes and fixed attention will suffice for the construction of physiology." Does M. Ribot mean gravely to affirm that physiology proceeds alone by the method of experimentation? What would experiment avail without observation? Why, then, may not physiology be said to employ the methods of external observation and experiment? but if so, what objection can there be to saying—as he himself intimates—that internal observation is one of the methods employed by psychology, the others being, according to his statement, "analysis and reasoning"? All this is captious. As well might we say that it is wrong to speak of the methods of analysis and synthesis, or of analysis or synthesis being a method, inasmuch as they are only one method. It can make no material difference whether they be called two methods, each complementary to the other, or one joint method. If M. Ribot admits that internal observation is the first step in investigation—and he does—he concedes that it is the first element of a method, a legitimate method; and then he contradicts himself, for he asserts that it is falsely

employed by the old psychology. He might, however, reply that what he insists upon is the insufficiency of internal observation alone; the necessity of its results being verified and interpreted by external experiments; and as the old psychology depended upon an internal observation which was not thus confirmed, *its* internal observation was worthless. This brings us to the next consideration.

In the third place, M. Ribot assigns as a reason why internal observation is the first step in investigation this: "There is always a necessary process of verification and interpretation." The enunciation is ambiguous. It might be construed as meaning that internal observation precedes, or that it succeeds, verification and interpretation. If, as is probable, it be meant that it precedes them, and is verified and interpreted by them, it is confessed that the mind, as an independent observer, furnishes materials for verification and interpretation by external, physical experiment; and then the question is given up, for it is clear that a mere physical phenomenon cannot observe itself, and submit its observations for confirmation by the physical experiments, either of itself, or of other phenomena like itself. M. Ribot may believe this: There may have been men who believed that the moon is made of green cheese; which is about as reasonable as to believe that a physical phenomenon can observe, and experiment upon, itself. If it be meant that internal observation succeeds the verification and interpretation of external experiment, How can it be represented as the first step in the investigating process? It may be said that this is an ungrounded supposition;



but a recent writer, who is professedly a great admirer of Wundt, expressly says: "On the one hand, empirical investigation must precede rational interpretation, and this empirical investigation must be absolutely unhampered by fetters of dogmatism and preconception; on the other hand, rational interpretation must be equally free in its own province. . . . Empirical psychology must be concerned chiefly with the latter only as far as rational inferences can be confirmed empirically in the stage of development reached." This is indeed to secure the process at both ends, like the fastening of a suspension bridge by a buttress at each extremity: physical experiment is verified by rational interpretation, and rational interpretation by physical experiment.

So much is spoken ambiguously and unclearly in regard to internal observation, or introspection, that, to secure clearness, one is compelled to resort to a dilemma. Either the method of introspection supposes the soul, contradistinguished to the physical organism, or it does not. If the former, it is conceded that there are two distinct methods of investigation which cannot be confounded. Internal observation would be concerned about the soul and external about the body—the one psychological in its character, the other physiological. It would follow that, as the two methods could not be reduced to one, neither can the two sciences of psychology and physiology be brought into unity.

If the latter, if the method of introspection does not suppose the soul as contradistinguished to the physical organism, it would indeed follow, from that supposition, that what is termed introspection would relate to the

bodily organism alone. All that would be meant is that those parts of the body which are not superficial, but veiled from the senses, must be investigated by internal observation, and those parts which are subject to sensible inspection by external observation. Upon this hypothesis, however, the difference is acknowledged between internal and external observation. The question, then, must be pressed, What is the differentia of internal observation or introspection? What peculiar and distinctive office does it discharge? The mind or the soul, as a psychical entity contradistinguished to the physical organism, has been discarded. It must be thought away. Consequently, the physical organism alone exists as the investigator and the object to be investigated. Now, what is the process by which the brain, the heart, the nerves afferent and efferent, are introspected? If the answer be, By consciousness, that implies, whatever else may be meant, a knowledge which something has of itself. Now, what is that something? The reply to that question must not bring back the banished mind. It cannot, one must insist, be said to be a psychical something. That would be a soul, or the term is wrested from its obvious significance. It cannot be said to be a mental something, for that would be a mind. That which is mental, and at the same time not mind, is not only inconceivable, but self-contradictory. It must, therefore, be a physical, a bodily, something. Using the brain as representative of the whole nervous system, for the sake of brevity and the avoidance of a cumbersome multiplication of terms, it comes to this, that the brain is conscious of itself. By its own consciousness it is capable of introspecting itself.

But what does this amount to but maintaining that the brain has a mental power of internally observing itself? and what is this but to bring back the mind, which, by the hypothesis, was excluded. It is like the pitching out of nature with a fork; it is sure to come back again. No, it may be replied, there is no mental entity to which this power is to be attributed; the mental power attaches to the brain itself; but it must be rejoined: That which has a mental power belonging to it must be a mental thing, a mental entity, else there is an incongruity between the nature of the power and the nature of the thing to which it belongs. It cannot be said that the power is independent, that it implies no entity to which it appertains, for it would follow that the power would not belong to the brain, and so it would not be the brain's power by which it is conscious of itself; which would be to contradict the supposition with which we set out—namely, that the brain knows itself by its consciousness. The only other supposition is that the consciousness, by which the brain knows itself, is a physical knowledge, a corporeal consciousness; a position which is not only a pure paradox as traversing the common usage of mankind, but a flat contradiction to the particular usage of these very writers themselves, who uniformly speak of psychical and mental powers and entitle their science *psycho-physics* or *physiological psychology*.

It will not do to say that the question is a superfluous one, for there is *no* introspection. That would involve self-contradiction. M. Ribot has already been quoted as maintaining that the first step in investigation is in-

ternal observation; and what is that but introspection? The question, then, returns, What is the something which does the introspecting? And, further, how does it accomplish it? Is it contended that it is the brain which introspects itself? It must be asked, How? If the answer be, that the brain knows itself by a power *analogous to* that which the old psychologist imputes to his supposititious but non-existent mind, that would simply be to deny and affirm a mind in the same breath: to deny that there is a mind which is not the brain, and to affirm that there is a mind which is the brain.

This analysis leads us to a definite issue. He who denies that there are two separate but related methods of investigation—the one psychological, the other physiological, and affirms but one and the same method, takes this ground because, in his view, there are not two separate though related things to be investigated, but one and the same thing. This one thing is in one aspect psychical and in another physical. So the one method of its investigation is in one aspect psychical and in another physical. Consequently there are not two separate though related sciences, psychology and physiology, but one and the same science with two aspects—namely, psycho-physics or physiologico-psychology. Of course, a science of the relations between a psychical entity and a physical entity is, according to this view, an impossibility.

The further consideration of this definite issue is for the present postponed, in order to give room for another specification in regard to method.

Fifthly. The charge is preferred against the old psychologists, that they proceed upon the method of metaphysics. The point of this indictment is that, as they employed a false method, they reached a false result. No true psychology can be a product of the metaphysical method. The old psychology is such product; consequently, it must be regarded as a false psychology. The only true method is that which proceeds by observation and experiment. In this way alone can a true psychology be attained. There are not two methods; there is only one—the physiologico-psychological, or psycho-physical.

This criticism is not without justice, so far as those thinkers are concerned, who, like Hegel and some of the Hegelians, first construct a metaphysical system, and from it deduce a psychology. This is, indeed, a false method of procedure. Psychology must begin with the observation of subjective phenomena, and by induction arrive at its generalizations; but this is not the sense in which the censure is passed. The charge is that the old psychologists no sooner begin, by observing mental facts, than they proceed to speculate metaphysically, and to strive after metaphysical conclusions by the process of inference.

There is, it may be, a tendency on the part of some psychologists to hasten unduly to the adoption of metaphysical inferences, but where this is the case the fault is not in psychology itself, but in those who profess to employ its methods. The disposition, moreover, to run into this vicious procedure is not peculiar to psychologists. Every science has cultivators who are satisfied

with an insufficient induction of facts, and treat unverified hypotheses as established theories; and it would be just as fair to charge the physical sciences with inherent defectiveness of method because of this fault of some scientists, as to censure the old psychology on account of the undue precipitancy of some psychologists in forming their general conclusions.

All this, however, supposes the legitimacy of adopting metaphysical conclusions derived from a competent observation of psychical facts; but the *gravamen* of the charge under consideration is that the psychologist has no right to deal with metaphysics at all, and that his introduction of it into his methods is to vitiate psychology itself, and destroy its claim to be considered a science in any proper sense. Now, none but a positivist of the strict Comptist school can consistently take this ground. He limits the province of science to phenomena. If he generalizes, the result is a mere collection of phenomena. If he arrives at unity—and one cannot see how he can ever arrive at it where more than one phenomenon is concerned—the so-called unity is a mere bundle of related phenomena. The thing he reaches is simply an assemblage of individual percepts; but there are, if we may credit Mr. Herbert Spencer's statement, very few scientific men, who maintain this position, who are mere phenomenologists. The great majority affirm and act upon the right to *infer* unphenomenal existence from phenomenal facts; and so far as appears, this is not only legitimate, but necessary. What scientific man is there who does not assert the existence of force? But what scientific man is there who could justly claim that

force is phenomenal, in itself considered, apart from its manifestations? Who would say that gravity, or any other physical force, is observed by sense-perception? Here, then, at the boundary of the phenomenal sphere every science touches the metaphysical; and to say that psychology, the science which does not primarily employ sense-perception, but chiefly relies upon the consciousness of mental phenomena, is the only one which has no right to conclude to the unphenomenal, the metaphysical, is to talk absurdly. Let the positivist, if he please, gather up his phenomena and ligate them with some phenomenal bond, much as one ties together a bundle of sticks with a piece of twine, and let him, if he will, call that a unity, no other scientific man, much less the psychologist, will be satisfied with his method. The psychologist, notwithstanding the opprobrium of being characterized as a fossil, will continue to collect the subjective phenomena of thinking, feeling and willing upon an unphenomenal substance which thinks, feels and wills. Call this metaphysics, and decry it, if one chooses, but it is the necessary progress of the human reason. Man is one. He cannot disintegrate himself. He who notes facts is impelled to go on and search for their origins, their ends, their unity. He may, by an effort of will, restrain himself to mere observation and registration; but if this be all which is entitled to the appellation of science, there are few, if any, sciences. It is curious that M. Ribot, who urges this indictment of being metaphysical against the old psychology, refers with approval to the opinion of Herbart, that "it is perhaps a necessity inherent in all psychology, even the

experimental, to set out [!] with some metaphysical hypothesis.”<sup>1</sup>

III. It remains, in accordance with the scheme of the discussion, to consider the ultimate ground upon which it is claimed that what have been usually regarded as the two different, but related, sciences of physiology and psychology may be reduced to unity as one and the same science—to-wit, that the mind and the body are, in the last analysis, not two different, although related, entities, but one and the same entity.

There are some who, like Herbart, are spiritualists, maintaining that the soul is a simple, spiritual essence distinct from the bodily organism, but are, at the same time, associationalists in their psychology. Most, however, of the associationalist school of the present day hold to the unity of the soul and the body. They contend that they are one and the same entity. These again are subdivided into two classes—first, those who, like M. Ribot, cannot be reckoned as substantialists, and hold that the one entity is a phenomenon. They may be denominated phenomenologists or cerebralists. Secondly, there are others who, like Professor Bain, profess to admit that the one entity is a substance, but a substance which is alike mental and physical—in the words of Dr. Bain, “a double-faced unity.” All of these thinkers are characterized by a common feature: they agree in maintaining the doctrine of the associationalist school, that all knowledge originates in sense-experience, and is developed from the materials furnished by it, in accordance with the law of association.

<sup>1</sup> *Germ. Psychol.*, etc., p. 45.



1. I propose, therefore, without going into an elaborate discussion of that doctrine, to make some remarks upon it, inasmuch as it favors the view of the unity of the soul and the body, and consequently of psychology and physiology.

(1.) The consideration must be pressed, that, as water cannot rise higher than its source, so, according to the theory before us, no knowledge, no principles, of the human being can transcend the sense-experience in which it is claimed that they originate. Dr. Dabney, in his able work on *The Sensualistic Philosophy in the Nineteenth Century*, makes, upon this point, remarks which challenge attention:

“Bishop Butler grounded his immortal argument for the spirituality of that which thinks in us, partly upon the fact that the mind not only performed acts of sense-perception through its material organs, but performed also abstract acts of intelligence, such as the conception of general ideas, and of spirit, and God, independently of all organs of sense. Materialists now object that he was mistaken in his facts; they think they have proved by physiological experiments and reasonings (see page 132) that no mental act takes place, not even the most abstract, independent of molecular brain-action. And this asserted fact is advanced with a triumphant air, as though it destroyed our argument. Turretin, who used the same argument with that just cited from Butler’s *Analogy*, two hundred years ago, has acutely anticipated and exploded this objection. Suppose it be granted that a molecular brain-action does accompany the mind’s action in thinking an abstract thought, as that of God, spirit, self; can a nerve organ give the mind that purely spiritual idea? No cause can give what it has not. How is it possible for an organ essentially material to give a result from which the material is absolutely abstracted? A liver can secrete bile from blood; but the bile is as truly a material liquid as the blood. Hence we confirm the testimony of our own consciousness that, in abstract thought, as in spontaneous volition, the causative action is from the mind

towards the nerve organ. The excitement of the nerve-matter is consequence, and the spirit's spontaneity is cause. In objective perception, the cognition of the new sense-idea in the consciousness follows the excitement of the nerve-matter, in the order of causation. And just so surely, in the case of spontaneous thought, feeling, and volition, mental action precedes the action of the nerve-matter (if there is any) in the order of causation. So that in the sense of Turretin and Bishop Butler, these acts of soul are independent of material actions still; and the inference holds as to the soul's distinct existence."<sup>1</sup>

Against this reasoning sundry difficulties may be suggested. First, it may be asked, whether effects must exist potentially in causes; whether effects must be like their causes. Secondly, it may be urged as an *argumentum ad hominem* against the spiritualist that he holds God to be a spirit, and yet admits that he is the cause of matter which is wholly unlike himself. Thirdly, it may be said that the spiritualist contends that the mind is spirit, and yet allows that it operates upon matter and produces material effects. Why may not matter operate upon spirit and produce spiritual effects? Fourthly, the ground may be taken that the first cause in a series may start into operation causes which are not like itself, the first being simply the *condition* upon which the other causes are brought into independent activity; and, if so, sense-perceptions may be merely the conditions upon which abstract and general notions may be formed.

First. The first and the fourth of these difficulties may be discharged by the reply that it is incompetent to the associationalist to raise them, for the reason that he acknowledges the maxim: "Like causes, like effects." It is incumbent upon him to show how, in accordance

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 161, 162.

with that maxim sense-perception can be a cause of abstract notions and beliefs in transcendental reality. The argument of Turretin, Butler and Dabney holds against him on his own ground.

Secondly. The second difficulty, as addressed to the concessions of the spiritualist, he is bound to meet. His answer is that God is a creative, and therefore, an almighty cause. He is also a free cause. He is not held to be a cause operating in virtue of a blind, immanent necessity. If he could not create existences, which are not identical with himself, or unlike himself, he would not be omnipotent and free; and that would be contrary to the supposition that he is God. The analogy does not hold between him and us as finite, which is used against the spiritualist.

Thirdly. The third difficulty is one which does not bear upon the position of the spiritualist, but does bear with peculiar force upon that of the associationalist. The latter contends that the materials out of which abstract notions, beliefs in space, duration, cause, self, and God, and moral convictions and religious sentiments are constructed are furnished and only furnished by sense-perception. Upon his principle, that like causes are followed by like effects, it behooves him to hold and to show that there is an analogy between these notions, beliefs, convictions and sentiments, on the one hand, and the percepts derived from sense on the other. It will not do for him to say that they merely precede and succeed each other in a uniform manner. He must point out the resemblance between them. On his theory, the very stuff which is the basis of all mental concepts,

beliefs, convictions, the highest as well as the lowest, is supplied by sense-experience. This he must show, or break down in the development and application of his fundamental law. That he is unable to show this will be evinced as the argument proceeds.

The spiritualist is not pressed by this difficulty. True he concedes that there is interaction between the mind and the nervous system, especially the brain; and, further, that this interaction is in a certain sense causal; but it is with him an important question, what sort of causal influence is involved in this interaction. Upon that question it is sufficient to say that the causal relation is not one which necessarily supposes that the nature of the cause is infused, is transmitted, into the effect. It is a *causa sine qua non*. A given sensation causes a corresponding perception, in the sense that it so conditions the perception that without it the perception would not take place, but it would be illegitimate to contend that feeling enters into the nature of the cognitive act. So when a perception induces a certain sensation, it would be equally unwarrantable to hold that the cognition forms an element of the feeling. No proof can be produced in favor of the position that the nervous influences terminating upon the brain constitute elements of mental acts. The psychological changes which follow them cannot be proved to be so related to the molecular agitations of the brain that the former are constituted of the latter. It cannot be shown that there is an actual transmission into the psychological acts of the influence of the cerebral motions. All that can be proved is that the one class of activities conditions the other.

Science will have to go much farther than it has reached as yet to prove that brain-motions are of the same nature with mental acts.

But whatever may be thought of the conclusiveness of this argument touching the causal relation of sense-perceptions to the higher mental products, it is clear that, as water cannot rise higher than its source, *no results of sense-perception can, in their nature, transcend the nature of sense-perception*, the associationalist himself being judge. Sensation conduces to perception. Perception is the first, the lowest, stage of cognition. Percepts, therefore, are fundamental in the development of knowledge. The difficulty being now passed by, which just here lies across the path of the associationalist—namely, of showing that there is a likeness between percepts and sensations, in accordance with the principle: like causes, like effects—it must be admitted that imagination and conception which presuppose percepts as the very materials upon which they proceed cannot overpass them. The former combines them into new ideal wholes, and the latter classifies them in accordance with thought-relations. Locke's reflection cannot be invoked, since it does nothing more than is accomplished by imagination and conception; unless it be conceded that reflection supposes and employs *a priori* powers of the mind, and then the question would be given up by the associationalist. Percepts being the materials with which the building up of knowledge proceeds, it is evident that the whole edifice, to the topmost point of its spire, is composed of percepts. They are combined, arranged, classified, but they are percepts still. No

imagination, no conception, no reflection, can get higher than the percept; and, since the associationalist limits perception to sense-experience, they cannot get higher than the sense-percept. How, then, can we account for such apprehensions as those of space, duration, the infinite, and the like? Will it be contended that they are constructed, by virtue of the law of association, out of the materials supplied by sense-perception? If so, how? This leads us to the next consideration.

(2.) The view has here been maintained that, upon the principle of the associationalist school that all our knowledge originates in sense-experience, and is developed from it, none of our knowledge can transcend perception; but it is the common belief of mankind and the doctrine of well-nigh all philosophers that our apprehensions of infinite space and duration *do* transcend perception. Now, if they do, some other source must be assigned them than sense-perception. The question then occurs, How do these sensualistic empiricists explain the genesis of what are commonly denominated the "abstract notions" involving an infinite element?

As to "abstract space" several explanations have been given. "Locke would have us infer the notion from the comparison of two bodies seen separated in space. James Mill and his followers would derive it from a 'muscular sense,' recognizing the absence of resistance, so that space is but our sense-perception of the extended not resisting. Dr. Thomas Brown would resolve it into a form of our notion of succession, given us by the 'muscular sense,' during the progressive contraction of some set of muscles." Dr. Dabney, from whose *Sensual-*

*istic Philosophy*<sup>1</sup> this statement of theories has been taken, proceeds to pass upon them the following criticisms:

"All the plans have this common vice, that the notion of abstract space has to be assumed at the beginning, in order to carry on the *genesis* of it. Thus, when Locke compared two bodies as separated, he must have had the notion of space already in his mind, in order to represent to himself the word 'separated.' This is too plain for dispute. It is as impossible for the mind to conceive a body, without positing it in space, as it is to conceive an attribute without referring it to a being or entity. Our abstract notion of space is the mental *locus*, which must be given by the mind itself, in order to think the idea of body. Nor does the introduction of a '*muscular sense*' help the matter. According to its own advocates and patrons, such a sense simply perceives resistance. It could never give us, then, a direct perception of extension. On this scheme, just as much as any other, the latter notion must be furnished by the reason, and it must be in order to the mind's construing its abstract idea of extension empty of resistance. Were Dr. Thomas Brown's method valid, it would but resolve the notion of space into another form of our notion of successive time, and this we shall show to be underived."

These strictures are true, but it is proposed in these remarks to pursue a somewhat different line of argument—namely, to show the impossibility of arriving at the infinite by the road of sense-perception. Let us hear M. Ribot, as he expounds the method by which this impossibility is overcome. He is stating the respective positions of the two schools of *a priori* and *a posteriori* psychology:

"Let us define the difference between the two schools of psychology by an example. The transcendentalists examine our ideas of space and time; they find that each contains in itself in an indissoluble manner the idea of the infinite. Naturally we have no

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 251, 252.

experimental knowledge of the infinite; all our ideas derived from experience are ideas of finite things. Nevertheless, it is impossible to conceive of time and space otherwise than as infinite, and it is impossible to derive them from experience; these are the necessary conceptions of the mind. The *a posteriori* psychologist, on his side, sees clearly that we cannot think of time and space otherwise than as infinite, but he does not consider them as an ultimate fact. He sees in it an ordinary manifestation of one of the laws of the association of ideas—the law that the idea of a thing irresistibly suggests the idea of another thing with which it has often been found by experience to be intimately united. As we have never had any experience of a point in space without other points beyond it, nor of a point in time without other points which follow it, the law of inseparable association causes us to be unable to think of any point in time or space, however distant, without immediately imagining [N. B.] other points yet more distant. This explains their infinitude without introducing ‘necessity.’<sup>1</sup>

Let it be observed that there is here an unmistakable admission of the infinite: “We cannot think of time and space otherwise than as infinite.” One might stop to challenge the accuracy of this language on two accounts: first, because time, from the nature of the case, is finite; it can be measured. He ought to have used the term *duration*. Secondly, it is impossible to *think* infinite duration and space; but let that pass. Did M. Ribot, like Dr. Bain, deny the infinite, the argument of Dr. Dabney would be pertinent, that space and duration, even as finite, are not objects of perception. But let us grant to M. Ribot, for the sake of argument, that, in perceiving related objects and events, we perceive the distance, the interval, between them. Let us take the instance of space. How stands the case, as he describes it? We perceive the space between two objects related

<sup>1</sup> *English Psychology*. Trans., pp. 86, 87.



by association. We also perceive the distance between the second object and a third beyond it; and also of a fourth beyond the third; and so on until we reach the last object related to the faculty of perception—that is, one beyond which we can perceive no other. What then? We *imagine* an object beyond the last one perceivable, and go on to *imagine* others with the distances between them, beyond and still beyond. Thus we reach infinitude, without introducing "necessity."

Now either the infinite is here employed in its strict and accepted sense of the illimitable, or it is not. If it is not, only the big finite is spoken of, and the whole exposition is trivial. If it is, the ground is taken that the infinite as the illimitable is attained to by the imagination, through the addition of limited sections of space to limited sections of space. As every one of these sections is confessedly limited, lying as they do between imagined "points" which bound it, the whole series of sections must be limited, in accordance with the impregnable maxim that what is predicable of all the parts is predicable of the whole. Consequently, the whole is limited, or, what is the same thing, finite. No imagined addition of finite to finite can give the infinite; but, if the imagination—the power appealed to—cannot reach the infinite, it is un-supposable that any other power proceeding *a posteriori* can reach it. We are shut up to the conclusion that as we do certainly have an apprehension of the infinite, and the imagination cannot furnish it, that apprehension must be assigned to an *a priori* source. This "explanation" of the experimental method by which we get the infinite palpably breaks down, and

as it is not likely that any other, pursuing the same road, will be more successful, we are entitled to rest in the conviction that all our knowledge is not derived from sense-experience.

Further, it has, in these remarks, been contended that if all our knowledge originates in sense-perception, no knowledge can rise higher than the sense-percept. It may be urged, on the contrary, that the imagination transcends perception. There is a sense in which this is true, as has already been conceded. The imagination has the power of combining, arranging, classifying the materials with which it deals; but what are these materials? They are percepts, represented by the imagination. Combine, arrange, and classify, subtract, add, and multiply, as it may, the material of all these processes is percepts. It is often remarked that the imagination is a creative power—as in the case of the poet, for example. The language is figurative. It certainly is not true that the imagination creates something from nothing. What, then, does it create? The answer is, new and often surprising wholes, but these wholes are but the aggregates of previously existing materials. They may exist in the form of concepts, and the philosophic genius may combine them into a system, which, as such, had no previous existence; but concepts are but percepts as thought under the forms of the logical understanding. Concepts of concepts—second intentions, in the language of the schoolmen—cannot transcend the particular materials furnished by perception, or, what is the same, by consciousness. The imagination of the astronomer, in its attempt to compass the universe, but

uses the intervals between perceived stars. Add them together, multiply them, as he may, and he will inevitably be baffled in his endeavor to imagine space which is not inter-stellar. He can never escape from the imagination of limits. All this would be true were the *nisus* of the imagination to proceed in only a single direction—that of length; but the difficulty is immeasurably enhanced when it attempts to radiate from a centre outwards in every direction to compass the infinite spherically. What can it accomplish in its utmost flights? Only the image of a firmament that is all-enclosing; but if that were reached, only the finite would be attained; for what is enclosed is bounded; and yet beyond that all-enclosing firmament of the imagination, beyond which it cannot go, we are compelled to *believe* that there is space which no firmament embraces. What is that belief—what can it be but the offspring of an *a priori* "necessity"? Let any one try the experimental method in his attempt to reach infinite space, and, if he is not willing to deny his consciousness, he will confess the utter inadequacy of that method. The apprehension of the infinite transcends sense-perception in its highest results, as used by conception and the imagination. It cannot, therefore, originate in it.

But if, as Dr. Dabney argues, the space between "points" or objects is unperceivable, if the terminating objects as phenomenal are all that is perceived, and the space between them as unphenomenal is not perceived, the bottom drops out of the theory. There would be no sense-perceptions to start with in the architectonic enterprise of building up the idea of infinite space.

In the following utterance I understand Professor Bain, whom John Stuart Mill, in an article in the *Edinburgh Review*, claimed as "belonging essentially to the association school," to deny the existence of the infinite in denying the possibility of conceiving infinite space:

"The only real notion that we can ever form of extension, as empty space, is a sweep (!) between two resistances; infinite space, where the points, or termini, of resistance are done away with, is therefore an incompetent, irrelevant, impossible conception; it does not comply with the conditions indispensable to the notion."<sup>1</sup>

One must be indulged in a few comments upon this position:

In the first place, as Professor Bain acknowledges no power in belief or faith to give us knowledge transcending that furnished by conception, in denying the possibility of conceiving infinite space, he denies the possibility of apprehending it. For the same reason he is bound to deny the possibility of apprehending anything infinite. It is inconceivable, and, therefore, beyond the reach of the human faculties. As all *termini* are done away with on the supposition of infinite space, there is no possibility of measuring it, and consequently no chance of building up the notion of its infinity. Therefore, away with it! The school of sense-experience cannot tolerate it; and so, as there are no stadia by which we can measure anything infinite, there is no possibility of constructing the notion of it. The so-called infinite must go. It is, in the words of Mr. J. S. Mill, a "nonsensical abstraction."

<sup>1</sup> *Mental Science*, pp. 48, 49.

In the second place, the doctors of the associationalist school differ. We have heard M. Ribot asserting the infinite, and attempting to show how the apprehension is reached upon the principles of that school. Dr. Bain proves that upon those principles it cannot be reached. Dr. Bain certainly has the advantage of the argument. We cannot reach the infinite by the method of sense-experience. The doing away with *termini* of measurement is the doing away with the infinite; but—

In the third place, this explodes the associationalist school. In attempting to disprove the infinite it destroys itself. It has been shown that the effort to reach the infinite by the road of sense-perception is vain; and Dr. Bain virtually confesses this in denying infinite space. A school which is either unable to account for the apprehension of the infinite, or boldly denies it, cannot live. John Stuart Mill himself admits that if we endeavor to assign limits to space, we are compelled to believe that there is space beyond those limits; and, as Samuel Clarke shows, if we suppose that beyond those limits there is nothing, we are obliged to believe that that nothing is space.

I had purposed to subject to special examination Professor Bain's objections to “the doctrine of innate ideas and principles,”<sup>1</sup> but their detailed discussion would protract this discussion to an undue length; nor is it necessary. They may be easily refuted by the application to them of the single law of belief in the infinite. For example, under the head of his first objection, and as an instance sustaining it, he cites space, and asks, with

<sup>1</sup> *Mental Science*, p. 182 ff.

reference to his "analysis of space"(!), whether it is not sufficient, and if not, demands to be informed what element there is "that cannot be identified with muscular feeling and sensation, under the intellectual properties of difference, agreement and retentiveness." The ready answer is, its infinity. So, under his second objection, he says: "The unquestionable rule being that our knowledge is gained through movement and sense (intellectual functions coöperating), the burden lies with the advocate of innate truth to make good any exceptions to this rule." The reply is, infinite space and infinite duration are exceptions to this "unquestionable rule."

His third objection is: "On the theory of nominalism, innate general ideas would involve innate particulars." This he enforces by the remark, "If an abstraction, or generality, be nothing but a host of particulars identified and compared, the abstraction is nothing without the particulars." The answer is, on no theory do the abstractions or generalities of infinite space and infinite duration involve particulars. They are characterized by absolute simplicity.

So one might go on through all six of his objections, but these examples must suffice. Dr. Bain observes that "in the present position of the controversy in question, the chief alleged innate (speculative) principles are the axioms of mathematics, and the law of causation." He "forgets God"—the consummate end of all human inquiry. Even Mr. John Stuart Mill not unfrequently condescends to speak of the deity as at least a possibility, but one is struck by the conspicuous absence from Dr. Bain's book on *Mental Science* of allusions to the exist-

ence of such a being. This, however, is eminently consistent. A psychology without a soul is the correlative of a philosophy without a God. This is science, and as science has to do only with facts, and God is not a fact, the scientific man can have nothing to do with God! What if it should turn out that God will have something to do with him?

The conclusion to which we come is that the infinite will not down at the bidding of the associationalist, and the associationalist cannot get up to the infinite. His theory is infinitely a failure.

There are other arguments against this doctrine which, were I writing a volume on this particular subject, would need to be developed. Their consideration must here be foregone, and, really, enough has been said, if it has been shown that, in the instance of the apprehension of the infinite, as applicable to space, to duration, to God, the theory breaks down. *Falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*. It is false in principle.

2. A previous analysis conducted us to a definite issue, the further consideration of which was deferred for a time. I come now to some notice of that issue. It is, whether the brain and the so-called mind are one and the same. It is tantamount to—at least, in the last analysis, it involves—the old question between the spiritualist and the materialist; but the issue is presented in a new form. There is the refusal to admit that either the so-called mind or the so-called body is a substance—a *substratum* or support of qualities which constitutes their bond of unity; and the assumption that the mind and the brain come together in one and the same entity,

which is neither spiritual nor material, but is simply mental and physical at one and the same time. We have, then, the hypothesis of a psycho-physical entity or something, which is neither substantively material nor substantively immaterial, nor both. This something is what M. Ribot calls "one phenomenon of a double face," and Dr. Bain "a double-faced unity."

(1.) We have seen that M. Ribot rejects and ridicules the hypothesis of two substances, and substitutes for it that of "two phenomena which have, for each particular case, so constant a connection that they can be most exactly designated as one phenomenon of a double face."

(2.) With this hypothesis of M. Ribot that of Dr. Bain, although expressed differently, is in real agreement. He denominates so-called mind the subject, and so-called matter the object. The defining characteristic of mind as the subject is the absence of extension. Mind, then, is unextended. The defining characteristic of matter, the object, is extension. Matter, of course, is phenomenal, since he holds its essence to be inertia. Is mind also phenomenal? Let us hear Dr. Bain: "The only account of mind strictly admissible in scientific psychology consists in specifying three properties or functions—feeling, will or volition, and thought or intellect—through which all our experience, as well objective as subjective, is built up."<sup>1</sup> That these "properties or functions" are phenomenal will be made to appear from what he says as to substance. Discarding an occult substate of matter, he makes its essence to be inertia. Likewise, rejecting an occult substance of mind—the

<sup>1</sup> *Mental Science*, pp. 1, 2.



view of the substantialists—he says: “According to the other view, the substance of mind is the three fundamental and defining attributes; those powers or functions which, being present, constitute mind, and in whose absence we do not apply the name. They are feeling, volition, and intellect.”<sup>1</sup> That this is his own view is evident from its correspondence with his definitions just specified. Now either the mind is, in the last analysis, substantive or phenomenal. Since Dr. Bain holds that it is not substantive, he must hold that it is phenomenal. That there may be a thing which is neither substantive nor phenomenal is, so far as I know, maintained by none. That Dr. Bain’s hypothesis is really coincident with M. Ribot’s is, therefore, apparent. It is true that he employs the word *substance*, but, as has been evinced, in a sense entirely different from that of the substantialists.

In addition to what has already been urged in the criticism of this extraordinary hypothesis, a few considerations will be subjoined.

First. All the arguments may be advanced against it which, in the controversy with the materialist, are drawn from the impossibility of bringing utterly incompatible attributes into unity upon one and the same thing. Especially is this sort of argument possessed of an *ad hominem* force as addressed to the express concessions of Dr. Bain. He defines mind as unextended, and matter as extended. His unit is, therefore, both unextended and extended. There is no extension in one of its faces, and plenty of it in the other. His metaphor of a

<sup>1</sup> *Mental Science*, p. 99.

“double-faced unity” is, to say the least of it, infelicitous. What a phenomenal face lacking extension can mean, and how it is connected with a face as extended as the brain in the same phenomenon, it is hard to conjecture; but, not to press the figure, an unextended-extended phenomenal thing—what, in the name of imagination or belief, can it be?

Secondly. These writers fail to represent the human being as a unit. In their last analysis, human nature is a compound. Take M. Ribot’s bold account of the case. Two phenomena are brought into so constant a connection that they can be *most exactly designated* as one phenomenon. In the first place, one craves to know how it is possible for two phenomenal things to be one phenomenal thing. These writers are men of science and view the matter from a scientific point. To what analogy of a scientific character can they appeal? To chemical affinity? Would they say, for instance, that the combination of hydrogen and oxygen can be exactly designated as one phenomenon? Is water a unit? Can it not be decomposed into hydrogen and oxygen again? Strictly speaking, where is the unity of water? and, strictly speaking, where is the unity of each of the constituents? Is it not said that hydrogen, for example, which is assumed as the unit of atomic weight, is itself diatomic? and yet we are told that mind and body are a single phenomenon! This is simply reckless assertion. In the second place, there is not merely the combination of one phenomenon with another phenomenon to constitute a third phenomenon, which is the unity with a double face, but there are sets of mental phenomena,

and sets of physical phenomena, which themselves need to be reduced to unity before this marvellous double-faced unity can be constituted out of them. What a short-hand method of unification is this of M. Ribot! In the third place, even the atomic components, of which the ultimate chemical elements are said to consist, are unphenomenal. Who has ever perceived an atom? The very basis is lacking of this pretended association of phenomena. It is as impossible to get a phenomenal foundation for it as it is to fabricate a phenomenal unit from it. This is true on the physical side alone; how much more apparent is the impossibility on the mental!

Let us see whether it fares better with Dr. Bain's statement of the case. He appears to perceive the necessity of first separately reducing to unity each of the sets of phenomena before he reaches the ultimate unity of the sets themselves in his psycho-physical, double-faced entity. Distinguishing, as to matter, "between the fundamental, constant, inerasible attributes, and those that are variable, fluctuating, or separable," he says, "Thus, as regards 'matter,' the property 'inertia' is fundamental and irremovable." Further, "The substance of body, or matter generally, would thus be what is common to all body—inertia."<sup>1</sup> Now we have seen that in his opening chapter, on Definitions, he makes matter and the object, or object-world, the same, and remarks, "The department of the object, or object-world, is exactly circumscribed by one property, extension." Two things only will be said of this account of the unification of matter. In the first place, unless Dr.

<sup>1</sup> *Mental Science*, Appendix, pp. 98, 99.

Bain can show the identity of extension and inertia, he uses contradictory affirmations, and it would task his powers to evince that identity. In the second place, this fundamental and unifying something is expressly called "an attribute," "a property"; but if it be, it is obviously not ultimate. It must be an attribute, a property of something, or the words are employed abusively. Yet this thing is the unity to which so-called matter is reduced. But leaving Dr. Bain's matter as substantially immaterial, let us consider briefly his unification of mind.

The unity of mind consists in "the three fundamental and defining attributes"—the "powers or functions" of "feeling, volition, and intellect." It is in the conjunction of these three that unity must be sought. Now—

In the first place, attributes suppose something to which they belong. Attributes of what? If of nothing, contradiction emerges. If of something common to the attributes themselves, absurdity obtains.

In the second place, powers and functions are treated as the same; but functions are the results of powers. Granted, however, that they are the same, what exercises the powers—discharges the functions? If nothing, the words are unmeaning. If something belonging to the powers or functions themselves, the affirmation is absurd.

In the third place, Dr. Bain does not tell us—could he?—what that something is which reduces to unity feeling, volition, and thought. According to him, it must be an element in which they are "conjoined," a generic something which is at one and the same time

feeling, volition and thought, without being either specifically. As he denies a feeling, willing, thinking substance, one may safely challenge Dr. Bain to point out what the unit is which feels, wills, and thinks.

In the fourth place, if another alternative mentioned by Dr. Bain be considered, the result is no better. It is “to call the *total* of any concrete the substance, and each one of its properties, mentioned singly, a quality, or attribute.” But as substance, properly speaking, is discarded, the total of a concrete is simply a collection of phenomena, and it amounts to this: the phenomena are phenomena of a collection of themselves!

It is sufficient for the refutation of these wretched attempts of associationalists to unify the powers of the human mind to cite the opinion of John Stuart Mill—and their school has produced no more powerful thinker—that there is a bond which organically unites all our consciousnesses.

“I hold it to be indubitable,” he observes, “that there is something real in this bond, real as the sensations themselves; and which is not simply a product of the laws of thought without anything which corresponds to it. . . . That original element which has no community of nature with anything answering to our names, and to which we can give no other name than its own without implying some false or unsteady theory, is the *ego*.”<sup>1</sup>

If, then, these writers are logically obliged to admit, instead of two phenomenal faces, a multitude of such faces, and utterly fail to indicate the unit to which these faces are attached, their hypothesis of a double-faced unity hopelessly breaks down.

This discussion must here be arrested, and I must

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Ribot, *Eng. Psychol.*, p. 122.

express the conviction that the arguments of the monistic physiological psychologists add no force to those of the out-and-out materialist. I have endeavored to refute the reasoning of the former, rather than to furnish positive proofs of the separate existence of the soul. Such proofs have been abundantly supplied in the protracted controversy with the materialists; but in relation to the comparatively recent questions raised by the school of sensualistic associationalism touching what they denominate physiological psychology, I would make special reference to the very able arguments of Dr. R. L. Dabney in his *Sensualistic Philosophy*, and of Prof. G. T. Ladd, in the latter part of his *Physiological Psychology*.

I desire, in this connection, to place on record two cases bearing upon this question of the difference between the soul and the body, which fell under my personal observation, and exercised an influence upon my thinking concerning the subject.

The first is that of Capt. Kinsey Burden King, an intelligent planter, of St. Paul's Parish, Colleton County, South Carolina. I had been studying afresh Bishop Butler's argument in favor of a future life, and had come to the conclusion that the presumption created by the fact that the mind often increases in vigor in proportion to the decay of the body was too uncertain to be relied upon, even as a probable proof. That is true in certain diseases, pulmonary, for example; but the opposite seems true when the brain is paralyzed. While in that mental attitude towards the Bishop's argument, I was one night called up to see my friend, who

was dying. I found him lying in a perfectly comatose condition, as motionless as a corpse, with his large, black eyes fixed, with an unwinking gaze, in a certain direction upon the ceiling. The physician was endeavoring, with loud calls to him, and a spoon of calomel pressed to his lips, to get him to take the medicine. Failing in his effort, he turned away and said, "Mrs. King, I am sorry that I can do no more for him."

Some one then suggested to her to speak to him. Putting her mouth near his ear she said to him, in little more than an ordinary tone, "My dear, wouldn't you like to see Bunner?" (a pet name for their little boy). What a transformation that question effected! Putting his elbow behind him, the almost lifeless man raised himself and sat up in bed, asking, "Where is he?" The little fellow, who was sleeping in another room across a passage, was brought to him. Leaning forward, he took the child in his arms, called him his darling, and kissed him repeatedly. The scene was thrilling, and the room was filled with the weeping of the friends who were present. Standing at the foot of the bed, and moved to tears, I was saying to myself, "Old Bishop, I believe you were right. Here is a dark lantern. Just now I saw no light. Now the door is thrown open, and the brilliant light is pouring out its rays." The dying man then sank back with the child clasped to him in his left arm, and relapsed into his former comatose and motionless condition. "Look!" thought I, "the door of the lantern is closed, but the bright lamp within is burning as brilliantly as it did a few moments ago. The thick walls of clay have shut it in. It cannot shine through

them, but it is there shining all the same. Old Bishop, I believe you were right." Very soon after, my friend died. Still a lingering doubt remained. May not the question have shocked the nervous system into temporary action? There was no spontaneous mental action. That doubt was removed by the other case.

It was that of the Rev. Robert Robertson Small, a young preacher of Shreveport, Louisiana, on his way to South Carolina to be married. Upon his arrival at the home of his parents in Charleston, he was prostrated by an attack of typhus fever. He lay ill for a month and died. On the last night of his life he lay dying for about six hours, during which time his body was motionless, his arms lying alongside of him, and his eye—for one looked across the line of vision of the other—fixed, as in Captain King's case, with steady, unwinking gaze, apparently at a certain point of the ceiling. There was no sign of life, save a slight breathing, which gradually became fainter and fainter. Towards morning, without being touched or spoken to, in the midst of silence which reigned in the chamber, a smile played upon his sunken features, and, lifting both hands, he stretched them out in the direction in which he was seemingly looking. The smile faded away, and the arms fell back to their former position. After a short interval the same smile and the same reaching forth of the hands occurred, succeeded by the Hippocratic face and the motionlessness of the arms. Then, the third time, the same thrilling signs of mental activity were exhibited; but this time the smile became beaming and indicative of inward rapture, the arms were stretched to their utmost tension,



and the lips moved in a whispered utterance. One standing near his head leaned down to hear, and reported him as having said, "Earth is receding—heaven." The light gradually vanished from his face, the corpse-like repose was resumed, and shortly afterward he ceased to breathe.

All this I saw with my own eyes. The *facts* convinced me. My speculative doubt was gone. It was clear that the soul is capable of existence and activity separately from the bodily organism. No afferent nerve had transmitted a current of influence to the brain; but the soul itself, moved by its anticipation of immortal bliss, had stirred the almost dead body to smiles of ecstasy and words of hope.

"'Tis true, 'tis certain; man, though dead, retains  
Part of himself; th' immortal mind remains."

## SPACE—WHAT IS IT?

---

W HATEVER space may be supposed to be, it is, so far as I know, very generally admitted to be infinite; and this admission would seem to be demanded by necessity, for it is impossible to conceive it as finite. "To set bounds to space," says Dr. Samuel Clarke, "is to suppose it bounded by something which itself takes up space, and that is a contradiction: or else that it is bounded by nothing; and then the idea of that nothing will still be space, which is another contradiction."<sup>1</sup>

Either it is nothing, or it is something. An infinite nothing is impossible; for nothing is a negation of which the only affirmation possible is that it is not existent; but to say that it is infinite is to make another affirmation of it, which is contrary to the definition. An infinite nothing is either nonsense, or it is a contradiction in terms. If it be something, the following suppositions are possible: Either, first, it is a relation; or, secondly, it is a condition; or, thirdly, it is a substance; or, fourthly, it is an attribute of substance.

1. Is space a relation? If it be, it must either be a relation between finite things, or between God and finite things. Take the first supposition—that it is a relation between finite things.

<sup>1</sup> Answer to the Sixth Letter appended to his "Demonstration," etc. This Letter was written by another than Butler, who wrote the first five.

In the first place, an infinite relation between finite things, if it does not imply a contradiction, is at least inconceivable. A finite thing cannot be everywhere; neither can two or more finite things. Between these finite things, therefore, a relation must be finite. An infinite relation must extend everywhere; but to say that space is a finite relation contradicts the assumption that it is infinite.

In the second place, a relation implies objects between which it exists. These objects are, from the nature of the case, the terms of the relation. The relation is, therefore, terminal—it terminates on two or more things. This necessarily implies that it is bounded, and in each particular case by the objects between which it exists; but space is admitted to be infinite; and we would have, upon the supposition, a limited, or finite, infinite, which is a palpable contradiction.

In the third place, we would have, upon this hypothesis, as many relations as there are objects between which they could exist. Each of these relations would, of course, be bounded by its terms, and the double contradiction would emerge, of a number of infinite relations, and a number of bounded relations which are one infinite relation.

In the fourth place, we cannot conceive of space as thus limited to an existence between terms or boundaries. We are compelled to conceive it as existing beyond as well as between finite objects whatever they may be; but that which goes beyond two or more finite objects, and infinitely beyond them, cannot be said to be simply a relation between them. Let us instance two worlds.

Space cannot be conceived as terminating with these worlds. It must be conceived as lying infinitely beyond them. What is predicable of two is predicable of any number of worlds, or systems of worlds. We can conceive the universe as limitable, but we cannot so conceive space, as a whole. As a whole, it is conceived as having a comprehension greater than the universe; for we are forced to conceive the universe as existing in it. Space, therefore, cannot be regarded as astricted to two or more points in the universe, even those the most remote from each other. It has no terms, and consequently cannot be simply a relation.

In the fifth place, against the hypothesis that space is only a relation may be urged its incapability of displacement. It may be admitted that, for purposes of thought, we may assign limits, in a certain sense, to it; just as we may conceive of the limited exercise even of a divine attribute—for example, of power or justice or mercy; but we cannot conceive of a divine attribute, as to its integrity, being limited. That would be to conceive the infinite as finite. So we may conceive of a limited portion of space, but we cannot conceive of space as an infinite whole being limited. Within the limits which in thought we may assign to it, be they greater or less, we cannot conceive of it as being displaced. It is up to, in, through and beyond, any two or more objects. We may represent, for purposes of thinking, these walls as limiting space, and call it the space within the walls, but we cannot avoid conceiving it as in and through the walls, and as existing beyond them; but that of which these things may be affirmed cannot be defined to be a

mere relation between two or more finite things. Objects are related to each other in space, but space is not simply a relation between them. So much for the first supposition, that space is a relation between finite things.

Let us take the second supposition—that it is a relation between God and finite things. Upon this supposition one or more of the terms of the relation must be regarded as finite. Now as no finite things, multiply them as you will, are everywhere, the relation being in one direction bounded by them cannot extend to the infinitude of God. It is, therefore, not an infinite relation. It stops at points within and not up to God's immensity. There may be relations—there are—between an infinite being and finite things, but they are not infinite relations. I speak of local relations, for they alone are relevant to the argument. An infinite relation bounded in one direction by a finite object is inconceivable. Space, then, as infinite, can be conceived neither as a relation between finite things, nor as a relation between God and finite things.

2. Is space a condition? If it be, it must be considered either as a condition of existence or as a condition of thought. Is it a condition of existence? It cannot be affirmed to be a condition of God's existence; for if that position be intelligible, it is maintained that the infinite, and, therefore, unconditioned, Being is conditioned, and conditioned by something out of himself. That would involve two contradictions: first, that an unconditioned being is conditioned; secondly, that an infinite being is conditioned by an infinite something

which is not himself; that is, that there are two separate infinities, one of which conditions the other.

If, further, it be held that the condition is not out of but within the divine being, it may be replied that we can make no distinction between conditions and attributes of the infinite being. It is not competent to us to speak of conditions either of the existence or energies of God. The language is unintelligible, and the notion it professes to symbolize, zero.

Moreover, if space be a condition of God's existence, then either there are said to be two conditions of his existence, or space and the necessity of the divine existence are affirmed to be one and the same. If there be any sense in which it may be said that there is a condition of the divine existence—which may well be denied—the only one which would appear tolerable is that in which necessity is considered such a condition. It has been said that his being is conditioned by a necessity incomprehensibly inhering in itself. To say that space is such a condition is to confound it with the necessity of God's existence, which is absurd; for then it would follow that all things exist in the necessity of the divine existence.

Yet again: if space be a condition of the divine existence, then it is either a condition of our apprehension of the divine existence, or a condition of that existence itself. If the former, as it is an irresistible conviction of our minds that all finite things exist in space—a conviction explicitly acknowledged even by Kant—it would follow that it is an irresistible conviction of our minds that all finite things exist in a condition

of our apprehension of the divine existence; which is absurd. If the latter—namely, that space is a condition of the divine existence itself—it would follow that, in accordance with the same irresistible conviction, all finite things exist in a condition of the divine existence; which is also absurd.

But if space cannot be shown to be a condition of God's existence, may it not be merely a condition of finite existence? If it be merely the condition of finite existence, say of the existence of the universe, it would follow that, as it is admitted that space is infinite, and the universe finite, space is where the universe is not; and then it would further follow that there is a condition of existence where nothing exists to be conditioned; which is absurd. To this it cannot be objected that the same difficulty inheres in the supposition that space is an attribute of God's substance—the immensity of an infinite Spirit; for, it being admitted that God exists, his attributes must equally exist, whether there be any finite existence to be conditioned by them or not. But if space be not an attribute of the divine substance, but a condition of finite existence, it is, *ex hypothesi*, simply and merely a condition of finite existence, and therefore would not itself exist except in relation to such existence. So that the supposition is necessitated that the existence of the condition is itself conditioned upon the existence to which it is related. But an infinite condition, having no other reason for its existence than its relation to finite things, is an absurdity.

What has been said in regard to the supposition that space is a condition of the existence of the universe

would, of course, hold with greatly increased force of the supposition that it is the condition of the existence of any particular finite thing.

Furthermore, if space is affirmed to be merely a condition of existence, then either it is nothing or something—*an ens* or a *non-ens*. If nothing, it is incapable of predication, for of nothing nothing can be affirmed or denied. Nothing, therefore, cannot be said to be the condition of something. If it be replied that this predication is possible in regard to it—namely, that existence is denied to it—then, as a condition must have some sort of existence, it is denied that space can be a condition, and that would be to abandon the supposition that, as nothing, it is a condition of existence. If, on the other hand, space be something, an entity, then it is either a rational or real entity—an *ens rationis*, or an *ens reale*. If the former, as every *ens rationis* is an element or a product of some mind, space, as a condition of existence, is either an element or product of a finite mind, or of the infinite mind. If of a finite mind, we would have an infinite element of a finite thing or an infinite product of a finite factor, either of which suppositions is contradictory and absurd. If of the infinite mind, as every *ens rationis* must be conceived as either an element or a product of the reason, space, as a condition of existence, is either an element or a product of the divine reason. If an element, as no element can be the totality of that in which it exists, we have a condition of God's existence which does not correspond with the totality of his being; which cannot be admitted. If a product, as every product is dependent upon the thing producing it, we



have a dependent existence conditioning the existence of that on which it depends; which is contradictory and absurd.

It must be added that it is unintelligible to affirm that an *ens rationis* conditions the existence of the *ratio*. That which has its ground of existence in the reason cannot be said to be a condition of the reason. This applies equally to the infinite being and to finite beings. The reason, or intelligence, is an element of existence in either case; and, as an *ens rationis* cannot condition one of the elements of an existence, it cannot condition that existence as a whole.

It may, however, be said that a divine *ens rationis* may condition the existence of other beings than God. To this I answer that God's ideas, which are real knowledges, cannot be distinguished from his intelligence, and to say that the divine intelligence, as conditioning finite existence, is space, is to admit that space is an attribute of God, and that would be to gainsay the hypothesis that space is not an attribute of God, but a mere condition of existence, and so to give up the question. So much for the supposition that space, as a condition of existence, is an *ens rationis*—a mere mental entity.

If space, as a condition of existence, be an *ens reale*—a real entity, and is, according to the hypothesis, different from God, we would have two real beings, which are co-existing, but independent, infinities; and that involves a contradiction, for two real infinite beings must be supposed to limit and condition each other; which is to deny that either is infinite, since no infinite being can be limited and conditioned.

To state the case in another form: Either space is a subjective or an objective condition of existence. If subjective to God, it is a divine property, which is to give up the question. If objective to God, we have an infinite objective existence conditioning another infinite existence, both as subjective and objective; and that involves a contradiction. If subjective to finite beings, we have: first, an infinite subjectivity of finite subjects; secondly, the subjectivity of finite beings conditioning inorganic objective existence—for example, the subjectivity of the inhabitants of the Alpine region conditioning the objective existence of the Alps; thirdly, the subjectivity of organic beings conditioning the objective existence of other organic beings—for instance, the subjectivity of men conditioning the objective existence of animals; fourthly, the subjectivity of finite intelligent beings conditioning the objective existence of other finite intelligent beings; and since action and reaction are necessarily implied, the subjectivity of those objective existences thus conditioned, in turn, by their subjectivity, conditioning the objective existence of those beings, whose subjectivity conditioned their own objective existence. In all of these cases contradiction and absurdity emerge. Space cannot be the subjective condition in finite beings of objective existence.

If, on the other hand, space be an objective condition of the existence of finite beings, we have the absurdity, already emphasized, of an infinite objective existence conditioning the existence of finite beings, as its only office: as its only office, I say, for, according to the hypothesis, it is not an attribute of God. That an in-

finite something should exist merely to condition the existence of finite beings, is inconceivable.

I have thus endeavored to show the incompetency of the hypothesis that space is merely a condition of existence.

Is space, then, merely a condition of thought? Or, to broaden the statement of the question, in order to avoid ambiguity, is it merely a condition or form of our subjective processes, having no real objective existence separate from and independent of them? As Kant seems to me to have maintained this view, it is well to get, if we can, some clear apprehension of his doctrine on the subject. In the first place, he admits the infinity of space. In the second place, he holds that it contains all phenomenal finite existences. In the third place, he defined it to be an *a priori* form of intuition. By intuition he understood the representations impressed through sensation upon the perceptive faculty by external phenomena empirically related to it; and he held it to be "the only subjective representation referring to something external that would be called *a priori* objective." In other words, it is the only *a priori* subjective form which grounds the possibility of empirical knowledge of external phenomena. In the fourth place, he affirmed the empirical reality of space, so far as every possible external experience is concerned, and at the same time maintained its transcendental ideality; but how does this bear upon the question of the separate and independent objective existence of space? Let him answer. "We maintain," he says, "that space is nothing, if we leave out of consideration the condition of a

possible experience, and accept it as something on which things by themselves are in any way dependent."

A writer's meaning is always liable to be misconceived, and it becomes us to be cautious in interpreting this language of the great German philosopher in expounding his doctrine of space. It might, perhaps, be said that, in asserting that space is not to be accepted as something on which things by themselves are in any way dependent, Kant meant that things, considered as substantial realities, are not dependent on space; but it would seem clear that he was speaking of things as phenomenal realities—things as appearing to us through their phenomenal existence; or it might be said that his meaning was that if things be viewed as phenomenal realities, although they may have an existence apart from their relations to our subjective form of intuition, yet have not their cause or ground of existence in space, but in something else, separate from our subjective process—say, for instance, in the creative and upholding power of God. This interpretation, however, it would appear, is precluded by the express language, "space is nothing if we leave out of view the condition of a possible experience"—that is, an experience of human beings. His doctrine, so far as I am able to collect it from his own exposition of it, is that space is an *a priori* subjective form—what is equivalent to a necessary principle or fundamental law of the common sense school; and that this law, as antecedent experience, is elicited into expression by the empirical relation of our minds to external phenomena. It gives to these phenomena their form, in the sense that they would be

nothing apart from it. In a word, he denies that space has any objective existence independent of the *a priori* subjective form of intuition. With this doctrine Hamilton and the common sense school are in accord, as against the sensational philosophy, so far as the affirmation is concerned that there is an original principle, a fundamental law, of our mental constitution, which grounds belief in space; but the common sense school differs with Kant in that it asserts the independent objective reality of space. For example, when Hamilton speaks of the maximum and minimum of space, and of its conceived divisibility, he cannot mean to refer simply to a native cognition, a subjective form of thought.

Taking Kant's doctrine in regard to space, as it has now been represented, to deny its independent objective reality as an object of knowledge to us, I proceed to state some of the reasons which oppose its reception.

(1.) A distinction must be made between the pictures of the imagination and native principles or fundamental laws of belief. It certainly would be illegitimate—it would be wild—to infer, from the grotesque combinations of once presented objects by the pictorial imagination, that there are objective realities which answer to them, and which their subjective existence demands; but where there is a fundamental form, to use Kant's term, or a necessary law of belief or thought, we are warranted in postulating for it a corresponding objective reality. Not that such a reality is directly given, but the conditions of experience being furnished, the subjective form or law is elicited into expression, and the objective reality is affirmed. Take, for instance, the

law of causality. If it be admitted to be implicitly contained in our mental constitution, there is required as answering to it the existence of real causes; and when those empirical conditions obtain which bring us into contact with external phenomena, the observation of phenomenal changes occasions, in accordance with the subjective law, the affirmation of real, objective causes, which depend upon that law indeed for their knowledge, but not for their existence. Kant himself argued from the subjective existence of the fundamental concept of moral responsibility to the objective existence of a moral law, and pressed, as irresistible, the inference from it to a moral ruler. Why he did not consider the same procedure valid in the sphere of intelligence it is difficult to see. His inconsistency in this matter has been frequently animadverted upon by subsequent philosophers. If our nature does not deceive us in the one sphere, why should it be regarded as deluding us in the other?

Given, then, the necessary subjective form of space-intuition, we legitimately demand for it a corresponding objective reality. As objective phenomenal changes, once observed in experience, lead to the positing of objective causes which have a ground of existence apart from our subjective processes, so the observation in experience of objects having spatial relations leads to the belief in space as an objective existence, grounded in something different from our mental forms.

(2.) It is admitted by Kant that space is all-containing. He holds it to embrace all external phenomenal existences; "for," he observes," first of all, we

can imagine one space only, and if we speak of many spaces, we mean parts only of one and the same space. Nor can these parts be considered as antecedent to the one and all-embracing space." This view of space would also follow from his concession that it is infinite. Now either the all things contained in space are real or they are not: realities, or, as Julius Müller would say, mere shine. If they be real, then—

First. From the position that space is merely a form of intuition, and therefore, purely subjective, it follows that all things are contained in the form of intuition of a finite mind. The inference may be characterized as too ridiculous to be derived from anything Kant ever said; but ridiculous or not, it is necessarily drawn from his doctrine as to the purely subjective nature of space; and it deserves to be noticed that the acute mind of Fichte pushed that doctrine out to this as its logical result. His pure subjective idealism was the developed result, in his hands, of Kant's speculations.

Secondly. What human being, it may be asked, possesses this omnitude, this extraordinary capacity of embracing in his subjectivity all external phenomenal existences? And what is true of one human being must be true of every one. The wonder multiplies in proportion to the number of these all-embracing individual subjectivities. Each contains all things; so that there are as many phenomenal universes as there are human beings to contain them; and, further, every man being phenomenal to every other man is contained in him, and besides, in all whose perceptive faculties are in relation to him; but, at the same time, he also includes them. This is a marvel of marvels.

If the all things contained in space—that is, in the subjective form of intuition denominated space—be unreal, then—

First. Our nature would be an engine of falsehood; and Kant's philosophy an instrument of deceit; for assuredly the universal, and therefore necessary, conviction of the race is that the external phenomenal existences which we perceive are realities.

Secondly. If the things which are contained in space are not objective realities, we would crave to know what there would be, to be contained in it. It is admitted to be all-containing, but, on the supposition, there is nothing real to be contained; and what the unreal contents of space may be it passes our ability to see; but they are real, says Kant, though real only to our subjective form of intuition. Well, grant it; and let us suppose that all human beings were dead. The universe of phenomenal existence would fail to continue, since that upon which it depended is extinct. This would be the idealism of Berkeley, so far as human perception is concerned. Nor does Kant shelter himself under the refuge to which the Bishop of Cloyne betook himself under the pressure of this inevitable difficulty—the dependence of all phenomenal things upon the perceptions of the Divine Being. These considerations, briefly presented, are sufficient to stumble the hypothesis of the sage of Königsberg in relation to the nature of space. Others may be presented, apart from the speculations of Kant, against the doctrine that space is a mere condition of thought.

In the first place, space cannot be merely a condition



or form of thought, for we cannot conceive its annihilation. This is contended for by Kant and Hamilton, and is proved by every effort to form such a conception which the mind can make. We may, it is said, conceive the annihilation of all things that are contained in space, but not of space itself. This is true, for if we make the attempt in thought to annihilate space, all that is attained is the removal of something called space from infinite vacuity; but that vacuity we are compelled to believe is the same thing as space. Now we are able to conceive the annihilation of every human being, and consequently the non-existence of every condition or form of human thought. This shows that space cannot be merely an element of human subjectivity. Indeed, it would remain if the universe of phenomena were blotted out of existence. It is simply out of the question to make it merely a condition of human thought.

In the second place, if space be merely a condition of thought, it is either a purely mental and subjective condition or an external and objective condition. If purely subjective, there is, *ex hypothesi*, no objective reality to which it corresponds, and it would follow that it cannot transcend the contents of subjectivity; but as that is limited and space is admitted to be infinite, a contradiction ensues. If space as a condition of thought is external and objective, as everything external and objective must, in the first instance—that is, as perceived and apart from inferences—be apprehended as phenomenal, space is phenomenal; and as it is infinite, it must be the infinite phenomenal manifestation of an infinite substance, and that contradicts the supposition

immediately under consideration—namely, that space is merely a condition of thought, and not a mode of substance. It would also contradict the remoter supposition that space, as a condition merely, is not an attribute of God.

If it be said that its being a phenomenon does not guarantee a substance to which it is attached, but that it has an independent phenomenal reality, we would have an infinite phenomenal reality which is neither God nor an attribute of God, and that involves the supposition of two infinite realities independent of each other, which is a contradiction. So far for the supposition that space is a condition.

### 3. Is space a substance?

(1.) If it be a substance, then, *ex hypothesi*, it is an infinite substance. There would, therefore, be two infinite substances, God and space; but they would be exclusive of each other. It is a contradiction to suppose the co-existence of two infinite substances, for they would condition and limit each other, and neither, consequently, could be infinite. We are compelled to suppose them one and the same, or to deny the existence of one of them. Either they are identical or mutually exclusive.

(2.) If space be a substance, it is either a material or an immaterial substance. If material, then, as it is admitted to be infinite, we would have an infinite material substance; which involves a contradiction of a two-fold character: first, that of a material substance affirmed to be infinite; for it is certain that some matter is finite, and therefore no matter can be infinite; sec-

only, that of two infinite substances different from each other; for God and matter are certainly different substances, and, on the supposition, we would have God as infinite, and an infinite material substance besides; but, as has been shown, two infinite substances are exclusive of each other.

If space be immaterial, we would have two infinite spiritual substances, and contradiction emerges. There would be two infinite spirits; but as a spirit is a personal intelligence, there would be two infinite personal intelligences; and as personal intelligence is active, two infinite personal activities or infinite actors—that is, two infinite creators, and then two infinite rulers and two infinite co-existent sovereignties—all of which involves supreme contradictions. It is scarcely necessary further to consider the hypothesis that space is a substance. It is one which is seldom maintained.

#### 4. Is space an attribute of substance?

This is the only remaining supposition. If the others have been removed, we are entitled, in accordance with the law which governs an argument like this, to hold that this is established. If space be an attribute, as it is conceded to be infinite, it is an infinite attribute. It must then be regarded as the attribute of an infinite substance, since it is plainly contradictory to affirm an infinite attribute of a finite substance. As an infinite substance is postulated for an infinite attribute, and there can be and is but one infinite substance—namely, God—it follows that space is an attribute of the divine substance.

I conclude this line of thought with the following

disjunctive statement as to the relation between God and space: Either he is without space, or he is within space, or he and space are equally immense.

If he be without space, it is limited as contained in him; but it is admitted to be infinite, nor can we resist the belief that it is. If so, nothing can be without its comprehension, and therefore God cannot be without it.

If he be within space, he is not co-extensive with it. He is, therefore, limited as contained in space; but that would destroy the notion of his existence as God. The supposition is monstrous.

The third supposition remains true—that God and space are co-extensive; but as nothing can be co-extensive with the infinite Being but his own attributes, space must be regarded as one of those attributes. What is it, what can it be, but the immensity of the infinite Spirit? If so, we have in our irresistible belief in space one of the most obtrusive evidences of the existence of that infinite God in whom we live and move and have our being. Atheism would be self-convicted of folly, since it could employ no argument the thoughts and expression of which would not confessedly imply and concede the existence of space, that is, the immensity of God.

To recapitulate: Either space is a relation, or a condition of existence, or a condition of thought, or a substance, or an attribute of substance. These suppositions exhaust the possibilities in the case. If there be any other supposition the argument would, as disjunctive, break down. But I have not met any hypothesis which cannot be reduced to one or another of those

which have been signalized. Now, if space has been shown to be neither a relation nor a condition of existence, nor a condition of thought, nor a substance, it must be a mode or attribute of substance—the only remaining supposition; but it has been evinced to be contradictory and absurd to make it the mode or attribute of any other substance than that of God. The conclusion, consequently, is that it is a mode or attribute of God's substance.

This position is not novel, for it was maintained by that subtle metaphysician, Dr. Samuel Clarke, and by Augustin long before;<sup>1</sup> but the reasons for it, which have been here given, I have not met with anywhere.

The same line of argument may be employed, *mutatis mutandis*, to show that duration is but a term equivalent to the eternity of the infinite Spirit.

<sup>1</sup>“Let no one ask of me where God was before he created the world. He was himself Time. He was himself Space.” Quoted by Dr. John Duncan, *Colloquia Peripatetica*, p. 138. The same view is maintained by Philo, Derodon and Newton.